

Aphorisms of Effective Choice

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Dedication

For The Earth, to all Life and Nature

That All Shall Realize Greater Love in This World

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Desire, Want, and Need

Love always provides both the basis for choice and the energy to choose. Love has three aspects: Desire, want, and need. These aspects refer to the quality, form, and intensity of love respectively.

Want, need, and desire are distinct, inseparable, and non-interchangeable. Each has its place, value, and validity.

The meanings of want, need, and desire are distinguished by where they arise and where they are realized. Considering the self as a conduit of connection between spirit and matter, soul and body:

Desires are feelings that arise within the soul to affect the self.
They can only be realized from within the soul (an aspect of spirit).

Needs arise within the self and can only be realized within the self (an aspect of mind).

Wants come from the outer world and arise within the body to affect the self.
They can only be realized within or through the body (an aspect of world).

Wants, needs, and desires are abstractions of thoughts, feelings, and emotions respectively. They are also the instructions of purpose, value, and meaning. A life must realize all of these, in proper balance, to be complete.

Here 'ab-stract' is best understood to mean "out of form" and 'in-struct' as "into form".

A single desire is always more fundamental than any number of wants and/or needs.

The Nature of Desire

To enable, allow, and nurture one's desires with clarity, precision, and purity is to realize love in life with health, wealth, and joy. In proportion to its purity, desire (Love) always connects, enlivens, and nurtures.

Desires are interrelated. They do not occur in isolation. All desires are interdependent with other desires.

Desires have various degrees of depth. Some desires are formed as an implementation of a deeper desire. The knowledge, resolution, and attainment of deeper desires will often decrease the intensity of many other surface desires.

The realization of a feeling occurs in the same location and depth of self as that from which it arose. The satisfaction of a feeling is always a return to the origin of that feeling.

Surface desires are often conflicted; one's deepest desires are never conflicted.

At the root, the desires of self and those of culture are always in deep alignment and agreement. The deepest desires of the self are always connected with the deepest desires of the community.

Ultimate root desires are never necessarily in conflict. Only the perceptions, expressions, representations, and beliefs about desire can be in conflict. Only forms (how one thinks about and expresses one's desires) can be in conflict; feelings are always consonant (never in conflict).

The meaning of a surface desire is clarified when its foundation in deeper desires is known. When surface desires appear to be in conflict, the knowledge and realization of one's deeper desires will always resolve that conflict.

When desires are confused (i.e., are internally conflicting or are unclear), or when one has conflicting ideas and beliefs, one has effectively become two smaller selves, each of which has significantly less freedom of choice. One chooses most effectively when choosing as a unified self, as a whole being, with attunement and at-one-ment with one's own innermost (deepest) desires.

It is as great a desire of self to grow as it is for a culture to evolve. Growth happens in interaction, connection, and coherency; the continuity of being. As such, both selves and societies always seek to find resolution between conflicting perceptions, ideas, beliefs, and ideologies.

Only that which nurtures life will continue to live.

The Basal Motivations of All Life

There are two ultimate desires inherent in all being:

The desire to create and be creative (the expression of self-quality).

The desire to experience and have experiences (the perception of form).

The most basic desire inherent in all consciousness is to maximize the degree (quantity), diversity (quality), and intensity of both the creative experience and the experience of creativity.

Creativity does not happen somewhere or to someone; rather it is inherently everywhere and within everyone. One does not need to "tap into" something external to oneself to create, to heal, to know something or to have imagination. In the very process of living, each of these qualities will take its own form.

Therefore, have faith in innate creativity and self-expression.

Where creativity is needed, it is always inherently available.

Evolution always moves in the direction that simultaneously maximizes the degree of experience and creativity of all aspects of life, in all aspects of life. These motivations are at the foundation of all desire, all cognition, and all action. Together they are the basis for and foundation of all love, life, growth, evolution, transformation, interaction, communication, learning, experimentation, being, and doing.

Choice is effective to the degree that it involves *both* a significant reflection on the meaning(s) of one's prior experience(s) *and* a significant investment of new meaningfulness (creativity). Choice is particularly effective when that significance is reflective of the highest dreams of all concerned.

The sense of satisfaction with being is proportional to the product of the degree to which one *thinks* they have chosen/defined/created with purpose, and the degree to which one *feels* they have experienced significance, meaning, beauty, and value.

Satisfaction is a function of both anticipation and realization, and is dependent on a fullness of both. **Satisfaction** is the product of both expectation (creative potentiality) and realization (experienced actuality).

Large, unbounded collections of 'insignificant small changes' can create overall effects far out of proportion to the apparent causes. Small, incremental changes occurring everywhere at once are more conducive to creative expression than suddenly-realized 'grand monolythic events'.

Love is that which enables choice

An **Effective choice** is one that results in the realization and manifestation of the deepest desires. An ultimately effective choice is one which realizes (manifests) the ultimate desires of all that is making that choice and all that is affected by that choice.

The ultimate innermost nature of self/soul is good. Ineffective actions and choices result from a lack of clarity between the soul and the mind. To have a lack of clarity is to have a lack of knowing and of understanding; it is an absence of wisdom. To improve one's knowing and understanding is to increase clarity within the self. Increased clarity is increased effectiveness of one's choices, and increased the degree to which one experiences joy/happiness.

Those who choose ineffectively can be nurtured and healed by enabling them to increase their degree of knowledge and understanding (i.e., teaching by example).

The most effective choices are those which maximally support creativity and experience in the world, in the self, and in the dynamics between them. The most effective choices provide or result in the greatest degree of wholeness and integrity of both self and world (necessary for experience), while at the same time allowing the greatest freedom to make additional future choices for oneself and others (necessary for creativity).

The degree of effectiveness of one's choices is proportional to the product of the degree to which one's choices and their results, coherently maintain, sustain, enhance, and nurture:

- 1) the integrity and wholeness (the actuality and actualization) of the world, the self, and the relation between world and self, and,
- 2) the potentiality/realization/evolution of creativity and experience in all of life, including one's own life (the degree to which it potentiates other choices).

Quality is as important as quantity. Potentiality (what could happen) is as important as actuality (what does/did happen).

What is Ethics?

Ethics: organized thought concerned with the study of, and adherence to, the principles of effective choice. Ethics is the study of the principles of the most effective means of self-expression, in both words and actions. It is about how to make one's choices more effective, for all of oneself and for all others, in both form and feeling.

In contrast, **morality** is an externally defined set of rules in a particular domain, generally applicable to all selves in that domain. Morality also refers to the apparent degree that the choices of a given self happen to adhere to those rules. Morality is the application of a collection of statements or codes which (hopefully) represent the principles of ethics in terms appropriate to that specific domain/world.

Rather than being about public/visible actions within a domain, ethics is internal to oneself and independent of any particular domain.

The relationship between ethics and morals is similar to the relationship between philosophy (metaphysics) and science (physics). Ethics is always the ultimate basis for any moral, statutory, or civil code in much the same way that the scientific method (a theorem of metaphysics) is always the ultimate basis for any physics.

A statement of ethics is a statement of principle. It originates from and has its basis within self.

In contrast, a statement of morals is a statement of statutory or civil law. A statement of morality originates from and has its basis within a specific world, domain, or culture. It is a command or directive to be followed by all selves in that world.

The study of ethics is ultimately about identifying and applying the principles of effective choice. It is not about whether any given choice is 'right' or 'wrong' in some absolute sense. Only morality can be considered in such a binary (unconscious) manner.

Each "action" is a form of communication between self and world; it involves aspects of both perception and expression. In this sense, ethics is the study of the 'best way to communicate'.

In connection with the nature of effective choice, the principles of effective expression and communication (all of which are involved in any real practice of ethics) are all ultimately defined in terms of the attainment of the basal motivations.

To consider how to increase the effectiveness of one's choices is to determine what is meant by simultaneously preserving the integrity and increasing the potentiality of both life and evolution. To maximize potentiality and integrity is to maximize the combination of symmetry and continuity in the relationships between self (the subjective) and reality (the objective).

To maximize the degree of continuity and the degree of symmetry is *not* to assert that symmetry and continuity will be realized in exactly the same manner for the same thing at the same time. Rather, symmetry and continuity are to be considered as applying to different aspects of one common dynamic, the relationship/communication between the subjective (self) and the objective (world). The principles of ethics will, therefore, describe what would be required in this common dynamic (communication) for the subjective and the objective to be realized (made real and known) as objective and subjective.

To develop the principles of ethics is to determine a method and, therefore, a practice of making maximally effective choices. An effective set of ethical principles will positively specify and characterize effective choices.

To assert "positive specification" is to have an ethics which describes what or how to choose -- which choices are best -- rather stating only what not to choose (which choices are worst, to be avoided). All negatively defined ethical systems must be regarded as incomplete.

Ethics focuses simultaneously on the value, meaning, and purpose of expressions (choices and events), with an emphasis on meaningfulness. In ethics there is no right or wrong, there are only varying degrees of effectiveness, of enhancement of life and evolution, and of the capacity to nurture (mindful) consciousness.

This is in contrast with a system of morality, which is defined as a fixed set of rules concerning what is right and what is wrong. Morality is usually defined in terms of goodness and virtue. Regardless of the degree to which a philosophy, religion, or society may confuse ethical concerns with moral ones, ethics *cannot* be considered as having externally fixed rules of right or wrong.

To the extent that a moral code defines some things as "good" (valued, of virtue) and others as "bad" (some actions as right and others as wrong), there exists the risk of being inherently unethical in proportion to the degree that the boundary between the good and bad is 'sharp' (an expression of discontinuity). Systems of morality which are defined in 'black and white' terms are fundamentally antithetical to life and consciousness and are to be avoided.

The absolute *principles* of ethics are common to all of consciousness (all individuals). The absolute *practice* of ethics is particular and unique to each individual; it cannot be prescribed from without.

Ethics is always implemented relative to the self and to the situation.
The realization of ethics is unique in each choice.

The Principle of Ethical Symmetry:

Where the objective/external context is different,
and where the subjective/internal context is the same,
the content of expression shall be the same.

The Principle of Ethical Continuity:

Where the objective/external content is different,
and where the subjective/internal content is the same,
the context of expression shall be the same.

The symmetry ethics is an expression of the notion of *consistent expressions*.
The continuity ethics is an expression of the notion of *equal valuations*.

The content of expression refers to one's statements, assertions, actions, choices, and expressions. The context of expression refers to one's beliefs, attitudes, understandings, and philosophies.

Objective content refers to any thing, event, being, or that which is 'other' than self. Objective context refers to the environmental circumstances in which an event occurs (when and where). Subjective content refers to the specific quality, unique nature, and/or the identity that is the being of Self. Subjective context refers to the integrity, unity, wholeness, and degree of integration of the self.

It is best to maintain *symmetry* in all aspects of relationship with the *world* (that which is objective, of or relating to form and substance, experience, causality, perception, content, the seen, the macroscopic, and actual intradomain interactions).

It is best to maintain *continuity* in all aspects of relationship with the *self* (that which is subjective, of or relating to feeling and essence, creativity, choice, expression, context, the unseen, the microscopic, and potential interdomain relations).

While there are only two principles (essential statements) of non-relativistic ethics, there are many effective ways to enact them. There are many ways to live ethically. While there can be any number of moral codes, it is usually considered that there is only one 'right way' to enact them; it is believed that there is only one way to live morally.

*Ethical principles (laws) are natural, and cannot be enforced.
Moral codes (rules/laws) are civil, and can only be enforced.*

To act in accordance with ethics is an affirmation of the integrity of self and the significance of others. To require others to be 'ethical', or to label them as being 'unethical', is itself inherently unethical. One cannot enforce ethics (ethical action and choice) on any other, in any world, ever. It is impossible. Only by being ethical can one encourage, allow and enable others to also be ethical.

One can only act effectively and ethically as oneself (personally).
One can never act on behalf of, or in the place of another, any other, ever.
One can only make one's own choices. One can only accept what is in one's own experience. This includes acting on behalf of causality or 'the universe', or 'in the name of God'.
One's own subjectivity can never replace or supplant the objectivity of any world.

Any effort which attempts to make life adhere strictly, ultimately, and absolutely, to any moral code without any exceptions, no matter how minor, will eventually kill it. To apply a moral code with absolute aspects or in an absolute manner is to ensure that the value of and meaning of the moral code itself will ultimately be lost.

Life is ultimately ethical, yet it is not moral. Life and evolution depend (in part) on occasional exceptions. No single set of rules, no matter what their origin, can encompass life. This is true regardless of the source of those rules; personal and impersonal; mundane and divine.

Life itself is dynamic, inherently involving inequality in evolution and change, a flux across a boundary; a dynamic which eventually exceeds and extends beyond all fixed boundaries. No world is 'fair', nor can any world be expected to be fair, even though all worlds are (in their own way) beautiful.

One chooses most effectively when choosing (and continuing to choose) from one's deepest basis of desire (love). The best choices express that desire in a manner which is affirming to all of life at all levels of being, in all worlds.

This principle of effective choice continues to apply regardless of the level of intensity involved in that choice. In making choices of high intensity, a corresponding level/degree of integrity in representing that desire and affirming life is required.

Choices and actions are most effective when they are the most ethical;
when they preserve both symmetry **and** continuity.

Any fully expressed choice which totally encompasses the subjective will also totally encompass the objective. Any choice which is truly and ultimately supportive and nurturing of *all* aspects of one's being will also have consequences which are supportive of *all* other beings.

It is important that this principle be applied with near absolute perfection.
Under such circumstances, it is guaranteed to work.

Integrity has the meaning of 'to act as one together'. It connotes wholeness, health, and a complete unity of being. Where the degree of intensity in interaction is very high, one is required to act with a very high level of integrity (very ethically).

One is permitted, empowered, and required to respond to an action affecting oneself (to act on) with a similar level of intensity as the degree to which one has been acted upon (neither much more nor much less). The key to this principle is to act in a manner that is perfectly transformative, rather than a manner which is merely reactionary.

In all interchange, there is to be maintained continuity. Where one has been deeply affected, that one may effect deeply; not to diminish or to escalate, but to change. Such changes are best and most effectively realized when enabling the realization of the deepest dreams of all involved.

To sustain the integrity of self, be conscious of and choose the level of intensity of interaction with a world. Be sure to choose the time of the best usage of intensity and of one's own involvement with it.

The practice and implementation of ethics involves personal choice; it is never concerned with either justice or judgment. There can be no ethical justice and no ethical judgments in a personal, objective, and effective sense.

Judgment refers to an evaluation of a choice (act or expression) made by someone other than oneself. Judgment *also* refers to an attempt to make choices in place of (or on behalf of) someone other than oneself.

Justice: When a self *external* to an event of subjective action (choice) attempts to deliberately implement on that subjectivity a 'moral' causality. A personal action of 'justice' is *believed* to be necessary when there is *also* the belief that no other natural causal relation would impersonally be applied.

Any attempt to seek justice is to hold the false expectation that the impersonal natural world would or should adhere to one's own arbitrary personal sense of right. As such, justice can only be regarded as a moral concern and cannot be regarded as an ethical one.

Only in thinking of 'justice' as a personal practice of maintaining a continuity of intensity in interaction (to 'make just' or 'to regulate'), can this concept be regarded as having ethical implications. However, by itself this is not a complete embodiment of ethics, for a continuity of intensity does not fully describe what would be required for effective, and therefore ethical, choice.

To implement 'justice' is an attempt to personally act 'on behalf of', or 'in place of', natural causality. Ultimately, this must be understood as a lack of faith in deity, the universe, and/or the causality of the world in which one operates.

For example; To claim that one is judging and enacting justice (or vengeance) 'in the name of God' is to imply that God would not otherwise choose, support, or intervene/act in agreement with the chosen moral code (a religious or civil law). Any activity (for example, the 'righteous' condemnation of others) that is 'justified' on the basis of religious convictions is ultimately founded on the *absence* of religious conviction. All 'religious wars' are categorically not based on having religion; they are due to an absence of religion.

In that the ends do not justify the means, neither do the means justify, determine, fix, or ultimately define the ends.

Favorable intentions alone are not sufficient to create a favorable outcome. There is always more than one path, more than one way to accomplish something; and there is always more than one thing accomplished.

To consider if an act or choice was just or unjust, to sit in judgment, is to attempt to evaluate choices (actions) which are not one's own. The essence of the meaning of judgment requires an objective consideration of that which is basically subjective (a choice or an action of expression). However, the objective cannot ever perceive the subjective. Therefore, the attempt to personally consider or judge another's choice is inherently and fundamentally impossible.

To enact judgment is to act ineffectively and by definition, unethically. Regardless of appearance, a judgment is always one's own choice. Because the essence of objective judgment involves choices which are external to oneself, the practice of judgment is inherently unethical. Implementing justice requires one to make choices on behalf of something that is not self, and thus also involves choices which are not one's own. Attempting to implement justice is inherently unethical.

Self is the product of all of the choices that you have made *and* all of the choices that you can still make. Therefore ultimately, the consequences of one's action will always also return to the point from which the intent originates.

*In matters of crime and guilt, it is the act itself which is its own worst punishment.
No one can hide from the consequences of their choices.*

All choices, expressions, and methods of understanding involve ethical implications. No perception, knowledge, or experience of the self will have ethical implications. No events of change or of causality have ethical implications.

Ultimately, one can only account for, or be asked to account for, one's own choices and expressions. One must always (and can only) be responsible for the totality of their choices and expressions, neither more nor less. One cannot be legitimately required to account for one's perceptions or knowing in any domain, world, or universe. Expression is always public; perception is always private.

Knowledge carries no ethical assignment; it is ultimately independent of ethics. Knowledge can never be objectively judged by another; it may be subjectively judged only by oneself. However, the choice to express or not express in accordance with that knowledge may have ethical implications. The expression of an understanding will always have (must have, cannot not have) an ethical aspect.

One is always responsible for all aspects of their expression and choices at the exact moment of their choice, neither before nor after. To the extent (neither more nor less) that the *same* conscious being can continue to make choice, they continue to be responsible.

One cannot ever be responsible for the choices of another.
One cannot be held responsible for the reactions or responses of others.
One can be held responsible only for their own actions and responses.

The process of communication is best facilitated when each participant freely, honestly, and fully grants to the other these three rights:

- 1) the right to speak,
- 2) the right to be understood, and
- 3) the right to know that one has been understood.

Communication between people does not happen unless and until all three of these rights have been (at least implicitly) granted from each to the other. These rights of communication cannot be taken; they can only be given.

Wisdom is the integration and synthesis of both knowledge (that which allows one to perceive correctly) and understanding (that which allows one to express correctly). Wisdom is an integration (spiritual and practical; knowledge and understanding) which enables one to make better choices -- choices which are more natural, ethical, durable, and practical.

No one is ever wholly wrong; there is always a grain of truth in whatever anyone says, or is in their being. Rather than focusing only on what is false, or who or what is at fault, wisdom involves focusing on whatever is true, whole (wholesome), valid, and right. The process of learning and the finding of Truth is more effective when one searches for that which is true, rather than for that which is not.

*To search for meaning is to find it.
To fail to search for meaning is to be without it.*

Truth is more than "that which one can consider" (perceive) with total confidence, clarity, and certainty. **Truth** is that with which one can personally act with total confidence and effectiveness. Truth is not so much about correctness in thinking as it is about the significance and efficiency of choice. It is not so much about perceptual certainty as it is about expression with clarity, effectiveness, and confidence.

*Perfect faith is beautiful only when it accompanies a perfect truth,
otherwise, it becomes a perfect horror.*

One knows truth as much through the process of feeling as through the process of thought. It is only when both feeling and thinking are used together that one may know Truth.

The essence of all communication acts are resolved into exactly and only two aspects: All statements (in all domains of communication) either define a representation or make a commitment (or both; no other roles or purposes are fundamental).

*Representative statements reflect what is (an actuality).
Commitment statements reflect what could be (a potentiality).*

A representation is a statement of perception, of actuality, which describes a quantity, a pattern, or a form. A commitment is a statement of expression, of potentiality, which proscribes a quality, an essence, a feeling.

The event of forming a representation is the event of a change/transformation of actualities. It is a transformation or mapping of some aspect to the form of something in some world (as an actuality) to a form or structure within a domain of language (itself also an actuality).

The event of forming a commitment is the event of a change/transformation of potentialities. It is a change in the potentialities of the future expressions of the one making the commitment, and it is a change in the potentialities of the perceptions of the common future of the one receiving the commitment.

Maturity is in proportion to the quantity, quality and significance of the choices made. The absolute degree of maturity is the multiplicative product of:

- 1) the degree of responsibility with
- 2) the relative degree of wisdom with
- 3) the degree that one's choices of responsibility are made in accordance with that wisdom.

A mature individual is someone who chooses with effectiveness for all concerned at all levels of being. The maturity of an individual is proportional to their responsibility (itself proportional to the scope, span, and frequency of choice), their wisdom, and the degree to which these are used *together* in their actions and choices.

Maturity, growth, and wisdom are measures of the degree of integration (within the self) of both experience and the capacity to think, feel, and reflect.

The rule of a nation is most effective when the maturity of the leadership is equal to the scope of that leadership. Never should the scope of a leadership exceed its degree of maturity. A leader of millions of lives needs to have the maturity of millions of lives.

Politics

Politics is what happens when a group of people makes decisions based upon what they fear, rather than on what they love.

Consensus is what happens when people in a group make decisions on the basis of what they love, what they all commonly desire together.

As long as any one person or country chooses on the basis of fear there will be strife, frustration, and pain. It is only in the communication and enablement of the deepest desires that agreement and true peace are reached.

The emotional energy associated with political debates is proportional to the intensity of the perception of a lack of value for something that is regarded as personally important.

To effect positive change is to 1) help all others (everyone) to know their real desires, and 2) to cooperatively help discover the most effective method for their realization. To make positive change is to help everyone act on the basis of what is wanted, (or needed, or desired) so as to get what is wanted/needed/desired, rather than on the basis of what is not wanted or feared.

The best methods of group decision making help people to know what they love, what they really care about, and enables them to choose on that basis. The solution to unproductive political debate is to practice *all* values with unconditional acceptance.

Examples: One cannot stop war by hating and fearing war. One can only stop war by desiring peace, choosing on the basis of peace, and helping others to acknowledge and choose on the basis of their own desires for peace and fulfillment too. To sustain the environment, the natural world, it is essential to enable others to get in touch with how much they care about the environment. Knowing how to love one's own children in a natural manner enables other people to love their children more naturally.

Only in combination may one's actions be both meaningful and effective. To realize truth and honor in life one needs to be gentle and firm, to have both compassion and ruthlessness, and be able to act with both sensitivity and severity. These aspects cannot occur singly; they **must** always occur together.

Perception is effective to the degree that it is dispassionate, without judgment, precondition, or expectation. Expression is effective to the degree that it is passionate -- a reflection of one's dreams and inspiration -- and is a clear manifestation of one's highest hopes and aspirations.

Example: In part, the ultimate warrior (in the idealistic martial arts sense) must be at once completely sensitive, aware, and accepting of all that occurs, without judgment or conditioning. In addition, the ultimate warrior must be able to completely and wholly commit decisively, with total faith and confidence, to their chosen action without reservation or hesitation in any part of self. The perception and compassion of the warrior is infinitely gentle and subtle while the expression of the warrior (their action) is confident, skillful, and absolutely firm.

With total openness and sensitivity, the effective warrior perceives directly; thus gaining true knowledge about others and the world. Anything less, in the form of judgment, distortion or a filtering and conditioning of perception, will result in significant weakness and ineffectiveness. The strength of the warrior is in the perfection of their sensitivity.

With complete and decisive commitment to do what needs to be done (ruthlessness), the warrior acts with a wholeness of being, effecting maximum meaningfulness. To act only in part, without coordination among all aspects of self, is to diminish significance. Maximum meaning and effectiveness is attained only when all aspects of self act in coordinated concert together. The strength of the warrior is in the perfection of their integrity of action.

Only where all of these attributes occur together and at once is the maximum of life realized.

Joy and Pain

Joy and Pain are both Real.

One has an experience of **joy** when one perceives an increase in one's potentialities. Events and choices which increase apparent freedom, are expansive, and decrease feelings of limitation will tend to result in experiences and feelings of joy.

One has an experience of **pain** when one perceives a decrease in one's potentialities. Events and choices which decrease apparent freedoms, are constrictive, and increase feelings of limitation will tend to result in experiences and feelings of pain.

Pain is typically literal, factual, and objective, and is found by going into the deep world (reality). Joy is typically symbolic, mythical, and subjective, and is found by going into the deep Self.

*To shift from the mythical to the factual is to decrease potential and experience pain.
To shift from the factual to the mythical is to increase potential and express joy.*

Pain corresponds to the actuality of events of interruption, cessation, discontinuity or disconnection in flow. These events decrease apparent potentiality. All pain is a reflection (a realization) of discontinuity. Pain occurs when there is a break, breach, or sudden change. Joy corresponds to the potentiality of events of connection, continuity, and union. These are events which increase the feeling of potentiality.

It cannot not seem that the outer world is defined by experiences of discontinuity and pain.
It cannot not seem that the inner self is defined by expressions of continuity and joy.

Joy and pain are not opposites; they are complementary aspects of a deeper whole. They have the same relationship to each other that potentiality has with actuality. They are both found in proportion to the intensity of the self-to-world interaction. Where the degree of the intensity of the interaction between self and world changes, there will be (cannot not be) either joy or pain or both.

An experience of joy does not result in or require an experience of pain. Nor does it make one any more or less likely to experience pain. Nor does the actuality of an experience of pain make the potentiality of an experience of joy any more likely. It is never "necessary for balance" to have equal degrees of experience of joy and pain. One does not need to experience pain to experience joy. Even a large amount of pain will not necessarily result in or imply that one will have even a very small amount of joy. The being of one does not necessitate the being of the other. There is no glory in suffering!

One cannot increase or decrease the potentiality of either joy or pain without also increasing or decreasing the potentiality of the other. To increase the potentiality of joy, one must increase the actuality of the intensity of interaction. Without the vivid connectedness of interaction, there can be no joy.

Where communication, connection, continuity and communion are fundamentally cooperative processes, and cannot be forced, only strengthened, so also one cannot force, guarantee, or ensure an experience of joy. One's ability to experience joy is proportional to the strength of one's willingness to remain present in the potentialities of the unknown.

One cannot guarantee that joy, happiness, or love will follow as the result of any process, conditioning, practice, or method. No religion, tradition, technology or practice can ever specifically create, force or guarantee that one will experience joy, bliss, satisfaction or happiness, or that one will not ever experience pain, suffering, or loss. The qualities of joyful experience can only be nurtured, not ensured.

For example; the connection between joy and potentiality is experienced in all forms of humor. **Humor** is the ability to create and convey an immediate, vivid, and unexpected expansive shift in interpretation and significance.

The essence of telling a good joke is the unexpected shift to an alternate interpretation, one which creates an expanded view of a situation. The shift to an alternate view, the recognition or creation of an absurdity, etc., are all expansive in comparison to one's initial understandings and expectations; they are implicitly perceived as an increase in potentiality; that there is more than one way -- a choice -- in how a situation may be perceived.

The effectiveness of a good joke is in proportion to the novelty, immediacy, and unexpected vividness in the moment of expanded realization when the punch line is issued. As such, an experience of humor is recognized as being a momentary experience of joy; a moment expressed in laughter. As such, 'to have a sense of humor' is correctly recognized as a spiritual quality; an ability to accept more expansive interpretations of each situation.

Joy, happiness, and love, cannot ever be a goal. They cannot be made; they can only **be**.

Mental and physical processes work best as the result of constrictive choices; choices that have the effect of limiting potentiality. Specific mental and physical states (a content of experience) can be attained as the result of a goal-driven activity. They can be achieved with practice and effort.

Emotional and spiritual processes work best as the result of expansive choices; choices that have the effect of increasing potentiality. Emotional and spiritual dynamics (a context of experience) cannot be attained or realized (will not ever be realized) as a target of any goal driven activity, technology, process, or technique. They will never be achieved by any amount of practice and effort.

Only out of potentiality (nurturing gentleness), and that which is unconditioned and unconstrained, may joy, happiness, and love arise. To allow and nurture joyfulness will make joy a more likely experience in life. Joy and health in life nurtures, accepts, loves, and integrates all parts of self and life well and fully.

Spirituality: the ability to remain whole and maintain a continuity and integrity of self. Acceptance and integration is the effective practice of spirituality.

Inner Peace: A faith and realization of the capacity of one's own spiritual nature, an ability to remain whole and to maintain a continuity and integrity of self, regardless of the degree of pain and suffering experienced in the world of the body.

Spirituality (acceptance) and the enactment of love (nurturance) enable and increase the potentiality that one will experience joy.

When the self can accept and integrate the experience of the deep world (of discontinuity) and remain whole (maintain a continuity and integrity of self) then one will be at peace. The realization of one's own spiritual qualities leads to an increase in one's knowledge of peace (a reduction in pain and suffering).

To the extent that one is deeply involved with the world (to the extent that one lives), there is potential for the nature of the discontinuity of the world to be carried inward; toward the self. When the experience of the deep world is not accepted and integrated into the matrix of the self, the self becomes increasingly disconnected and isolated and the experience of the world becomes one of pain and suffering.

It will always appear and seem to be a fact that all of the experience of any world will be one of pain and suffering. Joy, comfort, and connectedness (continuity), although equally real, cannot be seen or known objectively. They must always be, or seem to be, invisible, unseen, and subjective, a part of the Self. The appearance of fact (illusion) is *not* equivalent with the being of fact (reality).

With careful examination it can be seen that the central concern of most great religions is suffering and its resolution (a mythos of redemption via acceptance by divinity). Considering theology is often a means to an end intimately bound up with issues and assumptions regarding personal fear, pain, and suffering.

Any self-reflective consciousness in vivid and intimate contact with nature will tend to develop a high level of spiritual awareness. Living in nature inherently compels acceptance of situation, life, and truth. All forms of life in nature must ultimately accept nature as it is. The central dynamic of spirituality is about one's acceptance of that which is not self, a deep inner sense of spirituality enables continued survival in the face of suffering when alone.

When involved with others in social interchange, one's inner sense of spirituality combines with others to create a shared religion. Living in a society inherently requires that all members of that society be accepted by and into that society. Religion provides a defined code of morality for how to interact socially with others in that same culture. The central dynamic of religion is about being accepted into that which is not self. A deep religious nature enables continued membership and support in the face of suffering when with others.

With increasing degrees of separation from nature and more involvement in social interactions, these shared religions are increasingly defined in terms of forms, rather than in terms of a capacity to create deep feeling.

The interface between self and world, experience and expression, has intensity to the degree that a great integrity of self (perfect continuity) is brought into close and intimate contact with the deep world (perfect discontinuity).

The integrity of self must precede the connectedness with the world (experience). Wellness must take precedence over fullness. The maximum level of intensity with which one may have contact with a world must always be slightly less than the maximum level of integrity that one has within the self.

The rapidity and persistence of the changes one makes in the world increases with both the degree of intensity and the degree of coordination of one's interactions with that world.

One's actions, interactions, and expressions in a world have maximum effectiveness when equal attention is given to: 1) the intensity, 2) the feeling, and 3) the forms of the conscious choices which compose them. As such, optimum expressions of intention and thought will combine passion and emotion with quality, symbolism, and romance without giving up its literal meaning, logic, or factual nature.

Significance is maximized when the degree of inward awareness (toward the soul) is in direct proportion to the degree that one lives and has outward awareness (toward the world). Maximum effectiveness is realized when increased intimacy with self, the knowing of self, is used in balance with outward attention.

For most people to experience and reflect beauty, joy, contentment, peace, and desire, it is necessary for them to live inwardly toward the core of self, increasing interaction, connectedness, and potentiality there. Bring awareness inward to increase significance in life.

The degree of **intimacy** is proportional to the degree of similarity and the degree of proximity. Optimum significance is attained when soul works in divine, direct, intimate, cooperative (loving) participation with all of life.

The Meaningfulness of Life: to live well and fully. 'Well' means to maintain a high degree of internal integrity (symmetry) of Self; to live a healthy and wholesome life. 'Fully' means to maintain a high degree of connectedness (continuity) between self and reality; to be fully present in life.

To truly acknowledge life is to expand from the motivations of "being comfortable in life" (driven by purpose or simple values of material acquisition) to the motivation to increase significance in life (driven by clarity, artistry, and creativity). This results in making choices on a day to day basis which are healthier and more enabling for all.

Health refers to the ability to choose and respond, rather than just the ability to function.

Having options, opportunities, and potentials (choice) is as important as goals, actualization, and fulfillment (consequence). 'Potentiality' is equally as important as 'reality'.

The most effective choice will always be the one made from a basis which is the most enabling of all other choices.

In that the deeper emotions are the more affecting ones, they are also the most enabling ones. Ultimately, love is more enabling of choice than any other emotion.

Choice made on the basis of any other emotion is less effective. Although making choice on the basis of anger may appear to be more satisfying in the short-term, such a choice is in the long-term far less effective at realizing anything truly significant. For example, choice made on the basis of skepticism or fear always results in insignificance; it is ultimately impractical.

Choices made on the basis of love are healthier, more nurturing, and more effective. Always choose from the basis of love. Always choose with an immediate awareness and consciousness of the manner in which the deepest essence of love and desire is reflected and connected to that choice.

Highly emotional events are those which involve the greatest values and desires; those which are believed to be of importance and significance. This is especially apparent when aspects of self are blocked, confused, and conflicted (where there is separation and discontinuity).

The degree to which emotion is apparent is in proportion to the degree of blockage, resistance, or de-coherence involved in value, significance, and purpose. The scale of emotion will match the scale at which these compositions are apparently in conflict.

Learn to be aware of emotions -- they are an indication and reminder of what is truly loved, valued, and desired. Strong emotions (rather than being a hindrance) are effective tools of change and consciousness. The emotions provide a clear path to knowing what one loves; a true knowledge of self.

Where there is strong fear, anger or frustration, one may also find great love, passion, and strength.

Healing

Mind negates absence, separation, discontinuity. Where there is conflict, disconnection, or discontinuity in the mind, there will be emotion and pain, drawing attention and awareness to the disconnection.

*Love is that which exists only when it moves;
Pain is that which exists only when it doesn't.*

Individually and culturally, always move attention and awareness into those areas which have pain and need to be healed. Otherwise, acute situations will be the result of persistently ignoring a chronic problem.

Healing involves a letting go of form and a return to feeling. Connection and integration will always create new potentials and choices. Attaching to a specific form of manifestation is to realize disappointment. To let go of attachment to outer form allows for an acceptance of inner feeling (inner attachment). When the channels of feeling are opened, love can flow outward again and manifest as new and different forms. In creation and manifestation, the resulting realized form will always be different than expected. Creation is cooperative and always involves more than self.

For example; To remain attached to only one specific form and to discard or reject all others is to suffer an obsession, and in this way, discontinuity and pain. Obsession is when the distribution of acceptance and awareness is not equi-tempered. The way to break the depression that accompanies obsession is to let go of the expected form of love in order to return to the essence and deep inner nature of the love that supported the emotion in the first place. The correction for obsession is not suppression, but extension. To focus on only one person or only one aspect of life -- and to include nothing else -- is a painful discontinuity: attention is uneven and in some places, absent. The lack of attention itself results in increased potentiality for painful surprises and experiences ("Everything is sudden to those who are blind").

To consider a continuity of self is to assert a wholeness to the self, the integrity of self; that there is no part of self that is disconnected from, or rejected by, another part of self. To say that one has continuity of self is to essentially be a healthy, whole integral being.

Example; Therapy is about helping the patient to know and accept all parts of self. An effective therapist enables the client to nurture and love themselves fully and in all aspects. This may require learning how to live well, and how to coordinate and balance all personal behaviors, beliefs, feelings, and attitudes. The primary job of the therapist is to get one to love, nurture, and accept all aspects of oneself into an integrated and healthy functioning whole.

Only when there is clarity and purity of mind, wholesomeness of life and self, does the gradual release of inhibition encourage joy.

It is in the action of inhibition, suppression, restriction, and cessation, a blockage of love, emotion, desire, feeling, attachment, significance, connectedness, and life, that one knows, and others will feel, pain and suffering. To reduce the pain and suffering caused by a conflict (a disconnection between various ideologies and beliefs), it is necessary to heal the connection; to integrate these ideologies and beliefs by recognizing, honoring, and enlivening each of them. Hold as sacred the root desires which give each ideology its basis and strength.

One's choices are maximally affirming and sacred when they involve all aspects of self and have continuity and connection to others (the world).

Peace is the result of nurturing and integrating the life of all beliefs. Any attempt to suppress, restrict, or inhibit love, ideals, beliefs and ideologies will cause pain and suffering, both for oneself and for all others that one touches.

All levels of self, self-thinking, and self-feeling, must be known, acknowledged, and accepted to make effective choices. Happiness cannot be sought; it is a state of being, one must remain receptive to it.

Whenever there is an asymmetry of value, a break or discontinuity between those parts of a whole which are valued and those which are not, there is an associated experience of pain. There are many examples:

The action of **labeling** something or someone is problematic to the exact degree that it encourages a tendency to focus on only one aspect of that which is labeled, rather than on the whole. To use a **name** in a manner which accepts and honors the whole is more ultimately meaningful.

Prejudice is a maintained discontinuity in the distribution of one's choices. It is an attempt to make choices beyond the boundary of self, as if to make choices for someone else. Prejudice is the choice to never choose again; to be forever insensitive to all experience, thought, and feeling. *Prejudice reflects a discontinuity in one's awareness of change and interchange.*

Selfishness is the failure to recognize and accommodate the needs of another when it could be done at little or no cost to oneself. It is both an ignorance of the possible benefits one's choices may have for another, and an unwillingness to correct that ignorance. Selfishness reflects the loss of insight for a win-win result for all involved. *Selfishness reflects a discontinuity in one's awareness of choice and potentiality.*

Cruelty refers to an act that reflects an absence of sensitivity for any one or any part of those who would be affected by those acts. One acts with cruelty when one has an absence of, or presumes to have an absence of, sensitivity to interaction and consciousness on the part of any other. *Cruelty reflects a discontinuity in one's awareness of actuality, cause, and consequence.*

To act with **grace** is to act with a distribution of awareness and sensitivity which matches the effects and consequences of one's actions and choices. When making choices, one must remain sensitive and aware of that which is not oneself (the shared significance of other people and the world), as much as one is aware of one's own needs, wants, and desires.

Ownership, Control and Influence

Ultimately, there is no control, there is only influence. Desire has no reason.

No form of control is absolute; all process has some aspect of a cooperative nature. It is fundamentally impossible to completely and/or absolutely control or constrain anything, in any domain, under any circumstances, ever. Nothing in the world can force or condition one to feel a certain way or to have a specific feeling with predictable and definite qualities.

Perception will influence expression; expression will influence perception. There is neither absolute dependence nor absolute independence; there is only interdependence (interaction). Ultimately only interaction is real.

Prejudice: When expression is ultimately/absolutely independent of perception.

Reaction: When expression is ultimately/absolutely dependent on perception (where reaction is mechanistic/deterministic).

Realism: When perception is ultimately/absolutely independent of expression.

Idealism: When perception is ultimately/absolutely dependent on expression.

All choice is cooperative. Choice can only be given, never taken. No other person's choices, nor any consensus belief system, can compel, force, or constrain anyone to choose or believe anything in particular.

Law of True Ownership: "None can take from you that which you truly own". If someone or something can take some thing, some property, or some quality away, even in principle, then it was never truly owned; it is not a part of one's unique Self.

*Those things which are not Truly Owned are not owned at all.
There can be no ownership of that which is external to oneself.*

Experience, time, and validity are truly owned. Choice is Truly Owned.

True ownership is not control. True ownership is not commercial.
One cannot take True Ownership, acquire it, give it away, or trade it for something else.
True Ownership is a statement of right. It cannot be legislated.
Only privileges can be legislated and traded commercially.

A **Right** refers to the potential to exercise any choice which is a direct enactment of the Law of True Ownership.

A **Privilege** refers to a/the potential to exercise a choice which requires the accommodation of another and which has been willingly granted by that other.

For choice to be choice, it must have consequences. A choice that has no effects, or whose effects can be completely undone, is not actually a choice at all; it is inherently an illusion.

One cannot choose to not have choice, as to voluntarily 'not choose' is also a choice. When "not choosing" has real consequences and effects, it too must necessarily be considered a choice.

Every choice creates and enables other choices. Choice in the past can never reduce the amount or degree of choice in the present. Choice cannot absolutely fix or limit other choice. Choice can only enable other choices. Choice always begets choice; it cannot take away the beingness of choice itself.

Choice *can* set the context of other choices. While this shift in context could be viewed as a partial limitation and constraint on other choices, it is a choice to view it in this manner -- a hidden choice that must also be considered as contributing to the total 'volume' of choice available to self in the present.

No other can make choices for oneself, or take one's choices completely away. Others may be able to influence one's choices; yet, they cannot determine them. One cannot determine, take away, or make choices for another. One must (and can only) make their own choices.

Pay attention to the difference between someone trying to influence which choice you make vs an attempt to make that choice for you. Others can attempt or try to take choice/freedom away from you by attempting to limit the range of options that you can choose from, or attempting to select for you which option is chosen, or even attempting to limit, negate, or change the possible outcomes/consequences of your choice.

Ultimately, one can never provide a final reason or logical basis for any given choice, and therefore, one should not be expected to -- that would be unreasonable.

No amount of external acceptance or validation will ever contribute to any degree of self-acceptance. To feel peace, one must accept oneself totally, fully, and unconditionally. This is the essence and initiation of health, strength, integrity, and spirituality.

For one's own choice to be free and truly self-determined, there must be an allowance for it to be truly without external influence and without reason.

Security and Serenity

All of life is valid. Self is always sovereign. The nature of the being of self is not and cannot ever be conditioned or constrained by anything or anyone.

*The validity of one's own life is intrinsic.
It is Truly Owned and cannot be diminished or taken away.*

Security is found in a potentiality to act, regardless of what could happen or has happened. The feeling of security and strength is found in one's awareness of their freedom of choice. The greatest security is in the potential to act, rather than in the prevention of possible acts and events. Real security, safety, integrity, strength, and health are found only in the Truth of one's ever-continuing ability to choose.

Inner personal security is not the same as protection. To attain absolute protection is to require absolute isolation; the loss of all connection. Absolute isolation can never be obtained, even in principle. Absolute protection requires the absence of all love and life, the loss of all value and significance. In that one cannot not choose, and in that the capability to choose cannot be taken away, one may always remain secure in choice.

Real security (the feeling that one will remain whole, strong, healthy, integral) is something that can only originate from inside the self. True security is intrinsic to self; it cannot be found in the world; it cannot be taken away. Personal security is absolute and truly owned. It cannot be provided by any other person or organization. External security is *always* illusionary; it has no value.

The focus and strength of choice is at a maximum where attention is at a maximum. A change in attention necessarily implies a change in apparent choices available to self.

Awareness of a feeling or thought changes it. Nothing which is internal to oneself -- and which remains in one's focused attention -- will remain unchanged. The maximum degree of choice and change is possible at the location of the focus of attention.

The feelings that one has are never causal or reasonable or logical; or just the result of only causal, logical, or reasonable processes.

To experience a change in feeling, one must fully experience the feeling. The degree that one's feelings change is directly proportional to the degree that one experiences them with clarity. Feelings change with our awareness and attention. Feelings that are given no attention (are suppressed or held back from one's experience of the present moment) do not change. They will remain constant until experienced fully at the level of self from which they arise.

One can only make choices in the present. One cannot choose in the past or in the future. In that the overwhelming majority of one's being is here and now, so also are one's choices most effective here and now. Focus in the present concentrates the effectiveness of choices.

Each choice is unique unto itself and can only be made once.

Limitation and Freedom

Limitation and freedom always occur together; they are inseparable. Never does a freedom occur without a limitation, and never does a limitation occur without a freedom. In being, any realization of either of the concepts of freedom and limitation implies the complete realization of the other.

Actually, every instance of limitation implies at least two distinct categories of freedom, and every instance of freedom implies at least two distinct kinds of limitation.

All choice involves both freedom and limitation. Both are necessary for life.

To be free is to be aware of potentiality and choice. Limitation is the necessary actuality and consequence of having made a choice.

Consider for example, the action of discipline. Accepting a practice of discipline (a limitation) eventually results in a freedom to achieve optimal self expression.

One cannot have freedom; one can only give freedom.
One does not own love or freedom; one may only participate in its flow and unboundedness.

The freedom of the self to realize potential is directly related to the internal coherency, consistency, and continuity of that self. Where self is internally divided, there is much less freedom of choice.

The degree of individual freedom in a society increases dramatically in proportion to the degree of cooperation among individuals. A society or culture is strong to the degree that *everyone* is allowed to live creatively and live together.

A maximum of both acceptance and expression, unity and diversity, is necessary for a nation (society, tradition, religion, culture) to be strong. Diversity must be accepted and unity must be expressed. The strength of a nation is known as much through its flexibility and tolerance as through its commitments and follow-through.

To have an expression of unity there must be an acceptance of diversity. To have an acceptance of diversity there must be an expression of unity. Diversity, separateness, limitation, the unknown, and forgetfulness are all to be valued as much as singularity, oneness, freedom, limitlessness, and knowing.

Action, Reaction, Response

Action, reaction, and response are distinct, yet inseparable. There is never a response that does not have some aspect of action and reaction. There is never an action or reaction that does not have some aspect of response.

The **React/Response Ratio**: A measure of the degree of effort invested relative to the degree of consequence resulting from that effort. It is the ratio of the degree to which something has an affective nature, a potentiality to create change, as considered in relation to the degree to which there results in effective outcome, the actuality of change. It refers to the specific degree of apparent amplification (increase) or attenuation (diminishment) in the energy relationship between self and world. It is the ratio between action (choice) and reaction (causality).

Affect: The degree of choice or effort (influence or personal/subjective energy invested) in the expressions of the self.

Effect: The degree of outcome, consequence, or impact of a self expression.

Where the react/response ratio is exactly zero (all effort and no result), there is only unconsciousness (total insensitivity). Where the react/response ratio is infinite (all reaction and no response), there is only prejudice (pre-judgment, also a form of unconsciousness). Consciousness can only be maintained when the ratios of action, reaction, and response are near one-to-one.

The ultimate realization of Action is always going to be Change. The ultimate realization of Reaction is always going to be Causality. The ultimate realization of Response is always going to be Choice.

Ethics (continuity) is best realized when the react/response ratio is near to unity (1 to 1). The greatest levels of effectiveness are attained when there is a balance between affect and effect. The maximum effectiveness (world health) is obtained when the wisdom with which one chooses is equal to the degree of consequence associated with that choice.

With regard to self and world, a strong dynamic balance between affect and effect is the ideal. The degree to which this ideal holds is in proportion to the proximity and intensity of the interaction between self and world. To have consistently and significantly more affect than effect is to experience frustration and pain. To have significantly more effect than affect is to be tyrannical, to experience paranoia, and/or to inflict pain.

To be **responsible** as the being of oneself, one must choose and respond (act), rather than to react and reject (to be in false judgment). To be responsible is to sit in consciousness rather than merely in conscience.

Significance

Meaning, purpose, and value are distinct, inseparable, and non-interchangeable. To truly have any one of these, all three must be present.

Purpose is a measure of external potentiality. Purpose is a reflection of want.
Value is a measure of internal potentiality. Value is a reflection of need.
Meaning is a measure of the potentiality between things. It is the basis of desire.

Significance (meaning) is more basic than both value and purpose. Everything has significance. There is never an absence of significance. Every perception and expression cannot not have some degree of meaningfulness. All perceptions and expressions have some degree of purposefulness and value.

There is no single purpose or any single value for all of life, all of consciousness, all of beingness, in any world or domain. The purpose, value, and significance of each life, consciousness, and being, is always plural. No eventuality or domain is ever without -- or ever has just one -- purpose, value, or meaning.

Perception, experience, and causality are considered in terms of value. Expression, creativity and choice are considered in terms of purpose. There is no expression that is without purpose. There is no perception (experience) that is without value. All experiences have equal value. All expressions have unequal purpose.

Value is always described, from the inside toward the outside. Purpose is always prescribed, from the outside toward the inside. Purpose, value, and meaning are explicit and objective. Want, need, and desire are implicit and subjective.

The nature of purpose is from top to bottom, largest to smallest, and from without to within. The nature of value is from bottom to top, smallest to largest, and from within to without.

Potentialities always have value. Actualities always have purpose.

The value of a something is proportional to the potentials to which it could be applied (subjectively evaluated). The purpose of a something is proportional to the actual uses for which it has been applied (its objective actuality).

In absolute essence, all values are equal. Each value mutually supports every other value on the same level of being. No single value excludes or precludes any other. All values coexist and support all other values. Only by having all values may one have any values.

In contrast, all purposes are absolutely unequal to all other purposes. Each purpose on each level of being precludes all others on that same level of being. Purposes on one level of being may be component parts of those on other levels, implementing them. Only one purpose may be held at a time. Purposes will always contain or exclude other purposes.

Meaning, in contrast with value and purpose, cannot be held either by self or other. Meaning is always (and only) in between both self and other. Meaning is neither given nor taken, neither shared nor not shared. Meaning *is* -- and has being -- at all scales, from the smallest to the ultimate (the All).

Purpose is individual. Evolution is universal. Evolution is not progress.
Evolution is the purpose of life to become more alive.

To consider progress is to assume purpose. What may be the purposes of one may not always be the purposes of another. Progress to one may be regress to another.

To over emphasize purpose, function, and work is to risk losing one's values, self worth and feeling of the significance of life, the meaning of one's own and the value of all others.

Meaning, meaningfulness, and significance are cooperative. Ultimately, both purpose and value also cooperative. Purposes, which on the surface appear to be contradictory, are at a deeper level seen to be consonant (are seen as a truthful reflection of desire).

Nothing is purely dynamic or perfectly static.
Nothing is purely chaotic or is perfectly logical.
Nothing is perfectly random or absolutely deterministic.
Nothing is purely chosen or purely causal.

The significance of something, any life, event or action is present tense; it is not defined by the past or by its eventual future. Significance in the present defines the meaning of the past, and the meaningfulness of the future. Meaningfulness defines both value and purpose.

To say that something has had value in the past, or to say that something will have purpose in the future, is only to know significance in the present; neither more nor less. The meaningfulness of an event, a self, a life, is independent of its temporality.

Significance is scale, position, and direction invariant.

It does not matter what size, what duration, how permanent or impermanent something may be, its significance will be the same. Significance does not depend on large and small, high or low, near or far; it applies at all levels of being equally. The significance of a life does not depend on where one lives, who or what one knows, what one has or what one does. Significance is innate, independent of all state and function, worth and means.

A symbol (work of art, event, the life of a self, subjective expression, etc.) has *value*, connotation, potentiality and strength in proportion to the number of interdomain relationships that describe it. (Intradomain refers to relationships within a domain. Interdomain refers to relationships between domains.)

A symbol (life, etc.) has *purpose*, denotation, actuality, and power in proportion to the number of intradomain relationships that define it.

A symbol (life, etc.) has *meaning* and significance in proportion to the product of the number and the degree of the interdomain and intradomain relations in which that symbol is so involved.

The degree of the perfection of value is the product of the degree to which one values all things, and the degree to which one values all things equally.

The perfection of purpose increases with depth, coherency and the degree to which it is manifested (expressed) through other purposes and actions, with clarity, purity, and accuracy.

The degree to which one realizes meaning and significance in life is in proportion to the product of the degree of one's perfection of value (perception/experience) and the degree of one's perfection of purpose (expression/creativity).

Life is increased and made greater when always seeking to be creative and joyful (artistic). Life diminishes and becomes less when always trying to make life easy and comfortable (practical).

Life is significant and meaningful more than it is purposeful or valued. The purpose and value of one's life will always find its basis in the meaningfulness of one's life.

The significance of a single life can only be known by its connections to other lives. The significance of a single world can be known only by its connection to other worlds. To know the meaning of any existence (any single life), one must know the meaning of many existences (many lives, worlds, and domains).

The strongest, most affirming, and sustaining value is the acceptance of diversity in all creativity and experience. The deepest purpose, taking precedence over all others, is the desire to realize the maximum possible creativity and experience. The degree of significance in life increases dramatically when approaching the absolute limits of the perfection of value and purpose.

All experiences and creations are valid, valued, and valuable.
No one experience or creation is any less or any more valid than any other.
Experiences and creations of lesser intensity are as valid as experiences of greater intensity.

There is no life without significance, and there is no significance that is not alive.
Life and meaningfulness are intrinsic to one another; they are never separate.

Life **IS** its own purpose, value, and meaning. All that is life, all that is alive, is valued and sacred. The purpose, meaning, and value of all life is to live, to live well and fully, on all levels of being and in all worlds.

Equanimity

Ultimately, all of consciousness in all times and places and in all worlds has the same absolute intent: to maximize the degree of both experience and creativity. This is the *reality* of love: the actuality of potentiality *and* the potentiality of all actuality.

All the universe values all experiences and creations equally; it has no favorites. Everything is intrinsically significant. Experience/creation cannot not be meaningful, valuable, and purposeful. All creativity, all life, is valued and significant *as being* creative and alive.

This applies to each experience, each creation, and each type of experience and creation. An accidental experience regarded as 'undesirable' or painful is equally valued by "the all" as the chosen experience of one's desire.

To negate the significance and value of *any* life is to negate the significance of all life.
Either everything (at all scales of being, in all worlds, at all times) is sacred, or nothing is.

*Heaven opens to all who know all is sacred.
Hell imprisons all who think nothing is sacred.*

All interactions, perceptions, and expressions are inherently unique. No interaction can replace, or take the place of, any other. No experience can replace any other experience. All experiences and all expressions (interactions, communications, and integrations) are equally valued.

A great degree of experience, creativity, or intimacy in one domain, does not and cannot, replace experience, creativity or intimacy in any other domain. No amount of interaction, existence, and creation in any one world can replace any amount of interaction, existence, and creation in any other world.

No amount of objective causality will replace any amount of subjective experience.
No amount of subjective choice will replace any amount of objective expression.
They are of equal value.

No degree of knowing is equivalent to any degree of understanding.
No degree of understanding is equivalent to any degree of knowing.
Understanding cannot replace or create knowing.
Knowing cannot replace or create understanding.

Cultures and religions can be roughly divided into three categories depending on emphasis of the central majority value system:

Cultures/religions with an omniscient focus place the highest value on objectivity and understanding. They are ultimately values of *wisdom and intelligence*. (Examples; Science, Technology, Materialism, Capitalism).

Cultures/religions with a transcendent focus place the highest value on the hereafter and otherworldly. They are ultimately values of *mysticism and spirituality*. (Examples; Christianity, Buddhism, other organized and institutionalized religions).

Cultures/religions with an immanent focus place the highest value on the here and now, life and living in the present. They are ultimately values of *nature and community*. (Examples; Gaia or Earth consciousness, Paganism, tribalism).

All three values are needed and are mutually supporting and affirming. Holding any one value over the other two results in imbalance and suffering. Maximum effectiveness occurs when there is a balance among these three primary value systems.

Where there is an excess of a transcendent emphasis in a culture, there is a tendency to justify the means in terms of the ends. This leads to much unnecessary worldly suffering, cruelty, strife, and war.

Where there is an excess of an omniscient emphasis in a culture, there is a tendency to invalidate the meaningfulness and significance of life (that which does not sustain life is not itself sustained). This can result in an (over) emphasis on separation, isolation (man from nature), and valuing the mundane over the sacred.

Where there is an excess of an immanent emphasis in a culture, there is a tendency towards excessive individuality, lack of vision, and over-consumption (a realization of cancer).

Ensure that no single domain can account for, or is the source of, all of ones experience.

Values can be shared by all. It is possible and reasonable to value everything; to consider all life and all aspects of life as sacred. Effectiveness, meaningfulness, and life is best realized when regarding All as sacred and significant.

Ultimately, others will hold the same values as oneself. The same deepest values underlie all. It is not reasonable, however, to believe that others will hold the same *purposes* as oneself. It would be very unlikely, except at very deep layers of soul.

Values are realized, clear, and pure in proportion to the degree to which they are specific, known, and local to self. The greater the clarity and the more positive the statement of value, the more meaningful and rapid its resolution in manifestation.

To realize and implement "I love everything" (as a value) is vague, difficult, and ambiguous.
To enumerate one's values in detail is to allow for more immediate and direct realization.

Regardless of the value involved, one cannot enforce or impress any value on another. There are no necessary value conflicts. All values can be upheld and co-exist without conflict. True sacredness will never diminish other sacredness.

It is never an error to value more or to value too much. There can only be the mistake (the sin) of valuing too little. Each value enables one to have more (and other) values.

All that can be asked is for one to value other things in addition to what they already value.

There can only be disagreement about purposes, not about values. Purposes can be coordinated, but are infrequently shared. One cannot expect or convince others to hold the same purposes as oneself.

If one were engaged in an argument about one's values, then that argument is fundamentally irresolvable and shall be dropped without conclusion. While purposes can be considered in terms of logic, value is not logical, and thus, cannot be corrected. Resolution of misunderstandings of this type occur most naturally with the gradual adoption of all the values held by the other; those values not yet known to the self.

*It is ineffective to ask one to value something less;
it is always more effective to ask one to value more.*

Value is realized in equality. To live a value is to fully accept the being of other (all other, another, and the world). Values cannot transcend themselves.

The content of all worlds is imperfect and temporary. The content and inner nature of all of self is perfect and eternal (timeless). The imperfect and the temporary are as important and as valuable as the perfect and the eternal.

Value is unbounded and formless; it cannot be constrained or modified by anything which exists. One cannot not have values. Value IS, and cannot not be.

Values are always defined positively. Complete non-acceptance is impossible. Complete isolation of self is impossible. To express a value is to assert a willingness of acceptance.

To be truly and vibrantly alive, some element of wildness (some absence of conditioning, constraint, and control) is necessary. When and where wildness ceases, the most vital and dynamic aspect of life and creation also dies.

Spirituality and Religion

Spirituality and religion are distinct ideas and practices:

Spirituality is about how one perceives and experiences, how one accepts and integrates those perceptions and experiences into oneself. It is about how one integrates life's events, reflects upon them and learns from them. Spirituality is a philosophy about the role that a reality (a world) plays within oneself.

Religion is about how one expresses with others for the common good, the greater social and natural environment in which one lives. It is about one's expressions and connections, choices, and how one integrates their choices into the community in which one lives. Religion is a philosophy about the role one plays in a world and about how that world accepts each self.

*Spirituality relates to the integration of a world into oneself.
Religion relates to the integration of oneself into a world.*

The essential difference between them, is that spirituality is a perceptive and subjective process; whereas religion is an expressive and objective process. Subjective experience is private, where objective expression is public.

The measure of one's spirituality is defined in terms of the skill and ability to integrate personal experiences of the world into one's self. The depth of one's spiritual nature is proportional to the capacity and ability to accept and integrate all experience and all aspects of one's own inner nature. The greater the diversity and range of intensity that one can accept while still maintaining an integrity of self, the greater the level and quality of one's spirituality.

The measure of one's religious nature is defined in terms of the skill and ability to integrate one's expressions into the community and world in which one lives and acts. The depth of one's religious nature is proportional to the capacity and ability to integrate personal expressions and choices into the world, the community, and the environment. The greater the diversity of intensities of expression and creativity one can express while maintaining the integrity and wholeness of the world (the environment and community in which one lives), the greater the level and quality of one's religion.

Spirituality is primarily an inner, perceptive, and personal process. It is always private and is unremarked and unrecognized within culture and society. Religion is primarily an external, expressive, and public process. Each religion at least partially public and is recognized by at least one culture or society.

One feels and knows one's spirituality. One describes, defines, understands, and expresses one's religion. Spirituality is about being; religion is about doing. The nature of spirituality persists, even though it cannot be created. All religions are created.

Spirituality is known everywhere by everyone, yet is identified nowhere and by no one.

Religion is understood by no one, yet is identified by everyone.

Spirituality is always discovered and is never created or manufactured.

Religion is always created and is never found or discovered.

Spirituality is always discovered within the self and never in the world.

Religion is always created within the world and never in the self.

Spirituality is neither human nor inhuman. Religion must be either human or inhuman.

Spirituality always refers to the inner self and has no name; whereas religion always refers to what is outside self and is always named. It is possible for one to join a religion, yet one cannot 'join' a spirituality. Spirituality has no name. Only religions have names. A named philosophy is a religion. If a philosophy (way of life) has neither name nor a socially recognized form, it is, in essence, spiritual.

Spirituality does not require a commitment to anything external to oneself. Spirituality requires no actions and no demonstrations, for it is the process of one's being. A religion is defined by its actions, devotions, and worship, and requires commitment of oneself to another. Spirituality is defined in terms of one's being, it is only by one's actions that one is religious.

Even though one can appear and act in any number of ways, one cannot be other than oneself. For each self, there are many religions. For each self, there is only one spirituality.

There is no source for spirituality. Spirituality is not something that one obtains or attains. Spirituality has no source and no destination and it can neither be created nor destroyed. Spirituality only has beingness.

There can be no spirituality without a self (soul) and there is no self that is not to some degree spiritual. There can be no world without a religion, and there is no religion that is not bound to a world.

Some type of spirituality is a basic and intrinsic part of everyone's life. In that life cannot be lived without perception or experience, and the implicit integration of these into self, one also cannot not be to some degree spiritual. In that life cannot be lived without expression, choice, and creativity, and at least the implicit integration of these into world, one also cannot not be to some degree religious. In that there is a social need for unity on the part of all peoples, there is some aspect of religion in everyone's life.

The very beingness of self begets a beingness of spirituality. The very beingness of a world begets the beingness of a religion. Each is of nature.

Religion begins with one's desire to express an inner felt spirituality. All great religions begin with one's own life. Religion need not be external, remote, impersonal, abstract, or absolute. One's home, the natural world on this planet, is where religion and life is.

Simplicity and Clarity

The concepts of simplicity and clarity are distinct, even though they may often appear in the same context.

For an example of how the concept of simplicity is distinct from clarity, and of how clarity can be more valued than simplicity, consider a sphere of pure, black coal as compared to a large, multi-faceted diamond. The sphere of black coal represents one of the simplest physical objects. In contrast, the diamond represents a clear and complex physical object.

The simple sphere of coal will not allow light to pass through it, for it is not transparent. Despite the complexity of the diamond, it does pass light. In this way, one can see that the ability to transmit light (a metaphor for understanding) is not dependent on complexity or on the materials used, for both coal and diamonds are made of just carbon. The beauty of the diamond, its prisms and sprinkles of light, depends on a complex detailed technology of careful faceting. Light, which typically represents love and spirituality in symbolic terms, is made beautiful by the clarity, and to some extent the complexity, of the diamond. Simplicity cannot therefore, be the one and only consideration of philosophy, spirituality, or enlightenment.

In the practice of spirituality, philosophy, and art, clarity, not simplicity, is the more essential value. To speak, write, and live with elegance and grace is not to be demonstrably simple, as much as it is to be profoundly clear.

By emphasizing and valuing clarity, one is enabled to value diversity and complexity. Spirituality is about acceptance of life, which includes acceptance of its inherent diversity and complexity.

Clarity is distinct from simplicity. An emphasis on simplicity is *not* central to the realization of spirituality and enlightenment. The practices of simplicity, such as abstinence, asceticism, and minimalism, are means to an end: the realization of true clarity. The desire and practice of "spiritual simplicity" must always be grounded and return to an underlying desire for clarity. True clarity, particularly regarding the meaningfulness of life, can always be obtained in more than one way.

The process of evolution -- the basis of diversity in life and love -- requires one to accept that life will be complex. An overzealous attempt to 'simplify' life is unnatural, it can only result in suffering and death.

There are many examples of why complexity must be accepted in conjunction with simplicity. Relationships with loved ones are richer to the degree that they involve many different aspects of our lives. The web of nature is beautiful and alive because of its complex diversity. Ecology is healthy and vibrant in proportion to the degree that the web of life is rich and wild. One's own body -- a marvel of personal biology, ecology, and chemistry -- is vastly complex.

For every way in which something is simple, there are always at least two ways in which it is complex. Yet it is also true that for every aspect of complexity, there are always at least two ways in which it can be simple.

Simplicity itself is not always so simple. In an effort to make one aspect of something more simple, a price is often paid in making other aspects more complex. True complexity, rather than ever being "reduced to simplicity", is often merely displaced and ignored; momentarily forgotten by being put in some box regarded as unimportant. Such misconceptions result in living with needless suffering.

To be clear is to allow creation. The ability to realize creation and creativity increases with one's clarity and transparency; a form of silence, emptiness, and potentiality.

Events of greater degrees of synthesis and complexity have stronger aspects of creation/creativity. Evolution only happens where there is complexity and where that complexity increases.

Learning occurs when there is an increase in the meaningfulness of a perception.

Evolution occurs when there is an increase in the meaningfulness of life.

Clarity is necessary to maintain an open mind and to perceive deep truths. An effective person will frequently examine implicit, hidden assumptions and expectations. When one releases expectations, it often becomes possible to gain new and valuable insights.

To be effective, proceed with an emphasis on clarity of essence. Do not submit to the desire or drive for simplicity of appearance. Creativity will be lost when there is an over emphasis on simplicity rather than on essence.

The Path of Right Action

1 It is always possible to choose in a manner that is win-win for all involved, including oneself, at all levels of being (for all scales and aspects of consciousness from the smallest to the ultimate). It is always worthwhile to search for the best possible choice. There is never a circumstance in which it is not possible to choose in a win-win manner.

2 A win-win choice applied to one situation is adjacent to the win-win choice for each succeeding situation. Choosing the best choice always enables one to continue to choose well. Win-win choices are mutually self-supporting. As such, optimal choices are contiguous with one another, forming the *path* of right actions. The "path" is the perfect possible sequence of one's own personal and unique choices.

3 The degree to which it seems that one cannot make choices to the maximal benefit of all involved, including oneself, at all levels of being, is the measure of one's deviation from the path of right action. In circumstances where it *seems* that a situation requires a win-lose choice, the selection of the best choice for all involved will be the one leading in the direction of the path of right action, allowing eventual convergence with one's own, personal, absolute path.

The path of right action is a realization of the self-supporting dynamics of effective choice. Once on this path, one lives in dynamic balance: participating, creating, and experiencing; one acts with a clarity which is both internal and external.

A total continuity of the subjective always parallels a total symmetry of the objective. To enact choice with a total alignment and agreement of feeling, in all aspects and on all levels of self, is to create an outcome which is in alignment and agreement with, and beneficial to, all forms and beings (life) in the world.

With clarity one can act with a totality of clear conscience, without guilt or any internal hindrance (fears) of any kind. Within the discipline of the path (a seeming limitation), a true freedom of life is found.

*There is no one single right path of action for all individuals.
There is only the unique right path for oneself.*

One cannot perceive, walk, or determine what the path of right action is for another, or on behalf of another. One can only attempt to perceive and walk (choose) one's own path of right action through life.

Confusing one's own path with that of any others will result in misunderstanding, dis-ease, illusion, dis-illusion, conflict, and pain. A clear knowledge and continued practice of one's own path results in understanding, ease of life, creativity, synchronicity, and joy. To practice one's path is to be in an alignment with all of life.

The more one acts ethically, the more one is enabled to act ethically in the future, and the easier and more natural the pattern of one's life.

Faith

All of choice is uncertain; one can never know all the consequences resulting from one's least action.

Reason: The use of a fullness and completeness (accuracy) of thinking as the primary basis of one's choices.

Faith: The use of a fullness and completeness (precision) of feeling as the primary basis of one's choices.

Faith and reason are not in opposition; they are mutually reflective, complementary aspects of a deeper whole. To have faith is to embrace the mythic, rather than to be rejecting the factual.

Faith has no reason of its own; yet all reason implies faith.
Reason has no faith of its own; yet all faith implies reason.

Faith cannot be constructed or possessed. Faith is never finite.

Faith is not a commodity, and yet it is necessary to all commerce and creativity.

Faith is an acceptance of potentiality and creativity, rather than an ignorance of reality and actuality.

The meaning of the term 'acceptance' is not the same as "to give up one's own choice". Acceptance and choice are distinct concepts. Choice is not acceptance. Acceptance is not choice, and ultimately not a choice (eventually, everyone must accept at least something). Acceptance is about perception, the integration of perceptions into self -- it is a spiritual concept. In contrast, choice is about expression -- something which always has ethical, political, or religious implications. Both are necessary in life.

Reason can provide only a partial basis for effective (ethical) choice. It is also necessary to make a careful, deep, and honest evaluation of the totality of one's feelings.

When one is whole, healthy, knows fully and with clarity, and accepts unreservedly the totality of one's feelings and thoughts on all levels of being, the choices one makes in accordance with those feelings and thoughts will be at once wholly ethical and wholly effective.

Both thought and feeling, truth and faith, are to be applied together in fullness to attain efficient, effective ethical choices that are consistent with one's personal Path of Right Action.

No effective choice can be made only on the basis of reason or faith alone. All natural choices involve some elements of reason and some elements of faith. These work best when used in an intimate mixture with one another, especially *after* validating that each can stand completely on its own without the other. To have Faith is not to have certainty; it is to allow Trust.

All that is without choice, change, and consequence is illusion.
Only that which is at once choice, change, and causality is **real**.

To have faith in a world (universe) is to have wisdom, knowledge, peacefulness, and insight.
To have faith in oneself is to have security, skill, creativity, and playfulness.

Faith is not blind; it is *vision wide open*.