

The Framework of Change

A Model of Meaning and a Free Life

Authored by: Michael Chock

Edited by: Nathan Leibowitz

Contents

Contents	1
Prologue:	4
Chapter 1: Preparing for the journey	8
Finding Meaning	8
Freeing Life	13
The Positive Path to Contentment	18
Life is energy, not all energy is life	25
Meaning is change, not all change has meaning	29
Living leaves sediment	35
Chapter 2: Limits of a limited life	37
The basic model of our outer selves	37
Physical change through interaction	43
Social change through connections	58
Chapter 3: A positive path	66
Positive life, positive meaning	66
Leading Physical Change with Social Energy (Emotion)	74
Leading Personal (Mental) Change with Physical Energy (Effort)	81
Leading Social Change with Mental Energy (Thought)	87
Chapter 4: Finding our Drive and Direction	93
Driving Meaning, Directing Life	94
Circle of inner contentment	98
Conscience from Empathy	104
Collaboration from Motivation	108
Perception from Experience	112
Chapter 5: Growing our Potential for Change	117
Direction of Life, Positive Inner Meaning	117
Motivation from Emotion, Interaction through Cooperation	121
Against the Flow, Effort into Emotion	133
Experience from Effort, Information through Perspective	144
Against the Flow - Thought into Effort	156
Conscience from Thought, Emotion from Empathy	167
Against the Flow, Emotion into Thought	178
Chapter 6: Finding Our Meaning	190
Completing the Circle	190
The Full Physical Circle - Think, Connect, Act	198
The Full Mental Circle - Feel, Interact, Inform	208

The Full Social Circle - Interact, Think, Connect	218
Chapter 7: Freeing Our Life	229
Opening the Channels	230
Freeing our Physical Life with Security	233
Freeing our Mental Life with Stability	237
Freeing our Social Life with Trust	240
Opening the Channels Summary	244
Chapter 8: Breaking our Limits	245
Blocking the Flow of Energy	246
Contentment Without Balanced Aspects	254
Covering Weakness, Multiplying Strengths	266
Strengths and Weaknesses of the Soul	270
Chapter 9: Avoiding the Traps	273
Aspect Manipulation - The appropriation of our meaning	274
Forcing Stability Through Physical Manipulation	278
Forcing Trust Through Mental Manipulation	285
Forcing Security Through Social Manipulation	292
Chapter 10: Beyond the Physical	299
Resonance, the power of many	300
Finding Faith	302
Final Words	303
After Words	305
How to apply	306
How to apply to your personal life	307
How to apply to your Work life	310
How to apply to your Social life	313
Additional Thoughts	315
Note to the Lonely	315
Transcendence Through the Mundane	315
The Bucket Metaphor	317
A Moment on Time	317
Evaluation of the Evolution of Humankind	319
The Hypocrisy of Unquestioning Theology	322
Semantics	323
Energy Musings	325
Productivity and Contentment	326

Prologue:

This book does not give you a path through life, it is a tool that helps you to manage the changes you make on the path you are already on. This book is not here to impose external “universal guides” but it is rather simply revealing the model of change that already exists. By seeing the model as a complete whole, it becomes apparent that the effect of our lives is largely determined by our approach to the changes we make and not our goals alone.

In these boxes we will be drawing from philosophy, sociology, ecology and theology. These ideologies are basically focused investigations on specific areas of change. Ecology is the study of our effect on the world. Philosophy is the study of our effect on ourselves. Sociology is the study of our effect on each other. Theology is the study of our effect on something beyond us. While each ideology focuses on a specific aspect of who we are, they overlap into each other as each one tries to come to terms with the fundamental framework without acknowledging it.

You can think of the framework like bread. Bread takes 3 ingredients, water, flour and yeast. While people have different cultural, personal, scientific or even emotional elements that they may add and argue, just like ideologies, the fundamental parts and approach to change those things into something meaningful, remains the same.

Major ideologies all overlap into a fundamental framework of change because there is a fundamental framework behind change.

We will explore how all the understood and accepted paths to living better, when explored together, frees our life in a way no single ideology can, so we can have the impact we are led to make. There is much material that can't be included, the history of humanity won't fit into these pages. There is much material that won't include, as what is beyond human understanding is a journey on its own.

There are three key ideas that this book presents.

1. We can model the ways we create change into 3 “physical” aspects and the drivers behind change into 3 “spiritual” aspects. Every major ideology is already self organized within this “Framework of Change”.
2. Each ideology describes a “right” way to live. These “right” ways to live overlap into a “right” approach to change within the framework, in a way that has an overwhelming positive effect (Finding Meaning).
3. There are things that naturally occur that hold us back from personal growth along our path and the “right” way to live helps us overcome these. While ideologies may have different ideas of the origin of what holds us back, they share the same approach.

Our goal is to describe this fundamental framework of change. How the “right” approach emerges naturally from the relationships between physical interaction, sensory information, and social connections—elements inherent to human experience and more importantly, every form of organization capable of independent change. Finally, when you understand the model of change, you will be empowered to create the change you desire in pursuit of the truths you hold most important.

While life has many truths not found in this book, its purpose is not to reveal anything extraordinary. Its purpose is to reveal the mundane. To help us easily navigate the everyday, to clear the road so the greater truths are easier to reach. To live in contentment with the everyday, so we can free our life and find our meaning.

I never liked stories that reveal the ending before they start. But here I find myself doing the very thing that annoys me so much, telling readers how I have managed to reach a point of contentment and meaning in my life *before* taking them along my personal journey full of loss, redemption, adventure, and risk to life and limb. It's because the story of my life is not the point of this book, but just like in everyone's lives, the framework is an integral part of who and what I lived for and the search to create the change in the world that I wanted to represent my life. While the search for meaning and freeing life are in the journey, the ending has always been contentment. The point of contentment does not mean everything happens the way you want, contentment is rather the point of your life that you have both a goal and the tools to reach what you need in pursuit of that goal. The moments where you know your meaning and your life is free to create that meaning. There are many names for this realization, finding your true name, your spirit guide, your higher calling, enlightenment. Looking at life without finding this realization, the suffering can feel pointless, so I share the end before the beginning so the point behind the struggles becomes clear to those who have yet to reach it.

There are many theologies and philosophies out there, telling you that the key to contentment and meaning is found by focusing on their approach to change a specific aspect of who you are. Life, experience and an open perspective has led me to understand that contentment and meaning is only found in taking the proper approach to **every** aspect of who you are. Taking this approach to true contentment, we will find meaning and free our life.

What the overlap in ideologies tells us is that instead of one approach being right, that every approach is right, at least in part. Unfortunately everyone is so focused on fighting to be more right, that countless practices and rituals have been built over these ideas until the truths within have become nearly impossible to find. This all means that the key to contentment is not only found in pursuing your personal path but expanding your personal path until it covers all aspects of your physical and spiritual life.

In this book I will strip away all the dogma and marketing, get straight to the point of exactly how our approach to our actions change the outcome, how our approach affects our contentment and meaning. What this book will give you is the fundamental framework of change, so you can find out for yourself what is missing along your path to freeing life and finding meaning.

~

The book is written like a conversation, like we are sitting together sharing our lives. While I can't hear what you are adding to the conversation, know that I can empathize with you. We are connected by our shared stories, similar struggles and desire to be something greater. I see you, just as much as reading this will help you know me.

You won't understand everything in this book. Many things in life, like losing a loved one or childbirth, can't be understood unless you have experienced them for yourself. Don't worry if you don't understand everything now. As you live life you will grow your experiences, both the good and bad, and during those experiences the record of my journey will be here for you when you need it the most.

Don't struggle too much with the exact words being used. The same word can mean different things for different people just as much as different words mean the same thing. It's not words themselves that have an impact, it is the ideas behind the sounds that convey meaning. Only by approaching this book with curiosity and a desire to grow will you get anything out of the words on the pages.

So, while this book is written from my walk through life, the book is not about my journey. It is about yours – and the next step is now just beginning.

Chapter 1: Preparing for the journey

Finding Meaning

Meaning is the effect that the subject has on what's around and what significance that effect conveys. While significance is the relative value something holds and effect is the result of an action or event.

In other words, **meaning is the subjective value created by our actions.**

This is where many people start overthinking meaning, because the word "value" has mainly been used to only define the positive effect we have to those with the most resources.

Ecology tends to see meaning as what our significance is to the world around us. What the effect of our existence has on the physical world around us, what our life means to the continuation of life on earth.

- What lasting physical value do our lives create?

Philosophy tends to see meaning as what our significance is to ourselves. What the effect of our existence has had upon ourselves. While this is self centered it is not selfish, all value we create comes from us in some way, for us to control what our lives mean we must control ourselves.

- What value do we create within ourselves?

Sociology tends to see meaning as what our significance is to each other. What effect we have upon our connections and what effect they have on us.

- What value do our lives have to those around us?

Theology is a little different. It tends to see meaning as what our significance is to something greater or who we are as a whole. What the effect of our life has together, as the combined human race or in the scope of the human race.

- What value do we add to the greater value of humanity?

Many will tell you that a single approach to meaning is correct, but that is not true. Every action in one area has an effect in the others. That means even if you are not looking at the meaning your life creates in these other areas, that your life is always creating or taking away value from the world, yourself, others or humanity as a whole.

I am on the edge of creating something bigger than myself, not just with this book but with the possibility of my wildest dreams coming true. The possibility of creating a way to live that has real meaning, not just for me, but for anyone who wants to live a life that gives more than it takes.

This is my dream. This has always been my dream. But, during the heartbreaking life that has been given, I never imagined that dreams were meant for me. My life has never felt free.

Most of my life has felt like it has been its own ghost haunting me, as if the world had rejected everything about who I was and wished to be, before it gave me a chance to live. It took me until recently to understand that the meaning I wanted to create was not one the world wanted to accept. Who and what I wanted to live for, is not supported by society.

You may have already realized that the majority of our society is built to be a gamble that rewards those who take the most. As if we never stopped trying to colonize the world, never stopped claiming what we can as our own and destroying what we can't claim. It's a war of exploitation where the countries have been replaced with corporations, like every war, even the winners lose. I wanted nothing to do with that part of society where even those that take the most, only leave a pile of resources to be fought over by a world that has less than when they entered. I wanted my meaning to be positive not only for others, but for myself, the world and for humanity as a whole.

The world wasn't rejecting me; I'm not the victim. Rather, I was rejecting being part of a society designed to exploit and be exploited. There is nothing wrong with not finding your place in a group that you do not agree with. Refusing to go along with whatever is easy is the mark of someone with the potential for something greater.

In the search for meaning, it is incredible how it is so easy to dismiss the giants of the past era, but then turn right around and try to be the giants of our era, thinking somehow history will remember us when we have ourselves forgotten history. The history books never remember who a person was. Names and connections are lost through time. Instead, it is the *actions* of the past that linger. The way we affect the world that carries our legacy.

The world told me: I had to *be* someone, that my value had to be measured on their scales. Yet, my own experiences continued to tell me that **what matters, is not who you "are," but what you do.** That if I wanted my life to have meaning, value beyond the ephemeral whispers of modern society, my path would have to be different.

The eternal optimist inside me wanted to believe in the possibility of a better world, that there could be a place that works together to build something better. My search for a corner of society where my path would create lasting, positive change, has only further enforced the idea that our actions in this shared world are crucial in shaping our lives, our environment, and our communities. Humanity has focused so long on what our value means to the ones that hold the resources that we have forgotten how to find ecological, personal and greater value outside of what has been assigned to us. That what we do means more than who we are.

Every decision we make ripples across the universe.

My long journey of life has made it clear that the way the world works now, the way it tells us to live *is not a world of balance.* This has been my struggle to live for my meaning, my search for contentment, my desire for a free life.

~

My journey to find a better way to live took me through college to find the 'credentials' I assumed were needed to be able to create change. While college didn't give me credentials for change, what it did leave me with was three lessons that actually did give me the power to create change. These lessons are landmarks on my path, they will help you see both where I am coming from and where I am going. Your landmarks will be different, but the ideas behind them remain true.

The first lesson came as I entered my third year in an engineering degree. I was talking to my professor about a world-changing idea I had been developing (one of the ones I was least attached to). I wanted people to back my idea and turn it into a product. He responded that engineers do not create products or companies; they work for those who do. My goal in college was to build something valuable that could not be taken away; instead, I learned that in a competitive world, everything of value has already been claimed, even before it has been made. That the world is reserved for people who "are" not people that "do".

The second lesson I learned was when an economics professor tried to recruit me into their economics degree program. He had thought my skill to see how everything works together would be a good fit for their degree. During our discussion, the professor mentioned that you cannot make profits without taking them from someone else. That gain is impossible without someone else's loss. My goal was to build a world where everyone was better off than before; instead, I learned that in a competitive world, profit is only measured by what you can take from other people. Since value taken is not value created, the world I was told to accept was a world that did not create value, it was merely a world that fought over what it already had.

The third and final lesson I learned might be hard for many to accept. Hopefully this example can explain it more clearly.

Imagine there are three people in a room: The Group Leader, Person A, and Person B. The Group Leader claims that, "People with red shirts will always hit you – unless you strike them first!"

Well, someone with a red shirt indeed walks in. In one scenario, Person A immediately tackles the red-shirt person. In the other scenario, Person B asks the red-shirt person what their intentions are. The ethical question at hand: Who is the better person, Person A or Person B?

The answer? The Group Leader is the worst. However, this still brings up the lesson: *People who research are better*. Not because they were born that way, not because they have some degree. Rather, they cared enough about the truth and didn't believe the most popular opinion at face value.

It's not always a red shirt; sometimes it's skin, sometimes the questions they ask, other times it's who or what they care about. Many times it's not even a person, it's an idea or a way things are done.

Your grandma didn't have the world's best cookies because she bought the most popular brand the TV sold her. She experimented, refined her recipe, and made each batch with love and care. People who research and seek to understand are better because they work to change themselves, to *be better*.

- The first lesson: Those with the most, will want to exploit you. To build the value we want to have, we must have courage and faith in our path outside of what others tell us our meaning “should” be.
- The second lesson: Rejection is not a reflection on our value as a person; often, it is a reflection of everyone that rejects us lacking shared values.
- The final lesson: A better person is not defined by having all the answers but by their willingness to question, learn, and improve through experience and action. Or like a cookie genius grandma, instead of answering questions “Can we make cookies”, question the answers “How can we make them better?”

Meaning is found by actively working towards having the effect you wish to have, not by simply accepting the value others say you have.

Freeing Life

Contentment is a state of peace with where you are and what you have currently in life. Most of us are too busy struggling and fighting for one resource or another to be at peace. Freeing life is about removing the things blocking us from doing what we need to do, and in removing these blocks we are given the opportunity to be content. I say “opportunity” because not everyone will accept that the struggle can be over.

We can actually reduce the idea of contentment even more to one simple idea: *A life that gives more than it takes*. This is because if we create more than we consume, if we resolve more than what holds us back, we will want for nothing.

In Ecology we typically find contentment in building a way to live in the world that produces more resources than we take from it.

In Philosophy we typically find contentment in accepting who we are, building ourselves up more than tearing down.

In Sociology we typically find contentment in meaningful relationships that positively influence each other.

In Theology we typically find contentment in giving more back to the higher principles or entities that we follow than we receive.

The problem is, if we only focus on one aspect at the cost of the others, while we may find peace in the area we focus on, it will be the unresolved conflict in all the others that keeps us from total peace. It seems like an impossible puzzle, almost like we have to struggle to find peace, but this is not correct. To find contentment, we simply have to find peace within the struggle, find something we are willing to struggle for, to struggle for something that gives us more than we give up for it.

We are born into this world with a unique combination of personality and physical traits that make up our nature. As we grow, our nature is further defined by our personal goals and motivations. A parent's job is to “nurture” that “nature” in a positive direction. Even though my parents were wonderful people who tried their best, my nature did not always follow a direction they wanted to nurture.

As someone who never felt accepted, I was sure life meant that people had to change who they were until they were welcomed. My understanding was that the reason it was hard to connect with others was because my nature conflicted with the natures that the world found acceptable. To make things more complicated, words don't come easy to me; everything is a collection of concepts that create something unique. Conversations were a jigsaw puzzle with no picture of what they should look like. The many conflicts that came from miscommunication, made me feel like I was the misplaced piece of the puzzle, the one who needed to adjust.

I know you have a struggle too, we all do. Just like we all have different struggles, we also each have a place we feel like we belong, a happy place.

As an infant, my happy place was in a highchair with a stack of snacks. My stubby little baby fingers pushed and chased the snacks around the tray until they were eventually herded into my mouth. The prey often escaped their final destination, re-joining the rest of the herd on the tray, but persistence is always needed when chasing your food.

As an infant, the world was easy with just me and my activities. As a toddler, my happy place was somewhere small and enclosed, as if I was playing an eternal game of hide without the seek. Living was to avoid the notice of interactions that were often too difficult to navigate.

In my teens, I was happiest when I climbed trees all the way to the top. When you reach the highest point in a forest of trees and look out over the limbs above the crowns of the foliage around you, the rest of the world is nowhere to be seen. In an endless forest there are no people, no social situations, nothing reflecting who you are or who you “need” to be. The endless forest that shrouds the world does not care that you are there; the trees all around are content to sit there and eternally chase the sunshine, the breeze and the raindrops with no regard for anything else.

The difference between children and adults is that adults have had more time to build their perspective. Some people are lucky enough to encounter that perspective early, for others early perspective is a reflection of hardships that no one should have to go through. For me, it has taken an entire journey to see past myself, to see that my place is not disappearing among the treetops. We can't gain perspective by simply coming up with easy answers to the world's questions, like hiding from struggle, but by deeply questioning the answers that we have always assumed are true. It took me a while to start questioning why I felt like I didn't belong, rather than simply assuming that I didn't.

Now that I have more perspective, it is apparent that my happy place was just the absence of my weaknesses. That my happy place was me avoiding the personal growth I needed to become complete.

~

As a reader, you probably saw this immediately, *but can you see the same in your happy place?* There is an expression among farmers "You can't smell your own cows", you can also reword it "You can't smell your own house". It means that we become so close to the everyday, that we miss it completely. It takes experience and self evaluation to grow our perspective of ourselves. These things come with time.

Growing up, failing to find my contentment alone, I eventually understood that differences could be bridges, rather than barriers. What makes us different adds to everyone's depth of perspective. True contentment, I discovered, does not come from avoiding conflict or weakness, it comes from engaging with it constructively. Each interaction and shared story adds to our understanding of how we are connected. It brings us closer. It helps us communicate positively. Connections with other people add to our lives, we simply need to accept it.

My journey has taught me that contentment is not a state to be achieved but a practice to be cultivated. It requires us to embrace every aspect of our being—our physical need to stay alive, our mental need to find our place, and our social need for companionship. Initially, I looked to be alone to find peace. Initially I avoided my weaknesses as a futile attempt to force contentment.

But, true peace comes from developing ourselves through experience, making meaningful connections, and building our community.

It's about balancing the need to look after yourself with the equally vital need to develop your role in this shared world. To find what is truly important, we must ask ourselves, "Are we willing to die for this?" No, not out of some misplaced sense of self-sacrifice, but for all of us, death is the end of the impact we will create on our journey through life. If we are unhappy with ending that path where we are now, **then we are not taking the right path.**

The Navajo had a great concept of life called **iiná**. To overly simplify, it is the beauty found within a balance in everything you do, free thought within the structure, and reflection within the action. Too much of anything is just as harmful as too little.

We can't find meaning in action, we can't find meaning in connection, and we can't find meaning in thought; meaning is only found in balancing all three together. Only in balance do we find life, addressing what holds us back as much as embracing the things that drive us forward. Simply finding something to live for is not enough; you also have to be able to balance meaning with living. You must be able to find the "Why" behind the "What" and the "How." While you might find something you are willing to die for, true contentment is finding meaning that lets you truly live.

Even in our changing world, there are perfect moments all of us have felt when everything is how we want it to be. For most, it's just a sliver of time, wishing it could last. The truth is, those moments can last; we can grow those moments and sustain contentment until we find ourselves living the perfect life. We can create a perfect moment where we belong, where the world needs us as much as we need the world, where that moment becomes our life.

Contentment is *having the freedom to use your energy to make positive change; it is about being free to live for who and what you truly believe is worth living for. True contentment comes from balancing self-growth, meaningful connections, and contributing positively to the world, cultivating peace through giving, reflection, and purposeful living.*

If you thrive in competition, you may already feel content in a world that rewards those who take the most, even if that contentment could never be sustained because a sustained competition inherently means a sustained conflict. But, for many of us, true fulfillment comes from collaboration. We change the world to find food, shelter, and good health, but even as we change the world, everyone and everything else is changing it too. While we change everything else, everything else changes us in return. When our search for contentment conflicts with the world around us, instead of easily answering that we don't belong in the world, we can instead question if *we have yet to build a place for ourselves*.

I could find contentment by removing everything around me, but at some point, I would get hungry, bored, and lonely. At some point, I had to either decide that the top of the tree was the meaningless end of my journey or to come down and address life. As you turn the pages of this book, I invite you to reflect on your own sources of contentment. What sustains you? What gives your life meaning? And how can you extend those moments of peace into a lifetime of fulfillment? Let's explore these questions with open hearts and a spirit of curiosity. Together, let's leave our happy place and start building a life of contentment.

The Positive Path to Contentment

The world has always been a struggle. There have been many times in history where staying alive meant someone else would likely die. As humanity adapted to the world, we started to group together, gain strength as communities. But many still held onto the idea that for a group to thrive, another group had to decline. This led to colonialism, where those with the strongest social structures worked to exploit other communities for their own, forcing people to join or (typically) die directly or from lack of resources. While those that exploit have worked to get every ideology on their side, the damage to our world and our contentment is always the same.

Colonialism is still the way we do business with the difference in the obfuscation of harm in modern systems, making exploitation less visible but no less impactful.

Both modern sales teams and colonial merchant representatives/traders exploit systems for profit. The **effect** of modern sales teams is less immediately brutal but more insidious, as they operate within systems that obscure harm and shift accountability to abstract mechanisms. This is reflected in the saying “Don’t hate the player, Hate the game”.

Modern marketing parallels colonial propagandists in **manipulating perception and fostering dependency**. The impact on the public shifts from explicit cultural domination to subtle psychological and societal exploitation.

Modern product development parallels colonial resource development in its reliance on exploitative resource extraction, market-driven priorities, and externalized costs. The **outcomes**—environmental degradation, exploitation of marginalized populations, and wealth concentration—remain strikingly similar.

Modern HR parallels colonial overseers in managing labor to prioritize organizational goals, often enforcing systems that exploit workers and perpetuate inequalities, sustaining exploitative power dynamics. The shift from direct violence to systemic control reflects an evolution in labor exploitation rather than its elimination.

Modern finance parallels colonial treasurers in centralizing wealth, leveraging debt for control, and influencing policies that entrench systemic inequalities, maximizing wealth for a privileged group.

Modern customer relationship management parallels colonial agents in fostering long-term dependency, exploiting data and power dynamics, and shaping interactions to maximize extraction (of profit or compliance). The **impact** on systemic inequities and public harm remains aligned.

Modern accounting parallels colonial accountants in its role as a facilitator of wealth concentration and systemic inequities, albeit with greater obfuscation and complexity, ensuring financial efficiency for elite beneficiaries.

Modern legal departments parallel colonial legal advisors (Magistrates) in their role as architects and enforcers of systems that privilege elite interests while marginalizing vulnerable populations. Shifting to creating a complex legal tangle, entrenching inequities and legitimizing exploitation.

Modern operations management parallels colonial administration in its focus on resource and labor optimization, centralization of decision-making, and indirect perpetuation of systemic exploitation through the marginalization of vulnerable communities and exploitation of labor and resources.

Modern project managers parallels colonial expedition overseers and overseers in their focus on efficient resource coordination, hierarchical authority, and prioritization of deliverables over ethical impacts. At the cost of marginalization of vulnerable populations, environmental harm, and concentration of benefits at the top.

Modern CEOs parallel colonial governors in their centralized authority, focus on wealth extraction, and significant political influence. Modern methods have shifted from overt coercion to systemic mechanisms like regulatory capture and economic pressures while perpetuation of inequality, exploitation, and marginalization, obscuring accountability.

Modern investors parallel colonial financiers in their focus on maximizing profit, driving exploitation, and influencing governance to protect their interests, leading to resource depletion, environmental harm, and the marginalization of vulnerable populations. The main difference lies in the visibility and immediacy of harm, with modern systems making exploitation harder to identify and address.

While living in the modern era we may not die from scurvy to deliver profits, we die from other health issues that are as easily solvable in our modern society, lemons replaced with insulin. Most live in poverty to fuel the growth of the rich. We fight in wars to control trade. Political games to tank investments and make trading in these “Dangerous waters” drive away investors to sink the competition. We manipulate law and policy to both justify and empower our overthrow of cultures, countries and populations. Erasing the local people just as thoroughly as reeducation centers, assault on locals and native genocide. Even assault by the rich and powerful, in our “modern” society is too often accepted and overlooked because “they do greater good”.

Sadly, this is the world most of us are lost in. A world where everything has to be taken, success means taking more with every moment. Since contentment is a state of peace with where you currently are and what you have in life, our society is one that fights against contentment.

Fortunately this is not the world we have to live in. Humanity no longer has to only take to exist, we have the ability to exist in a way that gives more than it takes. In a society where everyone is producing more than they consume, contentment is the natural way of life.

We live in a shared place. What we do will always affect others just as much as what they do will affect us.

My birth was a celebration as much as it was a burden. The family structure I was born into was already under pressure. Though it shattered shortly after my arrival, it wasn't my presence that pushed us apart, my birth simply made it harder to keep us together any longer.

I appropriately arrived two weeks late, two days after Thanksgiving. Almost as if I already felt that my arrival was nothing to be thankful for. At the same time I was born, my father was a floor away, getting his testicle removed to stop the cancer. Also appropriate. When my mom found out she was pregnant with her third son (her first child was a daughter), she hoped that I would be the mediator that brought peace between the other two boys.

Much later she joked that, in a way my birth did bring peace between my brothers, it united them against me as their common enemy. Of course, this was brought up much later, after the bolt in the night to flee her husband's increasing instability, when she was no longer consumed with simply getting herself and the kids out of the situation intact.

I don't share this story for sympathy or for misery but to demonstrate how we affect each other. In fact, I am not even angry at my father, as broken as he was, because that is the point. The man who first married my mom was broken as a father before he even became one. My mother may have her wounds, but she used the desperate situation to change her own life, changing her path as well as the paths of her children. She found joy in gaining one more child before things fell apart. We could have stayed in that situation; I could be dead, in prison, or homeless, but that isn't what happened. My mother chose life. She changed the world for her family. She struggled to change where we were. ***She fought to redefine what life meant.***

It isn't just people that change each other, but the very planet we live on changes us as much as we change it.

Much later, my mother remarried to someone whom I am still proud to call my dad. Every couple of years, we would pack up the family to begin our regular trip from our home among the vibrant greens surrounding the great lakes in the US to visit family on the US West Coast. Days and days, sleeping in the back of the station wagon or the cheapest motels. Those were experiences I wouldn't trade for anything.

On one of these trips, we stopped at a campground in the Arizona desert. While we waited for the car to be packed back up, my brothers and I entertained ourselves by throwing rocks at bigger rocks, like all young teens do when they are as bored as we were. During our rock throwing, a kid who lived in the area appeared to show us a lizard he had caught. As we gently played with the lizard he told us about the desert: birds, hares, mice, lizards, snakes, scorpions, and everything else that lived there. ***I was fascinated. All of that lives here?***

I never looked at deserts the same way again. In my mind, the desert transformed from a lifeless waste to a place of life, change, and the struggle to survive. It was a drama of nature, seen only by those who look closely.

The world is like that desert. On the one hand, it's nothing more than a ball of mud squished together by gravity. But on the other hand it is full of life that brings change, life that brings wonder, life that brings new perspectives every time we experience it. Much like our own bodies, the surface of the earth is mostly water and minerals, with the various forms of life filling in the empty spaces to make something special.

~

We use **physical energy** to change the world to survive and thrive. We use **mental energy** to reduce stress by adapting to the ways the world changes us. We use **social energy** to resolve our worries about living in a shared place and ensure that those connections positively change us as much as we change them. We use energy for change in every aspect of ourselves—body, mind, and connection.

Our ability to create change is much greater than any other living thing. It's what makes us unique. It gives us the power to write the pages of history. It allows us to ensure that our changes are for the better.

My mother demonstrated this when she decided to face the world as a single mother of four. These pages would not be here without her using every bit of physical, mental, and social energy to change the future to what it is today. She knew it was possible just as much as she knew it wouldn't be easy, but more importantly, she wanted to live up to the obligation she knew she had. Her actions changed our family's life.

The **law of conservation of energy** shows that the world is an enclosed system with the gifts of sunlight providing the energy needed for life. Plants turn sunlight into life. We take that life to create change in our own lives. Eventually, it all gets sent back into space as heat.

That law applies to all energy we shape through actions, thoughts, or connections. All the changes we make will continue long after we are gone, shaping the future of humanity forever. If we destroy a life, that life, and all life that will have come from it, are now erased. If we think our neighbors are all thieves, that will fundamentally change our being. If we add to the misery of others around us, the same joy that others have felt and shared will be lost forever.

Energy is never created nor destroyed; it just changes shape.

I try to live a positive life in honor of my mother's positive energy. Hopefully, those in my life will grow that positivity as much as I have wanted to. Imagine if every day, every action, we work to make positive changes and do something kind. Whether it's a smile, a helpful hand, or a kind word, these actions add up. It was support like this that gave my mother the courage to take the steps she needed to. But if we let negativity guide us, it can take away from all the good stuff, making the world a more demanding place to live and leading those who follow us down a darker road.

That positive change is where our lives find positive meaning. The value (effect) our lives have is not who we are; our value is what we do.

Either way, it is our life and our energy that gives meaning to the world. My mother will always be my mom, but my father will never be my dad. The story of the person who provided what was needed for my birth has no meaning to me. The story of the people who gave me the tools for positive change in my own life, means everything.

On this planet *nothing has a greater effect than life, no life has a greater effect than human life, nothing gives the world more meaning than how we live our lives. We have an ethical and moral obligation to ensure our effect on earth, the value we create, is positive*

Before we can continue our journey, there are just three things I need to define for the readers. **What is life? What is meaning? What holds us back?**

Life is energy, not all energy is life

There is nothing deeper hidden here. Energy is the capability to cause change. Life is the ability to be biologically self-sustaining. Life is the energy that creates the changes needed to be self-sustaining.

Life uses energy to grow, reproduce, maintain stability, and respond to its environment. Without energy, the processes that define life—like metabolism and adaptation—cannot occur. The fundamental things that define what life is, are forms of change, forms of energy.

While life also relies on structure, organization and information to exist, even those are expressions and results of energy.

To put it in a more complicated way. If organization, structure, and information are forms of stored energy, then **life can be understood as an emergent state of organized energy**. Life arises when energy interacts with matter in specific ways to create self-sustaining, adaptive systems. While life is a manifestation of energy, it is the **specific organization and dynamic use of energy** that distinguishes living systems from non-living ones. Therefore, life is not simply "energy" but a unique expression of energy structured to sustain biological processes.

In other words. All life is energy, not all energy is life.

My Grandpa loved to hunt and fish.

I have fond memories of driving with him along country roads, looking for oak trees among the grazed grass of cow pastures. We would pull into the driveways and ask the farmers if they minded if we hunted squirrels on their land. We would walk on the carpet of leaves, the morning dew released as reversed waterfalls of steam in the patchwork of sunlight, breaking through the canopy of oak trees.

The faint smell of cows would mix with the rich decay of leaves turning to soil as we slowly made our way through the brambles and brush that were left for better grazing. We would watch for squirrels, scampering around with boundless energy, their carefree rustling the only thing breaking the meditative murmur of livestock. The squirrels would pause their concert of rustling to run up a tree and scold us as we approached, careful to keep on the opposite side of the trunk from the invaders in their homes. One of us would circle the tree so the other could get a clean shot to quickly end the squirrel's life, the energy it brought to the woods, gone forever.

My Grandpa was not an uncaring man. He looked down on those who killed animals for sport or trophies. His beliefs strained his relationship with his trophy-hunting brother. We took the lives of squirrels to keep our lives going.

My Grandpa had to hunt to keep his family going through the great depression. That respect of one life traded for another, made this more than a simple outing for us.

His actions showed me that even though the squirrel's life was gone, it still affected us. It gave us life. It gave the forest life. Trees grew where squirrels had left their nuts, feeding new generations of squirrels.

Maybe it was this deep tie to the idea of the energy of life still going on after death that when my grandfather passed, I didn't mourn his absence as much as I respected the changes he had left behind.

I didn't care who my grandpa "was" in life, I cared how he *lived* that life. When my grandfather passed, I didn't say goodbye, I said, "*See you later*"

~

In fact, I still see him every day. I see his reflection in the people who connected with him. I see his smile in the values I have taken as my own. I feel his emotions that linger with me, responding to the changes happening around us.

Nothing changes without something creating that change; it takes energy. Our bodies use kinetic energy to create motion. Our minds use chemical energy to change us. Emotions travel and spread around us like radio waves.

Everything we do and feel is through movement. If movement stops, we stop breathing, feeling, and living.

Plants use sunlight to turn elements into life. They combine those elements into complex chemicals that are the canvas that all life is painted on. We then use this chemical energy—the energy of life—to change the world as we live. Energy brought to earth on motes of sunlight from the beginning of time are still being used by us to maintain our everyday lives.

Energy is never lost; it merely changes form.

For instance, we were brought into this world when a spark of life and energy became trapped in the mess of bits and pieces that grew to become our bodies. We learn how to use energy to keep ourselves alive as we grow. We learn how to use energy to change the world around us. When we take life to add to our life, that other life is gone from the world. When we use our lives to help others grow, that adds to the world around us. The way we use energy defines what we have done with our lives.

Our value in life is seen in how we use the energy we borrow to change the world.

We exist in a shared world. The energy we gather and the energy we use affects others. The value we add or subtract from the world comes from the changes we make, from our effect on everything around us.

We may build friendships to protect and support one another. We can work together to achieve what we cannot do alone. When groups gather, the world changes in permanent ways.

Shared energy is shared life.

Our value is how our energy changes each other and the world around us. When the energy we create impacts someone or something else around us, our lives become connected, shared. It can just be a word, a hug, a loaf of bread left on a doorstep. The energy we use and the energy we shape is borrowed and shared throughout all of time. Energy is immortal.

*We use energy, experience energy, need energy, trade and fundamentally are energy. Without energy, we have no more life than the rocks around us. **Life is Energy.***

Meaning is change, not all change has meaning

Meaning is a subset of change, specifically those changes that are interpreted, valued, or contextualized as significant. Therefore, while not all change is meaningful, all meaning is ultimately tied to the changes we create in the world, ourselves, or others.

This means our lives have meaning, whether we intend it or not. That to have a meaningful life, we don't have to be frantically seeking new ways to make others acknowledge that we have created value, we just need to fully live. We make changes with every breath, when these breaths feed the plants, encourage our connections, fuel our positive actions, even our breaths have a positive meaning.

This also means we can control our own positive meaning, by making changes that have the positive effect we want. However, this is easier said than done. How can we know if the effect of our actions will be positive or not? While there are always exceptions, this is why understanding the entire fundamental framework of change can help you master the meaning within your own life.

The meaning of life is not what you believe. It is who and what you live for. That's it. Nothing more and nothing less.

It's not a mysterious path chosen for you. It is not some puzzle that will unlock your life. It is not an all or nothing goal that must be reached. If you don't understand it, then you are overthinking it. It is simply what the changes your life brings **mean** to you and the people around you. Meaning is the effect of change, not the state of belief.

Allow me to illustrate what I mean. After the dash in the night, my mother searched for a group of people she could trust – a support group that could help her better navigate through life. She found that support in religion. I am so proud of what she has done with that group. She has helped those who needed it, supported those who had no one else, and used the best lessons they had to offer to direct the rest of her path through life.

If you only know me through this book, and the book makes you mad, the meaning to my life, for you, will be negative. If this book brings you any kind of resolution, the meaning to my life, for you, will be positive. If my life meant something positive to more people than negative, then the overall meaning to my life will be positive.

Many people look for a higher meaning in religion, and while religion can offer our lives new meaning, it isn't the religion we follow that provides it, it is the new changes that come with the religion that provide the meaning.

Some people have used the path of religion to enrich themselves now and forever; the meaning of their lives was themselves.

Some people have used the path of religion to help others; the help they provided was the meaning of their lives.

And some people used the path of religion to forever cultivate their own understanding but end up *doing* next to nothing. For them, the meaning of their lives was sadly next to nothing.

Belief by itself, means little because belief alone affects no one. What we do within or outside our beliefs, means everything.

There is a fine line between personal faith and religion. There are religious beliefs people accept as fundamental truths, and there are personal faiths that direct the ways people follow those truths. Case in point, my mother found a community in religion, but her personal meaning was the good she could do in pursuit of her faith – *not* the “religion itself.”

In my personal upbringing, religion was “truth.” Fact. Self-evident. And, it was my life's goal to spread that truth to as many as would receive it. I wanted to be *the* positive change in the world.

But what is “faith?”

From my past experience in religion, faith is believing in something so much that faith alone proves it is true. But there have been conflicts in which people of faith have disagreed, when one person's *truth* conflicted with someone else's *truth*.

To me, none of that made any sense. If faith and religion were the same and the words of our religion were the highest truth, how could there be disagreement?

If others in our religion were not interested in why we act and think the way we do, why there were discrepancies within the “highest truths”, it would be up to me to figure it out and add that understanding to our faith in order to bring us all together. The study of religion became my passion. With enough time, commitment and energy, the ultimate truths could be found. With enough effort and study, I could become a better person than I was before.

At one point, I had even memorized nearly the entire text of our holy book. I had long conversations with religious elders, seeking answers to difficult questions that weren't covered in our holy text. After years of searching, study, and reflection, I found the three absolute truths about our faith that everyone shared, while everything else was open to interpretation by the various branches of the religion.

I could share these three truths here, but then suddenly my religious views would become the point of this book, while all the lessons learned on how to free life and find meaning would be lost in defense of religious perspectives. My life journeys would simply become a stand of faith, something for people to accept or reject.

And that was the point in my religious group too. Everyone was so focused on proving their personal faith was “more correct”, that they lost the point of the religion itself, no longer acting like the “good people” they claimed to be. They made it very clear that when organized religion has been claimed by those who exploit, it tends to demand control over personal faith. When I shared my conclusion, that there were three truths and the rest of your faith was up to interpretation and semantics, I found myself isolated from the community I had pledged my life to.

My faith led me to accept everyone as they are, love unconditionally, and be strong enough to stand up for what is right. At the same time, my religion demanded that we reject those who had strayed from the philosophies taught in our congregation. My response was that if people hold true to the three absolute truths, the rest is pointless conflict that distracts us from the good works we should be doing together.

I lost everything—all my support, all my connections, and my path through life. Even though my family stood by my side, even those relationships became shallower. The more I worked to accept people for who they were, the harder it became for my family to relate to the direction of my life.

But, even in failure, you can improve; *that is how I approached faith.*

In this failure, there was a lesson: **It is not the higher calling you follow that gives your life meaning; it is who and what you live for that gives you a higher calling.** It is not the questions you answer that define your impact. It is the answers you question that give your life meaning.

Anyone can memorize a theology. Anyone can recite words. What we believe does not create positive or negative changes in the world. Words without actions have no meaning. I could have used the answers found in religion to justify my actions, but if I did, my faith would have no meaning because my faith would not lead to personal change. It was only when I questioned the answers given by the religion that I realized my faith, outside the control of those who wanted to exploit, didn't just accept but demanded personal change. That is where my beliefs found meaning.

Even if my realization came from religion, this applies to all organizational change. If the strongest people only lived their lives competing for a title, what good did their abilities do? If all the strongest do is prove how strong they are, even the weakest of us can have a bigger impact, by doing something as simple as providing a meal to someone who is starving.

To put it in a way that applies to all of life: The meaning of life is not who or what we believe in. **The meaning of life is who and what we live for.**

If we want our *lives* to have meaning, we must truly and thoroughly *live*. We all want to think the energy we take for ourselves will be remembered somehow. We want to know why we are alive, why we get up, why we are given the energy of life, and what we should do with this gift.

But, just like the earth is a floating rock without meaning, our bodies have no meaning. Instead, it is the *energy* of life we have and the changes we make that create meaning. What do we want to dedicate our energy of life to? All it takes is to answer one question:

What are you willing to die for?

When your life energy is all spent, will you be happy with what remains of your purchases? If this is your last breath, will you be content with what that breath was used for?

For me, the answer was simple: My meaning is to create a place of freedom, joy and acceptance. Your own may be clear to you. You may need to meditate, brainstorm, or create a word cloud. The first step to contentment is finding the meaning you want to leave behind.

Simply knowing isn't good enough, you must direct your energy towards change. Knowing what I live for, led me to start The Aquifer Project, a way for people to pursue their own meaning while building a natural, sustainable future for humanity. Even if your meaning is never realized, the positive energy you put towards it will have an eternal positive effect. Turning your own *iiná* (life) into meaning takes time.

That is the purpose of this book.

~

When people think about their impact, they often consider only the physical changes—the visible marks left behind. But it also involves the people who join us on the same journey. If enough people walk the same route they can cut a path through a mountain.

Many fear that the changes we make and the energy we invest in our lives might fade into obscurity as time passes. We want to think that our lives meant more than simply to be consumed. We want to see a return on our investment while on this planet. But time does not measure distance; it measures change, the changes we make alter the direction of time. Living positively, with intent and hope, means our energy contributes to a brighter future for everyone. It adds to the positive charge of the universe. It nullifies negativity and propels us forward.

Energy never vanishes; it only transforms. Every positive step is an investment in the world's future, a declaration that our time here will resonate through the ages. It doesn't matter if you are placed here by a higher power or if you think you are here by chance. We must change the world for the better. Those changes, that impact, that meaning left behind, that will never disappear.

My mother's life will mean support, caring, and a more positive world. The meaning some of our religion's leaders will leave behind will be self-righteousness and intolerance. My meaning will hopefully be joy, freedom, and acceptance. What will your meaning be? Who and what will you live for?

Meaning is the significance the effect of our lives has. An effect is the change the subject creates.

Meaning is the significance of the change we bring. It is who and what we live for.

Living leaves sediment

Sediment is the buildup of resistance and consequences created by the energy that pushes back when we create change, slowing us down, blocking meaning, and limiting further change. Living leaves sediment through actions, relationships, and interactions with systems, as well as through physical breakdown (fatigue, stress, environmental degradation) and growth (accumulated responsibilities, unresolved conflicts, or societal structures). This sediment shapes our paths by creating barriers and constraints tied to the impacts of our existence and efforts.

Physical Sediment: The buildup of resistance or limitations caused by physical effort, such as fatigue, environmental degradation, or the inefficiencies of repeated manual actions.

Mental Sediment: The cognitive or emotional strain caused by processing information or adapting to change, such as stress, mental exhaustion, or overburdened thought processes.

Social Sediment: The obstacles arising from emotional and relational dynamics, such as unresolved conflicts, societal structures, or the lack of collaboration and trust.

For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. When we jump, we push the earth just as much as the earth pushes us. Of course, the amount we push the earth is just as small in movement as the earth is big in size.

Every time we change the world in a positive way, the world also changes us in the opposite way. Every time we free our lives, we restrict some of our freedoms. Before we give up, and call life pointless, let's really look at what this means to us.

When we say equal and opposite, it doesn't mean a good change always creates a bad change. There are many things we do not want to gain and many things we may be happy to give up.

When I was working on the farm there was a stump we needed to move. We had dug all around it and chopped all the roots we could get to, but it was still stuck. One of the workers thought they could remove it alone, tied a rope to it and tried to pull it free. They didn't move the stump, but they did move their back in a way that left them injured.

The pressure they had put on the stump was equal to the pressure the stump put on them and the stump won.

One of us put a strong board under the stump and started to jump on it while three more of us started pulling the rope. We got the stump out far enough to cut more roots and repeated this process until the stump was removed.

We were all tired from the work, because changing the world causes an equal amount of discomfort. The first guy had taken all of that discomfort in his back, the tiny movement in his spine injured him while the stump moved back that same tiny amount as soon as the guy stopped pulling.

With all of us working together we moved the stump out of the ground. Even though we were all tired, the stump was gone. The opposite reaction to moving the stump was discomfort, but the opposite reaction to the stump being gone was we didn't have to worry about it being in our way while we worked the field. With that stump gone, it took us less energy to get the same amount of work done every time we needed to work the area.

~

There is something hidden here. When working together, we can change the world around us more effectively. When we are working to change the world physically, it can also have a positive effect on us mentally. We are taking the equal and opposite reaction and redirecting it to another aspect of who we are to make both the action positive and the reaction positive. A single change can create a chain of positive energy. We will go more into this later, for now we just need to know that our actions have reactions.

When we create change around us the energy that pushes back on us builds up, slows down our lives and blocks us from finding meaning, limits the amount of change we can create. We call that build up “sediment”.

Chapter 2: Limits of a limited life

The basic model of our outer selves

All aspects of change within an organizational structure can be generalized into 3 categories.

- Physical: How we change the world around us.
- Mental: How we change from internal and external input.
- Social: How we change each other internally and externally.

This includes the organizational structure that composes us, our lives and the human experience.

Since change cannot occur without energy we can generalize the energy used in every aspect as effort (physical), thought (mental), and emotion (social).

If you already realize that these energies overlap into the other categories, then you are getting ahead of where we are in the fundamental framework of change. If we dig deeper into the energies, that overlap is demonstrated as effort is primarily kinetic and chemical, thought is primarily chemical and electrical and emotion is primarily electrical and kinetic. This also reveals more about the natural flow of energy, which we will get to later in the book.

If you are held up here and want to look into this further, there are places to start.

1. Physical (Kinetic and Chemical Energy):
 - Books: Principles of Biomechanics by Ronald L. Huston, Energy, Nutrition, and Human Performance by William D. McArdle et al.
 - Topics to Search: Energy expenditure in physical activity, Muscle contraction and ATP use, Metabolic pathways (e.g., glycolysis, oxidative phosphorylation)

2. Mental (Chemical and Electrical Energy):

- Books: Principles of Neural Science by Eric R. Kandel et al., Exploring the Brain by Mark F. Bear et al.
- Topics to Search: Synaptic activity and neurotransmitter dynamics, Action potentials and ionic currents in neurons, Brain metabolism and glucose utilization

3. Social (Electrical and Kinetic Energy):

- Books: The Social Brain: Discovering the Networks of the Mind by Michael S. Gazzaniga, Emotion and Social Behavior by A. S. R. Manstead
- Topics to Search: Neural correlates of emotion (e.g., amygdala and prefrontal cortex), Hormonal influences on social bonding (e.g., oxytocin), Nonverbal communication and emotional expression

Of course, if we were talking about a business, charity, government, community or any other living organizational system you would start somewhere completely different. But for now we keep things simple.

The simple circle is one of struggle. It is where we use only the associated energy to make the changes we need to. Value returned from the energy we spent will always be equal to or more often less than what we put in.

The value we give something is deeply connected to the struggle that we associate with that something – be it an object or idea or a person. We don't necessarily love pain or struggle, but on a fundamental level, **we respect the amount of life and energy that is invested**. Our idea of "Value" is usually directly tied to how much struggle or pain we associate with that object or idea because the energy used means something to us; it connects us to our own struggles. It is the same reason we respect the earth and our communities when we recognize the amount of struggle it takes to keep those things beautiful.

As a child, my relationship with money was shallow at best. I saw it as something to be spent. It wasn't until I matured that I learned the value you can only get when something represents hard-earned effort.

Along my journey, I've met many people with more things than they can keep track of and are confused as to why these things mean nothing to them. They never realized that ***the emptiness comes from the lack of personal struggle connected to those things***. At the same time, I have received gifts with almost no value for almost anyone else, but I will always treasure them because I knew the mental, physical or emotional struggle they represented to the gift giver.

People argue that money doesn't bring happiness. On the surface, most of us would disagree, because people with money seem less miserable. But that's the trick; money itself *doesn't* bring happiness, it can only make you less miserable by reducing your struggle. Happiness is found in receiving something of value, not from the lack of struggle. If someone who was struggling for money gave you money, knowing you would respect their struggle enough to value what they gave, that's when money brings happiness.

Personal happiness is knowing you are valued enough for others to struggle for you.

In our search for deeper meaning in our lives, we often look to outstanding achievements or wealth as the foundation of our purpose. But, through the refining furnace of challenge, we can forge the pure gold of our life's worth, both in its triumphs and trials. This does not suggest that hardship is a better path or that simply suffering through life should be its reward. No, it's through respecting the value of each person's efforts and their rightful claim over the honest value they created that we can all build a world where we all create positive meaning.

~

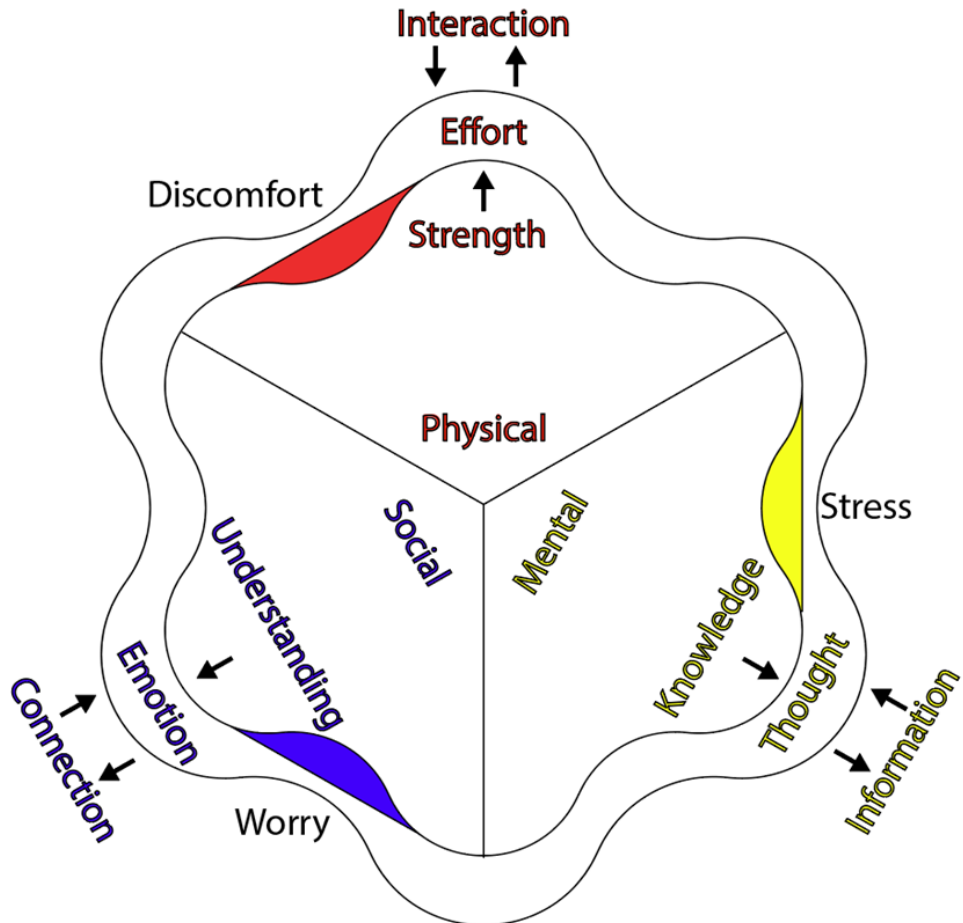
We never had much money growing up. The little we had disappeared to the obligations the world demanded from us. It made it easier to recognize that money is a token that represents the work done by others. Its own value is defined by struggle.

Like everyone who starts out in life, we use physical energy to resolve physical problems, mental energy to resolve mental problems, and social energy to resolve social problems.

Everyone would ask why I did things the hard way. My answer was that I wanted to learn to do them just like everyone else. I saw value in the struggle as if it was something to be proud of. Doing everything the hard way, from scratch, does teach a person how to learn, where learning how to learn is arguably the most valuable skill a person can have.

It turned out to be fortunate that I learned how to learn because, at some point, it occurred to me that struggle does not have to be repeated for it to have value. But that lesson was yet to come.

Newton posited that for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. What was true for physics rings true for our lives as well: As we change the world through effort and interactions, the world pushes on us as much as we push on it, returning effort as discomfort. As we change through information and thought, we gain the sediment of stress as our minds push back on the thoughts that demand changes of us. As we invest emotion into our connections, we gain worry as we all push back on the emotions that drive change to each other.



It never occurred to me that some people are more suited to making money in one way than others. Later I learned that we can get more value with less struggle if we trade our strengths. That one aspect can make changes to the world, to ourselves, or to others with less struggle. Value created in one way, can be multiplied when directed to where it will be valued the most. Just because energy follows the laws of conservation, does not mean what we do with that energy can't have value beyond what we put in.

Even though struggle creates value, not all struggles are equal, and not all values are equal. The **presence or avoidance of struggle** adds to the value, but when we are still immature; the simple circle is all we know. We only see value in the result, not recognizing gains or loss in the process.

Physical change through interaction

The following section emphasizes that we use effort to change the world through "interactions," and these efforts yield both sediment (discomfort) and strength (enhanced abilities and refined processes). This structure is supported by principles in ecology, theology, philosophy, and sociology in the following ways.

Ecological Perspective

Ecology demonstrates how physical effort alone can lead to inefficiency and imbalance. In ecosystems, species that over-rely on a single resource or process often face greater strain and resource depletion. For example, a predator species that does not adapt its hunting strategies faces exhaustion and scarcity. Similarly, monocultures in agriculture require disproportionate inputs like water and fertilizer, leading to environmental degradation—a clear example of sediment.

Philosophical Alignment

Philosophically, this framework aligns with Aristotelian notions of balance and the golden mean. Excessive reliance on a single energy type (physical) represents an imbalance that diminishes overall capacity for meaningful change. Existentialist thought supports this by emphasizing holistic engagement—physical, mental, and emotional—in shaping one's world.

Sociological Connections

From a sociological viewpoint, collective and multi-faceted approaches to change highlight the importance of integrating different forms of energy. Social collaboration distributes effort, reducing individual sediment while amplifying the scope of change. This is evident in community-driven projects like disaster recovery, where physical labor is complemented by emotional support and logistical planning, achieving outcomes no single individual could accomplish. Using a solely physical approach isolates the individual, reducing efficiency and increasing discomfort.

Theological Insights

Theologically, the concept of sediment aligns with teachings on human limitations and the need for interconnectedness. Many religious traditions, such as Christianity's emphasis on the Body of Christ or Hinduism's concept of Dharma, stress the importance of balancing individual effort with communal and spiritual energies. Over reliance on physical effort, akin to labor without faith or wisdom, is seen as burdensome and unsustainable.

I feel bad for my parents. Not only did they have the financial struggles that life pushed on them, but they were also given the much more challenging job of keeping me alive. I wasn't a stupid kid, it was just that whatever I did, I did it all the way. If a hole needed to be dug, it would reach the center of the earth. If a fence needed to be crossed, it would be jumped. If a tree was going to be climbed, it would be climbed until the branches were too small to support my (very light) weight.

I never broke a bone, but I have had countless cuts and scrapes, along with many rounds of stitches. My motto was that if you didn't come home with at least some scratches, you didn't have a fun day. I was a physical kid, and just like all kids, in my mind physical problems required a physical solution. The problem for my parents was that all my solutions were physical to the extreme.

Reflecting on those simpler days, I remember the joy and the freedom of building tree forts. For a child living in the rural embrace, far from the bustle of technology, each tree fort was more than just a play space; it was a castle in the sky, a retreat from the world below, a paradise where imagination ruled. Climbing a tree was one thing, but building a fortress among the branches was the real adventure. It added comfort and control to the peace found only at the top of trees.

When we're young, the world seems so simple. We see and address a need directly, with the enthusiasm only found in those who have yet to be drained by the demands of the world. It's only with experience that all the details start making themselves known, the exhausting details.

To a child, building something means grabbing a hammer, nails, and whatever lumber was lying around to start building. There was no blueprint, no measurements—just the desire to see something done and the willingness to try. Once, when asked to build a fort for a young neighbor kid, their father stopped by to ask if I planned to measure the materials. "No, we just need to build it," I replied, fueled by youthful confidence. And indeed, at that age, what mattered was the act of building; every mistake, extra cut, or broken board was just kindling for the fire and fuel for my experience.

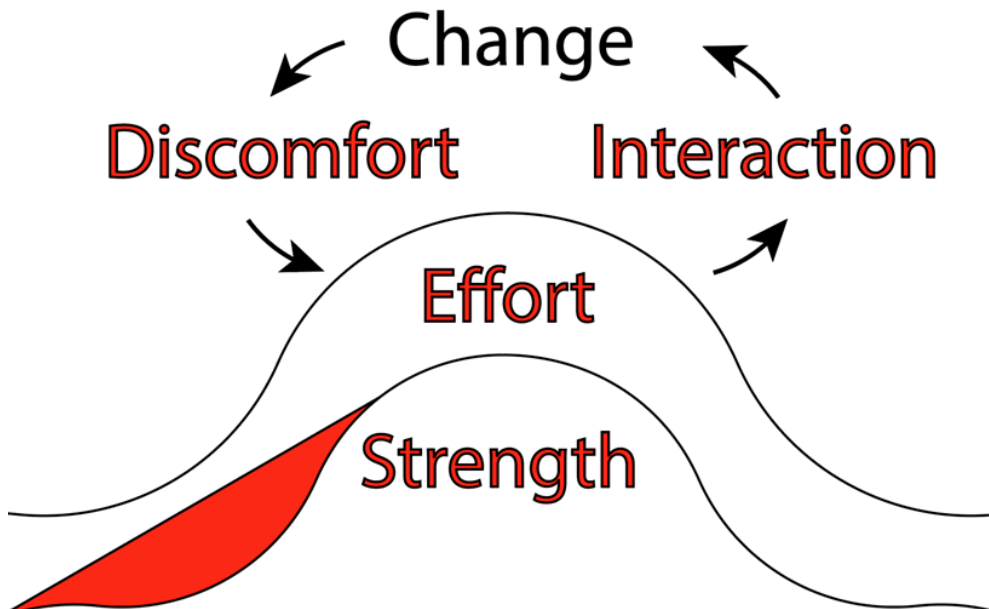
But life teaches us that our actions have consequences, and as I grew, my approach to creating had to grow too. Not much later, as a volunteer at a summer camp, I was asked to build a playground but instead I ended up facing the limits of only using imagination as a guide. Without plans, what we built was unsafe and to make it safe would cost more than buying a new playground from a store. The experience taught me that there is a difference between making a change to the world and making a change that has a positive meaning to the world.

~

The **physical aspect** of who is how we create **physical change** in the world around us. We create this change through **interaction** (the deliberate application of effort to transform the tangible aspects of the world). We use **physical energy as effort** (the use of chemical energy to move our muscles and bodies) to alter objects, environments, and systems.

As we engage in interactions, our bodies adapt by building **strength** in physical capability, refined skill and physical resources. This growth enables us to create greater change with fewer interactions.

We gain **discomfort** as we use physical energy, our bodies demand more resources and the more we interact the more our bodies need to adjust and repair. This sediment limits the amount of effort we are able to dedicate to our interactions.



Physical Aspect

The physical aspect of our existence—the bits, the pieces, the seen, the felt—is the core from which all other aspects of our being extend. As we live and breathe, from the step to the stomp, **each action we take leaves a mark.**

Though many such marks quickly fade, like breaths in the cold air or footprints on a sandy beach, those simple actions still **feed the plants and change the tides.**

We can't live without making a mark. We survive by eating life and taking oxygen. Simply by living, we are claiming resources that would extend the lives of others. Even stepping on the dirt packs the ground down, making it harder. This can support others coming behind us, make it harder for life to dig up from below us, or direct water to flow in a different direction. When we leave natural waste in nature, plants flourish. When we leave it where people and animals live, bacteria and other hazards to health flourish. What we do can both help and harm the world in ways that help or harm us and the things or people we care about.

For me, the physical world was the definition of living. Life was only for interacting, and the world was for changing. The only way to improve the world was if everyone put in all their effort to make it better and I used all my effort in every interaction.

Interaction is at the heart of how we engage with the world. It's a physical, tangible connection between us and everything around us. It is the place where physical change happens.

Physical Sediment

Every action creates an equal and opposite reaction. We are going to call the reaction to interaction “discomfort”. When we take resources from the world, there is less for others. When we change the world, it changes us in return, creating discomfort that we have to overcome. Although that change is equal to our efforts, it is not always equal to the changes we make.

For me, every interaction with the world brought a large amount of discomfort because everything demanded all my effort, or it wasn't worth doing. Even Legos would leave my hands sore after a while. It didn't bother me, though. Discomfort was a badge to be worn, misplaced proof of value created through the struggles of my effort. The more effort, the more struggle, the more value my mind attached to the day.

Interaction with the world brings discomfort. Hunger, fatigue, and pain are not signs of weakness and don't represent failure, instead they are proof of our changes to the world. Discomfort represents our impact.

Because I tried harder at everything, I could run faster than anyone my age, climb any tree, and stay king of the raft until it became boring. The results of my efforts did not always end well; the value created by my sufferings mostly went to myself, but just like effort creates discomfort, it also creates personal strength.

When we push on the world, it pushes back. This resistance and discomfort are opposite to our effort, but that doesn't mean it is bad. Equal doesn't mean there isn't anything to gain. Instead, it's an important part of the process that lets us know where to grow, adapt, and find new ways to do things.

For instance, when we feel the discomfort of hunger, we know we need to find food. When we are tired, it's a signal that we need to rest and recharge. When a task creates more discomfort than it resolves, it drives us to create machinery and tools that help us use our energy more efficiently, reducing the physical tax on our bodies and letting us do more with less.

~

These interactions are more than just our own survival. They are how we create meaning in our lives. Every interaction, whether growing a garden, cooking a meal for loved ones, or building a home, reflects our need to make a mark on the world, it's engraving our story on the earth.

However, effort alone can't solve everything. Trying to do everything by our interactions alone will lead us down a road with an excess discomfort and a shortage of progress. We also need to consider the rest of the world and our place in it.

The act of living means we eat other forms of life. This fundamental truth makes us think about the ethical ripples of our interactions. How do we balance our needs with our responsibility towards other forms of life? How do we protect other lives while fueling our own? How do we interact in a positive way that provides value that builds where it overlaps with the value created by others, instead of corroding into less than what we started with.

*These are not just questions to think about—they need practical, everyday choices that respect and honor the lives we take. It's about making those choices with open eyes and caring. **It's about recognizing that our life is deeply tied, both ways, to the well-being of all the lives around us.***

The question we still need to answer is, how do we overcome the limitations of our own strength?

Mental change through information

The following section explores how thought is used to change ourselves via information processing into personal growth, yielding both sediment (stress) and knowledge (enhanced mental abilities and adaptability). This structure finds support in ecology, theology, philosophy, and sociology in some of the following ways.

Ecological Perspective

In ecosystems, adaptation and survival depend on the processing of information—changes in environmental conditions prompt behavioral or physiological responses. However, over-reliance on mental energy without physical or collaborative action mirrors maladaptive ecological behaviors. For example, animals that overly rely on vigilance (information processing) to avoid predators expend unnecessary energy, leading to stress and reduced fitness.

Philosophical Alignment

Philosophically, the sediment of stress resonates with existentialist concerns about overthinking and analysis paralysis. Nietzsche's concept of the "burden of knowledge" underscores that unchecked mental effort can lead to despair or isolation. Conversely, Aristotelian balance suggests that wisdom (knowledge refined through experience) emerges from combining mental effort with action and relational engagement. The notion that mental effort alone limits change aligns with pragmatism, which emphasizes practical applications of thought alongside physical and social interactions to achieve meaningful outcomes.

Sociological Connections

From a sociological standpoint, information processing in isolation often leads to alienation and misinterpretation. For example, individuals or groups that focus exclusively on theoretical problem-solving without engaging physically or socially may develop impractical or disconnected solutions.

Theological Insights

Theologically, stress as sediment reflects the spiritual consequences of intellectualism disconnected from action or community. For instance, Ecclesiastes warns that "much study wears the body," suggesting the limits of solitary intellectual pursuits.

I have never feared the dark, only the things that sneak up in the dark. There were things that would hide in the dark like mice, snakes, spiders, and my mischievous brothers. Although none were actually dangerous, it was the unknown threats that crept outside my vision that I feared. There was never a clear idea of what lurked under the bed; it could have been the demons talked about in our religion that were trying to drag us away from the true path, or it could have been the fantasy creatures of H.G. Wells clawing their way from fantasy into reality to turn my dreaming life into the stories that filled my waking life. Either way, it was more a feeling of, "Why risk the terrors in the dark if I didn't have to?"

Whenever possible, the discomfort from my bladder was put off until morning. When the discomfort became urgent enough, it was a *dash* to flip on the light switch to create a corridor of safety as fast as possible. Returning to bed was another *dash*, attempting to outrun the tsunami of dark that followed the reverse flipping of the switch. Safety was only guaranteed when entirely covered by sheets—not that the sheet offered any protection from claws, but it forced any lurking threats to make themselves known before they finalized my untimely end thus turning intangible fears into tangible pending doom. The irony in the situation was that the sprinting kept me in a waiting room of dread and exhaustion until my heartbeat settled enough to allow sleep to slip in. It wasn't until my teens that I thought to check under the bed and in the room's corners before bedtime for any lurking predators, ending those late night sprints.

For most of my life at home, we had woods behind our house that stretched out into miles of government land. This was my playground, my neighborhood, my life. I knew these lands, what lived there, what didn't live there, how the trees looked, how grass bent in the wind, the dangers, the sounds and the resources.

One of my favorite activities was to take lightless walks during the full moon. The night was a refuge from the heat of the sweltering summer nights. The calm wind, and the soft rustling leaves whispered of more peaceful times to come, promising both a refuge and comfort from the hard, sweaty work of farm life. During the winter, the edges of the trees were a kaleidoscope in crystal highlights, creating a shimmering, shifting storm of fractured rainbows that would shame the imaginations of the world's greatest poets. Those lunar lit walks under the infinite scattering of celestial stars in the sky and the infinite scattering of terrestrial stars in the icy landscape created singular perfect memories that will remain frozen in time.

Though there might be monsters under my bed, there was nothing in the woods to be scared of. I knew there were wolves, bears, deer, squirrels, rabbits, and many other animals in nature, but I knew their place, I knew my place, and that knowledge eased my stress. It freed my mind from obsessing on how the world might change me, allowing my thoughts to focus on the information from the world on how to live better within it, and in that release, the world changed me more positively.

~

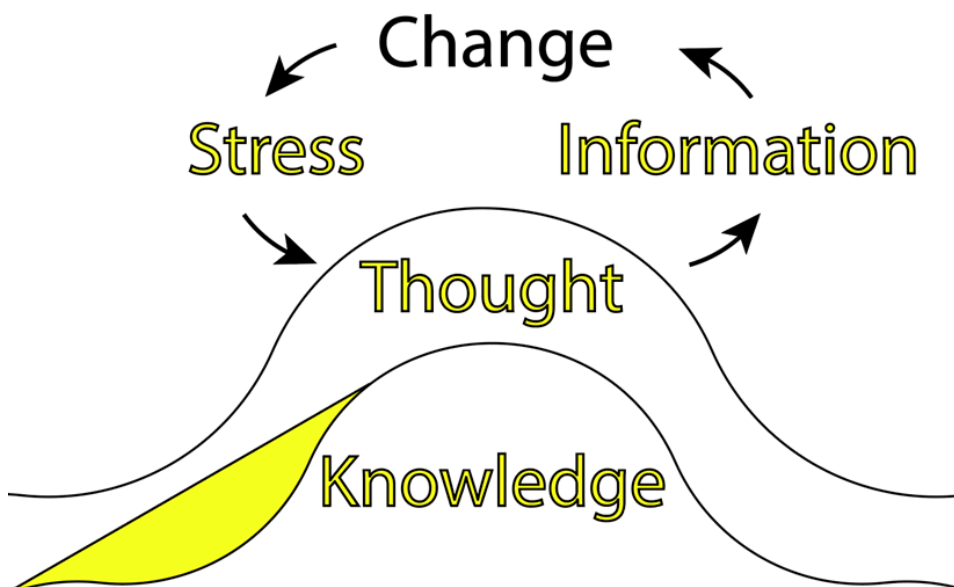
In its complexity, the mind does more than react—it also transforms. Everything from our cells, our reactions, our movements to our memories are changing based on the information we receive from the world.

The **mental aspect** of who we are is how we are changed by the world. This change happens both consciously and subconsciously through **information** (data from our senses). We use **mental energy as thought** (the processes in the brain that interpret, learn, and make decisions) to shape our perspective, emotional intelligence, and physical responses.

As we use energy as thought, we grow our **knowledge** as cognitive resources, adaptability, and our interpretation of how the world changes us. This knowledge enables us to make greater changes with reduced information.

We gain **stress** as we use mental energy, our mind has limited resources and the more information we need to process the more urgent it becomes to know how we are being changed. This sediment limits the amount of thought we are able to dedicate to sorting through information.

The more reliable our knowledge, the more efficiently our minds can work. We spend less energy thinking through all the information the world sends us, which allows us to focus more on growing and learning from new experiences, rather than merely reacting.



Mental Aspect

While the physical changes we make in the world give our physical lives meaning, our **mental lives find meaning in how we are changed by the world**. In other words, while our physical selves need something worth dedicating our physical lives to, our minds also need something worth dedicating our mental lives to. We need to know that the energy we use to change ourselves has a purpose, that our mental life has meaning, and that there is a reason behind the energy we spent transforming ourselves.

This book reflects the meaning I've found in my mental life. You might commit your mental life to a social cause. Others might strive to avoid change. Some seek to transcend through knowledge of the physical realm.

Whatever meaning you seek, nothing changes without something else making it change. In other words, someone or something has to start change, there is always a drive before a direction.

The world is full of life and energy, driving these changes. With everything constantly shifting, we must gather information to understand these changes. Our minds take in information through our senses. We feel the weather on our skin. We hear air shifting. We taste and smell chemical energy. We see the light being scattered as it moves. Electrical signals monitor and adjust our body from the inside out. This is how we are changed by the world, our connections, and our actions.

Much of the information we receive is processed without conscious thought. Our minds collect it, and it changes us in subtle ways, sometimes it triggers us to make decisions, sometimes it triggers reactions, sometimes it is stored and processed for later use. Everyday activities like sleeping when tired, moving away from something hot, balancing on sloping ground, and ducking at a loud noise are all examples of how we are continuously shaped by the world around us, often without even realizing it.

In my case from earlier, if I had let the unknown things in the dark drag my mind down every time the lights went out, my thoughts would have only focused on my fears. Stress would define my life, forever changed by the missing knowledge in my mind.

It's a simple example, I am sure you, like me, have larger subconscious feelings to overcome.

But, for most of us, **it just takes *thinking* it through to move through the stress.** But thinking alone doesn't ever resolve the root of the stress. I was able to think through the fear to get to the light, but had to interact with my fears of the dark before the stress of fear was resolved.

When we build knowledge, we learn to anticipate how changes *affect* us, and we can manage stress more effectively. Our intuition informs us while our Instead of avoiding stress, we should embrace the opportunity to understand it. We need to pinpoint what is causing our stress and recognize how it's negatively affecting us.

If we focus on our problems without finding solutions, we get stuck in a loop of obsession.

~

I knew the forest. It was dark, gloomy, and unpredictable. But there was also a rule of law and order in the way it worked. Nothing changed without something *making* it change, and unless I triggered a negative change, nothing in the woods could change *me* in a way that would harm me.

Mental Sediment

Information brings stress, but we can navigate through it with **the power of knowledge**. By understanding and addressing the sources of our stress, we can transform it into a force for positive change. Remember, our minds are always working, always seeking to make sense of the world, and with that comes the chance to grow stronger and wiser, but it will always come with stress.

How does this work? When we are born, we enter this world with a blank slate, our minds untouched by knowledge. In those early days, our senses begin to collect information, slowly helping us understand how the world works. This growing knowledge acts as a filter, allowing us to discern what information we need to pay attention to and what can be set aside. This filter equips us to adapt to our surroundings, making positive changes rather than feeling overwhelmed by the chaos around us.

For instance, for me, there was never a memory so peaceful, calm, and reassuring as that of the walks in the night. During the summer, it was a cool break from the heat. The breeze singing the song that all the leaves danced to was a promise of another day. Dew-dampened grasses reassuring that as dry as the summer got, water was simply hiding from the heat as much as we were. The sounds of life flourished at night, and the sounds of nature became more reassuring and more relaxed, almost as if they were celebrating the day that was and the days that were to come.

During the winter days, the sun turned the ice and snow into a blinding horizon of endless white that foretold the continued march of bleak days ahead. When the sun went down and the moon came out, the white turned to a peaceful blue that mirrored the long-forgotten summer sky. The ice and snow reflected a million shards of moonlight, reminding us that the cold was a fragile thing that even the reflection of a summer sun could shatter. The most tyrannical snowstorms, the deadliest layers of ice, only added to the peacefulness of a winter night so dedicated to its beauty that even sound slowed in its presence.

Knowledge can be liberating or confining.

~

Knowledge frees our minds from the world's constant noise so we can focus on what truly matters. The more valuable information we gather, the less we need to process in the future and focus on new information.

However, just having knowledge isn't enough. We must remain open to change and willing to learn and unlearn. **Flexibility is needed to bend with stress** rather than merely avoiding until snapping under it.

From birth, we rely on our thoughts to guide every necessary change within ourselves. As we mature, we gain knowledge as we learn better ways to manage and adapt. However, relying solely on our personal perspective can be isolating. It can trap us in a bubble, disconnecting what we “know” from the broader reality. No mind is perfect; flawed knowledge leads to flawed conclusions, which can spiral into greater confusion and even psychosis.

Sometimes, when stress overwhelms us, we must step back and disconnect momentarily. This pause allows us to clear our minds, sort through our thoughts, rethink the knowledge holding us back, and re-engage with the world from a place of clarity and renewed energy. However, while these breaks can help reset our mental state, they do not lead to long-term contentment. True contentment comes from continual learning, adapting, and connecting with the world around us.

The question is, how do we grow knowledge?

Social change through connections

The following section explains how we use emotion to create change through connection, yielding sediment as worry and understanding as growth in social capability. This structure is supported by insights from ecology, theology, philosophy, and sociology.

Ecological Perspective

In ecology, connections between species, such as mutualism or symbiosis, illustrate the importance of emotional energy (interpreted as relational bonds) in sustaining ecosystems. Over-reliance on any single aspect—such as emotional connection without action or adaptation—can destabilize these relationships. For instance, species that form strong dependencies (e.g., pollinators and plants) may suffer when external factors like environmental change disrupt their interactions.

Philosophical Alignment

Philosophically, the sediment of worry mirrors existentialist concerns about vulnerability in human relationships. Kierkegaard's discussions on anxiety and freedom highlight how emotional investments create both potential for deep connection and the risk of alienation. By integrating emotion with physical and mental energies, individuals mitigate excessive worry, achieving more balanced and meaningful relationships. This approach aligns with Aristotelian ethics, where flourishing (eudaimonia) depends on cultivating virtues through emotional, intellectual, and physical harmony.

Sociological Connections

Sociology underscores the importance of emotional energy in forging and sustaining connections, but it also reveals the limitations of relying solely on emotion. Emotional labor, often discussed in contexts like caregiving or service work, demonstrates how unbalanced emotional investments lead to burnout and disproportionate worry. Effective social change occurs when emotion is paired with mental planning (strategizing) and physical action (tangible support).

Theological Insights

Theologically, emotional connections are central to many traditions, yet they are rarely seen as standalone pathways to change. Christian teachings on love and fellowship, for instance, advocate for combining emotional connections with service (physical action) and wisdom (mental energy). Similarly, in Buddhism, compassion (emotion) is practiced alongside mindfulness (mental clarity) and right action, creating a balanced path to enlightenment.

Growing up in a small town in the Midwest can be incredibly isolating. It was for me. New ideas often faced resistance. Resistance turned into pillars of fear – fear encouraged by those who profit from keeping things the way they are. Asking questions was always risky; you were expected to question any answers the world provided that didn't reinforce the local accepted "common knowledge", while being banned from looking for answers to questions you may have that might contradict "The way things are". You would become a target if you shared any ideas that didn't fit the accepted local collection of beliefs.

The prevailing belief in the Midwest USA (and most of the world) is that your value comes from who you are, not what you do or how you do it. This perspective isolated me. In this environment, questioning "accepted" history was seen as disruptive and unwelcome. I believed that privatization would lead to higher taxes to pay for corporate profits. I refused to define our value based on what we do rather than who we are. I didn't care about social standings, didn't bow to strength or popularity, and treated everyone equally regardless of their skills, heritage, or title. These beliefs made it hard for people to categorize me as anything other than someone who was causing conflict.

Even the teachers viewed me as a troublemaker. Living in a world of concepts, I often misunderstood instructions. When someone speaks my mind instantly creates a mental image, an image that was always too literal, leading to misunderstandings. For example, when told to "get my ducks in a row," I would imagine a trail of goslings following me, which made me smile. Teachers misinterpreted this as mocking their authority. Thoughts and ideas were locked away as I assumed everyone targeted me because I was unlikable, never realizing it was because they didn't understand me.

My only friends were the outcasts, those who never received respect from anyone. On some days, I stood as the only barrier between an angry fist and a smaller child, connecting emotionally with both the targets and the attackers, negatively and positively. To help my social life, my mom decided to homeschool me from 5th grade onward. While this didn't help my social skills, it built self-confidence in my skills and abilities. However, even into adulthood, I saw disagreements as attacks and corrections as disapproval.

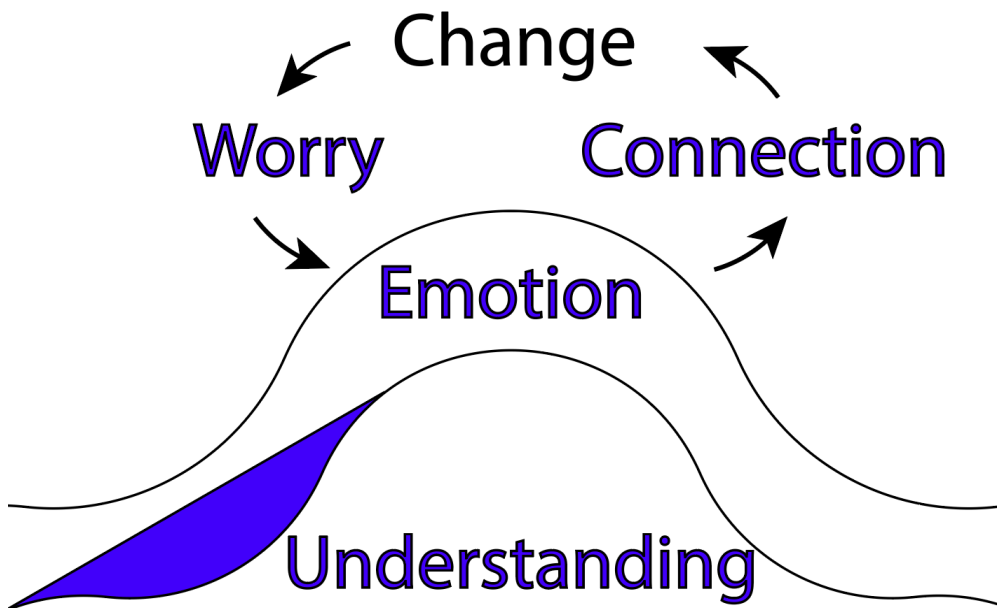
Despite my unshakeable self-confidence, my self-esteem remained low. I felt capable of doing anything, but I never believed people wanted me to do it. Treating everyone equally meant many people who thought they were better than me failed to connect emotionally. **However, those I stood up for—the ones who felt worthless—formed unshakeable connections with me.** These bonds were built on shared emotions and experiences. They created a deep sense of loyalty and understanding that transcended the superficial judgments of small-town life.

~

The **social aspect** of who we are is how we change each other. This change occurs through **connection** (the things or people that have the potential to change us and/or us change them). We use social energy as **emotion** (the processes that share intention, motivation and interpretation) to shape interactions, inspire collective effort, and sustain relationships.

As we connect with others we gain **understanding** how we are all changed by each other and the world, growing our social abilities by building emotional intelligence and relational skills. This growth enables us to create greater social change with fewer new connections.

We gain **worry** as we use social energy, as the emotional investment in relationships and collective efforts demand more emotional resources to maintain. The more we connect, the more essential it becomes to nurture and sustain these bonds. This sediment limits the emotional energy we can dedicate to forming and maintaining connections.



Social Aspect

Many believe our connections stem from the brain, the heart, or the intestines. However, the true nature of our connections goes past what we can physically sense. This is the part of us that lives outside ourselves, it is how we bond with other people and things. Our social aspect is powered by electromagnetic energy, the energy of communication. We connect through one another through our senses, but our emotions run deeper than simply what we sense.

Our social self is not static, it manifests as the shifting collective of connections we interact with at any time. And yet, it has a significant physical impact and is just as much of who we are as our body and mind are. It shapes how we connect physically, mentally, and emotionally. It influences how we change each other and evolve together.

I tried to control my emotions better to make myself more acceptable to the people around me. I tried putting myself in more situations that allowed others to connect with me, usually by standing awkwardly near other groups. As someone who saw how things could be better and would also feel deeply connected with the hardships of others, all I wanted was the chance to improve the lives around me. All I wanted was to add to whatever drew people together, to contribute to something better.

Our social selves crave a purpose for the energy we invest. We need something worthy in our lives for which we can sacrifice our social energy. Society often tells us this purpose should be marriage, work or conflict without considering our experiences and nature. This is why so many struggle with who they are socially, we all have different social meanings just like we do for our physical and mental aspects. For some, their social lives revolve around one special person or the camaraderie between friends. In contrast, others may feel a profound connection to an object or idea that they have connected to in a personal way.

The key is to find and tend to the social connections deep in our sense of purpose, while accepting the purpose of others.

When we allow ourselves to follow our unique social meaning, we open the door to genuine connections and true fulfillment. We honor our true selves and those around us. We foster lasting relationships.

It's not just people we connect with; our connections extend to the land, buildings, objects, and scents. We form these bonds in various ways—through our efforts, thoughts, or emotions. **Connections are the purest form of electromagnetic energy**, manifesting as feelings and emotions that tie us together and foster understanding. A connection is created every time we impact something and are impacted in return. Connections are the meaning created by the parts of life that are shared.

This trading of emotional energy is the base of every relationship and interaction. When we share love, we radiate positive energy that others can feel and respond to. When we experience anger, that energy can affect those around us, often prompting a reaction in kind. Our emotions don't only affect our own well-being but also ripple through the energy of everything around us through our own actions and others' perceptions, affecting how they react, how they are being changed. The emotions we display add to the emotional momentum of the entire world.

These connections are powerful. They allow us to experience the world and each other in new ways. They change our sense of belonging and purpose. When we connect with the land, we feel rooted and grounded. When we connect with buildings or objects, we link to history, memories, and the real-world proof of our experiences. Scents can trigger deep emotions, sweeping us to different times and places, connecting the future to the past while reshaping our present.

Others didn't understand why I joined social groups but didn't interact, mainly because I didn't offer my own understanding or desires. Instead, social situations eventually became something I avoided. My relationship with interpersonal connections rippled through everything I did. For me, emotions had become a weakness that others used. Their attempts to understand me only highlighted what I saw as flaws in myself. Even now, I still find myself waiting until I know the people around me before I can fully connect.

~

Social Sediment

Part of making an emotional connection is worry. When we give our emotions to something or someone, we are blending the meaning we have with the meaning they give. This investment naturally brings with it the fear of losing the positive changes that connection brought into our lives and the fear of being negatively changed by their connection to us. We can free up our emotional energy by building stronger connections. However, this can also increase our worry level as we become more connected.

To prevent worry from blocking our emotions, we can build a wide network of support for connections. The more emotional connections we cultivate and the stronger those connections are, the less any single worry will hold us back from using our emotional energy. A wide network of support will keep us supported when a connection is lost or becomes something we must let go of.

It's important to let go of bad investments—connections that drain our emotional energy without giving us anything positive in return. By letting go of these negative connections, we can reduce unnecessary worry and focus our emotional energy on relationships and connections that genuinely support and uplift us just as we support and uplift them.

~

Building a network of connections with various people, places, and things builds emotional resilience.

There were some connections I had, people I could understand, and I would only share the parts of myself they could understand.

Understanding is the power we hold to change each other through our connections. When we truly know someone, we gain insights into their motivations and perspectives. This knowledge strengthens our understanding of our connection with them, we are able to align our social meaning in a way that overlaps and adds to each other. Of course, when other aspects of my personality emerged, it made me seem even more weird, but the trade was it also made me happier with the connections I kept.

At birth, we rely on emotional connections to change each other and be changed. This is because we are immature and haven't yet learned more effective ways to get what we need or want. Relying just on emotions to influence others makes us emotionally needy, unpleasant to be around, and often leaves us with insecure connections. This emotional dependency can lead to a cycle of using more emotions in an attempt to get what we want, spoiling us, always depending on others to get what we want.

Sometimes, when worry becomes overwhelming, we may need to "emotionally dump" our concerns onto a connection to try and free up emotional energy for interaction or information. However, this negative energy can strain or even break connections that aren't reliable or are emotionally codependent.

We must balance our emotional investments with understanding and communication to build stronger, healthier connections. With a shared understanding, we create more stable and supportive relationships that can withstand the daily worries and challenges of emotional connection. With true connection, we can grow and thrive individually and together.

The question is, how do we grow understanding?

Chapter 3: A positive path

Positive life, positive meaning

When we use a single aspect of who we are to create change, we gain a disproportionate amount of sediment. In order to have a positive impact, we need to follow the natural flow of energy between the three aspects of change. Physical informs mental. Mental connects social. Social empowers physical. We can't find the positive direction in our approach if we are only viewing the framework through one aspect or one ideology, but when we look at them all together, it becomes much more apparent.

Ecology strongly supports the natural flow's emphasis on aligning energies with their optimal methods to create positive and sustainable changes. The interconnectedness, adaptability, and mutual dependencies observed in ecological systems exemplify the effectiveness of leading physical change with emotion, mental change with effort, and social change with thought to create positive and sustainable change in the world.

Psychology strongly supports the natural flow by illustrating how emotional connection enhances physical actions, physical effort shapes mental resilience and adaptability, and thoughtful planning fosters meaningful social transformations. These principles reflect the natural alignment of human behavior with the framework's approach to creating positive and sustainable change within ourselves.

Sociology affirms the natural flow by illustrating how emotional connection drives effective physical changes, physical effort informs personal adaptability, and thoughtful planning ensures meaningful social transformations. This alignment demonstrates that the integration of complementary energies is essential for creating positive and sustainable change within societies (Groups of mutual connections).

Theology aligns with the natural flow by emphasizing emotional connection as a foundation for effective physical actions, effort as a driver of personal transformation, and thoughtful engagement as essential for meaningful social change. These principles reflect the theological call to act with purpose, balance, and alignment with divine will, creating positive and sustainable transformations in all aspects of life.

Summer camp was a source of joy, freedom, and acceptance in my childhood.

It started in the final days of the school year. It began like an uncontrollable itching on your skin, like wearing a wool sweater that had been used to sweep up wood chips. It was the wait for the week of summer camp to be announced. Every summer day not spent at camp felt like a waste of a warm summer day. Until camp began, summer was only a word.

Growing up, our summer lives were free. We would bike all over town, fish at the dam, build forts in the bushes and get candy at the local store. But *camp* was a place where no one could judge me. It was emotional freedom from the pressures of home. It was freedom from sibling rivalry. *I was free to be myself.*

The eleven-minute ride always took the same route through the woods. That specific area of woods made time feel all stretched out, like every minute of driving would take twenty minutes to pass by. At camp, I wasn't the weird kid; *we were all weird kids*. The second we left the car, we were no longer individuals; we were part of that barely controlled mass referred to as "campers." The campers would flow into the towering pines, like a sea of moss flooding the forest floor.

In a very real way, it was like climbing to the top of the trees. As a camper, there was no identity to worry about. All social situations were awkward because no one knew anyone. I could run the fastest, be the king of the raft, build the biggest sandcastles, memorize the most religious passages, and terrorize the night games like the little monster I knew I could be without any lasting ripples in my daily life.

Out there in the real world, there was social hierarchy. The unspoken rules of school made no sense to me. Outside of camp, the social box never fit my true form.

As soon as I turned 14, I became a counselor. At camp, the meaning of my life existed in its purest form. All that was expected of me was to do my best to bring freedom, joy, and acceptance to the campers while keeping them safe.

Eventually, the summer camp failed due to the mismanagement of its board, the community with all the positive change it brought was gone forever. My dreams of “forever content” being part of the positive change that the camp had brought, wiped away as if my dreams were a vision board written in dry erase marker.

The drive to pursue my meaning, the dream of a place that could create change in a way that would support itself, led me to look back over my life. This drive led me to where I am now with The Aquifer Project, but my resolve to avoid the same collapse that destroyed the summer camp made me question the fundamental framework of change.

The camp closing was not positive. My life since then has been far from positive. But meaning can be found in the negative. Positive change can be fueled by negative sediment.

Reflecting on my time volunteering at a camp makes me smile. There, everyone had a role; the director trusted in the talents of his team—guiding without oversteering, allowing us to add our best strengths to each other. That experience showed me why sometimes leadership doesn't deliver what's truly needed. When you try to control every aspect, you lose the magic of surprise, the beauty of seeing what others can uniquely bring to the table. When you limit others to your vision, the impact you can create in a group will be limited to your potential alone. That's why I found camp to be a place to be myself, free to be part of something bigger than myself in a way that mattered.

~

I have said before that my greatest talent is to see how everything affects everything else, to discern the threads of correlation from the levers of causation. It also helped me realize something about what I was really looking for. A way to live better.

Theology, sociology, psychology, ecology and every other ideology aren't just separate branches of existence to pursue on their own; they are intertwined with the threads of our deepest needs and highest aspirations. What are we left with when you strip away all those heavy layers that look to control, manipulate, or exploit us? Something simple yet powerful is left—a pure path to positive change.

Every ideology has a core, part of a circle that mirrors our own physical selves. It's a circle of accountability, where oversight doesn't restrict, a path that leads to meaning and contentment. For any belief to truly resonate and ring true in our hearts, it must be rooted in some fundamental truth. And there, in the beautiful overlap of these varied beliefs, we find the fundamental framework of change. The foundation of what it means to live, to create change, to be part of the world.

In looking to sustain peace, joy, and acceptance, I found something more about myself and our world, a way to sustain contentment in each of us through finding meaning and freeing life.

Each interaction with the world, each rock we lift, each change in temperatures, and each gust of wind informs us. Our physical interactions are not just random events—they are bits of information, teaching us how the world works and our place. Our bodies are instruments, not just of action but of learning, always collecting information through every touch, every step, and every gaze.

Our physical efforts inform our mind.

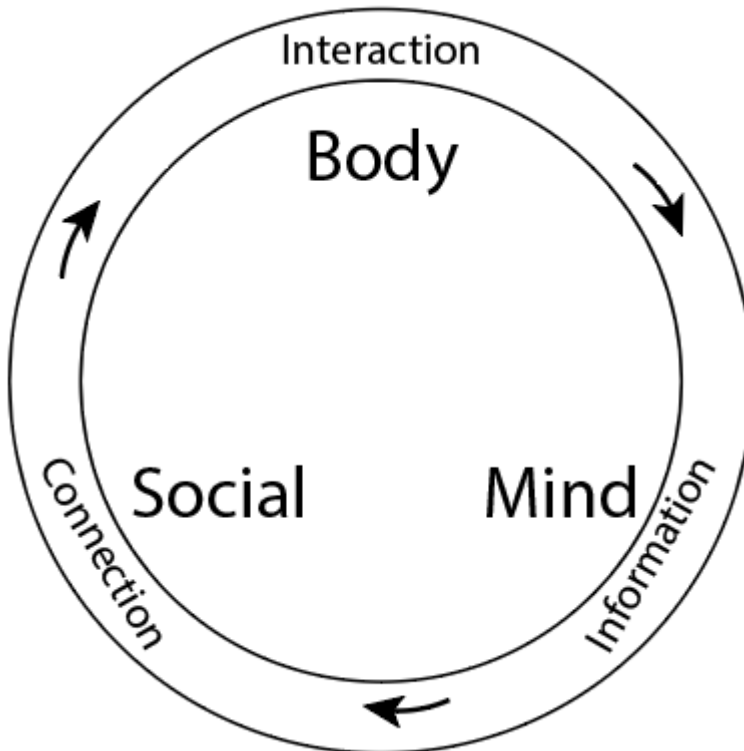
Our minds work with this gathered information, turning our senses into insights and connections. A heavy rock isn't just an object but a lesson in weight and impact; a hot surface teaches us about danger and prevention; a storm that bends trees gives us insight into shelter and safety.

Our thoughts connect us to the people and things around us.

But beyond the physical and the mental, our social selves bind us to the world and each other. Our emotions guide our interactions and are shaped by them in return. We use that rock to improve our world. We take action to safely contain heat. We shelter the things and people we care about from the storm. While we change each other socially, the emotions that come from those connections direct how we change the world.

Our emotional ties give our interactions in the world more impact

We are physical beings driven to create change in the world around us. Three parts, or aspects, define what it means to live: mind, body, and social. **Each drives the next.** Our bodies interact with the world, creating information. The information we collect with our minds help us relate to connections. The connections we make create new ways to interact.



The different aspects of who we are each use separate and distinct forms of energy. Our body uses kinetic energy to interact with the world. Our mind uses chemical energy to think while consciously, subconsciously and physically changing us. Our social selves use different forms of electromagnetic energy, energy waves, to change each other.

With every action comes a reaction. This universal truth reminds us that when we use our energy to change the world, the world, in turn, changes us. This exchange can slow the energy flow through our lives, like "sediment" slows the water flow in a pipe. The more we interact, inform and connect, the harder it becomes to use effort, thought and emotion.

We must accept that sediment from life is unavoidable, but that doesn't mean it can't be helpful. ***Our bodies will always interact with the world, our minds will always process information, and our spirits will always make connections.*** This is the natural rhythm of life, and in this rhythm, evidence of its passing will always be left as sediment.

By following the natural flow, we can free up the sediment that blocks the rhythm of our lives and use it to empower the changes that give our lives meaning.

As we grow into adults, we learn new ways of living in a positive way, yet many of us still push through obstacles, refuse to allow ourselves to change, and emotionally twist others to get what they want. We still only use a single aspect to create change within that aspect.

~Growing into maturity means *becoming more* than simple action and reaction, it means we learn to use all aspects of our energy to create change.

Reflecting on my childhood, building forts could have been an opportunity to work with my friend's dad or learn from my father's expertise in remodeling. Confronting my childhood fears of the dark could have been a chance to research, observe, and challenge those fears directly—much like I had confronted the unknown in a darkened forest. And in connecting with others, rather than reacting from a place of childhood pain, I could have sought to understand how they saw the world rather than simply responding emotionally to how I was affected.

~

As a kid, books weren't just stories to me—they were portals to distant lands and eras, a place to hide, where I could lose myself and find something greater. Even when putting together my Lego sets, for example, I was always steps ahead, picturing each part of the finished model long before it took shape in my hands. Art was about seeing the image that lived vividly in my imagination, and then somehow convincing my materials to mirror that image – constantly adjusting my approach to meet goals beyond what I had already done.

I remember being so lost in my creative world that my parents grew worried about my hearing, not being able to hear them yelling for me. After many tests, the explanation was simple: It was selective hearing! At first, I refused to accept this label, thinking it meant that not hearing was something I had control over. It took me years to understand what it meant: *sometimes, we choose what we let in and what to shut out*, even if it's subconscious.

What captured my curiosity, what challenged me, also drew me in completely—mind, body, and spirit—until everything else faded away.

Using all aspects of who you are doesn't just double your impact on the world; it adds a new dimension to who you are. It gives you new approaches that can make the impossible possible. A tree trunk doesn't need to regrow to weather each new storm, its strength builds on its strength. **Likewise, sustainable contentment becomes a part of our strength. It allows our different aspects to empower the next step in our growth.**

Our path to freeing life and finding meaning is clear.

If we want to resolve the sediment that comes naturally from changing the world and others or being changed ourselves, we need to learn how that sediment can be used to empower change. Just like the knots and twisted burls from trauma are the strongest part of the tree, we too can become stronger from resolving life's sediments.

To infuse our lives with greater meaning, we must engage every part of who we are in every change we make.

To have a positive impact, we must align our approach to life with the natural flow of energy.

Nothing changes without something *making* it change. There is always a catalyst to start the change. The more energy we put into the natural flow, the more energy it will take for the world to slow us down. It's like a moving train, the more energy we put into making it move faster, the more energy it will take to get the train to stop. That is how we free our lives. We keep putting energy into pushing our lives in a positive direction until it becomes an unstoppable train of momentum. When our lives are free, the meaning behind our lives becomes clear.

Leading Physical Change with Social Energy (Emotion)

Ecology demonstrates that physical changes in ecosystems, such as habitat restoration or resource redistribution, are most successful when driven by collective and interconnected dynamics. For example, species in mutualistic relationships—like pollinators and flowering plants—rely on coordinated efforts that are guided by shared goals (analogous to social energy) rather than solitary actions. Similarly, ecological conservation efforts that engage emotional investment and social awareness within human communities—such as fostering a shared commitment to biodiversity—maximize the effectiveness of physical changes, aligning with the idea that leading physical change with emotion amplifies impact and sustainability.

Psychology demonstrates that emotions, combined with social awareness, drive physical actions in ways that enhance effectiveness and sustainability. For instance, theories of motivation, such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs, emphasize the role of emotional connection and shared goals in energizing physical effort. Emotional engagement fosters collective motivation, such as when individuals in group settings are inspired by a sense of belonging or shared purpose to engage in physical tasks. Leading physical change with emotion ensures that actions are aligned with interpersonal understanding, reducing friction and increasing positive outcomes, as seen in team dynamics or community-driven initiatives.

Sociology highlights the importance of emotional connection and social awareness in mobilizing collective physical effort. Theories of collective action, such as resource mobilization theory, emphasize how shared goals, emotional investment, and understanding of group dynamics drive successful movements. For example, social awareness—recognizing others’ capabilities and motivations—ensures that physical efforts are coordinated efficiently within communities, such as during disaster relief efforts or urban redevelopment. Leading physical change with emotion reduces conflict, aligns individual efforts with societal needs, and fosters unity, ensuring that daily interactions and broader physical changes are purposeful and impactful.

Theology often underscores the importance of emotional connection and social awareness in guiding physical actions. For instance, Christian teachings about stewardship emphasize care for creation through actions informed by compassion, community, and shared purpose. Similarly, Buddhist practices highlight mindfulness and emotional harmony as precursors to effective physical engagement with the world. By leading physical change with emotion, individuals act with empathy and an understanding of broader societal and spiritual contexts, ensuring that their efforts are aligned with collective well-being and divine intent. This approach amplifies the impact of daily interactions by rooting them in shared values and purposeful connections.

Emotions are the energies that flow between us. When we interact with emotion, we are treating the world around us like we are changing it and our connections just as much as it changes us and our connections.

Emotions carry information from the world around us, and information from between the very lines that connect us. To interact with emotion is to treat the world like one big connection. It acknowledges that every physical change we make changes everything and everyone around us, just like the changes others make in the world change us.

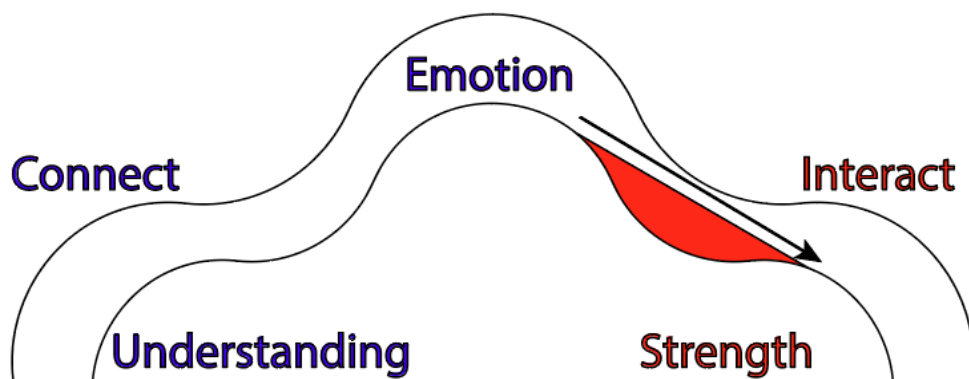
Another way to understand this is to see the earth like the human body. The surface of the earth has about the same balance of water, minerals and life as our body. Both are systems that work together with each bit of life simply doing its thing. Just like our bodies will reject an element working against it, the earth does the same. To make lasting changes to the world that works for you, you need to make changes that work well for everything else. There are times where what is accepted is not healthy, but again, positive change is not something you can do through thought alone, it must be done through community.

The confidence of youth tells us that if we just try hard enough, anything is possible. This message has been used by those looking to manipulate and capture the energy of those who are immature enough to still believe this. The brutal fact is most of us wouldn't be able to get dressed in the morning without someone else making the clothes we wear, they need the people who make the fabric and they need the people that grow the fibrous plants. Even the cells that make up our bodies have individual motivations and drive. Our world is just another body, how well we are able to exist within the world is completely dependent on everyone else around us. There is no such thing as an independent person, no one has ever been a completely self made individual because we were all made before we were even individuals.

It is easier to exist when we interact with emotion, recognition of the intentions, motivations and interpretations of our connections in mind. Consider the damage that can be caused by fire. Communities have always worked together to fight fires, not just for the individual's safety, but for the entire community's well-being. This instinct to aid a neighbor in need reflects a deeper insight: ***To build a safe community for your neighbor is to build a safe community for yourself.*** When we come together, fueled by the shared drive for security, we can put out the flames faster, saving more homes than if we all only focused on our homes. When we all fight our own fires, the fire keeps relighting the areas we already put out and everyone's house burns down.

Imagine if every time we needed to change something, we had to do it from scratch without anyone to help us. Our lives would become so inefficient that they would quickly become unsustainable. Our short lives would be ones of conflict, in constant effort to maintain what we create. When we think only of ourselves, just like an infant, our changes and our efforts do not last.

Using the natural cycle of energy, our connections empower our interactions.



Growing up is not always a walk in the park, especially when you're born into a family already struggling with more than it can handle. The lesson I have learned since living on my own, is that the changes my mother made to our physical lives – those based on emotion – gave me the strength I have today. I am not talking about inflated feelings, but the emotions that connect or separate us all.

She understood how the connection we had with my father would end in physical harm, so she made a decision: To change the situation we were in. She harnessed and used those emotions to find a solution to our situation, and took us all with her. She found a safe place to start her life again, and therefore made real physical changes based on her understanding of the people she was connected to.

Sometimes life, in its infinite complexity, isolates us through the very connections that are “supposed” to tie us together. Deep in my bones, I (mistakenly) felt that my brothers believed that being tied to me made their lives tougher, as if my life was a boulder they had to carry. I was always on high alert, tuning into every flicker of emotion around me, obsessed with trying not to be a burden. It's like wearing a coat that's too tight—every time you move a muscle, you're acutely aware of every little stitch tugging and pulling back against you.

Everyone cherishes having someone in their corner, someone to keep the gears running smoothly, right? Someone who steps up, no matter what, pushing themselves to excel so they're never seen as the problem. That was me. My obsession to not be a burden became a personal mission to always adapt my personality to fit whoever I was with. When there was a bigger picture, a larger task at hand, suddenly, I was everyone's go-to friend. I was working hard at trying to make connections with others, showing how a connection with me would add my strength to their interactions with the world around them. All to prove to myself that I was not a burden.

~

The world is a quilt we all weave together. Our interactions with the world, down to the smallest change we make, ripples through lives beyond our own, just like the changes they make ripple over to us. To live a content life, we must keep these threads in sight as we find our way through life's pathways. If we lose the threads that tie us together, just like the planks on a rope bridge, we lose the strength we build together.

Though I was an expert at sensing others' feelings, I needed to be more skilled at expressing myself. Many people might see this as a strength—always the giver, never asking for anything in return. But to me it was more of a personal burden manufactured by my own insecurities.

Those insecurities manifested themselves in my limited friendships. Growing up in the countryside as a homeschooler, and only seeing other isolated peers once a month, I mastered the art of self-reliance. My interactions were on my own terms—I decided to only spend time around other people when they made it clear they wanted me to be around. One of the few people that always wanted me around was my neighbor and best friend, who dreamed of being a park ranger. We'd roam the fields or tinker in the woods, finding a connection in our shared solitude. My neighbor had this deep bond with nature, always trying to find ways to live that would impact it positively. Connecting with me was his way of growing his dream and making a difference that stretched beyond his reach.

Spending time with him helped him strengthen his own connections and added to his strength while he tried to change the world. This was because he was very open about his goals while inviting others to join him in reaching for them.

Not being open about my goals made me a valuable asset, but not a true member of any team. I would act based on what I thought was best, never voicing my thoughts or intentions. Yet, I was always very aware when others were uncomfortable around me or when I made their lives harder.

The lack of sharing my emotions, drive or motivations often led to my efforts being taken apart. What I saw as an improvement to the world, others saw as unnecessary because there was no understanding between us. Despite my own good intentions when helping others, I never connected enough to understand other people's intentions, so my "help" often conflicted with what others were trying to do. When I was silent about ways to do something more efficiently, those around me had to work harder while gaining more sediment of discomfort, just because I was not connecting with them. All of this led to an endlessly frustrating cycle of me having to redo what was already done or seeing my best efforts rejected over and over again.

~

We could all try to go it alone, competing and clashing, trying to forge our own path solo. Or we could unite, pooling our efforts for a benefit we all get a piece of, taking turns forging and following. If we all had to learn every skill and invent every tool, it would be a never-ending cycle of everyone doing the same endlessly, with most of us still trying to invent fire. In our culture of competition we see profit as what we have taken from others, but in a culture of collaboration profit becomes what we can each build that benefits everyone, leading to a better world of overlapping meaning for everyone. Together, using the strength in our connected world, we achieve more with less energy.

That's why we need to start our interactions with emotion—to prevent the endless cycle of undoing each other's work or doing what has already been done for us. We must tune into how others shape our world, ensuring our contributions are meaningful and enduring. We cannot let the sediment of fear or worry stop the flow of energy from our connections, the energy we need to empower our interactions that change the world.

Remember, we use our emotions to create change, and since our bodies are instruments of change, how we feel inevitably shapes the world in ways that ripple far beyond ourselves and our time. You may feel your emotions are insignificant against the ocean of negative pushback that past emotions have created in the world. But it's not your responsibility to overwhelm the ocean of the past, you just need to use the bucketful of meaning connected to your own life to forever empower a positive flow within that ocean. Your bucket, along with the billions like you, will reshape the flows of the world. That is the strength we gain by interacting with emotion.

Leading Personal (Mental) Change with Physical Energy (Effort)

In **ecology**, adaptation often stems from physical engagement with an environment. Organisms that actively interact with their surroundings develop traits and behaviors that enhance their adaptability and resilience. For example, animals that physically explore diverse habitats gain the information (mental change) necessary to survive and thrive in different conditions. This mirrors how leading mental change with effort produces positive results: direct engagement with one's environment refines learning and adaptability more effectively than passive or purely intellectual planning.

Psychology provides strong support for the idea that effort-driven engagement leads to significant mental change. Experiential learning theories highlight how direct physical action—such as practicing a skill or engaging in physical routines—enhances cognitive processing, adaptability, and emotional regulation. Neuroplasticity research also shows that active engagement with challenges promotes brain development, strengthening the ability to process and retain information. For example, consistent physical exercise has been shown to improve focus, memory, and resilience, illustrating why leading mental change with effort is more effective than relying solely on thought.

Sociology supports the idea that personal transformation is rooted in physical engagement with one's environment. The concept of symbolic interactionism demonstrates how individuals shape their mental frameworks through meaningful interactions and physical participation in social contexts. For instance, engaging in physical tasks or roles within a group not only provides direct experiences but also informs self-identity, adaptability, and cognitive growth. By leading mental change with effort, individuals ground their learning in real-world contexts, ensuring that knowledge and personal transformation are both practical and meaningful.

Many **theological** traditions stress the transformative power of effort in fostering personal growth and alignment with higher principles. For example, disciplines such as prayer, fasting, and meditation involve physical engagement that drives mental clarity and spiritual insight. These practices demonstrate how physical energy creates opportunities for internal change, building resilience, adaptability, and a deeper connection to one's beliefs. Hinduism's concept of *Karma Yoga* similarly emphasizes selfless action as a path to spiritual and personal development, illustrating that leading mental change with effort ensures growth is grounded in meaningful, actionable experiences.

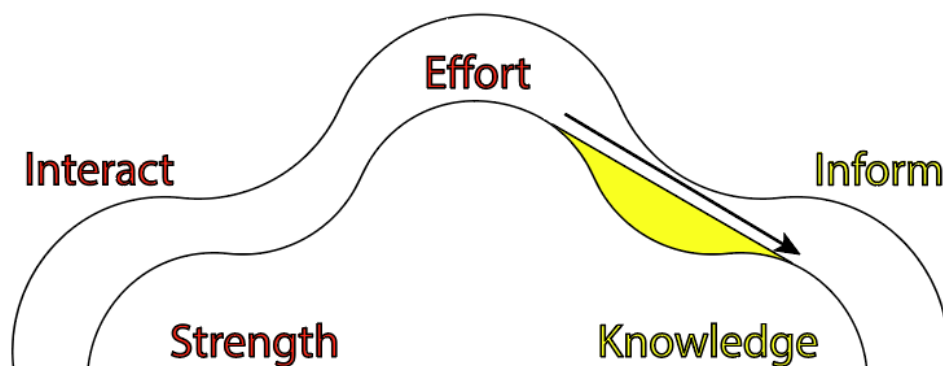
When we gather information through effort, we treat ourselves as part of the world, accepting that our own actions change us just as much as our actions change the world.

Consider the remarkable story of Helen Keller, who, despite losing her sight and hearing at a very young age, was taught by Anne Sullivan, a dedicated teacher from the school for the blind. Before Anne, everyone had thought Helen was dumb as well as blind and deaf. Despite what everyone assumed, Anne put in endless effort to learn and try new methods of learning. Through her dedication, Anne was able to teach Helen through touch—feeling vibrations and shapes, deciphering Braille, and understanding speech through touch—allowing Helen to connect with the world in a uniquely profound way. Anne's efforts to find new methods and Helen's efforts to learn, set Helen on a journey from isolation to becoming an influential author and advocate for people with disabilities.

Her transformation is a testament to the power of **information from effort**. Both Anne and Helen physically changed the world to build true knowledge that told them how the world actually worked. They gained knowledge, not from staying in their minds, not from emotions, but from endless effort.

The world changes us every day. A baby has limited interactions with the world, their whole day is processing information through thought, accomplishing very little. All information comes from the world around us, even if our brains interpret it differently. If we change based on information from others, we are changing in a way that helps them live in the world more easily, but not always in a way that helps us live more easily.

Using the natural cycle of energy, interaction gives us information.



As a teenager, I was part of a small, close-knit religious community. A man in our group owned a simple, rustic cabin beside the kind lake most people only see in advertisements for drinking water. This beautiful spot became the backdrop for an annual father-and-son fishing trip. After proving myself through long, hot summer days of corralling both cows and hay bales on his farm, I earned an invitation for my father, brother, and myself.

The clear, warm days of fishing in the shade of the forested banks were only interrupted by the buzzing of fishing reels and the excited shouts as we filled the stringers with fish. It was here that a hard lesson waited to be learned, hidden within a simple chore. On the second day, my brother and I were asked to haul the boat onto the ramp onto the bank by the cabin. My brother and I were as enthusiastic as we were unaware and inexperienced. We didn't know we had to lift the motor first, as it turns out that is an important part of pulling the boat up onto the lakeshore. As the boat was pulled up the ramp, the lakebed pulled back on the motor until the motor left the boat, sinking into the water. Our laughter at the motor's sudden sinking only showed how little we knew about boats and motors. We never thought a motor designed to be in water could be ruined by being in the water. Having borrowed this top-end motor from his brother, the owner was not as light-hearted about the accident as we were. I immediately saw and felt the hurt caused by our ignorant laughter on his face. The following year we were told there wouldn't be a trip this year, because last year's trip had cost too much. We never got an invite again.

The true lesson was in learning the value of putting effort in information. Suppose I had taken the time to learn about the motor and understand the proper steps in pulling up a boat. Suppose they had put a little effort into instructing us how to pull the boat up. Suppose we had found out the condition of the motor before we started laughing. We might still be going on those trips today.

Effort is a form of kinetic energy—*movement created by our bodies.* Our senses turn the movement around us into information. Our interactions *create* information. Our lives outside of us inform the lives inside of us. The energy around us transforms into energy within us.

Years later, I had another chance to work with the same man, this time cutting firewood—a task I could almost do in my sleep. Yet, even in jobs we know well, assumptions can lead to unexpected challenges. The chainsaw wouldn't start. If the farmer had been nearby, I could have saved myself several hours of frustration. The problem was simple: the bar oil hadn't been filled—something my father and I had always done as a routine step.

But instead of cutting wood, I spent hours tightening and loosening bolts, pacing between the woods and the shed, sweating and stressing, until finally, I just sat down and stared at the chainsaw. It took only five minutes of quiet reflection to think of the chain oil. A little more thought before action could have saved me all that stress. If the farmer had taken just a moment to inform me that the saw wasn't prepped, he wouldn't have been as stressed when he arrived to find barely enough wood to last the night.

~

We are changed by the world every single day. Every bit of information we receive comes from the same world, yet since each of us is unique, if we don't make the effort to experience those changes for ourselves, we miss the pieces of information that completes our perspective. Only when we actively engage—checking before acting, questioning before assuming, verifying before believing—do we ensure that the changes we make build true meaning within us, rather than creating a patchwork of mismatched actions. Effort helps us uncover the real cause behind the information. It helps us understand how the world truly affects us, rather than how someone else wants the world to shape us.

I never worked for that farmer again, and I never mentioned the issue with the oil—I was too embarrassed by my oversight. But from that point on, whenever something changes unexpectedly, I always question myself and my “knowledge” before continuing. I give myself the space to change and grow, to find easier ways to navigate the world. If someone or something disagrees with me, I investigate my own perspective as much as theirs to uncover the truth. If food smells done, I still check the temperature to ensure it's safe. If the car makes a strange noise, I inspect it. If a log across a river looks stable, I test it before committing my full weight. By putting a little effort into gathering information from all our senses, we avoid stress, save time, and prevent mistakes.

Through our efforts, we also learn about the changes others are making. Our actions inform us of better ways to interact and achieve our goals. Information can only change us if we are open to it. We can gather all the information in the world, but it's meaningless if it doesn't transform us.

Since we use effort to shape our minds, and since our minds are how the world changes us, how we interact with the world fundamentally changes who we are inside.

For us to be the best versions of ourselves, to have the biggest positive impact, we have to filter information through effort. We have to be actively in the bigger world (not necessarily part of it) in order for that world to change us in a positive way. This doesn't mean doing everything, good or bad, but gaining the perspective we need so we can truly understand who we are becoming, good or bad.

Leading Social Change with Mental Energy (Thought)

Ecology supports the idea that sustainable and long-lasting social change (e.g., the dynamics within species or communities) is driven by structured and deliberate strategies. For instance, in ecosystems, hierarchical or cooperative relationships among species evolve based on functional needs and adaptability, akin to thought-driven planning. Human ecological efforts, such as community-based conservation programs, rely heavily on mental energy to devise strategies, allocate resources, and address diverse needs. This approach prevents reactive or emotionally driven decision-making, fostering thoughtful, collective changes that align with ecological stability.

Psychological theories of social behavior, such as social learning theory and cognitive behavioral approaches, emphasize that effective social change is driven by mental processes like empathy, planning, and strategic thinking. For instance, thought as a soft skill—manifesting as active listening, conflict resolution, and problem-solving—enables individuals to influence relationships and collective behaviors intentionally and constructively. Emotionally reactive approaches to social change often result in short-term or fragmented outcomes, whereas thought-led strategies ensure sustainable, inclusive transformations by addressing underlying needs and aligning diverse perspectives.

Sociology emphasizes the role of thought in driving sustainable social change, particularly through strategic planning and intellectual engagement. Conflict theory, for instance, suggests that addressing systemic inequalities requires thoughtful critique and deliberate action to restructure societal systems. Similarly, social constructionism highlights how collective meaning-making and thoughtful communication shape societal norms and relationships. Leading social change with thought enables individuals to navigate diverse perspectives, address complex social dynamics, and create lasting connections. In contrast, emotionally reactive approaches to social change often produce fragmented or short-lived results, underscoring the value of mental energy in fostering intentional and inclusive transformations.

Theological teachings frequently highlight the necessity of thoughtful planning and intellectual engagement in driving social transformation. In Islam, the emphasis on *ijtihad* (independent reasoning) encourages using intellect to address societal issues within the framework of divine guidance. Similarly, Jewish teachings about *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) stress the importance of thoughtful actions informed by wisdom and justice to foster positive societal change. Leading social change with thought allows for careful navigation of diverse perspectives, fostering inclusivity and ensuring alignment with spiritual principles. While emotion inspires community bonds, theology recognizes that sustainable social change requires intellectual grounding to create long-term, harmonious impact.

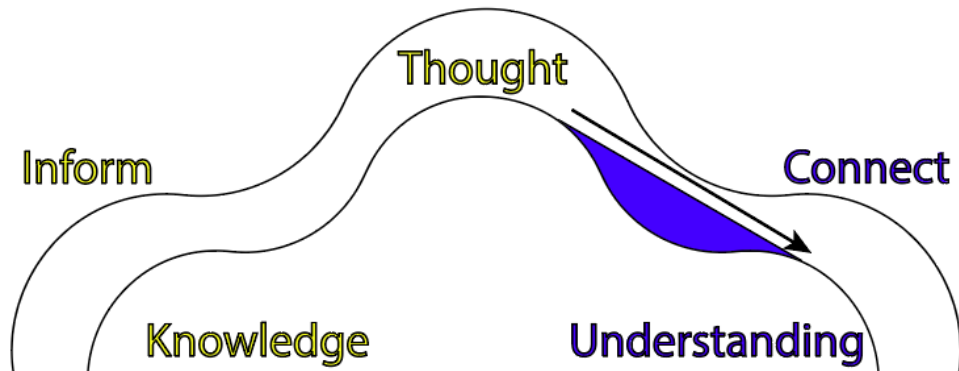
When we connect with thought, we acknowledge that just like our connections are part of the world that changes who we are, we are part of the world changing who they are.

Every interaction, every connection we build, is an exchange of energy—a bustling marketplace where the currency is life itself. This exchange reverberates through our existence, weaving into the fabric of who we are and who we will become, stitching our meaning to the world itself. To live, we consume, and in doing so, we sometimes shorten another life, snipping short a precious thread in the intricate quilt of existence we all share. Sometimes in our effort to stay alive we nurture, adding more squares to the quilt of life.

The changes in the world that impact us also affect everyone around us. Our experiences may differ in ways that reflect our unique paths, the information we receive is filtered through our past, giving all of us different reactions to the same changes. Yet, we all share the same fundamental information because we all share the same fundamental world.

Our connections are more than mere interactions; they are integral to who we are. We share life, we share information, and these connections become as vital to us as the air we breathe. Our connections are as much a part of us as our body and mind. When we change others, we will always be changed in return. With so much of who we are intertwined with this shared world, the only way we can authentically connect with others is through sharing information through the energy coming from the change of self, the energy of thought.

Using the natural cycle of energy, information guides us in forming connections.



Emotion is the energy that flows between us when we connect, but it can only be shared when both sides are willing to give and receive. Thought, on the other hand, represents our inner life. This quiet yet powerful force shapes our inner transformations and defines the meanings we build within ourselves. Through thoughtful connections, we share our feelings and offer glimpses of our deeper selves. This exchange allows us to understand how the world is changing us and, in turn, how our connections are evolving, giving us the tools to change each other in more profound and meaningful ways.

~

When I was a teenager, I bought a car from the elderly mother of a friend of my father's. The car was old but in good shape, easy to drive and comfortable. Living in the country, that car became essential. I used it to drive to town for food, materials, tools, and everything else I needed. When I moved to another state for work, it faithfully carried me back home to see my family and girlfriend. The car had 120,000 miles when I bought it and was almost as old as I was. My father had taught me how to change the oil, check the fluids, and handle routine maintenance. Whenever something broke, I fixed it. Remarkably, 230,000 miles later, the car was still running strong.

I've always disliked car ads that try to convince us their product is an adopted member of the family. But as much as that idea grates on me, there's some truth to it. A car becomes a way to connect—a tool we rely on, something we become directly attached to over time.

Thought is the chemical energy in our brains that changes the chemistry that forms and controls our bodies. Emotion, on the other hand, is electromagnetic energy that flows between us. Chemicals amplify emotion, and thought amplifies connection. When we connect, the energy within us becomes shared energy, changing both the world and ourselves, linking us through emotion. But it's only through thought that we understand how these connections will transform us.

It was a hot day in late June, the air heavy with humidity from spring rains, and the bright greens of the season surrounded me. The air conditioning was on, and music played from the stereo as I drove the half-hour to town. There was no warning, no signs—just a loud noise and steam pouring out from the hood. I tried to turn off the engine, but the car died before I could reach the key. It coasted down the road with just enough momentum to roll into the only gas station between town and home.

The car was dead. The coolant hose had burst, brittle from age and overworked in the heat, without coolant the engine warped beyond repair. I had relied on that car to get me everywhere; it had never let me down. But I had grown complacent, assuming everything would keep working as it always had. If I had only taken the time to reflect on my connection with that aging car, I would have realized it needed more than just routine maintenance. Caring about the car wasn't enough—thoughtful attention to how it was changing would have prevented the breakdown.

~

Connecting with thought means taking the time to understand the things and people in our lives, seeing how the world changes them just like we see the world changing us, and using that insight to strengthen our connections. While I took care of my car, I stopped thinking about how it was being affected by time and circumstances, sticking to a routine without additional thought.

Our connections to objects mirror our connections to people. How we care for the things we cherish often reflects how we care for the people we love. People with messy houses often have messy relationships, and those who rely on others to clean their homes frequently have disconnected relationships. Of course, this isn't a hard-and-fast rule; some people never form strong attachments to objects while others never form strong attachments to people. But it is an observation of how people can get stuck in a cycle of complacency, letting it influence the different connections in their lives. Regardless of the type of connection, we need to build it thoughtfully so those connections will be there when we need them—and when they need us.

When we build positive connections, we are entrusting those connections with who we are becoming, just as we are influencing their path through the changes we create in each other. For much of my life I kept my connections closed, afraid of only being changed in negative ways. I knew connections changed people, and wanted to be solely responsible for who I would become. This limited my life to my experiences, my life's potential was capped by my personal potential, the positive changes with who I was as a person was limited to what I could create alone. A little thought would have opened up a world of positive personal change, just waiting for me to connect to it.

Connections are how we change each other. While emotions share reactions, we can only see how we truly transform one another when we connect with thought. Emotions are amplified not just by the chemicals in our brains when we send them, but also when we receive them. Using thought we move beyond simply reacting and forcing others to react, instead we begin to understand the values of those we connect with, letting us be more aware of the fundamental ways we change others, how we are changed by them and how we are all changed in this shared world.

Chapter 4: Finding our Drive and Direction

Driving Meaning, Directing Life

Ecology, philosophy, sociology, and theology collectively support the existence and function of intangible aspects of humanity in the framework. **Experience** drives mental change, directed by **perspective**; **empathy** drives social change, directed by **conscience**; and **motivation** drives physical change, directed by **collaboration**. These disciplines affirm that drive and direction are universal forces shaping both individual growth and collective transformation.

Keep in mind that we are using the most applicable terms, depending on your semantic preferences you may use other terms and other terms may be more accurate and applicable depending on specific context, however the function of these intangible aspects remain consistent.

Ecology provides a natural basis for the interplay of drive and direction through observable patterns in ecosystems. It reflects how intangible forces like experience, empathy, and motivation shape adaptive and collaborative changes in nature.

Philosophy deeply examines the intangible forces that shape human existence and action, it affirms the centrality of drive and direction in shaping human growth, relationships, and impact.

Sociology explores how intangible aspects of humanity drive societal development and transformation. Sociology demonstrates how drive and direction operate collectively to shape relationships, institutions, and progress.

Theology explicitly addresses the intangible aspects of humanity, often attributing them to divine inspiration or spiritual design. Theology reinforces the existence and importance of intangible aspects as integral to human purpose and alignment with higher principles.

After I graduated from college, I was searching for a job in my field, but the economy was in a slump and any job was hard to find. In the Midwest, resumes were often sorted based on who had connections within the company, making the search even more challenging while feeling even more pointless.

During that time, I worked as head of housekeeping at a summer camp that also operated as a resort during the other three seasons. Part of me fantasized that this would be the realization of my dream that had been lost with the summer camp, that this would be the fulfillment of my life's meaning, something greater that I could contribute to.

The resort was nestled by a crystal-clear lake, teeming with fish. The woods were ancient, lush, and full of life. The camp had a unique personality, and the people there genuinely cared. The house I stayed in was one of the nicest places I had ever stayed in. No offense to my parents—they did the best they could with what they had—but the path of our lives never aligned with paradise.

Looking back, I realize I could have done more to keep hold of my dream, like building stronger friendships, but those were personal issues that wouldn't be resolved for years. Instead, I focused on doing my best in the ways I knew how. The resort had a religious focus, with a chapel on the grounds, but the best cathedral for worshiping the Creator was in creation itself—in the woods, on the lake, or under the stars. The difference I was making was in enabling people to focus on what mattered to them by providing a great environment where they could discover their own sense of meaning. Working hard to keep the place clean brought peace and joy to a place of acceptance.

I was there whenever a mess needed cleaning, maintenance needed another hand, or something had to be hauled across the property. When there was a good deal on new chairs for the chapel but not the budget for it, I donated my small paycheck to buy them. There's something about working towards a shared goal that builds a sense of belonging. When people gather in the same place for the same purpose, an indescribable energy flows through everyone involved.

My time there ended over a wrong pair of boots—a story for another time—but despite some bitterness over management's unwillingness to work with me, the changes I made to that place, the lives of the people who passed through, and the changes it made to me still linger. What struck me hardest upon leaving was realizing that the acceptance offered there was fragile and limited, a facade. Yet, it freed me to continue searching for a place where my meaning could be truly significant.

We'll refer to this greater aspect as the soul—our spiritual self—to keep it simple.

In our limited bodies, we can never fully grasp what is greater than ourselves. We can't even fully grasp our physical selves though we live our whole lives in our bodies. But what we can do is observe and test what drives our energy and direction. We can perceive the effects of our soul, but what lies beyond that is a matter of faith. We will explore the soul and how it influences us, but anything beyond that is up to you to discover along your personal journey.

If our bodies use energy in motion—effort, thought, emotion—to change the physical world, then our souls use energy in storage—experiences, empathy, motivation—to hold that energy, shaping its direction and impact when it is released. Just like a weight tied to the end of a rope, where it is held before being let go determines its direction and how much impact it has when it stops.

Life is change, and directing that change is something greater. There are infinite beliefs about what lies behind life, but people are inherently limited. Even if all of existence were revealed to us, it would still be beyond our ability to comprehend.

One universal truth across many faiths is that while life is energy, the way that energy is transformed and stored goes beyond life. The changes our bodies make give our lives meaning, but our spirit defines whether that meaning is positive or negative. The tangible changes we create may fade, but the influence our spirit imparts is enduring.

Life is Energy, and Meaning is Change. The impact of that life and that change varies with who and what you live for.

You can be a wonderful person with a positive impact on the world around you, but that doesn't necessarily mean you made a significant impact.

You can also live a long life with a substantial impact, but that doesn't guarantee you left the world better than you found it, that your impact was positive.

Meaning can be great or small. Our impact can be positive or negative.

Our souls transform the energy that flows through us, giving our lives meaning and direction. Perspective turns effort into information. Conscience turns thought into connection. Collaboration turns emotion into interaction.

Energy—effort, thought, emotion—is life.

Change—interaction, information, connection—is meaning.

Drive—experience, empathy, motivation—gives force to our lives.

Direction—perspective, conscience, collaboration—gives our meaning impact.

Through the body, our energy changes the world and builds strength. Through the soul, our strength fuels our drive and sets the direction for our actions, creating inner resilience. In the body, change comes from the outside; in the soul, the change comes from within. Where within? That's where your personal path intersects with personal faith.

Circle of inner contentment

The circle of inner contentment is universally represented as the harmonious alignment of **Drive** (experience, empathy, motivation) and **Direction** (perspective, conscience, collaboration) to create meaningful changes. In ecology, it reflects balance within ecosystems; in philosophy, it emphasizes ethical living and purpose; in sociology, it aligns with societal roles and contributions; and in theology, it manifests as spiritual fulfillment. Across these frameworks, meaning emerges from the subjective perceived value of actions, reinforcing the interconnectedness of drive, direction, and contentment in creating a purposeful life.

In **ecology**, the circle of inner contentment is reflected in the balance and sustainability of ecosystems, where the meaning of actions can be interpreted through their contributions to ecological harmony.

In **philosophy**, the circle of inner contentment aligns with the pursuit of purpose and ethical action, where meaning is derived from aligning personal actions with values and universal principles.

In **sociology**, the circle of inner contentment represents the alignment of individual drives with societal roles and norms, creating meaning through contributions to social systems that provide mutual benefit.

Theology frames the circle of inner contentment as the alignment of human actions with divine or spiritual principles, where meaning is perceived through the fulfillment of spiritual and moral duties.

Everyone has that little voice inside. You might call it a conscience, a soul, or maybe even instinct. Whatever you name it, we're all driven by something intangible—something we can't see, touch, or measure.

But we *still see the impact of its existence*.

Religion often told me that the soul is the most important part of who we are, while the body, being of this earth, is somehow corrupted. The message was clear: Ignore the body's needs if it fuels the soul. Some faiths even go so far as to say religion itself means being able to ignore the body's needs. But here's the thing—I don't think like most people. My thoughts don't come in neat little words but in feelings, impressions, and concepts. Thinking in feelings gave me a deeper connection to those around me—my soul *hurt* for those who were hurting, and *loved* for those who loved. My path to faith led me back to the body, where what we do defines who we are, both inside and out. It quickly became my life's mission to understand the soul and to find a way to live that gave me inner peace, a way to know that whatever I did, I could do it without regret. Sounds ideal, right?

But even though my journey to self-discovery brought me to what I thought was my destination, it wasn't until much later that I realized my understanding was a handcrafted square of fabric that had been left out of the quilt.

There was a *gap* inside me, something preventing true contentment. Sure, I had no regrets—everything I did was with the best intentions. By exploring the depths of existence and diving into every experience I could find, my view of the world and its people expanded beyond anything I could have expected.

But I was missing something. I found myself longing for a *community*—a group of people who could help me turn the path I'd found into a road others could travel. After all, if the most enlightened person to ever live just silently sat on a mountaintop, wouldn't their life be meaningless? Their enlightenment would leave the earth when they did, without leaving an impact. This realization was the final piece of the puzzle. It revealed my biggest flaw and why my circle of inner contentment was incomplete. I had been living to enrich my own understanding and only my own understanding. I had been living only for myself, the meaning to my life was only myself. I was a dusty square of fabric, forgotten in the bottom of the drawer without a quilt to be a part of.

We are spiritual beings, driven to create change and meaning within ourselves. There are three parts—three aspects—of our soul that drive us to live and create meaning. **Caring** drives our resolve to nurture. **Resolve** pushes us to be curious about how the world works. **Curiosity** leads us to find the things we care about and want to nurture. While the outer physical aspects of who we are gathers energy to give our lives meaning, the inner spiritual aspects drive the energy stored *within* us to direct that meaning towards positive or negative change.



Energy is never lost; it just changes shape. As energy passes through us, it's stored and then released in a new direction. When our souls move energy from one aspect to another, energy pushes back as friction that can build up within, slowing the rate at which we can transform our energy. This friction can hinder our ability to cultivate contentment and disrupt the natural flow of energy unless we find a way to resolve it. **Apathy** accumulates in our spirit as we exercise caring. **Anxiety** builds within our community as we strengthen our resolve. **Exhaustion** takes root in our subconscious as we explore our curiosity.

While I spent much of my life mastering the physical aspects of contentment, I overlooked my own spiritual contentment. Though I connected deeply with my spirit, I neglected to allow it to truly guide my life.

This isn't about religion—it's about that inner part of ourselves that provides personal direction. My life experiences, empathy toward others, and motivation for change went far beyond what most people encounter. My life had depth, yet it lacked meaning that would endure beyond my physical existence. *The meaning of my life was solely focused on myself.*

To build something lasting, you must build it through your spirit. You must share it, give your energy, drive, and direction. You have to decide to live for something that carries your energy beyond your own lifetime. This book is one such example. My suffering, my hope, my faults, and my realizations will endure after my death. The struggles and suffering that once held me back will gain new meaning as you read and reflect on them.

I am deeply grateful to you. By trusting me to contribute to your positive energy and insights, you've given me the opportunity to connect in a way that allows my energy to create positive ripples long after I am gone.

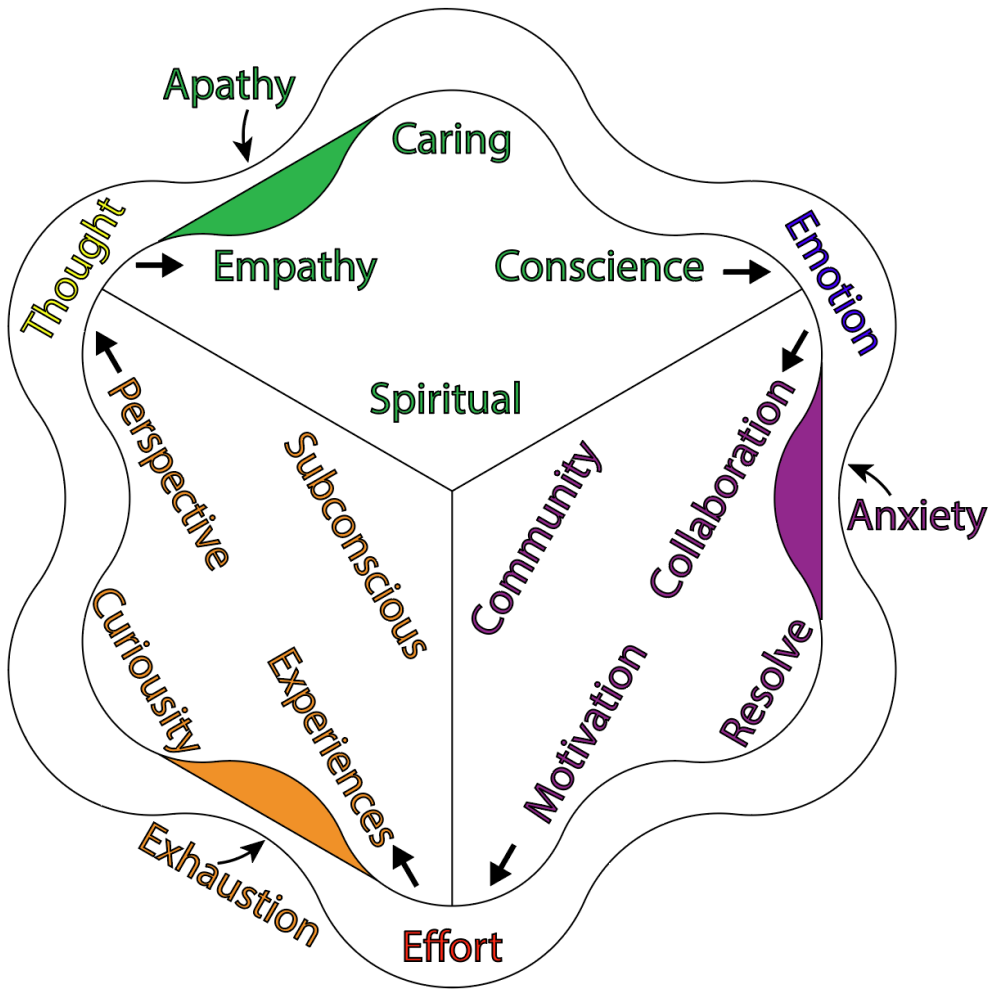
Your meaning might be found in enriching the natural world. Your meaning might be found in changing how we all live. Your meaning, like mine, might be adding to the positive energy in the world around you.

Meaning is Change. To cultivate that meaning within ourselves, we must remove the obstacles that slow us down. We need to care for others without falling into apathy. We need to build our resolve without being paralyzed by anxiety. And we need to explore our curiosity without being overwhelmed by exhaustion. When we master this balance, we can truly make meaningful changes.

This may seem like too many things to keep track of, however, there are ways to care for others, build resolve, and explore curiosity that help resolve these challenges. By discovering outer meaning, we free ourselves to build meaning within us. By discovering our inner meaning, we free ourselves to build meaning in the world around us. When we have cultivated both, that is where we find true contentment.

This journey isn't always easy. When we push our energy against its natural flow, our spirit loses its guiding force. Instead of our spirit leading and shaping our energy, we become driven by the current state of our energy—stagnating our spiritual growth and obstructing our ability to create positive meaning in our lives.

To truly flourish, we must align our spirit with the natural rhythm of our physical lives. That allows our spirit to guide our life toward growth, contentment, and the fulfillment of our deepest potential.



Conscience from Empathy

This section details the interplay of **spiritual identity**, **thoughts**, and **emotions** in shaping our connections and impact on others. Together, ecology, philosophy, sociology and theology affirm the central message: that our spirit, shaped by caring and conscience, directs our thoughts and emotions toward meaningful connections, while disconnection reflects a breakdown in this harmonious interplay.

Ecology highlights resource management and interconnectedness in maintaining balance and addressing disconnection.

Psychology explains the internal dynamics of thought, emotional energy, and the consequences of disconnection, such as apathy.

Sociology emphasizes the importance of empathy, social norms, and emotional investment in maintaining meaningful connections.

Theology provides a spiritual dimension, framing conscience, caring, and apathy within moral and divine contexts.

We all come to rely on certain things for physical, mental, and social support. These things we lean on become the things we care about, nurturing our growth and sustaining us through life's challenges.

When I was in school, I often felt like an outsider. I didn't fit in with the football players, the math whizzes, or the music prodigies. They seemed to believe that their specific singular focus made them superior to anyone with a different passion. But I saw value in a broader curiosity. The only group that supported me was the other "weird" kids. We found comfort in being ourselves around each other, and I grew to care deeply about them. They improved my life; they provided a sense of connection and belonging that I couldn't find elsewhere.

Caring is a well within our spirits. It transforms mere thoughts into connections, building understanding and empathy. The more energy we invest in connecting our thoughts and emotions, the more we weave together our mental and social worlds. This weaving fuels our ability to care deeply. It links how the world changes us to how we change each other.

Empathy allows us to understand that the world affects what we care about just as it affects ourselves. Being part of an outsider group changes your perspective. You begin to care deeply for each member because their experiences resonate with your own. When one of them is insulted or hurt, it feels personal. When they are sad or depressed, it impacts the entire group. We share experiences, and those experiences forged a shared perspective, changing us together. In the greater scope of humanity, we all share the same world experience; while we may be shaped differently, the information from the world around us affects us in the same way, creating a strong bond of empathy towards all living things.

Empathy is our ability to understand and predict how changes affect our connections. Our empathy captures meaningful thoughts that connect to change affecting our connections, sometimes positively, sometimes negatively. It turns thoughts into emotions, helping us connect on a deeper level.

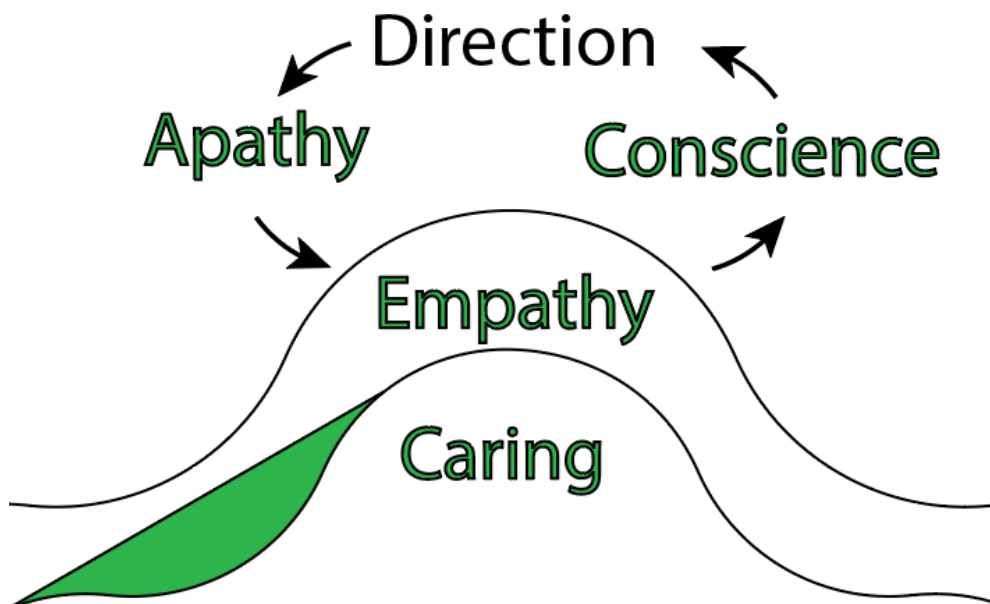
Empathy doesn't always demand action, but our conscience does.

Conscience is that inner voice urging us to act when the things we care about are threatened. When I saw bullies harassing the weird kids, I couldn't just stand by. I knew what it felt like to be hurt and unsupported. My conscience wouldn't allow me to let them suffer alone, so I stepped in to help.

There's a difference between willingly facing a challenge and being forced into it. By standing up to the bullies, I removed their power, choosing to endure discomfort myself to protect my friends. Acting on our conscience builds understanding and strengthens our connections.

Our **conscience** guides us in distinguishing right from wrong. **Caring is important, but it's only when we channel that caring into action that it truly makes a difference.** By seeing connections as a part of us being changed by the world, we create connections we truly care about. This gives us the understanding we need to change each other in ways that build positive meaning in all our lives.

Our **Spirit** is the identity of our soul. Our **Empathy** draws in significant thoughts held by our **Caring** and directed by **Conscience**. Caring is the spiritual well of our souls. It represents the amount of thought we have available to channel into emotion. As our Empathy pushes our thoughts towards connection, guided by our conscience, whether we succeed or fail to make an impact, we feel as though we've made as much of an impact as we can. We call apathy the feeling that there is nothing more we can do for a connection.



I always knew, deep down, that people should be treated equally and judged by their actions rather than their identities. My conscience has always been unshakeable on this point.

Our society often empowers those who simply take, rewarding self-interest over compassion. Choosing to make myself a target in order to help others didn't help me get ahead. But for those I helped, the meaning was profound, there was purpose in my decisions. There is a unique contentment that comes from knowing you've always done what you believe is right, regardless if the outcomes were what you expected.

Empathy and conscience—the essence of caring—can be strengthened by continuously connecting with others through thought, being mindful of how the world changes them. Connecting through thought cultivates connections that change each other in a more compassionate and understanding way.

Collaboration from Motivation

The section highlights the interplay between **community, motivation, collaboration, and resolve**, framing them as integral to how we channel emotions into effort for collective change. Together ecology, philosophy, sociology and theology affirm the statement's core ideas: that our community, supported by motivation and collaboration, empower individuals and groups to channel emotional energy into more efficient and effective physical change while anxiety reflects a breakdown in this mutually beneficial exchange.

Ecology emphasizes the balance and interdependence necessary for collaborative systems.

Psychology explains the emotional and cognitive processes behind motivation, resolve, and anxiety

Sociology highlights the importance of social cohesion, collective effort, and the contributions of individuals to community and personal well-being

Theology frames community, collaboration, and resolve within moral and spiritual contexts.

We live in a shared world where every day is like a web of collaborations. We establish governments to enforce the values we all want together but can't achieve alone, such as security, reliability, and trust. We divide labor so we don't have to do everything ourselves, using money to trade an hour of electrical work for an hour of farming. These collaborations, among countless more, form the bedrock of our society.

A simple definition of a cult is any organization people are willing to dedicate their lives to. It could be an electronics brand, shoes, work or altruism. Within that definition, the branch of religion I grew up in could be considered a cult, it was something we dedicated every aspect of our lives to. Like many others, it focused on growing its followers. Part of our mission was to help those who weren't fortunate enough to belong to our community, with the hope of bringing some of them into our fold. Engaging in acts of giving without expecting a reward gave us a sense of purpose, making us feel like part of something bigger. It aligned our motivations toward a common goal.

Motivation is the force that draws emotion from our connections to our community. It drives us to work to maintain those connections, to hold onto what matters to us. Our group's motivation was to uphold a positive image by doing good deeds for others. This, in turn, reinforced our connections to the group and strengthened our sense of community.

One act of service we performed was traveling to paint houses in a poor part of the country. The connection we all shared inspired a collective motivation to help others. We would spend two days in the hot sun, painting houses, and the other two days running a day camp for local children while sharing our message with them. If any of us had attempted this alone, we would have failed. But together, our community, united by shared motivation, was able to create change that was greater than each of us could have accomplished on our own.

Collaboration is our ability to work together to effect significant change in the world. It channels our motivations into actions that make a greater impact than we could achieve alone. When we collaborate, we align our motivations with others, combining their strength with our own, making us all stronger.

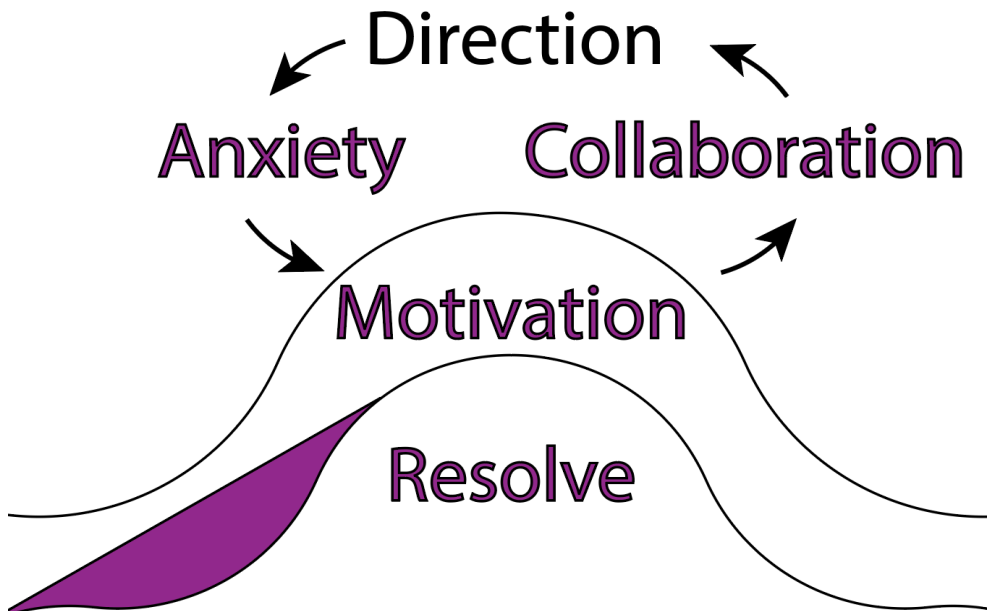
The group I belonged to demanded that we change the world according to the organization's beliefs. Our entire social lives were intertwined with these beliefs, and straying from them meant losing our connections. The desire to remain part of the community fortified our resolve to protect those connections at all costs.

Resolve is the well within our community that turns emotion into action. The more we consult our emotions before we act, the stronger our resolve becomes. When we approach changing the world like what we do changes us and our connections as much as it changes the world, we build the resolve to ensure our actions empower our connections and community, driving our motivation.

In the end, our resolve fuels our actions and our commitment to one another, ensuring that our efforts are meaningful and impactful.

Our **community** supports our soul. Our **motivations** capture strong emotions held by our **resolve** and are directed by **collaboration**. **Resolve** is the well within our community's soul; it represents the amount of emotion we have available to channel into effort. As our **Motivation** drives our emotions toward collaborative interaction, whether we succeed or fail to make an impact, we ultimately feel that we've invested as much as possible toward that impact. The feeling that our community is not enough to complete an interaction is what we call **Anxiety**.

Motivation and collaboration, both within and beyond the community, can be strengthened by supporting one another in building a strong, cohesive group that empowers us to change the world in ways we all need. Just like the organization I was part of, everything we do in our daily lives contributes to our community.



In the end, it didn't really matter what I believed or the reasons why anyone else was on that trip with me. What mattered was that we were all working together for something positive. The meaning behind our actions had a genuine, positive impact. For those few days, we were living to help people who needed us. The significance of that moment in our lives wasn't rooted in what we believed, but in the people we were living for during that time.

The connections we built over those days remain strong even today. Whether we fit your definition of a cult, religion, community or anything else, we lived to help people. Those collaborations forged a community that I am proud to have been a part of.

Perception from Experience

This section explores the interplay of the subconscious, experiences, curiosity, and perspective in driving mental effort and shaping understanding. Together, ecology, philosophy, sociology and theology affirm the central message of the section: that our subconscious, guided by curiosity and perspective, directs effort toward understanding, while exhaustion marks the limit of our capacity to process and engage with information.

Ecology emphasizes resource allocation, adaptive limits, and environmental interactions.

Psychology explores the subconscious, intrinsic motivation, and the cognitive boundaries of effort and exhaustion.

Sociology highlights the role of collective experiences, cultural frameworks, and societal limitations in shaping understanding.

Theology provides a spiritual dimension, framing subconscious curiosity, perspective, and exhaustion within the quest for divine or moral knowledge.

My hometown was predominantly populated by the descendants of immigrants from Northern Europe, so most people had very light skin. Growing up, I didn't interact much with people who had darker skin, but I observed how they were treated. In a small Midwestern town in the USA, you get to know most of the people, and even if you don't know someone personally, you trust them because someone you trust knows them. Everyone around you becomes part of your personal community, so you don't question their motivations without a reason. When I saw people treating those with darker skin with suspicion, it made me feel like there was a well-thought-out reason for that mistrust.

Our experiences shape how our soul changes us. As we navigate life, our subconscious holds onto the experiences we struggle with, and our perception filters how those struggles change us. No one shares every experience with us; we all have different perspectives, our bodies and minds can experience the same events very differently from the people around us.

There's a moment I remember clearly. I was sitting in the car on the way to church when I saw a dark-skinned person walking down the sidewalk. They looked like anyone else, just going about their day. I'm not sure if my mom said something or if it was just my curiosity, but I asked her why we shouldn't trust Black people. Her response was that they were raised with values different from ours, and many of them didn't have a father figure in their lives.

My mom wasn't actively racist; she believed people raised in a different value system had to prove themselves trustworthy on an individual basis regardless of skin color. But skin color made them stand out. Seeing someone who clearly didn't have generations of history in our very whitewashed town made you immediately question the values taught where they were from.

Our religion also taught that any activities leading to children had to be authorized by a religious ceremony and follow strict rules. It was believed that church was the only thing holding back the firestorm of evil. It was taught to us that people who didn't follow the tenants of the church were still under the control of evil and capable of anything—even murder. Never seeing people with dark skin in our religion made it easier to believe they didn't have a sense of right and wrong and couldn't be trusted. Of course, smokers, drinkers, dancers, and other "suspicious" types fell into this group as well as those types never went to our church either.

Curiosity is a well within our subconscious. The more curiosity we have, the more we are driven to new experiences in search of information. As a well to hold energy, the more we process subconsciously, the more curious we become. The more energy that flows between effort and thought, the more we connect our physical and mental worlds, and the more our subconscious grows.

It wasn't until a friend from our religion revealed that they had intimate feelings for the same sex that I started to ask real questions about the answers I had been given during my upbringing.

Up to that point, I believed our religion was fighting evil forces; and only by following our religion would you be able to tell the difference between right and wrong, only through our religion would you have the tools to resist becoming part of the evil we were fighting. We were taught that the unfaithful chose to do things against the rules of our religion as an act of spite and evil, giving themselves over to the forces against us. The religion would then have no choice but to cut the evil from their number, expelling them from family, home, and community.

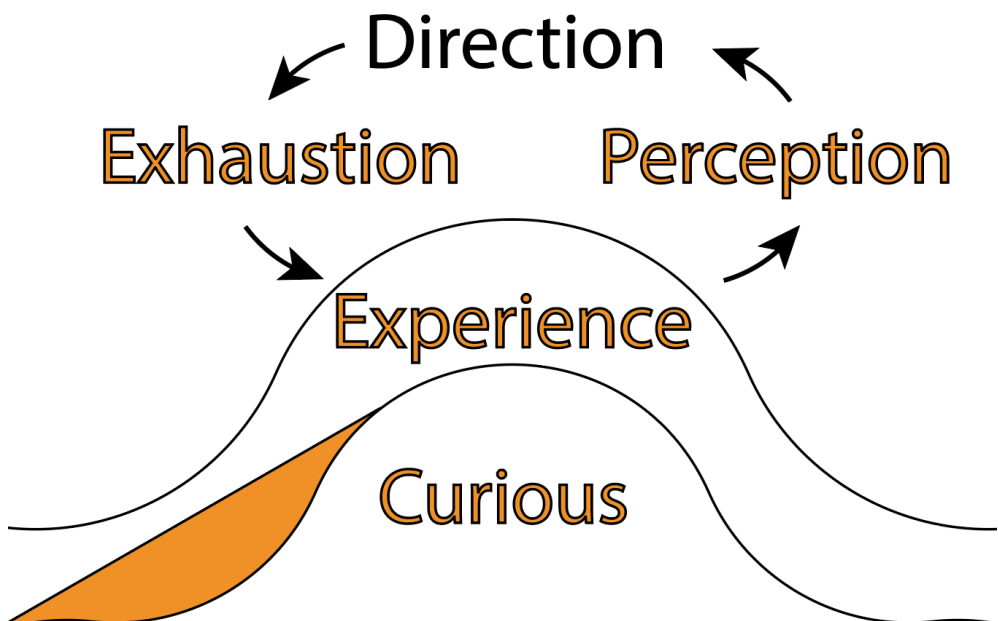
In my experience, my friend was not evil, and I couldn't see them choosing to lose every connection and community they had, driven to the point of nearly ending their own life. Who would choose that? If this was a conscious choice we all had to make and these urges were inside all of us, why hadn't more people in my life shared times when they chose not to be intimately attracted to the same sex?

After this experience, I made an effort to interact more with different people. I learned that people do not choose how their hormones act, the body parts they are born with, or their skin color, we can only control our perspective on these things. *Evil doesn't drive you to anything—it's you, and only you that chooses to live according to your values.* You can spend time with attractive people you're drawn to and choose not to be intimate, evil doesn't control your actions, just as much as evil doesn't choose who you find attractive. My curiosity about how the world affected me led to new experiences, providing me with a new perspective, and the information I gained along the way changed me for the better, helped me take accountability for how I affected those around me.

Perspective is how we gain knowledge from our experiences. We could all go through the same struggle but gain different information based on our past experiences, making our perspectives unique. When perspectives align through shared experiences, minds can resonate, strengthening or overpowering how we see the world. No matter who we are, our perspective will always have flaws. Only through new and challenging experiences can we grow as individuals and cultivate a more complete perspective that is closer to the truth.

I wish that were the end, that my perspective on skin color was flawless, but it's not. Even now, there are times when I see someone with dark skin in unusual places, and my subconscious alerts me that I may need to do something. I know enough not to let that information change me. I ignore my subconscious because I know it's a flawed perspective from a flawed childhood. Only through new experiences will my subconscious perspective shift away from the old and into something better. Treating ourselves as part of the world we are changing is the only way to truly understand how the world changes us. We must accept that we control how we react and are personally responsible for what we believe.

Our subconscious is the voice of our soul. Our experiences collect significant effort, held by our curiosity and guided by perspective. **Curiosity** is the **Subconscious** well in the soul. It represents the amount of effort we have available to channel into thought. As our Subconscious pushes our efforts toward information, guided by perspective, whether we succeed or fail to understand the impact, we end up feeling we have understood as much as we can. **Exhaustion** is the feeling that there is nothing more we can do to understand.



Experience and perspective are the heartbeats of our understanding.
They pulse with the vibrant energy of curiosity.

When we reach out, eager to embrace and absorb new information, we enrich our minds and collective spirit, we become better prepared for the changes the world demands of us.

Chapter 5: Growing our Potential for Change

Direction of Life, Positive Inner Meaning

We find balance, freedom of life, and positive impact through the seamless integration of our body and soul. By nurturing all aspects, we harness our full potential and create a life of deeper meaning and richer experiences.

Ecology supports the integration of body and soul (tangible and non-tangible aspects of change) through the principle of balance within ecosystems. Just as ecosystems require harmony between physical elements and intangible forces like energy flows and adaptability, humans achieve greater impact and meaning by integrating their tangible (body) and non-tangible (soul) aspects.

Philosophy aligns with the concept of integration as key to fulfillment. Aristotle's *eudaimonia* emphasizes balance between physical actions and non-tangible elements like virtues and wisdom, reflecting how nurturing all aspects leads to a meaningful and flourishing life.

Sociology demonstrates that integrating tangible and non-tangible aspects enhances social well-being. Social roles and identities require balance between physical contributions and intangible drives, such as motivation and empathy, fostering cohesive and impactful communities.

Theology reinforces the idea of integrating all aspects of the self. Many traditions, such as Christianity and Buddhism, teach that fulfillment arises from harmonizing tangible actions with intangible guidance, such as conscience or moral direction, aligning purpose with greater meaning.

Simply by living, we are constantly changing the world, ourselves, and others; just by existing, we are building meaning in our lives. Even the lives of animals have meaning; together, they create most of the changes in the world, keeping it flourishing and giving it purpose.

*By your very existence, your life and your energy have meaning. **You have meaning.***

But we need to ask ourselves—**is our “meaning” positive or negative?** You, like many people may believe animals have no choice; their lives are guided by simple needs and instincts. As humans, however, we possess souls with complex drives and directions. This doesn't mean that animals lack souls, but humans have the unique ability to create profound change and deeper meaning beyond merely existing. We can change the world for the worse, but we are also responsible for changing it for the better.

Meaning is found in the effects of change that we leave behind, it is created in our pursuit of who and what we lived for. So, how do we ensure the results of the changes we make have positive meaning?

It's not enough to simply look at what someone has done and judge whether it's good or bad then say that the meaning to their life is positive or negative. Many people have created positive change to gain the power to do greater harm. Many people have done great damage in the name of "The Greater Good". We have to realize **our meaning is subjective**. We might live to help one thing, while hurting everything else, giving a positive meaning to us, but a larger negative meaning to everyone else. We might also live to destroy one thing, but help the rest of the world, giving a negative meaning to ourselves but a positive meaning to the rest of the world.

The complexity of meaning has caused many people to just give up, but those people are making it harder than it needs to be. Just ask yourself, are you following the natural flow of energy in the changes we make to the world, ourselves and others? Are we allowing our soul to direct our energy through **perspective, conscience, and community**?

Perspective allows us to grow beyond our own thoughts and the inbred thoughts of our social bubbles. Conscience allows us to create the change in others that we want to see within ourselves. Community allows us to create change that helps everyone.

Even if the changes we make have a negative result, as long as we live to have the best impact we can, our struggle to build a better future will be the meaning to our lives. The pages of history are full of people who never achieved their dream in life, but gave so much energy to their dream that their dream lived long enough to be realized by future generations.

When our lives flow in a positive direction, we are using the energy we have built up in our soul, to power the changes we make in a positive way. When we do this, we are also using the energy from one aspect to make changes in another, empowering change with more aspects of who we are, breaking through the burdens of life that build up as sediment. If we direct our energy negatively, against the natural flow, our souls can't effectively channel that energy, and it lacks the impact needed to clear those burdens.

It's like the difference between fog and rain. **Fog** moves without drive and direction, eventually dissipating without much impact. **Rain**, however, has both drive and direction. It moves through life, nurturing growth, washing away buildup, and reshaping landscapes.

Even rain isn't always positive. Similarly, our actions might not always lead to positive outcomes even if we follow the natural flow of energy. But by aligning with the natural flow, we nourish our souls, build our strength, and clear away our burdens, giving us all the tools and resources to keep pursuing those positive outcomes. This means acting with **care, curiosity, and resolve**, bringing together **thought, emotion, and effort**.

Our **soul** links every aspect of our body together, giving us the drive to make changes greater than mere existence. Our bodies empower our souls to turn direction into action. When body and soul work together, they strengthen each other, completing a circle that makes us more than we could ever be separately.

Each aspect of who we are—body and soul—gives us power but can also weaken us.

Our soul influences our bodies. If we do not cultivate our soul through **connection** and **community**, our bodies will weaken. This is not merely a metaphor; we physically need intimacy and interaction just as much as we need food and water. Without them, we lose perspective, our minds collapse, and our bodies begin to fail from discomfort and depression.

Our body is fueled by our community and shaped by our subconscious. **Community (motivation)** is how our soul gives our body life (energy) by giving us the strength to interact within this shared world. **Our subconscious (perspective)** is how our soul gives our body meaning (change) by directing our thoughts based on our experiences and perspective

Our body, in turn, influences our soul. If we do not cultivate our bodies through **curiosity** and **information**, our souls will weaken. This is not just a metaphor; we spiritually need experiences and challenges as much as we need empathy and moments of reflection. Without them, we lose connection, our communities collapse, and our souls begin to fail from anxiety. **Our soul is fueled by our mind** and shaped by our connections. **Our mind (thought)** is how our body gives our soul life (energy), and **our connections (interactions)** are how our body gives our soul meaning (change).

Cultivating contentment requires both parts of who we are to work in harmony. **Our bodies cultivate energy**, freeing our lives to bring physical contentment. **Our souls cultivate change**, our meaning, to bring spiritual contentment. **Change** moves our energy from one aspect to another, and **meaning** moves our life from one aspect to another. **Directing energy** drives change, and **directing life** drives meaning. We can live as body or soul without the other, but we will never find true contentment. **We are two sides of the same coin, both essential to the life of the other.**

In essence, we find **balance, freedom of life, and positive impact** through the seamless integration of our body and soul. By nurturing all aspects, we harness our full potential and create a life of deeper meaning and richer experiences.

Motivation from Emotion, Interaction through Cooperation

Using the natural energy cycle to follow the natural flow, our connections empower our interactions through resolve. When we interact with emotion, we treat the world like a connection, like it is changing us as much as we change it.

Ecology supports the idea of connections empowering interactions through the concept of symbiosis. Symbiotic relationships, such as between pollinators and plants or coral and algae, illustrate how organisms treat each other as integral connections. These interactions not only change one organism but also shape the ecosystem, reflecting how reciprocal connections create lasting impact and mutual adaptation.

Philosophy supports the idea of reciprocal change through interaction. Existentialist thought emphasizes that our actions shape the world while simultaneously reshaping our understanding and existence. The concept of treating the world as a connection aligns with phenomenology, where human experience is seen as deeply interwoven with the environment.

Sociology highlights how connections drive cooperative interactions. Social exchange theory explains how relationships are built on mutual influence and reciprocity, aligning with the idea that interactions with the world are empowered by emotional resolve and shared change. The collaborative nature of societies reflects this dynamic.

Theology reinforces the reciprocal nature of interactions. Many religious teachings, such as the Christian principle of stewardship or Buddhist mindfulness, emphasize that engaging with the world thoughtfully and emotionally fosters spiritual growth. This mirrors the idea that treating the world as a connection results in mutual transformation.

We have to change the world every day. We must consume life to sustain ourselves and nurture life to keep the world alive. If we only rely on sheer effort to change the world, we get very little done while gaining large amounts of discomfort. However, when we lead with *emotion* and consider how our actions impact our shared world, we add the strength of others to our efforts, grounding what we do in the stability of the world around us. With more people, and with nature itself aligned with the changes we make, it takes less effort to accomplish more and we create less discomfort for ourselves and our connections. Yet, there is an inner strength between emotion and effort that drives and directs the changes we make—this is our **resolve**.

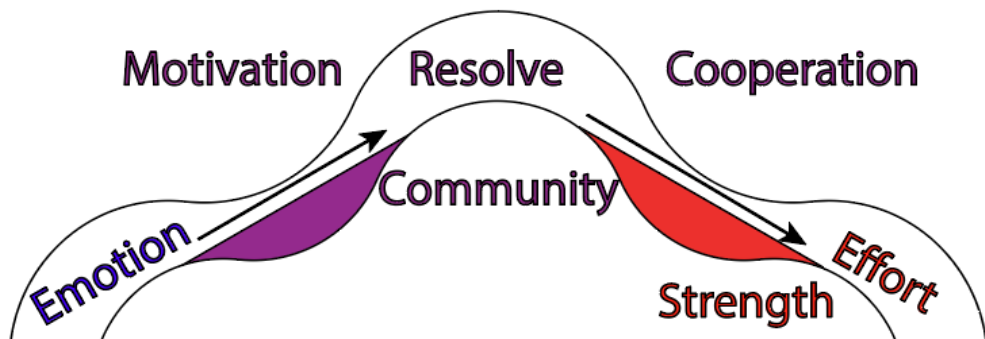
Our soul is shaped by thoughtfully tending to our physical connections and growing our understanding. Understanding our connections fuels our *motivations*, building our *resolve* to change the world and strengthen our community through *cooperation*. The soul uses this resolve to empower our interactions with *emotion*, directing our efforts to collaborate with our community and helping us make changes that positively impact everyone, including ourselves.

When we combine our resolve with our emotions and efforts, our interactions with the world drive positive change. This inner strength allows us to approach the world with compassion and purpose, aligning our actions with the greater good. Our *resolve* becomes a seed for transformation, turning intention into action and growing a community rooted in empathy and understanding.

By using our *emotions* to empower our community of connections and our community of connections to direct our interactions, we can create lasting change. Our physical and emotional connections become the foundation upon which we build a better world. Our resolve, rooted in our soul, guides us to make choices that benefit both ourselves and those around us. This is how we nurture life and sustain the world, ensuring our efforts are effective and harmonious.

In the end, through the unity of our body and soul, *connection* and *resolve*, we find the strength to change the world in meaningful ways. This balance enables us to consume and nurture life, transforming our shared world with intention and grace. We can create a future where every action is infused with purpose, compassion, and deep connection.

Using the natural energy cycle, our connections empower our interactions through resolve.



When we interact with emotion, we treat the world like a connection, like it is changing us as much as we change it.

Emotion into Effort Through Community (How positive energy combines through soul)

Emotion is like electromagnetic energy that we share, driving us to create our place in the world. It is the same energy as light—capable of being as nurturing as it can be harmful. When we interact with *emotion*, we infuse our interactions with power, capable of greater positive or negative impact. Our *resolve* gives this energy drive and direction.

We use our bodies every day, and if we push them too hard, it becomes more difficult to make the changes we need to make. When I was overworking myself and depressed, I stopped exercising and ate nothing but junk food. I became irritable and a burden on those I was working so hard to take care of. However, by caring for ourselves—eating right, getting enough sleep, and exercising—we can accomplish more with less effort. By building the *motivation* to protect our connection with our bodies, we strengthen our resolve to change ourselves in positive ways. This allows us to work with our bodies to effect change while still protecting our health, just like our motivation allows us to work with the world around us while still protecting our communities and connections.

Our social energy of *emotion* comes from our understanding of our connections. When we act with *emotion*, we change the world based on this understanding. Our motivations draw in significant emotions, building resolve to transform our surroundings through *cooperation*. Many of us have simple pleasures in life, like a stocked fridge, clean sheets, organized cabinets, or morning coffee. We change the world around us, working with others or even with objects to protect these positive emotions. Sometimes, the cooperation is us working more for the object, like when the power switch on the coffee pot doesn't work right, but we have a connection to how it brews coffee, so we find ways to keep it going.

Conversely, we change the world to avoid negative emotions when something upsets us. Positive and negative emotions guide us in determining what changes we need to make. When these emotions are shared by others, they indicate whether our community will support these changes or if they will be undone. This also gives us a chance to positively address how others are affecting us in a positive way before we put in effort to change the world.

Once our resolve gathers enough emotional energy, it fosters cooperation with our connections to make changes in a direction that aligns with shared motivations, creating a world that benefits us all. Changes that help everyone reduce the amount of effort and discomfort we experience. When we gain the resolve to eat healthily and exercise, we work with our appetites and muscles, changing our bodies to function better. When our bodies work better, we don't need to visit doctors as often or modify our homes to accommodate poor health. When we weigh less, it takes less effort for our bodies to move. If our body can make countless organisms work together as a community, so can we work together with every other community we are part of. When we find the trick to get the power button to work, the coffee pot has a longer life, and we get our coffee the way we like it.

By nurturing our physical and emotional well-being, we build a foundation that supports meaningful and sustainable change. *Emotion*, as powerful and essential as light, can drive us to create a better world when guided by resolve and understanding. This balance ensures our efforts are effective and fosters a community where everyone can thrive.

Interact with Community (How positive strengthens attribute)

It has been shown that images of nature calm us, lower blood pressure, and bring peace to our thoughts.

My neighborhood was in the country, with a dozen houses scattered through a pine forest five miles outside of town. As a teen, I wanted clothes that fit, different books to read, and money to do things outside of family activities. My first job was at a fast-food restaurant in town, and I would bike the five miles there and back to work my shifts.

The best part of my day was the bike ride. The grasses would blur along the shoulder. The soundtrack of gravel under my tires scored their passing. Trees close to the road would grow and shrink to mark my progress. Scents of nature were landmarks leading the way—past the pasture, the swamp full of death and life, the clump of perpetually seasonally scented northern pines, and the field that somehow brought a scent to sunshine.

It was a joy.

The symbiotic trance was only broken by the trash and debris thrown out by people who decided their lifestyle was the rest of the world's burden to bear. I wasn't the only one who wanted the peaceful views that healed the mind; when our neighborhood volunteered to "adopt" the highway and clean it up, I was one of the first to join. Cleaning up the side of the road may seem pointless; people see it as a trash can, so they think it will always be trashed. However, that wasn't completely true because the amount of trash alongside the road became less each year. We showed we cared, and our community was willing to spend the effort to create a meditative drive for everyone.

Many people respected that. It might have been that the people who did the work tried harder to keep it clean, but I believe even those who didn't live on the road stopped seeing it as a trash can and simply interacted with the world with a little *emotion*, benefiting all of us and making our job a little easier. By interacting with emotion, we came together as a community, creating a better place for everyone who lived there or passed through.

When we interact with the world, we are changing a shared place; changes done to the world can undo the changes made by others. When we use *emotion* to understand the motivations of our connections, sharing our own motivations in return, we build our community. As part of a community with aligned motivations, when we help ourselves, we help the community, and when we help the community, we help ourselves. By the time we interact with the world, we will find that many of the changes we need to make have already been made, and the changes we've made have been strengthened by others. Using *emotion* to interact through our community, we will find we have to interact less; the changes we make and the meaning we create will last longer.

Strength in the community (How prior helps power)

Living in a farming community naturally creates strong connections. Anything that affects one farmer affects all of them—prices of seed, availability of equipment, weather, water, crop disease, and even the local stores—everything is a shared experience, a shared perspective. Some farmers choose to live isolated from everyone else, and these are often the most miserable people you'll ever meet, the kind who are more likely to greet you with a shotgun blast than a hello.

One bright, hot summer day, I got a call from a local farmer I had worked for in the past. Some of his cows had run off after a storm damaged the fence, and they were last seen ten miles away in a swamp. Every farmer knows what it's like to lose some of the herd and how much it can impact their livelihood, so I was more than glad to help out, along with several others from the community.

Interacting with emotion adds the strength of others to our own. When we also share motivations, we aren't just borrowing strength; we're combining our goals with those of our connections. Shared motivations are what build *resolve* and our community.

The swamp was miserable—wet shoes, wet pants, bugs, and humidity. The cows, on the other hand, were as happy as could be. Fresh grass, water, shade, and cool mud kept the bugs away, and they had no intention of leaving willingly. Whenever one person moved towards the herd, they simply flowed around that person to head back into the swamp. It wasn't until we created a miserable chain of soaking individuals that our group managed to herd them into the field and drive them back home.

Sharing resolve means that we share the strength of our connections. It means that the changes we make to the world are not just our own energy; they come from the shared energy of everyone in our community, sharing our lives and the meaning that energy creates.

When one cow decided it was done being herded and lay down in a ditch of water, we all worked together to get it onto a trailer so it could be carted home. When our well froze, we could count on the neighbors to share their water until we could thaw it out. When my car slid into a deep ditch, the farmers down the road used their tractors to lift it out.

Using emotion through community, the strength we use to change the world is no longer just our own. Change is not driven by our energy alone. We share our life and strength with our connections, and the meaning we build becomes a collaboration beyond our strength alone.

Resolving Discomfort with Emotion through Community

Every action we take impacts the world as we move through it. Simply living—breathing, eating, drinking—changes the world around us. But with these actions often comes discomfort. Our bodies wear down, and we get hungry, thirsty, and tired. We face challenges from a world not always built for our comfort—sharp objects, extreme temperatures, and biting winds.

I remember my time as a sales and service tech vividly. Many of my co-workers struggled with either the sales or the service part of our jobs. We were tasked with hooking up our products to customers' automated machinery. With my background in robotics, this was a breeze for me, but one of my co-workers found it incredibly tough. While covering his vacation, I was called to one of his accounts to fix a leak. One of the machinery's moving parts had been rubbing against our equipment's tubing, causing a leak. I replaced the tubing, reinstalled the equipment to keep it out of harm's way, and reprogrammed everything to work automatically with the customer's setup.

When my co-worker returned, he told me he had been visiting that account three times a week to help them. We went back to the account together, and I walked him through my process, step by step. After that, he only had to visit the customer once a month, and rarely for an emergency.

We were part of the same community, and we were both motivated to make our jobs easier. I freed up my co-worker's time by resolving the issues at that account. He could help me with larger tasks, moving heavy equipment, and organizing our shared parts area. **Combining our strengths** reduced discomfort and created a stronger, more efficient team. As his service skills improved, we saw fewer emergency calls when covering his shifts.

When we follow the natural flow of energy and lead changes to the world with our *emotions*, we build a world that reduces discomfort for everyone. The changes we make last longer, and the number of times we need to repeat the same change goes down. We create a community with shared motivations so no one person has to do everything alone.

We do this in small ways every day. We establish personal space and possessions to create areas that work for us and those we interact with. We rely on people with specific tools and skills—bakers to bake bread and builders to construct houses—because they can do these jobs with less effort and more efficiency. The discomfort we resolve is all about recognizing that life is better when we collaborate as a community.

Building a community also alleviates some of our internal discomforts. It eases the anxiety of interacting with those whose motivations we don't know and provides a helping hand for tasks beyond our own physical abilities. When we nurture a supportive community, we not only alleviate our own discomfort but also contribute to a world that helps everyone live life more freely.

Resolving Anxiety with Community

Growing up within a religious group that drew a stark line between the divine and the diabolical, I was taught to see the world in extremes. Anyone who smoked, used drugs, or swore was labeled as having chosen a life without any moral guidance at all. This worldview always painted people as a single stumble away from a life of sin, and our community's light was the only thing preventing their fall into eternal darkness. However, life can challenge our perspectives when we least expect it.

In my early twenties, during an economic downturn, I found myself unemployed. My degree in robotics wasn't opening any doors, so I took a job at a fast food chain restaurant. There, I got to know my coworkers. We shared stories about our lives, futures, and what motivated us. We worked together to provide for ourselves and our loved ones. When I discovered that most of them did one type of drug or another, I was shocked. The bubble I grew up in quickly popped as I realized even those that smoke cigarettes can have strong morals. Looking back at where I worked, I realize that the customers would have been shocked to learn that not all of us did drugs.

When we use *emotion* to interact with the world, our community draws out the emotions that motivate us and builds resolve. As we turn those motivations into cooperation, we often reach a point where worry becomes discomfort. We become anxious about whether our resolve and community will be enough to allow us to make the changes to the world that we need.

Finding out that most of my coworkers had “given in to the devil” made me anxious. I worried about whether we could continue working and earning the resources to care for our loved ones without something going terribly wrong.

At this point, many people shut down. They refuse to cooperate with others because they fear failure, disappointment, or being taken advantage of. The key problem here is disconnection. They forget the connections and the emotions that motivated them to find resolve in the first place.

I spent more time with my coworkers, visiting their homes and inviting them to activities outside of work. The more time I spent with them, the more I realized we shared the same motivations for caring for loved ones. Although I never did drugs with them, we still connected as a community.

To resolve anxiety, we need to follow through with our emotions, push our resolve, and give it direction. It isn't until we build our community, find those who share our motivations, and interact with emotion that our anxiety will be resolved. That resolve may mean we cut connections that are truly harmful, but with a community to support us, we find shared resolve within removing anxieties.

By embracing our shared humanity and understanding that we all have similar drives and goals, we can overcome the barriers of fear and prejudice. We can build stronger, more resilient communities that support and uplift one another. In doing so, we transform our anxiety into a powerful force for positive change, creating a world where everyone can thrive together.

Community from Emotion

Interacting with emotion is about recognizing that we are permanently connected to the world around us—it changes us just as we change it. Because our world is shared, our actions can and should benefit both us and those around us. We align our motivations by aiming to create a better world for everyone. This alignment nurtures the shared resolve we need for meaningful collaboration, and it is in this collaboration that we find what community really means.

In my life, I have discovered community in many forms and places. The religious group where I grew up planted the seeds of community in me. I found it again among my coworkers at work and later in the selfless acts of volunteering. I didn't just happen to find community; it was built through a shared effort to create a better place for all of us. Our shared joys, collective sorrows, celebrations, and losses strengthened it. Every emotion, whether spoken or silently felt, added to our growth together as a community. We shared our motivations, pooled our resolve, and worked hand in hand to shape the world into a place that gives us all more than we put in.

Our community is defined by the connections we depend on, the shared experiences from our collaborations, and the motivation to improve our lives together. As we openly share our strengths and weaknesses, we knit ourselves closer, becoming not just individuals who live near each other but a true community. Within this community, every member is valued, every voice is heard, and every hand is joined to forge a better tomorrow for everyone.

Positive Physical Change (meaning) from Social Energy (life)

When we interact with emotion, we change the world; it changes us as we change it, helping us work for the world so it works for us. By following the natural flow, our motivations can pull in significant emotions, driving our resolve to build our community, and directing our interactions through collaboration. When we interact with emotion through community, we gain understanding and strength, resolving both discomfort and anxiety. By creating greater change in the world through community, we create greater meaning through collaboration. By removing discomfort that limits our effort, we are removing the sediment that limits our physical life.

Simply put, using our social life through our community gives our physical selves greater meaning and frees up our physical life.

Against the Flow, Effort into Emotion

Going against the flow we start treating others as merely another part of the world that we must change.

Ecology illustrates the consequences of disrupting natural flows, such as attempting to force change in an ecosystem. Overexploitation or imbalanced interventions, like deforestation or overfishing, mirrors the concept of forcing effort into emotion. These actions disrupt natural symbioses, ignoring the system's inherent dynamics, and often lead to negative outcomes such as resource depletion or ecosystem collapse.

Philosophy cautions against imposing force where understanding and connection are needed. Existentialist and phenomenological thought emphasize respecting individual autonomy and shared values. Ignoring others' motivations reflects ethical failures, aligning with critiques of authoritarian approaches that disregard the humanity and values of others.

Sociology highlights the harm caused by treating individuals or groups as objects of change rather than participants in collaboration. Conflict theory explains how such forced impositions create social inequalities and resistance. Ignoring others' motivations undermines trust and cohesion, fostering division rather than cooperation.

Theology warns against forcing change without empathy or respect for others. Many traditions, such as Christianity's emphasis on love and humility or Islam's call for mutual respect, stress the importance of valuing others' motivations and perspectives. Actions that attempt to force emotional responses without consideration are seen as morally and spiritually harmful, disrupting the harmony necessary for meaningful connections.

Following the natural flow of energy, our connections empower our interactions. It's our *emotions* and *connections* that motivate our efforts to change the world. We see the physical world as a connection that changes us as much as we change it

Going against the natural flow, our efforts are an imposition on our connections, we create conflict and negative change. We start treating others as merely another part of the world that we must change, ignoring their motivations and values. Attempting to physically force emotion is often seen as oppressive, overbearing, or even aggressive.

Consider how some people approach social interactions without thought, jumping straight into social dynamics. These might be the class clowns, the jocks, or those popular for *what* they are rather than *who* they are. Celebrities are a great example. They're in our lives every day through screens, working hard to connect with us in any way they can. Yet, despite their constant presence, there's no real connection. Many celebrities try to reinforce these one-sided connections with appearances and autographs, hoping to bridge the gap, all while creating emotional and social distance.

Bad Connections From Effort

When we use effort to connect and physically try to create an emotional tie with someone, we treat the other person like an object to be changed. In my early teens, I tried to impress people with physical acts—challenging them to races, jumping from high places, climbing nearly impossible objects, or leaping over tall obstacles. Impressing people gave them a reason to want me around, to connect with me. Crowds would gather to watch my antics, but when the show ended, so did the connection. Later, when I tried to talk to these people, they'd simply ask me to perform again.

"I don't perform on demand," I'd say, hoping for a deeper connection. But they'd give me a critical look and walk away.

Connecting through sheer effort creates an overbearing connection that's all about getting what one side wants, leading to uncomfortable situations. To my audiences, I was just entertainment. When I refused to perform, they severed the connection—there was no shared motivation to bring me into their community, no empathy driving them to care. To me, the audience was an acceptance of my existence that lasted only as long as my efforts.

A connection built on effort alone is fragile. It's a power imbalance where one side constantly fears the connection will fail, leaving them vulnerable to being taken advantage of. Even if you feel a connection through effort, hoping that emotion will follow, you'll never know if the emotion is genuine until you stop putting in the effort and see whether the connection lasts or fails.

Bad Interactions From Effort To Emotion

Working hard to force an emotional response can work temporarily. Charities often use this approach to get donations, and homeless individuals begging on the street do the same. Without their effort, many of us might not give money, thinking our concerns are more immediate than theirs. However, when we give in response to these efforts, we create problems in the connection. These interactions—and the changes in the world they produce—are often negative. When the effort stops, everything stops, and no real change occurs.

Charity is essential, and connecting through effort may be necessary in times of desperation, but it should always be seen as a short-term solution until real change is made.

Let me share a personal story. When my wife was pregnant, I was working hard to become an assistant manager at my job, motivated by the promise of a salaried position and the health care coverage it would provide. I worked extra hours, often for free, doing managerial duties to prove I could handle the job. I even drove to locations up to three hours away to show my commitment, trying to get upper management to see my value through my efforts.

We discussed the minimum salary I needed to survive. They praised my work and scheduled me for management training days. After the training as I was leaving for my three-hour trip home, they gave me a letter to sign. The letter was a position contract that offered a salary that was only 60% of the bare minimum I had said I needed to live. I left without signing.

A week later, the district manager called, asking why I hadn't signed. I explained that I couldn't survive on the offer—it was less per hour than I was currently making.

He replied, *"I know you're having a kid soon; it comes down to whether you want to pay for that out of pocket or if you want insurance."*

At that moment, I realized that while I was emotionally invested in the company, their emotional connection to me was purely self-interested. There was no shared motivation. I had thought we were a community, adding my strength to theirs. But when it was time for them to add to my strength, they weren't there.

This revelation caused my efforts to drop off. I lost my drive to improve the business. Numbers decreased, customers became less satisfied, and staff grew irritated. Eventually, I left. Before leaving, I wrote a letter to HR detailing all the improvements I had been working on and all the reasons I left. The district manager and the manager both lost promotions they had been working toward because they had ignored these issues. Their efforts had been about manipulating my emotions, and by going against the natural flow, the changes they were trying to make collapsed. Their exploitative interactions backfired.

This experience taught me that genuine connections cannot be built on effort alone. True, lasting connections come from mutual respect and shared motivations. When we align our efforts with the natural flow of energy—respecting and valuing others' motivations and emotions—we build strong, resilient communities. These authentic connections are the foundation for meaningful change in our personal lives and the wider world.

Effort into Misunderstanding

Being a social outcast can offer a chance for introspection. But this self-evaluation often becomes inwardly focused, creating a distorted view filled with misunderstandings. I experienced this firsthand when once again I found myself out of a job, searching for a new path. I returned to volunteer at the summer camp that had been a significant influence on me as a teenager, hoping to find community and support.

There was one other person at the camp who was like me—my age, someone I had known for years through our shared goals at the camp. Yet, despite our history, I struggled to maintain a real connection. I tried to spend time around her, creating opportunities to be in the same place, bluntly showing my interest in connecting. But with each effort, she became more distant, her discomfort so apparent that I eventually started avoiding her.

This experience taught me that when we go against the natural flow and try to force connections through sheer effort, we build only temporary ties. Any changes we make to the world through such connections are just as fragile. Instead of building understanding, we lose the strength we gain from cooperation. Although this person and I shared motivations and a community, my attempts to deepen our connection through effort alone led to mutual suspicion and misunderstanding.

Connecting through effort alone imposes our motivations without understanding theirs. It creates an uncomfortable dynamic where the other person feels pressured to align with our terms. If we continue down this path, we create endless cycles of misunderstanding and fragile connections. On the other hand, if we allow others to connect with us through effort, letting them force an emotional response on us, we never truly grasp their motivations beyond a surface level of selfishness.

If I had asked her to sit and talk about our interests, life journeys, and hopes for the community, we might have built a genuine connection. Instead, we lost touch, and I never saw her again after that summer.

Gaining Discomfort Through Effort

Discomfort is the world pushing back on our efforts. When we use effort to force an emotional connection, we go against the world, against the flow, and against our connections, creating more discomfort and worry. Connecting through effort treats people like they are part of the world we need to change. This puts a physical and emotional burden on others, pressuring them to change either themselves or us so we can fit into each other's world.

Reading signals, understanding intentions behind words and emotions, was always a weak point for me. It made me a sociable loner for many years. At that time, the few connections I had were from years ago, either from my religious group or the homeschool group we were part of. After college, I moved out of state and then moved back. I was looking for a new job, and the best opportunity was in a town 50 miles away. The week I decided to move, I got a message from someone I knew in our homeschool group a decade ago. He was moving out of his house and looking for an apartment in the same town I was moving to. I hadn't told anyone I was moving or even looking for a job. Whether it was a coincidence or something more sinister, we ended up sharing the rent on a 2-bedroom house.

Sharing rent wasn't new to me; sharing it with someone who didn't understand boundaries was a very unwelcome change. He worked strange hours and would wake me up in the middle of the night, asking if I wanted to do something. He'd give me random things nobody had a use for, expecting me to use them. He left messes and got upset if anyone asked him to clean. We agreed that one of us would wash the dishes every other day, but he never did. Weeks went by, the dishes stacked up, the kitchen smelled, and eventually, I would give in and wash them all. One day, he was on the phone with a friend, talking on speakerphone in our shared living room. He told his friend that living with me was like living with his mom—he never had to clean or do anything. After hearing that, I kept one set of dishes in my room, washing them after each use. The kitchen got dirtier, and eventually, we moved out. He still tried to get me to clean up after him, putting dishes in my way, buying me food that needed to be cooked, and dropping less-than-subtle hints. He put so much effort into not doing the dishes that he made both of our lives harder, making it difficult to use the kitchen and creating a burden by trying to force me to care for him.

At some point, he started dating a girl. The highlight of their relationship was when he came home laughing about how inappropriate he had been with her at a community dance in the park. He later told me that his girlfriend's sister was interested in me and had been trying to get me to ask her out. We went to a local restaurant, and I explained that when I dated, it was with the idea of marriage in mind—it was how I was raised. She told me she was raised to be a lady, which was why she always wore driving gloves, and she would expect her husband to provide for her so she would never have to work outside the house. If I could do that, she said, she would marry me. My housemate made his girlfriend uncomfortable by trying to build a connection in public without thought. His girlfriend's sister described a life of connection built on effort that made me feel uncomfortable. There was no second date.

The physical burden we force on ourselves or others is bad enough when it creates discomfort, but for many, using effort means using force. Forcing others to align with your motivations often leads to physical or emotional abuse.

Pushing Worry into Discomfort

As we build connections, we invest a part of ourselves in them. As we change each other, we start to worry about what that change will do. The *worry* that naturally comes from connection ties up our emotions, making it harder to connect as we accumulate more connections. We can resolve that worry by connecting with *thought*, but when we connect through *effort*, it builds up with no way to fix it. We find ourselves becoming more and more isolated.

The guy I rented a house with worked at a large resort/day club an hour away. The resort was known for its connections to drugs and crime. If you wanted something illegal, you could get it there. Since it was so far outside of town, he would ride with a coworker, splitting the cost of gas. Sometimes, the coworker would come over for drinks, giving me a chance to get to know him. It was clear to me that this coworker was involved in crime, but my housemate, who couldn't understand people and only knew how to connect through *effort*, didn't pick up on this.

One day, my housemate drove his coworker's car home. The story went that his coworker needed money urgently and sold the car to my housemate at a much lower cost than it should have sold for. The next day, my housemate came home late and upset. On his first trip to work in the coworker's car, he was detained by several police cars. The police searched the car and his body *very* intimately. They questioned him for a long time, with one officer screaming that he *knew* there were drugs in the car. After finding nothing, the officer had to be pulled away from my housemate by his fellow officers. The officer was so convinced that the car was being used to transport drugs that he refused to let him go easily.

Honestly, I found the whole thing hilarious, and though my housemate was a little traumatized, he also laughed at how ridiculous it was that the police had mistaken him for a drug dealer. I told him he shouldn't be surprised because his carpool buddy was a drug dealer who likely dumped the car knowing the police were onto him. My housemate argued that his coworker wouldn't do that to him; he *trusted* their connection because they were co-workers that carpooled together. But since my roommate didn't connect with *thought*, he was unable to understand his coworker's motivations. After that incident, he started to worry about his connections at work, concerned that they would hurt him. The incident proved to him that no effort would build understanding—which was true—but he was also incapable of connecting with *thought*. From then on, he drove to work alone, paying for gas himself, repairing his own car, and pushing his *worry* into *discomfort*.

Trying to resolve our worries through effort doesn't resolve anything; it just pushes our worries into discomfort. Without addressing the lack of understanding, the worry just builds up again. You might build a wall, lock the doors, give away all your time, or lose all your money, but without understanding built through thought, all you'll get back is worry and discomfort.

Collapse of Community from Effort

Trying to make connections using effort is treating those connections like they are just another part of the world that we need to change for our own comfort. This doesn't mean we don't have to work to build strong communities and connections; it implies that without leading with **thought**, we end up with domination, not collaboration.

One of the positions I held was as a territory rep for a large company. They provided us with a new, well-equipped truck, phone, laptop, tools, a corporate card—everything we needed to service our accounts. My territory was within a 20-mile radius, with no commute. The job allowed a flexible schedule, making it easy to handle emergency calls from customers and my kids' school. I thrived under this system, doubling my base salary through commissions by doubling the value of my territory. **There's a sense of self-satisfaction** that comes from being able to build a successful career simply by treating customers fairly, honestly, and ethically.

However, this period of peace and success lasted less than a year. **We were brought in a week before Christmas** to be informed of new business practices. The company was transitioning all of us from salaried positions with commissions to hourly employees; these "new" positions came with a pay cut and promises that the pay would be adjusted to what we made before once they learned how many hours we actually put in. They stopped letting us use company vehicles for personal use, added trackers to our vehicles, and put in place stricter work-from-home policies.

The new work-from-home policies made it much harder for us to order equipment, manage logistics, and stay updated with product changes. They gave an app complete control of our schedules and customer visits, dividing the reps into sales or service roles to keep up sales but reduce the amount of service and double the number of customers we had to visit.

The new policies made it impossible for me to maintain my work standards. Smaller clients began running out of products. Product changes went unnoticed until customers received replacement products they didn't want. As our shared storage became less organized, searching for parts became dangerous. The lack of parts and equipment led to delays in equipping new customers, driving them toward our competitors. The separation from management through apps meant that the promised wage fix never came, resulting in a 60% loss of income.

The company put so much effort into motivating us to do the right thing. They could have saved discomfort and worry by simply connecting with **thought** to build more collaboration between the team in the field and the team in the offices. Their efforts turned worry into discomfort, created unnecessary anxiety, and destroyed the community we had with our teams and the connections we had built with our customers. **They destroyed our resolve**, and our teamwork fell apart as the collaboration we had before simply disappeared. We were so busy trying to resolve the discomfort and worry created by their poor approach that we lost our connections to what we were doing and lost the *caring* that only comes from **thought**.

This is where authoritarianism happens.

Since we are using **effort**, we must try to use more effort to connect or lose the connection. Again, we are forcing the connection, and that means the motivations are ours alone; any resolve has to be kept up by us, and collaboration in our community is built from **effort** alone. Community from **effort** only lasts as long as our efforts or the patience of our connections. There are times when you force people to follow your motivations long enough that they also adopt your motivation as their own, but eventually, something or someone will come along that will cause them to question those motivations again.

Negative Social Change (meaning) from Physical Energy (life)

When we only use **effort** to connect with people, we treat others like they are part of the world that needs to be changed to fit our motivations. We ignore who they are, how they feel, and what drives them so that their efforts will work for us. By going against the natural flow, we are only addressing our own motivations; we push emotions in connections, push our resolve, push our community, and force collaboration.

Forced community stops when our efforts stop or when the connection breaks, leaving us and our connections with a legacy of discomfort and anxiety. By forcing a fake community with forced changes, all the connections we think we have are fake—only held together by our **efforts**. By building discomfort, we are building sediment that restricts our physical life. Simply put, trying to connect with **effort** leaves us weak and lonely, leaving our physical aspect without lasting meaning, limiting our physical life to only what we do.

The world is a shared place; when we interact with the world, the changes we make will always affect others, and the changes they make will always affect us. This doesn't have to be a burden for us to overcome. By following the natural flow of energy, this interconnection becomes a strength. When we interact with **emotion**, we treat the world like a connection we rely on, as it changes us as much as we change it. We become connected to the earth itself, creating a loop of positive energy, a never-ending cycle of positive meaning.

Experience from Effort, Information through Perspective

Using the natural cycle of energy, interaction gives us information through curiosity. When we inform with effort, we treat ourselves like a shared place, like we are part of the world that we can change.

Ecology aligns with the concept of interaction providing information through curiosity, as seen in exploratory behaviors within ecosystems. For instance, animals adapt to their environment through trial and error, learning about resources or dangers through effort. This mirrors the idea of treating oneself as part of the world that can change, reflecting the adaptive interplay between organisms and their surroundings.

Philosophy supports the notion of informing through effort by emphasizing the importance of experience in shaping understanding. Existentialist thought, such as Kierkegaard's focus on subjective experience, views effort as essential for personal growth and learning. The idea of treating oneself as a shared place aligns with phenomenology's view of the self as intertwined with the external world and capable of transformation.

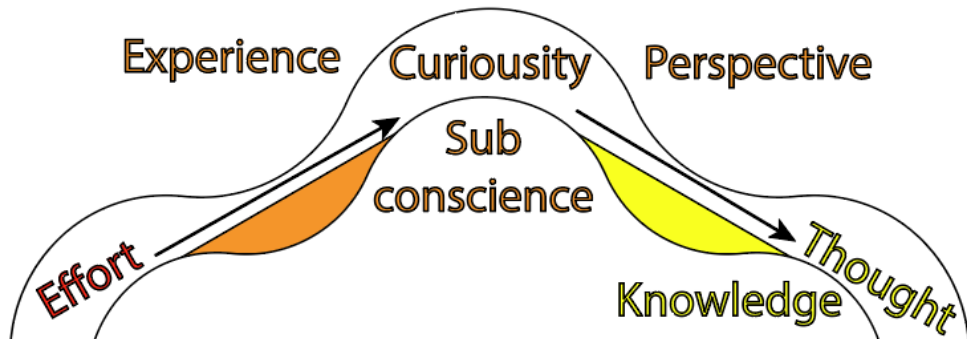
Sociology reflects this concept through the role of interaction and effort in constructing knowledge. Symbolic interactionism highlights how individuals create meaning through active engagement with their social environment. The idea of treating oneself as part of the world resonates with sociological perspectives on identity formation and self-concept as influenced by external interactions.

Theology emphasizes the transformative power of effort and reflection in gaining understanding. Religious practices, such as meditation or prayer, represent the integration of effort (interaction) and curiosity (seeking information) to foster spiritual growth. The concept of treating oneself as part of the world reflects theological teachings on interconnectedness and the divine potential for change within oneself through intentional action.

We are constantly getting information. Even when we sleep, the images in our minds come from our daily experiences while what's happening around us while we sleep seeps into those dreams. Information tells us what we need to live, what to avoid, what is happening, what will happen, and what we must do to be safe and secure. Since our senses measure change, the information we get directly from the world around us tells us exactly how things are changing around us. **Direct information** from our interactions gives us reliable knowledge that helps us work with the changes in the world. When we gather reliable information, we need less *thought* to understand the world, so we stress less and don't end up confused. **Good information** is the only way to avoid conflict between what we know and what is happening. *Effort* doesn't turn directly into *thought*; there is something between *effort* and *thought*—an inner voice that drives and directs how we change; we call this our **subconscious**.

Our spiritual connections change and strengthen our bodies. Strength from interactions builds our experience, curiosity to change ourselves, and our *subconscious*. **The soul** uses our curiosity to drive us to search for information, directs our thoughts with perspective, and gathers information that informs us how to change consciously and unconsciously in a positive way.

Using the natural cycle of energy, interaction gives us information through curiosity.



When we inform with effort, we treat ourselves like a shared place, like we are part of the world that we can change.

Effort into Thought through the Subconscious

Effort is like kinetic energy—the energy of physical movement and change. Just as kinetic energy drives physical transformations, our *effort* drives personal growth and learning.

Reflecting on my childhood, I see my mom teaching us how to care for ourselves through daily chores. We cleaned the house, did laundry, worked in the yard, tended the garden, fixed the house, and cooked. She used to joke that I was the easiest baby; if I was upset, she'd put me in a highchair with some food, and I'd be happy. When she taught me to cook, and I realized I could make my own food, cooking quickly became my favorite chore. *No matter how poor we were, good food was a luxury we could always afford if we knew how to cook.*

Our physical energy—our *effort*—is driven by our interactions with the world. When we exert *effort*, we gain information about how the world affects us, shaping us profoundly.

My parents were often stressed, and with eight people in the family, there were many times I got yelled at for things beyond my control. But I adopted a motto early on: “Do your best at whatever you do, and no one can say you’ve failed.” This simple belief taught me that if I couldn’t achieve something despite my best efforts, the failure wasn’t mine—the expectations had failed me. Besides, if you try your hardest, you will always learn something, which is a victory. This approach applied to cooking too, over time with effort and many failures, my cooking skills surpassed even my mom’s.

When we use *effort* to gather information, we build more accurate knowledge, preparing us for life’s challenges. Our *subconscious* mind drives us, giving us direction based on our experiences. Sure, we can ask other people for cooking instructions, but it isn’t until we experience it for ourselves that those instructions become reliable knowledge, that we become able to replicate the results that others can achieve.

Our experiences, the result of living in the world, fuel our curiosity about it. When someone cooks long enough, they can create something unique without a recipe. Just thinking about new ingredients evokes memories of tastes and smells, informing us how combinations might work. When we prepare and test a new dish, whether it succeeds or fails, we become better cooks. Once our curiosity collects enough physical energy, it pushes our perspective, giving us insights into how the world interacts with us. **A strong subconscious**, built on experience, provides perspective and knowledge, helping us navigate life with less stress and effort.

I am still amazed when people tell me they don’t know how to cook. To think someone might not know how to feed themselves is a stress no one should endure. Then I remember my own early days of cooking—the mistakes, the emotions, the effort. It was all part of gaining knowledge until my *subconscious* took over, making it a natural part of who I am.

Information from the Subconscious

When we gather information, we strive to adapt to what's happening around us. And let's face it, the world is constantly changing. There's so much information that trying to process it all consciously is impossible. But when we put *effort* into understanding our experiences, we train our *subconscious* minds to grasp how the world changes, how we impact it, and how it impacts us. This process teaches us what's safe to ignore and what's crucial to pay attention to.

When I dine out, I can pick up on the cooks' skill—the precision in their preparation, the freshness of the ingredients, the sequence in which they added them to the dish. These experiences have shaped my *subconscious*, giving me a unique perspective that lets me see details others might overlook. Sure, it does take some of the fun out of eating out, as my subconscious sets standards that have risen with my own skills.

My father's construction business is an excellent example of this. He has incredibly high standards and has spent his career identifying, fixing, and preventing building issues. We could be walking into a place, and he'll point out things like a sliding foundation, an out-of-line joist in the roof, or even the wrong screws used to hang drywall. These things are hidden from sight, but his *subconscious*, drawing from a lifetime of experience, gives him insights I wouldn't find even if I was actively looking for them.

The knowledge we gain goes beyond understanding what's safe and what isn't. *Effort* shapes our *subconscious* responses to the changes others positively make in the world by giving us real insight into how we're affected by each other. Our experiences apply our perception to everything from life skills to communication skills. As we put *effort* into gathering information, when the world demands that we change, we discover that we already possess the knowledge we need, often having already made those adjustments subconsciously.

Knowledge from the Subconscious

Gaining information through *effort* gives us perspective rooted in experience. Our *subconscious* mind, that remarkable inner compass, helps us by making connections so we don't have to think through everything. It filters out unnecessary distractions—like background noises, everyday shadows, and other sensory details—allowing us to focus on what truly matters. **Knowing what to believe and what to dismiss** is a powerful tool, but without experience, our knowledge remains incomplete.

When I started writing this book, my goal was to create a structure for a non-profit that could hold itself accountable and remain sustainable long after I was gone. We aimed to build a way of living where we have more tomorrow than we do today. This vision encompassed environmental, economic, and social sustainability—how we change the world, how we are changed by it, and how we change each other. The challenge was that we cannot achieve environmental sustainability without social sustainability, social sustainability without economic sustainability, and financial sustainability without environmental sustainability. It caused me to realize that we can't simply "fix" the environment, we have to also address every aspect of society together.

Positive change requires openness to new experiences, a willingness to shift perspectives, and the courage to transform ourselves.

As these ideas came together, I noticed a pattern emerging. The different philosophies I read reflected the different principles of changing the world, ourselves, and others. Concepts of justice aligned with the goals of sustainability. The business courses I took resonated with the structure of my non-profit. Theologies addressed different aspects of what is meaningful and positive. I could see the bigger picture only by embracing diverse experiences and building varied perspectives. Our *subconscious* mind guides us in processing this information, helping us with situational awareness, reading body language, understanding intentions, and connecting past memories to our present experiences.

I'm not claiming that this book unlocks the definitive nature of existence. However, for something to be believed, it must contain a kernel of truth. We can uncover underlying truths by recognizing the common threads in philosophy, theory, and theology. These insights might reveal something profound or something simple. Still, the knowledge I've gained through my experiences has shown me that there is a way for people to organize their decisions to maximize their impact and live life to the fullest. There is a place in the world for our mission.

Resolving Stress Subconsciously Resolving sediment (partial)

Stress often stems from trying to process everything that changes us. When we use *effort* to gather information, we remove the need to overthink the situation. By applying *effort*, we can either resolve the issue or understand how it affects us, thus alleviating the stress.

When I first started driving, I despised it. The thought of two steel boxes speeding towards each other at 120 to 160 miles an hour, and I was responsible to make sure they passed within feet of each other without colliding, made me panic. No amount of thinking could ease that fear. I would constantly scan for animals on the sides of the road, debris in the lanes, changes in the sky, speed limit signs, and the actions of other cars. This hypervigilance made me miss stop signs or other dangers, increasing my stress. However, the more I drove around my local area, the more specific things became second nature. I learned where speed limits changed, where animals often crossed, how my neighbors drove, and what was usual or unusual in the lanes. My experiences trained my *subconscious* to filter out what was safe to ignore, allowing me to focus only on things that required me to change how I was driving. Driving eventually lost its stress and became a relaxing routine. This familiarity let my mind notice new things, like animals, birds, construction, crops, and changing trees. Instead of struggling to process the necessary driving information, my mind could appreciate the scenery.

When we understand how something changes us, we can prepare for it, leading to positive change. Teaching our *subconscious* what is safe to ignore significantly reduces stress, but this is only reliable if we have obtained information through *effort*.

I remember when my family and I drove 16 hours to my sister's wedding in a large city several states away. Most of the trip passed through farms, forests, and small towns, similar to what I was used to. I relaxed in the back and read a book. However, upon reaching the large city, my dad decided it was the perfect opportunity for me to learn how to drive in urban traffic. He insisted that it was a good time for me to learn. I pushed back because I had never driven in the city and had almost no experience driving in heavy traffic. Suddenly, I was driving in an unfamiliar place with new road types, signs, and drivers. I also had to listen to my dad's directions. The overload of new information was overwhelming and stressful. At one point, I turned onto a ramp, driving against traffic. Everyone screamed, which only heightened the panic. After we managed to pull into a parking area, it was agreed that I would avoid driving in the city until I was more comfortable.

Without gathering information through *effort* we train ourselves to be unable to ignore anything, forcing us to overthink and stress about everything. But with new experiences training our subconscious and giving us new perspectives, we are able to ignore the things that used to stress us and focus on adapting to the things that negatively impact us.

Resolving Exhaustion Subconsciously Resolving friction (partial)

Exhaustion sets in when we feel our efforts won't provide the perspective needed to sort through the information we receive. As discomfort turns into stress, we may shut down, stopping our efforts to find ways to adapt to the world.

When my son became disabled, I had to drop out of college before my final year and find a good job with insurance in an area with doctors who could help him. *Selling my business* gave my family enough money to live on for a year while I drove halfway across the continent searching for a job. I lived between hostels and my car, using gym subscriptions to shower daily. I spent eight hours a day in coffee shops, applying for hundreds of jobs and submitting resumes to companies that might hire in the future.

After a year, I had to drive back home just in time for Christmas. Before New Year's, one of the companies that had my resume on file called to offer me a job. It was at a Fortune 500 company, and everyone told me how great it was, with a pension, endless earning opportunities once promoted to salary, and a history of rewarding hard work with promotions.

This was what I had been waiting for: my best chance at giving my son hope and my best chance at giving him a future. This was a job at which I could excel. On my first day, my boss told me I was too good for the position I was hired for. He said if I took the next job up the ladder immediately, he could promote me to salary in two years. The catch was they couldn't raise my pay, even though I would have to work 25% more hours, be on call 24/7, work rotating weekends, and take on exponentially more responsibility.

Since I couldn't work a weekend job as planned to pay hospital bills, I offered to work even more hours in a salaried position's role to help me secure the promotion. Long story short, I made less after four promotions and five performance-based raises than when I started.

The key to resolving exhaustion is that we **can't stop trying** when we feel exhausted. If we give up on finding new experiences, we will never learn how to move our thoughts forward and gain the perspective we need to keep going. *Exhaustion* becomes something more profound. At work, I would talk to my manager, HR, and even my boss's boss, letting them know how they affected me and my family. I sought information to bring about positive change for everyone. I learned everything I could about my job, putting in the effort to be the best so they would see how much of an asset I was.

Exhaustion is both *mental* and *physical*, often caused by a mix of both. It started small, but by the end of six years, I was always tired, dizzy, and unable to think or remember anything. I kept working, putting in more effort to find the information needed for positive change. Unfortunately, that change didn't come, and after injuring myself on the job three times, I had to go on disability. During my disability, I explored many ways to make money. I gained new experiences, eventually finding a path forward that helped me positively change the world.

To overcome exhaustion, we must *rediscover our curiosity*, that subconscious well that gives our experiences room to drive us. *Finding our curiosity* is challenging, especially when we are exhausted from trying to find ways to adapt to the world. But our subconscious is how our soul changes who we are. While we don't have direct control over it, we can push ourselves to new experiences and try to find our perspective again, letting our souls change us in ways our minds can't foresee. This is why the more jobs you try when you are young, the happier you will be with your chosen career.

Subconscious from effort How empowers the soul

Our subconscious mind transforms our experiences into *perspective*. This perspective includes how we see things and the skills and muscle memory we develop. It's the talent we acquire and the unique methods we adopt from doing things in a particular way.

I've always been curious. One of my favorite childhood activities was taking things apart to see how they worked. The side effect of my curiosity was the anxiety my parents felt. *Many of the first items I disassembled have yet to make it back together.* Over time, I learned the three main ways things are held together—compression, adhesion, latching—and how to dismantle them so that I could also reassemble them.

These experiences had apparent benefits for areas like construction, inventing, machinery repair, and my robotics course in college. However, they also helped me in less obvious ways. *Taking things apart* to understand their workings trained my mind to think critically, providing perspectives on how components fit together to achieve a positive result. This has helped me become a great manager and entrepreneur. *Breaking things while trying to fix them* taught me that life is easier when we take care of everything we do and that intentions do not control outcomes.

Identifying how things are assembled gave me analytical skills, allowing me to learn new things almost immediately. Pinpointing problems or failure points in systems enhanced my critical thinking skills, enabling me to discern value and intentions. Working with my hands developed my dexterity, which carried over to cooking, painting, sports, and virtually everything else.

Perspective shapes our understanding of how things are, how they happen, and how changes in the world affect us and everything else. We can observe change and form an idea, building a foundational perspective, but unless we enact the change ourselves, it never becomes locked in our subconscious. Even when we make a change ourselves, something else influences our outcomes. Only through *repeated changes* can we distinguish causation from correlation and understand what is truly happening versus what appears to be happening.

My mom always told me it would be easier to do things the way others instructed, and she was right—it would have been easier for both of us. But a part of me always saw the value in trying to do things myself at least once. Doing things the hard way provides insights into why people do things a certain way and allows you to apply those insights to other areas of your life. Setting up everything you need for a job simplifies cooking and construction, just like troubleshooting can help fix a machine or a work environment.

We can build some perspective from observation, but it takes real effort to embed that perspective into our subconscious until it becomes second nature.

Positive Mental Change (meaning) from Physical Energy (life)

When we collect information with *effort*, we treat ourselves as part of the world that we can change, helping us change ourselves for the better. By following the natural flow, our *effort* can pull in significant experiences, driving our curiosity to build our subconscious and directing our information through perspective.

When we inform ourselves with *effort*, we gain strength, knowledge, and curiosity—both stress and exhaustion. By creating more significant change within ourselves through our subconscious, we create more substantial meaning through our perspective. By removing the stress that limits our thought, we are removing the sediment that limits our mental life. Simply put, using our physical life through our subconscious gives our mental aspect greater meaning and frees up our mental life.

Against the Flow - Thought into Effort

Going against the flow we view the world as something that needs to adapt to our changes.

Ecology highlights the dangers of forcing thought into effort by disregarding the consequences of actions on natural systems. When humans exploit ecosystems solely to meet immediate needs, such as through unsustainable agriculture or industrial practices, they ignore their responsibility to maintain ecological balance, leading to degradation and loss of biodiversity.

Philosophy critiques the neglect of responsibility in this approach. Ethical frameworks, such as those by Kant or environmental ethics, emphasize the importance of accountability for the effects of our actions. Treating the world as existing solely to serve our needs aligns with utilitarian short-sightedness, which often fails to consider the broader consequences of actions on others and future generations.

Sociology identifies this behavior as a disruption of social systems. Viewing the world as a resource for immediate gratification disregards the shared responsibilities within communities and societies. Conflict theory warns that this approach exacerbates inequalities and undermines collective well-being by prioritizing individual needs over shared goals.

Theology warns against the moral failure of ignoring the impact of one's actions on the world. Concepts like stewardship in Christianity or the interconnectedness of life in Buddhism emphasize that humans have a divine or moral duty to care for creation. Treating the world as existing solely for personal gain is seen as a rejection of this duty, disrupting harmony and spiritual purpose.

Following the natural flow, our interactions empower our thoughts, we treat ourselves as part of the world that we change.

Going against the flow, our information does not replace the need for interactions, we view the world as something that needs to adapt to our changes. This may seem like a subtle difference, but seeing ourselves as part of a greater whole acknowledges that our actions affect others and that we have an obligation to the world—we are responsible for what we do. While doing the reverse takes away our responsibility for the way the world is changed by our actions, making it something that only exists to serve our immediate needs.

A good way to picture this is to imagine removing a cell from the human body and telling it to make a sandwich. It can spend forever thinking it through, but will never even be able to understand how making a sandwich is even possible, no less take the first steps to get it done.

Turning that perspective around, to say the world is part of us implies that the world has an obligation to us and that others are responsible for what we do. *The issue with many people* is that they were raised with this mindset; their parents gave them whatever they wanted or needed without holding them accountable for the consequences of their actions. Using the same approach to change is seen as immature, and using the wrong perspective can be perceived as being spoiled.

Harmful Interactions from Thought to Effort How to reverse damages attribute

Thinking before you act is not a bad thing. However, the issue with trying to interact with *thought alone* is that we need to separate the act of gathering information from the act of interaction. Instead, we attempt to do both simultaneously, where we often stumble. Moreover, we tend to bypass our emotions, neglecting the perspectives and motivations of those around us.

My family and I lived in a country home with a wood-burning stove in the basement as a teen. *There's something deeply comforting about the warmth from a wood fire*; it reaches your bones in a way that a radiator simply doesn't. Now, a physicist might argue that heat is heat, that the energy is the same regardless of the source. But I would beg to differ. The warmth from a wood fire feels like a higher form of heat—more penetrating, more complete.

Of course, burning wood has its drawbacks. Wood isn't 100% fuel; carbon and other garbage are collected in the chimney and the ash bin below the grate. And like many chores in our household, emptying that ash bin was assigned to one of us kids.

It was towards the end of winter, and patches of snow and ice dotted our long driveway, mingling with the dry leaves left over from fall. After dumping the ashes with water, my dad always instructed us to douse them to ensure nothing would start on fire. But in my youthful wisdom, I thought dumping the ashes on a patch of ice would suffice. *I was wrong.*

Thankfully, we noticed the fire before it spread to any trees. Unfortunately, it burned an old car my dad was planning to fix and sell someday. We managed to put out the fire quickly with our hose. Still, the charred remains of the vehicle and the scorched trees stood as a stark reminder of why it's essential to follow instructions.

This experience taught me a valuable lesson: trying to change the world without effort and relying solely on thought leads to unreliable outcomes. Even a small amount of training can prevent hardship or injury. When we approach interactions as though the world is an extension of ourselves, we often fail to take responsibility for the changes we make. This approach puts us on the defensive when conflicts arise and neglects our duty to effect change through our efforts. Without effort, nothing meaningful gets done.

Insufficient Information from Thought to Effort How to reverse damages prior

When we lead with *thought before effort*, we set ourselves up with expectations about how things work without any real experience to back them up. This assumption-based approach often results in mistakes that can break things or hurt people, stemming from lousy information not grounded in experience. Many people start with a thought and try to use effort to prove their idea, but this needs to be revised.

Many people try to use thought to avoid changing themselves. They rationalize and justify their behavior, convincing themselves and others that the rest of the world needs to change, not them. A group of friends almost split up because of this. We used to spend afternoons playing board games and tabletop games. Initially, these sessions were fun and filled with laughter and excitement. As we rotated through the games, everyone enjoyed them.

However, one player had a habit of getting angry when his carefully laid plans didn't work out. While it wasn't a huge issue initially, it led to tense moments when he started losing. I addressed it with him gently, reminding him that we played for fun and that luck could favor anyone at any time.

After our conversation, his attitude changed—for the worse. He began to get angry at me, specifically whenever I started winning. He would blow up, yell, and even refuse to play my favorite games. This behavior made our game sessions increasingly tense. I finally asked him why he was so angry with me, and he accused me of sabotaging games to make him lose. He believed I didn't like playing games with him.

He always misunderstood me despite my efforts to explain that this wasn't the case. I wanted him to know we were all there to have fun, but he interpreted my words as accusations. He had convinced himself that his losses were due to someone else's actions. He put all his thought into figuring out why he was losing, and when he found something that fit his preconceived notions, he used it to generate more lousy knowledge.

This experience taught me an important lesson: we shouldn't seek to prove what we already think. If we do, we might write a blog about how the world is flat or alienate friends over baseless accusations. Information can be manipulated to support almost any viewpoint.

We need effort and experience to let the world shape our understanding.

Instead, we're forcing our perspective to align with our assumptions about how the world should work. When we prioritize our perspective over real experiences, we turn imperfect knowledge into more lousy knowledge.

Weakness from Thought to Effort How reverse reduces prior power

While we can use *effort* to observe the world and increase our knowledge, we cannot use *thought alone* to interact with the world and gain strength. This goes against the natural energy flow and often turns positive thoughts into negative discomfort. Unlike organizing, this approach is what we call procrastination.

When I started a new job halfway across the continent from my family, I rented a room from a young man in his early twenties who worked at a startup and owned his own house. The house had three bedrooms and a sunroom, which he also rented out. His parents had invested a lot of energy and effort into his education so he could earn good money, which he did at his startup. However, they should have taught him more about anything else. They had helped him buy the house and would do his yard work, laundry, and kitchen cleaning. He hired people to handle everything else, believing his time was more valuable spent working at his job than maintaining his home.

I was renting the sunroom, which had glass doors that slid aside. He had put up a curtain for privacy and instructed me to use only the left-hand door because the right one was stuck and wouldn't open. Naturally, I had to check the door to see what was wrong. It turned out that a loose screw was causing the door to rub on the slide. I told him it was an easy fix and suggested he tighten the screw to prevent further issues. His response was, "*How do I do that?*"

I was puzzled and asked him what he meant. It turned out he didn't know how screws worked, how to tighten them, what a screwdriver was, or even where to get one. I fetched a screwdriver from my car and showed him how to use it, letting him tighten the screw himself. He was so proud of his accomplishment that he bragged to the other housemates about fixing something for the first time.

This experience highlighted a crucial point: using *thought alone* to interact with the world treats it as an extension of ourselves, something that is not our responsibility to change, something that needs to change itself for our comfort. This mindset abandons our power to change what's around us and builds stress and discomfort.

While we can use our minds to get others to interact with the world for us, more is needed to build strength. It merely shifts our discomfort and stress onto others. My landlord often had to wait days to get even the simplest things fixed in his house, sometimes for issues as minor as something being unplugged. He relied on thought to interact with the world and avoided tasks that required direct effort and connection.

When we take what we want without direct interaction, bypassing the necessary effort and connection, we become burdensome to others. And when that support is no longer available, we cannot resolve anything alone. This is why engaging with the world directly is essential, putting in the effort to learn and grow. Through this process, we gain the strength and independence to face life's challenges.

Ignorance from Thought to Effort How reverse reduces power

Going from *thought to effort* builds a perspective that has nothing to do with our experiences; we end up trying to change the world in a way we think it should change without understanding how it actually changes.

When I was away from my family, trying to get our new lives started, I was driving and sometimes living in a car that used to be a police car. I always worked on cars myself, repairing anything that went wrong. I also had a degree in robotics and experience fixing automated machinery, so my confidence in my skills was high.

During this time, the car I was driving started having issues; the problem turned out to be a seal (*head gasket*) leaking onto the spark plugs, making the engine run rough at times. I bought the replacement seal and replaced the old seal. Most people who fix cars will be laughing right now; replacing this seal can be complicated, and there should be an expert there to show someone how to do it the first time. As I took the engine apart, coolant flooded the engine. If I had tried to research the steps, I would have avoided this problem. Instead of wasting effort gathering information, I thought about changing my car.

When I put the engine back together, there was still some coolant. Since engines work by small explosions pushing things along, the coolant would burn off, ending the problem. *My perspective was that my skills would be enough*; I took it as a learning lesson even when unexpected things happened.

After the "fix," my car started dying while driving on the highway.

Since there were no more leaks, my expectation was that my skills would fix the car and that there was a new problem. Eventually, my engine locked up and would no longer start, so I gave the car to charity to be recycled. I still hadn't learned my lesson; there was a good chance that if I had opened up the engine again, this time draining the coolant first, I could have cleaned the coolant that was still in the engine and gotten my car running.

When we filter our experiences through our perspective instead of the other way around, we collect information that reinforces our expectations, and that reinforces the lousy knowledge we have already collected.

There is also danger in taking people's words as fact. When someone tells us something, we have two options: We can either try to build knowledge based on the information they gave us or put in the effort to check what they said. Without putting in the effort to check information from other people, their bad knowledge builds more bad knowledge, and before you know it, the whole community is burning witches.

Gaining Stress from Thought-Building Sediment Reverse

Trying to think through interactions takes a lot of work. We try to resolve why things don't work out the way we expect, why it seems like the world is working against us, and why whatever we do just crumbles into nothing. This is because we are trying to interact with thought and do not consider the impact of our connections, known and unknown, on our interactions, which causes stress.

My former friend from the game group could have had fun. They could have accepted that they were losing because controlling every aspect of a game was impossible. Instead, they put thought into the problem instead of a little effort and connection. They tried to think of the things that could be working against them instead of putting effort into expanding their perspective.

What should have been a relaxing escape from the stresses of life instead became a stress-fueled weekly experience for everyone there. Still, no one stressed more than they did.

It is easy to get angry at stressed people because the world is not aligned with their perspective; feeling bad that they are trapped in their own stressful lives is much more appropriate. I still went to game nights and played to win; the extra target on me became another challenge to play against.

Eventually, something else came up to blame, and everything went back to normal.

The world is a shared place; approaching it like a part of us that is being changed is incorrect; the world is not part of us, and others don't see it that way or treat it that way. When we interact, if we think we have all the answers, or even if we are trying to limit the amount of work we do and burden others, in the end, nothing will last, and the changes we make will simply cause us stress. Eventually, we will expect everything we do to fail, and the idea of trying to interact with the world is stressful in itself. Bad connections can cause the same problems.

Pushing discomfort into stress

Many things in life make us uncomfortable. Some of these discomforts exist for good reasons. In contrast, others exist because the world is a shared place, and society often fails to make changes with emotion. We can use our feelings to discover and resolve these discomforts. Still, we need help fixing it effectively when we attempt to change the world using thought alone. This leaves us feeling and thinking until we run out of answers, and our discomfort builds into pain or injury, causing us stress after our mental energy resolves nothing.

I once believed that I was the problem in every social situation. My family's interactions with me significantly influenced this belief, but the main issue was my thinking. Thinking about abstract concepts made words difficult for me. When I wanted to communicate, I had to attach words that best fit my thoughts. Unfortunately, language is heavily dependent on context, and the meaning of words changes depending on their surrounding words. This might be obvious to most people, but I couldn't navigate, especially when I couldn't understand why puns were funny, even after careful explanations.

These uncomfortable situations—people laughing at my word choices and me laughing at theirs—created a hostile world for me. Social situations stressed me out, and direct communication made me uncomfortable. I adopted the persona of a clown, hiding my "disability" behind a screen of intention. When something made me physically painful, like being cold, wet, tired, or hungry, I would simply endure it. Trying to change the world around me became stressful, and explaining my actions, such as why I approached an art project differently than instructed or couldn't answer a test question because it was open to multiple interpretations, was a mental challenge.

Growing up, my mantra became, "Change it or accept it." We can change many things in the world, but no amount of stress will resolve the things we can't change. If we can't accept something, we must change it because thought alone won't suffice. **We need to connect with others to bring others into our world to enact change.** If we use thought to justify why we shouldn't change or try to get others to do things our way, we only turn our discomforts into stress.

Gaining Exhaustion from Thought Building Friction Reverse.

Exhaustion sets in when our efforts no longer provide the perspective we need, especially when we try to interact with the world through thought alone. Overthinking everything means that every time we need to interact with the world, we must either find a way to do it ourselves or get someone else to do it for us. These changes are always temporary, requiring constant repetition and problem-solving each time, which is mentally and physically exhausting.

There was a time in my life when I couldn't work. Just thinking about returning to an environment that had caused me so much damage made my brain shut down. I understand now that this was due to "Executive Dysfunction." Still, I kept putting more effort and mental energy into my tasks until I crashed physically. My perspective told me that if I exceeded expectations at work, specific positive outcomes would follow. In reality, corporate powers changed the rules whenever they benefited them, undermining everything I was striving to achieve. I tried to think through it, figuring out how to make good on my promises to my family and how to avoid similar pitfalls in future jobs. But it didn't matter. There was no security, no stability, no trust.

Eventually, I sought support and began earning money on my own. Through connection, I created experiences that provided new perspectives and insights on how I could provide for my loved ones without putting myself in such a vulnerable position again.

Trying to resolve our stresses with thought or attempting to think our way through how to change the world in a way that changes us positively is **equally exhausting**. Believing that the world is part of us that can be changed to align with our perspective means we will need more preparation for the actual changes in the world. We try to shape the world to match our **undeveloped perspective**, ensuring our efforts will *never* be enough. In the end, I bought into the “community” concept they pushed, which only empowered them without considering those of us connected to them.

Weakened Subconscious from Thought How Reverse Weakens Soul

When we let thought lead our efforts, we avoid as much experience as possible. By constantly seeking the least effort, we miss the opportunity to gain knowledge; we must teach our subconscious how to take over part of the workload. Overthinking can overrule our subconscious, causing us to ignore the voice of our inner self that tries to guide us or to manually perform tasks we've already trained ourselves to do automatically.

Consider the times when we've tried to interact with thought alone, thinking through every step and searching for ways to minimize effort. This constant mental gymnastics leaves us exhausted, as we're not using the skills and muscle memory that come from experience. By trying to control every aspect, we block out the natural, intuitive responses our subconscious provides.

Overriding our subconscious can sometimes be beneficial, like if our instinctive reaction is physically attacking someone who stresses us out. But most of the time, when we ignore our subconscious, we try to justify making the world work for us instead of doing what we know we should.

This need to control stems from a fear of the unknown and a lack of trust in ourselves and the world around us. When we let go and allow ourselves to experience life fully, we build a repository of knowledge and skills that our subconscious can draw upon. This not only lightens the mental load but also reduces stress and fosters a sense of confidence and competence. Ignorant that stunts our subconscious, keeping us from growing into what it could be.

Negative Physical Change (meaning) from Mental Energy (life)

When we interact with thought alone, we treat the world as if it is part of ourselves that is changed by what we believe. This approach ignores our responsibility to make tangible changes through action and experience. By going against the natural flow of effort, we attempt to make the world conform to our thoughts, experiences, and subconscious, effectively imposing our perspective onto the rest of the world so it works for us. Such forced interactions last only as long as our efforts and require constant mental energy, creating stress and discomfort.

When we make everything about our perspective, the changes we impose collapse whenever someone else becomes involved, and our path creates unique perspectives that ultimately clash. This forces us to start over repeatedly, building stress and accumulating mental sediment that restricts our mental life. In essence, relying solely on thought to interact with the world leaves us ignorant and weak, providing no lasting meaning and resulting in a restricted mental life.

When we impose our perspective on the world without considering the broader context or the input of others, we limit our growth. This narrow focus means we miss valuable insights and learning opportunities from different viewpoints. Our actions become isolated. They lack the depth and richness of interaction and collaboration.

Conscience from Thought, Emotion from Empathy

Using the natural cycle of energy, information helps us make connections. The world is a shared place; when we connect, our changes can permanently change the world in ways that will last longer than we will.

Ecology supports the idea that information (effort to understand systems) fosters connections that lead to lasting change. Ecosystems demonstrate this through interdependent relationships, such as nutrient cycles or keystone species, where changes initiated by one element (like reintroducing wolves to Yellowstone) create long-term ripple effects across the entire system. Treating the world as shared emphasizes the lasting impact of these interconnected dynamics.

Philosophy aligns with the concept of using information to create enduring connections. Existentialist and phenomenological traditions, such as those of Heidegger, stress that understanding the interconnectedness of existence leads to actions that resonate beyond the immediate present. Recognizing the world as shared highlights the moral and practical responsibility to make changes that sustain meaning and value over time.

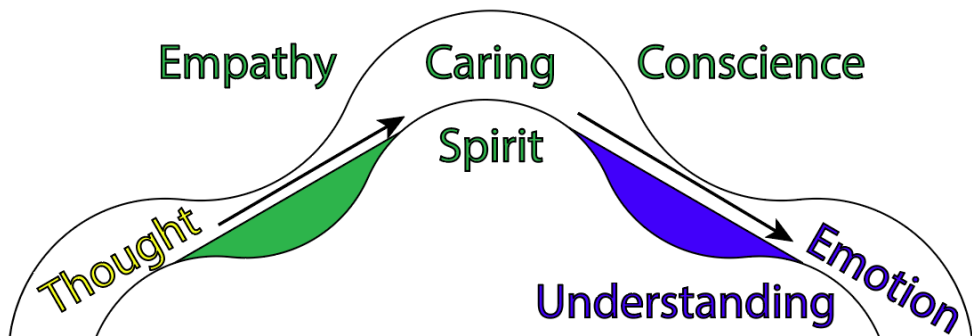
Sociology reflects this idea through its emphasis on collective action and societal development. Social capital theory, for instance, demonstrates how connections based on shared information and empathy strengthen communities and create lasting societal transformations. The idea of permanent change aligns with sociological perspectives on the cumulative impact of social movements and shared cultural progress.

Theology reinforces the view that understanding and connecting with others leads to lasting, meaningful change. Many religious traditions, such as Christianity's call to "love thy neighbor" or Buddhism's emphasis on compassion, frame connections as acts that transcend individual lifetimes. Actions driven by conscience and empathy are seen as spiritually significant, creating legacies that endure beyond physical existence.

We are always sharing connections that change each other. Connection brings us closer to what will help us navigate the changes in this shared world. If we only use emotion to connect to each other and resolve worry, we never fully resolve it. When we connect with thought, we make connections based on what we know about how the world changes, which helps us understand how we change each other. With strong connections, we need less emotion to keep those connections so we can rely on their strength when needed. We also should be careful about whether our connections will be there when needed. But there is something between thought and emotion, an inner drive to connect on an emotional level, which we call our spirit.

Our community interactions change our minds and give us knowledge. Knowledge from information builds our conscience, caring for each other, and spirit. The soul uses our conscience to drive us to find connections and directs our emotions with empathy, building connections that positively change each other.

Using the natural cycle of energy, information helps us make connections.



The world is a shared place; when we connect, our changes will permanently change the world in ways that will last longer than we will. This doesn't have to be a burden for us to overcome; following the natural flow of energy becomes a strength. When we connect with thought, we treat each other like they are a part of us being changed by the world. It helps us understand how we are changing them and how they are changing us.

Thought into Emotion Through Spirit How positive energy combines through the soul

Thought is chemical energy that creates chemical energy in our brains. It is the energy of life that we gather from the world around us and make our own. As someone who has spent my whole life trying to understand the meaning behind people's words, I became very good at reading their faces. It isn't just body language; a person's fears, hopes, and entire history are etched into the lines of their faces, the tone of their voice, the shifting of their muscles, and the placement of their hands and feet. This subconscious information connects me to everyone I meet. I feel their life, their struggle, and their joy. Seeing so many lines in the faces of others reflecting the lines in my own face made me care deeply about everyone. It gave me greater power to help and greater power to hurt. Feeling the pain and not being allowed access to the tools to create positive change became a burden.

When we connect with thought, we connect more deeply, capable of more significant positive and negative impacts. Our caring gives us drive and direction. *Our mental energy—our thoughts—is driven by our knowledge of how people are changed by the world. We change each other based on that knowledge when we connect with thought.* I became a comfort to many people, someone they could talk to and resolve their own burdens. I hope this book will do the same.

Naturally, when I changed others negatively, I would immediately feel the ripple of negative energy.

The same thing happens when I improve the energy around me; I see the positive change ripple outwards, impacting others and myself.

Not everyone has a subconscious trained to see this shift, but the effects of our every action are still there if we look for them.

By caring about our connections and linking our experiences to how the world changes others, we build a bridge of empathy.

Empathy allows us to understand others, avoid damaging connections, and strengthen those that uplift us. Our empathy—our knowledge of how others are impacted—draws in significant thoughts, building our caring around how others are changed. When our caring gathers enough mental energy, our conscience directs us to connect in a meaningful way, aligning our thoughts toward a greater understanding of how our connections change. Understanding our connections enables us to invest our emotions more effectively, reducing worry and stress.

Connections from Spirit How Positive Strengthens Attribute

Connecting with thought means treating our connections as if they are extensions of ourselves that we are changed by what happens in the world. Our spirit, the home of our personal drives, directs the changes we make, our motivations, and our subconscious desires. When we connect with spirit, we use what we care about to form deeper connections and encourage those we connect with to do the same.

There is an ongoing joke about how men can spend hours together doing something without saying a word while strengthening their connection. When they share their experiences, they align their perspectives, share experiences firsthand, and learn what their connections care about. My dad remodeled houses while I was growing up, and I would help him between school. Whenever I helped, I did the job right the first time, as nothing bothered me more than having to repeat a task. Our connection grew stronger as my work improved and met the high standards my dad held himself to. Our shared goal of well-done work built a bond based on mutual respect and understanding. When my dad got angry, I focused on doing something better and ignored the time it took. I learned to understand my dad. Now, I give him gifts that show quality and utility. In return, he became more understanding of my frustrations, seeing my slow work as my way to improve instead of assuming I was lazy.

Sharing motivations helps us connect with others and build our community. Caring about others helps us understand what matters to them and what we can do to create a better connection. When we connect through empathy, directed by our conscience and our knowledge of the right thing to do, we invest a part of ourselves into the connection.

We prove our value by showing our connections that their needs matter to us and that we value their contentment.

Caring about others is not a weakness; it is the only way to build strong connections.

Focusing on our shared experiences and motivations builds a foundation of trust and mutual respect. This approach allows us to form deeper, more meaningful connections with others. We can create a supportive community where everyone feels valued and understood through these connections.

Following these steps can build solid and empathetic connections that enhance mutual understanding and support within your community.

Understanding from spirit How prior helps power

Knowledge and understanding are the same.

Knowledge is a chemical reaction built from chemical reactions. It can only tell us what is based on what we know. Understanding comes from electromagnetic reaction; it is an emotion (feeling) built from the emotions of others, and like electromagnetic energy, it can be shared from one source to another.

Everyone except those with the most shriveled conscience has been in a situation where they immediately felt uncomfortable. They might not know why, but there is an immediate feeling that that place is not where they should be and that this is not what they should be doing. There was a time when I was angry at my life's situation, desperate, and needed a change. At the same time, my bike got stolen. My bike was the only way to get around as I could not afford a car and the area did not have public transportation. I was walking down an alley and saw someone else's bike behind their garage; it looked abandoned but still in great shape. My mind told me to take it, but my caring, empathy and conscience immediately helped me understand that the bike owner might be in the same situation. Later, I saw a very obviously homeless man riding around on a girl's bike that was much too small for them. I immediately understood the homeless people as well; they were people more desperate than I was, desperate enough to act on their thoughts.

Sometimes I find myself being careful to lock the car doors, secure my possessions and then glance around to check that any bikes nearby are safe. I wonder why I feel that way and carefully look around. Every time I get that feeling, I see someone with the same signs of desperation walking around. There are even times when I sense desperation before my senses pick up the person. I will get the feeling and look around before they come out from behind a dumpster or walk out of an alley.

This can be a positive thing too, where you know how to help, comfort, and avoid making someone's days worse. Many of you who work in offices know that feeling of dread, or the feeling of opportunity, that today is the day to either ask for a raise or find a job in an out-of-the-way corner that will keep you out of sight from the boss all day. Those of you who know what I mean have probably laughed in relief when you got a raise or when the boss absolutely ran over someone else who crossed their path instead of you. Caring allows us to understand the motivation of our good and bad connections. Caring will enable us to share their perspective regardless of their intent.

Understanding can be shared without words, signs, or any information being passed. It can help us know the motivations and perspectives of others without any words being shared, but first, we need to be on the same wavelength as the other person. I am using wavelength figuratively; some believe it can be literal, but no matter how you think it works, you need to care about the other person to understand them. Connecting with thought through caring helps us build empathy, feel what others feel, and understand the emotions of our connections like they are part of us.

Following these steps, you can transform knowledge into more profound understanding and build meaningful connections through empathy.

Caring from thought How empowers the soul

Connecting with thought means treating others as extensions of ourselves being changed by the world. This connection fosters an understanding of what they are going through, why they have changed in specific ways, their true motivations, and how we can either help or simply relate to them. Seeing others as part of the world that needs changing is easy. Still, when we use thought to recognize the patterns in them that mirror patterns in us, we start to build more profound empathy and understanding.

I had a casual friend who absolutely hated immigrants. He believed that anyone not born in his country was a drain on society, looking for handouts. He was convinced immigrants were all thieves, murderers, and abusers. One day, while sitting with our friend group, another person mentioned how immigrants were destroying our country. Surprisingly, this friend spoke up, saying that some immigrants work harder than everyone else and are just trying to earn an honest living. I was astonished at his change in attitude. It turned out that an immigrant started working at his workplace and was outworking everyone. He began thinking about the connection between himself and the new guy. He started caring about the hardships people endure to change their lives and the desperation that drives people to try and make it to a new country. He saw this new person and himself as part of the same company, doing the same work and being changed in the same way. This built caring that awakened his empathy, driving his conscience towards positive change in his connections..

When we see others as part of ourselves, we share emotions and build empathy. Empathy drives thoughts to emotions, while our conscience draws from the caring in our spirit to direct change.

My friend began to change his mind on many subjects. He recognized that the wall between his empathy and conscience was put there on purpose to limit his community, as a way to control his motivations and collaborations. Simply put, we care for ourselves, and when we see others as reflections of us, we care for them too.

This means we need to care for ourselves first, put thought into our connection with ourselves, understand how our own changes to the world change us and give us what we need so we can care about others.

For example, my friend's transformation began when he saw the immigrant coworker not as an outsider but as someone facing similar challenges. This shift in perspective led to a broader reevaluation of his beliefs and opened his heart to empathy and understanding.

Ultimately, we build a more compassionate and connected community by seeing others as extensions of ourselves. This approach enriches our lives and creates a ripple effect of positive change, fostering a world where empathy and understanding thrive.

Resolving Worry with Caring Resolving sediment (partial)

*Worry often arises when we need clarification about the **stability** of our connections. We **worry** that these connections will break or lead to negative changes. When we connect with thought, we treat connections as if they are part of us being changed by the world. Seeing others as extensions of ourselves allows us to communicate with empathy and understand how they are being changed by the world and how our actions impact them.*

The difficulties in our lives have caused conflict in my marriage, but one aspect that has remained (mostly) smooth is the connection we share. It's easy to care for those experiencing the same things you are, affected in the same way. However, many people only recognize this when things are bad, ignoring it when things are going well because they are so used to only seeing the changes in the world rather than the person. Even if someone reacts negatively to positive change, we can put thought and caring into the connection to better understand them.

In my marriage, one aspect always caused issues. It took many years and discussions to uncover the reason for the friction. Our worry stemmed from a belief that there was no caring. This worry was only resolved when we shared how the world was changing us and reassured each other that it didn't change how much we cared. When handled well, situations like this deepen the connection and strengthen our caring and empathy, but when unresolved it only strengthens worry that trickles into anxiety.

Empathizing and sharing emotions with our connections means we do not need to worry about whether they will break, we will already understand how they feel and their motivations. Understanding how the world and our actions change our connections also helps us resolve worry. It allows us to anticipate if the world will break the connection or if negative change is coming. There are still things that can hurt our connections. Still, the associated worry can be alleviated by connecting with thought, conscience, and empathy.

Resolving Apathy with Caring Resolving friction (partial)

Apathy sets in when our conscience doesn't give us the empathy to make connections. We stop pushing to connect with others as our stress turns to worry. We lose faith in our spirit's ability to form meaningful connections amidst the chaos, feeling we lack the emotions needed to empathize with others. At this point, many people give up on caring. However, we should care the most when we think the most apathetic.

I see people discarded all the time. In competitive capitalism, your worth is defined by who you are, not what you do. Profit is measured by how many resources a person can take without giving anything back. The people I see discarded may provide social and mental benefits, contributing more to society than they take. Still, if they cannot be capitalized upon, they are discarded. There is only so much caring a person can do, only so many connections they can make without feeling drained. This is how I thought for a long time.

We build up our caring by drawing from our conscience and our knowledge of what people should be going through. As we build more caring, we connect more with others, allowing emotions a path to follow and giving our empathy direction. Many people feel the same way I do—they want to live more collaboratively and create a path where people can build more significant profit beyond what they can hoard.

My conscience pushed me to make these connections, driving me to create the Aquifer Project.

Many assume that because they stop caring, they have done enough or that there is nothing left to gain by empathizing with others. But without empathy, we can't build understanding connections. If I had given up because I couldn't solve homelessness, my lack of caring would have spread to my other connections, cutting my conscience from the flow of energy. It would have drawn me inward to justify everything else I couldn't change, leading me to make connections only for personal benefit.

For example, through the Aquifer Project, I found renewed purpose by focusing on collaborative efforts that create lasting, meaningful impact. By drawing from my conscience and connecting with others who shared my vision, I could push through the apathy and continue making a difference.

Ultimately, overcoming apathy requires consciously reconnecting with our values, seeking support, and taking consistent, small steps toward positive change. Doing so builds empathy and strengthens our connections, creating a ripple effect of caring and understanding that benefits us and those around us.

Positive Social Change (meaning) from Mental Energy (life)

When we connect with thought, we change each other as if they are part of us being changed by the world. This deep connection allows us to know others as well as we know ourselves. By following the natural flow, empathy draws in significant thoughts, driving our caring to build our spirit and directing change in us and our connections through our conscience.

Connecting with thought through our spirit leads to acquiring knowledge, understanding, and caring while addressing worry and apathy. When we create more significant change in each other through our spirit, we infuse greater meaning into the world through empathy. By removing the worry that limits our emotions, we clear the sediment that restricts our social life.

Simply said, using our mental life through our spirit enriches our social interactions. It gives them more significant meaning and freeing our social lives.

Against the Flow, Emotion into Thought

Going against this natural flow we are treating ourselves like we are forcibly being changed by other people and we can force them to change.

Ecology illustrates the dangers of forcing connection into information through the disruption of natural interdependencies. For instance, when ecosystems are managed without understanding the intrinsic balance of their components—viewing interactions as forces to be controlled rather than mutual exchanges—it leads to conflict, such as invasive species causing ecological harm by disregarding existing relationships.

Philosophy critiques the idea of external forces wholly defining one's identity. Existentialists like Sartre argue for individual agency and responsibility, emphasizing that humans shape their essence through choices, not merely through the influence of others. Viewing oneself as entirely shaped by external connections denies the personal capacity for self-determination and adaptation.

Sociology recognizes the interplay between individual agency and societal influence but warns against overemphasizing external control. Structuralist theories may describe how social forces shape behavior, but symbolic interactionism stresses that individuals actively interpret and respond to social interactions, maintaining agency over their identity and responses to change.

Theology often teaches that individuals hold spiritual autonomy and are not wholly defined by external influences. For example, Christian theology emphasizes free will and personal accountability, while Buddhist teachings stress self-awareness and personal responsibility in responding to life's changes. The belief that others entirely define us conflicts with these theological principles of personal growth and moral agency.

Following the natural flow of energy, our information builds stable connections, meaning our thoughts and information help us change others and allow them to change us. We see each other as part of who we are that is being changed by the world.

Going against this natural flow and trying to turn connection into information, we cause conflict and negative change. We are treating ourselves like we are forcibly being changed by other people and we can force them to change. We mistakenly believe that our personality, motivations and the foundation of our actions are the result of those around us, that we have little to no control over who we are as a person or how we adapt and respond to the changes around us.

While we influence each other, not every change is a direct and intentional action of others. We should not let ourselves be defined solely by our emotions; we can't expect others to be determined by how we feel.

Emotions and our inner selves do not control how we must change, and the actions of those around us are not the authors of our inner selves.

In the same way, we cannot expect others to change based on our feelings; we do not write their being.

Bad Connections from Emotion to Thought: How Reverse Damages attribute

Going against the flow and treating ourselves as if we can pick and choose how the world changes us, believing that everything happening is intentionally directed at us, leads to emotionally reacting and collecting information with emotion. *Assuming that everything has an emotional motive is not only paranoid but also incorrect.* Most people are simply trying to live their lives, and their actions, which may not take us into account, are often flawed, just as ours are.

For far too long, it was popular to think that “how we feel defines reality.” People assume emotions inform us of truths around us. This mentality has led to harmful practices and beliefs: redlining, racism, hatred of immigrants, religious violence, and the politicization of freedom. These issues arise because specific individuals want people to think of a sure way to support their ideas, tying information to emotions. This has closed many of my connections as people I care about are led to connect with those who only want to take advantage of them.

The biggest problem with using emotion to collect information is that while emotional responses are always valid, people often assume that the information tied to those emotions is also always valid. This leads them to also believe that because the information is valid, their emotional response to it is also valid. This creates a closed loop where thinking about something triggers an emotional response. The emotional response triggers connected thoughts. This loop makes it impossible to connect meaningfully with others, as it becomes almost impossible to know what information will trigger emotional responses and maintain those connections.

When others change the world, they change us, but unless we connect with thought, they may never know how their actions affect us. We shouldn't take what happens to us personally without first considering it. *When we assume emotions change people, we may start using our feelings to bully others into changing how we want them to, becoming toxic and bringing negativity and conflict to our interactions. This leads to having no actual connections.*

Insufficient Information from Emotion to Thought How to Reverse Damages prior

To collect information with emotion is to treat ourselves like we are part of our connections being changed.

While connections do change each other, going against the natural flow skips over caring and empathy, preventing us from building an understanding of others' motivations and perspectives.

Religion relies on faith, and I knew someone from my religious background who took this too far, becoming unrecognizable to others in the faith. This person believed that anyone not following our faith was inherently evil, and those who claimed to follow it were always good. They were told that a particular politician did not follow our faith, so they immediately thought everything this politician said was wrong and evil. The politician wanted to change medical insurance policy to prevent poor people from dying because they couldn't make someone a profit.

This led the person to believe that poor people die because God is punishing them, that God gives the people he wants to live the resources to pay for medical care. During a deep freeze that caused power outages, this person argued that sheltering poor people in government buildings was wrong because the government saving non-profitable people was evil.

This might make sense to some, but it might sound far-fetched to others. Recently, this person showed me a collection of shopping ads from a local newspaper with names and numbers circled, including serial numbers from the page itself. They explained how these numbers and names corresponded to themes from their faith and, when cross-referenced, aligned with names and numbers connected to "evil" people.

To them, this proved that grocery stores were run by an organization using subliminal messages as part of an evil plot. While I agree that large corporations use grocery stores to influence our thinking, they aim to increase profits, not engage in complex conspiracies.

Thinking with our emotions leads us to listen to celebrities over experts with hands-on experience or extensive study. It causes us to dismiss people before getting to know them and to be terrified of things that may never actually happen.

Just because someone makes us feel a certain way doesn't mean their information is good or they are trying to help us positively change. Trusting a connection in one area doesn't mean they have reliable information in other areas. Emotions are like electromagnetic energy; they travel quickly and are picked up by people around us, spreading like burst water from a pipe that flows between connections. Because people are flawed, their perspectives, emotions, and reactions can also be flawed.

Allowing these emotions to overrule our own can lead us to flawed emotions, thoughts, and attitudes.

Misunderstanding from Emotion to Thought How Reverse Reduces Power

While struggling to sort everything out with my work, just thinking about everything and how to move forward was next to impossible. My mind would shut down after hours of thinking, and information would stop making sense. You could give me directions to my mailbox, and if my mind had already shut down, I would end up at the gas station a mile away. One night, a friend reached out for help with something simple in their life. It was late, and nothing they said made any sense to me. I told them I'd like to help but couldn't think about things and asked them to call back the next day. They never called back, and I assumed they had figured it out. After waiting to hear from them, I reached out again. They no longer considered me a friend, saying they didn't have time for someone too selfish to help out a friend with something so simple.

When we use emotion to collect information, we treat ourselves as being changed by our connections. We give our connections the burden of changing us the way we want them to, or we have to change them, but unlike the world, they have their own desires and needs. At some point after the phone call, my friend turned my rejection into information. They decided that I wanted them to be upset because my response upset them. I would rather see them suffer than take a second to think, and in my mind, our friendship was there only to benefit me.

We may also send emotions to try and get information from someone, an aspect of emotional manipulation. The problem is that with no real connection, we must keep up the pressure, increasing it more and more until the connection collapses without understanding. This is why police interrogations have been proven ineffective but are still used in some places. Only some law enforcement offices are interested in good information; they just want any info. Unfortunately, many people have been jailed because of being emotionally pressured into giving lousy information.

Finally, we use emotion to pressure others to think how we want by making them feel confident about us. This forces the other side of the connection to misunderstand us, who we are, and our motivations. It doesn't build genuine connections and can even damage existing ones. It isn't only attractive people who do this; many of us have had these experiences, on one side or the other.

Imperfect Knowledge from Emotion to Thought: How Reverse Reduces Prior Power

When we use emotion to collect information, we treat ourselves as part of our connections being changed. We assume that because someone shares something that resonates with us, they are telling the truth. However, we often need to learn or understand their motivations. Even if our connections have good intentions, the information they share may need to be more accurate. Our feelings for our connections may lead us to trust the information they share, even if it is false, incomplete, or twisted by their perspective or our understanding.

This happened to me recently. During a discussion on government agencies and their power, I casually mentioned an example of a government agency that had allegedly assassinated a historically prominent political figure. Everyone got quiet until one person informed me that the figure had actually been killed by a violent hate group that had no connections to the government. I apologized and later researched the incident. It was well-documented, not only in our country but also in international sources and documents from the public figure's family, that the extremist group was responsible.

I realized that people from my childhood had used this false information to justify their beliefs and actions. The emotion attached to that misinformation became ingrained in my knowledge, and I ended up basing my feelings on this faulty knowledge.

Believing something is a sure way because of how we or our connections feel about it, which leads to building lousy knowledge. This insufficient knowledge can cause us to ignore important information, change ourselves in damaging ways, or be unprepared for the changes happening in the world.

Emotions are powerful and can distort our perception of reality. When we rely solely on how we feel or our connections feel about something, we risk accepting and spreading misinformation. Verifying information and understanding its motivations is essential to ensure we base our beliefs and actions on accurate and reliable knowledge.

Pushing stress into worry

Part of connection is the **sediment** of worry, which builds up in our social aspect, blocking the path from thought to connection and connection to interaction. *We worry about our connections, losing them, and losing the trust from them being broken.* Stress arises from the continuous thoughts of figuring out how to change to function in the world. When we use emotion to resolve these stresses, we reach out to our connections for answers on how to change. We become reliant on those connections, and when they break, we feel lost.

We change ourselves to match the motivations of our connections, and when we are unprepared for how the world affects us, we either lose trust in those connections or lose faith in the world.

There was a person in my friend group, brought in by someone I knew well, who was always worried about something. They isolated themselves, limiting the number of changes happening around them. They minimized their needs to avoid having to change. Their parents were not supportive, repeatedly kicking them out at an early age, blaming them for things that were not their fault, and treating them like a burden, denying them the power to change anything. This person accepted their role, believing that negative things happened in life because of their connections to others and that there was nothing they could do to make the world work better for them or work better in the world. They decided that since they had no control over what happened to them, all their problems were how they reacted. They tried to adjust and monitor their emotions, keeping them tightly controlled to avoid doing anything that caused their connections to hurt them.

They stopped being around other people, isolating themselves in a way that made it impossible for others to understand them, creating more worry. Whenever negative changes impacted this person, they took it as a sign that they were the problem and a lousy connection that the world wanted to be removed. Their life completely collapsed as their paranoia and fears shut down their ability to function. They were mentally unable to resolve how to live in the world without their own negative emotions making it worse. Eventually, they stopped functioning, their stress became a permanent disability, and they ceased connecting with anyone.

We build stress when we try to collect information through emotion and move ***against the natural flow***. Without effort to gain perspective and resolve worries, we are only informed through our connections, turning how the world changes and affects us into a social problem. We become so dependent on our connections to function that we constantly question why our changes are never good enough and our connections won't support us. The stresses of life become a persistent worry that no one will help us resolve. **They lead to the belief that our connections are only there to harm us.**

Gaining Worry through Emotion Building sediment reverse

Whenever we use emotion, we create worry because we have invested a part of ourselves into building that connection. Emotions are electromagnetic energy shared and amplified between us and our connections. Even if we use our emotions to try to manipulate people, we are still investing a part of ourselves, and we will worry about how they will react or what we will do when we have broken all of our connections.

There was a small coffee roaster in a small town I lived in. There was only one employee. They would roast coffee for local shops and restaurants. This person wore their heart on their shoulder, meaning they were very accessible with how they felt to everyone they met. The problem was that the roaster had decided that anyone with whom they had an emotional connection had good information. Any information they needed about a connection could be gathered through emotion. Eventually, something a person did or said conflicted with the imperfect knowledge the roaster had built up in their mind, and the connection stopped. They became so worried about the intentions of others that they became isolated. They were so concerned about truthful information that they disconnected from the community.

The most significant source of worry comes from allowing others' emotions to control the information we receive. When others try to get us to change the information they share, we become worried that if we reject the information or don't change how they want us to, they will break the connection.

A local troublemaker in town was trying to clean up their life. Everyone else ignored them, but the coffee roaster didn't care about their past. They started being friends. Roasters would share life stories and insecurities, using emotion to share emotions about themselves. Trouble would always listen and empathize by sharing emotions back. As they became closer, the roaster started following Trouble back down his usual path of doing the things that kept destroying their own life.

The roasters had a choice. Their information about Trouble's intentions came from shared emotion. The roasters' trust in their connection convinced them that Trouble had good intentions, and eventually, the roasters convinced themselves that Trouble's bad habits were not as bad as most people thought. Eventually, the desire to keep the connection caused the roasters to follow Trouble into a spiral of bad habits that they never recovered from.

This worry is very valid; many. Many people, myself included, have lost friends, families, and jobs because we chose information collected by effort instead of being pushed by emotion. Following the natural flow can be challenging, but the more significant danger is if we let the worry of others inform how we are changed without putting in the effort for ourselves.

Gaining Apathy through Emotion Building friction reverse

Collecting information with emotion is treating ourselves like we are part of our connections being changed. It puts the burden of what happens to us on our connections, whether intentionally or because we don't verify the information they share. Suppose we force others to be responsible for how we change by using our emotions. In that case, we disregard their motivations and how our actions impact them as long as we get what we want. This approach avoids empathy but still burdens our caring, ultimately building apathy.

No one in the community we lived in would trust Trouble. He made it clear that he would use emotion to provide fake information, causing others to change themselves or the world in a way that benefited him. He even manipulated people's thoughts, so they would make changes that he wanted without him having to change. People thought Trouble cared, and he did, but he lacked empathy. His conscience had become disconnected from how others were being changed by the world and him. Trouble became so adept at manipulating thought through emotion that he convinced himself people listened to him because his feelings were more valid. He no longer cared about others. To him, connections existed to use people as much as they used him.

When we collect information from others and allow our emotions to dictate our beliefs, we fail to understand our connections and those we gain information about. We let others tell us what and who we should care about, overwriting our conscience and losing empathy. This process builds apathy because we are pushed by lousy information about our role in the world and our effect on others.

The burden of emotional-based information gathering can lead to negative consequences. Relying on emotions to guide our understanding without verifying facts can distort our perceptions and decisions. ***By depending on others for our changes and not considering their true motivations or the accuracy of their information, we risk losing our ability to empathize and become apathetic.***

Loss of Caring from Emotion How Reverse Weakens Soul

When we think of everything that happens to us as a result of someone else's actions, we become very defensive of the words and actions of others. Since we have no understanding of the motivation of others, we stop caring about what is bothering them and instead worry only about how their actions affect us. My friend, who disliked immigrants, thought this way. They were given information by people they trusted, claiming that immigrants were terrible and took jobs. If immigrants took jobs, then immigrants didn't care if we died of starvation. If immigrants want us to die, then they are capable of anything. If immigrants are capable of anything, they do anything to get what they want.

My friend deeply cared about their family and community, and this emotion reinforced the lousy information they already accepted as fact, ending their caring whenever an immigrant was involved. Their empathy no longer reached their conscience when an immigrant was injured, lost their job, or was sleeping in the street. The ability to justify not caring for immigrants extended to not caring for those who fought for immigrant rights or safety, even becoming outright hostile and angry when he met people who defended immigrants. The lack of caring spread from their angry response to lousy information about immigrants to every conversation about caring, all of which originated from someone exploiting my friend's love of community.

I tried to explain that people exploited the desperation of immigrants, giving them jobs to avoid taxes so they could treat workers inhumanely without being reported. I argued that if people stopped exploiting immigrants illegally, then immigrants would stop coming over illegally. However, their response was so intertwined with emotion that they could only respond emotionally. Their unthinking emotional reactions continued until the point they started to connect through thought.

When the world changes us, and we are unprepared, we start blaming others and stop caring about ourselves, assuming the changes are the fault of our connections. Gathering information from emotion makes us think that everything happening in the world is caused by the feelings and intentions of others, making it hard to understand their true motives. When we trust our connections to provide all our information, gathering information from emotional connections, we build lousy knowledge. *This insufficient knowledge makes it hard to empathize with how the world changes others.*

Negative Mental Change (meaning) from Social Energy (life)

When we think with emotion, we treat ourselves as if we are being changed by others. As we change each other, we find ourselves giving up control over how we change. By going against the natural flow, we sacrifice our conscience by avoiding thoughtful consideration, caring, spirit, and empathy. A conscience based on emotions rather than thought will always disappoint us because emotions shift, they are shared, and the feelings our connections have are not always based on sound knowledge. By giving up control over our empathy, conscience and caring, we also give up control over our thoughts, our connections, who we connect with, and how well we understand them.

By building worry, we accumulate sediment restricting our social interactions, leading to a restricted social life devoid of lasting meaning.

Chapter 6: Finding Our Meaning

Completing the Circle

To build positive energy in our life and find our meaning, we simply need to *follow the natural flow of energy*: **social energy to change the world, physical energy when we are being changed, and mental energy to change each other.**

By completing the circle, we not only amplify the impact of our actions but also minimize the resources required, achieving efficiency and meaning in alignment with natural and ethical principles.

Ecology aligns with the concept that integrating all three aspects—interaction (physical change), information (mental change), and connection (social change)—creates greater impact with less resource expenditure by mirroring the efficiency of diverse ecological systems.

- **Alignment:** Ecosystems thrive when multiple processes work in tandem. For example, plants utilize sunlight (physical), adapt to environmental conditions (mental), and form symbiotic relationships (social). This integration maximizes resource efficiency and ensures sustainability, paralleling the idea that using all aspects reduces energy waste and amplifies impact.
- **Refinement:** Ecological systems also demonstrate that incomplete processes—such as disrupted feedback loops—lead to inefficiencies, supporting the framework’s claim that partial use of aspects is inherently less effective.

Philosophy supports the idea of holistic integration to maximize impact through the pursuit of balance and completeness in human actions.

- **Alignment:** Aristotle's *eudaimonia* emphasizes achieving human flourishing by cultivating all virtues, aligning with the integration of physical, mental, and social aspects. Similarly, Stoic philosophy's emphasis on aligning reason, action, and social responsibilities reflects the framework's call for simultaneous use of all three aspects.
- **Refinement:** Philosophical critiques might focus on the feasibility of complete integration in every change. However, the framework's emphasis on aligning aspects within the context of natural flow mitigates this, suggesting that balance is achievable when we align with intrinsic processes.

Sociology strongly supports the concept of integration as a means of creating greater societal impact with fewer resources.

- **Alignment:** Social capital theory demonstrates how combining physical actions (infrastructure building), thought (policy development), and emotional connections (community trust) leads to greater collective outcomes. The framework mirrors this by emphasizing that integrated efforts create exponential benefits compared to isolated actions.
- **Refinement:** Sociological critiques could address barriers like social inequalities or systemic resistance to integration. However, we can only be responsible for the change we make and the change we support and when these barriers present themselves, that is where we find meaning, where the effect of the change we create can convey the most significance.

Theology reinforces the idea that integrating all aspects of change aligns human actions with a higher purpose, resulting in greater impact with less effort.

- **Alignment:** Religious doctrines like Christianity's stewardship or Buddhism's *right effort* emphasize harmonizing action, thought, and compassion to achieve fulfillment and divine alignment. This mirrors the framework's assertion that completing the circle strengthens individuals and communities, allowing them to thrive with minimal resource strain.

- **Refinement:** Theological perspectives may highlight the importance of intention in integration, however by establishing our meaning as who and what we live for, we ensuring the impact is not only efficient but also meaningful.

The framework's cyclical use of physical, mental, and social resources is broadly supported across ideologies, with some critiques emphasizing the need for adaptability, equity, and flexibility in real-world applications.

That is true, not everything we do will have the best possible outcome. But in knowing the basic model of change and taking the best approach as often as possible, every positive change will free us up to make more positive changes. We will know that no matter the outcome, despite being flawed beings living in an imperfect world, we left positive meaning by living to create positive change. We will know that no matter who or what we lived for, we will have truly lived.



This won't happen all at once. Simply start with the areas you are weakest, where the sediment has held up your life the most. When there is conflict, or things seem harder than they should be, rely on the natural flow of energy to lead you to a positive outcome. You don't have to figure it out yourself, there are near endless philosophies, theologies and ideologies that can help give more insight into the areas you need it.

As you strengthen your soul through positive change, it will start driving your life in the positive direction, it will start directing your energy towards positive change and positive meaning, cultivating contentment.

When we inform with effort, we treat ourselves as part of the world that can be changed, building knowledge of the world and how we can best adapt to it. When we connect with thought, we treat connections as parts of ourselves that are being changed, building understanding in our relationships. When we interact with emotion, we treat the world like a connection that changes us and vice versa, making changes based on knowledge and understanding instead of merely reacting on impulse.

Another way to look at it:

When we change the world with effort, we are only changing the world to work for us. **When we change ourselves with effort we gain the knowledge of how the world works and what we need to do to thrive in it.**

When we inform ourselves with thought, we only see how the changes in the world affect us. **When we connect with thought we gain the understanding to see how the changes in the world affect everyone.**

When we connect with emotion, we are only able to change our connections through our connections. **When we interact with emotion we gain the strength to change the entire world through our connections.**

When we complete the circle, we know how to thrive in the world, we understand the connections at work and we gain the strength to change the world.

Energy never disappears; *it simply changes form*. When we free our life, that energy flows through us without end so that sediment never has time to settle, and we always have fuel for what we need or want to do. If we use only two aspects of ourselves, the energy doesn't complete the circle and stops, dropping sediment along the way. Whenever we make a decision or change, we must use every part of who we are—*mind, body, and connections*—to resolve sediment, and we need to follow the natural flow to ensure positive changes.

This may sound exhausting, and at first it will be. But remember, nothing changes without something making it change. Just like planting a garden for the first time takes a lot of effort to clear the land of trees and rocks before tilling the ground, the first steps of freeing life will require work to get it started.

But don't get discouraged. The knowledge we gain about how to do something in a positive way is something we will always have. The understanding of how our actions affect our connections will build strong relationships that last, and the strength those connections give us is something we can always count on. The groundwork we do today will produce yields for the rest of our lives.

We may need to put in the work to free up the sediment we have now, but once we get our lives moving in a positive direction, it will keep going until something comes along to slow it down. When something comes along to slow down our lives, we will have what we need to overcome it. With our lives flowing in a positive direction, the changes we make will be positive too, giving our lives positive meaning. Just like the people who created the soil in the Amazon with charcoal, fertilizer and pottery, the growth in us will continue long after our work stops.

This path may seem to conflict with the current mantra of placation to "Live in the Moment", because according to the framework in this book, for a moment to have meaning, it has to represent change.

Don't think that living in the moment means only seeing the current sliver of time, without any connection to the past and the future. It would be like standing on a mountain top and only looking at the gravel under your feet.

It is the past and future that holds the beauty of who we are right now.

If we look at a tree, each branch represents a positive change towards more sunlight, more growth. Every bend in the trunk adds a unique story, complexity and interest that comes from the struggles it went through. Even though we can't see the changes that failed, the branches that died, the younger years where its growth was the hardest, those changes are the unseen knots and heartwood of the tree that provides its strength, its ability to weather future storms.

When that tree one day dies, every moment of its life is recorded in the lumber. Burlwood is the part of the tree that holds the most history, it is a complex tangle of knots that represent growth through struggles that would kill most trees. Burlwood makes some of the most beautiful lumber you will ever see, reserved for the most treasured projects because of the complexity and struggle it represents.

The energy we create in life does not always leave a mark as physical as those a tree does. But it does give the moments we are in their significance. A mountain peak is all the more beautiful if you climbed there yourself. Not only do you see the changes of history on the world around you, you see the change in yourself. The struggle you went through ties the meaning of the moment directly to you, letting you become a part of the gravity of the world.

That is how we live in the moment. When you complete the circle, you are adding the weight of your past to the beauty of your present. When you feel how your life has been freed, you gain the drive to create positive change. When you see how your sediment has turned to meaning, you feel your strength to direct your future.

Living in the moment means seeing the significance in every dead branch, every twist, every knot, every searching root and every flourishing blossom in the story of your life. *From that moment on, everything you are becomes a strength that will last far beyond just the physical changes you make to the world.*

The Full Physical Circle - Think, Connect, Act

Ecology supports the "**Full Physical Circle**" by demonstrating how natural systems efficiently leverage interconnected resources to maximize impact and sustainability. The water cycle demonstrates this principle effectively. Physical resources like precipitation (effort) feed into mental resources through environmental changes (e.g., influencing plant growth and soil adaptation). These adaptations foster social resources, such as symbiotic relationships between species (e.g., trees supporting biodiversity). These interconnected systems reinforce and sustain physical impacts like water purification and habitat creation. This cyclical process ensures that each resource contributes to and magnifies the next, mirroring the framework's concept of leveraging resources sequentially for maximum impact.

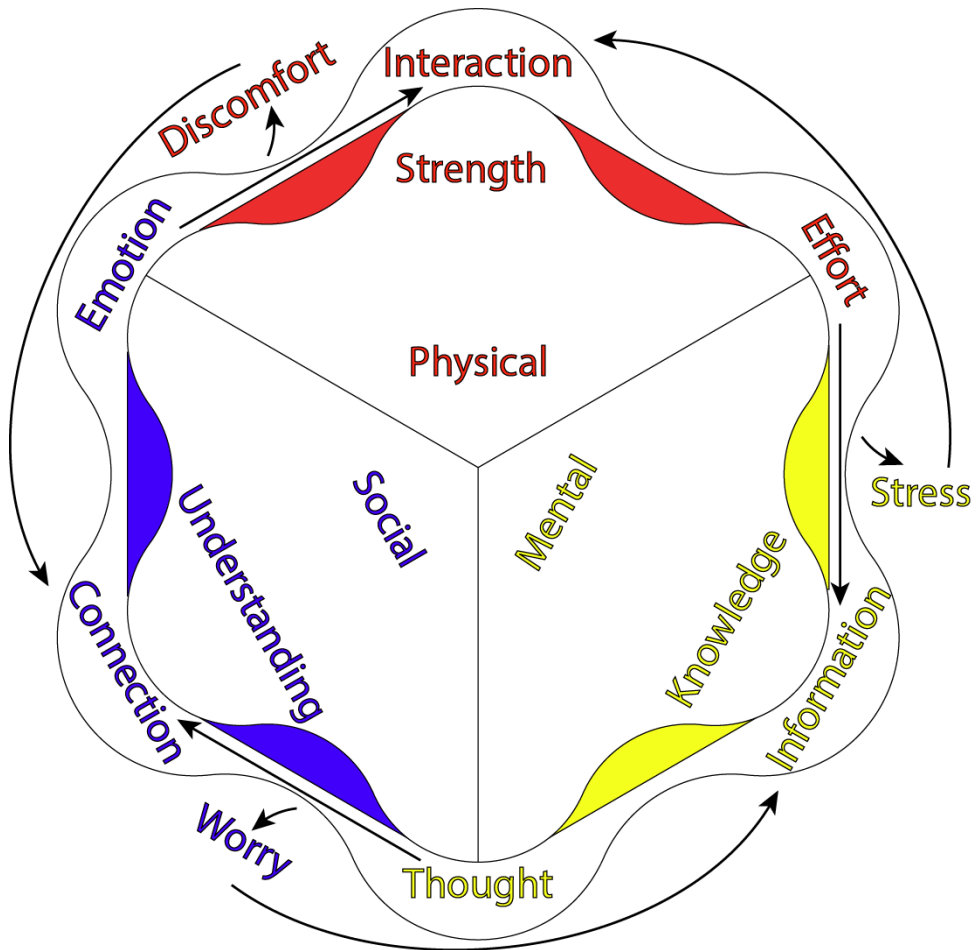
Philosophy aligns with the concept by advocating for intentionality and balance in how resources are applied across domains of change. John Dewey's pragmatic philosophy is a compelling representation. Dewey emphasizes that experience (physical action) informs learning and reasoning (mental resources), which then guide collaborative problem-solving and community engagement (social resources). This iterative process enables individuals and communities to enact practical, lasting changes in their environments. Dewey's emphasis on the interconnected nature of physical, mental, and social efforts reflects the framework's cyclical use of resources to maximize impact.

Sociology strongly supports the framework, emphasizing the multiplicative effects of integrating physical, mental, and social resources for impactful physical change.

Resource mobilization theory and social capital theory demonstrate how collective efforts maximize outcomes by leveraging physical actions (labor or infrastructure), mental understanding (knowledge of systems), and social trust (relationships and cooperation).

For example, infrastructure projects that involve community knowledge and collaboration are more sustainable and impactful than those driven solely by isolated efforts.

Theology supports the "Full Physical Circle" by highlighting the interconnectedness of physical, mental, and social resources in fulfilling moral and spiritual purposes.



Because the world is a shared place, the changes we make to the world should always be led with emotion so we can understand how we are changing each other before we make changes ourselves. The essential questions to ask ourselves are: *What will our connections change, and what have they already changed? Do we understand their motivations? More importantly, do we understand our connections well enough to know how the world changes them and how that influences their motivations? Do we understand how they are changing us?*

Understanding their perspective, caring, and community is crucial. We need to know the direction in which their skills, talents, and souls are driving change. Without this understanding, we risk creating conflicts between how we are trying to change the world and how it is actually being changed, conflicts that build sediment.

Cultivating Physical Strength through Interaction

I dream of a better world—not just in theory, but to build something beyond my own imagination. The problem is my imagination is limited. Even if I spent my entire lifetime designing something truly spectacular, the chances of me building it are zero. The potential of any interaction I have is limited by the potential I personally hold. My own dreams are limited by my own human potential.

I have been telling you that the best way to live is to complete the circle, and this is where it truly means something. One simple observation made throughout the book truly gives me the drive to change.

The point is, "The world is a shared place."

Am I the only one who dreams of a better world? Of a way to live that gives more than it takes? Of a society that believes profits are not solely personal wealth but the privilege of being a part of greater shared wealth?

Of course not.

Our meaning is not capped by individual ability; it is only capped by the connections we make in life. The potential of the community is capped by the combined potential of everyone who collaborates. Dreams are only limited by the shared resolve of everyone sharing the same dreams.

It takes energy to start a large boulder moving. Once that energy threshold is reached, the energy of each additional person adds to the momentum of the boulder. Each connection we add to our strength does not allow us to increase our meaning, potential, and dreams; it gives everything a much bigger impact.

It's like how good managers work. Sure, they could micromanage everyone under them or see everyone as equals, with the management role being to clear the way for everyone to succeed. Micromanagers limit their output to what they personally accomplish. A facilitator magnifies the combined input of everyone they work with.

To build knowledge, we must find information about how our interactions change the world. Using thought to connect with those who will be impacted by our interactions helps build understanding. Finally, we need to use emotion to make changes based on the understanding we have built or choose not to take actions that may destroy or undo the efforts of our connections, thereby strengthening our community. *By following this full circle, a simple change to the world strengthens every physical aspect of who we are.*

Completing the circle multiplies the impact of everything we do and every change we make on the world, not just for us but for everyone we share this world with.

We treat ourselves as part of the world being changed, accepting that our connections are changed just like we are. Then, we work together to change the world the same way it changes us, completing the circle. By tying every aspect of who we are to the changes we make, we accept that we live in a shared world and strive to change it positively for everyone. **This gives our lives a greater meaning than simply serving ourselves.**

Interaction from Effort

The connections I value the most are the ones I've gone through the most struggles with. My interactions are defined by my efforts. When we put effort into being changed, we discover how our world is interconnected and altered by everything else. Using this knowledge to build connections means we are forging shared bonds based on our mutual influence on the world. Friends may come and go, but those who endure the worst with you are connections for a lifetime. Community is about sharing emotion through shared motivations discovered through effort. By fulfilling everyone's motivations, we strengthen connections, and few times align these motivations more than during struggles.

When I was the head housekeeper of a resort, each department was its own clique. The office workers stuck with the office workers, the ranch people with the ranch people, and the housekeepers with the housekeepers. During the winter, only weekends were booked, so I was the entire housekeeping department. My social world was limited to bursts of connections in summer that drifted into the isolation of winter. Homeschooled for most of my life, I didn't know how to socialize, so I never left the resort to connect with others. My social life followed the seasons: winters of loneliness, springs of hope, summers of warmth, and the withering of fall.

The maintenance team, a mix of former farmers and semi-retired military vets, could swap out a golf cart motor in ten minutes flat. They hung out in the maintenance barn, working on project cars, welding stairs together, and swapping stories. One fall, when my staff had left, a group wanted to stay for an entire week, meaning I had to clean every heated room with over 100 beds in six hours. What normally took five days had to be done in less than one. The office saw this coming and asked maintenance to help me for the day. I was uncomfortable using my "managing voice" with the grizzled veterans, but we pulled together because these bookings paid all our checks. We all shared the same motivation and resolve. I showed the maintenance team my organizational skills, and they included me in their team for the day.

After that, the maintenance team always lent a hand whenever we had close off-season bookings. When one of the crew was putting in a concrete foundation for their garage, I helped before the cement hardened. I became friends not just with the maintenance team but also with their friends.

When we share motivations with our connections, we align with the connections of our connections, expanding our social aspect by merging communities. Cooperation in making changes to the world together builds more connections and strengthens existing ones. ***Our emotions fuel both our interactions and our connections.***

Being part of the team made the resort a part of who I was, increasing my desire to protect that community and shared life. Efforts to connect created community and interaction, positively changing myself, others, and the world. *This support made my life more stable and helped me achieve things I couldn't have done alone.*

Strength from Effort

My son was in the hospital for a long time. We stayed with him for several months while the doctors tried different tests, medications, and procedures. During this time, my oldest sister came for a visit. We had never been close; by the time I talked, she was rebelling, and she moved out of the house by the time I developed my personality. This sister stayed with us in the hospital for several days. While the rest of the family cared and communicated this over the phone—something I do not resent—my sister put in the effort. She showed up, learned about the situation, and saw how I dealt with it.

That short amount of time with my sister built a connection between us that I feel is as strong as any other connection in my family. She learned my motivations, and I learned hers. When my son's condition caused problems down the road, she trusted that we would have attended family functions if we could. I understood her challenges, recognizing that she cared even when she couldn't effectively communicate it. When we had our own struggles, we could help each other meaningfully, whether moving, watching the kids, or simply going camping.

Our strength is only as powerful as the strength of our collaborations. Our community is only as strong as our understanding. Our understanding is only as strong as our conscience. Our conscience is only as strong as our knowledge. Our knowledge is only as strong as our perspective. Our perspective is only as strong as our efforts.

By sharing this world, we share experiences, and those experiences ripple around the circle, ultimately giving us strength for even bigger challenges.

In essence, the effort we put into our relationships builds the foundation for deep and lasting connections. These connections, rooted in empathy and understanding, become sources of strength and support. My sister's visit during a difficult time was more than just a gesture; it was a transformative experience that deepened our bond and reinforced the importance of effort in building and maintaining meaningful relationships.

This journey taught me that the energy and time we invest in understanding and supporting each other truly binds us. **The connections we forge through shared struggles and mutual support create a resilient community capable of withstanding life's challenges.** *The more we invest in these connections, the stronger our community becomes, providing us with the collective strength to navigate and overcome adversity.*

Resolving Sediment through Interaction

Completing the circle in a positive direction takes the negative energy and uses it to empower our soul. It gives us strength and directs our energy positively, with discomfort driving conscience, strengthening our connections and motivations, filling our resolve, and directing our community.

My sister's effort in bringing in a new perspective helped resolve the stress of not knowing how the world was affecting my son and how we would deal with this change. Our empathy resolved the worry about our connections staying strong when we needed them. Our family was strengthened by our shared resolve to be there for each other, leading to collaborations that helped us resolve discomfort.

Interacting with effort alone will build more discomfort than we can resolve; our whole life will be about interacting to gain chemical energy. By completing the circle, we can accomplish what we need without accumulating additional sediment. Another important aspect is that our discomforts motivate us to connect—the sediment of discomfort fuels our emotions. Because the best way to resolve sediment is by completing the circle in a positive direction, feeling discomfort is a good time to care about others positively. This shared motivation builds resolve and can lead to collaboration that strengthens our community.

I would never have informed my sister of our situation if it wasn't for the stress leading me to share information, and she would never have put in the effort to gain perspective. Without worrying about our connection, we would never have shared thoughts that helped us empathize. Without the discomfort of trying to work through this part of our lives alone, we would never have worked together to become a more stable family.

This process shows that discomfort and stress can catalyze positive change when channeled correctly. By allowing these negative feelings to drive us toward connection and understanding, we transform them into forces for good. The empathy that arises from shared struggles strengthens our bonds, creating a supportive network that can weather future challenges.

Pushing Sediment through Partial Connection

When we complete the circle, we must go through every aspect. Starting at one point and stopping before we go all the way around may feel like we resolved our sediment, and while it may seem gone, we have merely pushed it to the next aspect; **the energy never disappeared. It just changed shape.**

If we try to resolve our discomfort by starting with effort but ending with information, we might learn what is blocking our efforts, but we haven't truly resolved it; instead, we've just pushed discomfort into stress. If we then use that information to connect with thought and stop there, we may build some understanding between us and our connections but still have not resolved the discomfort, pushing it into worry about the situation.

It isn't until we push the discomfort into motivation that it actually gets resolved. We must build the resolve to take action, collaborate with others, and allow them into our community. This collaboration can use our newfound knowledge to provide everyone relief from discomfort. Or, it can allow others to provide that relief for us. It doesn't have to be a medical emergency; it can be something as simple as giving extra food to your neighbors, asking for help moving a couch, or organizing a community clean-up.

When my sister visited us in the hospital, the initial effort was just the beginning. She showed up and gained perspective on our situation, which built her understanding of what we were going through. But it didn't stop there. Our shared empathy turned that understanding into motivation. She didn't just know about our struggle; she took action, supporting us in practical ways and strengthening our bond.

By completing the circle, we moved through effort, thought, and emotion and arrived at a place where we could act on our motivations. This led to real, tangible support and a deeper connection. Our community was fortified by shared resolve, leading to collaborative efforts that provided genuine relief from discomfort.

This process can be applied to any situation. *If you identify an obstacle or discomfort, begin by making an effort to understand it, use thought to connect with others about it, and finally, let that connection fuel a shared motivation to act.* By fully completing the circle, we ensure that our energy is continuously flowing and transforming in a positive way rather than stagnating and causing stress or worry.

Relying on others is not a weakness but a strength. Even the strongest person can be outmatched by three average people because there is a limit to what we can do alone. We don't have to learn everything ourselves; we can trade our skills for those of others, which is how an economy works.

Emotion is essential to resolving discomfort. Building a supportive and effective community requires a connection with understanding. By completing the circle—gathering information, considering the impact on connections, and using community energy—we create positive change and build a more resilient, interconnected world.

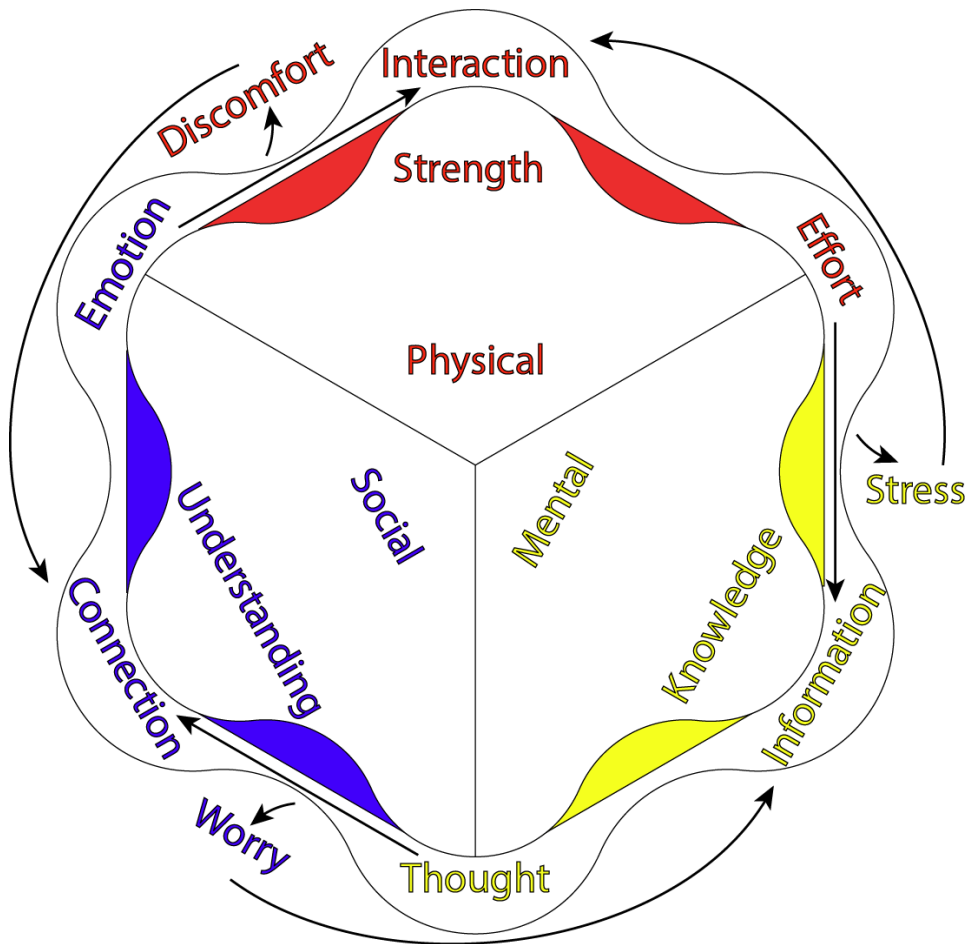
The Full Mental Circle - Feel, Interact, Inform

Ecology supports the idea of cycling resources through mental, social, and physical aspects in sequence to enhance personal change by reflecting natural adaptive processes. Adaptive behaviors in ecosystems mirror the cyclical use of resources. Mental resources (adaptation to environmental stimuli) guide social connections (e.g., cooperative behaviors like pack hunting). These social resources enable physical changes (e.g., reorganizing hunting strategies based on collective learning). The resulting physical success feeds back into improved adaptive processes (e.g., refined environmental awareness). This cyclical process ensures that adaptation (mental change) is sustainable and increasingly effective over time.

Philosophy aligns with the framework by emphasizing the integration of thought, social engagement, and action as essential for meaningful personal change. Mental resources (thesis) engage with social forces (antithesis) to create actionable outcomes (synthesis). This process refines the individual's understanding and facilitates personal growth. Similarly, pragmatist philosophers like Dewey emphasize that personal change arises from thoughtful reflection (mental), collaboration (social), and practical action (physical), reinforcing the framework's sequence.

Sociology strongly supports the **Full Mental Circle**, as it emphasizes the interplay between individual thought, social structures, and physical resources in fostering personal and collective transformation. Symbolic interactionism reflects the cyclical process described in the framework: Mental resources (self-concept and interpretation) drive social interactions (building relationships). These interactions enable access to physical resources (material or logistical support). The physical resources then feed back into mental transformation (enhancing self-efficacy and adaptability). This approach aligns with sociological theories that emphasize the role of social capital and material access in personal development.

Theology supports the **Full Mental Circle** by framing personal change as a holistic process involving mental reflection, social connection, and actionable effort. Many religious traditions emphasize the sequential integration of thought, social engagement, and action for spiritual and personal growth. Mental reflection (prayer or meditation) fosters empathy and compassion (social resources), leading to acts of service or charity (physical resources). These actions feed back into spiritual understanding, completing the cycle of personal transformation.



When we allow ourselves to be changed by the world, we should make those changes with effort and mental energy to ensure that we are not causing internal conflict between what we think we know and how we are actually being changed. The questions we need to ask are: How is the world changing, and how can we change to be prepared? Do we have the strength for these experiences? More importantly, do we have the strength to handle the changes positively coming our way? Do we have the strength to change ourselves to deal with these changes? Do we have the strength in our caring, community, and subconscious to direct our skills, talent, and soul to drive the necessary changes in us?

Unless we strengthen our interactions, we risk creating a physical conflict between how we are changing and how the world is changing around us. We need to ensure that our changes align with the world's changes so we can live with them rather than against them.

Cultivating Mental Strength through Information

People have always told me I am smart, and it has always made me feel like a personal failure. *If I am so smart, why is my life so miserable? Why do my decisions always seem to have negative outcomes? Why can I solve complex murder mysteries but can't even figure out how to make friends?*

It also made me realize that **there is a difference between being “smart” and “knowing a lot.”** I could figure things out, but trying to remember names, dates, or trivia? Those were areas of failure for me. It made people's expectations hard to navigate and made me feel even more like even being smart wasn't something I could accomplish.

The problem was that I thought being smart meant being able to figure out anything when all it meant was that my curiosity was my strongest attribute. It meant I had potential, but without completing the circle, that potential was limited to how the world changed me and not how I changed others or even the world around me.

True, my subconscious connected my physical self to my mental self, but we need our community to help us change the world in a way that works for everyone we are connected with. Without this, all of my interactions with the world around me would have been doomed to never be enough. Without thinking about connections, all the effort I put into gaining knowledge would still leave me with misunderstandings about my place in the world.

To build understanding, we need to think while connecting with others, understanding they are being changed by the world just like us. By engaging thoughtfully and empathetically with others, we ensure that we are aware of the collective efforts and motivations driving change. Using emotion helps us focus our efforts in our search for information, prioritizing what matters most to us and to others that gives us the knowledge we need to change in the way that helps us work with the world and our connections. This alignment of goals with the needs of our community allows us to direct our energy effectively.

Our meaning is not capped by individual knowledge. **Our meaning is only capped by the combined knowledge of our connections.** The misunderstandings we feel are the paths we need to follow to be changed for the better. The value of the information we receive is only as good as the amount of thought we put into the source we connect to, the amount of emotion we use to connect it to how the world is being changed, and the amount of effort we put into turning that information into knowledge.

Collecting information with effort is essential to prepare ourselves for the changes happening in the world. Actively seeking out knowledge and experiences helps us to learn, adapt, and be open to new perspectives. When the world changes us, having this preparation means ***we can handle whatever happens with the right knowledge and understanding.***

By completing the circle, we can make our intelligence in one area of intelligence in every area. As my journey toward this moment continued, I started to be able to solve the unspoken mysteries in conversations as well as the unwritten mysteries in novels. The mysteries of my own existence simply became another part of the story. Life itself had become a novel where everyone and everything was another element. Empathy, motivation, and perspective were simply parts of the story that could inform me of the past, the present, and the future of the characters that intersected and added to the story thread of my own life.

By following the full circle, a simple change in us strengthens every physical aspect of who we are. We treat our connections as entities being changed by the world, acknowledging their experiences and perspectives. Treating the world as part of us being changed as we change it helps us understand our reciprocal relationship with our environment. Accepting that we control our responses to the world, we change positively, growing our sense of purpose and meaning.

Information from Thought

The world is constantly changing, and ensuring these changes affect us positively can be stressful. We might need to change our routines, methods, or even our way of thinking. Every bit of information we receive shapes who we are and how we grow and adapt physically, mentally, and socially. The world is a shared place, constantly in flux, and we are connected to these changes just as much as we are connected to the lives around us.

Before we can understand how we are being changed and how we should change, we need to understand the role our connections play. For instance, learning to drive was very hard for me. It was easy to learn the material and understand the rules, but putting it into practice felt like chaos. The knowledge I had about driving based on information didn't prepare me for the actual experience. Instead, it helped me make my best guess about what everything on the road was going to do. The information provided only helped me understand the context of driving.

Driving is simply getting from one place to another, which seems easy to understand. However, it took me a while to realize that this is the only shared motivation among drivers, the systems, the lights, and the signs. The infrastructure provided by the government exists because enough drivers want security and stability to reduce the discomfort and stress involved with crashing, but that motivation isn't universal.

Once you begin to see shared motivations, it becomes easier to identify people who don't share the same resolve as most of the driving community. It turns into a collaboration among good drivers to avoid negative interactions caused by bad drivers. It wasn't until I had driven through different types of areas and around different types of people that I gained enough perspective on driving to finally relax.

People who don't consider how driving connects them to others cause bad interactions with bad information and have a flawed understanding of what driving means. Those who don't put emotion into their driving interactions are often the ones who carelessly make driving dangerous.

*Only by following the full circle—**thinking, caring, empathizing, and connecting**—did the information I had on driving turn into good knowledge.*

Thought allowed me to understand people's motivations, both good and bad. **Emotion**, stemming from understanding other drivers, built a shared resolve for safe interactions, enabling collaboration with good drivers and creating strength from safely transporting things at high speeds.

The effort to drive well-created experiences subconsciously built a perspective on how other drivers affected me. This allowed me to ignore unimportant information and focus on what would help me be a safe driver. Good knowledge of safe driving removes uncertainties, making driving a more reliable part of life.

Knowledge from Thought

Information comes from every sense, both from what is happening *outside* us and what is happening *inside* us. Our muscles' reactions, the pains, the stresses, and the impacts—all of this creates information. As we experience more, our subconscious takes in this information. It changes our bodies to perform the same actions more effectively with less effort, a process known as muscle memory.

I developed good driving practices by always trying to drive safely and staying alert for unsafe drivers. Even when I am tired, or the amount of information I can process is limited, my subconscious keeps me driving safely. I maintain safe speeds without constantly checking the speedometer, keep track of my gas, and remain aware of other cars. My subconscious alerts me when someone is driving dangerously. I know when someone is about to change lanes without signaling, when the road is dangerous, and I should slow down, and when someone is going to ignore a stoplight. While I still need to be aware of my surroundings, by following the full circle, I have the knowledge needed to collect good information.

Muscle memory reduces the amount of conscious thought required. In fact, overthinking something you have done many times can hinder your performance. Experience is a strength in itself, which is why we practice and learn. It's not just our muscles that are affected, but our minds and reflexes, too. *Our ability to handle crises can provide more strength in a situation than our muscles alone, as our subconscious manages these experiences, making us more effective in every way.*

Resolving Sediment through Information

Completing the circle in a positive direction transforms negative energy into a force that empowers our soul. It provides us with knowledge and channels our energy positively, with stress driving our collaborations. These interactions grant us *experiences*, satiate our *curiosity*, and shape our *perspective*.

When I first started driving, I was worried that every car was an accident waiting to happen. Now, I know which drivers to trust and which roads, lights, bridges, and weather conditions to be cautious of. This understanding has come from completing the circle through continuous learning, thoughtful connections, and positive interactions.

Initially, driving was filled with challenges: sliding off the road into ditches, braking too hard, running out of gas, and walking through town to avoid accidents or tickets. Now, I drive others and reach destinations more efficiently with less discomfort or injury. Worrying less also means taking fewer risks that could lead to discomfort.

At first, everything about driving stressed me out. I was unsure about pedestrians, the impact of weather, differentiating between on-ramps and off-ramps, identifying one-way streets, understanding parking laws, and navigating varying driving laws in different areas. Now, I know what is important, what will change me, what others will do, and how to adapt positively.

Relying on information from thought alone creates more discomfort than we can resolve, leading to a life spent overthinking. By completing the circle, we can discern what the world is telling us without accumulating additional sediment. Stress, while challenging, motivates us to interact and fuels our efforts. The best way to resolve this sediment is by completing the circle in a positive direction.

It is a good time to find new ways to interact positively when stressed. This exploration gives us new resolve, builds our curiosity about how the world works, and can lead to perspectives that strengthen our subconscious and build security in how we will be changed. Completing the circle means integrating effort, thought, and emotion into our actions and responses, ensuring that our energy flows smoothly and constructively.

Pushing Sediment through Partial Interaction

When we complete the circle, we must go through **every** aspect. Starting at one and stopping before we go all the way around may feel like we have resolved our sediment, but in truth, we have just pushed it to the next aspect. The energy never disappears; it just changes shape. For example, suppose we try to resolve our stress by starting with thought but ending with connection. In that case, we may gain an understanding of what is causing the stress, but we haven't resolved it. Instead, we have pushed discomfort into worry. If we then use that information to interact with emotion and stop there, we may add strength to our connections but still not resolve the stress, pushing it into discomfort shared between us and our connections.

It isn't until we push the stress into experiences that it actually gets resolved. We must put in the effort to do something about it. We need to build a perspective on what is causing us stress and either subconsciously ignore it or resolve it through interactions, either by changing it or by changing ourselves mentally or physically.

Not all stress can be resolved, and not every connection will work with you to build knowledge. Some connections might even try to make you change in a negative way.

In such cases, ***find new connections***, directly ask them to help you check the motivations of the connection causing negative change, and if they all agree, then drop the old connection and work with the new.

Remember, most of our strength comes from our connections, but it's essential to follow up on stories from your news sources. Make sure that you are not the product being sold to their customers. A good rule to follow is: The less you pay for your news, the less you should trust it. If they are not selling the information to you, they are selling their power to change you to their backers.

The Full Social Circle - Interact, Think, Connect

Ecology supports the "**Full Social Circle**" by illustrating how social interactions within ecosystems (e.g., cooperative behaviors) drive physical and mental processes, which then feedback to strengthen social cohesion and stability. Coral polyps form collaborative structures (reefs) that provide shelter and support for a diverse range of marine species. These reefs facilitate physical resource accumulation, such as nutrient cycling and habitat formation. The ecosystem's organisms adapt to the physical structure and ecological dynamics, refining their behaviors (e.g., feeding strategies, symbiotic relationships). This cyclical interaction between cooperation, physical resource use, and adaptation ensures the reef's resilience and amplifies its ecological impact over time.

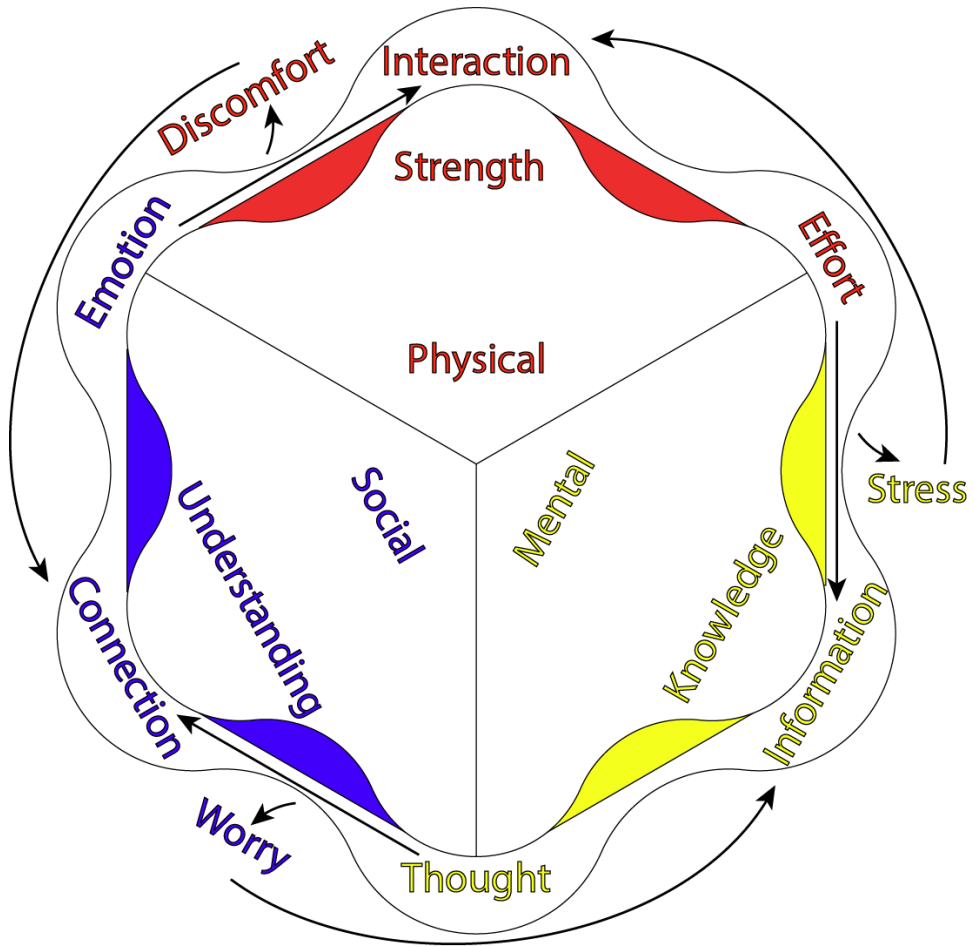
By aligning cooperative actions with the collection and utilization of physical and mental resources, coral reefs exemplify how ecosystems thrive through sequential and interdependent resource utilization, supporting the core idea of the "**Full Social Circle**."

Philosophy aligns with the **Full Social Circle** by emphasizing how social interactions, grounded in physical actions and guided by mental processes, create lasting societal and individual transformation. JConfucius' teachings provide a sequential framework for achieving harmony and impactful change. Relationships and social roles (*ren* or benevolence) are foundational, initiating efforts to strengthen society through mutual respect and cooperation. These relationships encourage tangible actions, such as fulfilling obligations and contributing to communal welfare (*li* or ritual propriety). The fulfillment of social and physical responsibilities cultivates wisdom and moral insight (*yi* or righteousness), which then enhances the social fabric by promoting greater empathy and ethical behavior. This cyclical process of using relationships to inspire action, which in turn fosters self-improvement and societal growth, aligns closely with the "**Full Social Circle**" framework.

Confucianism underscores the importance of integrating social, physical, and mental aspects in a structured and harmonious way to achieve sustainable and meaningful change.

Sociology strongly supports the **Full Social Circle** by emphasizing the interplay of social, physical, and mental resources in driving systemic social change. The **Marshall Plan** implemented after World War II, which demonstrates the sequential use of social, physical, and mental resources to drive systemic social change. The initial step involved fostering international alliances and mutual trust among nations, creating a cooperative network for rebuilding Europe. These relationships served as the foundation for pooling resources and ensuring collaboration. Economic aid and infrastructure development followed, utilizing tangible resources to rebuild war-torn regions, restore industries, and stabilize economies. The success of these physical efforts led to new intellectual frameworks for international collaboration, such as trade agreements and cultural exchanges, fostering shared understanding and long-term social cohesion. This example illustrates how leveraging social relationships first, followed by physical and mental resources in sequence, created a lasting impact on global stability and cooperation. The "**Full Social Circle**" framework is reflected in the way these interconnected efforts multiplied effectiveness and sustainability over time.

Theology supports the **Full Social Circle** by emphasizing the interconnectedness of social, physical, and mental resources in fostering moral and spiritual growth within communities.



When we need to make changes to each other, we should approach it with thought and mental energy to ensure we do not cause conflict between how we are changed by the world and how our connections are changed by the world. Understanding the perspectives and needs for change of those around us is essential. Knowing what they have gone through and what they will go through helps us empathize with their life experiences and understand how we are changing them and how they are changing us. It's equally crucial to know if they care or empathize with us.

Understanding their perspective, caring, and community allows us to see the direction in which their skills, talents, and souls will drive change. Without deep knowledge of how we are changing each other, we risk creating mental conflict between how we think the world is changing us and how it is actually changing us, leaving us unprepared.

Cultivating Emotional Strength through Thought

To build understanding, we need to consider how we are changing our connections and how they are changing us. This involves using emotion to interact with the world in a way that works for everyone, combining their strengths with ours. Finally, we must try to gather information about those in our community, collecting good knowledge that helps us connect positively. By following the full circle, a simple change in our connection strengthens every physical aspect of who we are.

We should treat our connections like they are a part of us that is being changed by the world. This means accepting that how we change affects those we are connected with, and how they are changed affects us. This completes the circle.

By seeing every connection as part of who we were, who we are, and who we will become, we start to not only connect with our connections but also understand the foundations of who we are. This perspective allows us to change the world positively for everyone, giving our lives more significant meaning than simply focusing on ourselves.

I could never understand my place in the world and what others wanted from me. It turns out that both of these problems come from a lack of seeing everyone as part of the same world. This is where we see those with large egos succeed because they see themselves as the world and everyone else as a part of their world. It's this confidence in the right to be that we see as charisma, something I wanted but was unable to obtain because I did not see my weakness.

When we understand how we all change the same world, how the simple act of living changes everyone, we also see how the way we change our connections changes us. We no longer see ourselves as a piece in the puzzle but another brush stroke on a painting that is being changed into something better or worse depending on how every surrounding brush stroke is defined together.

When we consider how world changes impact our connections, we foster mutual understanding and empathy. This understanding strengthens our community, making it more resilient and cohesive. Interacting with emotion ensures that our efforts align with the well-being of others, creating a supportive environment where everyone thrives.

I no longer feel obligated to anyone other than to simply be the best version of myself that I can. This is my sole motivation. This means to be kind to those connections that desire kindness. This means standing up to connections that genuinely desire confrontation. This means I am secure enough to know we all are of the same world to reach out and share that security with those who are insecure. Most conflict comes from insecurity, and when security is both felt and offered between people who genuinely want a better world, conflict becomes a memory of what aligned our motivations to become stronger as a community.

Gathering information through effort helps us gain valuable insights into the needs and motivations of those around us. This understanding builds trust and resolve for collaboration, helping us work together more effectively. When we complete the full circle of connection, we create a positive feedback loop that continually enhances our personal growth and the well-being of our community.

Accepting our interconnectedness and embracing our role in the world's changes, we create a ripple effect of positivity. Our efforts to improve ourselves and our surroundings contribute to larger, collective progress, and they ensure that our actions are meaningful and impactful, crafting a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Connection from Emotion

When we genuinely connect with others and care about them, we gain valuable information from their efforts, and build empathy. Our conscience serves as feedback from the soul, signaling how our subconscious and perspective are changing us through our mind. By creating connections as extensions of ourselves that are being changed, we incorporate them into our perspective, fostering deeper caring and understanding.

This process was challenging for me. If you've been following the book, you understand why. It wasn't until I grasped this concept that the ideas in this book became clear. I have always been fiercely independent, holding myself to higher standards than those around me. My curiosity drove me to dissect every part of every process, and my continuous learning accelerated to a point where others couldn't keep up. While self-dependence has its merits, it also isolates you from making meaningful connections. This isolation intensifies when you are afraid to reveal your emotions, fearing harm more than help.

I have always aspired to create something grand, something bigger than myself. I worked tirelessly to build something, to hire people to join me, and to achieve this on my own. It wasn't until I realized that doing it alone was impossible that I began to infuse my interactions with emotion. I started to identify the shared discomforts among the people around me. I explored how my interactions could build strength and how my strength could help alleviate others' discomforts. By leading with emotion, we uncover each other's motivations and build a community, fostering a collective resolve that empowers us all.

These interactions create shared experiences with others who are also striving to create. Their efforts provide information that complements my own, offering me new perspectives on how I need to change to function within the world and how to make positive changes in myself.

This perspective extends beyond merely adjusting my projects or approach; it encompasses how to connect with others. I recognize the same struggles in others, the same desire for positive change, and the same challenges in adapting to the changes happening to us.

I wanted to connect and bring something amazing to the world, but first, I had to share my motivations and experiences. *Building caring in others before making connections was crucial.* Allowing others to see my vision resonated with their own resolve. Sharing experiences enabled us to build a better perspective, allowing us to empathize, creating connections we could trust.

Understanding from Emotion

Understanding is an inner feeling of how our connections perceive a situation, while knowledge is the information about how the world changes them and how they, in turn, change us. Observing others can provide some information, but with constant change, it requires effort to discern which changes truly impact things. By using emotions to build a community, we see the connections and motivations behind actions, allowing us to do things in a way that is supported by others. This reduces the number of interactions we need to make and helps us recognize when others are acting in ways that may harm us.

Our experiences in the world are always influenced by how we feel. If we only do what's best for us, we fail to acknowledge those who act in the best interest of our community. Our perspective becomes limited to what benefits us, and our understanding of others focuses solely on how they serve their own interests or what we can gain from the connection.

When we make changes to the world around us with an awareness of how others in our community are being affected, our experiences provide a broader perspective. We can see which connections are working towards positive change and which are not. This perspective allows us to understand the motivations that drive the community to collaborate towards positive change, as well as those who seek to align the community with their personal motivations.

Completing the circle allows us to fully develop our understanding. **We grasp motivations, perspectives, and empathy.** Connecting with people is straightforward, but **true empathy requires more emotion, effort, and thought.** Empathy enables us to feel what others are feeling, exchanging electromagnetic energy, our conscience directing that energy towards meaningful change. This energy can only bring long-lasting positive change when we have understanding.

When we connect with others and genuinely care about their experiences and how the world is changing them, we gain valuable insights from their efforts, which directs our conscience. Our empathy acts as our spirit's way of telling us how our subconscious perspective is changing through our minds. By creating connections as extensions of ourselves that are being changed, we integrate them into our viewpoint, fostering deeper caring and understanding.

Resolving Sediment Through Thought

If we start with mental energy and stop at social connection, we can partially resolve the emotional sediment of worry and will gain some stress as well. If we use effort to gather information before we connect with thought, we will avoid gaining stress but will accumulate discomfort. Using emotion to interact with the world before we connect will bring some worry while resolving discomfort.

However, **by completing the circle, we can address the worry we build.** Completing the circle in a positive direction transforms negative energy into a force that empowers our soul. It provides us with strength and directs our energy positively, with worry driving our perspective, filling our caring, and directing our conscience.

Trying to build something amazing on my own would consume my entire life, and even then, it might never be accomplished. There are many people with skills far superior to mine in different areas, and attempting to master all those skills would take several lifetimes. Our bodies would break down before we could create a community on our own. By leading with emotion, we share interactions, resolving discomforts such as hunger, thirst, cold, heat, and exhaustion.

By sharing life experiences, we also share our discomforts and perspectives on how the world changes us. We learn how the world works together. We don't have to figure out everything ourselves or control every aspect of the world. When we share experiences, we already know how others will change the world, reducing the amount we need to change and thus reducing stress.

When one of us struggles, we know what that feels like and how easy it is for us to be in their place. We develop empathy, share perspectives, and understand motivations. With such an understanding of our connections—how they work and how they affect us—there is nothing left to worry about, which builds trust.

Connecting with emotion alone will build more worry than we can resolve, leading to a life consumed with seeking emotional energy. By completing the circle, we can get the support we need without accumulating additional sediment. Our worry motivates us to collect information; the sediment of worry fuels our thoughts. The best way to resolve sediment is by completing the circle in a positive direction. When we feel worried, it is a good time to inform ourselves about how the world is changing us positively. This process drives our subconscious, builds caring, and can lead to greater empathy for what our connections experience.

Pushing Sediment through Partial Information

When we complete the circle, we must go through every aspect to truly resolve our sediment. Starting at one point and stopping before we go all the way around may feel like we've resolved our sediment, but in reality, we've just pushed it to the next aspect. The energy doesn't disappear; it simply changes shape. For instance, if we start with emotion and stop at interaction, we may have connected more, but without understanding, we haven't resolved our worry—we've merely pushed it into discomfort. Similarly, suppose we gather information and stop there. In that case, we might build knowledge about how we are changed by the world and our connections, but we push our worry into stress over things we can't change.

The actual resolution comes when we push the worry into our conscience, which requires building a caring relationship that considers how we change our connections and how they change us. We need to empathize with their role in our lives and understand them deeper to resolve our worries with a more profound understanding of our interconnected roles.

Using emotion to interact is *key* to contentment. It involves recognizing that everyone you connect with during your day is unique with their own perspective. Engaging with people and learning about their stories can be surprising and enlightening. *If you plan to do something alone, consider doing it with someone else.* This makes the activity more enjoyable, and you gain knowledge, understanding, and a deeper connection.

Chapter 7: Freeing Our Life

Opening the Channels

"Opening the Channels" explains how aligning our actions with the principles of **"following the natural flow"** and **"completing the circle"** removes sediment and increases our capacity for meaningful change. It emphasizes the dual function of these principles: avoiding sediment buildup by adhering to the natural flow of energy and expanding our capability to enact change by leveraging all aspects (physical, mental, social) in harmony. The process of "opening the channels" is thus framed as a proactive and ongoing effort to maintain alignment with these principles.

- **Ecology** provides examples of natural flows, interdependence, and cyclical renewal.
- **Philosophy** emphasizes harmony, holistic integration, and flourishing through balance.
- **Sociology** highlights the removal of barriers, enhanced collaboration, and reciprocal systems.
- **Theology** frames these principles as aligning with divine order, spiritual integration, and cycles of renewal.

Energy is life; it is how we make changes and how we use it to give our lives meaning. As we live, sediment builds up that slows us down. Discomfort, stress, and worry impede us from doing what we want to, stopping us from making the changes that will give our lives meaning.

When I was homeschooled, I really wanted to join the local school soccer team. My parents told me that it was no problem, but I would have to find my own way to and from practice. The problem for me was that we lived five miles out of town. While I could, and often did, ride my bike to town, the idea of riding home late at night while exhausted from practice did not sound like something I could safely do.

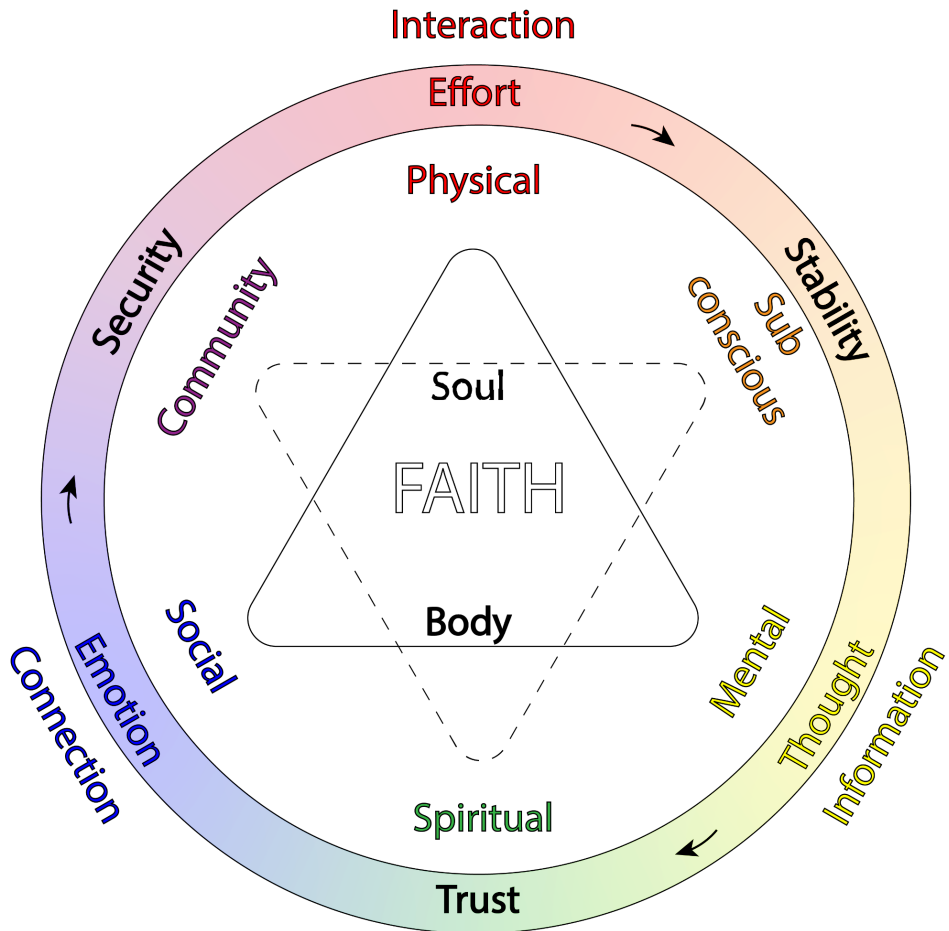
With discomfort, lifting something with a hurt back takes more effort to interact. With stress, reading with distractions takes more thought to gather information. With worry, thinking someone dislikes us takes more emotion to connect. There are many more kinds of sediment, but they mostly fall into one or more of these categories.

The same thing happens with the friction in our souls. Exhaustion requires more effort to chase experiences and more thought to derive perspective. Apathy demands more thought to hear our conscience and more emotion to draw out our empathy. Anxiety requires more emotion to motivate ourselves and more effort to collaborate with others.

My weakness has always been building a community. Instead of riding my bike to town, there may have been other people nearby who would have given me a ride when they brought their own kids to practice. But without that channel of energy that connects connection to interaction, my energy was not enough to make the changes to the world I needed.

Sustaining contentment means freeing our lives to flow without hindrance, creating positive meaning with our daily decisions. To free our lives, we need to both remove sediment and prevent it from collecting. If we imagine our energy flowing through our bodies like water through a channel, sediment builds up and narrows that channel. Following the natural flow empowers our energy to remove the sediment and use it for something positive. Just like a fire hot enough to start burning wood clears the wood out of the way and grows more powerful, our energy can clear out sediment and strengthen.

Our nature at birth may make some of our channels wider than others. How our nature has been nurtured until now has also changed our channels. But there is a solution: open all the channels and widen them as much as possible.



Having a secure community built on trust builds a secure world. A world where things change the way we need them to, and those changes remain after we make them. I didn't feel secure in asking others for a ride. My ride late at night, while exhausted, would have made my ride dangerous, where my progress could be stopped suddenly and violently by someone else trying to be somewhere else. In the end, I wasn't able to play soccer for exercise, I didn't learn enough about soccer to be able to use it to connect to others, my connections didn't grow, and my community remained stagnant.

Opening the channel isn't hard; it just requires us to keep our energy moving positively. Imagine water flowing through a riverbed. As long as we keep it flowing positively, the riverbed will become larger, and the water will flow smoother and cleaner with less sediment. If we change the flow in a negative direction, it becomes stagnant, and it will never gain the force needed to open the channel. Instead, it will push the sediment into a block, stopping us from using our energy and from living our lives fully. You may have a physical disability or life experiences that make it hard to complete the circle and open your channels, but fortunately, we can build up our body and soul in ways that will free up our lives.

Freeing our Physical Life with Security

Stress is an indication that our life needs more security, to free up our physical energy for positive mental change. By completing the circle, if we initiate physical change by using physical resources to collect mental resources, use those mental resources to collect social resources, use those social resources to enact physical change, completely and in that order.

Security Empowered by Stress

When we make lasting changes, we *limit* how the world can affect us. A reliable source of clean food, water, and air removes the stress of survival. Stress signals that our lives lack security, indicating areas we should control.

I was stressed whenever I had to interact with my peers. I didn't understand why they did the things they did. They didn't understand why I did the things I did. Whenever we had to change the world together, it caused conflict. My solution was to try to physically connect with them by joining them in a sport.

Many make the mistake of avoiding stress rather than addressing it. While I wanted to address the stress of working with my peers, I never got to the point where anything happened.

The key is to change ourselves, aligning our interactions with our community's motivations. I could have shown up and asked for a ride. My athleticism and determination would have contributed to a strong team, and they would have been happy to give me a ride. In my mind, no one would give me a ride because who cared if someone that they didn't know had an opportunity to socialize and have fun?

Stress indicates *a need to gain information, understand our connections, build community resolve, and effect positive change*. Sometimes, this means changing communities, but often, it stems from a lack of understanding within our current community. **Using stress as fuel, we can make changes that create the security we need and permanently resolve that stress.**

Resolving worry is what empowers our physical interactions the most. However, permanently resolving stress typically requires a physical approach. If we use the resolution of our own stress and the stress of our connections to motivate us to collaborate through community, resolving stress no longer becomes a burden, it becomes an element of our lives that leads to interpersonal growth and personal strength. It naturally leads us to complete the circle in a way that frees our life by also resolving discomfort and worry, opening our channels, building personal and community security and reveals the meaning we find in how we change the world.

Reducing Discomfort with Security

Discomfort obstructs our interactions; we get tired, sore, injured, and worn out as we try to change the world. While help from others can resolve discomfort, it's more effective to prevent it by making our interactions more secure.

Biking 5 miles to and from soccer practice is exhausting and very uncomfortable. There are many ways to resolve this discomfort, from securing a ride to moving closer to traveling into town earlier and waiting in a secure area.

Security is achieved when the changes we make are lasting. We get tired when we do things the hard way, sore when interacting unpredictably, injured when tools break, and worn down when repeating the same interactions. Establishing lasting methods and interactions can help us avoid gaining extra sediment.

Gaining Security by Resolving Worry

The world is shared. People can change it, undoing our changes, and we do the same to them. Working within a community aligns our motivations with others', helping us know which changes will last and which can be done with less effort.

Worrying about others wanting to give you a ride gets you nowhere. Worrying about being able to travel safely can prevent you from traveling. Worrying about your ability to do what you need to can stop you from making changes.

A strong community is essential for security, not by controlling it, but by understanding its connections. If the world around you feels insecure, invest time building connections and integrating them into your community. When we no longer worry about our connections, the community we build will secure our changes.

Limiting Security with Thought

Going against the natural flow and trying to interact solely with thought might seem efficient, but it's flawed. Without considering our connections, we can't foresee when someone might undo our changes. Even if we connect before interacting, we can't truly understand our connections' motivations without thoughtful connections. Trying to resolve discomfort solely with information doesn't work; we won't know when discomfort will stop us from making necessary changes. In a world that is always changing, non-lasting changes lead to a lack of security.

Thinking through the logistics of doing something, without connecting to others, will lead to a limited life. *It will slow your flow of energy.* It will create a world where you do not get the interactions you need, you don't get the knowledge you want, you don't build the connections that will change you for the better.

When our changes aren't secure, we avoid community. This leads to exhaustion because our efforts don't provide real experiences. As we abandon new experiences, the changes we make and the ways the world changes us become less secure, narrowing the channel between effort and thought. This blocked channel builds worry, making us feel our connections are sabotaging our efforts, causing a loss of trust. Stress accumulates as our changes fail to last, making the world seem increasingly unstable.

The Circle of Security

By considering your connections and their experiences, you can complete the circle and avoid gaining the same discomforts they have already faced or imposing discomforts on others. Strengthening your community in this way not only builds security but also fosters a collaborative environment where everyone benefits from shared experiences and efforts.

Freeing our Mental Life with Stability

Stability arises from consistent experiences. When we build accurate knowledge of how the world affects us and our connections, we gain insight into their motivations. This understanding alleviates worry because we are no longer uncertain about how our actions influence each other.

My experiences with fixing things has given my life stability. When something breaks, I know how to fix it. When I need resources, I can offer my services to others. With how much I crave new experiences and learning, this is one of my strong points. I know how the world is changed, how others change it, and what the changes mean to me.

Growing up in the Midwest, many people do not have new experiences. There was one coworker that had never been further than 30 minutes from her birthplace. Many think this is a strong point, but these same people worry so much about traveling that they never leave.

One of the main themes in the Midwest is the fear of foreigners, just like the fear my friend had of immigrants. When President Obama was elected, many people were afraid because his last name sounded like the name of a terrorist from the Middle East. When Obama was sworn in, he put his hands on Lincoln's and Martin Luther King's bibles. The people in my hometown saw two books and assumed the second was the Quran. Since the Quran was used to justify Sharia Law by extremists, they all worried Obama was going to turn the US into a chaotic holy warzone.

Persistent worry indicates a need for greater stability in our lives; it suggests that our current understanding does not match reality. Often, we mistakenly think our connections intend to change us negatively when, in fact, instability is the real issue.

The political parties use instability to get voters to vote for them, as they can promise to resolve what they make up. All it would have taken was a little effort, a little work, and a few more experiences with people who actually follow the Quran to realize there was no reason to worry about any of the chaotic stories they chose to believe.

To address worry, we must thoughtfully engage with our connections, build resolve, and gain experiences that shape our perspective on how the world affects us collectively. **By resolving worry through this holistic approach, we truly understand our community and the world's impacts in a way that brings stability to the way we are changed by the world.**

Stability comes not from limiting thought but from evolving our perspective to naturally understand our surroundings without constant mental strain.

Resolving discomfort is what empowers our mental interactions the most. However, permanently resolving stress typically requires a physical approach. If we use the resolution of our worries to motivate us to inform with effort, resolving worry no longer becomes a burden, it becomes an element of our lives that leads to interpersonal growth and more reliable knowledge. It naturally leads us to complete the circle in a way that frees our life by also resolving stress and discomfort, opening our channels, subconsciously building internal stability and reveals the meaning we find in how we are changed by the world.

Reducing Stress with Stability

Stress *obstructs* our ability to process information, causing overwhelm, distraction, confusion, and pressure. While changing the world to reduce stress is one approach, preventing stress accumulation through stability is more effective.

Life is uncertain; when you are a struggling farmer or own a small-town business, those uncertainties pile up. Somehow, those who are taking from us have convinced us that those with nothing left to take are the reason we have so little. The Midwest is a fantastic place, full of wonderful people. Unfortunately, the limited interactions many people have is used against them. However, as a result, there are almost no communities anywhere where the people pull together as much as in the Midwest because that is the only stability they have. Of course, this comes at the cost of those from outside the community.

We get overwhelmed by excessive changes, distracted by numerous concurrent changes, confused by unfamiliar changes, and pressured when expected to adapt without adequate information. **Building knowledge through effort and experience ensures that our reactions to the world become consistent and predictable.** Understanding changes' actual causes and effects allows us to distinguish between correlation and causation.

Gaining Stability by Resolving Discomfort

Excessive discomfort signals that the world is negatively impacting us, indicating the need for us to adapt to the world or alter it to better suit our needs. Some worries necessitate personal change, while others require changing the world. Resolving discomfort helps us focus on essential changes and ignore minor inconveniences.

If we are starving, we need to put even more effort into finding out why instead of finding someone to blame. If we have to work harder for less, we need to share our experiences with those inside and outside of our communities to gain solid knowledge of how the world is changing as a whole. When we find ourselves injured but unable to find medical help, we need to put effort into finding out why some of us suffer while others in our country or other countries do not.

Persistent discomfort forces us to constantly think about when and how it will negatively impact us. By addressing discomfort, we eliminate negative influences, leaving only those factors that persist regardless of our actions, thereby gaining stability and understanding of what will truly affect us.

Limiting Stability with Emotion

Relying on emotion to gather information results in collecting opinions rather than facts, leading to inaccurate perceptions of reality. When our opinions clash with reality, we either change negatively or try to force the world to align with our misconceptions, destabilizing our lives. Without accurate knowledge, the world becomes an unpredictable enigma, preventing us from knowing how to adapt effectively.

It is easy to blame others. Mob mentality almost never ends in lasting positive change, but it does allow us to feel emotionally justified because our connections feel the same. We can make the world more stable through isolation and defensiveness, but that just leads to more fear.

Collecting information that is not grounded in stability bypasses our subconscious understanding, leading to apathy as we feel our thoughts conflict with our conscience. Consequently, we may give up on caring altogether, seeing our efforts as futile.

By completing the circle of effort, thought, and emotion in a positive direction, we can transform worry into stability. This holistic approach ensures that our experiences lead to greater understanding, consistent reactions to change, and a harmonious community where stress and discomfort are minimized, allowing us to live securely and with greater peace of mind.

The Circle of Stability

Building stability in your life involves completing the circle by integrating thought, emotion, and effort. Each aspect reinforces the others, creating a stable foundation for managing change and minimizing stress.

Freeing our Social Life with Trust

Trust arises from the assurance that our connections will change each other positively. **Building strong connections fosters a world that collaborates towards shared goals. It reduces the need for individual efforts and preventing the undoing of each other's contributions.** When we feel excessive discomfort, it's a sign that trust is lacking and that we aren't working together as effectively as possible.

There are two kinds of managers: those who trust their employees and those who don't. A trusting manager will connect with the team's thoughts and build an understanding of why they should work efficiently. A non-trusting manager will offer rewards and punishments to physically force a team to work efficiently.

People seem to forget that they have a limited amount of stress they can resolve in a day. Teams are being paid to resolve stress. A trusting manager will give the team reason to trust them to resolve as much stress as possible so the team can focus more on the goals they are trying to accomplish. A non-trusting manager will never trust the team, and the team will never trust them; the uncertainty of reward or punishment will add more stress that draws them from their goals.

Keep in mind that politicians are also managers. Also, keep in mind that trust is not blind. Interaction through collaboration leads to experiences that build knowledge. Connecting with thought based on that knowledge is what builds trust. We have to physically share struggles, we have to share thoughts, and we have to open our perspectives to build trust. This is why many companies offer social events where management mixes with the team to build more trust.

To address worry, we must thoughtfully engage with our connections, build resolve, and gain experiences that shape our perspective on how the world affects us collectively. **By resolving worry through this holistic approach, we truly understand our community and the world's impacts in a way that brings stability to the way we are changed by the world.**

Instead of using force – which destroys positive connections – we should use emotion to reach out, understand how our interactions can improve our community, and use these experiences to build empathy, understanding, and trust.

Resolving stress is what empowers our social interactions the most. However, permanently resolving discomfort typically requires a social approach. If we use the resolution of our own discomfort and the discomfort of our connections to motivate us to act conscientiously through empathy, resolving discomfort no longer becomes a burden, it becomes an element of our lives that leads to interpersonal growth and understanding of every thread that connects us to the world and people around us. It naturally leads us to complete the circle in a way that frees our life by also resolving worry and stress, opening our channels, building an inherent and well founded trust that reveals the meaning we find in everything we are connected to.

Reducing Worry with Trust

Worry obstructs our ability to connect, making us uncertain whether our interactions will have positive or negative outcomes. Trust, being a two-way connection, clarifies our motivations to others and helps us understand theirs.

When a parent gives their child more trust, the child is more open with the parent. The openness gives the parent reassurances that reduce worry. A parent opening up to their child about their own struggles, their own childhood and their own vulnerabilities will reduce the child's worries about failure, building trust in their relationship with the parent.

By sharing our concerns and what we care about, we build empathy and open lines of communication. This mutual understanding reassures us that if we **express how a connection negatively affects us, they will adjust their actions, and vice versa. Trust reduces worry by fostering open, honest communication** and ensuring that the changes we make to each other are constructive.

Gaining Trust by Resolving Stress

Resolving stress enhances our understanding of how the world and our connections change us. It helps us discern what changes we can influence and which we cannot, thus tying our conscience to our empathy. We can identify who and what to trust with a clearer perspective on these changes.

Stress is not knowing how the world will change you. Since trust is built by connecting with thought through empathy, we cannot build trust if we do not have the knowledge we need. By eliminating stress, a good parent can give their children the freedom to connect with them, the ability to grow trust in their family, and stability that resolves the stress that occupies their minds.

When we work to resolve the stress of our connections (with emotion), we are also collaborating in a way that builds shared experiences, experiences that show we are all being shared by the world in the same way, that the changes we make to the world are for all of us. It's in that shared collaboration, shared perspective, and shared empathy that trust is found.

If trust is lacking, we should invest effort into gathering information and training our subconscious to recognize relevant details, creating a solid perspective that reduces worry and builds trust.

Limiting Trust with Effort

Without the integration of thought and emotion, effort alone does not foster true understanding or trust. A connection based solely on physical effort lacks the depth necessary for stability, leading to continuous worry about its reliability.

If we know someone who is stressed out and we simply eliminate that stress, we do not build any understanding; we are, in fact, building uncertainty about what will happen if we feel they are causing stress.

We can also “love bomb” someone to try and get them to trust us. But when they try to connect with us about something important, they find we do not have the understanding or empathy to truly connect, creating uncertainty and distrust in the relationship's stability.

If we try to force someone to empathize with us by forcing them through the same discomfort and worry, we are just growing their discomfort and worry and not building trust. It's like that family that if one parent is miserable, they make the rest of the family miserable; it does not build a trusting connection.

Trust cannot be built on physical interactions alone; **it requires a deeper connection that includes empathy and understanding.** Without this, our worries are merely shifted into discomforts, and our trust in other connections can be compromised.

The Circle of Trust

Trust is built by completing a holistic interaction, effort, and thought circle. This process ensures our connections are genuine and reliable, fostering a strong, supportive community.

Opening the Channels Summary

We know there is a world we can't see. While electromagnetic energy is about movement, there is another side of the world that pushes back. We can't see this other world; it just affects what we can sense.

Our energy flows through our physical selves; it is driven, held, and directed by our souls. While our bodies are about movement and change, our souls are about gathering and change. We can't see our caring, community, or subconscious, but we can sense where our physical energy drives our spirit and when our spirit gives back direction.

By opening the channel, we give room for more energy to flow, which means we have room for more life to flow. Each channel leads into the next; a secure life builds stability, stability builds trust, and trust builds security. Opening the channels happens naturally when we follow the natural flow of energy, which gives us the power to live life more freely with less energy so we can focus that energy on making the changes that matter and give our lives true meaning.

We can free our lives by forcing open channels, by changing the world, our connections, and ourselves to only benefit ourselves, but doing this only robs our lives of any positive meaning and causes all the sediment of our lives to build up in one aspect or another.

We can also create selfish meaning, using our energy to change the world around us negatively, destroying our stability, reliability, and trust, leaving us without a positive life with limited channels.

We have used Apathy, Anxiety, and Exhaustion to describe what shuts down your spiritual channels, but only you know what drives your spirit. What motivation can turn your anxiety to resolve? What experience can turn your exhaustion into curiosity? What if your conscience can turn your apathy into caring? This is how we can find our meaning in life.

All I can tell you is that unless you follow the natural flow, you might never have the energy needed to discover how strong your spirit is. When we change the world around us in a positive way, that also opens the channels for our energy, both freeing our life and creating positive meaning through positive change.

Chapter 8: Breaking our Limits

The intangible parts of who we are are not only integral to our physical aspects, but we can observe where in the framework they lie by observing how a blockage in an intangible aspect causes blocks in the tangible aspects to either side. How freeing life requires addressing the aspects of the “soul” as well as the aspects of the body.

- **Ecology:** Emphasizes the ripple effects of disruptions in interconnected systems.
- **Philosophy:** Aligns with holistic views of the integrated human experience.
- **Sociology:** Reinforces the interdependence of personal well-being and social dynamics.
- **Theology:** Mirrors the mutual influence of the soul and body in spiritual and physical realms.

Rather than conflict, ideologies support the ideas presented in this chapter. This framework is supported across these ideologies, highlighting the universal relevance of interconnectedness and the consequences of blocked energy flows.

Blocking the Flow of Energy

We have already talked about the things that build up and slow the flow of energy—discomfort for the physical, stress for thought, and worry for the social. However, certain factors completely stop the flow of energy through our different aspects. These are not just sediments but blocks. While we are all unique and have individual factors that can block us, some blocks are universal: injury, fear, and isolation. Regardless of their causes, these blocks have similar effects.

Injury and Exhaustion Blocks Effort

When I moved to California to help my son, I took time and effort to find a job that gave me the flexibility to respond to my son's medical needs, a position I was uniquely suited to excel at in a company that had a reputation for recognizing and rewarding talent. For the next six years, I put everything I had into my work, putting the load of our lives onto my wife's shoulders. I was working sixty to seventy-five hours a week, on-call 24/7. I was promoted five times and got six performance-based raises. When an internal or external VIP needed a tour of our operations, I was the one they asked to give a tour of my area of responsibility. Engineering asked me what the next developments in our products should be. In my performance reviews, my boss said he expected me to be CEO one day.

However, after six years, I was bringing home less income than when I had started. The company had changed into one that only cared about profits, even at the cost of the literal health and safety of the ones creating that profit.

I was exhausted. No matter what I did, no matter how much effort I put in, there was no path towards changing myself so I could work within the world and protect my family. I had let the exhaustion get so bad that I could no longer function physically or mentally. I could no longer perform my job duties, my memory and focus were gone, and I would simply shut down and fall asleep on the job.

If I had taken action sooner, I could have gotten a different job, but it had gone too far, to the point where I couldn't even complete an interview. Even if I did get through an interview, the exhaustion would mean that I would never make it through a 3-month probationary period.

The problem was I could no longer put the safety and well-being of my family in the "good intentions" of a corporation. I had to switch things up and find a way to be productive that didn't include avenues of exploitation. This is what drove me to finish this book. This is what directed me to push The Aquifer Project forward.

We call injury the thing that blocks the physical energy of effort. Injury can encompass anything from illness to missing limbs—essentially, anything that prevents us from using effort to make changes. When we can't use effort, interacting with the world becomes much harder. This is where cultivating contentment with the natural flow of energy can truly free up our lives.

If we try to interact with thought while injured, we might be unable to do anything productive. However, by connecting with emotion, we can rely on our stable connections to interact with the world in ways we can't. Injury becomes a greater issue when it affects our mental state. Since the only way to build reliable knowledge is through effort, we need to be creative in finding ways to collect information when injured.

A prime example of this is Stephen Hawking, who, despite being almost completely paralyzed by ALS, managed to provide reliable knowledge to the world. When Hawking was young, he connected thoughtfully with experts in physics. He collaborated emotionally with those connections to interact with the world and build good knowledge. When he could no longer interact with the world physically, he had solid connections that could interact in ways he couldn't, putting in effort on his behalf to provide information. By following the natural flow of energy, Hawking cultivated contentment and maintained his position as one of the top scientists in the world. These same interactions with emotion can also resolve our stresses when we can no longer interact with effort.

Exhaustion does not block us from interacting with emotion or effort, but it does block us from collecting information with effort. When we cannot collect information with effort, we are forced to collect it with thought, which can build bad knowledge and increase stress, causing additional blocks. Alternatively, we may collect information with emotion, leading to instability, worry, and stress. Fortunately, exhaustion is easier to deal with. It requires *finding new experiences to rekindle our curiosity* and *discovering new perspectives to drive our thoughts* toward building *better knowledge and stability*.

Confusion and Apathy Blocks Thought

Politics is a divisive issue in the United States. The forefathers warned us of the dangers that would come from only having two major political parties. But the divisiveness works in favor of those in control, so they feed the conflict to ensure they keep the power they have while avoiding any threats of a third party further splitting the political power.

My community growing up was very conservative, and at the time of writing this, one of the political parties had claimed to be conservative as their banner. The party of my parents would claim they were conservative while blaming any negative effects of their policies on "The Evil Other." They demanded faith while giving only empty tokens back in return for that faith.

My faith demanded that I would be a good person, but those in charge of "The Good Party" continued to do things that went against my faith. I was not willing to vote for evil, so I was confused about what to do. Do I vote for evil individuals that my indoctrination told me are for the greater good? Or do I vote for "The Evil Other"? Like many people, I had become apathetic about politics. I no longer cared what anyone did because, in my mind, there was no good choice.

This apathy prevented me from considering how these political connections changed me and from actually making an effort to inform myself. I was no longer able to think about the long term global changes caused by my poor voting decisions.

It wasn't until my son developed his disability that I began to really feel how these policies affected the people I care about. Empathy forced me to put thought into connection. It forced me to grow my perspective. Now, I do the work, do the research, and look up a politician's criminal and voting record before voting them in. I put in the effort to find out a politician's policy values instead of assuming their banner reflects good personal values that will trickle into their policies. Political parties don't really even factor in. It is much less stressful to put an hour of work in for the ten politicians on the ballot than it is to try and sift through all the conflicting information. Doing the work resolved my worry.

I would never wish my son's disability on anyone, but I do wish that there was a way to communicate how damaging being informed by emotion actually is. How much freer our lives would be if we shut out the noise, connected our caring to our empathy, and put in the effort.

We call it the thing that blocks thought confusion. Confusion occurs when our knowledge conflicts with thought or information. We might not have enough information, the wrong information, or bad knowledge, or our thoughts might not flow as they should. Whatever the cause of confusion, it prevents us from thinking through information clearly, hindering our ability to be positively changed. When we are confused, we need to rely on effort. Through effort, we can find the information, thoughts, or knowledge that are confusing us and replace them with something positive.

Relying on our connections during confusion might lead to more bad information or misunderstandings, especially when we are in a vulnerable state. Even our strongest connections can sometimes provide bad information or have intentions we don't fully understand.

A bigger issue arises when confusion prevents us from using thought to connect positively with others. ***Without building understanding, we may feel isolated.*** Conversations might end in awkward silences, jokes may fall flat, and we may be frustrated with almost everyone we meet. In such times, we should find ways to connect that allow others to contribute their thoughts to the relationship. Some of the kindest and easiest people to be around are those who are mentally disabled.

You don't always have to provide your thoughts to connect with others; sometimes, simply listening and letting others share their thoughts is enough. Confusion doesn't have to end connections and can sometimes make you a better connection yourself. The other side of the connection will know more about themselves, their motivations, and what matters to them than you ever will. Listening can often be the best way to connect with thought. If you cannot connect with thought, put in the effort and let others do the thinking to build your connections.

Apathy doesn't prevent us from collecting information with effort or thought but does prevent us from connecting with thought. When we cannot connect with thought, we are forced to connect with emotion, leading to misunderstandings and increasing worry, causing another block. Alternatively, we may have to connect with effort, leading to mistrust, discomfort, and worry. Fortunately, apathy is easier to deal with. It requires *listening to our empathy to build our caring and finding our conscience to drive our emotions toward building better understanding and trust.*

Isolation and Anxiety Blocks Emotion

The physical and mental exhaustion that came from being exploited at my job blocked my subconscious channels. It prevented me from collecting information, making me worry about being unable to connect.

Worried about being able to hold a conversation. I worried about using all my limited energy to connect and not being able to do what needed to be done. Worried that new connections would lead to new exploitations. This caused me to develop an anxiety disorder that led to social isolation.

I still was around my family every day, but there was not the emotional or mental bandwidth to connect to them. Even though my body was present, my family still felt isolated from me, and I felt isolated from them. Things that needed to be done started to go undone; the physical, mental, and social needs of the household went unmet. Although I cared for them, my anxiety and isolation prevented me from caring for them and from applying that emotion to interactions.

When all my channels were blocked, depression turned into isolation, which began a downward spiral, as all my energy was blocked. My spirit began to starve. I didn't have the energy to resolve any sediment in my life. This is when we need to rely on others to help us when our aspects are weak. This is addressed in the next sections.

It took a long talk with my wife to realize what must be done. We had to combine our aspects to get something flowing between us, to build shared connections, to work together to accomplish interactions, and to work through how we can change to work within the world. But the simple act of knowing another person is there, whether it is a partner, friend, or therapist, helps us resolve the isolation and anxiety so we can get our energy flowing again.

I honestly believe this is the definition of love: being able and willing to share all aspects. It is like two trees being grafted together. In some spots, we grow together, in some spots, we branch out, and in some spots, we steal the others' sunshine. Together, we are stronger, but if separated, we become vulnerable and fall.

We are calling it the thing that blocks our emotional isolation. Isolation does not mean you are physically alone; you can be isolated in a crowded place without connections to anyone around you. Isolation can be forced on you or result from withdrawing when uncertain about how a connection will turn out, leading to not connecting at all. Whatever the cause, when we are isolated, our emotions cannot connect. There is a way to remove isolation: if we connect with thought, we don't have to expose our emotions initially. We can build connections first and follow with emotion later.

The problem with being isolated is that it removes us from being connected, preventing us from interacting with emotion because there is no one to connect with. Since the only way to gain strength greater than our own effort is through connections when we are isolated, there are many things we will never be able to accomplish.

True isolation is actually quite rare in this world because there are potential connections all around us, even passive ones like working over the internet or using self-checkout. However, there are times when isolation is unavoidable, perhaps due to severe anxiety or other reasons that prevent connection. When isolated, we have to rely on our own strength to make all the changes we need, but we can still connect with thought to the world around us. We can connect to nature and learn how to use it to provide food, connect with science to create devices or methods that make working easier and connect with books to gain the knowledge accumulated through the efforts of people we have never met, thereby gaining the strengths of others without direct connections.

Anxiety does not block us from connecting with thought or emotion, but it does block us from interacting with emotion. *When we cannot interact with emotion, we are forced to interact with effort, which limits the strength available to create change and increases discomfort, causing another block.* Alternatively, we have to interact with thought, which leads to unreliability, discomfort, and worry. Fortunately, anxiety is easier to deal with; all it takes is *focusing on our shared motivations to build our resolve and finding collaborations to drive our efforts towards increasing our strength and building security.*

Summary

It is important to note that **sediment from the soul affects the aspects of the body** on either side.

Exhaustion is both physical and mental.

Apathy is both mental and emotional.

Anxiety is both emotional and physical.

It is also important to note that **sediment from the body affects the soul** on either side.

Injury blocks both collaboration and experiences.

Confusion blocks both perspective and conscience.

Isolation blocks both empathy and motivation.

Recognizing this duality is crucial for a couple of reasons. Firstly, it helps us identify whether we are dealing with a conflict of our soul or body, making it easier to address issues hindering our way of cultivating contentment. Secondly, it underscores the importance of following the natural cycle and paying attention to both our spiritual health and physical health.

Some people choose to avoid the soul at all costs. They often refuse to empathize, collaborate, or gain perspective out of selfishness. By rejecting these spiritual aspects, they become withered souls. Since the soul affects the body's aspects, these individuals also lack strength, knowledge, and understanding. They have no real physical, mental, or social power because they have rejected their soul.

If the sediment holding our soul back can affect our body, then our body can affect the sediment holding back our soul. Alternatively if the sediment holding back our body can affect our soul, then our soul can affect the sediment holding back our body.

If our problem is that we don't have enough energy stored in our soul, we just have to free our life to fill our soul. If the problem is that our lives are blocked, we just need to create meaning through drive and direction in our soul to get our lives moving.

Though the energy we build up in our lives may be opposite, our body and our soul are also opposite but connected. Knowing this we can follow the natural flow to use body sediment to find meaning and use soul sediment to free our lives.

These are just some of the many things that can block our energy flow. As with everything in life, blocks to our energy flow are inevitable. They will occur at various points in our lives, and for most of us, our energy will be blocked from making changes many times. When our energy is blocked, our lives are blocked, preventing us from creating positive changes and positive meaning. However, this book is not called "Overcoming Adversity" but "Cultivating Contentment."

When we make changes with the positive flow of energy and use every aspect, we open the channels and increase our strength, putting power behind our energy and lives. Removing blocks from our energy is very challenging, but by following the natural flow of energy to gain strength and open the channels now, it will take much larger blocks to hinder us from making necessary changes. We will also have much more strength in our connections, information, and interactions to overcome the blocks that will arise in our lives. *Cultivating contentment isn't just about empowering ourselves; it is about giving more than we take and cultivating a world of positive changes that empower others to do the same for us.*

Contentment Without Balanced Aspects

We are all broken in our unique ways and possess unique strengths. Working together we can amplify strengths and overcome weaknesses.

Ecology: Highlights mutual interdependence for systemic balance.

Philosophy: Resonates with existential acceptance and collective purpose.

Sociology: Reinforces division of labor and social cooperation.

Theology: Mirrors unity in diversity and community support.

This concept reflects a universal acknowledgment of the value of collaboration and interdependence, demonstrating harmony with established ideological frameworks.

People are not perfect; from the day we come into being, we are inherently flawed. .

We are created from broken genes; we get broken by the world, we get broken by each other, and sometimes, we break ourselves. Cultivating contentment is about using every aspect of ourselves in everything we do to create positive changes, and those positive changes give our lives meaning. When we use these aspects in the correct order, we allow our energy to flow more freely, helping our lives to flow more freely, enabling us to make bigger changes, and giving our lives more meaning. ***So what happens when one aspect is weaker or stronger than the others?***

The first thing to understand is that a broken person is not worthless. We are all broken in our unique ways and possess unique strengths. Black paint, being a combination of all other paints, might be considered the most complete, but a painting made entirely of black misses the beauty and depth that individual colors like blue, yellow, and red bring. Similarly, a broken person, with their unique experiences and perspectives, offers depth and understanding that someone who has never faced challenges cannot. Ironically, society often defines success as avoiding hardship, leaving those who have never struggled with little to offer in terms of resilience or insight.

Most of us lack balanced aspects, and this imbalance makes us more valuable. Our weaknesses and struggles motivate us to create strengths. Rather than focusing on achieving what we can't, we should focus on improving what we can. Our strengths, combined with the weaknesses of others, create opportunities for stronger connections, clear motivations, and the building of trust and understanding.

Our aspects may be set at birth, potentially blocked in some ways, limiting the energy we can move through that aspect. These aspects also change throughout our lives. As children, our physical aspects are strong as we explore the world. In middle age, our mental aspects strengthen, provided we've collected good knowledge, reaching our intellectual peak before our cells begin to decline. Our social aspects become stronger in old age as we accumulate understanding and connections.

Life can change our aspects at any moment, whether temporarily or permanently. We never know what will happen, so we should always cultivate contentment. **Relying on the positive changes we've made and the strength of our other aspects becomes crucial during unexpected changes.** Living selfishly and spreading negative change leaves us broken and alone. Living generously and spreading positive change ensures that we are never alone, even broken. In our shared world, as long as we have others, we can never truly be broken; we can only be empowered in other ways.

Reduced Physical Aspect

A reduced physical aspect can be debilitating. You may have been born with a handicap, or you may be suffering from injury, pain, or illness. At some point in all of our lives, we will find ourselves unable to muster the effort needed to make the necessary changes. Even with one of our aspects reduced, it is still possible to cultivate a content life. **When our physical aspect is reduced, thoughtfully connecting with others becomes more important to build understanding.**

Interacting with the world should be done with emotion. When our interactions are limited, this becomes even more important. When we consider our impact on others and demand they respect what we do, we ensure our changes won't be undone. We can only do this by building connections with thought because, without understanding, our connections will collapse. No one will respect what we do if we do not respect them and their motivations.

Discomfort is inconvenient for most people, but for some people with already narrow physical channels, it can block the limited amount of effort they can use. To help resolve discomfort, rely on your connections while putting more effort into resolving their worries and discomforts, trying not to pass your discomforts onto others as stress.

Interact with emotion to build as much reliability into your life as possible, widening the channels for your limited effort to have the biggest impact. Spend extra time thinking about how your actions affect others so you won't have to redo changes. This also makes it easier for people to connect with you. Before you interact, think about any connections that can help you. Connections can be people, the environment, or even objects that can increase your strength and resolve your discomforts.

Information should always be collected through the effort, but it can be hard to gather good information when the effort is limited. We can still follow the natural energy cycle by putting more thought into which connections we trust, connecting more to gather a greater amount of information, and using effort only to verify the information we receive. We can also ask our connections to check for us and provide their sources and processes.

Stress build-up is a major issue for people with limited interaction. Reliability helps you use your limited interaction to resolve stresses as they arise. Stability will help stress build up more slowly, so you will accumulate less to begin with. Despite these actions, stress will still build up. Sometimes, you must rely on your connections to interact with you to resolve stress. *Using your limited interactions to resolve stress can be the most helpful thing for you to do.*

When your physical aspect is reduced, use thought to help you build strong connections and a robust social aspect to cover your physical needs. *Exchange thoughts with your connections, help them with understanding, and let them help you with stress.* Don't be afraid to get information from your connections, but make sure you use some effort to verify that information.

Reduced Mental Aspect

Many things can reduce your mental aspect, ranging from something as simple as not getting enough sleep to something as devastating as a brain injury. We can never predict when we will lose our ability to mentally handle the changes that happen to us. However, even with one of our aspects reduced, it is still possible to cultivate a content life. **When our mental aspect is reduced, emotionally interacting with the world becomes more important to build strength.**

Information should always be collected with effort; when our thoughts are limited, this becomes even more critical. By investing extra effort to ensure our information is correct, we won't need to spend as much thought figuring things out. We can have a limited mental aspect but still be more accurate than those around us if all our knowledge has been carefully built through hard work, whether through experience or studying from multiple sources.

Stress can make life challenging, and if your thoughts are already limited, even a little stress can make normal life problems seem insurmountable. As you interact with the world, take extra time to ensure you are not creating more stress for yourself, either for the present or future. Resolve stress as soon as possible, ensuring you are not transferring your stress to other people's worries.

Collect information with effort, as good knowledge will make the world around you more stable, opening the channels for your thoughts to flow freely. Emotion can guide you on when to use extra effort; when someone (or you) feels strongly about something, it is important to find out more information. Don't let others pressure you into taking their words as truth—trust but verify. Understanding the motivations of others can help you know when to put in extra effort; politicians spread stories to get votes, and businesses share stories to get cash.

Understanding is built through thoughtfully connecting, but when thoughts are limited, it can be hard to understand our connections. Using the natural energy cycle, we can use extra effort to collect information about our connections. This can involve spending time with them, helping them resolve their discomforts, or engaging in activities they enjoy. As we spend time together, we can use our thoughts to understand them better over a more extended period.

Worry is resolved with thought and can build up when your thoughts are limited. Stability helps your thoughts to flow more freely; relying only on trusted connections will cause you to worry less. Worry will still build up, but *focusing on the connections you trust the most can help you build understanding and trust with your other connections or tell you if they are not worth your trust.* **Using the limited thought you have to strengthen the connections you trust can be very beneficial.**

When your mental aspect is reduced, use emotion to help you interact effectively to build a strong physical aspect to cover your mental needs. **Focus on emotion when you interact. This will give your interactions more strength to resolve your stresses, and remember to give back to your connections by resolving their discomforts.** Don't be afraid to let others connect with you through thought; use some thought to understand their motivations.

Reduced Social Aspect

A reduced social aspect can be overwhelming. You may feel self-conscious or experience severe social anxiety or depression. Sometimes, we lack the emotional energy to connect in the way we need or want to. However, even with one of our aspects reduced, it is still possible to cultivate a content life. **When our social aspect is reduced, it becomes more important to use effort to collect information and build our knowledge.**

Building connections should always be done with thought. With limited social energy, this becomes even more important. When our ability to make connections is restricted, we need to ensure we build understanding and trust to keep worry out of our lives. For our thoughts to be effective, we need extra effort to build reliable knowledge; bad information causes misunderstandings.

Worry can block emotions for most of us, and a narrow social channel means worry can keep someone from ever leaving their home. Rely on your connections to help you understand how to resolve the things that make you uncomfortable, while helping them resolve their worries and stress. Don't make your connections uncomfortable by pushing your worries onto them.

Connect with thought to build as much trust with the connections you rely on, widening the channel to free your emotions. When social connections are difficult to make, it is very important to trust the ones you have. Put in extra effort to connect with others intellectually, finding common ground. You don't have to agree with everything, but it is important that the things and people you connect to share the things that motivate you. You and your connections should be open to other points of view; if they are not, there are hidden motivations.

We should always interact with emotion, but when we are emotionally drained, it can be hard to care. If we complete the natural cycle of energy and use thought to connect before interacting, we realize others can help us do more with less effort. Considering the impact of our changes on others creates a world where we all make each other's lives easier. More thought can help us resolve discomfort with fewer connections and interact with less emotion.

Discomfort build-up is a major issue for people who are socially limited. Trust helps you feel freer to build connections that can help reduce your discomforts, and stability will create a world where discomforts happen less frequently. Even with these actions, discomfort will still build up. ***You must let others resolve your discomforts, even when you don't feel like socializing.*** It can help to think of others helping you as a transaction instead of a connection, giving back to your connection by reducing their stresses or resolving their discomforts in return.

When your social aspect is reduced, use effort to help you build good information, creating the knowledge needed for a strong mental aspect to cover your social needs. *Rely on others to resolve your discomforts, asking them what you can do to help them with their stresses or worries.* Don't be afraid to let your connections inform you of the best way to interact with the world, but make sure you put some thought into building trust first.

Strong Physical Aspect

A strong physical aspect can lead us to become leaders on our chosen path, but sometimes, we let our physical aspect dominate our lives at the cost of our other aspects. *This imbalance can make it harder to cultivate a truly content life.*

When we are physically strong, we find it easier to use effort to interact with the world and may ignore the emotions of others. Many people with a strong physical aspect view interacting with emotion as a weakness. However, even two people can match the strength of a single person who is twice as strong. Refusing to interact with emotion also means ignoring our impact on others when we change the world, making our actions selfish.

Discomfort builds up in all of us, but when we focus solely on an effort to interact with the world, discomfort accumulates faster, and we may end up injuring ourselves. We should always use our connections to resolve our discomforts. Any team will tell you that connections can help us accomplish more work with less discomfort. This only works if we put thought into our connections so we share motivations and goals instead of causing conflict in our efforts.

Many physically strong people focus on getting stronger and neglect their mental aspect. However, someone with a strong physical aspect has an advantage over their mental aspect. Having more strength provides the resilience needed to build stability in life, allowing focused efforts on collecting information and building reliable knowledge. This makes it easier for someone with a strong physical aspect to become an expert in their field.

Use your interactions to resolve stress. This will help your thoughts to keep flowing freely, even if you neglect your mental aspect by focusing only on your physical aspect. It is very important not to let sediment build up. If your stress level gets too high, you may find it hard to build reliable connections, your mind may shut down, and you will struggle to connect meaningfully.

Focusing on your physical aspect can lead to neglecting your social aspect. Even when others connect with you, it can be hard to understand their motivations. Use your effort to collect information about your connections, build understanding, and resolve worry. Many people choose sports or other activities to build trust and shared motivations but be careful as this trust only goes as far as the shared activity.

Using effort to build knowledge also gives us the power to connect with thought, fostering reliable connections. ***We don't have to know everything about everything, but we should definitely take the time to learn about the things that matter and the connections that matter to us.***

When you have a strong physical aspect, build up your mental aspect. This will give you the knowledge and information you need to make meaningful connections and resolve your worries. By building your mental aspect, you empower your social aspect, enabling meaningful connections to resolve your discomfort and emotions that empower your interactions.

Strong Mental Aspect

A strong mental aspect can lead us to become leaders in our chosen path, but sometimes, we let our mental aspect dominate our lives at the expense of our other aspects. This imbalance can make it harder to cultivate a truly content life.

*When we are mentally strong, it is easy to collect information with thought and find ways to **avoid** effort.* Many people with a strong mental aspect think it is beneath them to try to learn things, but reading a book on anatomy doesn't make you a surgeon. It takes experience and muscle memory through effort to make you an expert. Coming up with information without firsthand experience does not make us smart; it makes us ignorant.

We all have stress in our lives, but when we use thought to collect information, we find that life doesn't always match up to our thoughts, making everything stressful. We should always physically resolve stress. We can change ourselves to accept stressful things, but then we are becoming something other than who we want to be. It is not strength to mentally adapt to what's happening around you; it is strength to adapt to what's around you to support you mentally.

Many people with a rich mental life neglect their social life or make their social life an accessory to their mental life. However, someone with a strong mental aspect has an advantage regarding their social aspect. Understanding the world can help you connect to the people around you. The world is a shared place full of shared struggles. Building solid connections can help you find people to make the changes you need to make in the world.

Use your thoughts to connect to people. This will help you connect emotionally, even if your mental life gets in the way of building a social life. You mustn't let worry build up. When worry builds up, you will become more isolated, and that isolation will make it hard for you to emotionally connect with others and interact in the world as you need to.

Focusing on your mental aspect can lead to neglecting your physical aspect. Even when you interact with the world, it can be hard to make the necessary changes. Use your thoughts to build connections to help you change the world, building strength and resolving discomfort. You can plan, organize, and strategize with others to get things done that you can't do yourself, or even build processes or products that can help you do more with less.

Using thought to connect also gives us the understanding to interact with emotion, building strength in numbers. We don't have to be emotionally invested in everyone we interact with, but we should definitely invest in building trust with those we rely on the most.

When you have a strong mental aspect, make sure you build up your social aspect to give you the understanding you need to interact with cooperation and the connections to resolve your discomforts. By building your social aspect, you empower your physical aspect, creating strength in numbers that can help you resolve your stresses with an effort to gather information.

Strong Social Aspect

A strong social aspect can lead us to be leaders on our chosen path, but sometimes, we let our social aspect dominate our lives at the cost of our other aspects, causing our lives to be out of balance and making it harder to cultivate a truly content life.

*When we are socially strong, we find it easier to use emotion to change others through connection, **bypassing** understanding.* Many people with a strong social aspect think connecting with thought is a waste of their time, but most of the biggest influences in our culture are not only charismatic but also understand their audience on a level that most other people don't. Not connecting with thought means our understanding is shallow, making us shallow.

We all worry about those we care about, but when we don't understand those we connect with, we worry about our connections and their motivations. We should always use information to resolve worries. If we are unsure of what will happen to our connection, the best thing to do is to find out. Ask your connection or investigate the situation. Putting in effort to learn about your connection has the added bonus of strengthening the connection and making us less shallow.

Many social people only focus on their connections, looking down on people who put in effort to get things done. However, social people have an advantage when it comes to making physical changes. You can call on them to make bigger changes with less effort when you have more connections. A person working alone can't raise a barn wall, but a group of people can raise an entire barn in a single day. Having connections gives you the strength of many.

Connections can help you resolve your discomforts. When more people, businesses, and tools are available, you can resolve the little things, helping you focus on your connections. If you let your discomforts build up, it can make it hard to take care of the things that stress you and can shut down your ability to collect good information.

When our whole world is about connections, we can find ourselves ignoring information, and the information we do get could be changed by our connections. ***Use your emotions to interact with the world so your changes will help those around you, adding to your strength.*** Creating a network of people you can rely on will create a safety net of people who will tell you if the changes you are making to the world are becoming selfish, threatening everything you have built.

Using emotion to build strength also gives us the power to collect information with effort, building stable knowledge. We may not have the energy to double-check everything that comes into our lives, but we should always check the things that make the biggest changes in the way we think.

When you have a strong social aspect, make sure you build up your physical aspect to give you the strength you need to build reliable information and interactions to resolve your stress. By building up your physical aspect, you empower your mental aspect, providing reliable information to resolve your worries with the thought of building solid connections.

Covering Weakness, Multiplying Strengths

Using our strengths to cover others weaknesses, and their strengths to cover our own, we can be strong in every aspect of the body together, physically, mentally and socially.

Ecology: Demonstrates mutualism and interdependence for ecosystem resilience.

Philosophy: Supports theories of complementarity and collective growth.

Sociology: Aligns with the division of labor and social integration for societal strength.

Theology: Mirrors teachings on unity, mutual support, and collective progress.

This concept harmonizes with the foundational principles of these ideologies, affirming the universal value of collaboration to overcome weaknesses and achieve collective strength across all aspects of existence—physical, mental, and social.

We live in a shared world. Our physical changes to the world around us create information that generates changes in others. If we use emotion, we can ensure these changes are positive and minimize stress. When we gather information and are changed by it, others are experiencing similar transformations. When we change our connections, they change us in return. People have four basic needs: reliable sources of food and water, which provide physical energy; stable shelter, which frees up mental energy; and trust and intimacy, which free up social energy.

What does this mean for us? It means everyone has shared needs and experiences—we are not alone.

We can still cultivate in isolation by changing the physical world, but without connections, our impact will be small, and our ability to resolve discomforts will be limited. We can gather and share information, explaining the process and the effort involved. But even though we can cultivate a content life in isolation, we miss out on the pieces others offer.

Combining our strengths with others allows us to make larger changes than we could separately. **When we work together, we eliminate each other's discomforts while building trust, security and stability.**

If you have a strong physical aspect, connect with people with a strong social aspect to help resolve your discomforts. This leaves the mental aspect, where finding someone who can think through connections and resolve worry will balance the group. Same if you have a strong mental or social aspect, join with those that strengthen your weaknesses while you compensate for theirs.

For example, if we need to build a house, we could teach ourselves construction, electrical work, and plumbing, gather all the tools needed for each task, and build the house, using additional tools to move items too large for us to move alone. Alternatively, we could learn construction, team up with a plumber and an electrician, each of us buying one set of tools for our chosen skill and working together to do the heavy lifting. By helping each other build our houses, we achieve the same amount of work with a third of the tools and learning. We also do less heavy lifting, and as we become more skilled in our specialization, we can work faster with less effort and higher quality results.

If we need to test something to see how we are changed by the world, we could try to gather all the information alone, or we can benefit from the work of others. Fortunately, we have connected with emotion, formed groups, and developed a process called science. Science involves testing an idea, recording the work, the process, and the results, asking others to test the same idea, and comparing the results. Finally, everything is shared and reviewed by other experts. Science is not always the right answer, but it is our best answer with the information we have. We still need to put in our own work when something cannot be tested, such as personal faith. This means we do not need to learn everything, but we need to learn how to check information. The more different sources that put in the effort, the more reliable the information.

Our social aspect relies on others to begin with, even when we remember that connections are not always people. People we trust will help us identify reliable connections, whether they involve transportation, a process, a procedure, or another person. Trustworthy people also facilitate our ability to connect with others. By relying on others in uncertain situations, we gain perspectives that reduce the risk of being taken advantage of. The more people we connect with, the more we will understand—not only about those individuals but also about broader human behavior. We begin to see that we all share the same basic needs and desires. Relying on our connections builds further connections, turning into mutual understanding. A small social circle offers limited perspectives, easily leading to misunderstandings and worry.

Very few of us are balanced. When we cultivate contentment, we often rely on others to help resolve our discomforts. Connections resolve discomfort, effort resolves stress, and information resolves worry. We may sometimes lack one type of energy, and having strong connections helps us resolve each other's issues. The stronger our circle, the easier it is to cultivate contentment. We don't just connect socially—every aspect allows us to offer and receive something.

Our circle is crucial when dealing with weak aspects or blocks.

When we cannot use effort, thought, or emotion, we can rely on the strength, knowledge, or understanding of others to give us the break we need. We are never truly alone; we live in a shared world, and there are always ways to connect to others.

The final part of cultivating contentment is opening our channels. Reliability is achieved by understanding our connections and using them to create a functional world. Stability is created through effort, but since the world changes us all, we can combine our strengths to adapt in stable ways. Trust is created through knowledge of our connections. Sharing knowledge and spending time together builds unbreakable trust.

When we team up to offer our strengths and cover our weaknesses, we can make greater changes with less energy, achieving more together than we could alone. We can use others to resolve our sediments when we lack the energy or a strong enough aspect to do it ourselves and help others do the same. Working together opens the channels for our energy to flow while helping each other navigate around blocks.

While we can cultivate alone, working with others allows us to build more meaning with less energy, creating more meaning than we could alone. We can use others to free up whatever is slowing us down while helping others do the same. We can help others work around or clear the things blocking them from living fully while they do the same for us.

Working together multiplies the amount of life we can live while giving our lives more **meaning**. The **people** we surround ourselves with can help us cultivate *true contentment*.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Soul

Using our strengths to cover others weaknesses, and their strengths to cover our own, we can be strong in every aspect of the “soul” together subconsciously, spiritually and communally.

Ecology: Reflects interdependence and the balancing of weaknesses to create sustainable systems.

Philosophy: Aligns with dialectical unity and the existential value of relationships in overcoming individual limitations.

Sociology: Mirrors collective identity and the role of social solidarity in addressing personal and communal weaknesses.

Theology: Supports spiritual interdependence and mutual support as central to communal and personal well-being.

This concept harmonizes with foundational principles from these ideologies, affirming the universal value of combining individual strengths to address weaknesses and create strength in all aspects of the “soul”—subconsciously, spiritually, and communally.

We cannot see the soul; we can only see its effects. I cannot tell you all the details of (What I call) the paramagnetic dimension, but I can tell you what to look for.

Subconscious

Our physical selves change the world, while the subconscious is how the soul receives information about our body.

People with a strong subconscious will be curious about the world around them and find it easy to learn new things, making their actions seem effortless. If you have a strong subconscious, gain as many new experiences as possible, including others. Use your extra thoughts to focus on how your actions change your connections so you don't neglect the rest of your aspects. Make sure to share your perspective, but also work hard to check it with effort. Check the perspective of others as you may start to become too reliant on your own experiences and subconscious. You may be tempted to do everything yourself, to interact with thought, but this will only lead to isolation, anxiety, and an inability to gather the strength you need from collaboration.

A weak subconscious person will have difficulty learning new things and will have to focus on everything they do. **Use your stronger aspects to find new experiences, try things other people are interested in, and let their curiosity lead you to search for new perspectives.** You may be prone to stress and exhaustion, but don't let that stop you from experiencing more of life. As you put in the effort, the exhaustion will start to fade. You may be tempted to gather information only with thought, but this will lead to lousy knowledge, where changes conflict with predictions, causing stress. You may be tempted to gain information with emotion, but this will lead to bad knowledge where the opinions of others conflict with the way the world changes you, leaving you without the thought you need to understand your connections, along with confusion, worry, exhaustion, and apathy.

Spirit

Our mental aspect is how our soul changes us, while our spirit is how we change the spiritual world.

A person with a strong spirit will care about the world around them and find it easy to connect with other people and things, making their connections seem effortless. If you have a strong spirit, take time to listen to your conscience but pay attention to how the world changes, using your extra emotion to focus on how your conscience relates to the effects of your actions so you don't neglect the rest of your aspects.

Make sure you empathize, but also work hard to check your connections with thought and ensure others can empathize with you, or you might become too consumed with your own version of what is right. You may be tempted to figure out everything from your connections and inform with emotion, but this will only lead to confusion, exhaustion, and a lack of knowledge from a broad perspective.

A person with a weak spirit will have a hard time understanding people and will struggle to emotionally connect with anyone. Use your stronger aspects to build a code of right and wrong, making sure to work with others who may find what you are doing is wrong even if you don't understand why. Let their caring lead you to search for a way to empathize or at least share enough to let them empathize with you. You may be prone to worry and apathy but don't let that stop you from building a code of the right and wrong ways to connect. As you put in the thought, the apathy will start to fade. You may be tempted to connect only with emotion, but this will lead to worry about how your connections may change you. You may be tempted to connect with effort, but this will lead to misunderstanding, where the ways you change someone conflict with the ways people want to and should change each other and an inability to gather the emotion you need to interact, along with discomfort, stress, anxiety, and exhaustion.

Community

Our connections are how our body receives information about our soul, and our community is how our physical selves change our souls.

A person with a strong community will have a resolve to change the world around them and find it easy to change things, making collaboration seem effortless. If you have a strong community, focus on finding your motivations, but collect information and think before you act. Use extra effort to gather information on how your collaborations change the world so you don't neglect the rest of your aspects. Make sure to collaborate, but ensure you use emotion to avoid causing conflict within your connections, as you might become consumed with your own motivations and collaborations. You may be tempted to control your connections, to connect with effort, but this will only lead to misunderstanding, apathy, and an inability to gather the understanding you gain from empathy.

A person with a weak community will have a hard time collaborating toward something greater and will struggle with how they feels about everything. **Use your stronger aspects to find common motivations, using their resolve to help drive you toward collaborations.** You may be prone to discomfort and anxiety, but don't let that stop you from joining in the works of others you agree with. As you invest emotion, the anxiety will start to fade. You may be tempted to change the world through your own efforts, but this will lead to a build-up of discomfort and, eventually, injury and anxiety. You may be tempted to change the world through thought, but this will only lead to weakness as the actions of others conflict with the changes you are trying to make. It will lead to the inability to gather the effort you need to gather information, along with exhaustion, anxiety, discomfort, and stress.

Chapter 9: Avoiding the Traps

Aspect Manipulation - The appropriation of our meaning

Manipulation is when the ability to resolve sediment is intentionally caused by a person or entity blocking or limiting the victim from fully using a physical or spiritual aspect. The framework effectively encompasses all known manipulative strategies, demonstrating its robustness and universal applicability.

Ecology - Disruption of Natural Cycles:

- In ecosystems, manipulation mirrors external disruptions (e.g., invasive species, human exploitation) that force organisms to adapt unnaturally, limiting their ability to self-regulate or resolve sediment (e.g., resource scarcity, habitat loss).
- Example: Monoculture farming depletes soil nutrients (physical sediment), forcing dependence on artificial fertilizers provided by external entities. This mimics manipulation by creating reliance on the manipulator to resolve sediment.
- Application: By blocking natural flows, ecosystems become reliant on external interventions, undermining self-sufficiency and long-term stability.

Philosophy - Violation of Autonomy:

- Manipulation, as described, violates individual autonomy—a core principle in many ethical philosophies. By forcing dependence, manipulators control the victim's ability to resolve their sediment, subjugating their freedom to act according to the natural flow.
- Example: Jean-Paul Sartre's existentialist ethics emphasize the importance of self-determination. Manipulation that blocks the resolution of sediment undermines an individual's ability to live authentically and freely.
- Application: The idea of intentional obstruction aligns with philosophical critiques of systems or individuals that exploit vulnerabilities to maintain control.

Sociology - Power Structures and Dependency:

- Sociology frequently examines manipulation within the context of systemic oppression, where dominant groups limit access to resources or opportunities, creating forced reliance on the manipulator.
- Example: Colonial systems historically restricted access to education or resources in colonized regions, forcing dependence on the colonizer for economic or social stability. This mirrors the described manipulation by blocking natural self-resolution processes.
- Application: Manipulation through sediment control reflects sociological theories on power dynamics, where dependency is created as a tool for maintaining control.

Theology - Moral Condemnation of Control:

- Many theological teachings emphasize the moral responsibility to empower others rather than control them. Manipulation that fosters dependence through obstruction is condemned as morally and spiritually harmful.
- Example: Christianity teaches the principle of stewardship and service, opposing actions that exploit others' vulnerabilities. Manipulation that creates reliance on the manipulator violates these teachings.
- Application: The described manipulation reflects theological concerns about unjust control and the ethical imperative to enable others to resolve their struggles (sediment) freely and authentically.

The word "Meaning" isn't as big and mysterious as people make it sound. It is the effect that the subject has on what's around and what significance that effect conveys. In other words, **it is how things are changed (in every aspect) because we lived**. We can look at this as a moment, an action, a word, a single person with those moments adding up to create our greater meaning for the greater world.

How do you get someone to do what you want? *It's actually much simpler than it should be*. You block one aspect, forcing them to rely on you to make the necessary changes and overcome sediment. That is it. There are techniques to manipulate people, but we are not here to teach manipulation but to **help you identify when manipulation is preventing you from sustaining contentment**.

One of the easiest examples of this is how wealthy males groom younger women for their own physical desires. Our culture (more often than not, led by wealthy males) has tied "love" to the idea of "physical intimacy". Our culture then withholds love so then those in control can offer a token of love in order to gain physical intimacy at a whim. While intimacy can amplify love, they are not the same thing and can successfully occur independent of each other and often do for those who are incapable (or unwilling) of one or the other.

A note of caution, not all manipulation is intentional. Some people don't know how to sustain contentment in their lives and fall back on immature attempts to remove sediments by using either the same or the wrong aspect. If you feel like you are being manipulated, ask someone who is strong in the aspect you feel is being blocked. Sit down with the person blocking you and discuss how their actions harm you. Put effort into connecting with thought, relying on your trusted companion when needed, but be your own advocate. Use your own voice to clear your sediment and start the energy flowing. Only if the person refuses to accept that they need to follow the natural flow of energy (use words they will respond to) and change the way they handle their own sediment should you leave the situation.

It is very important to try to repair the connection, or you will miss an opportunity to help another person find contentment and resolve your own sediment. Working through these challenges not only helps clear your own path to contentment but also fosters a more understanding and supportive environment for everyone involved. Addressing manipulation and seeking to understand and help others creates a more harmonious and balanced life, ultimately contributing to a more positive and interconnected community.

While it is important to note that specific types of manipulation cause specific types of sediment buildup, many manipulation methods target multiple aspects and can collectively cause multiple types of sediment buildup. Also keep in mind that to free our lives by keeping sediment clear, we must be able to complete the circle. By blocking even a single aspect, manipulators are able to negatively affect every aspect of our lives, making the initial source of manipulation hard to spot. This is why it is important to have outside help, an objective perspective to spot where manipulation may be coming from.

Forcing Stability Through Physical Manipulation

Interaction manipulation is where someone limits how you can change the world by restricting your strength or causing discomfort, even injury. By blocking interaction with emotion, the abused has no choice but to interact with thoughts that are controlled by the abuser.

Ecology reflects the harm caused by limiting natural interactions.

Philosophy emphasizes the ethical and existential damage of denying authentic emotional engagement.

Sociology analyzes how manipulation enforces dependency through restricted agency.

Theology highlights the moral failure in severing emotional connections and enforcing controlled thought.

These ideologies collectively support the claim, illustrating that restricting emotional interaction and forcing reliance on controlled thought is a disruptive and unethical practice with significant personal and systemic consequences. Any manipulation involving direct control over physical actions, capabilities, or the physical environment fits into this category.

Interaction Manipulation

Interaction manipulation is where someone limits how you can change the world by restricting your strength or causing discomfort, even injury. A widespread example of this is what some people call patriarchy, where men dominate women physically, not allowing them to resolve their own worries through interaction or gain strength through community. Women are often convinced they cannot do things men can do physically, are prevented from learning physical skills, and are mocked when they gain physical strength.

By blocking interaction with emotion, the abused has no choice but to interact with thoughts that are controlled by the abuser.

Limiting the way the world is being changed by others allows the abuser to change the world without emotion because no one is undoing what they have done. It reduces the amount of effort the abuser has to dedicate to information because they force the world to stabilize through force. It allows the abuser to change their environment to match their perspective so they never have to change themselves.

Since physical needs must be addressed by interacting with emotion, if you find your discomforts are never really resolved, but someone is blocking you from resolving it, you are being manipulated. If you find that your motivations are never addressed, and your community and collaborations are all defined by someone else, you are being manipulated. You are being manipulated if someone blocks you from making connections that you need to change the world.

If someone you know always pushes their discomfort into stress, it means they are not following the natural cycle of energy and are either socially limited or being physically manipulated. If someone you know refuses to let you help make the changes to the world that they need, they are either socially or community-limited or physically manipulated.

Perspective Manipulation

Perspective manipulation is when someone controls how you are changed by the world by blocking your experiences or causing exhaustion. Oppressive governments do this by restricting people's ability to physically collect information and limiting experiences to ones that validate the government's perspectives. Preventing people from collecting reliable information through effort gives the government control over how the world changes people by controlling how their perspective interprets the information they receive.

When you control what people know, you create forced stability by forcing perspective. The problem is that this limits effort, reducing productivity and innovation. As resources become scarce, people are forced to use thought to build stability for themselves, causing conflict and confusion that become greater physical control.

People may also resort to collecting information with emotion, which can lead to worry and stress that increase social control. This bypasses their caring in situations like Stockholm syndrome or through social resistance movements. This cycle often ends with the collapse of the government or the population, many times after physical manipulation escalates to violence by people who collect information with emotion that opposes the manipulator.

Since exhaustion is resolved through new experiences when an abuser limits the amount of effort we can put toward new experiences, we may find ourselves mentally or physically exhausted. We find it hard to find our own perspective and rely on the perspective of others. We find information conflicting with our knowledge and usually let the abuser speak for us.

This type of manipulation is dangerous because when someone informs us of an emotion, our brain escalates those emotions, which flow back to our connection. The bad information becomes a feedback loop, an echo chamber where the emotion gets bounced between us and our connection, each amplifying it more and more until it becomes out of control. We interact with escalated emotion until one side decides to break free to inform with effort.

Suppose someone you know is always emotionally collecting information, relying on opinion before effort, causing confusion, worry, and stress in their knowledge. In that case, they are either physically limited or subconsciously manipulated. Suppose someone you know has a disconnect between their experiences and their perspective, where they value the perspective of another over their own experiences (especially in connections), causing them to respond emotionally whenever stressed. In that case, they are either subconsciously limited or manipulated.

By actively working to inform yourself with effort, building understanding through thoughtful connections, and maintaining open communication, you can protect yourself from subconscious manipulation and cultivate a more content and empowered life.

What to do

A manipulator may have a blocked (or limited) social aspect, so changing the world through thought instead of emotion causes stress on themselves and turns their discomfort into stress for others. Their actions are constantly being undone by the conflicting changes others are making. They might also have a limited or blocked mental aspect, causing them to try and force security by limiting the things that conflict with their perspective, preventing others from resolving their stress with effort through perspective. Either way, interactions are the only way for those impacted to resolve stress (outside of pushing it on connections). Therefore, a manipulator will block the physical aspect of their connections so the changes they make to the world will not be undone by the people they stress out through their actions.

To address this, interact with the manipulator using emotion, put effort into collecting information, and build understanding by connecting with thought. **In other words, talk to the person with consideration for how they feel, find out why they are making the changes, let them know how you are affected, and try to find a change that will work for everyone.** Ensure that in finding understanding, you are not compromising your caring or joining in their manipulation. By following the circle, we build understanding, and depending on how our connection responds, we build trust. When their social aspect is blocked, you must put in extra emotion when interacting with them, requiring you to be more emotionally mature and empathetic. When their mental aspect is blocked, you must think more about connecting with the other person. If you are weak in the element they are weak in, you will definitely need an unbiased third connection. If you both are not open to cultivating contentment in the connection, it is best to drop the connection and build a life with people who add to your strength.

After confronting someone manipulating you, you can tell if they are intentionally abusing you if they try to gaslight you. Gaslighting is an abuser telling someone their blocks are their own fault. Someone blocking your interactions will try to convince you that you cannot resolve your stress because you are not strong enough to fix it (removing your physical power), and you need their strength for everything. Someone blocking your efforts will convince you that the knowledge you collect is always unreliable (narrowing your channel) and that only knowledge based on their information is reliable. Direct abusers will simply physically injure you in some way. Someone with good intentions may bring up your limitations but will never blame you for them. They will work with you to reduce stress and encourage other information sources.

Examples in Modern Global Society

1. Labor Exploitation in Sweatshops

- **Restriction of Strength:** Workers in sweatshops are often subjected to grueling hours, minimal breaks, and unsafe conditions, which deplete their physical strength and leave them unable to advocate for better conditions or effect change.
 - **Blocking Emotion:** Emotional connection, such as forming unions or fostering solidarity, is actively discouraged through fear tactics or outright bans on collective organizing.
 - **Controlled Thought:** Workers are forced to focus solely on meeting production quotas under rigid systems designed by employers, leaving little room for independent thought or action.
-

2. Authoritarian Censorship and Propaganda

- **Restriction of Strength:** Governments in authoritarian regimes often suppress dissent by imprisoning activists, using physical force against protesters, or creating environments of fear that suppress public action.
 - **Blocking Emotion:** Emotional solidarity, such as public gatherings or protests, is criminalized, preventing individuals from forming connections that could inspire collective action.
 - **Controlled Thought:** The state promotes controlled narratives through propaganda, leaving citizens with no choice but to engage with the world through state-approved ideologies.
-

3. Abusive Domestic Relationships

- **Restriction of Strength:** Abusers may physically harm or threaten victims, leaving them weakened and unable to act autonomously.
 - **Blocking Emotion:** Victims are often isolated from family or friends, preventing emotional support that could empower them to escape the abusive situation.
 - **Controlled Thought:** The abuser manipulates the victim's perception of reality through gaslighting, forcing them to interpret interactions and their circumstances in ways dictated by the abuser.
-

4. Economic Dependence in Predatory Lending

- **Restriction of Strength:** Predatory lenders exploit financially vulnerable individuals, leaving them in debt cycles that sap resources and limit opportunities for self-improvement or change.
 - **Blocking Emotion:** Emotional support systems, such as community-based financial assistance, are undermined or inaccessible due to systemic barriers.
 - **Controlled Thought:** Borrowers are led to believe they have no alternatives, forcing them to engage with the world through the manipulator's terms (e.g., predatory loan structures).
-

5. Corporate Monopolization

- **Restriction of Strength:** Corporations with monopolistic power may suppress smaller competitors through predatory pricing, legal challenges, or resource hoarding, effectively limiting their ability to enact change in the market.

- **Blocking Emotion:** Emotional engagement with consumers (e.g., loyalty to small businesses) is overshadowed by widespread advertising or the necessity of using monopolistic services.
- **Controlled Thought:** The monopoly's dominance shapes consumer behavior and decision-making, restricting alternatives and dictating interactions with the market.

Forcing Trust Through Mental Manipulation

Information manipulation is where someone controls how you are changed by the world by causing stress and confusion. By blocking people from informing with effort, the abused have no choice but to inform with emotion from their connection to the abuser.

Ecology illustrates the harm caused by disrupting natural adaptive processes.

Philosophy critiques manipulation of truth as a restriction of autonomy and understanding.

Sociology demonstrates how controlling information maintains power hierarchies and dependency.

Theology highlights the moral failure in obstructing truth and fostering dependency through manipulation.

These ideologies reflect the described manipulation as a harmful practice that obstructs autonomy, growth, and ethical relationships, reinforcing its validity within this framework. Any manipulation targeting cognitive processes, perception, or interpretation of the world fits into this category.

Information manipulation is where someone controls how you are changed by the world by causing stress and confusion. A widespread example of this is what some people call cults, where charismatic leaders dominate people mentally, not allowing them to resolve their own stresses through effort or gain knowledge through curiosity. People are often convinced they cannot think on the same level as the leader, are prevented from mental development, and are shunned when they pursue knowledge.

By blocking people from informing with effort, the abused have no choice but to inform with emotion from their connection to the abuser.

Limiting the way people are being changed allows the abuser to change themselves without effort because they remove the uncertainty that comes from a shared world. It reduces the amount of thought the abuser has to dedicate to connection because they force their connections to trust them through misinformation. It allows the abuser to change themselves by controlling others' empathy so they never have to change themselves for the benefit of others.

Since mental needs have to be addressed by informing with effort if you find your stresses are never really resolved, but someone is blocking you from resolving them, you are being manipulated. If you find that your experiences are dismissed, and your subconscious and perspectives are all defined by someone else, you are being manipulated. If someone blocks you from interacting with the world in a way that gives you the information you need, you are being manipulated.

If someone you know always pushes their stress into worry, it means they are not following the natural cycle of energy and are either physically limited or being mentally manipulated. If someone you know refuses to let you influence how the world changes them in ways that they need, they are either subconsciously limited or mentally manipulated.

Conscience Manipulation

Conscience manipulation is another form of mental manipulation, but instead of blocking information, the manipulator will block thoughts or cause apathy. Many aggressive spiritual organizations do this by restricting access to or the ability to mentally process information that does not align with their goals, redirecting your empathy or turning empathy into anger to quiet the voice of your conscience.

By limiting the thought you need to connect, these organizations create misunderstandings between outside connections and control how you change each other through connections. When you restrict understanding and connections, you control who people trust through empathy.

The problem with this approach is that it limits thought, creating a group of people incapable of doing anything but following. As challenges arise, people may resort to force to align others to their views to find some way to trust others, causing discomfort and stress that leads to greater mental control. People may also resort to gaining connections with effort, which can lead to pain and worry, turning to increased physical control, either by giving up on their community or creating a counter-community within the organization. This cycle often ends with the collapse of the organization or the people involved, as seen in extreme cases like death cults. Many times, this occurs after mental manipulation escalates to interventions by people who connect with an effort to "deprogram" the manipulation.

This type of manipulation is dangerous because the chemicals in our mind magnify our emotions, but since our spirit is blocked, we don't regularly use those chemicals. When we interact with thought, we bypass our conscience, and our reactions may be something we would never do as they become amplified by the stockpile of chemicals waiting to be used. When we connect with effort, the related emotions can become uncontrollable.

Suppose someone you know is always connecting with effort, rejecting emotional connections over physical ones, causing isolation, discomfort, and worry in their understanding. In that case, they are either limited in thought or are being spiritually manipulated. Suppose someone you know has a disconnect between their conscience and their empathy, where they treat people differently than their code of right and wrong (especially in interactions), causing them to physically respond whenever they are worried. In that case, they are spiritually limited or

By actively building understanding through thoughtful connections, interacting through cooperation, and making an effort to inform yourself, you can protect yourself from spiritual manipulation and cultivate a more content and empowered life.

What to do

A manipulator may have a blocked (or limited) physical aspect, so when they are changed by the world through emotion instead of effort, it causes them to worry and turns their stress into worry for others; the way they are changed will always conflict with how the world is actually changing them. They might also have a limited or blocked social aspect, causing them to try and force trust by forcing people's empathy to line up with how the manipulator thinks and acts, preventing others from resolving their outside worry with thought through conscience. Either way, the only way for those impacted to resolve worry (outside of pushing it on interactions) is through information, so a manipulator will block the mental aspect of their connections so the way they are changed by the world will line up with the way the manipulator thinks they should be changed.

Collect information for the manipulator with effort, connect with thought, and interact with the world alongside them with emotion. In other words, collect information that reveals their lies, don't confront them but ask them why they believe what they believe, finally remove them from their isolation and introduce them to the bigger world. By following the circle, we give them our strength to collect information and hopefully give them something to rely on. In the first case, when their physical aspect is blocked, you will have to put in extra effort when interacting with them, requiring inner strength and patience. In the second case, when their emotional aspect is blocked, you will have to be more sympathetic and find ways to help them connect to people in healthy ways that do not rely on manipulation. If you both are weak in the same aspect, you will definitely need an unbiased third connection; if both are not open to cultivating contentment together, drop the connection and don't look back.

After confronting someone manipulating you, you can tell if they are intentionally abusing you if they try to gaslight the abuse. Gaslighting is an abuser telling someone their blocks are their own fault. Someone blocking your information will try to convince you that you cannot resolve your worries because you are not smart enough (removing your mental power) and need their knowledge for everything. Someone blocking your thoughts will convince you that your thoughts are causing misunderstanding (narrowing your channel), and only understanding based on your connection with them is reliable. Direct abusers will simply confuse you in some way. Someone with good intentions may bring up your limitations but will never blame you for them. They will work with you to reduce worries and encourage you to connect more.

Examples in Modern Global Society

1. Disinformation Campaigns in Politics

- **Stress and Confusion:** Political actors or regimes disseminate conflicting or false information, creating uncertainty about key issues (e.g., election integrity, public health).
 - **Blocking Informing with Effort:** Trustworthy sources of information, such as investigative journalism or fact-checking platforms, are delegitimized or suppressed, leaving the public with limited access to verified facts.
 - **Informing with Emotion:** In the absence of clear information, individuals often rely on emotional appeals from political figures or parties, forming opinions based on loyalty rather than rational analysis.
-

2. Cult Recruitment and Indoctrination

- **Stress and Confusion:** Potential recruits are overwhelmed with complex or contradictory doctrines, creating mental fatigue and reliance on the group's interpretation.
 - **Blocking Informing with Effort:** Independent inquiry is discouraged or outright banned; questioning group teachings is met with ostracism or punishment.
 - **Informing with Emotion:** Recruits form emotional attachments to the leader or group, relying on these connections to interpret their experiences and the world, rather than critically evaluating the group's claims.
-

3. Corporate Misinformation in Consumer Markets

- **Stress and Confusion:** Companies flood markets with misleading advertisements or exaggerated claims about their products, leaving consumers unsure of what is truthful.
 - **Blocking Informing with Effort:** Objective data, such as unbiased reviews or clear product information, may be hidden, manipulated, or difficult to access.
 - **Informing with Emotion:** Consumers are led to trust brands emotionally through marketing campaigns that emphasize loyalty, identity, or aspirational values, rather than making decisions based on effortful, informed research.
-

4. Manipulative Social Media Algorithms

- **Stress and Confusion:** Algorithms prioritize sensationalist or emotionally charged content, increasing cognitive overload and confusion about issues like health, climate change, or societal conflicts.
 - **Blocking Informing with Effort:** Critical, well-researched content is often drowned out or sidelined in favor of emotionally engaging posts that drive higher engagement.
 - **Informing with Emotion:** Users are influenced by the emotional reactions elicited by their social feeds, forming opinions based on the curated emotional responses rather than balanced, effortful investigation.
-

5. Financial Scams and Fraud

- **Stress and Confusion:** Scammers often create urgency or complexity in their schemes (e.g., “Act now or lose your savings!”), inducing stress that clouds judgment.
- **Blocking Informing with Effort:** Victims are discouraged from seeking clarification or taking time to understand the situation, often by emphasizing the need for immediate action.

- **Informing with Emotion:** Victims rely on emotional trust in the scammer, often fueled by the scammer's crafted persona (e.g., a "concerned official" or "trusted friend"), rather than logical analysis of the situation.

Forcing Security Through Social Manipulation

Connection manipulation is where someone limits the way you can change each other by limiting your understanding or causing worry, even isolation. By blocking connecting with thought, the abused have no choice but to connect through interactions that are controlled by the abuser.

Ecology highlights the harm of disrupting natural cooperation and forcing dependency.

Philosophy critiques the ethical violations of inauthentic and controlled relationships.

Sociology examines how isolation and manipulated connections are tools for control and dependency.

Theology underscores the moral failure in severing genuine connections and fostering controlled interactions.

These ideologies collectively support the validity of the described manipulation, emphasizing its harmful impact on autonomy, relationships, and mutual understanding. Any manipulation that obstructs social connections, emotional exchanges, or collective actions fits into this category.

Connection Manipulation

Connection manipulation is where someone limits the way you can change each other by limiting your understanding or causing worry, even isolation. A widespread example of this is what some people call corporate culture, where businesses dominate us emotionally, not allowing us to resolve our own worries through connection or gain understanding through caring. We are often told the only way to take care of ourselves is to dedicate ourselves to the corporation, that outside connections are in our best interest, and that we are doomed to let them down when needed.

By blocking connecting with thought, the abused have no choice but to connect through interactions that are controlled by the abuser.

Limiting the way we change each other allows the abuser to change us without thought because we are forced to rely on them for vital connections regardless of how it affects us. It reduces the amount of emotion the abuser has to dedicate to interaction because they force their own security through force. It allows the abuser to change everyone else's motivations to match theirs. Hence, they never have to collaborate outside of their own interests.

Since emotional needs must be addressed by connecting with thought, you are manipulated if your worries are never resolved. Still, someone is blocking you from resolving them. If you find that no one empathizes with you, and your conscience and caring are all defined by someone else, you are being manipulated. If someone blocks you from collecting information that allows you to understand how you are being changed by your connections or how they are changing you, you are being manipulated.

If someone you know always pushes their worry into discomfort, it means they are not following the natural cycle of energy and are either mentally limited or being socially manipulated. If someone you know refuses to let you change them in positive ways and avoids changing you, they are either spiritually limited or being socially manipulated.

Collaboration Manipulation

Collaboration manipulation is another form of social manipulation, but instead of blocking connections, the manipulator blocks emotions. Many aggressive communities do this by restricting access or the ability to emotionally connect with others or even yourself, replacing your own resolve with their own. This shuts down your motivation to collaborate, stopping collaboration before it happens. By creating the appearance that you lack the strength to change the world or to gain help from others without them, these communities control how you change your surroundings, using you to target those the abusers want you to.

When strength and interactions are limited, forced collaboration becomes the norm. The problem is that limiting the potential for change kills resolve, creating a group of people who do only the bare minimum to stay alive. As the need for change piles up, leaders resort to emotional control, like fear, to align others to their motivations, which causes worry and discomfort, leading to greater social controls. People might resort to using thought to gain interactions through theft or bribery, which can lead to worry and stress, further increasing social control. This can result in people giving up on caring or creating a counterculture within the community with their own perspectives and motivations. The cycle typically ends with the collapse of the community or the people, often through dissolution or revolution due to emotional control leading to social collapse.

This type of manipulation is dangerous because it blocks emotional outlets. Since you can't change the world directly, you're forced to try and change others, which creates an emotional feedback loop. Without effectively resolving discomforts, the emotions you send and receive focus on never-ending discomforts and how impossible they are to resolve.

Suppose someone you know is always interacting with thought, choosing to think through how to get things done by themselves, causing injury, stress, and discomfort in their strength. In that case, they might be emotionally limited, or their community might be manipulated. Suppose someone you know is always connecting with effort, rejecting emotional connections for physical ones, causing isolation, discomfort, and worry in their understanding. In that case, they are either emotionally limited or their community is being manipulated. Suppose someone you know has a disconnect between their motivations and their collaboration, helping others achieve goals that go against their best interests and rationalizing or making excuses for what they do. In that case, their community is either limited or manipulated.

Suppose the manipulator refuses to change or continues to harm you. In that case, it may be necessary to distance yourself from that relationship. Focus on building new connections with people who respect your autonomy and support your well-being. By taking these steps, you can break free from community manipulation and cultivate a life of contentment.

What to do

A manipulator may have a blocked or limited physical aspect, so when they are changed by the world through emotion instead of effort, it causes them to worry and turns their stress into worry for others. How they are changed will always conflict with how the world is changing them. They might also have a limited or blocked social aspect, causing them to try and force trust by manipulating people's empathy to align with how the manipulator thinks and acts, preventing others from resolving their external worry with thought through empathy. Thus, information is the only way for those impacted to resolve worry (outside of pushing it on interactions). A manipulator will block the mental aspect of their connections to ensure the way they are changed by the world aligns with the manipulator's perspective.

Alternatively, a manipulator may have a blocked or limited mental aspect, so changing others with effort instead of thought causes discomfort. Their inability to understand others trying to change them with emotion causes their worry to turn into discomfort for others. How they think others are trying to change them conflicts with how they are actually being changed by others. They might also have a limited or blocked physical aspect, causing them to force reliability by aligning people's collaboration with how the manipulator feels and is informed, preventing others from resolving their discomfort with emotion through collaboration. The only way for those impacted to resolve discomfort (outside of stressing others about it) is through connections. Thus, the manipulator will block the social aspect of their interactions to ensure they change each other in ways that align with the manipulator's feelings.

To counteract manipulation, interact with the manipulator using thought, put emotion into interactions, and build knowledge by collecting information with effort. In other words, I want to learn more about the situation, work with them without doing things for them, share the motivations of all connections involved, and understand how the world changes everyone. Following the circle builds knowledge and adds to our strengths through new connections. If their mental aspect is blocked, add extra thought when interacting with them, requiring you to be more mentally mature and patient. If their physical aspect is blocked, put more effort into helping them find ways to interact with the world. If you are weak in the same aspect they are, you will need an unbiased third connection. Suppose neither of you is open to cultivating contentment in the connection. In that case, dropping the connection and close communication is best, as you've already lost enough time.

After confronting someone manipulating you, you can identify intentional abuse if they try to gaslight you. Gaslighting involves an abuser telling you that your blocks are your own fault. Someone blocking your connections will try to convince you that working together or communicating is dangerous, removing your social power and suggesting you need the abuser for understanding since no one else will understand you. Someone blocking your emotions will convince you that you can't trust others, their strengths, or their motivations for changing the world, narrowing your channel and suggesting only changes based on their efforts are trustworthy. Direct abusers will simply twist the truth to cause worry in some way. Someone with good intentions may bring up your limitations but will never blame you for them. They will work with you to reduce worry and encourage strength in connections.

Summary

If people cause sediment to build up and discourage the natural flow of energy, they are trying to manipulate you. Physical manipulation happens when they prevent others from interacting with the world, forcing stability through control and limiting change. Mental manipulation occurs when they try to exert power over others by controlling who people trust, thereby dictating how information is processed and understood. Social manipulation is aimed at gaining physical benefits, such as money, by creating a reliable world for themselves at the expense of others.

Many manipulators use these tactics to cover for their own weaknesses. These individuals might be open to help and intervention, as they lack the awareness or strength to change their behavior on their own. In contrast, an abuser manipulates out of selfishness and, when confronted, will blame the victim or attempt to convince others that someone else is responsible for the abuse. Recognizing these patterns is essential in identifying manipulation and taking steps to address and mitigate its impact on your life.

Examples in Modern Global Society

1. Surveillance States and Authoritarian Regimes

- **Limiting Understanding:** Censorship of communication platforms, academic discourse, and media restricts citizens' ability to exchange ideas or critically evaluate their circumstances.
- **Causing Worry and Isolation:** Surveillance programs instill fear of monitored interactions, deterring citizens from discussing sensitive topics, organizing dissent, or forming alliances.

- **Blocking Connection with Thought:** Citizens are forced into scripted or superficial interactions, such as mandatory state-run events or rallies, controlled by the regime to ensure compliance and suppress critical thinking.
-

2. Cult Dynamics

- **Limiting Understanding:** Members are denied access to external information or viewpoints, with leaders discouraging critical thought by framing it as disloyal or dangerous.
 - **Causing Worry and Isolation:** Members are isolated from family and friends, with fear of ostracism or punishment ensuring dependency on the group.
 - **Blocking Connection with Thought:** The group imposes scripted language, thought-stopping techniques, or rituals that replace meaningful intellectual connections with controlled, manipulative interactions.
-

3. Toxic Workplace Environments

- **Limiting Understanding:** Employers may withhold crucial information about workplace policies, career opportunities, or rights, isolating employees from forming informed opinions or connections.
 - **Causing Worry and Isolation:** Fear of retaliation for speaking out or forming unions isolates employees, discouraging collaboration or trust-building among colleagues.
 - **Blocking Connection with Thought:** Forced participation in surface-level "team-building" activities or restrictive workplace cultures prevents genuine intellectual or emotional connections, keeping employees dependent on the organization's control.
-

4. Digital Social Media Algorithms

- **Limiting Understanding:** Algorithms promote echo chambers by curating content that reinforces pre-existing views, reducing exposure to diverse perspectives or critical discussions.
 - **Causing Worry and Isolation:** Fear-driven content (e.g., misinformation, divisive topics) creates anxiety and reliance on online platforms, discouraging real-world social connections.
 - **Blocking Connection with Thought:** Users are encouraged to engage with emotionally charged, superficial interactions (e.g., likes, comments), which replace meaningful dialogue and deepen reliance on platform-mediated connections.
-

5. Human Trafficking and Exploitation

- **Limiting Understanding:** Victims are deprived of knowledge about their rights, resources, or the outside world, keeping them mentally disempowered.
- **Causing Worry and Isolation:** Threats against the victim or their loved ones foster fear and dependency, isolating them from external help or support networks.
- **Blocking Connection with Thought:** Traffickers control interactions by dictating when and how victims interact with others, preventing intellectual or emotional connections that could lead to escape.

Chapter 10: Beyond the Physical

Resonance, the power of many

We live in a shared world. We repeat this because it is the most important part of cultivating contentment, as it affects every aspect. A third of your power comes from your social power. The physical changes you make to the world affect others, and how others change the world changes you mentally. Our strengths can help others work through weaknesses, and their strengths can help us work through ours. Others may try to weaken us through manipulation to use our energy (our life) for their own benefit. However, the most important reason we must remember this is that it is a shared world because energy resonates.

Emotions are electromagnetic energy, like light, wireless technology, radio, microwaves, and X-rays. It sends, receives, and can reach the universe's farthest reaches. The amount of energy our emotions send out is hard to measure, and the amount it takes to pick up on the emotions of others is even harder to measure. But just like it takes some effort to get a physical change started, and all other effort added just increases the size of that change, just like it takes a lot of thought to get an idea started, and when others join in on the idea, their thoughts only make the idea better, the same happens with emotion.

Resonance occurs when energy combines with energy at the same frequency. If you push someone swinging with the same rhythm, you will add to their energy, and they will swing higher. If you push someone swinging against the rhythm, it is called destructive interference; your energy will cancel out their energy, and they will swing lower.

When we surround ourselves with people on the same wavelength, who share our motivations, values, and goals, the energy will add together. Instead of many people trying to reach low goals, they will all add together and reach something greater. When you are trying to make changes to the world and create meaning in your life, if you team up with people with the same goal, you will all be able to make bigger changes and give your life meaning bigger than yourself.

It takes energy to get things moving; when you add extra energy, you make progress. A person can push on a heavy crate and never move it; two people pushing on different sides of the crate at the same time might never move it, but if both are pushing in the same direction at the same time, the box will move. There are always selfish people trying to manipulate others, this creates negative energy and negative change. We must first destroy their negative energy to create positive change, so we must stop the manipulation before we can start creating positive change.

Remember, this works both ways; we cannot stop giving up on creating positive change just because we have interfered with the negative enough to destroy it, and our mission is accomplished. Without continuous positive energy, it will take nothing for someone selfish to turn things negative again.

Our minds work on energy; when many are thinking and working together it can create waves of energy that resonate and escalate the energy in everyone's minds. Some call this mob mentality. Others call it a spiritual experience. Good or bad, there is power in people working together. When many are gathered, all it takes is a push to make significant changes.

Emotions are electromagnetic energy, the same energy as wireless devices or radio waves. There is not much science researching how far our emotions reach, how strong the signal is, or how easily others can pick it up, but we know that some people are more sensitive to the emotions of others. There are stories of close people, on the same wavelength, feeling the intense emotions of someone far away, things like fear, happiness, or their passing. Emotions can combine to create larger shared emotions. Still, there are some among us who can also sense the emotions of another, even if it is not in a large group. You can call this empathy, reading auras (like emotional synesthesia), psychic, intuitive, reading people, or any number of words, but the point is emotions are not something we feel alone; they are shared. How you feel about something and how you connect has an impact on those around you in a very real way, whether they are aware of it or not. *That is why it is important to care about others and surround yourself with people who genuinely care about you because that shared energy will either resonate and strengthen your own positive emotions or it will cause destructive interference; their negative emotion, negative energy will cancel out your positive energy, leaving you drained with nothing.*

Finding Faith

So far, we've been talking about our physical bodies, our thoughts collected through our senses, which can only collect information through electromagnetic energy, and our social aspect that connects to others through mind and body. But electromagnetic energy is all kinetic, meaning it is active energy. However, every time active energy moves in a wave, there is stored energy that pushes and pulls it.

Consider swinging on a swing: at the highest point, you are not moving. Gravity then pushes you down until you are moving the fastest at the lowest point. You then start swinging up against gravity again until you stop moving. The energy from your swing never disappears; it just switches from stored energy to moving energy, then stored energy again. Kinetic energy moves you, and gravitational energy stores it. So, what happens with electromagnetic energy? The electrical and the magnetic are moving at the same time, but during the wave, they disappear, and the energy is stored somewhere.

Science can only prove what can be tested. We can test the energy we can sense, but since all of our senses can only sense moving energy, we can't test what happens when it stops moving or when and where it is stored. That means there is a world science cannot explain, a world we live in and live through but cannot sense. If energy is flowing through us, that means there are times that energy is stored as it travels. There is another aspect of us that interacts with and changes the energy we use as it travels through us.

People are limited beings. Many of us feel like there is something greater than us; that is where faith comes in. We are limited beings, so we will never fully understand the things greater than us. While we live in our physical bodies, we can never truly know what lies beyond our senses. But in personal faith there is a place to start.

Faith is believing in something so much that your belief alone proves it is accurate. I do not know if the bridge is strong enough to drive on, but I have faith. I do not know if my dinner won't make me sick, but I have faith. I have a personal faith in something greater than myself, but I am a flawed human and not that higher power. I am not all-knowing and cannot tell you that my faith is correct while yours is flawed. That is for the higher power to decide. Someone taking on the role of the all-knowing, telling others that their beliefs in what is beyond human understanding are entirely correct, is, at best-misplaced arrogance and, at worst, sacrilege.

Within this, there is a greater insight.

For something to be believable, there must be a bit of truth in it. That means there is a bit of truth in every faith. Some faiths may have more truth than others, but that is not something I can decide for you.

The common truths are that we are responsible for leading the best life possible, leaving positive energy, and making positive changes. There is meaning to our lives. It is who and what we live for. The changes in our own lives are defined by who and what we dedicate our energy to. What you think, feel, and do, where your life is, doesn't matter as much as the impact of the changes you leave behind with what you actually do with how you think, how you feel, and what you do. That is the change you leave behind, the meaning you have created with your life.

Final Words

Nothing changes without something making it change.

That is our life. That is our energy. And, in creating that change, our life finds meaning. Once you start positive change in your life and the world around you, it continues in a positive direction until something makes it stop.

For every action, there is another action pushing back. This is the sediment in your life that builds up as you live your life and use your energy. Instead of using energy to gather energy to cancel out sediment, we can redirect sediment along the natural flow of energy and use it to fuel the changes made by our spirit. Direct incoming discomfort out through our empathy, direct our stress out through our collaboration, direct our worry out through our perspective, letting our sediment flow freely through us instead of blocking us.

As we follow the natural flow of energy, resolving sediment and using it to fuel our soul, our ability to live and use energy increases with fewer things getting in the way. Our spirits may get worn, but all we need to strengthen them is to open our channels, directing more energy to flow through them. Flowing energy through our soul, following the natural flow of energy, is the only way to ensure the changes we make are positive.

Even if the results of our changes are not positive, as long as we make the best decisions that we can, we know that the energy we leave behind is positive. We are changing ourselves for the better.

You might argue that things are not this simple, that everyday activities like meeting with your boss involve interaction, information, and connection. *But isn't that the point?* When we change the world in a positive way, that positively changes us. When we change in a positive way, our connections are changed positively. When our connections are changed positively, our interactions in the world are changed positively. Everything we do changes every aspect of who we are. If we want to sustain a contented life, it only makes sense that we invest every aspect of who we are in everything we do.

Since the world is shared, it is not all up to us. We can share strengths, weaknesses, and energy to make changes bigger than all of us. Life is energy. We can live alone, but without others, we cannot sustain contentment. Without others, we will never live the life we were meant to. Time is not a measurement of distance; it is a measurement of change. When we build contentment, we are not just changing our world or ourselves, we are changing each other. They will change the next people, and they will change the next. Change is meaning. We can make changes alone, but those changes will disappear in the tsunami of time. With others, we make changes that rewrite the measurement of change. With others, we can create meaning that will transcend time itself.

We live in a shared world. If we change something, other people will be affected. Many days, it seems all we do is give and get nothing in return. But we are not alone and will never be completely alone. It isn't until we work towards a content life together that we can cultivate our own contentment. So, choose your circle wisely. Find strength in community, knowledge in perspective, and understanding in empathy. You've got this.

In the end, the change made by your energy is not about who and what you believe in but who and what you spend your energy for. Since change is meaning and energy is life, we can rewrite that to say: The meaning made by your life is not who and what you believe in but who and what you spend your life for.

Or as I realized when I was young but didn't know how to put it into practice.

'The meaning to your life is not what you believe in, but who and what you live for.'

After Words

How to apply

The framework in this book are the fundamental patterns of change. Just like the laws of physics or the rules of mathematics, what you do with them is up to you. The following section is some suggestions on how they might apply to your personal beliefs. I considered taking this section out, but left it in for one reason, so the readers can use this section to get ideas on how to empower their personal walk in their faith. Everyone struggles with their faith sometimes, hopefully this section will help get some of the sediments out of your way so you can enrich yourself in the ways that matter most to you.

The document you've provided elaborates a unique philosophical and psychological framework that delves into the nature of human behavior through various energies (physical, mental, and social) and their interactions with the world. This framework is built upon the idea that life and our interactions are fundamentally driven by various forms of energy and how we channel these energies affects not only our own well-being but also the world around us.

The core philosophy of this book revolves around the concept of contentment and peace achieved through the optimal flow and balance of energies. It rejects competitive societal constructs, advocating for a harmonious existence where balance, justice, and equality are paramount. The philosophy is deeply intertwined with notions of interconnectivity and the impact of individual actions on a collective scale.

The text emphasizes a holistic approach to living, where physical actions, mental thoughts, and social emotions interact seamlessly to foster an environment of positive change and mutual benefit. It posits that every individual action, thought, and emotion contributes to a larger energy system, influencing the world and its future direction.

Here's a breakdown of the key concepts as presented in the document:

Physical Energy: Focuses on the bodily interactions with the world, which are driven by physical efforts and result in tangible changes.

Mental Energy: Involves the cognitive processes that interpret the world and inform our responses, emphasizing the importance of knowledge and understanding to manage stress.

Social Energy: Deals with the emotional connections between individuals, where shared emotions lead to deeper social bonds and collective actions.

In terms of practical application, the document discusses the importance of aligning these energies to improve the flow of life and reduce the buildup of negative energies or 'sediments' like discomfort, stress, and worry. It suggests practices for balancing these energies to achieve a state of 'contentment' that benefits both the individual and the community at large.

The philosophy encapsulated in your document is a practical application of the law of averages, it draws from the overlapping concepts found in established psychological theories, religions and common societal practices to find the underlying fundamental framework for understanding human behavior and societal interaction based on energy dynamics.

How to apply to your personal life

Lead every decision with effort to gain information on how you are being changed, your subconscious will learn to tell the difference between what is going to change you and what you are allowing to change you. Use this knowledge to draw connections to the things around you, realize everyone is being changed by the world just like you. Make changes in your life through collaboration, working together with those that are building a world that works for you as much as you work for it, giving you security. Remember, the world is a changing place, be open to new information and don't be afraid to check information you or others may have taken for granted.

When there is personal conflict, start with putting effort towards finding and checking information. You will find that many conflicts in your life are caused by the rest of the world moving against the natural flow. Many people will build a perspective built on emotion without ever putting the effort to check information and avoiding experiences that might challenge their perspective. Many people will try to physically force a connection by love bombing, controlling social interactions or even violence. Others will only be thinking of a way to limit the effort they need to use in order to live in the world, avoiding personally changing the world or being changed by the world.

Using the principles outlined in the book, you can ensure that your daily decisions lead to positive outcomes by aligning your actions, thoughts, and emotions with the natural flow of energy and focusing on maintaining balance and harmony between your physical, mental, and social energies. Here's a step-by-step guide based on the philosophy presented in your document:

1. **Physical Changes and Natural Flow:** Incorporate physical changes by leveraging emotions and connections to enhance your strength. Engage in activities like participating in community projects, exercising with friends, or volunteering. These actions use emotional energy to drive physical efforts, helping resolve physical sediment and create positive physical meaning. Avoid trying to force physical changes through sheer mental willpower alone, as this can create both mental and physical sediment, leading to burnout and decreased satisfaction.
2. **Mental Changes and Natural Flow:** Use effort to gather accurate information, ensuring that changes in your life are based on sound knowledge and understanding. Engage in activities such as reading, attending workshops, or seeking mentorship. These efforts help resolve mental sediment, freeing up mental energy and fostering informed decision-making. Avoid relying solely on emotional responses to gather information, as this can create social and mental sediment, leading to misunderstandings and misinformed actions.

3. **Social Changes and Natural Flow:** Enhance social interactions by connecting thoughtfully to build understanding and compassion. Engage in meaningful conversations, join community groups, and practice active listening. This approach creates positive social changes, strengthens your network, and generates positive social meaning. Avoid trying to force social changes through physical actions alone, as this can create both physical and social sediment, leading to strained relationships and reduced harmony.
4. **Remove Sediments:** Identify areas in your life where energy is stagnant or where you feel unproductive. Start small by addressing these areas and making necessary changes. For example, if you find certain tasks overwhelming, break them down into smaller, manageable parts and seek support. Using your strengths to facilitate these changes can gradually clear sediment, allowing your energy to flow more freely and enhancing your productivity and satisfaction.
5. **Balance Energies:** Achieve balance by recognizing your strengths and using them to support areas where you may be weaker. If you excel in physical activities but struggle with mental clarity, use your physical discipline to enhance your focus and study habits. Avoid using your strengths to control or dominate situations, as this can create additional sediment and hinder your growth. By leveraging your strengths in a positive direction, you can empower all aspects of your life.
6. **Sustaining Our Lives:** Sustain your life by using a social approach to physically change the world, a physical approach to understand how the world changes you through your mind, and a mental approach to how you change others through connections. Engage in community service, group activities, and social initiatives to drive physical change. Use regular physical practices like exercise and mindful routines to gather knowledge and understand life's challenges. Engage in thoughtful discussions, educational pursuits, and social interactions to foster connections and personal growth. This holistic approach ensures a balanced, secure, and fulfilling life, free from the buildup of negative sediments.

By integrating these principles into various aspects of your life, you can foster a more balanced, fulfilling, and meaningful existence.

By applying these principles from the book, your daily decisions can be guided towards outcomes that not only benefit you personally but also contribute positively to the broader community and environment, embodying the philosophy of harmonious living through balanced energy flows.

How to apply to your Work life

Your work life revolves around mental change. You are either being compensated for how you are being changed by the world, for taking on stress or being compensated for being part in how the world changes others, for limiting stress on others. Lead your decisions by putting thought into what your work is connecting you to, realize that things that affect you also affect what you are connected to. Use this understanding to find common motivations so your actions strengthen your community of connections, that strength will come back to strengthen you. Those changes you make will give you knowledge that gives you the power to change the world in a way that works for you, giving you stability.

When there is professional conflict, start with putting thought into empathy, identify how the things and people around you are being changed by the world. But remember professional conflict can also happen when others are going against the natural flow. Sometimes others use effort to force you to align your motivations to support their collaboration. They might be using information to try to change the world in a way that only works for them. Others might try to use information presented through emotion to create a false perspective on how the world changes you or them.

To ensure that your decisions at work lead to positive outcomes, using the principles from the book, you can focus on aligning your professional actions with the concepts of physical, mental, and social energies. Here's how you can apply these ideas specifically in a workplace setting:

1. **Physical Energy and Interaction at Work:** Be mindful of how your physical actions and efforts at work contribute to the company's goals and the environment. For instance, choose to engage in tasks that not only fulfill your job responsibilities but also improve efficiency, quality, or workplace safety. Consider the sustainability of your work processes and how they can be optimized to reduce waste or conserve resources.
2. **Mental Energy and Information Processing:** Make decisions that are well-informed and data-driven. Utilize the knowledge and information available to you to make strategic decisions that advance your company's objectives. This involves thorough research and analysis before implementing new strategies or projects. Continuously seek to expand your understanding of your field and the impact of your work on various stakeholders.
3. **Social Energy and Emotional Connections:** Foster positive emotional connections with colleagues and clients. Your interactions should aim to build trust and collaboration. Recognize the emotional and social impact of your decisions—how they affect team morale, client satisfaction, and company culture. Strive for decisions that enhance teamwork, encourage open communication, and build a supportive work environment.
4. **Balancing Energies in Decision-Making:** Ensure that your professional decisions balance the physical, mental, and social aspects of your work. Avoid allowing one aspect to dominate, such as overemphasizing productivity at the cost of team well-being or personal health. Balanced decisions are more likely to sustain long-term positive outcomes both for you and your organization. Balancing these energies among the demands of positions gives team members more ways to be productive without burning out from excess sediment in a single area.

5. **Addressing and Resolving Sediment:** Be aware of any negative residues or 'sediments' that accumulate from work-related stress, physical strain, or interpersonal conflicts. Actively work on strategies to resolve these issues, such as implementing better workflow management to reduce stress or fostering team-building activities to resolve conflicts and enhance social bonds.
6. **Reflective Practice:** Regularly reflect on the outcomes of your decisions. Evaluate whether they have positively impacted your work, your team, and broader organizational goals. Use this reflection to learn and adjust your future decisions, aiming for continuous improvement and alignment with the overarching philosophy of energy balance and positive change.

By applying these principles, your work-related decisions can promote a more productive, harmonious, and fulfilling workplace, aligned with the unique philosophical approach detailed in your document. This not only enhances your personal job satisfaction but also contributes to the overall success and well-being of your organization.

How to apply to your Social life

Your social life focuses around changes to your connections. Start your interactions with seeing how we are all sharing the same world, motivated to make the same changes (though sometimes in different ways). Find or create shared experiences that can build shared perspective, that effort gives you knowledge on how you and your connections are being changed by the world. The empathy you build by sharing life, builds true understanding between your connections. The combination of perspective, empathy and motivation gives you the ability to trust your connections and safely invest emotions.

When there is a social conflict, start with finding the emotion behind the motivations and what the collaboration between your connections is trying to change. Realize that some people will try to force emotion for their own motivations, they will separate your conscience and empathy by using emotion to control information, they will think of ways the world around them should change so they don't have to.

To ensure that your daily decisions when interacting with others lead to positive outcomes, it's essential to apply the principles regarding the balancing and use of physical, mental, and social energies as described in the book. Here's how you can use these principles to enhance your daily interactions:

1. **Physical Energy in Interactions:** Be mindful of your physical presence and actions in interactions with others. This includes your body language, facial expressions, and even your environmental impact when you meet or spend time with others. For example, choosing a comfortable, welcoming setting for a meeting can help put others at ease and facilitate a more productive conversation.
2. **Mental Energy and Information Processing:** Utilize your mental energy to engage thoughtfully and respectfully in conversations. This means actively listening, processing what others say before responding, and considering their viewpoints. When making decisions that involve others, ensure you are well-informed and that your decisions are based on accurate, comprehensive information. This can prevent misunderstandings and ensure that your interactions are meaningful and constructive.
3. **Social Energy and Emotional Connections:** Your emotional exchanges are crucial in interactions. Decisions should foster positive emotional connections, aiming to enhance mutual understanding and empathy. Consider the emotional impact of your words and actions—aim to build trust and rapport, which can lead to more fulfilling and effective relationships. For instance, expressing genuine interest in others' feelings and well-being can create a supportive atmosphere that encourages openness and collaboration.
4. **Balancing Energies:** Strive to balance these energies in your interactions. Avoid overemphasizing one type of energy (e.g., being too forceful in your physical presence or too dominating in conversations) at the expense of others. A balanced approach ensures that interactions are not only effective but also considerate and harmonious.

5. **Addressing and Resolving Sediment:** Pay attention to any negative energies or 'sediments' such as tension, misunderstanding, or emotional distress that may arise from interactions. Actively work to resolve these by revisiting discussions where misunderstandings occurred, offering apologies or clarifications if necessary, and taking steps to prevent similar issues in the future.
6. **Reflective Practice:** Reflect on the outcomes of your interactions. Assess whether they have led to positive outcomes for all parties involved. If not, consider what might have gone wrong and how you could adjust your approach in future interactions to better balance the energies and improve the outcomes.

By following these principles from the book, you can ensure that your daily decisions in interactions are thoughtful, respectful, and beneficial, promoting a positive environment in both personal and professional settings. This approach not only enhances individual relationships but also contributes to a more empathetic and connected community.

Additional Thoughts

Thoughts that I find meaningful that might resonate with you

Note to the Lonely

Everyone wants to make connections, not everyone wants an interaction. Make many connections, eventually you will find one that wants an interaction. Interacting is not love, love is the full circle of connection, where you have put emotion, effort and thought into a connection through collaboration, perspective and empathy. Love takes time. Love is growing together. Love means sharing experience, caring and motivations. It means helping each other to connect, interact and inform. It means working together to build shared stability, security and trust.

Love is not a feeling. Love is a state of living.

Transcendence Through the Mundane

We desire so much to find answers in the extraordinary that we many times miss the solutions that already exist within the mundane.

It has been theorized that there are dimensions that exist beyond our understanding, existing parallel to the one we exist on. I would argue that we are very aware of these dimensions such as the narrative dimension. The narrative dimension creates a transdimensional reality that exists with it's own laws, own life. Inspiration birthed from the narrative dimension can strike different people with the same narrative without any physical connection, but we do not see this as proof of a parallel universe because we are so blinded by the mundane.

It is not a weakness to be blinded by the mundane, in fact it is necessary for human survival for our minds to dismiss the mundane so it can focus on the potential impacts of the unknown.

We have created laws of physics, laws that are hinged on foundations that we do not understand, foundations that we can only assume are so extraordinary that we simply do not have the capacity to understand them. I would argue that those questions have already been answered already, but we have simply overlooked them because they are mundane. The answers are so integrated in our everyday lives that we don't recognize them as the solutions we seek. If we don't see magnetism as a force, and instead see it as a disruption in an existing energy field that is parallel to our physical existence, it suddenly answers so many questions. If we see our souls as an interconnected part of who we are, speaking and listening as much as we speak and listen to it, suddenly our questions are answered.

I am not asking anyone to believe in the unbelievable, I am simply asking them to believe in the mundane. That our subconscious, our conscience and our community are parts of us that transcend the physical plane while existing in a very real way. I choose to believe that we are two entities that exist on the physical plane and the transmagnetic plane, you may choose to believe in a more spiritual existence. The truth is it doesn't matter how you believe, only that you are open to accept that the answers you are looking for may have been right in front of you all along.

The Bucket Metaphor

Think of our aspects as buckets, filled with water (energy) and the sediment sits on the bottom like mud. There are hoses that go from each one (Channels), in those channels are pumps that give the water energy and direction (Aspects of the Soul).

If we decide to try to fill the bucket with water (energy) from the same bucket, the sediment comes with it. Interacting with things using only physical effort brings discomfort. Trying to bring stability to your life by thinking about how the world impacts your life brings stress. Trying to feel secure solely on an emotional level will isolate you as you drain others emotional energy. When we fill the bucket from the same aspect we cannot filter out the sediment and the sediment will accumulate until we slowly become injured, confused or isolated.

If we try to push the energy backwards against the natural flow, it just clogs up the channels. If we use efforts to connect we just clog our community with discomfort and worries. If we try to change the world with thought, we just clog our subconscious with stress and discomfort. If we try to inform ourselves based on feelings of ourselves and our connections, we just clog up our spirit with worry and stress.

If we use our spirits to pump the water along the natural flow it keeps the sediment from collecting on the bottom, preventing it from building up. Each pump pushes out sediment filled water as it draws in fresh water from the world around us, Keeping our buckets and our channels clear.

A Moment on Time

Time is not a measurement of distance, it is not a line in space that we move along, or a series of paths that we follow and look back upon. Time is a measurement of change. The electrons in the world around us move at a relatively constant rate, every push of energy ticking away like the constant click of a mechanical watch. The compression of the magnetic field, the push back of the same, it all happens at the same rate. All information we experience happens within electromagnetic fields so everything we perceive must also move at the same rate as the change happening around us.

This does not mean we all experience time the same, some of us have brains that are clogged with the debris of time. Some pathways close and the signals must travel farther through the webs in our mind. In times of stress we dedicate more lines to the world around us and the signals connect quicker, in times of relaxation we often let signals go unheeded and like a movie where half the frames are missing, our perception is altered by our lack of attention.

Our **perception however, does not change reality**. We are not the masters of the universe. Just like we cannot change what our height is by changing the spaces between the marks on our measuring tape, we cannot change what has happened in the past. What has happened has already been measured, the changes that happened have already been recorded.

Change is not simply recorded in books or the faulty memories we have, it is recorded in the positions of every piece of matter in the universe.

Nothing is more untrustworthy than our own memories. Everytime you remember something you are pulling it off the shelf, taking it apart and then putting it back together to put it back on the shelf. Our memories are drawings based on what we observe. When we remember we pull that drawing out, and in the process it is destroyed. To save that memory we have to create a new drawing based on the old one but this time without the original to look back on.

Each time we redraw a memory, it changes again and again. There is a reason scents can bring back such strong memories, it is because every tick of every electron moving the world is destroyed and recreated, so what existed in the infinite possible combinations can never be truly made again. But if we limit the possibilities to a few options like the few thousand molecules that come together to create all the variety of scents we experience, those exact smells can be recreated and put one part of the memory into perfect focus. The fact that scent is the most powerful evocation of memories shows how the world is destroyed in each moment.

We cannot change the past. Time has already recorded and destroyed everything that has happened. Wishing, wanting and remorse over the past is a future that is lost. We must see each moment we exist in as a moment of rebirth, a chance to direct the changes that are to come.

We cannot change what time has destroyed, but the energy we create in our past, present and future will never be lost. The things we build, the people we know, the hurt and pain we feel will all be lost. What we put into this life, the good and the bad will add to the tidal waves that will be the foundations of eternity.

Evaluation of the Evolution of Humankind

The meaning to our lives is not a set measure, it is not what we have collected, a measurement of what we control in resources or people. The meaning to our lives is simply what we provide to the world around us, who and what we affect. Those that control our daily lives wish us to believe that means our value is simply what we add to their perceived self value, this is false, an enslavement of your worth to the worth of someone who wishes they were greater, someone who is insecure within themselves and is trying to offset their negative impact with materials that will be lost to time. No, your worth is what you provide to others in the energy that you leave behind, the waves of future change that you are adding to.

Improving the lives and experiences of those around you will enable others to in turn create positive and good changes themselves, adding to the overall positive changes in the world as a whole. Even if you feel like you are dumping glasses of clean water into a muddy ocean, with enough glasses and enough time those positive actions will lead to positive change. If we simply accept the muddy ocean and in turn dump more more mud into the ocean we are guaranteeing the only future we have is an ocean of solid mud.

Energy is never lost or destroyed, it merely changes shape. For us to stop being parasites we have to stop turning the energy we are responsible for into more mud, we must cleanse the energy we are given and provide as much clean water as we can. For when we die all that will be left after time takes its due is the quality of change we left behind, and in the afterlife, even if the afterlife is the ripples we made, all that we will have is the energy we changed while we lived.

Faith is the belief that our struggle is for something greater, that the energy we create is going to influence a greater change. This is true, for energy is never destroyed, and the energy we bring into this world whether it is effort, thought or emotions will influence the direction of the future for all of eternity.

The only question is if we are being held accountable to a greater power, who gave us this mandate? I am happy to tell you, I don't know. I am not that higher power and since we exist on the electromagnetic spectrum we will never know until we leave our dirt trips behind and transcend onto the transmagnetic plane and see the truth. We are limited by the confines of this mud we move, we are not the higher power in ourselves, we may catch glimpses of it and some of us may even be close to the truth but until we finally move beyond our limitations at the end of our lives no one can say the completely grasp the vastness of eternity and the ultimate complexity of existence.

What we do know is that we must cultivate the best energy possible, leave the world better than we found it physically, expand the understanding of mankind towards the truths that are around us, and support each other so we can reach greater goals together. This is our mandate, this is our truth, this is the reason we exist, this is how we leave a permanent signature on the tapestry that is humanity.

Being a more complete person will allow you to see the incompleteness in others. It doesn't matter why you want to be more complete, by becoming whole you will break your programming.

Poetry of Destiny

We all are a part of an evolving consciousness, that all work towards collective improvement is at our fingertips. We have the tools to evolve humanity further, we can all fail together or we can all evolve together, these are the only choices we have.

We are the physical expressions of the paths towards improvement brought into reality. We must leave behind the ideas that were and accept the realities of what we are that we have found, we cannot let fear, hope, insecurity or comfort hold us back from evolving humanity into what we know what we should become. We can die as parasites or thrive as symbiotes.

You must give up the idea that you are correct, humanity in itself is flawed and as a flawed being we must accept that the only truths that we can accept are the moral beliefs that humanity as a whole shares.

- Everyone is equally flawed, our differing ideas are equally incorrect, this is the only known universal truth.
- Deception is wrong. Without the attempt towards truth we will be forever lost in ignorance.
- Arrogance is wrong. If we cannot accept the flaws within us we cannot find the path to improvement.
- Killing without just cause is wrong. Every living thing adds to our understanding of what is, what was and what should be. Losing a life is losing a facet of understanding.
- Corrupting the innocent is wrong. By damaging a person's connection and not allowing others to grow naturally, we extinguish any revelations that they may bring into the world.
- Selfishness is wrong. Focusing on only improving ourselves is simply feeding our flaws.

- Stealing is wrong. By destroying the order others have built we feed our selfishness at the cost of improvements made by others.

There is nothing wrong with measuring the worth of a person in how much value they bring to the relationship, the problem is when your only definition of worth lies in money and your only concept of value lies in possessions.

The Hypocrisy of Unquestioning Theology

With the universe as vast and complex as it is, it is arrogant, ignorant and a little bit self righteous to believe that there is no greater power than humanity. If we consider that there is a consciousness that is so much bigger and more complex than us it is arrogant, ignorant and a little bit hypocritical to think that we, as flawed beings, completely understand the entirety of our existence and the connections we have to that greater power. We are flawed beings so our understanding must also be flawed, we must accept that our understanding of something greater than ourselves must be even more flawed.

I have yet to meet someone that knows another person so closely and intimately that they know exactly how that person thinks about every subject, knows what that person expects of them at all times, can predict that person's response to any given action and yet we have people of faith generating hatred and violence because their view of what is beyond our understanding differs from someone else.

If our views of those we can touch and see are so far beyond us, how much more incomplete is our understanding of those things that not only can we not touch and see them. But if we could there is no way we would ever be able to comprehend them. There is a place for personal faith in this world, but we cannot say with 100% certainty that the faith of another is incorrect unless we ourselves are that higher power.

There are aspects of faith we know are wrong, faith that leads to actions that harm another person or the world we live in more than inaction would, because that kind of faith would damage the investment any higher power has placed in our world. We all agree with complete certainty that if there is a higher power invested in our lives and the world we live in that they would want us to treat that investment with dignity and respect, to give more to the world around us than we take, to improve the lives of those we come in contact with, to leave the world and everything in it better than we found it.

Faith itself is vital to being a better human. But when that faith does not ask questions, it can drive us to do great good, or great evil.

Faith of something greater, faith in what is beyond us, faith in the potential to be better, these are what leads us to reach for something bigger than our own flaws.

Faith in self, faith in our own perception, faith in our own understanding, faith in the people we choose to follow, is narcissistic for the atheist and sacrilegious for the religious.

Semantics

Love = Cultivating contentment together, aligned by motivation, perception and caring.

Hate = Avoiding sediment or what we assume will build sediment.

Subconscious is how our soul changes our body (feedback)

Community is how our soul directs our body (output)

Connection is how our body change our soul (feedback)

Information is how our body directs our soul (output)

– Output - Body - Change

- Community - Physical - Subconscious

- Output - Soul - Change
- Information -Spirit - Connection

Negatively filled needs (flipped along natural cycle) less change for more effort

- Dependency is when we emotionally fill our mental need for stability. It turns connection into fear.
- Dominance is when we physically fill our emotional need for trust. It turns effort into insecurity.
- Laziness is when we mentally fill our physical need for interaction. It turns thought into discomfort.

Positive impact sediment (completing circle along natural cycle) more change, more energy

- Planning is when we mentally resolve our discomforts while considering connections, turning discomfort into stability.
- Understanding is when we emotionally resolve stress through interaction, turning stress into trust.
- Communication is when we physically address our worry through thought, turning insecurity into security.

Negative impact sediment (pushed along natural cycle)

- Aggression is letting stress control your interactions, can be caused by connection being blocked by depression or limited by isolation. Turns stress into discomfort.
- Paranoia is letting worry control your information, can be caused by efforts being blocked by illness or limited by discomfort. Turns insecurity into stress.

- Anger is letting discomfort control your emotions, can be caused by thought being blocked by fear or limited by stress. Turns discomfort into insecurity. When that discomfort is hunger we call that hangry.

Righteous anger is when another's actions are so terrible that it blocks all energy at once, (causes fear, injury and depression) in these situations any action you can possibly take feels justified.

Energy Musings

Our thoughts, memories and everything connected works by pushing around electromagnetic waves, the same energy as light waves but just in a form our bodies can handle. When light travels in a wave, it changes between positive energy and negative energy so the question is, what is making it change?

If we push a spring down in a negative direction and let go, the energy holding the metal together will push back and move the spring past its resting place until it runs out of energy in the positive direction and the metal pulls it back again. The spring will keep moving back and forth until all the energy that we put into it turns into heat. Like mechanical energy, the electromagnetic energy that defines what life is moves in a wave, switching between positive and negative.

But what is pulling it back? The electrical signals in our minds give this energy a push but what is pulling it back?

The answer is, we don't know what pulls it back because we can only sense the energy, the material does not interact with us at all.

Parallel to the world we experience there is a world that we cannot sense but direct our lives. No human is all knowing and until the day comes where we are released from our physical bodies. We will never truly know what exists just beyond our senses but the energy we create will continue on in both this world and the next.

Productivity and Contentment

Cultivating contentment is flowing all equally, but outside energy is always needed in the system. Most we can reduce our needs is by $\frac{1}{3}$. So (Theoretically) one third of our productivity should go into each aspect for universal balance that builds contentment. To ensure this happens, we can split the labor of each individual equally into each aspect. Example: production is $\frac{1}{3}$ of the economy. $\frac{1}{3}$ of production is manufacturing, [$\frac{1}{3}$ of manufacturing is labor ($\frac{1}{3}$ of labor is physical work, $\frac{1}{3}$ planning, $\frac{1}{3}$ organizing) $\frac{1}{3}$ of manufacturing is research/design ($\frac{1}{3}$ testing, $\frac{1}{3}$ design, $\frac{1}{3}$ research) $\frac{1}{3}$ of manufacturing is logistics ($\frac{1}{3}$ transport, $\frac{1}{3}$ efficiency, $\frac{1}{3}$ connection)].

Also Contentment is about doing the most with the energy we have, so if you want to get the most productivity out of your time or the people you work with you will reduce stress, worry and discomfort as much as possible while trying to balance the work done so it either builds all 3 equally or in ratios that match the strengths/weaknesses of the individuals involved.

With people who have out of balance aspects, it is best to balance the demands of their labor with the strengths of their aspects, but still split their time spent equally between the three.

Productivity is not a financial, motivation, economical (mental, social, physical) problem, but a stress management (sediment) problem.

Essentially wages are compensation for people building sediment, so compensation and work environment should follow the natural flow of energy to address that sediment. Physical labor should be socially constructive. Mental labor should be physically constructive. Social labor should be mentally constructive. By creating a positive environment to address the sediment of the labor we should be able to build contentment in the workplace.