



Atmamun - Kapil Gupta

Jan 6, 2021

Note: While reading a book whenever I come across something interesting, I highlight it on my Kindle. Later I turn those highlights into a blogpost. It is not a complete summary of the book. These are my notes which I intend to go back to later. Let's start!

- For almost every human being in the world, his current existence consists of the following: He has a thought that is generated by his mind. The thought may be true or untrue, logical or illogical, pleasant or unpleasant. This thought produces an emotion within him. It makes him feel a certain way. He then expresses this feeling in the form of a particular reaction or a behavior. That behavior produces a certain tangible consequence. This consequence then produces another thought. And this thought another emotion. Which leads to another feeling. And another behavior. With another consequence. Leading to another thought. This is the state of existence for more than 99.9 percent of the population. This is a reactive, robotic, and programmed existence. This sort of existence has the man living as a naked nerve which twitches to every thought, sensation, and circumstance. This is what I call a Spinal Cord Existence. If you tap the inferior aspect of a person's knee, it produces a kick reflex. Man's entire life is a Kick Reflex. You might ask, What is wrong with this? Another theme that you will discover throughout this book is that it is not a question of right and wrong. It is a question of misery versus peace. Joy versus anguish. And freedom versus imprisonment. If we live in this reflexive way, our lives will necessarily be filled with pain. For the

mind is adept at producing negative thoughts and thus negative feelings and negative behaviors and negative consequences. The self-help movement has created what it considers to be an antidote for this: Positive Thinking.

Positive thoughts still emanate from the same mind. And while they may make one feel more 'positive,' it is imprisonment all the same. And you will forever remain lost in the struggle of turning negative thoughts into positive ones. **Bliss is neither positive or negative. Neither is it neutral. It is a state of Equanimity.** You see, any disturbance to a state of equilibrium is a disruption to that equilibrium. Whether the disruption is in an up direction or a down direction matters not.

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Positive thoughts still emanate from the same mind. And while they may make one feel more 'positive,' it is imprisonment all the same. And you will forever remain lost in the struggle of turning negative thoughts into positive ones. Bliss is neither positive or negative. Neither is it neutral. It is a state of Equanimity. You see, any disturbance to a state of equilibrium is a disruption to that equilibrium. Whether the disruption is in an up direction or a down direction matters not. It is a disruption all the same. But in order to circumvent this issue, man has categorized the disruptions as positive versus negative in order to make himself feel better about it. Nature lives in a state of equilibrium. It does not consider a storm as bad and sunshine as good. It does not categorize. Or judge. Or take sides. Nature exists fully and unabashedly according to its fundamental nature. To understand the fundamental nature of the mind allows one to transcend it. And once the mind is transcended, its powers become available to the human being to use as he pleases. This is man's fundamental nature. This is true freedom.

- **The mind can go anywhere it wishes. You need not go With It.** The mind can entertain any thoughts that it wishes. They have nothing to do with you. For you are not the mind.
- When you look into the mirror, it shows you an image of the person you have habitually come to regard as "yourself." Because you believe this to be "yourself," you have spent your entire life attempting to adorn him, fortify him, protect him, and guide him. If someone says anything against this person, you retaliate. If someone tries to harm this person, you rush to protect him. If he is hungry, you feed him. If he is tired, you allow him to rest. His every little wish is your command. His mundane desires. his need for

approval, his hope for success, these are all your life's work. You work incessantly for him. And you never question it. Even the thought of questioning it puzzles you. It may cause you all sorts of hardship, but you wouldn't have it any other way. The survival and the well-being of this person in the mirror represents the full sum of your life.

- Imagine that I came to you and said that I would take care of this person in the mirror for you. Imagine that I gave you a week's rest. For one full week, I would take care of his needs and attend to all his concerns. From his disappointments about his career to his hope for becoming a success. From his conflict in his family life to his desire for happiness. His hunger, his sleep, his thirst, his sense of peace, you would be free of it all for one week. What would that week be like? There would be no worry, for there would be no one to worry about. There would be no hope, as there would be no one to hope for. There would be no boss to impress. Or family member to apologize to. What would you do with your time? How would you spend the day? I want you to go there now, within yourself. Fear not, I will not give you the luxury of one week. For man has learned to shun such guilty pleasures. I will only give you a few minutes. **For the next few minutes, this person in the mirror is not your concern. Just for a few minutes.** Whether he lives or dies, is tired or hungry, is hopeful or depressed, is not your concern. For the next few minutes, this person in the mirror has no caretaker. His caretaker is taking a break.
- Now that you have done so, I will not ask you how you feel. I will not ask you to tell me what I want to hear. For there is nothing that I want to hear. **Insights are achieved in silence. When they are spoken of, they are poisoned.** Feelings are feelings. And, in many ways, to speak is to lie. For language cannot do justice to the subtleties and nuances of feeling. For your entire life, you have lived as a slave to this person in the mirror. And it has destroyed

your life. This is always the case with slaves. **For there is no state that is more lamentable than the loss of one's freedom.**

- The life that you are currently living is not your real life. Because you are living through the Sheath known as Mind. The mind desires, and you believe that it is you who is desiring. The mind craves one success after another. And you believe that it is you who craves. The mind creates your turmoils, and you set off in a frenzy to clean up its messes, believing that it is you who made them. Your attempt to become a “good person” is an attempt to polish that which is known as ego. And understand this immediately and clearly: The Ego is Not that which says that you are great. It is that which says that you Exist at all! And now we come to the mind's master stroke. The greatest illusion in the history of man. The sleight of hand that has the entire world enchanted and confused. The idea that you exist. This is the one single source of all your problems. This is the genesis of all your turmoils. This is the seed of all your troubles. Allow me to explain. Take for instance a lovely woman named, Naomi Johnson. Naomi believes that she exists as a person called Naomi Johnson. And thus she will beautify Naomi. She will adorn Naomi. She will have dreams for Naomi. She will have plans for Naomi. She will attempt to make Naomi good and helpful and ambitious and mannerly. She will attempt to make Naomi a success. She will attempt to make Naomi a STAR. She will spend Naomi's entire life doing these things. And for the entirety of this life, she will live in abject misery. Why? Because Naomi Johnson doesn't really exist. The mind that is within Naomi has created this persona that her parents named Naomi Johnson. And the creation of this persona is the genesis of all of Naomi's problems. How? Because whatever happens in Naomi's life does not “just happen.” It happens To Her. The breakups, the disappointments, the conflicts, and all of life's endless upheavals happen To Naomi. As a result, she is simply doomed to a life as a piñata, battered by circumstance. And all the psychotherapy, and meditation,

and yoga, and counseling in the world cannot help her. Why? Because even as she pursues such remedies, she pursues them As Naomi Johnson. **If you were to shower with your clothes on, would you ever become clean?** The beautiful human beings that I counsel have the world at their feet. They have great wealth and notoriety and all that the material world can offer. Yet what they seek is the Experience of Bliss. And Peace. And Unbridled Freedom. And this the material world cannot give them. Here is the Ultimate Truth Of Your Life: **Naomi Johnson is not the person she thinks she is. She is the Being That Knows that a persona called Naomi Johnson has been created.** It is the same for you. **And once you Experience This, the troubles of life may continue in full force. But they will no longer have the power to affect you. And this, my friend, will be your Doorway to BLISS.**

- KG: When you look in the mirror, you see a body and a face. You have completely and totally accepted this body and this face as You. You choose to dress this body in a certain way. Groom yourself in a certain way. Part your hair in a certain way. You have opinions about many things. Opinions about politics, society, abortion, finances, hard work, raising children, education, diet, philosophy, religion. You decide to walk a certain way. You decide to carry yourself in a certain way. All of these things are strategically designed to portray the image that you have of yourself. This is what you call Your Personality. All of this is what you call You. And it is what I call the Manufactured Self. Q: By saying that it is manufactured, do you mean that it is false? KG: You ask a wonderful question. Naturally, if something is manufactured, it is not in its original state. But I don't wish to be derogatory or condemning. I want us to walk together on this journey toward an organic understanding. Q: Okay. KG: The problem with manufacturing anything is that it requires continuous maintenance. It requires constant support. It needs to be looked after and checked upon and groomed and trimmed. And

in this way it very much becomes a burden. My backyard consists of patches of lawn bordered by a fence. And behind the fence is a natural wooded area.

The patches of lawn must be constantly and intensely maintained. They must be watered with sprinkler systems and cut with mowers and fertilized and trimmed. The wooded area needs no maintenance. The rains water it. The animals play within it. The wind caresses it. Nature assumes its care. And it is just as beautiful as the carefully manicured lawn. Without any need of

maintenance. Q: That makes perfect sense. But it's almost like you're saying that we should not take care of ourselves. KG: What I'm saying is that because

you have manufactured a self, you have to constantly look after it. Q: How is

my manufactured self not my real self? KG: The vast majority of your ideas, opinions, likes, dislikes, and philosophies were not ones that you were born with. You acquired them like pieces of clothing. They became the scaffolding for this manufactured self. And each day that you awake, you have to jump into the skin of the manufactured self. It is a role that you play. Q: How so?

KG: If someone says something against this self, you feel a powerful need to protect it. If it does not get what it desires, you feel disappointment. If it loses something, you feel sad. If it gains something, you feel happy. And as I'm saying these things, you think that this is normal. And the reason that you think this is normal is because everyone around you also does the same thing. For normalcy is nothing more than a democratic madness. Q: So what should

I do? KG: You ask this question too easily and too quickly, dear friend. I will not allow you to flee from the full weight of the truth through an escape chute. You don't seem to understand how much of a burden this personality, this manufactured self, has become to you. Q: I've felt burdened quite often.

KG: You felt burdened by the weight of some responsibility. But I'm speaking of the burden of having to maintain and tend for this manufactured self. Q:

How does it burden me? KG: Because you constantly seek to satisfy its every wish, you live in constant anticipation. Because you seek to wipe away its

sorrows, you seek desperately for its happiness. Because you seek to maintain its reputation, you are acutely sensitive to the sharp opinions of others.

Everything that you do is done in the interest of its welfare. It has made you a slave. Q: So this manufactured self is responsible for all of my unhappiness?

KG: Who is the person who seeks to be happy? The person that you call You. And who is this You? Your manufactured self. Do you not see? Even the need for happiness is a great burden. You would not have this need if you had no

manufactured self. Q: So what you are saying is the very persona that I'm using to Overcome my problems is actually the Cause of my problems. KG:

That is correct. When the manufactured self is created, problems are as well. The manufactured self is nothing more than one gigantic problem. And man lives his entire life trying to untangle a mess, when all he needs to do is to step out of it. When YOU are born, misery is born. When YOU are born,

burden is born. Q: That would be easy to take the wrong way, wouldn't it?

KG: No question about it. Because most would feel that I'm attacking something about their personality. But what I'm attacking is the very idea of Having a personality. We are slaves to ourselves. And we think that we are free. The greatest freedom that we have is the freedom to walk away from

ourselves. I will say this again: The greatest freedom that we have is the freedom to walk away from ourselves. The day that you walk away from yourself, you no longer feel the need for happiness. For bliss has become yours. Why? Because there is no longer any burden to carry. There is no great master to take care of. You are absolved of your responsibilities. You are now officially off duty. You are free to dance in the fields. And roam in the hills. In becoming nothing, you have gained everything.

- You spend your life chasing Things. You chase after success. You hope for riches. You strive for respect. You value accomplishment. Why? Because you have no choice. The hole within us is so big, the chasm so wide, the emptiness

so unbearable, that we must fill it with something. Nature abhors a vacuum? No sir. Nature nurtures a vacuum. It is man that abhors it. The man who cannot stand being a Nobody will strive to become a Somebody. But as he chases this status, he finds that this Somebody he hopes to create never seems to sustain itself. Therefore, he must keep creating and re-creating this person. But try as he might, he can never make flesh and bone out of it. It remains forever a shadow on the surface of the water. And if he looks back at his life, he wonders what it all amounts to? What do his accomplishments really mean? What have they done for him besides afford him a certain level of comfort and a smattering of applause? To be the best in the world at one's craft is largely a journey into the recesses of one's self, rather than a journey toward a stage. To arrive at one's goal broken and battered and soul-less, no matter how grand the achievement, is to have arrived nowhere. As it is put so beautifully in the bible, What good does it do a man to gain the world and lose his soul? **A man's greatest prize is his own Life. Not the life he creates. Not the life he hopes for. Not the life he manufactures. Not the life he adorns. Not the life he strives for. But the life he was born with.** That deep, nameless, pulsating vibration that spawns breath in his lungs and consciousness within his being. The life that existed before the life he attempted to create.

- Understand this: Hope Destroys! If who you are today is not enough, it is because you don't know who you truly are. And trying to make yourself into Someone will take you even further away from who you fundamentally are. To live a Hope-less life is simply the most glorious life of all. To live as nothing. To hope for nothing. To strive for nothing. The man who lives in this way gains accolades without wanting them. And he becomes a Prince of Mankind. I ask you: Is it not forever better to live as a Prince, rather than as a Pauper?
- If you are happy, don't get too excited, for misery is just around the corner.

And if you are unhappy, fear not, for happiness is on its way. This is the purgatory of man. To live vacillating between opposite poles of emotion. Living in This whilst hoping for That. Loving This whilst hating That. Striving for This whilst receiving That. Must it be this way? Yes! Why? Because the events of the world are precisely this. It can be no other way. Some events will be in your favor. While others will be to your detriment. And you will continue to suffer the friction of both. Is there a way out? There is a way out. But only for a very specific sort of human being. The human being who sees the sine wave for what it is. And cares for it no more! The human being who sees the strings behind the stage. The human being who understands that the events of his life will bring him nothing of any real value, or any lasting bliss. When this sort of human being encounters something auspicious, he will likely feel a surge of excitement. But he will immediately recognize that it is from the mind. And thus his excitement will abate. When he encounters something troubling, he will feel his heart drop. But he will immediately recognize that this too is from the mind. And his disappointment will simply vanish. What this human being will begin to understand is that Life has nothing to offer him. That nature has structured life in such a way that bliss is only available in the most mundane of places: This Very Moment. And nowhere else! That which appears exciting is a charade. That which appears disastrous is as well. We live in a world of shadows and mirages. Nothing is real. Nothing is tangible. Nothing belongs to You. Nothing is under your control. Life is something that is to be Lived rather than manufactured. But the Living can only happen if we live as a lonely traveler passing through. Rather than one who builds his home and settles down within it.

- If there is one truth that I have learned, it is that unless you find it inside of Today, you will never find it inside of Tomorrow. Your life will become a benediction the day that you stop searching. For as long as you continue to

search, you will keep sacrificing Today. For as long as you continue to search, you will be bound to the idea that there is something to find. For as long as you continue to search, you will become in love with the search. The Bible says, Seek and ye shall find. But perhaps the seeking it is speaking of is not the seeking in the world. But a seeking within yourself. You see, **once you seek inside, you no longer have the need to find. The search will be over.** A man who pursues his passions and experiences his life with complete boldness has no need to search. He simply lives. He walks toward no horizon. For he has already seen beyond it. This, my friend, is the benediction. To abandon the world. And gain the universe.

- What is the meaning of life? This is on the lips of millions of human beings. And every one of these human beings is an adult. Have you ever heard a child ask this question? The one who asks the question is the one who has not tasted life. The one who asks this question is the one who looks at life as a means to a particular end. For meaning is an intellectual concept. Intellect affords a sense of survival in the modern world. But survival is survival. And living is living. The child who twirls in the rain has no purpose for doing it. **The child who runs through the field does not run to get somewhere.** The running and the jumping and the playing is not done for meaning or purpose. It is an expression of the elation within. **It is not done For joy. It is done Out Of joy.** You can try to organize your life into neat and organized sections. You can label it and categorize it. You can arrange it in any way you wish. But the minute you turn your head, it will become amorphous once again. You cannot contain it any more than you can contain the ocean. A mountain breeze has no meaning. A floating cloud has no meaning. A surge of emotion has no meaning. A glorious idea has no meaning. Successes. Accolades. Achievements. Feelings. None of these things have meaning. Certainly, man will ascribe meaning to them. Man will slice it this way and that and look at it

from all angles in order to Reduce It into a meaning. But this is only because man is not interested in what IS. He is only interested in what he can Make Out Of It. And this is why the bulk of humanity lives a Clinical existence. It reeks of antiseptic and medicines, rather than undefined aromas. You can create anything you wish In your life. But you will never make anything Out Of life. For life will always be life. Meaningless. Innocent. And Indefinable.

- Buddhist monks spends weeks creating an intricately patterned mandala with painstaking detail. Millions of grains of sand are required. And an unwavering focus to exact every detail. And when it is complete is a beautiful work of art. What do the monks do after the mandala is complete? Do they cherish it? Do they put it into a frame? Or save it as a gallery piece with the other mandalas? No. They destroy it. This is their way of teaching themselves impermanence. And as strange as it may sound, there is joy in freeing oneself from the attachment to his own creation. For attachment is the greatest bondage in existence. Climb the greatest mountain. Achieve all the accolades in the world. Become the greatest in your field. Achieve fame. Earn millions. And you will enjoy every bit of the journey, if and only if you understand that none of it means anything. When something has meaning, it becomes work. When something is meaningless, it becomes play. The joy that you experience in honing your craft is the greatest reward. Spending your life exactly the way you wish to spend it is a wonderful liberation. This is what sinks into the heart. This is the true experience. And understand this: life's nectar lies in experience, rather than reward. Rewards fade from memory. Experiences remain forever. A life of wild abandon is the greatest life. Leave purpose to the wind. Give yourself to your life. Surrender yourself to your inspirations. Achieve all the greatness in the world. And be willing to drop it without hesitation. This is a life of joy. This is a life of freedom.
- Life has never had any meaning. The meaning that one finds in life is the

meaning he ascribes to it. Life is simply a joke. An absurdity. A non-linear, haphazard, and unpredictable trail that is fertile for the imagination of hallucinatory human beings. Life is a Rorschach. You can see in it what you wish. It is a mirage. Always tempting us to see some glimmering landscape on the horizon. If you deconstruct life, and break apart all of the pieces and look at it, bit by bit, you realize that it is not what you thought it was. Instead of pages of prophecy and significance and biography, you find the intelligible gibberish of an infant tapping on the keys of a typewriter. You've been chasing a ghost, my friend. When things were going well, life had no intention of treating you right. And when things were sour it had no intention of treating you ill. The events that surround us just surround us. There is no grand plan. And there never was one. There is just an open field upon which to play. By all means, build your house. But understand that it will be a house of cards. By all means, make your mark. But understand that someone will one day erase it. By all means, change the world. But understand that after you die, it will change back. I am not a pessimist. Nor am I an optimist. I am a seeker. My way is the way of truth. In any form in which I can find it. I will tell you firmly that that which I know pales in comparison to that which I do not. But this much I know: Life is not what you think it is. What is life? Life is the leaf that falls and tumbles onto a bed of leaves. Life is the dog that barks in the distance. Life is a breeze which blows through your hair. Life is the very thing that you ignore every day. Life is the most insignificant event of the hour. Life is not a series of events. Rather it is the substrate in which the events take place. We have a habit of looking at life in a certain way. We have a habit of looking at it in a good or bad light depending upon the nature of the events that we experience. But events do not color life any more than smoke colors the sky. Perhaps the greatest realization we can have is that we are free to do whatever we wish. But in order to remain in this freedom, we must discard the notion of significance. My friend, there was a day that you were

not here. And there will soon be a day when you are no longer here. And once you realize this, you will understand that all there is left to do is play. Play with your work. Play with your kids. Play with your wife. Play with your surroundings. Play with your happiness. Play with your sorrows. Play with all of those things that you consider to be your miseries and misfortunes. There is no linear path. There is no destination on the horizon. If you wish to create one, play with that as well. If you attempt to Make A Life, you will miss it. If you attempt to Create Significance, you will lose your freedom. And if you lose your freedom, what life is there left to live?

"It does not matter!!"

- To intellectualize life is to miss it completely. **If you understand that life has no meaning, the events of your life will not affect you.** You will move through the world with ease. For you will have acquired the wisdom to live life as a poetry, rather than a stale and confining prose.
- **Prescriptions such as positivity, mindfulness, optimism, and happiness are traps.** They will keep you invested in an activity, an undertaking, a “doing” of some sort. If you try to be mindful, you will never leave the mind. If you chase after happiness, you will attract unhappiness. If you convert negative thoughts into positive ones, you will be converting for the rest of your life. Peace is not known Eventually. It must be had Now! **No prescriptions.** Seek Truth No tricks. No potions. No techniques. **Simply Understanding. Simply seeing the game you’ve been playing for your entire life.** This and this alone will lead you where you have always wanted to go. Human Beings Were Not Meant To Be Workers There is a famous story of a lion cub who lost his way and found a group of sheep.
- Your “job” may indeed earn you a living, but it will not earn you a life. It may put food on your table, but it will not nourish you. It may provide you with drink, but it will not quench your thirst. It will simply allow you to survive. And, my dear friend, you were meant for so much more than that.

- **Wealth, success, and luxury do not harm a man. What harms a man is the Attachment to these things.** If a man becomes greatly successful and accumulates a treasure chest full of wealth, he is not the worst for it. But if he is attached to these things, he is doomed. And what is rarely mentioned is also this: The man who is Attached to the idea of achieving spirituality is equally doomed. **Attachment is poison.** Attachment is the source of all misery. Attachment to money, fame, ego, success, spirituality. Even attachment to family and friends. Attachment is the antithesis of life. Attachment is the great death. A death greater than death itself.
- I do not condemn a man for having a job. I chastise him for believing that this is all he is worth. I call him out for his unwillingness to examine his interiority and discover that he is a Prince of the earthly kingdom. There are glorious talents that are unique only to You. For nature does not make carbon copies. And schools and societies insist upon nothing but carbon copies. One day you will die. And when you are in your final days, how will you feel when you realize that you spent your life as a “worker?” How will you feel when you realize that you have wasted your entire life never having explored the talents that were meant only for You? How will you feel when you discover that you have left your riches on the table? How will you feel when you realize that you sold yourself for a shilling? You are fortunate. For there is still time. What will you do with it?
- Nature created you as an original. Originals are invested with glorious talents. **Discover the talent within yourself that nature has been waiting for you to show to the world. You are a creator.** And you always have been. Give yourself the permission to create. For if you do not, the world will take advantage of you being ignorant to this fact. And it will put you to “work!”

- Success arises from innocence or from a sort of knowing. It arises from innocence when an individual is so devoted to his craft that he gives himself to it, day and night. Not because he wishes to make himself a success. But because the craft is quite literally a part of him. He simply cannot imagine doing anything else with his life. He feels that he is born to do it. He feels that this is what he was made for. And because of this intimacy with his craft and the innocence with which he approaches it, his skill level soars. And success comes running to him. Then there are those who just know that they will be a success in their field. They can feel it. It is in their bones. They can see it. They can taste it. Not making it is simply not possible. Not because they talk themselves into it. Or because they think “positively.” They genuinely scoff at the idea of not making it. This is not artificial. They truly feel this way in their heart of hearts. The majority live in a world of hope and striving. They listen to the clichés and the endless motivational phrases that society tosses about. Hard work, striving, practice with a purpose, fake it till you make it, believe in yourself, walk the walk . . . These things are meant for those who need to be helped at every turn. They know within themselves that they are likely not going to make it. And in order to absolve themselves of this feeling, they do everything on the “outside” in order to make them feel differently on the inside. I once wrote a discourse titled Hard Work Is No Excuse. Hard work has become a scapegoat of sorts. It is a game that people play with themselves. They work “hard” in order to prove to themselves that When they don’t make it, it just wasn’t meant to be. Because if they don’t make it Even With all of that hard work, what else could they have done? **Hard work never made anyone a success. It may have played a catalytic role.** But it was never the key to their success, regardless of what society says. It may have appeared this way. But it just isn’t so. We have evidence before us all across the world

of those who spend decades “working hard,” but go nowhere. Opponents of this claim will state that it is because they didn’t work “smart.” Or that they didn’t “practice with a purpose.” I myself was given to such ideas years ago. But life and my own experiences have taught me the truth. **Knowing comes first. Devotion and love come first. Hard work MAY come later.** And for some people it never really comes at all. I do not mean to suggest that one sits on the couch and success comes to him. What I am saying is that when endless striving and the toil and sweat are seen in the vicinity of great success, they are more methodology than the central key. The man who knows that he will be a success makes “hard work” work for him. To him it is a tool in his arsenal. The man who does not know Works For hard work. He Relies upon hard work as the engine and the vehicle to get him there. And this latter instance rarely works. The inside always trumps the outside. Knowing trumps belief. **Innocence and sincerity are king.** The one who knows just knows. The one who doesn’t know looks at “the odds.” The one who hopes for success creates backup plans, “just in case.” The one who knows has no need for a backup plan. Because he simply cannot imagine doing anything else with his life, he simply has no choice but to succeed.

- You see, society is against the creation of legends. This society is not meant for legends. It does not breed legends. It breeds clones. It breeds sheep. It values conformity. And hails mediocrity. If you seek to be a legend in your field, it will help you to understand that you will have to be comfortable being an outcast. For you will not fit into this society. And if you do fit neatly into this society, there is no way that you will be a legend. Society does not support anyone who goes against it. It only supports the masses. It supports common people with common thinking. And there is perhaps no greater contributor to mediocrity than the concept of “school.” For education is one thing. School is another. **If you seek to be a legend, bring to the world something that it has never before seen.** There is something unique in you.

something that it has never before seen. There is something unique in you.

For nature makes one-of-a-kind creations. Society makes clones.

- If you think about something as you are looking at it, you will not have truly seen it. Thought stands as a barrier between You and The Experience. When one Experiences, there is no thought. When there is no thought, there is no mind. When there is no mind, there is Atmamun.
- **If you are truly Sincere about achieving Freedom and Bliss, drop all techniques.** For a technique will leave you bound to technique. The How leads only to the How. It never leads to the destination of the How. Stop playing games. Drop all solutions. Abandon all methodologies. Drop all slogans. Do not jump on the bandwagon of ready-made solutions. For they will only take you further from the truth. And they will keep you entrenched in misery and bondage forever. If you are truly sincere about achieving Freedom and Bliss, you will look directly at that which is preventing you from realizing them. Ask yourself, what precisely is preventing you from having Freedom TODAY! Ask yourself, what precisely is keeping you from Bliss right now! **Atmamun is a path away from All Paths.** It is a journey toward Questions rather than Answers. Drop these disingenuous solutions . . . **Become a lone warrior** . . . And set off on a journey to the place within yourself that you have forever ignored.
- There is simply no greater enslavement in the history of man than man's enslavement to his own mind.
- When your thoughts feel like imposters. And your ideas seem like noise. And your preferences fail to move you. And your pride is easily dropped. You will experience the state of No-Mind. When you lose yourself in the activity you are involved in, and that which seemed to be an insignificant chore now seems like the only thing in the world, you will experience the state of No-

Mind

- Might sitting for twenty minutes of meditation give you a sense of peace? Certainly. For Those Twenty Minutes! For when you resume your daily activities, you will succumb once again to your inner turmoil. Potions only work for a very short time. They are never a permanent solution. If you are serious about truly accomplishing something in this domain, understand this:

Meditation Will Get You Nowhere. Meditativeness Will Give You The Keys To Your Inner Kingdom.

The unserious man puts in his obligatory twenty minutes of meditation in order to fulfill his daily quota. But the one who is truly serious transforms every single thing that he does into a meditation. In short, he becomes Meditative. Brushing his teeth is a meditation. Putting on his clothes is a meditation. **Driving to work is a meditation. Losing himself in his work is a meditation. Talking to his children is a meditation. Kissing them goodnight is a meditation. Washing the dishes is a meditation. Tapping keys on his computer keyboard is a meditation. Everything Is A Meditation. And when everything is a meditation, you have become Meditative. And when you have become meditative, there is nothing that is done reflexively. And when nothing is done reflexively, it is done perfectly. This, my friend, is the key to human perfection.**

Being
fully
in the
moment,
Do any
thing
with
full
intent

- The meditation that the world is taught to practice is all about the “meditator.” It is about the individual actively engaging in the practice of meditation. As such, it is a Doing. But the truth is that exploration of the self is a subtle realm. It cannot be approached in a fashion similar to common tasks. In this realm, the greatest currency is Sincerity. And the greatest tool is Surrender. When any artist has had the performance of their life, it was because they happened to dissolve into the performance. They simply disappeared. And because they disappeared, there was no interference. As

such, it became a meditative experience. For as long as there is a “meditator”

who is “meditating” nothing will happen. Once the meditator disappears, all things suddenly become possible.

- Why do you hanker for world peace? What does peace among nations have to do with you? There is so much turmoil in your own life, and so many fires in your day to day existence, of what concern to you are the fires that go on around the world? Man is very clever. He attaches himself to high-minded ideals in order to avoid doing the work that needs to be done. He convinces himself that he is worldly and progressive and magnanimous by hanging on the coat-tails of societal principles. All the while, his own life lies in shambles. The greatest thing that you can give to the world is peace in your very own life.
- Man loves nothing more than to avoid the immediate. He loves nothing more than to abandon the practical in exchange for the romantic. He continually flows toward the path of least resistance. And it is for this reason that he achieves nothing worthwhile in his life. Drop this idea of world peace and set off on a journey toward inner peace! Forget world hunger and for the first time in your life seek to satisfy the deepest hungers you’ve had for yourself! World peace is simply a manifestation of the lack of one man’s peace. And for as long as man seeks to “correct” the world, he will gain nothing and lose himself.
- The way to help the world is to help yourself. Not in the form of indulgence, but in the form of self-examination. Not in the form of gluttony, but in the form of self-reflection. Man’s greatest gift to man is also his greatest gift to himself: The gift of becoming Whole.

- You see, a child is a mirror. The most stark and unflinching mirror in

existence. And when the parent looks at his child, subconsciously he sees his own inadequacies. And in seeing his own inadequacies, he cannot bear the pain of them. As a result, he attributes the inadequacies to the child. And it is at this juncture that all the troubles begin. For it is at this juncture that he decides to do something that will change the course of both of their lives: He attempts to Fix the child! He attempts to correct him. And mend him. And improve upon him. And in doing so, he destroys him. A parent doesn't have the wisdom to see beyond his own ego. And he becomes intoxicated with this newly granted power. This new found control. And this becomes his undoing. For he abuses his power. And assumes omniscience over the child's life. He teaches him "lessons." And tells him what to think. And indoctrinates him into religions. He has taken this child who has come into this world colorless, and painted him with the colors of his religion and his nation's flag. If a man or a woman is wise, they will look at their children in a completely different way. They will stop teaching and begin listening. Why? Who is the most joyful person in any family? The small child? Or the grown adult? In the family unit, there is the adult who is miserable and disappointed and stressed and confused. And there is a child who is energetic, full of life, joyful, and playful. Let me ask you something: Who should learn from whom? Should the parent teach the child to be miserable? Or should he learn from the child how to be joyful? The child sees everything as new. He sees everything as if it is the first time he has ever seen it. The adult hasn't seen a new thing in years. Should the adult teach the child the academic and stale information about this old and uninteresting thing? Or should he learn from the child what he himself has been missing for all these years?

- If you wish to raise wise children, stop being a parent. Abandon the idea of ownership. For whatever a man owns, he destroys. Do you not see that you treat other people's children far better than you treat your own? Why?

Because you don't own them. But the children that you own are the very ones that you take for granted.

- Whatever a parent does in the name of his or her child, he is really doing for himself.
- Imagine that tomorrow morning, your child was going to leave the home. Imagine that you were going to drive him to the airport. And as you were driving him to the airport you sat in complete disbelief that this time actually came. Somewhere within the common sense part of your brain you knew that this day was going to come. Didn't you? Yes and no. You knew it Theoretically. But it was so far off that you never considered it a true possibility. Imagine that you are driving him to the airport NOW. You are thinking of all the years that have passed. The nuances, the joys, the quiet times, and the conflicts. And you suddenly have this urge to rewind the clock. You have this painfully desperate wish to have just two years of that time returned to you. Even two months . . . But the universe says to you, "I'm truly sorry. But you've had your time. And now that time is gone." What you wouldn't give for another shot. What you wouldn't give for a handful of borrowed time. You think to yourself, "My goodness . . . All the time that you wasted. So many years flushed down the drain." And now it is time to reap the benefits and the sorrows of what you spent decades planting. All of those times when it was All About YOU. All of those times that you sat on your pedestal and preached your silly doctrines. All of those times that you were so busy "teaching" that you didn't have the time to Listen. Being a parent is, in many ways, a burden. The burden of possessing too much power. And any human being that is given too much power, even though he may have the best of intentions, ends up abusing it. I now bring you back to the present. You now have the time that you begged for. What the universe couldn't give to you, I'm giving to you now. And as you run forward into this rediscovered life, I hope that you will be acutely cognizant of the fact that The Day Is Coming!

hope that you will be healthy, vigorous, and happy, and that the day is coming.

Parents Don't Really Love Their Children Do you love your children? Love is such an easy word, isn't it? Four letters that just slip off the tongue. It's used just as often as hello and goodbye. And frankly, in the context of modern life it means about as much. If you have children, you don't love them. You control the times they sleep and wake. You control the things they say, the manner in which they say them, and even the tone with which they are said. You plan their future for them. You make them ask your permission for the most menial privileges. You control their behavior by withholding your affection (I will not call it love). You tell them not to embarrass you. You have free reign to speak to them anyway you like because you know they will be quick to accept your apology. While you are slow to accept theirs. There is so little resistance, so little caution, when you speak to them because you are the King and they are the servants. **Until the day comes when they are ready to leave home. And for the first time in your life you realize that it is you who now stands begging them not to leave.** The problem with being a parent is that there is too much power. And it is in the nature of human beings to abuse any power that they have been given unchecked. You treat them the way you do, not because you feel that you should. But because you Can! You treat them the way you do because you are lost in yourself. You are lost in your own little world of conflicts that have lived with you for years. You do not love them. Not because you don't wish to. But because you have not yet come to that moment in your life when you see your life as meaningless. And meaningless it is. When your life becomes meaningless. When you can live, instead of asking from life, you will have the capacity to give love. And it will look far different than it does now. The fundamental tenet of love is Freedom. The one who gives love has no need to control. He sees the humanity in the human being. And he loves him for who he is. He has no need to meddle. For how can one meddle with perfection? And, on a practical level, if some rules need to be set for the well-being of the child, they are set. But they are set in

clay rather than stone. And they are set with the child rather than against him. For your entire life, you feel that you have given so much to your children. But you have failed to give them that which they have craved from the moment they were born. They did not need you to buy them things. They did not need for you to take them places. **They did not need for you to raise them or teach them. What they needed was for you to be so madly in love with them, that they would never feel the need to leave you.** What they needed was for you to look into their eyes and see creation. What they needed was for you to give your entire self to them, and keep your mind to yourself. There is still time . . . Despite all that you have done, they will still accept you. Do not kiss them on the cheek. Or tell them your lies about loving them. Or fill them with your high-minded advice. **Lose yourself in their eyes. And fall completely in love with who they are.** Allow them the privilege of feeling that they are worthy of such love. Allow them the intoxication of feeling that they are perfect beings. In losing yourself in their eyes you will give them the love that they have always given to you. And nothing will need to be said. For what sort of love is a love that can be reduced into words?

- Adults have turned into parents. And children have become their slaves. The problem with parents is they think that they know. Perhaps they once knew. But that which they once knew is long gone. And that which was worth knowing has long been forgotten. The parent lives in the world of yesterday. He hopes for tomorrow. The child has no hope. For him, tomorrow is an illusion. The child lives. The parent dreams. The child is raw. The parent is calculated. The child is spontaneous. The parent is rehearsed. The child lives. The parent makes a life. If there is someone to be inspired by, who should it be? The one who is conditioned? Or the one who is free? If there is someone to learn from, who should it be? The one who searches for answers? Or the one who has no need for them?

- **You do not live in the real world. You live in the world of Mind. You live in the world of Thought.** Understand what I am about to say. And understand it clearly. For it is not a sleight against you. It is simply the unadulterated truth: You Are A Schizophrenic. Your existence is such that you live your entire day within a cocoon of ceaseless thought. Your mind rambles endlessly. It produces thoughts. Thoughts produce feelings. And you react to those feelings. And this entire escapade occurs within You. There is no reality to speak of. It is only the semblance of reality. You hear voices. And your entire life is lost in a frantic quest to quell some voices and accentuate others. This is the plight of all humanity. You are not unintelligent. You Are Simply Asleep. What does it mean to be Asleep? It means that reality is lost upon you. You live forever in thoughts of past and future. You hope. You dream. You lament. You ponder. You never deal with What Truly Is. You deal only with what your Mind Tells You What Is. As a result, you are a walking zombie. You drive to work, and you don't remember how you got there. You place your keys on the nightstand and you don't remember placing them there. You speak a dozen words to your neighbor and you don't remember speaking them. You live your entire life in a state of Eventually. You live forever looking deep into the distant horizon. And every ship that crawls upon the horizon generates a hope in you. A hope that this is the ship you've been waiting for. And if this is not your ship, then you await another. And as you wait, your life passes you by.
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- In working with celebrity clients, for example, I have found that it is almost always the case that they spend their careers chasing something. But upon acquiring it they are filled with the need to begin a new chase. The world thinks they have everything. But they themselves feel a sense of emptiness. Upon completing their ascent to the top of the mountain, they believe they will see a vista of Truth. But, in fact, what they often discover is an endless landscape of mountain ranges. This is the predicament of all humanity. Human beings have become accustomed to chasing mirages. And this is why their thirst is never quenched. And they have chased for so long that they have become accustomed to the chase.
- If you are alive you will have troubles. This will never end. You will have them until your dying day. It doesn't matter how you deal with it, or how you look

at it, or turn lemons into lemonade or any such silliness. Trouble is trouble. Problems are problems. And they will be at your throat for as long as you live.

Almost every single day of your life there will be a running soap opera of some sort. Perhaps a new problem or one that keeps recurring. And the most intuitive thing to do is to try to resolve the problem. To put an end to the soap opera. But this doesn't work. Why? Because although you try to end the soap opera with one hand, you start a new one with the other. You don't have any real desire to end your soap operas. You can't live without them. You enjoy them. They add meaning to your life. They are like pieces of your jewelry. They play a significant part in your life. You only pretend to not want them. You Relish your problems. And this is why they never go away. You will make certain of this. You enjoy the times of sorrow. You feel a sense of comfort when you cry. Wallowing in guilt is a delicacy. Playing the victim is a luxury. If someone tried to take these things away from you, they would have a fight on their hands. All your problems, your disappointments, your guilt, your worries, your miseries, your pain, your sorrow, your apprehensions, and anxieties could disappear in an instant. But where would that leave you? Who would you be without them? What would you do with your time? I am not saying that you Should let go of these things. I am saying that they exist because you invite them. And since this wasn't enough to muddy the circumstances of your life, you have now added a new level of complexity by stating that you want to get rid of them. This will keep you busy forever. And this is what you are seeking to do. Human beings have a habit of creating problems for themselves in order to add meaning to their lives. And the reason they seek meaning is because they have not lived life at all.

- Man is not searching for happiness. He is running from sadness. He believes that happiness is the opposite of sadness. When, actually, there are only shades of difference between them. Happiness and sadness are moods.

Moods are a byproduct of thought. And thought is the very constitution of the mind. The unenlightened man thinks, and he then responds to the feeling which arises from the thought. And then matters become even more complex. He begins to have a thought about the thought. And he begins to have an opinion about the feelings. He categorizes his feelings into likes and dislikes. And he attempts to find ways to cultivate the good feelings and avoid the bad ones. Thus begins his frantic search for “happiness.”

- **Happiness and misery are different segments of the same wave. Neither of them will benefit you. Bliss is the abandonment of the search for happiness.** And the abandonment of the search for pleasure. For this will return you to the moment that you forever seek to escape.
- Do you want instant bliss? I will not keep you in suspense. I will give you the secret right at the beginning. Understand that when I reveal it to you, you will say that you already know it. But I will argue fiercely that you do not. I will argue that you know it in your head. But you do not know it in your heart. The knowing of the head is for cocktail parties. The knowing in the heart is for transformation. Are you ready for the secret to instant bliss? Here it is: **You Are Going To Die!** This is not a theoretical understanding. Or some far off possibility. It is the heartfelt realization that stabs a man square in the heart. It is the grip of fear that ensnares his entire waking moment. It is the image that fills the entire screen of his mind. When he finally realizes that he is going to Die! Until we learn this, life is an endless stream of events. Until we learn this, we will live within the illusion of an Abundance Of Time. And that which is in abundance is Never valued. Nature should be more kind to man. It should subject man to a near-death experience at least once every six months. **Just to remind him that His Time Is Running Out.**
- To remind him that this paper existence that he lives is about to Whither. To remind him not to get too comfortable. To remind him not to take his life

Your
existence
does not
matter!!

seriously, for it is only on Lease. To remind him that every “grand achievement” and every bit of respectability and every drop of his so-called reputation is Going To Fall As Common Dust. It is said that Alexander The Great once met an Indian sage who asked him, “Alexander, what if you were walking in the desert, dying of thirst, and I had a bottle of water? What would you be prepared to give me for that bottle of water?” To which Alexander replied, “I would be willing to give half my kingdom for that bottle of water.” The Indian sage said, “What if that deal was not acceptable to me?” Alexander said, “Then I would be willing to give you my entire kingdom.” The Indian sage replied, “You are a very silly man. Devoting your entire life to waging wars and conquering lands. All for a bottle of water.” We are even sillier than Alexander. For at least Alexander had a life-and-death excuse for craving the bottle of water. We have refrigerators full of water, yet we waste our lives seeking an extra drop. Why do we do this? Because our situation is not as clear to us as it was for Alexander. Alexander knew precisely what he craved. He knew exactly what he was thirsty for. The sage’s question had defined the problem so perfectly for him, that the solution became clear. Our problem is that although we thirst, we do not know what exactly we are thirsting for. As a result, we wander through life grasping at shiny and colorful things hoping to quench our thirst. But the things we find never do the job. The paths that we walk are circular rather than linear. And as a result, we go nowhere. The elixirs we drink are filled with salt. And thus we remain thirsty. The dreams we have do often materialize, but then they lead only to more dreams. We cry in the quiet of our room. Wondering how to escape from our plight. And the more we attempt to escape from it, the more we become ensnared by it.

- The lonely and thirsty wanderer in the desert is in a far more enviable situation, is he not? His life is simple. He has only one need. And once he gets it, he is content. But may that man never leave the desert. Though he may not realize it, the bare open expanse of desert is his only salvation. Why? Because

if he trades the wilds of the desert for the paved roads of civilized life, his life will become immediately more complex. Where he once had only one need, he will now have hundreds. Where he once thirsted only for water, he will now thirst for everything under creation. And in doing so, he will become a far more pitiful creature than he ever was in the desert.

- Life made a mistake with human beings. It overestimated our ability to see The Truth. **The truth is that we are only here for a short while.** Yet the calendar on the wall displays days from here until eternity. The watch winds up instead of down. This is complete deception, is it not? The only worthwhile watch in the world is not the one which counts Up, but the one which counts Down. Not the watch which tells you what time It Is. But the watch which tells you how much time you Have Left. To know the very day that you are going to die. And to have a watch which tells you how much time remains in your life. That is a life-changing watch!
- **The most cataclysmic mistake of your entire life is believing that you have time.** You have become so incredibly comfortable in this well-worn life of yours. There is an oval depression right in the center of it, where you nestle into it. There is so little time. But you are so accustomed to hearing from science fiction movies that tell you that the end is coming that you have become numb to it. Intellectually, you Know that you are only here for a short time. You Know that your days are numbered. But intellectual knowing is only good for Trivial Pursuit. Intellectual knowing does not change your life. Do you know that your days are numbered? You will likely reply with a reflexive and meaningless “yes.” But if you truly know that your days are numbered, how many days do you think you have left? How many years? How many months? If I tell you that you might have Zero days left . . .
- If you knew that you were going to die tomorrow, today would be the most blissful day of your life. All things would immediately explode into

crucial day of your life. All things would immediately explode into

perspective. The insignificant elements of your life would immediately drop

away. Because you would no longer have the luxury of time. Man is by nature an eleventh hour creature. It is only when he is threatened with everything that he decides to do anything. Break through the illusion that you have time. See all of the names in the obituaries and the cemeteries and KNOW that YOU are next! This will pluck you from your complacency. And force you to look at the things in your life that are most immediate and most in need of attention. Is there anything more important in your life than living in bliss? Then understand that time is not your friend. Understand that you have a finite number of breaths left in your lungs. And with each passing one, you come closer to death. We are all quite literally DYING. And this more than anything else will keep us close to LIFE.

- **Anger is not a form of self-defense. It is a manifestation of inner conflict.** And understand this: ALL Conflict Is Self-Conflict. You need not worry about the other. You need not attempt to change the other. You need not make the other see your way. You need not the apology of the other. Why? Because There Is No Other! You see, if someone calls you an idiot, something within you at least partially entertains or accepts the idea that you are an idiot. This idea that you may be an idiot, in turn, causes you to feel very uneasy about yourself. And this uneasiness is manifested as anger. The person calling you an idiot simply set the stage and created the opportunity for you to examine how you felt about yourself. And when you did not like what you saw internally, you reacted with anger externally. The anger, in this example, is simply a manifestation of the inner conflict of entertaining the possibility that you are an idiot and disliking the fact that you are entertaining it in the first place. I will state categorically that if within yourself there was no possibility that you were an idiot, anger simply would not arise.

- We believe that our responses are to people and situations. And the reason that we believe this is because of the temporal relationship between the response and the inciting person or event. But in understanding that our emotional responses come from entertaining the possibility that the criticism is valid, we will begin to examine the source of this self-criticism, rather than the source which provoked the emotional response. If we understand that the mind levels undue criticism by its very nature, we will begin to discover the root of the problem. If we come to terms with our own strengths and misgivings, we cannot be bothered by anyone or anything. And imagine what your life would be like if you learned to live in this way.
- The reason that you are the way you are is because, on some level, it is okay with you to be the way you are. To give yourself the permission to be the way you are, and also the freedom to lament about it is a great luxury. And it is a luxury that will never allow you to know life. Change is cosmetic. For he who changes, changes back. Transformation is permanent. And it begins with a decision. Not a decision to acquire, but a decision to lose. What about yourself would you like to lose? What are the things in your life and outlook that you would like to completely abandon? I will warn you. It will not be easy. For you are emotionally tied to your destructive habits. You are enmeshed within them. And as you tear away the habits, you will also tear away parts of yourself. And while you will certainly rejoice at seeing the habits go, will you also rejoice at seeing those parts of you float away? My friend, you will not get a true feel of the ocean with one foot firmly on the sand. You must dive into the depths. Become saturated with the new possibility. And it is only then that you will acquire a new skin. To become the human being you've always wanted to be, you must be willing to walk away from the human being you've become.

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