

# **A Little Book To Help You Get A Lot Of Help**

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## **The Guest House**

By *Rumi*

This being human is a guest house.  
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,  
some momentary awareness comes  
as an unexpected visitor.  
Welcome and entertain them all!

Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,  
who violently sweep your house  
empty of its furniture,  
still treat each guest honorably.  
He may be clearing you out  
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice,  
meet them at the door laughing,  
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,  
because each has been sent  
as a guide from beyond.

—

You might be familiar with the iconic ad campaign series "**The Most Interesting Man in the World**" for *Dos Equis* Beer. The protagonist, portrayed

by Jonathan Goldsmith, is depicted as a man of many accomplishments, exuding charm and wit in a series of adventurous and humorous scenarios. The underlying message is clear: the most interesting man drinks Dos Equis Beer, and by association, so should you. These ads have captivated audiences with their portrayal of a man with an extraordinary lifestyle.

Now, let's reimagine this concept in your own world.

Picture your meeting with the most interesting person in the world. You'd anticipate a unique and memorable experience. If asked to identify such a figure, you might name legends like Sachin Tendulkar in cricket, Serena Williams in tennis, Michael Jordan in basketball, Oprah Winfrey in media, Warren Buffet in investing or business titans like Bill Gates, Jeff Bezos, and Elon Musk. It could even be one of your spiritual gurus. These individuals have all achieved remarkable success in their respective fields.

You may have a fan-boy or a fan-girl moment during that meeting. You may even be nervous and forget to ask the questions that you were so well prepared for.

But now, let's switch gears.

Instead of "the most interesting person", envision meeting "the most **interested** person" in the world.

## **The First Meeting**

You may still be nervous, but for a different reason – uncertainty around what to expect and how to approach the meeting. It's understandable because statistically you would have met more people trying to be interesting than the other way around.

First and foremost, the "most interested person" in the world would make you very comfortable with yourself. Just the way he or she greets you will make you let your guard down. The warmth in that smile will make you feel at ease. You know in the first few seconds that you can be yourself in this conversation – there is no need for any pretense. As the meeting progresses, you might even wonder if this really is the first meeting? The camaraderie makes you think and feel that you are meeting a long-lost friend.

This person would be incredibly engaging, deeply curious, and wishes to understand your triggers, hopes, goals, dreams, fears, and motivations. He or she would want to know about your journey so far – how you got to where you are today. They may want to know the key inflection points in your life. They may be curious about the important people who have touched and shaped your thinking and worldviews. The list goes on and on.

The conversation would be endlessly fascinating. In a world dominated by “Look at me” people, it’s refreshing to engage with the “I see you” person.

What would you need to do to prepare and, mainly, to *deserve* meeting the most interested person in the world?

Surprisingly, *not much*.

Why?

Because everyone (yes, everyone including *you*) is interesting in their own unique way, and this person has the skill to uncover and highlight your most intriguing qualities. He or she knows how to extract that “special sauce” out of you - after all, he or she is “the most interested person” in the world for a reason.

Your only responsibility is *to be open and engaging*. Answer his or her questions thoughtfully and avoid shutting down the conversation. Think of it as a dance where your partner leads, and you follow without resistance.

When the meeting ends, you feel good about yourself. Those curious, thoughtful questions brought the best out of you. You hope, wish, and pray that this is not a “once and done” meeting and that there will be more meetings with the “most interested person” in the world.

Well, it’s your lucky day again.

There was an opportunity for a second meeting with the “most interested person” in the world.

## The Second Meeting

You met this person just last week. You presumed that the second meeting may not be that interesting after all as the person knows pretty much everything about you. “What else is there to talk about?” you think.

Well, you would be wrong (fortunately).

The person is ready with the same warm smile and friendly disposition that it almost makes you feel that he or she is more eager and excited to meet with you a couple of notches more than you are.

A few questions that the person might ask include:

- What were the highlights of this week for you and why?
- What were the learning moments this week brought you?
- Did you contribute to one or more people to such an extent that they missed you in their past?
- If you were to relive this week knowing what you know, what would you do differently?
- What did you do that would make the people you deeply respect be proud of you?

As you begin to thoughtfully answer, they have follow-up questions to each response. It leads to another multi-hour conversation where you lose sense of time..

Let’s assume that this is your third meeting with the “most interested person” in the world.

## The Third Meeting

You just met this person last night and here you are, meeting them once again. This time you are convinced that the meeting will not be that “interesting” anymore. *What’s left to discuss? I’ve shared everything!*

Once again, you’re glad you’re wrong.

But this time, the person asks you a simple question::

## **What is the most important thing you did today?**

And eagerly waits for your answer.

It seems like a simple question at the surface, but you struggle to answer immediately. You think hard. It's not easy – your mind is surfing through a collection of memories, actions, and choices you made. Even as you respond, you're already thinking that you need to do something more compelling tomorrow if this were to be asked again. You let out a sigh and wait for their assessment.

The person simply smiles with zero judgment. All they ask is, *"Is there anything else you want to share about the day?"*

You talk some more and leave the meeting feeling enriched, empowered, and looking forward to the next day.

You also feel a sense of gratitude for the "most interested person" in the world for not only taking the time to meet with you but also for the care, thoughtfulness, and compassion that they demonstrated in that meeting.

## **The Difference That Makes the Difference**

The most interested person must genuinely want to know you. It's not just a technique or tool that's used. It's about being that real person who *cares*.

They don't just ask about what you're doing; they tell relatable stories that spark your own thoughts. Sometimes they share stories from their life. This person doesn't just inspire you; they trigger inspiration within you. What inspires you most comes from within, triggered by their stories and questions.

For example, if you say, "I don't think I can do this," The person would have you repeat the statement but add one word at the end: "yet." So it becomes, "I cannot do this yet." This small change shifts your mindset completely. It channels your thoughts in a new direction.

When you say, "I cannot do this," they usually explain why. But if you say, "I cannot do this yet," the reason often disappears, and you might say, "Therefore I will." This phrase means commitment, not just possibility.

This shift in mindset through one word can lead to new behaviors and habits. The truly interested person supports you in a systematic and sensitive way, helping you improve in personal life, health, and work.

Inspiration comes from within because you become more successful. It could be anyone, like Tom or someone else, triggering your mind and bringing out that inner inspiration.

## The Switch That Matters

Now consider this: what if the most *interested* person in the world is your *alter ego*?

This inner persona knows everything about you, is endlessly curious but never judgmental, and seeks to understand your thoughts, actions, and worldview.

Reflecting on this can unlock new possibilities and is a crucial first step towards self-awareness.

Imagine having regular conversations with this alter ego: the most interested person in the world. How would these conversations unfold?

- What questions would your alter ego ask you?
- How would you respond?
- What insights would you gain about yourself?

My God-daughter Soundarya once shared the idea of using the phrase “**Be curious, not judgmental**” inwardly, applying it to oneself rather than others. This concept sparked a paradigm shift for me regarding self-compassion. In a world where it’s easier to judge than to be curious, practicing “**be curious, not judgemental**” is already hard when you apply it outward to others. It requires a whole new level of maturity to apply inwardly to yourself. But, you have to begin somewhere on this path. That first step is awareness, followed by baby steps toward eventual mastery.

These conversations with your alter ego would be rooted in the “Be curious, not judgmental” framework. As the most interested person in the world, your

alter ego would have an abundance of questions. Your role is to remain open and receptive, making every one of these dialogues transformative.

The first few meetings with your alter ego may be difficult for you, but that is common for any new skill. You will have to traverse the amateur phase before you reach mastery.

This path is also difficult because we live in an over-stimulated world of mobile phones (that really should be called “ultimate distraction machines!”). But, you have to start somewhere.

Here are some ideas to get started:

- Pick a day and time on one of the weekdays and mark it off as “Meeting With MIP” [ No brownie points for guessing what MIP stands for ]
- Throughout the week start collecting questions on your favorite note-taking tool to ask yourself.
- Before the meeting date and time, print the question list on a sheet of paper
- Shut off all the communication devices for the time period you have chosen (start with 30 minutes first) and only with that question list and a few sheets of paper and a notebook.
- Answer the questions one by one in your own way. For example, using a long narrative style, through bullet points, or via a mindmap
- Evolve your own style of the above as you get into the groove.
- Rinse and repeat.

## **Fish can't see water, but...**

You are not a fish.

You would have heard the phrase “Fish can't see water” to mean if you are mired in a problem, you lose perspective. The solution is to step outside of yourself and look at it from an “outside-in” perspective. Luckily you are not a fish – you are a human being with the power of imagination.

Creating your alter ego as the “most interested person” in the world requires deploying the power of imagination to step outside of yourself to get an “outside-in” perspective.



Think of the MIP as a hyper life coach – deeply and fully interested and invested in you, not judgmental, but curious, and willing to follow through week after week with the same enthusiasm!

The MIP (your alter ego) is ready to serve the VIP (you) if you choose to engage.

The only question left is:

*Are you ready and excited to meet with the “most interested person” in the world?*

## **Appendix 1: Starter Questions from Your MIP**

[ **Note:** These sections and questions below are in no particular order ]

### **Reflect on Achievements**

- What are three accomplishments you are most proud of, and why? Of those three, which one makes the person you respect also feel proud of?
- What recent success has made you feel the most fulfilled?
- How have your achievements over the past year aligned with your long-term goals?
- Which personal qualities contributed most significantly to your recent successes? What are you doing to nurture those qualities?
- What lessons did you learn from your proudest accomplishments that you can apply to future endeavors?

### **Identify Challenges**

- What has been your biggest challenge in your recent past, and how did you address it? Could you have done anything better?
- What obstacles have you overcome recently, and what did you learn from the experience?
- How do you typically approach problem-solving in difficult situations?
- What strategies have you found most effective in managing stress and adversity?
- How do you balance persistence and flexibility when facing challenges?

### **Evaluate Personal Growth**

- How have you grown personally or professionally in the past month?
- What new skills or knowledge have you acquired recently?
- How have your experiences over the past year shaped your personal development?
- What steps have you taken to foster continuous learning and self-improvement?
- How do you measure your growth in areas that are important to you?

## **Explore Inspirations and Motivations**

- What inspires you to keep going when things get tough?
- Who or what has had a significant impact on your life, and in what way?
- How do you stay motivated when working towards long-term goals?
- What role do your passions and interests play in your daily life?
- How do you draw inspiration from your surroundings and experiences?

## **Set Future Goals**

- What are your short-term and long-term goals? How did you choose those?
- What concrete steps can you take today to move closer to your goals?
- How do you prioritize your goals and manage your time effectively?
- What milestones do you plan to achieve in the next six months?
- How do you stay accountable and track your progress towards your goals?

## **Assess Relationships**

- Who are the most important people in your life, and why?
- How have your relationships influenced your personal and professional journey?
- What qualities do you value most in your relationships?
- How do you nurture and maintain meaningful connections with others?
- What role do mentors and peers play in your personal development?

## **Encourage Self-Care**

- What activities or practices do you engage in for self-care?
- How do you ensure you maintain a healthy work-life balance?
- How do you recognize when you need to take a break and recharge?
- What habits have you developed to support your physical and mental well-being?
- How do you incorporate mindfulness and relaxation into your daily routine?

## **Foster Creativity and Innovation**

- What creative projects or ideas are you currently working on?
- How do you cultivate creativity in your daily life?
- How do you overcome creative blocks and stay inspired?
- What new approaches or techniques have you experimented with recently?
- How do you create an environment that fosters innovation and creativity?

## **Reflect on Values and Beliefs**

- What are your core values, and how do they guide your decisions?
- How do your beliefs shape your actions and attitudes?
- How do you stay true to your values in challenging situations?
- What experiences have influenced your values and beliefs the most?
- How do you align your daily actions with your core values?

## **Practice Gratitude**

- What are you most grateful for today?
- How do you express gratitude in your daily life?
- How has practicing gratitude impacted your overall well-being?
- What small moments or acts of kindness have brought you joy recently?
- How do you cultivate an attitude of gratitude even during difficult times?

## **Assess Learning Moments**

- What was the most valuable lesson you learned this week?
- How have past mistakes shaped your current approach to challenges?
- How do you identify and embrace learning opportunities in everyday life?
- What feedback have you received recently, and how have you applied it?

- How do you create a culture of continuous learning for yourself and others?

### **Evaluate Impact and Contribution**

- In what ways have you contributed significantly to others' lives recently?
- How do you measure the impact of your actions on those around you?
- What causes or communities are you passionate about supporting?
- How do you use your skills and resources to make a positive difference?
- How do you reflect on and learn from the impact you've had on others?