



Changing Lives One Moment at a Time!

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Our evolution has been a cumulative process. Footprints across time have left traces of our reach beyond us for something better.

◇ N. Vita-More

DEDICATION

To Dr. Jerry Stewart, our angel/benefactor and to you, the Cultural Creatives

This book is dedicated to you, Cultural Creatives. So very much rests upon you and the moment-by-moment choices you make. It is our hope that you see yourself in this book and feel a call to action on a visceral level.

Since the 1960's, 50 million people have made a comprehensive shift in their worldview, values, and way of life—their culture, in short. These creative and optimistic millions are at the leading edge of several kinds of cultural change, deeply affecting not only their own lives but our larger society as well. Cultural Creatives are shaping a new kind of American culture for the 21st century (Ray & Anderson, 2000).

We were recently witness to the enormous/wondrous power of cultural creative's in the 2008 American Presidential political race. True to the known demographics of 'cultural's', democrats and republicans and independents joined forces to move toward making our planet better. President Barack Obama tapped into conscious and unconscious truths about our ability to change. He riveted us enough to believe and in that believing we rose to action, one ballet at a time. Perhaps we can get down to the business of addressing long neglected work put so elegantly by Matthew Fox, "The heart of the matter lies in paying attention to the work the industrial model practically ignores: our inner work." (Fox, 1994)

This book belongs to us only in that we were in a very real sense 'commissioned' to deliver the material—'commissioned' by our passionate desire to make sense of new research that is only just now beginning to peek into the larger critical mass.

SMARTMOMENTS® TRILOGY

Triple chocolate latte' angst and razor-blade sharp
hubris

Vie for our attention and appear so real; and yet
Possess potent clues to a more authentic life?

It's not in your face conspicuous,
Rather, so subtle it barely leaves a wee shadow on
the road.

What sliver of light holds such supreme relevance?

What ancient texts belie the secret?

As elegant as quantum physics and as surreal as 'a
play within a play'

Grasp its transformative truth and you reign as

Architect of the palace,

Writer of your own song, and

Master of your Universe! ****

The seed of creation lies within each human form

Waiting, begging to be born into consciousness

Each delicious and delicate Smart Moment at a time.



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FORWARD

By Dr. Doug Covey
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If the purpose of an E-Book is to tantalize the reader, to encourage further exploration, then the reader will find the purpose is well met here. That I should be asked to write an introduction for an E-Book is both an honor to me, and a wonder to any who know me. Bibliophiles treasure the medium, can almost sense the worth of the mysteries to unfold on the pages of the tome. Everything from the heft of the volume, to the art of the printer, to the techniques of the binder, fill a book lover with anticipation.

As one who has never embraced new technologies with enthusiasm and one who clings to old paradigms in my personal life, being given the opportunity to play a small role in setting the table for the veritable banquet of insight the authors are about to lay before you, is an honor indeed. Especially so since the authors are most sincere in asserting that this is far more than a marketing tool. They truly feel “commissioned” to share the benefits of what they’ve learned as a practical guide for empowering us all to make for ourselves the lives we wish to live. I am confident you will find that the message triumphs over the medium, and that you will feel compelled to explore further. A new medium for a new message seems to be an appropriate fit.

We are not all, the “cultural creatives” to whom the work is dedicated, or at least we may not as yet recognize it. A central appeal of the scaffold of understanding created by the authors is their wide

embrace of many religious and philosophical traditions as well as the gleaning of knowledge from quantum physics and other scientific disciplines as the basis for the model. More positivistic, linear souls will be comforted by the due diligence of the research and empowered to reach out in unaccustomed ways.

Most importantly, the central themes of the Smartmoments® model are that we all have the power to create our own happiness, that change is possible, that the techniques to improve our lives in ways large and small can be taught, and that the genius to do so lies within each of us. Smartmoments® in short, provides a practical model for the odyssey of self discovery which will inform the choices we make as we become the architects in charge of designing our own futures.

PROVISOS

The research embedded in SMARTMOMENTS® makes reference to spiritual and intellectual wisdom passed down from antiquity and scientific wisdom culled from relatively new discoveries. Our worldview contains 'nuggets' from around the globe coalescing into a 'workable model' whereby we learn to embrace our capacity and potential for change.

You will discover quotes from great masters, religious and literary alike, in the SMARTMOMENTS® system. You will also discover quotes from recent authors and scientists. We believe these references make the body of work comprehensive, thorough and rich.

A thoughtful colleague once remarked to us that years after we struggle with philosophical constructs, at the end of the day we only remember that which enhances our lives in a meaningful way. That remark reminded us of what Jacques Rousseau wrote in *Émile* (1762). Rousseau tells of a young vicar who loses his faith and is able to restore his equilibrium only when he finds a new kind of faith in God by looking within, to his own "inner light."

It is our goal to help you along your path toward finding **your** inner light.

SMARTMOMENTS® is a practical based approach designed to help you uncover your inherent genius and beauty. Our approach promotes no specific religion or orthodoxy although honors the wisdom and mystery of divinity. Our research extracts meaning from multiple domains providing a solid foundation known as the SMARTMOMENTS® model.

Although the SMARTMOMENTS® model is solidly based, we do offer a word of caution to our readers. Information provided within SMARTMOMENTS® is of a general nature and is designed for educational purposes only. This information is not intended to replace “traditional” mental health counseling/therapy or religious practice. If you have questions or concerns about your physical, mental or spiritual health, contact your physician and/or mental health professional/ spiritual advisor. The model provided by SMARTMOMENTS® is considered an alternative source of support for you.

SMARTMOMENTS® CORE TENETS

SMARTMOMENTS® is a metaphysical model for coaching.

SMARTMOMENTS® ushers in a new way of viewing the world and subsequently ourselves by taking coaching to new heights.

SMARTMOMENTS® is based on 5 core tenets:

Change is possible.

We must take stock of our lives if we're going to change them.

What we focus on expands.

Thoughts actually materialize.

We each can create a better future.

Chapter 1

Why don't we know more about the nature of reality?

Get ready to learn about an idea so original and practical, it defies categorization! Get ready to learn about a concept where Eastern and Western notions of human potential are carefully integrated with the latest scientifically based discoveries to create a personalized system for you to live the life you desire.

This personalized system is called SMARTMOMENTS® and its purpose is to show you how to change what you don't want in your life into that which you do want in your life. Its goal is personal growth, development, more fun and transformation. It's about changing your life one moment at a time.

The revolutionary and evolutionary insights contained in SMARTMOMENTS® have been brought together through years of important research from the best scientific minds, and coupled with ancient wisdom. The insights on change and transformation have been merged with state-of-the-art, millennium technology to create a systematic model for you to use in personal self-development.

We have come to know that although in higher education scholarly breakthroughs and advanced theories abound, it sometimes takes as long as eighty years for those same advances to make their way into mainstream society. Often the dilemma is that scholars tend to insulate themselves and expound upon their breakthroughs in academic circles amongst like-minded individuals. Seldom, if ever, is there a translator, if you will, to decipher the important ideas and present them for you and I.

Key Points

1. SMARTMOMENTS® presents scholarly breakthroughs to you.
2. Ready for revolutionary and evolutionary insights?
3. It's about changing your life one moment at a time.

Change is possible.

Chapter 2

We are carving out every detail of our life.

Our journey began as we took stock of what it means to be a leader. We discovered through delving into leadership theory and practice that leadership is essentially an inside job. In order to assume the mantle of leadership whether in personal life, family life or professional, we must take stock of our lives. Easier said than done, right?

Absolutely! Why do we believe we can do this? Well, we are translators. How did we become translators? We're glad you asked because we have a story to tell. This story is about separate yet parallel paths converging as the SMARTMOMENTS® Team.

Captivating elements of the story include four continents, finding friendship in the midst of sorrow and life altering challenges, discovering great differences and striking similarities, disappointing loss, and the ultimate reclaiming of an idea as ancient as antiquity and yet as fresh and revitalizing as the new day. The idea is that we are each much more involved in carving out our lives than we have been led to believe.

We originators/researchers of the SMARTMOMENTS® design met for the first time in August of 1996. Arriving from Ghana, Europe and, the United States, and the Federated States of Micronesia—our paths collided. Our professional backgrounds, we were later to discover, are as diverse as our humble beginnings. We didn't know it then however we fell into SMARTMOMENTS® as “accidental entrepreneurs” as defined by Shah & Tripsas. Their research reveals,

Entrepreneurs who happen upon an idea through their own use and then share it with others; more specifically, the development of an idea and subsequent experimentation, adaptation, and preliminary adoption often occur before that idea is formally evaluated as the basis of a commercial venture. (2007)

How serendipitous! Deepak Chopra calls the phenomenon of not-so-chance meetings and other “meant to be” occurrences as synchronodestiny. But more on synchronodestiny later. Back to the story. We met. Voila! The magic happened. A partnership is born.

Appreciating the special talents and uniqueness of one another as we came to share more and more, the connection was more than a surface appreciation of each other’s talents, a fondness, or a mild bond. We came to share hearts and eventually souls. It was and is an emotional and spiritual connection, and a connection for which we are deeply grateful.

Life frequently intervened as we formed the early ‘rumblings’ of SMARTMOMENTS®. Life reminded us that we live fully in the world; so we collectively—including our families—experienced births, deaths, weddings, divorces, serious illness and a joyful new romantic partnership. Added to the mix were children growing and parents’ health and independence failing. Life!

Life—! Three separate stories rolled into one big drama: Colorful characters, ups and downs, mountain peaks juxtaposed against mortal suffering, ‘meaning of life’ stuff, strong stuff, “heady” stuff, human

stuff, new found freedom, tremendous insight, and discovering life's purpose.

Often paralyzed by our own fear and despair, we learned to keep inquiring. The thinking behind the persistent questioning is that perhaps discovering a new way to live our lives is in asking different and difficult questions.

We would like you to join us on the SMARTMOMENTS® journey, a cutting edge yet "do-able" model for self-discovery and transformation.

Key Points

1. We are each involved in carving out our life.
2. Discovering new ways to live our life is in asking new questions.
3. We invite you to look at a cutting edge model for self-discovery.

We must take stock of our lives if we're going to change them.

Chapter 3

Universal principles partner with us to yield results.

We bring you a remarkable and profound way to change your life for the better. We want to show you how to change those things you DON'T want in your life into those things you DO want. We want to show you how to be all that you can and want to be. (Thank the U.S. Army for making the notion of being all you can be so popular!)

Mary Reynolds Robinson, a breakthrough thinker, says it like this: "We all have two lives: the life we've learned to have, and the life that wants us." In order to make the subtle shift from the life we have to the life that wants us, we will want to shift what we're focusing on. The philosopher Derek Parfit describes it similarly; "We are not what we believe ourselves to be." If we believe that our focus mobilizes us and leads us closer to where we want to be, then this step is paramount! The good news is that we don't have to do it alone. Universal principals and the creative design are partnering with us to yield results.

We invite you to explore, delve into, examine, and experiment with the research, ideas and spiritual wisdom presented here. Change is possible! Your dreams CAN come true! We hope that you will embrace the notion that your life contains endless possibilities.

We feel it is important to note here that the journey of life, the path that we are talking about is, in essence, a spiritual path. This idea may feel awkward for some people. Please, be open-minded. Know that by "spiritual" we do not mean "religious." By spirituality, we mean an inner acknowledgement of a creative energy that helps us to transcend our own limitations.

We are in no way referring to one specific set of religious beliefs. Spirit is defined in the dictionary as: *that which is traditionally believed to be the vital principal or animating force within living beings.* Therefore, spiritual relates to or consists of the nature of spirit, which is not tangible or material. For some this means God. Others may think of this energy or intangible force as the Universe, Goddess, the Higher Self, or Flow.

Perhaps you think of it as creative energy. You may call this force God/Divine Creator/Intelligent Design. Perhaps it is helpful to look at how Julie Cameron puts it: "The point is not what you name it. The point is that you try using it" (1992).

Malone and Malone (1992) put it like this: "Without our innocent acceptance of the essential unity of nature, a unity of which we are an intricate part, we can never participate in the beautiful and grand experiment of living." They go on to elaborate, "Faith is a form of trusting the connected and connecting patterns of life."

So, please sit back and relax, keep an open mind, and keep reading. Allow us to offer you new insights, new ways of thinking, and new ways of being. Let us help show you how to move into a more beautiful present and future. We hope that you will enjoy your own delightful and fulfilling journey as you increasingly a reality you desire! Enjoy the journey!

Key Points

1. "We all have two lives: the life we've learned to have, and the life that wants us."
2. The journey of life is, in essence, a spiritual path.

3. You may choose to think of it as creative energy.

What we focus on expands.

Chapter 4

We are viewing the world through an outdated map.

In the beginning, as it were, we happily triumphed as students and scholars, graduating (finally), only to dive immediately into another exercise in problem solving. The problem: the profound and disconcerting disparity between what we had come to know in the “academic world” and what we experience in the “real world.” Within that gap, life doesn’t always make much sense.

Cries from frustrated students (we’re teachers) and soulful diatribes from colleagues from around the world seemed to land smack in our laps. “If we’re so smart and have learned so much, why can’t we make sense out of our lives?” “Why aren’t things working out like we thought they would?” “Why isn’t life working like it is supposed to?” “Things just don’t make sense anymore!”

The problem of life not making sense is profoundly felt, and felt by many. As Faith Popcorn puts it, “Too many of us spend our lives feeling slightly off-kilter, slightly out of step, something isn’t clicking: a job, an idea, a product, a place, the sum total of what we’re doing and where we’re going. We fumble around trying to find the right combination to break into a new life.”

What if the feeling of being off-kilter, the fumbling around to find the right combination is due, in large part, to outdated models and notions we are using to make sense out of our lives? What if the prevailing paradigm (we realize this term is overused) we use to explain our world, to sort through and order life’s experiences, doesn’t work anymore? What if we find that we are actually viewing the world through an outmoded map?

OK, you ask, "What is a paradigm/map?" A paradigm is a frame of reference, a lens, if you will, with which we interpret life's experiences. According to Komives, Lucas, and McMahon (2006), [new edition] "paradigms are patterns and ways of looking at things in order to make sense of them" (p. 8).

We find, upon reflection that we are looking at the world with 'old' eyes. The disconnect probably in large part is due to our **not** taking the time and effort to reflect upon how very much things have changed. As times change, patterns for making sense of things change, and what worked before becomes less and less effective. Similar to the brain that needs plasticity for optimal function, our soul requires plasticity in order to change. A Massachusetts Institute of Technology (2004) article reveals that, "Plasticity, or the ability to change, is key to the brain's ability to learn and remember."

Put another way, Malone & Malone say,

If we are unreceptive to our present, we cannot learn. How can one not attend to what is yet to be? [But], like Dicken's Scrooge, we are unable to allow the unfolding of the infinite possibilities of what the future may hold. Indeed we limit possibilities in an attempt to be secure. Living that way, we deprive ourselves of the nourishment that exists in the infinite all.

Michael Gurman in *The Soul of the Child* puts it like this; "A great deal of our thinking, and thus our human energy, is caged in old ideas." (2002). Rarely do we take time to reflect upon and then reformulate what works for us. Is it any wonder, therefore, with our

outdated lens for viewing life, that we feel off-kilter? Of course, awakening to the fact that we need new ways to approach life offers hope. It also indicates a paradigm shift. Considering how much knowledge we have today and all the scientific research we have, what's going on? What does this knowledge really tell us? Has all this research left us "holding the bag" so to speak? We believe just the opposite is true!

This new knowledge, particularly from the field of quantum physics, actually tells us that we must rethink how we view the world and the way it works. This new knowledge, coupled with ancient wisdom that has been handed down for literally centuries, points the way to viewing life differently.

'Facts' backed by credible authorities take us to the forefront of new frontiers, freeing the shackles that pay homage to a limited view of our potential. What if our future depends upon it? Willard Daggett extols the subtle imperative facing each of us living on earth today. According to him, "We are entering an era of rapid change. The future will be much different from the past. Our definitions of educated and literacy have changed markedly from this century to the next."

As we look to quantum physics we see that it supports the theory that personal creativity plays an essential role in our perceptions of what we call reality. Noted physicists, mathematicians, as well as psychiatrists and neurophysiologists are supporting this opinion.

Consider this:

The Heisenberg Principle: Heisenberg discovered that the path of an electron comes into existence ONLY when we observe it. It is the very act of placing our attention on the electron that enables its path to come into existence.

Implications: Where we place our attention, and what we place it on, has great significance. If we focus on conflict, we will manifest more conflict. If we focus on moving easily into our dream life, we will manifest more of our dream life. In other words, we get what we focus on!

Bells Theorem: Bell discovered that you can place a particle in a measuring devise at one location, and, simply by doing that, instantly influence another particle far way.

Bell's Theorem proves nonlocality. Locality is the principle that an event which happens at one place can't instantaneously affect an event someplace else. Nonlocality means we are connected in ways we never knew.

Implications: We are interconnected to all things in the universe. Actions that we take affect us and others. They affect our health and happiness. Those actions we take can be toward wholeness and transformation or they can be away from it.

Schrodinger and his cat: Schrodinger, in his example about a cat in a box, illustrated that a single particle can be in multiple locations simultaneously. Schrodinger showed that there is a conflict between what is true about the nature and behavior of matter on the microscopic level and what we observe to be true about the nature and behavior of matter on the macroscopic level.

Implications: What you see isn't always what it seems to be. What is going on beneath the visible surface is usually much more important than what we see at surface level.

Let's recap. Quantum physics shows us that we can manifest that which we focus on, we are interconnected to other people and phenomena, and the ways things appear to be on the surface may not indeed be the way they are within. This supports the new paradigm which suggests that there is a dependence on an inner wisdom and authority and that we will see it only when we believe it.

And viewing life differently means we do things differently. The question then becomes "how?" How do we go about doing things differently? Recognizing that we hold the keys to the kingdom harnesses the partnering energy to move us toward our dreams. We have to be able to 'see' what we want in order to attract it into our life. Our thoughts, feelings and desires are active forces, compelling a change when we are diligent and consistent.

We rose to the challenge to answer this question of "how?" and to address the cries of others. We did so out of our own sense of frustration from feeling slightly off-kilter, as well as our knowledge that there is a significant amount of ancient wisdom as well as scientific research that questioned the current yet outmoded models for understanding.

In fact, we went even further—we not only offer new ways of looking at reality we have also developed a **model** for change. Therein arose our commitment to bridge the gap between the "academic

world” and the “real world,” And we embarked upon this endeavor that we came to call, SMARTMOMENTS®.

Key Points

1. “Things just don’t make sense anymore!”
2. We are actually viewing the world through an outmoded paradigm.
3. How do we go about doing things differently?

Thoughts actually materialize.

Chapter 5

New knowledge expands view of what is possible.

In shifting to a new way of looking at what we call reality, there are two things we should consider. First of all, there is an incredible body of existing research—groundbreaking ideas that are so shattering and potentially life-altering that it confronts us right where we live. Secondly, ancient wisdom from many different traditions—Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and other traditions—point us toward looking beyond the day’s paradigm and into the deepest part of ourselves for our sense making. Taken together, this knowledge literally calls us to expand our current frame of what is possible.

Gurman (2002) believes that, “Both our scientific and religious knowledge have developed to a point of creating an astounding new vision, a vision that is right before our eyes but has not yet been fully recognized.” The new scientific knowledge radically changes the way we view how life works.

It is tremendously exciting, but given the potential life-altering quality of this knowledge, the question then becomes: Are we prepared to embrace this knowledge and to embark on such a significant change of course?

Kalkanis, Hadzidaki, & Stavrou postulate that until we ‘catch up’ with what quantum physics reveals as current reality, we lag behind in every arena. The implications to this powerful idea are nothing short of staggering. This means we lag behind in education, government, industry, world affairs and epistemology.

Alright! What exactly does that mean, you ask?

Most of what we know to be 'true' speaks to the visible world we see each day. In fact, we are tempted to only honor that which we see, hear, feel and can touch. But the new knowledge we have from quantum physics and other fields tells us that there is more to being 'true' than what meets the eye, ear, or hand.

It takes a form of rethinking, to get past this notion that **only** the world of the five senses exists. It is when we acknowledge that there is a reality beyond the five senses and begin to shift our awareness to these more subtle energies that we come to approach the powerful act of guiding our lives in the direction we want to see manifested.

As we shift our awareness to more subtle energies by rethinking, or 'reframing,' we start to question the unspoken assumptions we have held, and the assumptions of the social codes all around us. (Ray, 2000). Social codes are the collective ideas we hold about how our world works. Fortunately many new insights beckon to us with profound implications.

Rolf Osterberg says it like this; "A new way of thinking is developing naturally within humankind. It is the result of human evolution and not of any organized activity with religion or political overtones."

How do we transition from worn out ideas and get to the ones that assist us in changing our life? A partial answer is that we will want to recognize when we are operating on autopilot and begin to reframe the thoughts we think. Sometimes this is called reframing.

One way of reframing is by simply asking different questions. Kurt and Patricia Wright, ground breaking life coaches, have researched the simple yet significant power of simply asking different questions in order to change your direction from 'status quo' living to 'creating your life.' The Wright's recommend invoking the subtle energy we referred to above and make the conscious switch "from one of inquiring about what is not working, to one of learning to identify and build upon what *is* working." (Wright, 2000)

And how does the phenomenon of asking different questions help you create a better life? They say it like this; "You entered life with a fully developed internal guidance system that is dedicated to serving your highest good. This profound source of inner knowing is often referred to as your "heart" and comes preloaded with all the answers you will ever need to guiding your own life."

We tap into our inner knowing when we start questioning the unspoken assumptions of our social codes and learn to listen to our heart, our inner voice. Ancient wisdom sometimes refers to the voice we hear when we listen from within as the voice of the divine. For example, the Bible, in the Old Testament book of Isaiah, tells us that when we get quiet, we can hear the still small voice of God.

Perhaps, in order to overcome what seems difficult in expanding our current view of what is possible and embracing new ways of looking at reality, we need help understanding the profound ramifications of what this can mean.

Key Points

1. It takes rethinking to get past the world of the five senses only.

2. Let's "build upon what *is* working."
3. We can shift our awareness to more subtle energies.

We each can create a better future.

Chapter 6

Building Bridges

Out of our own struggle to make sense of life, we realized others might need assistance in their struggle as well. The subject of how people deal with complexity reveals constructivist conditions that have been identified as cognitive apprenticeship (Farmer, Buckmaster, & LeGrand, 1992). Individuals with levels of mastery, often called experts, can render bridges in order to help individuals who are beginners or novices. (Brooks, 2002).

Experts acquire such a rich inventory of domain specific knowledge that they often activate this engagement intuitively (Klein, 1992). This engagement process between experts and novices is highly constructive in nature with enormous implications for the work we've done (Brooks, 2002).

Often we take turns playing these roles; sometimes we are a novice and sometimes an expert. The notion that one is rigidly one or the other defies the developmental nature of mutually growing and learning and evolving.

We came to realize that scientific discoveries helped point the way toward sense making and that many people had not heard of the research in quantum physics, learning theory, or evolutionary biology. With new ways to look at the world and life experience, we can come to terms with new ways to make sense of it all.

We can come to far different conclusions than we had previously. We realize that, as scholars ourselves, it is incumbent upon us to build the bridge between academia and "the real world." In addition, we

realize that it is incumbent upon us to build that bridge to include ancient knowledge that may have been forgotten.

We begin with the fundamental premise, drawn both from new science and from ancient wisdom; pointing to the fact that genius lies within us all. Some people, in fact most people, and have simply forgotten that they indeed can tap into their own innate capacity for evolution and transformation.

Arnold Schornberg commented on the reasons we cling to ideas that no longer work. "One of the greatest barriers to creativity is the existence in the mind of firmly embedded conventional patterns of thought from which one cannot escape." Of course we now know we can escape these "firmly embedded conventional patterns". It's important however to become aware that they are there. We can cling to the patterns we've created that don't work or we can override them and move on to creating a different life.

Most of us have forgotten completely that we have adopted patterns that don't serve us and we do not even acknowledge this consciously. Marianne Williamson eloquently describes the incredible capacity we have to forget: "We are like birds that have forgotten we have wings, kings and queens who have forgotten our royal heritage."

Malone & Malone address the complexity involved in finding wholeness while living in the world, by saying that there are two experiential bridges that facilitate healthy transitioning. They are "Our becoming our real selves and our learning to live as those selves in the real world." They coin the term 'captured' to indicate when we are brainwashed by either our personal blocks or the systems in which we live (organizations, institutions, families, etc).

We encourage you to uncover the genius that lies within you. The genius that lies within serves as a lens through which we can reflect, refocus, and rethink how we approach life.

Your genius enables you to rethink your life, and moreover, to refocus in an intentional way. The notion that we actually can create an awesome life is enough to excite anyone, right? There is tremendous relief in the realization that living intentionally and authentically causes things to change.

Unfortunately, change can be thwarted when societies or individuals lack a constructive way of forming meaning. The result is an adherence to a nostalgic notion of 'the good old days.' With a focus on what 'used to be' we ignore our current reality and in the process abdicate our responsibility to participate in creating new meaning.

Without acknowledging our responsibility in creating new meaning in and for our lives, we lose sight that change is possible. As Dr. David Simon, a noted political scientist and social commentator points out, much of what is offered by way of mass consumption information is reduced to its lowest common denominator and we numb ourselves into believing that we have no power and that change is impossible.

Key Points

1. We have simply forgotten to tap into our own innate capacity for evolution and transformation.
2. Genius lies within us all.

3. The genius that lies within serves as a lens through which we can reflect, refocus, and rethink how we approach life.

Building Bridges

Chapter 7

What Are Our Perceptions of Reality?

In Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*, the English novelist presents us with what has come to symbolize the essence of the human dilemma.

“It was the best of times; it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the season of Light, and it was the season of Darkness. We had everything before us, we had nothing before us.” (P. and info)

The paradox of Dickens often invoked quote serves as a literary reminder of our vital role in interpreting the moments of our lives. Why is it that twins from the same lineage sometimes choose far different ways to live their lives? Why does one tell of a childhood replete with every opportunity anyone could wish for and the other recants an upbringing of drudgery and despair?

We each learn differently. We each have our own view of reality. Every person has a unique history and background that influences how he or she views the world. There are multiple ways of interpreting what we experience.

All experiences are filtered through human eyes, which hold particular world-views, values, and perspectives (Vorreger-Hedges, 2002). By choosing our own vehicles for growth, we inherently find the stories, the movie, and the theme that moves us in the direction we want/need to go.

In this fast paced world we live in, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that we play a vital role in how we view or perceive our

experiences. Furthermore, we can lose the underlying currents of our lives (Cameron, 2000).

Sometimes we even forget which direction we are going in, or forget to take the time to look inward and monitor our progress. It is important, however, to keep in mind that we are responsible for our perceptions.

Michael Lipson touched upon the importance of our perceptions during his attempt to translate Rudolf Steiner Verlag's early and original work on conscious human action. He noted, "The real heartbreak of translation does not come from the distance between German and English, but from the gap between spiritual and world-bound consciousness." He goes on to say that, "The thinking appropriate to an understanding of the perceptual world necessarily includes a development in how we perceive."

How do we come to understand our perceptions and how we perceive, you ask? Can this be developed like a well-exercised muscle?

The process of consciously addressing our habitual ways of interpreting our experiences, or in other words, our perceptions, requires a HUGE step toward self-responsibility and it requires paying attention.

What you see isn't always what it seems to be. What is going on beneath the visible surface is usually much more important than what we see at surface level.

Here's a powerful example of how our perceptions are paramount in our picture of what is possible:

The Spanish explorer, Ferdinand Magellan, set sail for South America. At some point on his voyage, the ship anchored off the coast of South America. Magellan and a small landing party lowered a rowboat from the ship and rowed to shore. There they were greeted by a group of native people.

As they exchanged greetings, the native people, surprised by these strange looking foreigners, asked them how they got here. The explorers explained that they had sailed from far away on a large ship. The natives had never seen a ship and were bewildered. Magellan then pointed to the anchored ship visible far off on the horizon. The native peoples saw nothing when they looked.

Because they had no prior concept of a ship and no experiences from which to draw upon, they simply could not physically see what was before them. They had no frame of reference to help them perceive or interpret what they were seeing.

Indeed, the way we interpret our experiences can be powerful; however, we can change our perceptions and offer different interpretations of what we experience. When we begin paying attention and consciously addressing our habitual ways of interpreting our experiences, we realize we can change. We can begin to see that which we couldn't see before. Not only can things change, we also can change ourselves!

Key Points

1. A vital role is in the interpreting the moments of our lives.
2. Addressing our perceptions requires paying attention.
3. The way we interpret our experiences can be powerful.

What Are Our Perceptions of Reality?

Chapter 8

Learning to 'see' differently!

We want to share a story with you that demonstrates the profound significance of taking stock and making our way toward the life we consciously choose.

In Arthur Japin's gripping novel, *In Lucia's Eyes*, we are transported into the world of Giacomo Casanova, notorious and legendary romantic icon of eighteenth-century Europe. The plot keeps us riveted to Casanova's first love, Lucia, in a frantic attempt to discover the delicate details of unrequited love.

As the novel unfolds, we learn the cruel fate of Lucia, who is disfigured by small pox and how she came to triumph, not in spite of the circumstances of her life, but ultimately because of them.

When Lucia finally meets up with Casanova decades after their youthful romantic encounter, the occasion brings with it a glimmer of insight even she is unprepared for. Lucia comes face to face with the profound wisdom that separates most of us from our own greatness.

In her own words, she unravels the illusive secret.

"Everything comes down to this: the reason for every word I have written and every word I will write. I am recounting my life for you so that you may know this secret without the pain of discovering it. We are unhappy because we think that love is something we require from someone else."

"Our salvation depends on a simple gesture that is nonetheless the most difficult act we can perform. We must give away the thing we

long for. Not to receive but to give. So do we conjure triumph from defeat? This is the lesson of the life forced upon me by my imperfection.”

What metaphysical truth lurks behind Lucia’s words? She goes on to drive the point home. “Was it possible that, without realizing it, most of us have the power to create our own happiness? That we find certain things only once we abandon the search for them?”

You may be thinking right about now, “So what does this have to do with my journey and why do I care about love gone awry?” Because tucked between the storyline is a metaphor so explicit, so powerful it points us on our way to unravel the great mystery of achieving our happiness. Lucia’s parting words tinge even the most cynical among us with this simple and elegant declaration.

“I know nothing of alchemy, but I’ve learned this much: The tangible can be reshaped only by the intangible.”

“The only thing that can change reality is the mind. I have discovered this in the laboratory of my own life. If one would change things, one needn’t touch them; one need only see them differently.”

Key Points

1. “Most of us have the power to create our own happiness.”
2. “The only thing that can change reality is the mind.”
3. “The tangible can be reshaped only by the intangible.”

Learning to ‘see’ differently!

Chapter 9

“To Change Things; See Them Differently.”

Learning to ‘see’ differently sounds like a clever slogan created by a highbrow public relations firm on 5th Avenue. It’s pithy and poignant but what the heck does it mean? The Magellan fable and the story from *In Lucia’s Eyes* give us some clues on how to answer that question, but perhaps we also need to dig deeper.

If we are going to have an intelligent dialogue about how to see differently, we first need to address **why** we may need to change the way we currently “see.” Honestly, you may be asking, what’s so wrong with it and why does it need fixing?

If you are happy and your life is working well for you in all areas, then perhaps you don’t need to fix anything. However, if there is something in your life that you would like to change, then continue reading.

In order to change something in our lives, we need to believe that change is possible. In order to fully believe that change is possible, and that we can make changes ourselves, we need a new way of looking at how we think, feel and act.

What is needed here is to internalize conditions of what constitutes the right thing to do and when to apply those conditions [for the change]. When we apply those conditions we create our own individual identity. Interestingly the human cycles and generations that may follow our initiatives would enroot and sprout from the seed we sow today. We must prepare the soil by awakening consciousness, our own first (Larbi, 2007).

Often we are taught that change is difficult if not impossible. But, we'd like you to consider the following: Did you know that the human body replaces 300 billion cells every day? This means that every seven years, we literally become a new person. That's right, a completely different person than the one who looked in the mirror seven years ago. And here comes the exciting part. As our cells are replaced within our physical body, our attitudes, beliefs, and paradigms can undergo a "transformation" as well.

As we grow and transform, we can move into a healthier version of ourselves—not just healthier physically, but emotionally, mentally, and spiritually as well. Sounds like something we all want, doesn't it?

If we all desire positive change, why does it seem so difficult, so illusive for so many of us? Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that many of us are living in the old paradigm, even in the midst of grand and empowering shifts in knowledge.

There's a reason that we find ourselves still clinging to an old paradigm, even though it's not working for us. Judith Bluestone Polich, an attorney, entrepreneur, and poet reminds us that Western culture predisposes us to a 'sense based' indoctrination. She states it like this;

"We now understand, at least theoretically, that mind and matter are implicitly connected. But the damage caused by the mechanical model has been done." (p.80) (2002)

Key Points

1. We need a new way of looking at how we think, feel and act.
2. Many of us are living in the old paradigm.
3. "Mind and matter are implicitly connected."

"To Change Things; See Them Differently."

Chapter 10

Enter a new paradigm: Change is Possible!

If we want our lives to be different, we are going to have to do things differently, and that usually means leaving something behind. It might be tough, but it's not as scary as it sounds. When we're honest, we come to see that we've needed to let go of those patterns that weren't serving us anyway.

There are two steps in determining what we want our life to be, how we want to transform. The first step in examining and defining what we're moving toward is perhaps the most significant step—that of determining what we're going to leave behind.

All of us have things we think, ways we act, and beliefs that don't serve us well. Often times these ideas, actions, and beliefs have become patterns—habits, if you will—and we no longer think about them. We just go through the motions.

However, when we do stop to examine our beliefs, thoughts and actions, to pay attention to them, we see that they don't get us where we want to go. In fact, they no longer serve us at all.

Is there another way to operate in the world? Is there a way to tap into original insights and wisdom?

An author who we admire, Mike Dooley, suggests that each of us has inherited the hard wiring to access an unlimited supply of information, knowledge and insights. Dooley recalls how he accessed that unlimited supply as a student himself. Reflecting on mathematic problems he would 'daydream' his way into a solution. He maintains

that each of us possesses this capacity. We have simply forgotten that intelligence is our birthright, flowing through us as we call upon it.

Dr. Bitzer says it somewhat differently by saying, "Intelligence responds to intelligence. We are dealing with Intelligence so we must think."

Are we saying that every individual possesses the capacity for genius? We're kidding, right?

Key Points

1. If our life is to be different, we must leave something behind.
2. We see our beliefs often don't take us where we want to go.
3. Intelligence is flowing through us; we've only to call upon it.

Enter a new paradigm: Change is Possible!

Chapter 11

What we mean by genius

Often, a genius is seen as a person who has a very high IQ, or an incredible talent and mastery of something such as music or art. With this view, Beethoven, for example, was a genius. Einstein was a genius. Given this definition of genius, however, most of us do not feel like one. "What incredible talent?" we ask. Sometimes, we are grateful just to make it through the day! But there is a different way to view genius. One must look a bit further to define genius with a new eye.

A dictionary defines a genius as someone with exceptional ability, exceptional talent of a particular kind, someone with a particular skill, a special quality, or someone who exerts a strong influence. To us, this definition of genius rings true. It is a definition we can relate well to, for it describes everyone that we know.

Within us all is a particular skill, an exceptional ability, a special quality. Genius is revealed when you finally figure out a dilemma, a puzzle, when nothing else has been working. Genius is not about mastery coming easily to you, but rather, it is about moving through walls and finding breakthroughs. Genius is about courage and insight and energy. It is about reconnecting with that which you already know. It is about seeing life differently.

Joseph Chilton Pearce reminds us, "In our present culture and meta-culture, we often speak of people as being made, as if they (meaning we) were designed and assembled in some factory or laboratory. However, bio-engineering hasn't taken us that far and we are still very much "grown from seed." For most of us, the difference between creative genius and drab mediocrity is about 95% nurture and 5% nature.

Key Points

1. A genius is someone with exceptional ability.
2. Genius is about moving through walls and finding breakthroughs.
3. Genius is about reconnecting with that which we already know.

What we mean by genius

Chapter 12

A Little More Bliss

The purpose of this e-book is to shed light upon research from rich domains such as neuroscience, evolutionary biology, and quantum physics, and to share concepts from ancient wisdom. Why? Because SMARTMOMENTS® wants to offer you a different way to approach life, a way that offers you more of what you do want and less of what you don't want.

We've studied the research and mined ancient wisdom for you, and the resulting cutting edge model for change and transformation is trademarked as SMARTMOMENTS®. SMARTMOMENTS® can help you change your life for the better!

Although SMARTMOMENTS® is a copyrighted and trademarked intellectual work it is down-to-earth and basic and not relegated only to intellectual arenas. Its rightful heirs are the individuals who have somehow gleaned that we have not yet begun to tap into our true potential.

For those who have intuited in 'peak moments' that there is so much more to be had in this lifetime or for those who have simply been graced with moments of elegant clarity, SMARTMOMENTS® is for you. It is also for those who have yearned for a way to learn, grow and evolve into a finer version of you. SMARTMOMENTS® is a unique developmental process of self-discovery and transformation, launched to help people consciously create reality.

Our hope is that you, the reader, will be moved to explore the ideas presented here, to delve into them and examine them, and to

embark upon your journey through life with more joy and wonder. We want you to have, as the song by the country music group *Sugar land* suggests in their hit song, "A little less hard time and a little more bliss!"

Key Points

1. For those who have simply been graced with moments of elegant clarity, SMARTMOMENTS® is for you.
2. Our hope is that you, the reader, will be moved to explore the ideas presented here.
3. We want you to embark upon your journey with joy and wonder.

A Little More Bliss

Chapter 13

SMARTMOMENTS® Wrap Up: Changing lives one moment at a time!

SMARTMOMENTS® changes lives one moment at a time through encouragement and support in the forms of coaching and practical tools. SMARTMOMENTS® helps people discover themselves, enlarge their vistas, uncover the genius within, and live life more fully.

SMARTMOMENTS® is a comprehensive system of guided self-discovery. Through life coaching and practical tools, based on both scientific research and ancient wisdom, SmartMoments® provides people strategies to change their lives in ways they desire.

SMARTMOMENTS® is based on a different way of looking at the world and its possibilities. Embracing both ancient wisdom and scientific research, SMARTMOMENTS® is based on five basic tenets:

Change is possible.

We must take stock of our lives if we are going to change them.

That which we focus on expands.

Thoughts actually materialize

We can create a better future.

Not satisfied with cognitive understandings alone, SMARTMOMENTS® weaves in an action plan designed to reinforce learning and self-mastery. SMARTMOMENTS® provides a system of learning that is sequential—through the use of CD's, workbooks, journals, self-assessment tools, and coaching. Using the SMARTMOMENTS® model, individuals have the opportunity to explore different ways to approach their lives, allowing them to see change, indeed transformation, as possible.

SMARTMOMENTS®' franchises are affordably priced with a user-friendly back office system covering every step-by-step detail.

SMARTMOMENTS®