

Empowerment

Chapter 5 (of 10)—Expectation & Nonresistance

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Before I left last week, Myron told me that today's lesson would both lighten my load as well as expand my horizons which would be welcome information to say the least. Although I have tremendous responsibilities and most of the time I'm under a lot of stress, all-in-all I have a great life. My company is successful, my wife and I have two beautiful, happy children, I have great friends and I have good health. So I have to ask myself, why is my relationship with Myron such a boon to my existence?

Over and above trying to understand these new concepts, I'm fifty years old and although I've been extremely fortunate in my life, I'm starting to realize that there is more to life than what I previously believed. I attended a seminar recently and the person leading it had us do an exercise whereby we closed our eyes and pretended we were lying on a hospital bed. The lights were turned down low; we were to pretend we were all alone and had only three minutes to live. We were asked to quickly review our life and the question was then posed, "how do you feel about it?" And you know what? I didn't feel so hot. In fact, tears welled up in my eyes when I thought about all the things I wanted to do but never got around to it. I thought about all the places I wanted to take my family but was too busy building my business and I thought about the dreams I once had when I was younger which seemed to fall by the wayside as I had gotten older.

My experience at that seminar has made me realize that my meeting Myron was very fortuitous. As I pulled in front of his house, I saw him trimming some bushes which was pretty impressive for a man of his years.

As I approached him he greeted me warmly "Good morning Robert, how are you doing this fine day?"

"I'm doing great, sir. I'm surprised you haven't hired somebody to do your yard work."

"Oh hell, I've never found anybody that could do the job nearly as well as me. I do all the yard work myself; can't you see how young it makes me look?" Myron gave me a big smile and let out one of his trademark laughs. I realized that this was the perfect opportunity to ask him something I've wanted to know since I met him but felt uncomfortable asking. "Exactly how old are you, Myron?"

He lowered the clippers and looked at me, "How *young* do you think I am?"

OK, I asked for it. How do I tactfully get myself out of this one? "I'm going to say... seventy." It came out sounding like a question.

"Humph. Not even close," he said and went back to trimming the hedge.

"Eighty?" I asked, now certain if I done the right thing.

He lowered the clippers once again and turned to me. "You're getting warmer. I'm going to be ninety-seven years young next month," he bowed as he said it.

My mouth dropped open in astonishment and all I could say was, "Wow."

"What are we jawing out here for? Let's get some tea and go to work."

As I sank down into that couch which I'd grown to love, Myron poured me a nice hot cup of our traditional green tea.

"Robert, today we're going to talk about a couple of things that will definitely lighten the load. As a warrior, you might think that life is all about fighting reality, but nothing could be farther from the truth. In fact, a warrior's life is easier than most because of their perspective."

Myron then began searching through the hundreds of books that occupied his bookshelf, floor and desk. “Aha, there it is.” Finding what he was looking for he removed an old-looking leather bound book from one of the shelves.

“Robert this little book is called the *Tao Te Ching* which was written by Taoist sage by the name of Lao Tzu in the 6th century BC and translated by a brilliant author by the name of Stephen Mitchell. Lao Tzu had never intended to document his wisdom, however, when he was making his way to the mountains to die, he was held captive at the border by the ruler of China until he wrote all of what he knew of life.” He opened the book to a marked section. “His writings contained 81 precepts. In his 2nd precept, Lao Tzu writes,” as he reads aloud:

“When people see some things as beautiful, other things become ugly. When people see some things as good, other things become bad.”

Being and non-being create each other. Difficult and easy support each other. Long and short define each other. High and low depend on each other. Before and after follow each other.

Therefore the Master acts without doing anything and teaches without saying anything. Things arise and he lets them come; things disappear and he lets them go. He has but doesn't possess, acts but doesn't expect. When his work is done, he forgets it. That is why it lasts forever.”

He closed the book and looked up at me, “I have read this to you Robert because of two words, ‘*expectation*’ and ‘*non-resistance*,’ which are the bane of our existence. Unlike many western motivational speakers who preach that one should ‘*expect what you want*,’ I can tell you with 100% certainty that expectation will get you nothing but disappointment and heartache. The truth of the matter is that without expectations your life will be much happier and joyful. Now this is not to say that you don't have goals, because you do, but it's all about creating them, not expecting them because they will come at their perfect time and you don't know when that is.”

Myron began to move closer as he continued speaking, “The point here is that instead of arguing with reality or *what is*, you can utilize another Universal Law, the *Law of Polarity*. The Law of Polarity which is discussed by Lau Tzu states that everything in life is like a coin with two sides; a ‘good’ side and a ‘bad’ side and in many instances you don't know which is which. It's kind of like the story about the sparrow and the cat. Once upon a time, there was a nonconforming sparrow who decided not to fly south for the winter. However, soon the weather turned so cold that he reluctantly started to fly south. In a short time ice began to form on his wings and he fell to earth in a barnyard, almost frozen. A cow passed by and crapped on the little sparrow. The sparrow thought that it was the end. But, the manure warmed him and defrosted his wings. Warm and happy, able to breath, he started to sing. Just then a large cat came by and heard the chirping, investigated the sounds. The cat cleared away the manure, found the chirping bird and promptly ate him. The moral of the story:

1. Everyone who shits on you is not necessarily your enemy.
2. Everyone who gets you out of the shit is not necessarily your friend.
3. If you're warm and happy in a pile of shit, keep your mouth shut.”

With that, Myron let out a great pirate laugh, slapped his knee and said, “I love that story.”

He then winked at me, patted me on the shoulder and said, “See you next week, Robert.”