

HOW TO LIVE

INNER PEACE THROUGH
SPIRITISM



BRIAN FOSTER

Introduction

In the book *Spiritual Wisdom: Missives of Hope*, by J. Herculano Pires and Francisco (Chico) C. Xavier, there is a poem dictated to Chico by the spirit Andre Luiz. It is revelatory.

The poem has twenty-four verses which pertain with how we should place ourselves in a mental state to achieve inner peace. Inner peace isn't a condition to enjoy for a moment or two on the beach after a few drinks - it is a life quest ... a multiple life quest.

In the spirit world thought is action. As a spirit, our mind creates the environment in which we live. Hence the more control we have over our own thoughts, the more calm, the more reasoning, the more loving we become ... all contribute to a true paradise awaiting us when we are scheduled to pass back to the real world - the spirit realm.

The poem is essentially a list for advancement and serenity. For those few souls who have attained the complete set of states listed, they, most probably, are no longer required to come back to earth. They have graduated to a higher level planet. A planet without hate, envy, crime, and war. They either are physically incarnated on an advanced planet, living side by side with others as positive and loving as they are, or at a high level in the spirit hierarchy contributing to growing and improving the multiple universes.

What first intrigued me about the poem is when I read what J. Herculano Pires had commented, he said:

"Those propositions, analyzed individually and as a sequence of events, would result in a book we could label 'The Technique of Existing.'
Spirits do not communicate with each other in vain. Their messages must be read and meditated upon with attention and profoundness." ^[1]

Acting upon his suggestion - the poem is reproduced below and you are reading the book.

Inner Peace – A poem by Andre Luiz

Keep Always

... trust in God and in yourself

- ... a serene conscience
- ... time spent on productive matters
- ... a constructive speech
- ... a prayer allied to work
- ... hope in action
- ... an industrious patience
- ... a dispassionate opinion
- ... the blessing of comprehension
- ... a participation in everyone's progress
- ... a compassionate attitude
- ... truth enlightened by love
- ... oblivion of evils
- ... happiness in your commitments
- ... unconditional forgiveness of offenses
- ... a devotion to study
- ... a gesture of kindness
- ... an encouraging smile
- ... spontaneity to assist others
- ... simplicity of habits
- ... a spirit of renovation
- ... fostering of tolerance
- ... courage to place yourself second to serving
- ... perseverance in goodness

The poem was published in Chapter VII titled "Happiness." After I read the chapter and noted Pires' feelings about the list of desired states, I

marked the chapter with a piece of paper and wrote; “This may be a good idea.”

Years later, after finishing the trilogy of *Spiritism – The Spirit World Revealed to an English Vicar*, I revisited the book mark and examined anew the twenty-four verses. I thought this would be a wonderful exercise to determine if I could understand what the spirits sent us.

I don't pretend to have it right or even close, but just thinking about what was meant by the few words in each verse was a worthwhile exercise. I realize I am being pretentious in explaining the desired state defined by each line; for I have not reached any of them. But, hopefully, I can point a light to the road to begin.

My modest goal is to demonstrate what the spirit world expects us to learn while in the earth life and to convey the benefits associated with the mere effort to attain the twenty-four target states.

The very act of starting to modify your thought patterns and resulting actions serves as a catalyst to propel you ever upward and to enable you to begin the arduous journey to break free of the material bonds that shackle us on this planet. With this first step you will be able to prioritize your life and ascertain that which is important and worthwhile and that which is not.

Therefore, I present to you, dear reader, my imperfect interpretation of the poem, “Inner Peace”. One chapter for each verse.

Each chapter will explore one aspect of attaining inner peace. I shall attempt to describe the end state of what was envisioned in the specific verse and why this state is vital for your spiritual growth.

I will describe how Spiritist literature illustrates the path to attain it. I will give examples from passages in Spiritist books, my own books, my articles from my blog, and from my experiences.

Inner Peace is more than a poem or a list of spiritual conquests - it is what should be the result of full integration into the Spiritist Doctrine. Inner Peace is the result, the summit of attainment possible in our short earth lives. The climb is worth the effort and upon reaching the summit you shall view more mountains to scale and ever increasing rewards to attain in your quest.



How to Live – Inner Peace through Spiritism



By

Brian Foster



<http://www.nwspiritism.com/>

1st Edition

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Chapter 1 – Trust in God and in Yourself

Trust - a simple word but a complex concept for an adult. As a child we had implicit trust in our parents. We literally knew no other way of thinking. As we grew older, our trust evolved, we developed to measure trust out in small increments. In full adulthood we totally abandoned the possibility of absolute trust. We always reserved that small percentage of doubt.

There is an interesting section in a translated communication titled *The Life of Jesus*. It was reportedly a communication from spirit Jesus to a medium in France in the 19th century. The medium was only known as Medium X. The book was translated into Italian, then Spanish, then into English. It was not completed until a second medium took up the work in the 20th century.

While I don't know for certain if this work is really the communication of spirit messengers from Jesus, the message does present intriguing concepts. The idea that we need to cast aside all imbedded beliefs – the stories and cultural heritage of our youth – and look again. In Chapter Twelve this concept is introduced:

“The Soul's freedom is acquired by the Spirit's intellectual power. By intellectual abilities I do not imply the more or less prominent aptitudes for the study of the sciences, but the positive momentum of the idea to the solution of this or that problem placed in the field of the infinite; I care to determine the intellectual power of the Spirit, feeding it with a burning desire to discover the origins and giving it the stamp of an unalterable will to advance constantly, and even more.

Rejecting a belief that relies only on old prejudices and erroneous references to embrace a truly radiant faith in the midst of a Heaven with a fascinating and infinite light is a fact that cannot happen but with the collapse of all worldly aspirations; with the Spirit's absorption of the material principle effected by the spiritual principle of the same Spirit. It is then that the bonds of the soul break apart and now in the possession of its own freedom, it follows the Spirit that is in possession of its own power.” ^[2]

Therefore, the old dogma must be discarded and the truth must be uncovered. We can't find our path by following old roads. We must blaze a new trail. And we must use the messages of love as our signposts and ignore the passages that excluded groups based on old beliefs.

The pursuit of knowledge must be the driving force of our life. Not just the accumulation of facts and figures, but in problem solving. We need to fill our tool box with heuristics ... every type of problem solving, discovery, or learning technique we can grasp. For as we ascend in the spiritual world, we will be called upon to utilize each and every one of them.

We can only achieve this state if our focus is on accumulating spiritual knowledge instead of accumulating material goods. As long as our efforts are concentrated on the daily grind of making money and desiring to buy more, we won't have the stamina to explore spiritual phenomena. We have to balance the needs of our everyday life and devote time to our inner selves.

This will not be easy and it's not intended to be. If it was we wouldn't hold onto our knowledge, our victory – it would be forgotten like an old discarded toy. We must feed our intellectual curiosity and feel the excitement as we discover one more salient fact about how the universe actually operates.

It will not be as simple as one prayer, but will require real effort. We won't be given immediate enlightenment – it is our responsibility to build our base of knowledge. The way won't be tranquil:

“God does not reveal himself to the soul, although loving, it is the slave of a Spirit that operates by request only and not by its own science and consciousness. God then, did not reveal himself but only halfway to the pious woman, but ignorant of the hardships that lead to the joys of faith, that faith without contradictions and without terrors, that looms over all dangers and smiles in the middle of torture, that receives the light from God to fulfill all duties, devour all humiliations, not shy away from all heroisms.” ^[3]

We are being told that we must strive to learn about God and His creation, in the face of unrelenting pressure to deny all rational conclusions

that our intellectual pursuits led us to. Only by being certain, by logically following where evidence leads, can we stand our ground against those who would turn us away from true faith. We achieve this by not believing without doubt whatever we are told, but by analyzing and cementing the truth in our minds by the weight of evidence we have discovered.

This is the type of faith that Spiritism and the spirit realm wishes us to cultivate. While I realize it is difficult to fly in the face of an entire world culture dedicated to commercialism, relative morality, and utter faith in current scientific hypothesis, the uncovered facts are out there. Waiting for the truly open and inquisitive mind to parse.

Trust in God

How does one begin the journey to find a Divine Presence in their life? For me it began with my wife telling me that certain things would happen in my life, with such specificity, that although possible, were not probable. When one event occurred, in which, I had thought was out of the question, it stopped me in my tracks and made me reevaluate my entire belief system.

Previously, I had always possessed a feeling of some sort of a Higher Presence, but I thought it to be remote. Over time, I stopped pondering spiritual questions and turned my attention to advance my career, to make more money, to accumulate more material – house, car, clothes, et al.

When my wife told me that I would be out of a job; the bank I worked for would go bankrupt – but I was not to worry because the same bank but with a new name would hire me - I dismissed her comments out of hand. About nine months later the first shoe dropped. Six months after that I was rehired by the bank who took over the failed bank.

The immense suffering, anxiety, and stress caused me to reevaluate my beliefs. My intellectual scaffolding had collapsed. I searched for how could the future be predetermined.

I found Spiritism, which explained that we are on earth to learn, to improve ourselves, to cast off negative characteristics and replace them with love, charity, fraternity, and honesty. And we must travel through life after life to achieve a pure state.

Intellectually I found my answer. Spiritism explained the spirit realm, how we are immortal spirits who must be trained to become responsible members of the spirit society ... to take our place amongst spirits who create. Create with their minds, which must be free of all ill intentions, who must also be free of any blemishes in their character.

I discovered Spiritism, I read about Spiritism, I spent hours upon hours thinking about the spirit realm, the leadership of Christ and God. I intellectualized Spiritism. I tried to comprehend the procedures and processes, the organization, the hierarchy, and the environment of the spirit world.

While, I felt myself to be more enlightened about why I am here, why the earth is like it is ... I didn't feel the spirit realm. I didn't seem to be emotionally in touch. I didn't intuitively know the feeling of absolute love that many have experienced. Either through their own mediation or via near death experiences or other discoveries.

I read about God. I read everything I could about God in Spiritist literature. The central theme, from *The Spirits Book* in the 1850s, to the latest book sent to us by a spirit via a Spiritist medium – God is beyond our comprehension, to begin to understand God one must start with Christ.

Spirits even in the higher levels of heaven have reported that they too are unable to fully realize the extent of the Supreme Divinity. Passing on from physical life to spirit doesn't come with a ticket to suddenly know who and what is God.

Hence, as scientists, who are trying to understand a phenomena, we must begin with studying the effects from an unknown source on a known object. We must analyze that which is affected and which in turn touches upon us. And this is precisely why Christ came to us on earth. To be the channel, to explain and to teach us how to become a spirit, that one day may reside close to God.

In the book *Among Brothers of Other Lands*, psychographed by Francisco C. Xavier and Waldo Vieira, spirits communicated to them that there is a path explained to find God:

“We can not measure God's glory around us, but we can recognize the divine attributes of God through our love to our fellow man.

As far as it goes, the definition of the New Testament, “God is love; and he that abideth in love abideth in God, and God abideth in him”, carries with it the promise that by living and practicing pure love man will finally attain to the state of union with his Maker forever.

Would we find God? Then we need to follow Jesus Christ. Service with Him, is the real easement of life’s problems.

Good things do not come to us by chance. The happiness and the peace in the soul’s kingdom come from love’s service. When we find love in our heart, Jesus is there.

‘For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also’ – Jesus (Matthew, 6:21)” ^[4]

Therefore, to absorb the love and goodness of Jesus is to take one step closer to feel the presence of God. Only by seeing the love and dedication to people of all types and classes by Jesus, can we determine the environment, manufactured by God, which created a spirit like Christ.

We see in Christ a reflection of God’s domain. A land of love, a deep feeling of warmth and contentment that has been identified by people who have had near death experiences, visions, and fleeting feelings of being encased in love.

While I thought about the spirit world, I felt better, calmer, but I didn’t experience the wave of love until I started to meditate and pray. Until one day, during a Spiritist meeting, where upon a person was talking. I looked at the person and heard her selfless acts and suddenly my body started tingling. I felt my brain focus on one thought – love. It was if a wave of warm water, but without moisture, bathed me and left me clean. Completely free of any worry or preoccupation of the mundane aspects of life. I felt in the moment. I felt bliss.

Later I had a dream, my mother, who had passed away, held me in her arms and I felt once again the utter contentment and bliss of basking in love.

For me, I had to achieve a combination of study - accumulating knowledge about the spirit realm and the immortal teachings of Jesus and the application of love for our brothers and sisters, without prejudices. And

emotion – by meditation and asking for guidance, by opening myself up to help in whatever form was best for me. Only then, intellect tempered by emotion, could I achieve a state to experience, for a few seconds, what it meant to live in an atmosphere of love. And to trust implicitly in God.

Even now, that feeling is hard to come by. But when I do, it's like a breeze came in from a small opening, carrying with it a sample of God's universe.

My trust in God is built upon facts which I know to be true. Facts that only I and my wife could attest to. Facts that couldn't be proven in a court of law. But facts nevertheless. And a state of feeling. An anticipation of breathing in love, walking in love, and existing in love – that I know I will come back to when I am done with my lessons on earth.

For each one of us, that trust may be constructed differently. It doesn't matter what others think. Only what you know, deep in your heart to be true.

Trust in Yourself

To reach trust in God, first you must believe your rational foundation for your beliefs are valid and strong. These core beliefs can be used to interpolate the cause of present and future events, and your relationship with the world. This is faith. Faith built upon your own construction. Not faith because a person or organization told you. Your faith must be in yourself first, in your moral code, before it can be transferred to God and the spirit realm.

But faith can't be left on the shelf, to be taken down whenever desired. It must be exercised. In the book *Our Daily Bread*, psychographed by Francisco (Chico) C. Xavier, the constant use of faith is emphasized:

“In the gallery of venerable people of the faith, great preachers of the Gospel have always been construed as being the greatest expressions of Christianity. However, this has been the case only when these instruments of the truth have not, in fact, forgotten the watchfulness that is crucial for righteous testimony.

It is interesting to note that, of all his disciples, the Master regards most highly those who listen to his teachings and actually put them into

practice. From this we may conclude that people of faith are not only those who are prodigious in words and enthusiasm but those who also display attention and goodwill in light of Jesus' teachings, studying their spiritual content in order to apply them in their daily endeavors.”

[5]

Going to the gym once in a while doesn't produce a newly perfected body – only by a regular and disciplined routine does one see improvement over time. Working out becomes a habit, a virtuous cycle, whereby improvement provides an incentive to exercise more.

Faith is the same. When I was younger, if I read the Bible, very rarely, and I thought of what it said, I would only ponder, not do. The messages of love and forgiveness were not made part of my daily life. I still got mad at people. I loved malicious gossip. The juicer the better. I still wanted to take advantage of whatever situation I could find. And I was constantly stressed and anxious.

I remember one day it all caught up with me. My stomach tightened and I was in great pain. My first thought was to find a tranquilizer. I instinctively knew I was extremely nervous and it was all catching up with me.

I wanted to find a cure for the symptoms as soon as possible. I knew the cause – my own actions in circumstances of my own making. But I didn't even think, not for one second, that I should change myself and my outlook. I was so locked into the culture of getting what I wanted that my field of view was limited to attaining momentary relief so I could keep on striving for material and physical pleasures.

My plight was described exactly by a passage in the book *The Way, the Truth and the Life*, psychographed by Chico Xavier:

“As they go about their daily chores, people must not forget Paul's expression, 'Have faith in yourself.' They should bear it in mind in the sphere of their obligations before God.

Those who live in the certainty of the divine promises are those who have faith in the relative power that has been entrusted to them; and by increasing this power with their own efforts, they evolve with their eyes set on eternity.

However, those who are discouraged as to their own abilities and place their hopes in human promises instead are like pieces of cork with no definite purpose; they are at the mercy of the sea without course or harbor.” ^[6]

I was that cork with no definite purpose. I fully bought into the consumer society as reinforced by a constant barrage of commercials and other pressures to dedicate my life to acquire material goods and to occasionally please myself by spending money.

Without purpose, we look to anything and everything to distract us. But faith rooted in reason anchors you. The barrage of messages from friends, acquaintances, colleagues, and society may rock you but they don't dislodge you when faith hardens like a diamond.

Faith only becomes strong with practice. My intellectual fascination with Spiritism was only the first step. It was only after I started to review my actions every day and examine what I did right and what I had failed at – did I begin to pour the concrete pilings that fully grounded me.

Only then did I commence to cure myself from the pangs of nervousness and stress. I began by listening to my conscience. Spiritism tells us that we are given that great tool from our previous lives. It is the set of Divine Laws that is implanted into every free-willed being. After each life we add more to the set of codes by which we must live. We build up interpretations of how to behave in different circumstances.

Stress occurs when you ignore or rationalize away the dictates of your conscience. The vibrations caused by signals sent out from your Crown Chakra alerting you of an incorrect action disharmonizes all other Chakras, thereby creating an imbalance. Anxiety and nervousness is the result.

The challenge is that your conscience tells you to ignore material gain at the expense of providing for yourself. It tells you to help instead of hinder others. In other words, in many instances, it is diametrically opposed to the norms of behavior in our society and to our own base selfish instincts. Hence, you must be strong to swim against the current.

Once you put into practice love instead of hate, forgiveness instead of revenge, honesty instead of deceit, fraternalism instead of tribal exclusiveness, and spiritualism instead of materialism ... stress dissipates.

Living, thinking of serving others as opposed to taking lightens your load. When I trained my thoughts, not just my actions, to conform with my conscience, I became more relaxed, calmer, less prone to losing my anger and saying hurtful words in retaliation to perceived attacks against myself.

I realized we are all souls on a journey, some of us are more mature than others. Many have not let light into their personalities. Hence we should ignore their actions, as we let the comments of a teenager roll off our backs; because we know they will grow out of their irrationality.

The rewards are great. Whereas, I used to take headache medicine quite often, I no longer need it. In fact, I can hardly remember the last time I required pain relief. My health is better, because my outlook is better.

The small vicissitudes of life no longer control my emotions. I have trust in myself. I know I am on a journey to perfection. It may take many lives and trials, but my faith in the Divine keeps me grounded, for I know that any tribulation that I encounter is sent to teach me – to make me a better person.



Chapter 2 – A Serene Conscience

Nothing is more important in learning to live well than to follow our conscience. Our conscience is one of the gifts we are given that ties us back to our previous lives. At its simplest, our conscience is the set of Divine Laws. Each human and human-like soul on whatever planet in the universe contains this same collection of universal behavior.

Starting with a primitive human existence, we have this in our minds. While ensconced on a primitive planet, we often totally ignore the suggestions and warning signs it supplies us. As we mature as souls and live in a more civilized era, we acquire techniques to rationalize away whatever good advice we receive and instead focus our energies in accumulating immediate satisfaction.

Like a lawyer who has been in the profession for many years, building up a law library, with cases examining each small detail and meaning of the law, as we mature, we too gather judgements on the many shades of grey in which to translate each episode. We gain wisdom, after numerous lives, on how to detect right from wrong and how to react in any given situation.

We "know" what is correct, but we still haven't subjected ourselves to the discipline to act upon our knowledge in circumstances which could lead to our momentary discomfort.

To fully possess the will power to actually listen and act upon your conscience, takes a re-adjustment of your character and attitude. In the book *Times of Health and Conscientiousness* , by the spirit Joanna de Angelis, psychographed by Divaldo Franco, she introduces us to the types of humans in society:

“Careful studies of human behavior have shown that there are three biotypes representative of individuals in society.

The first biotype can be termed as *codependent* . It is made up of conditioned individuals, that is, those who set their goals according to circumstances other than their wishes. They do not experience the personal satisfaction that comes from striving for self-realization. Their aspirations are based on other people’s possibilities, on circumstances, and they claim that they can only be happy if they are loved, if they

take this trip, or have that job, etc. Their lack of self-confidence disrupts their health, they are often susceptible to cancer, and they have a higher death rate than the other two biotypes.

The second biotype is made up of *disgruntled individuals* : those who are angry about life; those who are against it. They are unstable and irritable by nature, self-destructive, and live under the constant constriction of irascibility. They say they feel unfulfilled, that nothing goes right for them; hence, they take it out on themselves, everyone and everything else. They are easy prey for nervous disorders that chafe and make them even more miserable, casting them into the dungeons of exaltation, depression and direct or indirect suicide...

Amongst these are despots, warriors, criminals...

The third group consists of *well-adjusted individuals* : those who are self-realized, calm, confident. There are not very many of them, of course, and they differ greatly from members of the other two groups. These well-adjusted people are candidates for success in the activities to which they dedicate themselves. They are pleasant, sociable and encouraging. Their endeavors are positive and always aimed at the common good, the progress of all. Their leadership is enriching, creative and dignified. This group produces promoters of social development, examples of sacrifice, creative geniuses, seekers of the Truth..." ^[2]

A person is not born into one group or the other, their upbringing, their maturation, the effects of their past lives and their dedication to see themselves truthfully determine what type they are. And no one is locked into one category, each has the ability to grow to be a well-adjusted individual.

The central theme is that only a well-adjusted person has the capacity to attain a serene conscience. A co-dependent individual is unable to listen to their own set of rules. They are a slave to the rules imposed upon them. They follow the herd and find it difficult to pull away.

Leaving the rest of the group implies ostracism and withholding of the pleasures and comfort of groupthink. These people must first establish faith in themselves and not look for confirmation from the outside.

While a disgruntled individual constantly seeks others to blame. They are handicapped to the path to self-actualization until they examine their own actions, morality, and character.

Toward a Serene Conscience

Therefore, the first step toward a serene conscience is to have the confidence to actually listen to and obey your conscience. By doing so you will be swimming against the tide. You shall meet people who will actively attempt to steer you off the road to the light.

The spirit Joanna de Angelis tells us the damage that may occur when we don't follow our conscience:

“Among all the inner scourges that torment humans, producing unnamable afflictions, the guilty conscience stands out.

It insidiously takes root and, like an acid, it corrodes the gears of the emotions, fostering the eruption of maddening inner conflicts.

Arising from psychological insecurity in judging one's own actions, a guilty conscience opens an abyss between what has been done and what should not have been done, cruelly flogging those who suffer its dogged persecution.

Due to their own weakness, individuals allow themselves incorrect behaviors that appeal to their sensations, but as soon as these cease, they surrender to self-punitive regret, trying to correct their foolishness, and being immediately assailed by a guilty conscience.

Perversely, it punishes the offender inwardly, but it does not alter the course of the action's consequences, nor does it make things right with the injured party. On the contrary, despite being an unforgiving creditor, it unconsciously arouses new desires, repeated behaviors, and ever-increasing punishment...

Self-punishment is an atavism of hypocritical religious moral and social behaviors, which do not hesitate to make the wrong recommendation; thus it must be eliminated thoroughly and immediately.” ^[8]

When one goes against one's conscience, it often results in more than just a single wrong to atone for, it sparks a reaction of events that further

deteriorates forward progress. Joanna lays out the downward progression.

First we feel bad, we regret what we did, but we don't rectify our transgression against the innocent party. That would entail embarrassment and loss of face. Instead, we agonize over our mistake, increasing our stress. We look for ways to atone, mostly by hurting ourselves in some manner – as if self-harm does anything for the person we maltreated.

Punishing ourselves for our transgressions does nothing to solve the problem. Constantly looking back and agonizing over the wrongs we may have made doesn't remove the karma that must be paid or help to remove the defect that allowed the error in the first place. Only introspection and a hard desire to never make that mistake again leads to the higher path.

Joanna de Angelis spells out what our plan should be when we feel we have committed a wrongful action:

“You cannot prevent or avoid what you have already done.

Once the arrow is released, it follows its trajectory.

Therefore, determine the effects and rectify them when negative.

If your action was reproachable, take measures to correct it as soon as you can.

If your attitude was the result of a personal conflict that does not correspond to what you believe or who you are, practice balance and stay vigilant.

Weak are all who consider themselves weak but do not put forth the effort to become strong.

If you excuse your mistake with self-punishment in order to appease the guilt, you will soon make it again.

Look at life as it is and your circumstances as they are.” ^[9]

The spirit Joanna goes on to tell us to replace the negative thoughts with positive. Thoughts on how to serve others, how to improve yourself, or provide support for a family member or a friend. Most importantly, take yourself out of the spotlight and think what you can do to make a difference in the lives of those around you.

These nurturing emanations from your brain, serve to ward off others who are looking for validation of their own negative emotions and reinforce wiring your head to look for the light instead of the dark. When trouble occurs, think of others, not yourself. Calmly review the steps to solve the problem with honor and fairness. Whatever the price you pay, afterwards you will feel you have not only survived the episode, but grown because of it.

Serenity

“Serenity is the cornerstone of the moral and spiritual constructs of the human being. Without serenity, accomplishments become very difficult. It results from right conduct and an equitable consciousness, both of which provide a realistic view of events and foster the identification of the goals in life worthy of the valuable investments of bodily existence.

In the frantic pursuit of pleasure, cultural treasures are wasted and are made servants of the lower, perturbing passions, with negative consequences. The more one enjoys pleasure, the greater the need to experience even more of it in order to renew the sensations that masquerade as emotions.

Serenity is the state of concurrence between duty and right, which harmonize for the individual’s benefit.” [\[10\]](#)

Again, Joanna, in a few words, describes a complex process and a noble goal.

To fully comprehend the benefits of serenity we must ask: What is it like to live without serenity?

We all know the answer, for we all have lived without it. Unfortunately, most of us live our entire lives submerged in stress and disharmony. Life is a constant flow of looking back in regret and anger, desire for revenge against those who wronged you, and dreaming of escaping your current circumstances.

It is a state of hopefulness that things will get better, if you can achieve that certain job or object of your desire. It is a feeling of uneasiness, interspersed with a few moments of happiness or ecstasy, which are always fleeting. It is never having enough.

I read a very revealing study about money. It surveyed what level of wealth people thought would make them secure and happy. The consistent answer was twenty-five percent more! Whatever level of capital they had, a majority of the respondents believed that if they could just get a quarter more, they would achieve their goal.

Living with the desire for material wealth and the unremitting wish to gain more is like the donkey chasing the carrot, held over its head with a stick. The poor animal will never get there. And we humans, will never reach a state of happiness, because that little bit more will always be beyond our grasp.

One sees this all of the time. How many of us have looked at a successful person, who has, according to our desires, plenty of money in the bank. They could leave their career at any time. After all, if we had that kind of money we would quit tomorrow and retire to a beach house.

But would we, or would we be caught in the same trap? Think, if we suddenly found that pile of riches. Our attitude would change and then we would ratchet up our yearnings for that next level of life style. A house on the beach wouldn't suffice, we would need a yacht too. And a crew of course.

Once your life is defined by a craving for more goods – it is hard to turn it off. It becomes the central theme in your life. Everything you do revolves or intersects with accumulating more. The status of your spiritual state becomes a remote afterthought. There is never any time to devote to other pursuits.

Turning off Looking for More

What happens when you end the longing for more, and drop your thoughts of righting the wrongs done to you by others? How would you feel if you were content with what you have? How relaxed would you be knowing that you are at peace with all of your colleagues, acquaintances and family?

Most of us would think, I would love it, but certain events must occur and certain people must apologize first. We would love that state, but it must be on our terms. No ... it doesn't. It only takes an alteration of your mindset.

Spiritism tells us that we are all on planet earth to learn. Some of us are more or less mature souls than others. Hence, for a certain portion of the population, they take what they can get and have no immediate regrets. They are immature souls, who steal, rob, seek revenge, plot, and spread misery and chaos wherever they reside. There is a long road of difficult lives ahead for this group.

Others are higher in the ladder of controlling themselves, but still lacking internalizing the Golden Rule. They are trying, they feel guilty when they know they did a wrong, but they are unable to resist the temptation to attain their most fervent desires. They have many lives of atonement ahead of them, but they are on the upward arc and they are usually improving, little by little, in each life.

Knowing this, understanding that we are all learning together, and that some can't resist their primitive impulses, and, this is vital, comprehending that we too have acted in a like manner or worse, in a remote past life, provides us with the rational to take pity and forgive all trespasses against us. Just as Jesus told us to ask for forgiveness for our wrongs, we too, should forgive, as God forgives us, the wrongs of others.

In your new state of forgiveness also comes the knowledge that you don't need to be the vehicle of teaching anyone else the lessons they should learn. The spirit realm will do this for you. Knowing that whoever has caused you harm, will themselves have to experience what they have done to you, will be done to them. The form and manner may be different, but the event to fully expose the hurt they committed is inescapable.

And, you need to realize that their act, because either nothing or very little is left to chance, against you, was done because of a past action on your part. Therefore, take pity on the poor soul committing an error that must be paid back and put into your mind that you yourself would not do the same to anyone else. Be thankful the lesson was delivered.

The same can be accomplished in relation to your material standing. No matter how rich, how poor, how destitute, how envious you feel at this moment; it can all disappear. Your feelings of want are in your mind. You long for a thing, not because of the object itself, but because of how you believe it will make you feel upon attainment.

Spiritism tells us that our life is on a predetermined path. A blueprint tailored for us to set the scene for us to learn the lessons we required. Our state of wealth, number of homes, cars, or lack of – should be viewed as learning materials. They are merely objects around us to facilitate our classroom experience.

In an elementary classroom, there are crayons, scissors, glue, paper, books, and puzzles that serve to stimulate the young pupils to acquire the knowledge the teacher is imparting to them. We are no different.

We live in a specific house, with a mortgage, for a specific reason. We have a new or beat-up old car for a specific reason. We are in our career, on an upward or downward path for a specific reason. It is all there to provide the surrounding scenery to enable us to accumulate new knowledge. Not facts and figures, but emotional wisdom. Events that are meant to shape our character and transform our personality ... because, what do you have when you discharge your physical body? Only yourself. And that is all you require in the spirit world.

Hence, take stock of what you have or don't have and be at rest. Most likely, you are exactly where you are meant to be at this precise moment. Be at peace with it. Wear your material circumstances like a comfortable robe. Feel the warmth of the love from your spirit guides and recognize the great favor that has and is being done for you.

Attainment of Serenity

“With a serene conscience, one can face every situation with poise and never fall apart emotionally. Occurrences, people and existential phenomena are seen on their true levels of importance and do not become a cause of distress, no matter how bad they may seem.

Serene individuals are content because they have overcome attachments and detachments, illusions and desires, maintaining harmony in any situation. Balanced, they are not victims of extremes; they choose the *middle path* with firm, unwavering determination.” [\[11\]](#)

The peaks and valleys of life are always temporary. Avoid hubris and self-pity. Merely acknowledge the circumstances and analyze what you should have absorbed from that valuable lesson.

The spirit Joanna de Angelis presents the gift of a serene conscience as a human being at rest, at peace, at harmony with themselves, their surroundings, and their possessions. The certainty that God, Christ, and a band of spirits who watch over you, have your personal growth in mind at all times, serves to anchor you against all storms.

Bliss doesn't come easy. It comes with practice. I still am not there. I let myself be buffeted by circumstances and by longings. But I have learned, to calm myself, to think that I should stay in the moment, in which the past is gone and the future is in the hands of my teachers. All I can do is to follow my conscience and try the best that I can. Realizing that the reason I am on earth is to do precisely what I am doing now.

My mission, which is the same for all of us on earth, is to remove my base and primitive characteristics and replace them with more noble aspirations. I realize I am a work in progress and I am certain that one life will not erase my predilection to pride and selfishness.

If I examine myself honestly, I have made progress in controlling my anger and envy. I forgive with ease, whereas before I would agonize, until a great span of time made me forget the original slight that disturbed me so greatly. I no longer thirst for riches, I accept what comes my way. Although, I find myself wanting that twenty-five percent more to make myself comfortable. But, it doesn't bother me, I don't lie awake at night worrying about changing my situation. I accept it, while striving to better myself, so if rewards come my way, they will come at the right time and through my effort.

Even beginning the pathway up the trail to a serene conscience has provided me with immense benefits. And I hope I am more pleasant to live with for my family and friends. I sincerely desire all of my readers to join me in my quest.



Chapter 3 – Time Spent on Productive Matters

In our mind, we do spend our time on productive matters. We wake up, get ready for work, commute, work, commute back home, eat dinner, watch TV or surf the internet (all necessary to decompress after work), and then the cycle starts all over again. We do this in order to make a living. We contribute to a company or organization; in other words we are productive.

During the weekends, we get the required chores done around the house, with some time left over to rest. Well-deserved after five straight days of dawn to dusk grind. And if we have children, our small slice of free time is set to almost zero.

This is the deadening rhythm of our modern society. We eek out what little pleasures we are able - thinking all the while that we deserve our occasional down time, after so much dedication to making money for an organization whose leadership thinks little or not at all about us.

Such is the kernel of our modern lives. Now I exaggerate the monotony and for many people, who truly enjoy their work and the balance of their lives, I am completely off the mark. But what I wish to emphasize is the daily routine, in which we trade our time and talent for money.

Our notion of time spent on productive matters is centrally focused on this trade of time for a reward. The more our time is worth - the more profit that can be made from our labor - the more recompense. As we trade our time, during the work day, we engage in many conversations, meetings, and interactions with others - most deal with the task at hand or pleasantries to grease the daily effort to hit the targeted goal.

Is this what the spirit realm means by "Time spent on productive matters"? First, we must explore what the spirit world considers productive use of time.

Work

There is a revealing chapter titled "Work" in the book *Thought & Life* by the spirit Emmanuel, psychographed by Francisco C. Xavier, which illustrates the role work plays in our physical and spiritual existences:

“If we wish to mentally register the light of Higher Planes, we must be willing to embrace work as our daily sustenance.

In the past, we looked upon work as something belonging to the lower classes or to condemned slaves.

Schools, the arts, housework, industry and farming were previously assigned to slaves while the supposedly free lived in a state of comfortable idleness. Today, however, we know the law of work is the path to freedom. Without this law the mental world would fall into slumber and stagnation. To flee its dictates is like stepping to the roadside to watch the traffic of evolution pass, leaving behind all those who chose the illusion of laziness.

The man who practices deception will not only suffer for the unfortunate act of stealing what belongs to the General Good, he will regret the misfortune of having prepared for himself a prison cell that stifles his best spiritual faculties. The lower regions are a beehive of activity.

Beyond the obligation to work principle, though we are remunerated, we must reach a point where we feel the pleasure to serve.

In the natural sequence of our development on Earth, our incarnated spirit is compelled to a continuous struggle in order to survive. Man receives the water, the sun and the sustaining atmosphere for free. However, to assure his physical well being, he has to labor and suffer for the protein and carbohydrates he needs.

Although captive to the requirements of the material plane in which he dwells for a time, he can nevertheless begin to experience the elation of voluntary service to mankind, once he opens his soul to the reflection of the Divine Sphere.

Action transform the environment.

Service transforms man.” [\[12\]](#)

The spirit Emmanuel describes the process whereby we must learn to labor, first to supply our basic needs, next for higher desires – in this act of effort we are creating habits of productive activity.

We see this in our daily lives. The parent who retired, but who must keep busy. The neighbor who is independent, but volunteers and runs around more than when she used to get paid for her time. Most people, after a lifetime of functioning at an aspect of gainful employment are unable and unwilling to slow down. They have programmed themselves to stay busy and useful. They have a sense of wishing to serve.

Whereas, during our years toiling in a nine to five job, we tell ourselves we are only doing it for the money, we actually want both. We need the task and the compensation.

We enjoy helping our friends, neighbors, and family. Usually, when we look back at our lives, the most satisfying times are those of collective effort and service.

All of this sets us up for what is ahead in the spirit world:

“In the higher realms of spirit, work is not imposed on anyone. A person who is conscious of truth understands that doing good attunes him to the Love of God. He surrenders to this fact of his own free will.

This is why in the higher realms he who serves progresses towards the heights of a glorious immortality. He reproduces within himself the marvels of Heaven that surround us everywhere.” ^[13]

Therefore, productive use of time is more than gainful employment, the act of creating an object or serving ... it is the process of instilling the habit and pleasure of effort spent for the benefit of others; outside of our own enjoyment. Although we derive happiness in service to the greater good.

Rewards on Earth

In our quest from childhood to adolescence to young adulthood to middle age to old age – we often start out as lazy children (at least according to our parents!) then we realize the positive attributes of applying ourselves. We finally mature into a young man or woman who knows how to study and pass the tests before them.

When we enter the job market, we are ready to start earning, after all of those years of toiling for a piece of paper instead of a paycheck. We become fascinated with handling our own money and determine to spend it on ourselves. There is an entire list of necessities we feel we must buy to set up

our own household. We become obsessed with earning more to pay for what we perceive as the absolute minimum required to be comfortable.

After our education is complete we step on the treadmill and we don't realize anything else. We construct a laser focus on gaining more wealth.

I lost my twenties and thirties in a haze of the pursuit of more. I have memories of mostly work. Of striving to climb up the ladder of management. I have fleeting glimpses of vacations and mostly of accumulating great debt and wondering how to pay it off. I dedicated myself, as so many others did, in consumption.

I never gave a second thought to helping the community. I didn't sit and think about my or my family's spiritual health. And I didn't have time to let the love of God and Jesus inside me. Instead, I was busy working, ever working; trying to figure out how to increase my wages.

My family shared my desire for wealth and what it could buy. Our lives revolved around finding more material goods to purchase. Happiness was going to the mall and finding something to take home. My trash cans were full of boxes, store bags, and wrapping material.

In the book *The Way, the Truth and the Life*, by the spirit Emmanuel, psychographed by Francisco C. Xavier, a chapter starts out with:

“Now who is going to get what you amassed for yourself?” – Jesus (Lk. 12:20)

Within all human groups beats the concern with making money. The spirit of profit reaches the simplest areas of life. Children who have barely left infancy display a desire to selfishly accumulate things. Nowadays, mothers abandon their homes to babysitters for several hours of the day in order to enjoy the lucrative lifestyle. In this way, most people turn their evolutionary progress into a stress-filled race.

Beyond the grave – the final stop for all who have left the cradle – the truth is waiting and asks:

‘ *So, what have you brought with you ?*’

The unfortunate ones will answer that they accumulated physical assets with which they intended to ensure their own and their loved ones’

peace-of-mind.

However, when their achievements are examined, they find out that such victories are crushing defeats instead. They hold no value for the soul, nor do they bear the stamp of lasting goods.” ^[14]

If I had not discovered Spiritism, with the help and guidance of my spirit mentors, I would have answered, “I have brought absolutely nothing, except regrets.”

I would have spent my entire life in the same cycle that I started out of college. Desperately thinking of how to earn more, because of my tendency to continue spending more than I earned. After all, the only happiness I could think of was the pleasure that money could attain.

I was one of the billions on our planet who have been educated and lured into the consumer society. Where God, devotion, spirituality, and living frugally are frowned upon and ridiculed. Thanks heavens for those who had the strength to live outside of the vast and wide treadmill of buy, buy, and buy more to be examples of what life could be; free of excessive encumbrances.

While I understand the desire to accumulate to provide for the needs of your loved ones, we must think about what receiving something for nothing entails. Working hard to achieve a goal places the attainment at a higher level. If you buy your daughter a car, then the car becomes just an object that can be replaced. But if your daughter found odd jobs, worked hard during the summer, and saved for years to afford a car, then she can see, every day, what real work brings.

Real work brought her a car, but more importantly it taught her the lesson that applying dedication and perseverance brings victory. She will now hold her car as more than a hulk of steel and technology that can be easily replaced – but as a reward for her sweat. She will evaluate that car in relation to the effort she put into it. She will be proud of her accomplishment.

I bought a smart phone for my son. He put his phone in his jacket pocket and left his jacket on the ground. It was an expensive iPhone. The jacket and the phone were both stolen. Then I made the mistake of replacing the iPhone with another one. Months later he was paddle boarding

on the water, and, of course he had his phone on him, fell into the water, thereby wasting one more phone. It didn't seem to bother him, since dad would buy another one.

Unfortunately for him, I got a little smarter, I found an old phone, not a smart phone, it was only good for calling and texting, and gave it to him. Telling him that he would have to earn the money to buy what he wanted. A week later, a friend of his accidentally kicked the old phone off the dock. Although why he would leave a phone on a dock is beyond me.

He was given a great gift, he could now experience life without a mobile phone, just like how I grew up. He found a job and earned the money to buy a phone he wanted. He takes better care of it than he did the ones I purchased. When I mentioned how carefully he treated his new phone, he told me that he had too because he bought it! We both laughed.

The moral of the story is that giving something away without cost could be the worst thing you could do. We are not meant to live on earth without earning our keep, without understanding that anything worth owning is worth working for. If we are given a gift, it may be a welcome diversion, but it doesn't become precious in the same manner that we cherish that which we labored hard to attain.

The spirit world fervently desires us to comprehend that effort, not just the act of working, but the satisfaction of a job well done and the pleasure of seeing the results is a gift. This insight should be ingrained into our character, because it will be a prerequisite for advancing in the spirit hierarchy.

Productive Balance

The complicated process, at least for me, was in learning how to be productive in working for a living and in spiritual growth. I fully recognize that many, more enlightened people, completely understand the need to allocate time and space for spiritual enlightenment. Regrettably, I was not one of those.

First, for those who have been hardworking and productive throughout their career and have made a substantial amount of money – there is nothing to be ashamed about. As long as you gained it honorably. Spiritism tells us:

“Money does not imply evil. Instead, the Apostle to the Gentiles explains that the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. People are not to be condemned for their financial wealth but for their incorrect use of it, for it is by means of the obsession of ownership that pride and idleness – those two ghouls of human misfortune – set up shop within souls, thus compelling them to wander away from the light eternal.

The money that comes into your hands in the correct way, which only your conscience can examine under the divine light, is a friend looking for your wholesome guidance and humanitarian counsel. You will answer to God for the guidance you have given it; but woe to you if you have used this beneficial power in the dark edifice of iniquity.” ^[15]

Hence, use your capital wisely and not for any nefarious purposes and you are free to live in any or as many houses you wish and drive multiple cars – don’t feel guilty. Your monetary success was all part of the plan, and if you are still the nice and humble person you have always been – then you are victorious beyond measure.

As for me, I never had that problem. A plethora of riches was not part of my life plan this time around. I was born into middle class and I will most probably exit middle class. Not a bad place to be. It means I have had to learn to constantly hustle for my wages. I never had the luxury to sit idle and wait for the next opportunity. When one job ended, I had to quickly find another.

My problem was that in the pursuit of living from paycheck to paycheck, I felt that I had no time for anything else. Of course, I actually did ... it was all a matter of priorities. I chose to rest and reward myself for working hard – not thinking of anything else but my current desire.

I truly believe the spirit world knew they were working with a stubborn and materially focused person. They read my personality perfectly and realized that subtle hints wouldn’t force me to expand my horizon to become spiritually aware.

Even marrying a woman who was kind, gentle, gracious, and religious didn’t deter me from my single minded dedication to material yearnings. My poor wife, who had to put up with me, was raised a good Catholic girl and had to teach me to make the sign of the cross with the correct hand

motions, so she wouldn't be embarrassed when I met her parents. It's harder to learn for a left-handed person than most people appreciate, since I have the tendency to take whatever people show me and do the opposite. I found if I did the motions fast enough, no error would be detected.

Hence, I had to be shocked. And I was. I have written about this before, but to summarize, a future event was foretold to me with great detail. Such specificity as to make it most improbable that it could be a random guess of what would happen more than nine to ten months in the future. And my wife told me she was given this prediction more than ten years before we were married.

From that seed, my spare time was taken up in research and discovery of predestination. My spare time, once dedicated to mindless watching of TV or equally mundane pastimes, was now totally concentrated on learning how could my life be planned out and what does that mean to my entire mental foundation and philosophy.

Through this endeavor I found Spiritism, or rather, I was led to find Spiritism. I didn't know it yet, but my life was changed.

Finding out that an entire other world was regulating and watching us didn't consciously lead me to portion out my day between material and spiritual endeavors. What occurred was a natural progression.

As I read and made the teachings of the Spiritist Doctrine a part of me, the old cravings to mindlessly satisfy myself in front of the television gradually faded away. I found enjoyment in learning about why I was here and how I could fashion myself to be ready for my journey back to where I came.

There is a chapter in the book *Our Daily Bread*, by the spirit Emmanuel, psychographed by Francisco C. Xavier, which lays out the importance of being spiritually productive:

“ *'Walk while you have the light, so that the darkness, does not overtake you .'* – Jesus (Jn. 12:35)

Meditative persons will encounter divine thoughts as they analyze the past and the future. They will see themselves placed between two

eternities – that of the days that have passed and that of the days yet to come.

As they examine the treasures of the present, they will discover their precious opportunities.

In the future, they foresee the blessed light of immortality, whereas in the past, they behold the darkness of their ignorance, the wrongs they committed, and the experiences they handled badly. A crushing majority of people have no other picture regarding the recent or remote past except one comprised of ruin and disenchantments. This compels them to reevaluate the resources at hand.

Thus, in spite of being transitory, human life is the flame that puts you in contact with the work you need to do in order to evolve rightly. By taking advantage of this blessed opportunity, you can learn, attain, accomplish and reunite; you can redeem, correct, reconcile, and enrich yourself in the Lord.

Reflect on the Master’s remark and you will grasp its enlightening meaning. ‘Walk while you have the light,’ He said.

Take advantage of the gift of time you have received by doing spiritually constructive work.

Lift yourselves from your lower condition by acquiring a higher understanding.

Without the signs of improvement and accomplishment as you go along, you will be dominated by the darkness; that is, you will waste your sacred opportunity by turning to unworthy impulses, and after the death of the body, you will return to the same place of darkness from which you emerged in order to climb new steps on the sublime mountain of life.” ^[16]

Reading and studying about a hidden world, an invisible dimension is exciting, revealing, edifying, and life changing. It will replace older non-productive pastimes with a world of infinite possibilities. A universe in which you have an eternity to fully explore.



Chapter 4 – A Constructive Speech

How often do we really speak constructively? Meaning, communicating on a topic that is meant to help, guide, or enlighten a person or organization toward a worthwhile goal. If we look at ourselves realistically, the time spent on edifying conversations is woefully low compared to our daily output of speech.

This is not to say that all pleasantries should be discontinued, or time spent on idle fancies should be suspended – only that if we can't be productive – be at least neutral, not negative in a personal sense toward others.

When you see a problem, analyze it and attempt to rectify it. Whining and complaining about the people who may have started the debacle to begin with does no good. It will only serve to waste time and to raise defenses amongst those who perceive they are being blamed.

The spirit realm notifies us that we need to learn to control our speech. In the book *Our Daily Bread*, by the spirit Emmanuel, we are told:

“The tongue holds the divine spark of the word; however, people usually divert it from its edifying function and place it in the swamp of subaltern thoughts. This is why we see it at the forefront of nearly all the folly of suffering humankind, which is dead set on its petty objectives that lack humility and love.

War is born from the language of unsatisfied criminal interests. Great societal tragedies are often caused by conversation based on inferior sentiments.

People's tongues have seldom consoled or edified their brothers or sisters; instead, they are always ready to excite, argue, depress, slander, accuse and harm mercilessly.” ^[17]

Who hasn't the family member, friend, or neighbor that loves to reveal the latest gossip to you? Particularly, gossip that has been directed at you. They consciously or unconsciously love to get you to stoop to their level of constant agitation. They only seem happy when drilling one more hole into your peace of mind.

There is an infinite supply of people and circumstances to rile you up. The vast majority of our media exists on the precept of distressing people instead of healing. This is why one of the first steps to stay in the zone of constructive speech is to eliminate or cut back viewing news programs. It is perfectly fine to watch or read about analysis on events, but always try to discern the biased view of the journalist. They are not providing news, they are selling. Usually they are selling a concept to keep you angry, so you are motivated to continue reading or watching to determine the outcome.

Reject their view of the world. It is one based upon crass consumerism. In most cases, it has to be, because if not, they wouldn't be paid to promote it. Search out those voices of reason and good cheer, who remain positive and are motivated to see all sides of a story. Look at events from a platform of love and fraternity. Analyze everything from a long arc of learning – since everyone is on this planet with the aim of repairing past wrongs and experiencing new trials to promote their better character.

Speech is Initiated by Thought

“It is a bad habit to cultivate destructive, pejorative, troubling thoughts because emitting them will create factors that facilitate their condensation in the emotional and physical arenas.

Every time one thinks about something unpleasant that is expected to happen and it actually does, it is time to change the way one formulates ideas, constructing them in an edifying and positive manner. Then, one will see that events change, become happier and more comforting.

We do not mean to say that the mere fact of developing an idea, what one wants or plans for will necessarily happen. Nevertheless, the mental wave will act as a propitiatory factor, which will contribute to rendering the desire viable. In addition, one must not fail to invest effort and intent so as to make it real, constructive and edifying.” ^[18]

The spirit Joanna de Angelis provides valuable instruction to not only help us on earth, but more importantly, to prepare us for life on the other side.

On earth words flow out and dissipate into the atmosphere. The vibrational sounds travel only so far and are lost. Spoken ideas are limited and transitory. They mainly serve to set up action or feelings.

On the other hand, words, which are in reality vocalized thoughts, are real in the spirit universe. Thoughts are action and thoughts are reality. Our outlook, ideas, views, and beliefs shape the world around us and place us with others of like mind.

This concept, this eternal truth, cannot be stressed enough. We shall leave this temporary and brief moment on earth and be reborn in the realm of spirits. Hence, when Andre Luiz's poem "Inner Peace", extols us to have "A constructive speech", he is in fact foreshadowing our future. Our destiny as a spirit, is to reside in a land that was created by thought – not by natural forces.

All objects in the spirit world were manufactured by the expressed will of high spirits. Whether it was the mountains, the seas, the cities, the plains, the castles, the flowers, and the evolution of animals – all born of an idea and formed by collective will power and faith.

Hence, to rise, to take your place amongst the spirits who create, you must have control of your mind. The starting place to control your mind is to control what comes out of it ... your speech.

The Road to Self-Improvement

The first step is to stop complaining. At the least consciously pare it down considerably. That is what I am trying to do. Have I eliminated this facet from my character entirely? Unfortunately not, but I try to catch myself, and then I try to think of things to be grateful about.

In the book *Our Daily Bread*, by the spirit Emmanuel, psychographed by Francisco (Chico) C. Xavier, there is a chapter titled "Complaining", it starts with a quote from Paul:

" Do everything without complaining or arguing – Paul (Phil. 2:14)

There has never been an argument that was not preceded by complaining. It is an ancient habit of thoughtlessness to seek ingratitude, moral misery, pride, vanity and all the other scourges that ruin souls in this world in order to organize conversations of darkness, where goodness, love and truth are the focus of malice.

When someone begins to find little reasons to complain a lot, they should perform a rigorous self-examination to see if they are not

suffering from the terrible illness of complaining.

Of course, those who are carrying out their duties on the list of righteous activities will not have time to complain.

The disciple must be on guard against accumulators of destructive energies, because, generally speaking, their pernicious influence has invaded nearly every corner of struggle on the planet.

They are easy to identify. For them, everything is wrong, nothing works, and one should not expect anything better in anything. Their speech is constantly irritable, and their remarks are unjust and discouraging.

Let us strive with all our might against these humiliating mental attitudes. Trusting in God, let us expand our hopes, and be assured that, as the old Proverb says, an optimistic heart is the medical prescription for peace and joy.” [\[19\]](#)

Hence, remove that poisonous sac from your body. Cast off that urge to remonstrate to the world everything you had found to be lacking. But, you may ask, why should I? There are many injustices and I shouldn't have to suffer so!

Here is another great lesson given to us by Spiritism – the circumstances you detest, the reasons that you feel are responsible for your inability to obtain your desires – are all there for a purpose. Each and every large and small obstacle is but one entry in your grand lesson plan – the blueprint of your life, which traces the major and minor events that you will endure. All for one reason and one reason only – to help you improve and grow. To modify your character and personality to be able to enter the spirit realm ready to ascend.

Therefore, complaining about your life is the same as your child complaining about school. You tell your wonderful and beautiful off-spring to stop complaining and learn what the teacher is trying to teach you. You love the child, but you know they must learn how to learn and they must accumulate enough knowledge to make them a responsible adult.

The spirit world sees us in the same light. The courses have been carefully planned out – all with our benefit in mind. A billion variables –

our parents, our friends, our accidents, our spouses, our careers – all have been traced out to make our life on earth as fruitful as possible. Not for our pleasure, but for our education and transformation. From immaturity to maturity.

Don't Give Up

The road to self-improvement is not without great hurdles and disappointments. Restructuring your entire outlook and basic philosophical foundation is not a trivial task.

Think of the revolution of ideas that must have occurred to the disciples of Jesus. In the book *Jesus in the Home*, by the spirit Neio Lucio, psychographed by Francisco C. Xavier, a taste of the difficulty of changing everything you have learned is discussed.

The book records dialogs with Jesus and his disciples in the homes of several of his apostles. Many of the conversations took place in Peter's house, where at the end of the day His close followers would discuss what Jesus had revealed. They would ask for clarification and guidance, and sometimes they would express their frustration in their ability to transform themselves into the vision laid out before them by the teachings of Christ.

In one such gathering, Thaddeus expresses great concern over his ability to spread the Gospel to humanity when his mind is full of conflicting thoughts. Then Andrew joins into the conversation with his lament:

“Master, what will become of me? By your side I am an obedient sheep, but when I am away from you, all it takes is one meaningless word of misunderstanding to undo me. I can't put up with insult or injury. Is it right for me to continue to teach others to practice the good, when I believe myself to be so bad and imperfect? ...’

Peter interrupted and said:

‘On my part, I can see that I am no more than a miserable, indebted and very imperfect spirit. I'm the worst of all. Every night when I go off by myself for my daily prayers, I'm perplexed by the sudden inner courage with which I am embracing my current commitments. My weakness is great; my debts are enormous. How am I to serve the sublime principles of the New Kingdom if I am so insufficient and incomplete?’” [\[20\]](#)

Neither Thaddeus, Andrew, nor Peter felt themselves making dramatic progress. All were frustrated with the pace of recasting their philosophy and re-wiring their responses to the daily trials of life to conform to positive thought and action.

Whereupon, Jesus listening to the hardships of his disciples smiled and told them this:

“In reality, the paradise that we dream of is still very far away and I don’t see any winged disciples here. In my opinion, the angels in heavenly dress have yet to find a home on the rough and dark ground upon which we walk. We are the students of the good on the way to the Father, and we shouldn’t belittle the blessed opportunities to grow towards Him, just as the grape vine reaches for the sky after being born in the dark bosom of the earth, spreading out mercifully to produce comforting wine for everyone’s happiness. If you declare yourselves to be weak, hardened and evil debtors, but are not the first ones to work so that you become strong, redeemed, dedicated and good to benefit the overall work of salvation, it doesn’t look to me like the angels should descend from the glory of the Most High to replace you on the field of earth’s lessons. Medicine, above all, is for the patient; learning, for the unlearned. Otherwise, I think the Gospel of Salvation would disappear because it is inadequate and useless.” ^[21]

Jesus told his disciples, it is the trajectory that is important. They were striving to do their best. That is all that is expected. The fact that they were valiantly trying to re-make themselves means they were performing exactly as they should be.

The spirit world doesn’t expect us to read or hear a passage of how to behave and presume an immediate change. They well know the time and effort it takes to break down old habits and to reform primitive emotions which could rise up at any slight provocation. This is a daily, and often hourly, struggle. We just need to keep observing ourselves and continue to instill new habits of positive thinking and speaking.

Reflection

An important aspect of formulating constructive speech is to first listen. There is guidance on this from the spirit Emmanuel, in the book *The Way*,

The Truth and the Life :

“ But everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger. (James 1:19)

Analyzing, reflecting and pondering are actually all forms of listening. It is essential for people to always be ready to determine the meaning of the voices, suggestions and situations around them.

Otherwise, it is impossible to carry out the simplest task in the ministry of the good. Only after listening carefully can a person speak in an edifying manner while on the pathway to evolution.

Those who listen, learn; those who speak, teach.

One keeps; the other spreads.

In the good experience, only those who keep can spread successfully.

Therefore, James’ advice represents an undying appropriateness.

It is important to remember that, just as people should be quick to listen and moderate with their words, they should be slow to anger.

Of course, each and every day the human pathway offers various reasons to act quickly. However, whenever possible, it is best to put off till the next day any expression of anger, for that will provide an opportunity to examine the matter more wisely and the cause of the anger might disappear.

We should bear in mind that all are born to carry out specific functions. If they always listen, they can be sure that they will serenely achieve the purpose for which they are destined, but if they are always talking, they might lose sight of their endeavor halfway through it; and if they are always getting angry, they will probably not accomplish anything at all.” [\[22\]](#)

The spirit world perfectly understands us. They have lived in the same shoes as we have and they have experienced the deluge of a thousand different pinpricks attacking their calm demeanor. Life as a human entails numerous obstacles raised before us and behind us.

Learning to filter out the trivial and reflect upon the major distractions is part of our training. Guiding our inner selves to the path of perfection is

like flying a jet, we can't jerk the pedals, or the plane will spiral out of control. When we see danger ahead, we need to analyze, plan, and then act. Our action involves speaking.

Speak when you have understood the circumstances, and the enduring effect of your proposed actions. Think through the ramifications of your plans. Visualize the possible future options and your next move ... and your next move after that – only then act.

High creative spirits plan for the long-term. When they commence a new project, they fashion their conception to be dynamic, to grow with changing environments and factors. High spirits, Angels, Lords of the Higher Plane understand the need to approach every challenge with first understanding the situation, the entire problem and the atmosphere around it and the cause.

They analyze the possible solutions, not just the immediate aftermath, but the long term consequences. They build into their solutions the ability to grow and become better.

This all appears to be rather complicated and time consuming. But isn't this exactly what you do with your children every day? You weigh the pros and cons and the long-term effects of every action you take with your child. If they do something wrong, it would be easy to punish them severely, for they would be so frightened they would never make that mistake again. But wouldn't that set-up a general weariness of doing anything else? Wouldn't that instill a fear of their parent? Therefore, correcting their course must be subtle, if the parent wishes the child to retain their ability to explore. The parent desires the child to be prepared to act and then learn from their mistakes.

Imagine if we took the same care for any of our reactions to other people who intrude upon our lives. That we listened to them, understood their point of view and examined their circumstances and reasons for their actions. Then and only then did we compile our response; a reply with the good of that person in mind. The world would be a different place. It would be a world similar to heaven, where love is at the forefront.

Curative Dialog

The spirit Emmanuel sent this message to a Spiritist meeting, led by Francisco C. Xavier, it was reproduced in the book *Spiritual Wisdom: Missives of Hope* :

“Observe the extension of human suffering and make your speech into an instrument of relief and peace.

You will find infirm individuals of the soul around you appearing from every place; some with psychological maladjustments from other existences, presenting obscure traumas in the mental field; others who could not fulfill their commitments, and who now wander in this world in self-loathing; desperate others, who walk the fine line between delinquency and a productive life; and the afflicted ones, almost all of them tied to the process of anguish.

They are all infirm individuals of the soul who must be medicated, first and foremost, with a curative dialogue.

At home, have compassion with your relatives and try to radiate the light of understanding that might establish tranquility and safety, in the work place, as much as possible, transform yourself in a cleanser of bitter confidences, substituting goodness for incomprehension, and blessings for acrimony; in public manifestations, select concepts that promote ideas and opinions so you may not stimulate violence or discord; and in public places, mobilize solidarity and kindness, decreasing the tiredness and loneliness felt by the companions who bear conflicts and trials that you might perhaps ignore.

Do not carry your speech with fulminating vibrations when surprised by the intemperance of others; otherwise, besides not curing the infirm, you will become even sicker yourself, especially under circumstances when facing particular adversaries or supposed aggressors.

Place yourself in the other person's situation and imagine how your reactions would be if someone spoke to you with bitterness and lack of consideration.

The denser the clouds in the environment, the deeper the mental imbalances around us.

The more dissonance embraces us, the more necessary it is for us to elicit a curative dialogue, capable of suppressing infirmities and obsessions at the incipience.

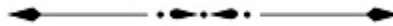
Regardless of the circumstances you find, blend your words with kindness and understanding.

We all know that sufferings, tears and fires of dissent and tribulations are all abundant on earth.

The Lord, however, does not expect from us any miraculous formulae that will immediately extinguish the fires of agitation; however, wherever we are and with whomever we are, He asks us to provide a glass of cold water.” [\[23\]](#)

There is no better survey of constructive speech that I have found than what was sent to us from the spirit realm, via the spirit Emmanuel, to the late great Brazilian medium, Chico Xavier.

The bar has been set high for self-improvement. Now it is up to each of us to determine how dedicated we shall be toward reforming our thoughts and speech.



Chapter 5 – A Prayer Allied to Work

“But the one who perseveres to the end will be saved” – Jesus (Mt. 24:13)

According to the spirit Emmanuel, this quote isn't trying to tell us to just survive until we die, but to live life with a goal and don't waver in its pursuit. Emmanuel elaborated on the message in the New Testament:

“When the Master applauded persistence, he was referring to the arduous task of those striving for excellence on the spiritual path.

It is necessary to eliminate false notions of unearned favors from the Divinity.

No one will be able to avoid with impunity the amount of effort required in the endeavor for self improvement.

The doors of heaven are wide open. They have never been closed. However, in order for people to rise to such a height, they need wings of love and wisdom. For this purpose, the Supreme Lord grants an abundance of merciful material to all his children and confers on each one the duty of molding it. Such a task, however, requires tremendous effort. In order to conclude it, days and lifetimes are required. Many lose heart and prefer to remain at a standstill for centuries on end in the labyrinth of the lower spheres; nevertheless, good workers know how to persevere until they reach the divine objectives of the earthly path as they continue on a sublime trajectory towards perfection.” ^[24]

Spiritual self-improvement is not accomplished easily. It is not a votive message per day or a poster hung on the wall. Effort and dedication is required. Hence, guidance through prayer or meditation is needed to light the road ahead toward spiritual wisdom.

Daily work to earn what is necessary to live and survive takes commitment and discipline. With it, the rewards of physical life are attainable – housing, food, security, and times of leisure. Spiritual growth comes with a different set of rewards – contentment, peace, calmness, happiness, and satisfaction.

And these are the outcomes while on earth. But, more importantly the honors of ascending up the levels of heaven ... living life as a spirit amongst untold wonders and creating your own environment of constant discovery and friendships in a plane of support and love are rewards far surpassing anything attainable on earth.

Result of an Absence of Work toward Spiritual Growth

Before we determine the amount of sweat and toil required, let's look at how a life of little or no effort toward spiritual wisdom terminates.

In the book *Heaven and Hell*, by Allan Kardec, he relates the invocation of the spirit of a twenty-five year old woman who had recently died. She was born into a relatively wealthy family and she had the reputation of spending her time on frivolous pursuits. She was a nice woman, not mean and also not inclined to spirituality. In other words, she was like most people. She existed on earth, and attempted to derive whatever pleasures she could without harming others. A good and decent young lady.

A group of mediums evoked her three days after she had died from an unknown cause. Her death was sudden, no one saw her suffer. When she was called to the mediums, she was extremely confused. She thought she was in a dream. She could see her parents and others in the household, but they couldn't see her. She also felt herself to be two persons. She felt attached to her physical body and yet she knew she was in another form.

The group prayed for her and asked for assistance to be given. When she was evoked a few days later, she told the group:

“Thank you for having prayed for me. I have recognized the goodness of God, who has relieved me of the suffering and apprehension coming from the detachment of my spirit from my body. My poor mother will have a very difficult time resigning herself; however, she will be comforted. What to her eyes may seem like a misfortune was meant to occur and was indispensable so that the things of heaven might become to her what they really should be: everything. I will be at her side until the end of her earthly trial and I will help her bear it. I'm not unhappy, really, but I still have much to do to approach the state of the blessed. I will ask God to grant that I may return to the earth, for I must make up

for the time I wasted during my last existence. May your faith uphold you, my friends. Trust in the effectiveness of prayer, especially when it comes from the heart. God is good.” [25]

The young woman was regretful over her lack of spiritual direction. It was as if a person visited Paris, without ever touring the Louvre Museum, view the Eiffel Tower, enjoy the architecture, and only eat at McDonalds during their entire stay. While one could say they were in Paris, they didn't experience or learn from Paris. The trip would have only been a change of location, without effect.

This is precisely what occurs to millions of souls who pass over every day. They had to travel long and hard through life. The ups and downs, and the chaos and order ... all without profit. For they started their life the same as they ended it – the same character and personality.

This is not a fate you wish to suffer. Spiritism tells us that to be incarnated into a physical body on earth is a privilege. There are twofold more spirits on and around the earth waiting for a chance to come and use the opportunity for growth.

Work for Gain

But Jesus answered them. “My Father is working even now, and I work also.” (Jn. 5:17)

The spirit Emmanuel, in the book *The Way, the Truth and the Life*, psychographed by Chico Xavier, explored the feelings of humans on the planet about work:

“Everywhere we look, we see unhappy, complaining people.

Almost all of them are actually asking for help. Very few love the task they have been given. Most people complain about their job.

Those who clean the streets want to be business persons; those who work in the country would prefer life in the city.

The problem, however, is not the job, but the understanding of the opportunity.

Usually, complaints in this regard are the product of an unconscious laziness. It is the innate desire to hold on to what is useless and ruinous

from failures in the obscure past.

But Jesus came to save us from ‘dying in sin.’ He brought us the blessing of work, which is the unceasing activity of life. So that we may know how to honor our own endeavor, Jesus referred to the Father, who never stops working on his eternal endeavor of love and wisdom, and to his own task, which was replete with imperishable dedication to humankind.

So, when you feel tired, remember that Jesus is working. We started our humble undertaking only yesterday, but the Master has been toiling for us for how long?” ^[26]

We are being trained to ingrain the habit of labor. This is the central meaning of what Emmanuel presented to us. To work is to keep busy, to learn, to help others, and help yourself. To remain idle is to accomplish nothing, assist no one, and to dwell on the fleeting pleasures of life.

Idleness is the root cause of much unhappiness for those who are trapped in its clutches. The poor souls who spend time on day dreams, without any foundation in reality, range from the inherited rich to the person receiving government money every month. Neither class has to work. And so they make the horrible decision to not work.

These small minority of people, for most people desire to be productive and actively seek out work, spend their time creating false narratives – whether conspiracy theories of why the world is against them, their status as a victim, or elaborate tapestries of a dream life coupled with legions of people who are halting their meteoric advance. They all exist in their own mind – their immature character and lack of wisdom snares them into a closed cycle of selfishness and pride.

They only need to shift their focus from themselves and onto others to start to be liberated from their fantasies. Hence, the spirit realm urges us to immerse ourselves in productive labor. By doing so, we take ourselves to the road to self-improvement.

It is peculiar that to not concentrate on ourselves we may start the path to perfection. But this peculiarity explains our place on earth and ... most importantly, in the spirit realm. We are not isolated beings, we are part of a

whole and as such we can't grow alone, but only in concert with the sea of spirits around us.

The spirit Emmanuel explains the true environment in which we live. While many of us believe we are alone and disconnected from those around us – nothing could be further from the truth:

“The soul enters into resonance with the mental currents of souls who are in tune with it.

We assimilate the thoughts of those who think as we do. When we feel, visualize, speak or act, we are in tune with the emotions or ideas of all other persons, incarnate or discarnate who are on our wavelength.

We are constantly attracting or repelling mental energies that attach themselves to us. They will either strengthen us for good or for evil, according to the direction we choose.

In anything we do or plan, or any opinion we give, we are always the sum of many people.

We are the expressions of thousands of persons and thousands of persons express us.

Desire is the lever that acts upon our feelings. It generates the energy we use in accordance with our will.” [\[27\]](#)

Hence, only by working, side by side with others, who are focusing their energies on positive outcomes, can we tap into the stream of consciousness that will serve to bring greater focus and will power to our own ratiocination processes. In effect, we use the power transmission of outside forces to work the lathe to hone our skill to fashion and control our thoughts.

Existing in isolation is like a madman shouting at the people on a crowded sidewalk. All of his energy is dispersed, without any effect. On the other hand, utilizing the mental transmissions of others allows us to rationally gather our ideas and fashion a megaphone to target our voice to be widely heard and acted upon.

This is what work teaches us. To plan, focus, act, and measure our progress. And all of this occurs in a dense atmosphere of mental images and

thoughts swirling around us. As we learn to harness our brain, we also learn the ability to filter out harmful thoughts which deter us from our objective.

This is part of the training we are expected to absorb while on earth.

Use of Prayer

We are not without support in our educational process. Prayer and meditation is our channel to request guidance and assistance. The spirit world has and will continue to invest time and effort on our behalf. Who knows how many thousands, hundreds of thousands, or even millions of years that we have been gestating toward becoming a productive and useful spirit.

Prayer is so much more than commonly thought. Our prayers are heard, analyzed, and acted upon by a legion of spirits. Prayers are directed to different levels within heaven according to the need and complexity of the request.

The Rev. G. Vale Owen, in his communications with high spirits, exposed entire complexes, staffed by spirits, whose job was to intercept and send our prayers onward to the correct recipient. Prayers are not lost in the ether, they are real and actionable. Prayers are precious reminders of our growth on the physical plane to the army of spirits under the direction of Christ.

Emmanuel, lays out what praying means:

“Prayer is a Divine Journey of the mirror of our soul aiming towards the Higher Realm, in order to reflect its greatness.

Prayer is like a live appeal to the powers of the Heavenly Spirit. This appeal may be clothed without words, in the silent language of the vibrations of the soul.

Imagine a mirror turned towards the sun to reflect its brightness into a dark pit.

This is essentially the function of prayer as it reaches Divine Love and concentrates its light upon the ignorance and suffering, misery and hatred present in the world.

There are varying degrees of prayer which begin from the simplest desire of the lowest beings up to those of divinely exalted angels. Nothing is done on Earth without the desire of an aspiration that guides the steps of all creatures.

Throughout the Planet, prayer is the motion that sustains the cosmic tapestry. In the oceans, the ebb and flow of tides perpetuate their own equilibrium; in the plant world, it is the yearning to reach the light to assimilate its elements. In the animal kingdom, it is the instinct of curiosity and inquiry that mark the basic sign of reason; and in Man, it is his natural concentration before any useful enterprise along the human path.” ^[28]

Emmanuel describes the healing and usefulness of prayer. Prayer is the conduit of love to us from God. Through our aspirations we become connected to the spirit realm and others on our planet. With this connection, our actions, and goals are revealed. Our future can be interpolated to determine if we are following the established blueprint for our life – which was created before our birth.

Spiritism doesn't just generalize about prayer, it delivers the details. Spiritism lifts the covers to explain how prayer actually works for our benefit. Emmanuel illustrates how prayer functions in our daily life:

“When the professor plans his lesson and the physician concentrates on a remedy for a certain ailment, when an administrator devises a program to carry out a task, and the engineer works attentively on the blueprints for a certain project, in fact all are using a form of prayer. They are reflecting on their mental screen from their past education, the science of healing, legislation and the progress that flows from the invisible plane with abstract images before manifesting to the world.

To pray is to align oneself with the greatest source of power in the Universe, to absorb its riches and to reflect the laws of permanent renewal that govern the foundations of life.

Prayer gives a spark to the hidden energies of the heart and releases them by the living and image forming power of thought. In turn these images ascend to the Higher Spheres, touching the minds of both visible and invisible entities around us. As a result of this contact, we

will receive answers from the Divine Plane, for the All-Merciful Father manifests Himself through His children who express His divine goodness.

When a person turns to prayer, they touch responsive hearts. Such contact produces reflexes of enlightenment. Through them the Spirit silently receives the influx of the Divine Messengers in the form of inspiration and inner help. These are the sublime servants who assist with the soul's evolution, renewing emotions and thoughts through which one progresses.

The process of prayer is the highest means of interchange between Earth and Heaven.” [\[29\]](#)

Without prayer, without thoughts, we are simply automatons who were born and are destined to return our elements to the earth. But with prayer, we are connected to the entire spirit universe. We exit this planet with our spirit form ennobled ... ready for the next challenge.

Unification of Prayer and Work

In the book *Spiritual Wisdom: Missives of Hope* , Jose Herculano Pires provided further interpretation about each of the messages received during mediums meetings led by Chico Xavier. These selected messages were printed in a Brazilian newspaper with commentary from Mr. Pires.

In one message there is a poem about the required difficulties of our trials on earth. In his quest to provide a more exhaustive explanation, Jose Herculano Pires brilliantly described the needed synergy between work and prayer:

“Earth is a field of trials; and human life is a stage of apprenticeship on this field. We have trials and hardships, which are different from one another. Trials are means of learning whereas hardships are consequences of our past, atonement of the mistakes we made in previous lives. If we are here, it is because we need these experiences; and if we are aware that we requested our trials and tribulations while in the spiritual world, then we should understand that we asked for them because our need was dire.

Guided by the good spirits, the incarnate spirit sees its inferior situation in the spiritual world with exactitude; and it knows that its true and definite world is the spiritual not the earthly one. The struggling spirit understands that earthly existence is temporary and that its sole objective is to prepare the interexistent for the true and permanent life. When on Earth, the spirit is not entitled to complaining, and it must face its problems and be grateful to God for the opportunities of acquittance, reparation, and progress that are granted.

If the incarnate spirit does not proceed in this way, it is because it is entranced by the illusions of the physical plane, which causes it to lose the spiritual vision of its real objective during corporeal life. However, sincere prayer is a resource that the spirit has at its disposal to ask for assistance from the friends on the other side. And every sincere prayer, every legitimate request, soon receives its answers through intuition, a warning that seems to derive from the spirit's own consciousness, or even through a friendly message conveyed by the human telegraphy of mediumship.

No one comes to Earth to enjoy perfect happiness, which we can only experience in the spiritual world or in the superior worlds of the infinite cosmos. Happiness on Earth consists precisely in having the opportunity to face our trials and atonements with strength and determination, and without lamentation as *The Gospel According to Spiritism* instructs us in the item mentioned above. As Jesus taught us, truly happy individuals are only those who are successful in the world towards their elevation to the superior stances of the true life, which is the spiritual one.” [\[30\]](#)

We are on earth for a reason – to grow, to educate ourselves. In order to accomplish this objective, we must follow the course of events laid down for us. We must follow and expand in wisdom from one episode to the next; we must work and ask for guidance. We ask for assistance through prayer and meditation.

We receive our messages from the spirit world via many avenues. Dreams, visions, intuitions, synchronicities, and other means are all employed by the spirit world to herd us onto the right path – the road to the light. It's not easy and isn't meant to be.

Nevertheless, strive we must and never falter, for the fruits of victory are sweet beyond our earthly comprehension. The journey is won by putting one foot in front of the other. Never stopping, feeling sorry for yourself as little as possible, and laboring to pull yourself out of one predicament after another with minimal whining and complaining.

While those who leave their physical body, who are still attached to earth, will watch their precious possessions rot and decay; you will return to the spirit realm with your sparkling achievements, improved character, and bright reflections from the love instilled in you; you shall know the battle was worth fighting. Only then can you help those who are tethered to the planet find their stride as you found yours.



Chapter 6 – Hope in Action

The phrase “hope in action” could be described in various ways. At the most basic level it implies forward movement with faith in future results. It is a picture of a cavalry charge; lancers or armored knights valiantly attacking a position with certainty of victory. It is what all of us have longed for – a purpose, a goal beyond ourselves, an exalted resolution to achieve greatness ... for the benefit of all mankind.

What many of us don't realize is; that is exactly why we are on earth. The attainment of spiritual victory – for ourselves and humankind. Each person who serves as an example of goodness over a wasteful life is a shining beacon which lights the path to ascendance for others.

Many of these small victories by people go unnoticed. The good are lost in the commercial atmosphere of publicizing outlandish and destructive behavior ... but this is only on the surface. Patterns of thought from upright and civilized citizens serve to combat the pull of gross materialism and absolute selfish actions from the “elites” of the world. For anyone seeking a better way, these waves of loving emotions, with bolstering from our spirit benefactors, serve to support and spur on many people striving for improvement.

A slow and gradual change, has been and will continue to occur. More and more people shall be incarnated on earth to reinforce the rational and good-hearted souls. As this tide rises up, almost imperceptibly, people on the fence will be swept along and they will be given examples to follow.

This is the slow-motion charge of hope. Each of us are in the troop of valiant brothers and sisters. We are not in this for one, but for many lifetimes. Each new existence on earth brings us one more step closer.

Joining the Charge

How do we become a member of this regiment of light? First, we must prepare ourselves. To prepare ourselves we must awaken. We must rise from our slumber and look around and see who and what we are and the society around us.

The spirit Joanna de Angelis tells us about the importance of being awake:

“Humankind, in general, lives in a sleep state, in lethargy, and that is why people suffer the worst sickness possible: ignorance of themselves, their destiny, and the meaning of their existence.

Comfortable with their situation, people may complain, but they do almost nothing to change society’s ills, ills that are often characteristics of themselves as well; due to their masochistic need to inspire pity, they bemoan themselves. They yield to circumstances out of self-indulgence and make no real effort to overcome any obstacle that may pose a threat or hindrance to their progress.

Unconsciousness prevails in the modern world because it gives in to immediate gratification, with no follow-up plan for attaining liberating emotions. Thus, society is divided into surreptitious, mutually hostile groups that grow further apart each day, whereas they should work together to eliminate separatist barriers and become aware of their infinite potential for self-realization and spiritual awakening.

But the moment inevitably arrives when individuals are induced to either awaken or remain dead to reality. In order to awaken from their heavy sleep, they must make every effort possible to break the chains of self-pity and unhappiness, self-depreciation and self-disrespect.

Being awake means self-fulfillment, being awake of one’s inner reality and the infinite possibilities for growth that are within one’s reach. It mean freeing oneself from the fears that keep one immobilized in uselessness, rediscovering the joy of living and acting, broadening one’s communication with nature and all living beings, multiplying the means of human dignification and making them available to everybody; and submitting oneself to the eloquent purpose of enlightenment found everywhere...” ^[31]

“Break the chains of self-pity” – doesn’t that describe the cult of victimization which pervades our culture today? Everywhere one looks, groups are decrying their victim status, blaming others for whatever fantasy of failure they have. The spirit Joanna is telling us to discard that as utter nonsense. To stop imposing censorship, whereby any opposing ideas are shut down – instead open up and listen to multiple viewpoints.

Doing so will expose each and every one of us to be unprotected from the world, so we may, as individuals, not robots, discern for ourselves the true path to the light. The road is not through shutting down all communication and living in a closed and controlled environment. It is by living in the world, the planet chosen by the spirit realm for us to learn and grow. The path to awareness is to acknowledge the limitations, the class, the race, the culture, the sex, and the age in which we live ... and to understand that we are here in the exact circumstances we need to be in order to comprehend what the spirit world has planned for us.

Only by the realization that we are immortal, and are destined to travel through multiple lives which present multiple scenarios of opportunities of growth can we begin to feel comfortable with our present circumstances, instead of retreating to a cloister and shutting off the world around us. For if we do that, then it is as if we were sent away to a very expensive college, and all we did was cut classes. Our parents would have spent a fortune and we would have learned nothing.

On the other hand, being awake means understanding our present time and place as being the launching pad for greater advancement. It means we recognize the hardships ahead but we have faith and hope that we shall be successful, because we understand that it isn't our momentarily pleasure that we seek, but modification of our character.

The Path to be Awake

The spirit Joanna doesn't just ask for us to be awake, she has written entire books about it. In her book *Self-Discovery – An Inner Search*, psychographed by Divaldo Franco, she tells us to learn to filter out bad conversations from our mind. Anything that serves to stir up primitive emotions – rage, jealousy, envy, hate, revenge – will cause negative emotions to permeate throughout our body. Hence we become unbalanced and prone to nervousness which leads to ill-health.

Joanna lets us know that “vicious behavior towards vulgar and licentious conversations induces health imbalances that produces gastric and hepatic disturbances.” ^[32] Our own failing to control ourselves leads to stomach and liver problems.

Instead of letting in destructive notions, block them immediately and only allow feelings of love and harmony. This starts the process of re-wiring the brain and eventually better connects our conscience to our actions. Joanna describes the effects:

“Then, the individual discerns about what one must and can do. And, the individual also does not allow one to choose what pleases one but what should not be done. Immediately after one’s discovery on how to proceed, one lives calmly without the shocks of uncontrollable emotions.” [\[33\]](#)

I can’t emphasize enough the veracity of her statement. I have lived it. I know there still are hard times and hard decisions, and emotions still get the best of me occasionally; nevertheless, when you are presented with a dilemma and you search for the correct response in your conscience – once you make the decision – all is calm. The problem is behind you, even though the consequences may still lie ahead, because you have thought them out and have accepted with gracefulness what will happen.

Joanna is completely correct when she states:

“Healthy thinking is a valuable commitment to generate optimism and peace. It initiates a program of right actions that gives birth to habits responsible for a second nature of the being, that is to say, another nature interpenetrated within one’s own nature.

In this direction, the course of time becomes pleasant, without tiredness or irritation, and the resting time will be designated by restorative tranquility that replenishes the expenses of awakefulness.” [\[34\]](#)

Healthy thinking will become such a second nature, that without our knowing it, we will have greatly improved our personality. We more carefully think through our actions in the home and in society. Instead of being a catalyst of worry and gossip we shall be a beacon of joy. When we radiate quiet and loving dignity, it comes back to us in many ways.

The Better Way

Once you begin to feel the comfort and warmth of following your conscience, your actions have more purpose and more effect upon others. Since your effort has greater impact, you naturally desire to do more.

The spirit Emmanuel guides us in the direction we should follow:

“It is time you offered your cooperation in the assistance of others and, as a rule, you wished you could donate the most of yourself according to the circumstances. However, if this cannot be so, give the little that you do possess, to the extent of your wishes, for it is better to offer one’s very least than to deny oneself to provide assistance altogether, closing the doors to love towards others.

If a challenge to humility rises ahead, you will surely entertain reason for such an enterprise for its ability to show an angelical understanding to those who appraise your spiritual progress. However, if you are not capable of implementing it, do not exempt yourself from this or that minute gesture of tolerance. There is more fairness in articulating a meager impulse of sympathy than in abandoning fraternal assistance altogether, for the latter would consequently give passage to unfettered aggression when confronted by offenses and hardships, which are essentially nothing else than manifestations of the infirmities and imbalances in the behavior of others.

Should you not be given the opportunity to offer a day’s work to companions who are needier than you are, offer them an hour to their benefit whenever possible, for it is more beneficial to spend only a few minutes in the execution of good works than to exempt yourself from it, which would arrest the ideal and trust in goodness in our companions of experience and journey.” [\[35\]](#)

Emmanuel is telling us what we already know – to create a good habit, one must exercise it daily. To ingrain the automatic reflex of doing good – one must perform positive actions – even in the face of negativity.

I encounter challenges everyday – we all do. When I write about Spiritism, how we are immortal souls journeying through life after life in our quest for perfection, I encounter incredulity and comments which point out how stupid I must be. Sometimes I feel defensiveness rise up in me, but I try and quickly calm that down. Because, after all, before I was forced to confront absolute proof of the Divinity before my eyes, I would have said the same!

It's not the other persons fault they believe I am willfully ignorant. They haven't lived through the same circumstances and my rendition of my experiences didn't resonate or connect with theirs. God bless them. A time will come when they will be ready to face the truth of their existence.

My failure to reach one person won't stop me from slogging onward. I have faith and hope, that my small contribution may help a few people, who are open and willing to learn about the spirit realm and our part within it.

When I become discouraged I reread the message given to me and my wife at the Seara Fraternal Spiritist Center in Rio de Janeiro, in July 2014. The message talked of bringing the light of Spiritism to America; one paragraph stands out:

“The promise is happening and that seed is planted now, first in your heart, and then in your own country, which will be the beginning of a seed of many years and light. Don't give it up, it will not be a fight that will require little effort. Fight the good fight and in close ranks, marches the best soldiers of the Father.”

I read it and I know I am only planting seeds. I may not see the plant break through the topsoil. But it doesn't matter, that is not my job. I am here to plant seeds, not to harvest. I am trying to perform my duty, my little contribution to the spiritual growth of earth. I realize I am like the person who planted one or two seeds in a hundred acre farm and then would never be allowed to see even those few small plants sprout. But no matter ... I have done what I promised to do.

This is what hope in action means to all of us. Failures will occur, they may outweigh the successes. But, these are all outward signs, for there were no failures inside you. You persisted in attempting to follow your conscience and your compass of love.

In the book *Our Daily Bread*, the spirit Emmanuel gives us comfort that our journey is bolstered by the spirit realm, under the guidance of Christ:

“Jesus is our perennial path leading to Divine Love.

Joining him are all the hope-filled spirits of goodwill, sincere adherents of the sanctifying way.

From this blessed and eternal path come the seeds of the Heavenly Light given to ordinary men and women.

It is crucial for people to be aware of this, so that this treasure does not slip by unnoticed.

The sanctifying seed will always appear in the midst of the most varied circumstances.

Just as the generous wind freely spreads the principles of life among the plants, the Invisible Kindness provides all hearts the opportunity of accessing the path of love.

Nearly always, the divine spark appears in ordinary daily activities: in a book, in an insignificant incident at work, or in the timely remark by a friend.

If harmful weeds occupy the soil of your heart, and if you have already received the heavenly principle, cultivate it devotedly, sheltering it in the garden of your soul. The human word may fail, but the Word of the Lord is imperishable. Accept it and comply with it, because if you fell from the imperatives of the eternal life, sooner or later the angel of affliction will visit your spirit, indicating new paths to follow.” [\[36\]](#)

There will always be signs and signals and hints and synchronicities to light our path. As we move forward with faith and hope we need to learn to discern the hidden directions.

Signs and Signals

Spiritism, which is a doctrine, not a religion, presented that we incarnate multiple times. Several religions, such as Buddhism, also reveal the same central fact of our immortal journey. People who are Spiritualists recognize that a higher authority rules our physical universe.

As we move through life, in this dimension with time to force us to move forward, the other side is constantly in touch with us. One door is closed while another is opened. We believe we made choices, but in actuality we took the road which was laid out for us.

To the casual bystander, it seemed as if our choices were natural, but in reality circumstances were manipulated to lead us onto the path which was

determined before we were born.

As a subtle example, growing up I always wanted to go into the air force and become a pilot. In my senior year of high school I suddenly required glasses. The avenue of making the military a career was removed from the realm of my possibilities. Just one of those things, as people say; I believe it was an example of guidance.

As you move forward, with hope, learn to recognize the telltale signs. If you desire to embark on a course of action and everything falls into place, then you are most probably on the right track. On the other hand, if you are hindered at every turn, then you may wish to reevaluate your plans.

My wife and I wanted to move from our house. Our present house was too small. So we looked for other houses. Each time we found one we wanted, it was either too expensive or sold before we could make a bid. Then we decided to buy land and build a house. Again, we tried multiple times to purchase land – we were always too late. Finally, after looking at the cost of buying land and the cost of building, we decided to tear down our house and build upon our land. Everything went smooth.

The question is why? Why weren't we allowed to live in another location? What was so important about this location? I don't know. I don't have a clue. But I am certain, that for some reason, we were forced to stay in place. The sequence of events denying us the opportunity to move were just too overwhelming to be mere chance (although it is certainly possible).

The wife of couple we know decided that she should visit John of God in Brazil. The visa for the passport, the tickets, the hotel, everything fell in place perfectly, all at the last moments. She was meant to travel to Brazil.

Nothing is too small nor too trivial to be arranged by the spirit world. This is the central truth everyone should put deep into their hearts. We are much more watched, guided, and analyzed than most of us realize.

Go forth in the understanding that our mentors are always ready to lend you a helping hand. They are at your call when events seem to be overpowering and impossible to solve. Your guardian angel is ever vigilant on your behalf. The spirit realm requires all the agents of good amassed on our planet to push humanity one small step closer to a higher level. To a

place where the earth will truly be a paradise. And your assistance is greatly appreciated.



Chapter 7 – An Industrious Patience

Patience is my least developed attribute. I have been told that in messages from the spirit realm. While I have plenty of impatience, which for some reason doesn't make up for my lack of patience. I have always wanted what I wanted now and had no desire to wait ... therefore I forced events so I could grab what I desired. I have since learned this was to my detriment.

Choices need to be made and options followed when the timing is correct, not when you wish it so. This is a fundamental lesson presented to us by the spirit realm. One cannot create planetary systems, ecosystems, and life in general without the ability to pick the right moment.

The spirit realm sends us to earth to acquire knowledge and wisdom. Wisdom is the combination of intellect and emotion – such as love, caring, and compassion – which unites in the ability to apply solutions to complex problems in the most humane and efficient manner possible.

This doesn't mean that everyone will like or even agree with the solution, or that people won't be adversely effected in the short run. Only that over the long arc of time that which has been decided will serve to edify the individuals involved.

In the communications of spirits to the Rev. G. Vale Owen, they talked about the basic conceptual development process for new enterprises, whether animal or mineral, is the *spiral* . Whereupon, whatever was commenced had within it a self-improving mechanism. There would be times of growth and expansion, then periods of contraction, which may seem like a step backwards, but was actually destroying weak attributes to make way for a stronger foundation. Then an acceleration and expansion once again.

This is how we have evolved and how the entire history of mankind has evolved. If the spirit world did not have patience, we would have been made perfect to begin with. The result would have been a monotony of sameness. We would be like the worker ants, never changing, never growing, and never creating on our own. It takes patience to begin an endeavor and let it play out ... only interfering at precise critical moments.

Patience for Ourselves

The same applies to our personal growth. We are impatient for results. We want to drive a car before we are of age and even before we achieve the financial status to buy an automobile or pay for insurance. We want a home and a family before we realize all of the responsibility that entails. We want spiritual growth without the work to earn it.

All of this will come and it will arrive at the right time – when we are ready – if we have patience. The spirit world notifies us of the need to wait, because even if we don't realize it, factors are always at play to take us to that next pinnacle:

“How many times you ask for guidance in the experiences of life!

You frequently appeal to the Spirituality, weighed down by afflictions and disappointments, as if crushed by stones of despair. However, on most occasions, the divine remedy to overcome such concerns is already enriching your experiences in life.

Who among us ignores the imperative need for patience during the unsettling circumstances that assault us in our evolutionary journeys?

Such a simple recommendation this is, one would object, that this reminder expresses nothing else but the obvious, so preordained to everyone in their evolution as the humdrum of daily life itself.

However, that which is evident is not always the easiest to accomplish. The practice of good is an indispensable light in the pursuit of happiness. We all know that. Nevertheless, who among us can kindle it without effort?

Spontaneous assistance to others is a safe foundation. That is irrefutable. Yet, how long will we spend on the complete learning of such message?

In every obstacle to conquer and in all shadows to extinguish, let us engage patience in the service of the heart. Patience applied to tolerance and understanding in all the trials and struggles that the world presents to us.

Progress may vertiginously follow the avenues of intelligence on Earth when it comes to the material nature of our realizations. However, without the lubricant of patience in the machinery of our relationships with each other, the speed in the physical world will frequently do nothing but dry out the gears of our life, precipitating us, rather often, towards instability or disaster, fatigue or perturbation.

If you aspire to find safe directives that may guarantee stability to your home or social group; if you aim at being the most efficient at the work entrusted to you; if you really want to support your beloved ones, and if you effectively want to live with tranquility and produce abundantly, cultivate patience during moments of tribulations and problems that recur on your path, whatever they are, for it is only through the constant exercise of patience that we will find within us a peaceful territory in which we will edify the everlasting kingdom of love.” ^[32]

Jose Herculano Pires, who wrote the commentary after what the spirit Emmanuel expressed above, told us that we live in a culture and time of speed. We expect everything to come quickly. We drive fast, we brake fast, and we never have time to slow down. We do so much, but we anguish over the fact that we can't do what we want. We cry that time is short and that the day is filled.

Pires is correct. We live an accelerated life. We find a delay of two seconds to download a page on the internet to be an eternity. We no longer can sustain the endurance to sit through the opening titles of a movie, hence the film industry is either putting those at the end, or grabs our attention first and then flashes the minimum information as the story begins.

We are becoming stimuli reactors instead of reasoning humans. We have only time for emotions instead of the valuable exercise of analyzing, planning, and acting deliberately. Hence, our culture is one of instant gratification. We can't stand to listen to anything that causes us to sit and ponder. We don't wish to be troubled by anything that demands us to be still and think out precisely what the other person said and how that will affect ourselves and our society in the long run.

This pervasive state leads to the destruction of our ability to spiritually grow. If we can't find the time to filter through all of the ideas and thoughts which pass by and through us, then all we can accomplish in this life is to

give free rein to our primitive emotions, which spill out of us because we feel we must react instead of patiently thinking it out.

Lack of Patience Leads to Dissatisfaction

When you are impatient you are dissatisfied. When you are unhappy with your life, you look for easy (and invariably wrong) answers. The spirit Joanna points out the slippery slope of allowing yourself to be frustrated:

“Dissatisfaction is responsible for many of the ills and sufferings in the social fabric, creating imbalances that could easily be avoided.

By using mechanisms of evasions, individuals avoid assuming their own reality. They create models of fictitious happiness, to which they shift their aspirations, producing and clinging to states of nonconformity and discontentment, wasting excellent opportunities for self-knowledge and fulfillment.

These standards become their goals, although they are unlikely to reach them. In the event that they actually do reach them, they remain stuck in the same state of morbidity and maladjustment because such goals are fallacious.

Minutia becomes essential, and details that differ from what they consider to be beautiful, healthy, aesthetic and happy become highly important, thus keeping them stuck in misery.

Rebellious in character and perturbing in behavior, they belittle the invaluable resources available to them and they long for only what they would like to be, have, and appear to be.

In this climate of discontent, they wait for a miracle that will never occur from the outside in. They do not put forth the effort to transform their outlook and change their attitude from the inside out.” [\[38\]](#)

The spirit Joanna has identified the great trap that we set for ourselves. Instead of seeking the truth within our own divine conscience and in seeking God and spirituality, we construct a façade of what we believe will make us happy.

And what we believe will make us content and fulfilled is invariably material. We believe that money can buy our desires. And if we follow the

full stream of our culture and put all of our effort in attaining wealth then we too can be as visibly cheerful and well-off as others we see in the media.

Once we attain our goal, we find it eerily lacking and believe it to be that we are not following the dictates of society close enough. Therefore, we must have the same brands, the same clothes, cars, and house styles – for that must be the path to appear completely satisfied.

It never happens, because inner peace can't be imposed from without, only from within.

Acquire Patience

The spirit Joanna lays out the plan to acquire patience. It is one of the three legs of the stool which allows our will to triumph in any circumstance.

“There are three indispensable resources that support the will's framework: patience, perseverance and self-confidence.

Patience teaches that while every endeavor has a beginning, it cannot be finished right away, for just as soon as one phase is completed, another challenging one appears, since the individual never stops growing. Only through careful and continuous action can one reach one's objective.

Thus work unfolds peacefully, as new horizons open up to be braved at a later time; one never feels rushed or troubled for not yet having completed it.

Patience is a resource that must be trained insistently to give continuity to any undertaking while one waits for outside factors to contribute to the hoped-for results.

This mechanism is nothing but the result of well-directed effort, a rhythm in one's work that must not be interrupted.

Conditionings are slowly created in the unconscious to aid the ability to wait, quieting perturbing anxieties and fostering a climate of emotional balance.

Like any other achievement, patience requires the indispensable requisites of practice, consistency, and faith in one's ability to carry out the endeavor. Patience avoids going beyond what is required for one's

inner growth at the start, preparing a plan that must be followed step-by-step without leaps, bringing excellent results that will open the way to other possibilities for personal development.

In the tradition of early Christianity, people regarded as saints those individuals endowed with uncommon attitudes, capable of handling unbearable situations and even excruciating testimonies. Over time, various legends arose, much to the taste of the imagination. For instance, it was said that St. Kevin, desiring to pray, was seized by an attitude of ardor and held out his arms through an open window in preparation. Suddenly, a warbler landed on one of his up-turned palms, where it proceeded to build a nest. Two or more weeks passed but Kevin did not move until the little bird had hatched its eggs.

His companions regarded this as an act of patience – blessed and unusual patience!

It is not necessary to reach that degree of patience. It is obviously impossible to live it; even so, the example serves to show that, with patience, the impossible becomes possible.” ^[39]

If one believes that we are on earth by chance and life is a series of your personal choices, mixed in with random events, then patience is difficult to attain. After all, one is only alive for a short time and every minute to live it as you see fit that is denied you, is lost forever.

Whereas, if one looks at one’s life as a Spiritist; a series of educational challenges over the course of infinity – then patience is becomes part of the process. Just like taking your books, paper, and pencils to school, and you wait for the bell to begin class and wait for the next bell to end class. You realize the bell will ring when it does, not a moment sooner or later. You don’t waste energy on desiring the ring to occur, you simply wait and perform other functions. The bell will eventually ring. Of that you are certain.

Take the same point of view to your objectives. Plan and start the work, track and make modifications – but don’t agonize over it. Don’t worry because, whether you attain your objective or not was all planned out by the spirit realm and the very act of the journey could have been what was specified for you for your edification.

This is the open secret of reincarnation. No opportunities are ever lost. Opportunities for love, wealth, greatness, and fame are waiting ahead. You will have to sample each and every one of these. A well-rounded and educated superior spirit must be tutored in varied circumstances.

All of this will come, fretting about it doesn't make it arrive sooner. In fact, sometimes the spirit world will grant your wish, just to demonstrate to you the folly of attempting something before you are ready.

During a Spiritist medium's meeting, the mediums encountered the spirit of a miserly man, who after he passed away still frequented the house he had lived in. He had lived under the stairs of his house, for he rented the rooms to lodgers so he could make money. He had several houses and rented rooms at a good profit. He lacked nothing and could have lived quite comfortably in one house, while renting out the others. Instead, he choose to make as much as he could, for he was enthralled with money. That was his driving passion – to the exclusion of everything else. The poor soul was miserable in the Lower Zone, locked on earth, unseen by his past tenants and still tied to his gold and possessions.

When the mediums asked a high spirit, how this came to pass for the poor miser, the high spirit said that the man was still an immature spirit, he had plenty to learn. He asked to be rich in his next life. He was told he wasn't ready, but he insisted. Therefore, the spirit realm sent him back to earth to be rich, so he could learn the lesson of his impatience. At some point, while trapped in a prison of his own making, he will awaken and cast off his old material ties and begin again the trek upward to spiritual growth. Wiser for the lesson he received.

Exist in the Present

Be patient, for the future will unfold, it has to. All you really have is today; for today is when you will learn and grow and implement the plans that you have devised. Enjoy the moment and relish the beauty of the earth and that you have been given the gift of improving yourself on this wonderful planet.

Living wholly for the future is to not live and to not take advantage of the teachings the spirit world is providing for you today. Yes, you must withhold gratification for today to earn your prize in the future, but your

sight must encompass those around you. Otherwise you may miss a chance to lend a helping hand or support someone in need.

In the book, *Our Daily Bread*, the spirit Emmanuel writes about today:

“ But encourage one another every day, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. - Paul (Heb. 3:13)

The Apostle’s recommendation on daily mutual encouragement requires a great deal of reflection in order to keep doubts at bay.

Let us emphasize that Paul places singular importance on the time called ‘Today,’ pointing out the need to take advantage of the resources in play for the possibilities presented to us during the day at hand.

Many believe that in order to give advice to their brothers and sisters they must talk all the time, making themselves non-stop arguers. It is important to realize, however, that guidance consisting solely of words invariably leaves a great emptiness after they have been uttered.

As occurs in the realm of physical organizations, no spiritual edifice can be built without a foundation.

The statement, ‘But encourage one another’ represents a more important appeal than simply calling one another to verbal duels.

Invitations and advice become more effective when accompanied by example. All those who practice the noble principles to which they have devoted themselves, who eagerly fulfill their duties, and who sincerely exhibit the good are exhorting their brothers and sisters in humanity to take the pathway of spiritual growth. It is to this kind of daily testimony that the Convert of Damascus invites us. Only by means of this constant practice of self betterment will men and women free themselves from deadly deceit.” ^[40]

Patience is an acquired behavior. It must be exercised and strengthened. Most importantly, it should be placed and tended to as one of the supporting pillars of your will. From your will comes everything else; faith, love, kindness, wisdom, knowledge, charity, and fraternity, along with accomplishments.

With patience comes calmness and certainty. Stress will melt away in the face of a poised of tranquil patience. Your body will be in balance and your spiritual vibrations will be in harmony.



Chapter 8 – A Dispassionate Opinion

During the Age of Reason, most commonly acknowledged occurring during the 18th century in England and France, but beginning in the 17th century when the numbers of scientific discoveries started to explode; ideas reigned. It was thought that to calmly shift through the arguments and weigh the pros and cons, then and only then to respond, or to conduct one's own experiments was the correct approach when discussing new theories. Excitable replies and overly emotional retorts were considered to show a lack of intellectual force.

Today, we live in the opposite world. At least in the most visible section of our popular culture. The spirit realm understands this current hysteria will not last.

Contrary to popular opinion, we are not placed on earth to reside safely and in constant peace. We are not here to listen only to what we desire to hear. We are not here to close ourselves off and only read, watch, and listen to what we already know.

We are on this planet of atonement, this campus where we must pay for our past misdeeds and accumulate new experiences, to accomplish one goal and one goal only – improve our character and transform our personality – to rid ourselves of the blemishes (hate, envy, pride, selfishness ...) and instill positive attributes (love, fraternity, charity, honesty ...).

This can't be accomplished without interaction with others. We must be exposed to good, bad, indifferent, stupid, and intelligent ideas so we can acquire the skills to filter out those which are useful for ourselves and society and those which are indifferent or detrimental. To hone this process we must learn critical thinking and get rid of the habit of emotional reaction.

When I was in Junior High, I had a wonderful Social Studies and History teacher. He spent an entire series of classes on being able to discern points of view. For example, he showed us the headlines of newspapers that covered the Hungarian revolution against the Communists in 1956. From behind the iron curtain to newspapers of different ideologies in the west. We learned, through critical thinking, that all news had a point of view, all news was biased in one way or another. By taking his class, through these

valuable examples we knew to take nothing at face value. That we must distill the facts for ourselves, then and only then make our conclusions. This lesson has never left me.

Later on when I was in positions of responsibility for corporations, I saw first-hand how articles in newspapers and magazines could be easily manipulated to push whatever point of view you desired. And, when only reporting a simple story, the facts were incorrect or manufactured by reporters with an ideology to shove onto their unsuspecting public. Trust nothing you see, read or hear – analyze for yourself first, then determine the amount of confidence you have in the alleged facts presented.

Unfortunately, this is particularly true of our media today. Their ability to selectively edit and rearrange audio and video makes it easy to misshape even the most innocent of acts. Hence, the need to be on your guard and to learn to filter all information through your own mind and conscience.

How to Start

Every human has a conscience. It is the set of Divine Laws given to us by the Supreme Being. It is through this mechanism that we compare every action and thought against. The maturity and breadth of your conscience depends upon your spiritual maturity. Your spiritual maturity is gathered via multiple existences on earth – reincarnation.

The spirit Joanna explains the process:

“Reincarnation is the instrument for spiritual progress. At times, individuals must endure expiation when their wrongs are serious, submitting to afflictions that are educational disciplines, whereby the duties they must fulfill are fixed deep in their conscience. At other times, they undergo trials, which strengthen the moral fibers responsible for dignifying action.

Rather than being a punishment, the gift of physical rebirth is a blessing of God’s love. It helps the spirit develop latent resources, like soil that is tilled and fertilized so that the tiny seed may become the lush plant sleeping within ...

Given this reality, broaden your conscientiousness through reflection and act with ethical certainty, surrendering from now on to the duty of

enlightenment.

Never put off your duties under the pretext that you will have future opportunities.

Your conscience will tell you that today, here and now, is the time and place to build your spiritual Self, which must ascend, freeing itself from primitive atavisms and perturbing passions.

Awareness of reincarnation will drive you to progress through love and the good with no alternative for failure, because the light of happiness shining ahead will be the stimulus for reaching your goal.

Without reincarnation, intelligent life would return to chaos and the logic of progress would be reduced to stupidity and ignorance.” ^[41]

We are all in the process of improving our spiritual quotient. Some may find it difficult to flesh out the gray areas for ethical dilemmas, while others, with a history of added incarnations or more successful incarnations will be able to competently unlock the right answer.

Whatever the status of a person’s spiritual and intellectual growth, utilizing your own conscience, ignoring the words and deeds of others is the starting place. We are placed on earth to exercise our wills to trim away bad habits and to reinforce positive attributes. To do this, we must exercise what thinking and feeling ability we possess.

The important point to remember is that pure intellect, or in other words the level of IQ a person has, does not imply spiritual ascendancy. The spirit Joanna emphasizes this theme:

“Currently, psychology is facing a new approach regarding the development of *interpersonal* intelligence, which has to do with social relationships, the observation and monitoring of events, and the ability to discern, responding consciously to the various spiritual states, different temperaments, and care that must be used in the treatment of others, something that goes way beyond intellectual robotization.

Consequently, it is necessary to harmonize emotion and thought, such that they mutually aid each other, with emotion providing warmth to reason, which in turn offers understanding to the *heart* , thus avoiding

remaining on just one aspect of the reality that makes up the human being.

Of course, misdirected emotions perturb one's thought, making concentration difficult and working against the intellect. In the same way, cold and logical intelligence creates obstacles to sharing, to emotional focus, rendering individuals deprived of love and sensitivity. They may express all the beauty, describe all the harmony, and speak of all the greatness of life, but will feel nothing, rendering it only intellectual and lifeless in form.

When emotions predominate, attitudes are embarrassing, and persons simply cannot think correctly or tell right from wrong, creating behavioral problems. *Neuroscience* says that this phenomenon is the result of the *functional memory*, located in the pre-frontal cortex. Hence, it is necessary that, in the festival of life, emotions coexist well with reason so that sentiment and thought contribute mutually to the commitment to happy results in human decision and conduct.

We will conclude by saying that individuals have *two brains*: *the emotional* and *the rational*, which we may say are two types of intelligence, or even two types of minds. The development of both corresponds to the successes or failures that affect human beings.” [\[42\]](#)

An advanced spirit is not simply a computer beyond our imagination. A high spirit also contains love and empathy. Almost universally, when people report their near death experiences, if they describe an encounter with a shining angelic being, they speak of the wave of warmth and love emanating from their bodies.

This is why we must learn to combine the two forces of intellect and emotion into one power. Using our conscience and will, we must study to focus that radiant beam of energy for the good. This is the definition of spiritual wisdom.

Going Forward

Just as we need to exercise patience, to learn to wait for the right time, to not rush that which must be developed over the course of events, we also need to exercise understanding and empathy. Only with these two key levers can we postulate dispassionate opinions.

As one advances in the Spiritist Doctrine and comprehends the long arc of our education on earth (and possibly other planets as well), a sense of calmness descends upon you like a protective covering. The little disappointments, the petty bureaucratic requests, the malicious gossip, all become background noise that you become less and less aware of. Eventually, even the greater challenges are recognized as opportunities to either gain more knowledge or pay off past debts.

The lack of stress, self-induced beforehand, but now erased or vastly diminished, frees up your mind to focus on new horizons. You will find your ability to concentrate enhanced. You no longer have a thousand insignificant worries dancing around your head. All this frees you to lift your intellect and feelings to greater destinations. You can begin to more fully explore your conscience, your actions, the actions of those around you, and you can better set attainable goals for yourself.

More importantly, you can expend the right amount of effort to think through problems and formulate an opinion, based upon the foundation of spiritual wisdom you have built. Emmanuel, in the book *Thought & Life*, psychographed by Francisco (Chico) C. Xavier, provides us with the importance of understanding:

“The farmer cannot furrow his fields without a plough.

A sculptor uses a chisel to bring out his creative ideas hidden within marble.

Likewise, to produce protective mental reflexes, we need understanding as a foundation for the task of our renewal; an understanding that symbolizes dynamic brotherhood; a feeling that is like a magnet in which our best attracts the best in others.

All of us are immersed in our own mental waves by virtue of an existing natural circuitry.

We classify ourselves as good or bad according to the way we use our feelings and thoughts which are electromagnetic forces that either protect or hurt, help or damage, vitalize or destroy. They always return bearing the elements of happiness or unhappiness that we had given them.

When we are angry, irritated, aggressive or rude towards others, we instigate through reflexive action, discouragement and intemperance, cruelty and coldness towards ourselves. On the other hand, whenever we are generous and understanding, being of service and useful to those around us, we create happiness, tranquility, security and cheerfulness that work in our favor.

Life answers us through every creature and everything according to the nature of our call.

Until all beings reach cosmic consciousness, they are differentiated by the light that raises them to the pinnacle of evolution, or by the shadows of darkness from the suffering caused by their past.

This symbolism works even with humanity on Earth; the Sun in its full splendor is high above us, while the dark abysses are found below.

All of us receive inspiration for the future from our Celestial Father and all of us suffer the repercussions of the past upon our lives.

To undo the handcuffs of evil we have forged against our souls, we must seek goodness, feel it, visualize it and mold it with all the resources we can muster.

We can begin by distinguishing the criminal from the crime, just as the farmer sees the difference between the worm and the soil, so that he can lessen the strength of the former and enhance the usefulness of the latter. And just as the farmer works to eliminate all blights to save his crop, so must our understanding find the means to help our neighbor who falls into crime.

To make ourselves humble in order to help, without diminishing our own heights, is to insure the improvements of all and thereby enhance our own progress.

However, only tireless dedication to understanding can guarantee us the necessary balance in the task of our self-improvement. We must make it our most cherished dream, for only love, pure and true, can create in our minds the energy of divine light as it radiates from us into waves on constant renewal.” ^[43]

Emmanuel stressed the importance of giving constructive criticism. Be generous with positive emotions and approach giving your opinion in the fairest manner possible, even while rejecting that which was presented to you. Rebuff with as much diplomacy as manageable. Finding the gem of agreement and eliminating the other points helps to validate the other persons approach to their idea while not actually agreeing with their original premise, is an excellent device to present your opinion in opposition to the one given to you.

On the other hand, be open to changing your mind. Think through what was offered to you and determine if your conscience, heart, and mind sees valid arguments which may alter your own thinking.

Trust Yourself

As you journey onward, learn to trust yourself. When you feel you have established a firm foundation of belief – in God and in the truth of the Spirit Universe and all that implies – you shall more often than not be correct in your opinions. Emmanuel tells us:

“Undoubtedly, there are many people of estimable opinion to whom we may resort at opportune moments. However, we should never discount the opinion of our own conscience, because that divine sanctuary is where the voice of God usually enlightens us.” ^[44]

And this is the most difficult part of the equation – we must listen to our conscience, not rationalize why this or that fragment is fine. To ascend is to listen to the total findings of your inner voice, not just the parts you like.

Accomplishing this feat makes you the owner of your spiritual truth. You become unalterably tied to the Spirituality and the spirit universe. Your thoughts become intertwined with the grace and majesty of the aims and feelings of superior spirits.

This happens because you are no longer influenced by the baser emotions of lesser spirits – spirits who have not yet discovered how to leave the Lower Zone for the brightness and heights of heaven. Their radiations of ill-conceived adventures will no longer enthrall you ... ill-gotten gains are not welcomed in your new state.

Only by being responsible for your construction of your moral authority, directed by your conscience in concert with God will you be able to make the big push to your ascendancy. Freeing yourself of doubt in the pursuit of goodness is a life-changing event. You shall be a wholly different person. A person with a noble aim and countenance.

The spirit Joanna lays out the ramifications of reaching this state:

“Whatever you resolve, without analyzing it deeply, will become truth to you.

Believing it to be true, you will see it as real.

You need to submit your beliefs to the test of reason to see which ones can endure the scalpel of logic and common sense.

Therefore any criticisms and reproaches leveled at you ought not disrupt you and throw you off balance.

First of all, draw up your action plan and make up your mind to carry it out. Shielding yourself with the ideal you have espoused, press on.

Do not argue over your plans and aspirations with the world’s *owners of the truth*, especially those who are particularly close to you, because those individuals are unwilling to understand you, let alone help you.

The majority of them are passionate combatants for their own transitory *truths*, which they do not give up because they are belligerent. Consequently, they become severe criticizers, aggressive sentinels and forceful fighters against others.

Pay them no mind. If you disregard their senseless opinions against you, their slanderous references and acidic comments, none of it can touch you.

But if you do heed them, they will become *truths* that trouble you and disrupt your progress, although you have a destiny to reach.

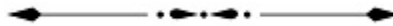
The truth gives balance; it stimulates order and respect for the ideas of others.

Fulfill your commitments, unconcerned with what others think about you, your actions, your life. You are free to act, but remember you are a

slave to what you do, reaping as you have sown. The rest is unimportant, unless you decide to make it important.

The truth always satisfies. So, let its power pervade you, and carry on tranquilly, supported by it.” [\[45\]](#)

Live your truth, interpret the actions and ideas of others through your truth. Give them your dispassionate opinion fashioned by your truth. And above all, love, simply love everyone for who they are, wherever they fall on the spiritual maturity scale – for one day they too shall become a perfect spirit.



Chapter 9 – The Blessing of Comprehension

Part of our trial, our struggle, here on this beautiful and cruel planet is to find God and the Divine Laws He created, by a path of our own devising. We are not allowed a shortcut - we are allowed hints and signs and visions to move us along. Spiritist literature reveals the extent of the guidance and support we receive from the spirit realm. But, at the end, attaining faith in God's plan is a mountain we must climb alone.

While we may have tethers to others close to us, it is up to our stamina, dedication, and courage to pull ourselves up to the summit. Because only through hard work and strenuous effort, by our surefooted reasoning can we build a solid base upon which to hold onto our faith while the winds of society tries to blow us off the top of the mountain.

In the chronicle [*The Life of Jesus*](#), in Chapter 12 (available on the internet) are words that ring true. While I can't vouch for the authenticity of the entire communication, I detect true wisdom and understanding of the state of our plight as humans on earth. This is what a spirit messenger from Jesus told the medium:

“In exercising its freedom the Spirit finds the necessary calm for its faith, the fervor for bold ideas and the decision to direct its own work. But, can this possibly be a complete and lasting freedom? Unfortunately not! – No, because the sad dependency of Spirits, on each other, must exist for the establishment of God's Justice in the worlds in which the destruction of the inferior species by other superior species indicates a progressive march that concludes with man, in the worlds in which the enormous disproportion between the Spirits themselves comes from causes painstakingly defined by the science we have established, a science that recognizes the immutability of the natural laws. Now, it is a fact that the Spirits' material dependency is a law of this world, ergo no one can avoid it, and the higher Spirit that is temporarily here conquers a provisional freedom or saddens on account of the oppression on its willpower. The weaknesses of faith are inherent in any belief held by concessions from reason itself. The weaknesses in the faith are sources of continuing efforts for all those who practice a religion without really understanding it. Fanaticism, which consists of an ardent faith without reason, must be considered as a disease of the

Spirit. True faith is never separated from reason. It points to a personality convinced of its divine attributes and this personality is forced to bow before the duties that result from it.” ^[46]

The paragraph above is dense; there is a lot of information packed into it. In essence, we are told:

1. We have free will, but possessing free will doesn't mean we can make decisions in a vacuum. Our choices will always be limited by the world around us. We must make choices in the recognition of how our decision affects others and society at large.
2. We are bound by a set of Divine Laws. We can't escape the force of these laws. First, we reside on a planet of atonement, which means we live amongst a whole range of relatively immature spirits who are sent to this planet to atone for their past wrongs - karma. Our goal is to become a civilized spirit. To become one takes a walk through the fire of our trials and tribulations. Only by arduous effort, in multiple lives, will we remove our blemishes.
3. Those who are on this planet with more experiences and successes in previous lives are not given any special pass. They are subjected to the same waves of emotion and arrows of ill-feeling as the rest of us. Higher spirits are expected to perform better by being more focused ... drawing on their spiritual resources and history to withstand external forces.
4. Giving yourself to a religion, cult, or doctrine unquestioningly is a sign of weakness and poor judgement. Abnegation of personal responsibility to an earthly organization, demonstrates a desire to withdraw to a life without stress, without physical and intellectual struggle.
5. Faith is not blind trust. Faith is a belief in the extrapolation of what you know. For example, you work with a group of people. You know who is capable of performing well or poorly. You select a high performer to carry out a task; you have faith in that person's ability to be successful. Only because you have seen results before, not because that person promised they could do well. While, that person may falter, which would cause you to reevaluate your point

of view, your original vote of confidence was built upon a foundation of reasoning.

6. Once we believe in the spiritual world and its set of Divine Laws, then we must follow that to its logical conclusion, which entails us to behave in a manner fitting with the Spiritist Doctrine.

True Faith

Faith is not the end but the means to ascend in the spirit hierarchy. Only by acquiring faith, or as the spirit Andre Luiz terms it – the blessing of comprehension, can we begin to truly learn from the next level of experiences which will be assigned to us. The next paragraph notifies us this is so:

“Whatever the guideline cause of duty, it is the result of struggles, of claudicating, of previous faults of the Spirit whose future duties shall be shaped in the same way, based on those of the present. Only very slowly can human nature get rid of its carnal tendencies, but only true faith can convey the thrust of courage, perseverance in all matters, contempt for all dangers and the study of the duties becomes easier and easier, the material life is exhausted when the Spirit conquers new positions, which rises from stage to stage until the complete annihilation of materiality. Brothers of mine, true faith honors the industrious intelligence who has traveled many paths, in which it has surrounded itself with protectors. True faith is the reward of all elderly Spirits, whose intellectual development is not disheartened by society’s moral decay.” [\[47\]](#)

The line of progression and the means to rise is clear and is consistent from other Spiritist literature I have read. But never have I seen the formula laid out so succinctly. I will recast it in longer and ordered form so the reader may process it:

1. Over many lifetimes, through many different types of struggles, are we able to discharge the baser instincts and learn that love, charity, fraternity, and honor is the preferred path.
2. As we behave in a more civilized fashion, we are able to begin the intellectual leap to build a base of reasoning to attain rational faith.

3. Employing our new-found tool of certainty, even in a culture that rejects our ideals, we are given more complex trials. Trials which exercise our intellectual dexterity and readies us for even more responsibilities in the future.
4. As part of our climb, we accumulate methods to withstand assaults against our basic principles and at the same time, we establish relationships with other spirits to create a powerful support group, on earth and in the spirit realm.

This is the stark difference between success on earth and heaven. On earth, there are many roads to the top - honorable and dishonorable. In heaven, the only path is work, faith, and love. We begin as primitive, ignorant spirits, living life through trial and error. Unbeknownst to us, like a kindergartener, we are shepherded through a series of lessons, each making a faint impression upon our immortal spirit memory. Eventually, a realization occurs, a spark of insight that there may indeed be something above us and our desire for luxury and immediate pleasure in life. This flash of discovery propels us to create a rational foundation for our faith, which then enables us to commence a new level of trials and missions on earth (or another planet).

Once a person understands the true meaning of life, one is able to look at life as a string of existences, culminating in an exciting discovery and reward in the spiritual world, the momentary depths, the bouts of disease and depression, are more tolerable. Tolerable because they had reason behind them and all were meant to produce a reaction to promote education. The British says it best, "Carry On"; that is what we must do, just carry on, just keep moving forward, with good humor (if possible) and never stop learning from mistakes and experiences.

This is the true meaning of the blessing of comprehension ... the acknowledgement that we are on earth to become purified by a series of trials. We must walk through the fire to burn out the impurities and set in place beautiful and divine attributes. Whatever occurs to us is all meant to enhance our ability to love, forgive, and to assist others.



Chapter 10 – A Participation in Everyone’s Progress

We aren’t just placed on earth in isolation, but to interact with other spirits and incarnates. We have no choice. Even if we lived on a deserted island, there would still be spirits around us, reading our thoughts and supplying us with inspiration. It is meant to be this way; for in this stage of our education we are expected to live amongst the influence of good, bad, and indifferent spirits and humans of every variety.

This concept is discussed in a translated communication titled *The Life of Jesus*. It was reportedly a communication from spirit Jesus to a medium in France in the 19th century. The medium was only known as Medium X. The book was translated into Italian, then Spanish, then into English. It was not completed until a second medium took up the work in the 20th century. We are told in the “About” section:

“The original book was written in French and was later translated to Italian, and that version translated into Spanish. The Spanish translator was also a medium who received the dictation of the second part in the 20th Century. His name was Ovidio Rebaudi, born in Paraguay, but lived in Buenos Aires. At first he was reluctant to translate this book into Spanish, because he himself had lost faith in Jesus, believing him to be a myth. But a series of apparently unconnected occurrences happened which made him change his mind and he set forth on the difficult task of translating the book. It seems he was a very special person and highly spiritual indeed as he was then used by the Light Forces to transmit the second part Jesus had in mind. He is referred to in the book as Medium XX.” ^[48]

I am not sure about the authenticity of the work, for usually I attempt to find some cross-reference with other Spiritist literature that vouches for the communication. I haven’t found any other references to this material, although the central tenets of the messages conform to the Spiritist Doctrine.

One passage spoke about our dependency on others and its relation to the stage of the planet we live on. I found it fascinating and revealing. Here it is, from Chapter 12:

“The dependence of the Spirits increases relative to the inferiority of the world they inhabit, and I add that, despite the spiritual lights and intellectual strength of a Spirit, it has to suffer more or less deplorably for the shadows cast on its ideal and for the assaults on its convictions in a world in which all religious beliefs are understood only through demonstrations relating to the past, future, present and the honor of the Spirit.

The family of man consists of alliances without homogeneity and without enough collective strength to achieve its objective. These alliances become miserable tests for Spirits honored with a previously achieved elevation in the moral and intellectual hierarchy.” ^[49]

The concept that as we start out as ignorant spirits on a primitive planet, and then are promoted up to a planet of atonement, where we must pay for our past wrongs from past lives in order to learn the lessons we require (where we live now), that we are more dependent on outside factors; such as other incarnates and discarnates, cultures, societies, schools, and friends and family is reasonable. I had just not thought about this aspect of the growth of a spirit before.

It makes sense, for we easily detect the inordinate influence that children have on each other. When one child executes a new action, then the rest follow, what children see and hear around them, causes them to act in a similar manner. As adulthood approaches the effect of external stimuli lessens. Therefore, it must be the same for a young and immature spirit.

In the second paragraph above, the difficulties of a spirit who has been sent to a planet like ours, who has previously lived with civilized souls, in a community where there is a close connection with the spirit world and which follows the Divine Laws and adheres to the rules of love, peace, charity, and fraternity – are revealed. Imagine taking your adult self all the way back to first grade and being forced to interact with taunting, constant physical horse-play, and other infantile games. This is where we live.

Elevated spirits must descend to our world and wonder what the heck they have gotten themselves into. Sane alone in an insane crowd, they must experience momentary bouts of self-doubt and thoughts of escape. Nevertheless, higher spirits who make a great sacrifice to come to earth,

struggle through their lives trying to help others and lift our planet to the next level, are doing us all a critical service.

It All Starts with the Family

For most of us, spirits who are in the learning process and of a relatively low standing, must start at the beginning; our participation commences at the family level. We are born dependent upon others; our parents, our brothers and sisters, and our extended family. While we think we grow to be self-sufficient, we are never far from dependency or proximity to incarnates or discarnates. Our thoughts and feelings radiate and are penetrated by the life force of a multitude of sentient life forms.

Hence, whether consciously or unconsciously, we are involved in everyone's life in our sphere of influence. Although, when we were young our parents were the first who had an enormous impact over us. They held a Divine responsibility to form our character.

The spirit Joanna describes the vital duties of the parents:

“The child is malleable *clay* , waiting for the diligent hands of the potter that will give it shape and content.

The skillful *potter* is the educator that should shape the decent social being, so that it can build a harmonious society.

When the child is capable of leading others, it is preparing itself to lead the human groups later on in life in the different areas of existence, oftentimes resulting in the command of people and nations.

The child will carry out this ministry, exactly as it learned in the beautiful days of its personality's shaping, delicately crafted by the patience and wisdom of their teachers.

At home begins the incomparable work of moral shaping of all the members that constitute it, through the experiences and behavior of the parents, who will give demonstrative examples of the value of knowledge, character, honor, and domestic coexistence, representing the social segments of common life with other members of humanity.

This work is relevant and vital and it should never be totally transferred to the school, in essence, in charge of the instruction, which must

inculcate healthy habits through the teachers' conduct. However, parents are the noblest educators, both for the ethical and moral growth of the students as to the errors that lead them to the imbalances of all sorts that are prevailing in these days of shadow and perversity." ^[50]

The spirit realm, through the spirit Joanna, plainly states that our most important duty is to our children. Not only must they be taught to grow up straight and strong and wise, but they must also be inoculated against our material culture.

Children must be presented with gift of spiritual sight. They may not use the gift for many years, it may lie dormant for a decade or so, or even a life, but the spark will arise and be used by their spirit mentors to guide them onto the celestial path.

And whatever good is bequeathed to them will carry on to future generations. Goodness begets goodness, it multiples and trickles through into other families and places you never thought possible. Even the little gestures, such as one toward a stranger, could have far-reaching ramifications.

Spirit Joanna tells us of an actual event, which seemed small, but made a great impression upon another at just the right moment:

“Incidentally, two children, respectively 7 and 8 years old, were walking to an elementary school without a word to each other, each absorbed in their own juvenile world. The eldest was in great conflict for not being able to communicate effectively with the other colleagues, suffering the discriminations for his humble status and for the color of his skin...

They halted before crossing the street waiting for the traffic lights to turn. When they turned green, both children advanced to cross the street, but the school pack of the eldest child, crammed with books and notebooks, opened and some of them fell to the ground, forcing the child to stoop down to collect them. While he did so in an angry tone, the youngest child approached him, bent over, and while helping the other asked, ‘May I help you? I like you very much...’

They both smiled and left talking in the direction of the school.

After a quarter of a century, when a citizen of African ancestry achieved the administrative acumen in a large enterprise, he declared in his acknowledgement speech after the compliments, ‘I owe my life to a seven-year-old boy who once helped me collect my textbooks and notebooks that had fallen from my school pack as I attempted to cross the street. I was resolved to commit suicide that day, but his jovial and innocent gesture transformed my life completely. Therefore, I have always thanked him for having survived, and now I thank him again for having reached this very position and, in anticipation, for everything else good that may or may not come to be...’” [\[51\]](#)

The man who was grateful for the boy, was also indirectly grateful for the seven-year-old’s parents. If the younger boy was taught to distrust and scorn others, he may have just laughed at the boy who dropped his backpack. Instead his parents instilled empathy and kindness, not merely by words, but with deeds and actions.

Expanding Your Influence

Kindness and gestures of support is one of the major themes that we read, time and time again, from messengers from the spirit plane. Our spirit mentors are well aware of our busy lives and our preoccupation with trying to make a living, but they ask for little moments of caring.

If we are serious to improve in this life, we are expected to assist the struggling colleague at work, to help the neighbor in their time of need, to give a kind gesture or a moment of our time to the stressed stranger in the street. It is through these tiny acts of compassion that we show to ourselves and others what our capabilities for higher notions of love and fairness could amount to, if we all lived according to the Golden Rule.

Every one of us should attempt to assist in the advancement of people within our sphere of influence. And if we all try, the world would be covered in positive thoughts of love and light. By helping others, we direct the focus of our attention away from ourselves and onto the joy of being of service. This is an important step to enable us to explore the satisfaction of serving instead of promoting our own desires.

The Spirits Book , by Allan Kardec, identifies the focus on self is the main hurdle holding back mankind from spiritual growth:

“ 785. What is the greatest obstacle to progress?”

Pride and selfishness. I refer to moral progress; for intellectual progress is always going on, and would even seem, at the first glance, to give redoubled activity to those vices, by developing ambition and the love of riches, which, however, in their turn, stimulate man to the researches that enlightens his mind, for it is thus that all things are linked together, in the moral world as in the physical world, and that good is brought even out of evil; but this state of things will only last for a time, and will change, as men become aware of that, beyond the circle of terrestrial enjoyments, there is a happiness infinitely greater and infinitely more lasting.” ^[52]

This is why the spirit Andre Luiz exhorts us to participate in everyone’s progress. Only by our dedication can we strive to lift Earth out of the chaotic state of a planet of atonement to the semi-paradise of a planet of regeneration. Where hate and envy and inequality are vastly diminished. And our planet is cared for like the jewel of the solar system is supposed to be.

This is not to say we abandon our civic duties or commit violence to change the world. Jesus told us, “Then give to Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s.” (Mk. 12:17), meaning that we should abide by the obligations imposed upon us by the society we reside in. While we may not like it, we have been sent to the world as it is to learn the lessons provided by the time and place chosen for us.

Hence, we should certainly note the injustices and tell ourselves that we would never rule in like manner. Nevertheless, we should strive to be as positive as possible and approach the opportunity to change with our example first and foremost.

The Spiritist Doctrine plainly illustrates that the end doesn’t justify the means, the means justify the end. The practice of violence and evil does not promote the eventual good, it only serves to elongate a culture of domination by one fraction over another.

The effects of spreading love and kindness is more powerful than one supposes. Think of Jesus, who harmed no one, spoke of understanding and

compassion, and yet his words reached the entire world – even with the deleterious example of the corrupt church hundreds of years after his death.

Our little acts plant seeds that may remain hidden, but they are there, germinating in minds, unseen by outward actions, yet thoughts are percolating, whereby someday they may emerge into daylight. And then these gifts of kindness are spread once again throughout the world.

As we perform our good deeds at the micro level, our cumulative acts and harmonious vibrations combined with guidance from the spirit world creates a process whereby transgressions are resolved by future incarnations, lessons are learned, and positive examples shine as a beacon to all.

In the book *Thought & Life*, the spirit Emmanuel explains how reincarnation functions to correct attitudes and behaviors, to eventually herd entire cultures to a superior level:

“Thus, those who trample over the rights of their fellows beings by taking advantage of their position of wealth or social power, will later return to live in the same ill-treated way. There, they will receive in person, the suffering which they created in the hearts of needy people. And if both aggressor and victim do not succeed in ample and reciprocal forgiveness, we will find a social picture of recurrent waves of hatred and vengeance, dissension and crime; a breeding ground for all sorts of delinquency.

Societies of yesterday that had enslaved human labor, must today receive and nurture, as its own sons, those it has driven away from the land where they were to evolve. Invading armies that trample over the fields of poor and humble people, will be reborn as children of that conquered land where they must work for the reconstruction of the institutions they had destroyed.

Segregationist groups who humiliate other races return carrying the same pigmentation they had detested, collecting the result of their own deeds. Aristocrats who are insensitive to the problems of the lower classes, after living in luxury are usually reborn in the poorest sections of the city. They drink from the cup of poverty the repercussions of

their cruelty when, in other times, they had laughed at the pain and suffering of others.

Human society has always been a gigantic filter of Spirits, in which souls learn experiences regarding wealth and poverty, as well as giving and receiving orders. By this process, they gather the harvest of their own planting and either remain at ordinary ground level or ascend in obedience to Divine evolution.” ^[53]

Hence, the spirit realm has a process, whereby, legions of immature spirits are collectively raised, over thousands of years, by struggling through various cultures and levels of technology to acquire the civilized aspects of good manners and to be able to balance materialism and spiritualism.

We are part of the process. We are one of the spirits being filtered through multiple lives, classes, and experiences. And we are also here to interact with other spirits, either by being a tool or a foil in the learning process of another spirit (while we ourselves are also acquiring knowledge).

Therefore, whether we wish it or not we do participate in everyone’s progress. The question is do we do it willingly or reluctantly? If we demonstrate our humbleness and our awareness of why we are on earth and actively contribute to the eventual ascension of our planet, then we too gain immense benefit – not only on earth, but in rewards when we return to the spirit life.

For that reason, seek out those who are trying to teach sanity to a crazy world and listen. Be part of their progress – contribute what you can. Hear the messages of love. Embrace the knowledge that we are on earth for a short time. We are living but one life in a sequence of many. That we are on earth for a reason; to help ourselves and others. Add your light and assist those around you to the dim flame of sanity and civilization, so more can be drawn to it. One day, when enough of us understand that we are immortal spirits with a plan, the world will become a better place.



Chapter 11 – A Compassionate Attitude

The spirit Andre Luiz, who writes with the authority of the spirit realm, exhorts us to possess a compassionate attitude. Compassion, sympathy, empathy, concern, and kindness are all attributes of superior spirits. No soul rises in heaven without these traits.

These are not empty words to these angels, but part and parcel of their character. While, these superior beings are capable of action and decisiveness, of planning difficult trials for mortals on earth, and of overseeing complex projects which could span eons, they do so with an eye for the betterment of mankind. It may not seem so, for those of us in the middle of a personal tragedy, or during conflicts between nations – that everything is planned with efficiency – a blend of edification and effectiveness. To enable humankind to arrive at the correct destination.

We are urged to form the same attitude – to solve problems, to help others, to guide our friends along the right road ... as gently as possible, while at the same time, ensuring success.

Compassion is Not

In the book *Our Daily Bread*, the spirit Emmanuel writes, through the mediumship of Francisco (Chico) C. Xavier, what compassion should not be:

“Much is said about compassion, but when we make references to this virtue, it is hard to distinguish between compassion and lowering oneself.

‘I’ll help this man but he’s an addict.’

‘I’ll help this woman but she’s ignorant and bad.’

‘I’ll take pity on this brother but he’s cruel and ungrateful.’

‘I feel for this person but he’s no good,’

Such statements are repeated all the time by lips that claim to be Christian.

In fact, on earth we normally encounter only the compassion that is comprised of a soft voice and thorny hands.

It dispenses honey and poison.

It puts balm on wounds and then tears them open.

It extends open arms and charges payment for recognition.

It rescues and then pummels.

It supports and then discourages.

It offers kind words and then hurls hostile retorts.

It appeases the hunger of life's travelers with loaves full of bile.

True compassion, however, is the daughter of love.

It wastes no time pointing out evil.

It is concerned too much with the good to trade it for trifles and it knows that each minute in the economy of life is precious.

The Gospel does not refer to the false compassion that is full of illusions and demands. Those who display enough strength to embrace the Christian life find the resources to criticism, and they know how to sow the good, water its seeds, tend to its shoots and await its fruitage.”

[54]

What Emmanuel is saying, is that many of us confuse compassion with wishing well and feeling empathy for a person, combined with trying to forcibly rectify their mistakes and lead them onto a better path. It is the act of pointing out and expecting contrition for their errors that lead us to compassion that is not really compassion, but more of an opportunity to try to change a person, even though they may not be ready or open to your suggestions. Unfortunately, this is often done with a condescending attitude, but I believe that most people are genuinely trying to help, but they can't resist demonstrating their superiority and determination that their way is the only way to recover from a tragedy or blunder.

What we should understand is the root cause of the misfortune the person is going through and their spiritual maturity at the time of their transgression. By analyzing these two factors, we should comprehend that forcing a lesson on a particular person is actually counterproductive.

All of us are at different points in our journey to become perfect spirits. We live on a planet of atonement because our character is not yet developed. For this reason and for the choices and actions we made in our past lives an event will be planned by the spirit world to have a specific affect upon our psyche. The event will, if the person is open to learning, repair a character flaw or at least promote a better understanding of how to behave in the future.

If a person is a relatively mature spirit, amongst the beings on a planet of atonement, the lesson will have a greater chance of success, without our misguided interference to try to hammer that lesson home. A holier than thou attitude toward the sufferer will only serve to cloud the issue and subtract from what the experience should have truly meant.

It is like watching a movie and your friend spends their whole time narrating the film for you. That would have destroyed the feeling that the movie was supposed to generate. The spirit world knows best how to teach us. Let them teach.

If a person is recently graduated from a primitive existence, the lesson will mean something else. It may be more of a hard knock, a stimuli that acts as a warning. Like a slap on the hand for a toddler who tries to run out onto the road. Again, trying to guide the person to the higher meaning of that episode in an abrupt manner will only arise emotions of defensiveness and take away focus from their lesson at hand. In essence, they aren't ready to objectively analyze their actions. They shall be in future lives to come.

Compassion According to the Spirits

On the other hand, compassion with the correct message and subtle or situational counseling will be of great benefit and actually speed the learning process. Emmanuel leads us to what compassion should be:

“Have compassion when you analyze the less favorable behavior of a brother or sister and you will find the right path.

Compassion is the doorway to access the foundation of a solution to any moral problem in life.

In truth I tell you, we are all surrounded by companions who are riddled with anguish and restlessness.

Do not aggravate their suffering.

Some of these companions believed to be righteous, and fell prey to remorse; others confused tyranny for vigilance, and converted themselves into executioners of their beloved ones; others still assumed that affection was built solely from pleasure, and ended up unbalanced; others imagined that destitution should be the foundation of economy, and succumbed to avarice; and yet others understood that divine providence existed exclusively to sustain personal desires, and transfigured their own faith into a scourge to their fellow human beings.

Reflect upon the mistakes to which they succumbed without awareness of their situation, and have compassion on them.

If you cannot relieve their distress, weave a veil of hope to protect them from the attacks by the forces of darkness.

God is the justice present in the exercise of the laws that reveal Him, but He is also compassion in the expression of the love that guarantees His omnipresence.

Those who have gone astray know that they have deviated from their right path without it being necessary for us to expose their shortcomings with accusations and censorship.

We all know in great detail the somber place where our minds dwell when we fall prey to delinquency.

May the sufferings from guilt be sufficient for our liberation.

Pain exists to show us that there is no imbalance without possibilities for rectification. And divine wisdom, which made us immortals, reigns sovereignly at the foundation of equilibrium. For this reason, the Lord has decreed the unforgettable statement to be attributed to Him in all revelations of truth: ‘I want compassion, not sacrifice.’” ^[55]

The vital point of the message from the spirit Emmanuel is to relieve their suffering. And if that is not possible, give them reason for hope in the future. This accomplishes a change of focus from self-pity to a more positive outlook; thusly allowing the person in need to think clearly about the entire dreadful episode and derive the lessons required from the experience.

Lending a sympathetic ear, a shoulder to cry on, a mutual commiseration, or helping instill a new set of plans for a bright future are all ways to achieve a compassionate attitude.

Understanding Promotes Compassion

The first step toward compassion is understanding. To fully emphasize with a person entails an acknowledgement of the person and the circumstances surrounding them. The spirit Joanna explains the importance of understanding:

“Understanding is the ability that best contributes to success in human relationships, because it validates the other person’s positive and negative qualities. It reflects great spiritual development, through which it offers support and guidance to the one who seeks it in difficult situations.

Understanding distends solidarity, providing the necessary therapeutic resources according to the needs of the moment. Without agreeing with everything that is said or rejecting it outright, understanding benefits the listener, who is then truly heard.

Humans are instinctively gregarious and need to be with one another in healthy interaction in order to receive and provide stimuli that lead to their development.

Due to numerous factors, human understanding regarding other people’s limitations and problems has become scarcer, something necessary, yet rare.

Imperiously eager to communicate, individuals look for relationships and yearn to disclose themselves to each other. Yet, the human heart dreads being exposed. What they are is their troubling treasure. Their actual way of being is different from the image they portray and fear losing. This is so because they do not expect to receive understanding.”

[\[56\]](#)

We are all shy of exposing our true selves. In any rational review of our character we identify weaknesses. We abhor demonstrating our naked self; we prefer to dress it up and make it look presentable.

We like to see the idealized form of ourselves, not the tattered true image. Which is all fine, for we should strive for the character we desire to be. But, we require friends who act as touchstones to guide us to that correct destination.

Hence, a true friend, is not a sycophant, but pillar of understanding and compassion. They know when to feed our ego, when it has been recently bruised, to not allow us to be laid low for long. But they also know when we need to remove the veil before our eyes and see ourselves in stark contrast to our idealized self. Only then can we find the right path for improvement.

Joanna describes how to be a true friend, a companion who is not merely beside another, but a team member. Like mountain climbers who are strapped together, while one is ascending, the other holds the safety line:

“The world is full of *deaf* people talking with one another; of *mute* socialization being expressed in intense *silent* interactions.

There is much talk about *nothing* , resolving a broad spectrum of problems that remain ...

When people approach you to talk, try to listen and register their words. Perhaps you cannot offer the best advice, or do what is expected of you, but quite often they only want a *listening ear* .

Give them your attention and you will encourage them, making them feel worthy of interest.

If they decide to trust you and open up, respect their problems and help them if you can.

On your part, overcome the fear of opening up. Of course you cannot neglect prudence or balance, but it is healthy to dialog and unveil the panels hidden by the *ego* or masked to reflect unrealistic images.

As a frail human being, living honestly with others will contribute effectively to your inner harmony.

So, be empathic and patient, a fraternal therapist.

Do not create stereotypes or label people with images that are but a passing phase.

We are all undergoing continuous transformations, and we are not always today what we seemed to have been yesterday. New experiences and lessons have been added to the lives of others, as is the case with you. It is the inexorable imperative of progress in action.” [\[57\]](#)

Joanna leaves us with that in understanding the people around you, will in turn make you a better person. You will treat yourself as you treat others and forgive yourself for trespasses, which should be corrected and then forgotten. Just as you should concentrate on growth for your friend, the same applies to you. The past is past, one more lesson learned and evaluated, now move on to the next.

And as you learn to treat yourself, by treating others, your skills will rapidly increase. You will be able to separate the person from the deed. You shall see the person as a distinct personality, traveling through planned events, all manufactured to improve that personality.

I often see the term “personality” to describe humans and spirits by spirit messengers. It goes beyond our definition, which is a set of behavior patterns, how we think, and how we feel. “Personality” according to the spirit world is the total encapsulation of our unique energy life-force. It is what makes you ... you. It is consciousness, the ego and superego, the id, everything. It is all that is immortal. It is all that you take with you when you leave your body behind. And, it is that which is constantly connected with the entire spirit universe and every other being within it.

Hence, to understand, we must know the facts of what we and everyone around you are. To understand, is to ignore the outer casing and to concentrate on their “personality”. Improving that little spark of energy, which must be composed of highly complex logic, is the aim of understanding and compassion.

The Message of Compassion

In the book *Jesus in the Home* , dictated to Francisco (Chico) C. Xavier by the spirit Neio Lucio. Each chapter recounts a dialog that Jesus held with his disciples while in one of their homes. Usually these gatherings were held at Peter’s house.

Neio Lucio, with permission from Christ, was allowed to present to us how Jesus talked to his disciples so they could learn His message of another

Kingdom and the spirit world. These conversations show how difficult it was for people at the time to internalize the need for true Christian compassion. After all, the world during the first century A.D. was one of retribution and an eye for an eye.

In chapter 47 – The Message of Compassion, after a discussion about the hardships of dealing with all sorts of people, John asks Jesus, how are they supposed to handle the situation when people reject them so rudely and abruptly - Jesus tells them:

“‘Take pity on the slanderer and work for the good of all,’ the Heavenly Messenger responded, smiling, ‘because love undoes the darkness of evil and work destroys disrespectful thoughts.’

‘Master,’ asked James, the son of Zebedee, ‘and how are we to act when someone brutally attacks us?’

‘Those who are led by violence,’ added Christ kindly, ‘must either be crazy or poisoned. Help them regain their senses.’

‘Lord.’ Asked Judas with fiery eyes, ‘and when those who offend us are clothed with respectable authority, whether as a prince or a priest, with all the appearance of a conscientious and normal leader?’

‘The serpent can hide itself in a bunch of flowers, and there are worms that live in the most beautiful looking fruit. Those in authority who show that they are violent and cruel are ill. Take pity on them because they are sleeping in a nightmare of dark illusions from which they will have to awaken some day. Help them as best you can and continue on your way, acting for the happiness of all.’

‘Master, and when our house is hit by crime? What am I supposed to do when faced with someone who has betrayed my trust, who has dishonored my name or who has shed blood in my home?’

‘Pity every type of criminal,’ Jesus explained, ‘and do not desire to break the law that your neighbor has disregarded, because both the persecutor and the criminal in any situation carry a blazing fire with them. One wrong does not right another and blood does not cleanse blood. Forgive and help. Time is responsible for giving back to everyone in accordance with their own effort.’

‘Master,’ Bartholomew cut in, ‘what are we to do about the judge who condemns us unfairly?’

‘Have mercy on him and continue to cooperate for the good of all those around you. There is always a higher judge who analyzes those who criticizes or condemns, and beyond one horizon, other broader and more luminous horizons unfold.’

‘Lord,’ asked Thaddeus, ‘what are we supposed to do about the woman we love when she suffers a moral downfall?’

Jesus gazed at him tenderly and asked in turn:

‘Isn’t the inner suffering that afflicts her day and night punishment enough?’

A balsamic silence fell over the group, and when he saw that the disciples didn’t have any more questions, the Lord concluded:

‘If we intend to banish ills from the world, we must cultivate the love that sympathizes with the service that edifies for the happiness of all. Do not deceive yourselves. Time is an inflexible instrument of the Law that gives to each of us according to our deeds. No one can hope to right a crime by practicing other crimes, because time changes everything on earth with the fire of suffering or with the ice of death.’”

[58]

What was said by Jesus in multiple ways, was that all of us are subject to the laws of karma and reincarnation. That whatever a person’s transgressions, the process to repair the wrong deeds and fix their character will be handled by the spirit world. It is not our place or function to determine how to renovate another person’s character.

Jesus’ disciples fell into the same thinking that all of us do – they examined the deed first, and by weighing the act, they set in their minds the worth of the person.

Jesus tells us to turn this around. We should examine the person and determine the circumstances in which the error was made. Whatever wrong was committed, will be rectified by successive incarnations and plans for each life. Nothing is hidden and no action does not have a reaction.

Thusly, we can only have compassion, for we know they are traveling through difficult waters; waves of previous missteps are crashing upon them as they often make wrong decisions, owing to their lack of spiritual maturity. Future lives will right all wrongs and they will eventually emerge as a wonderful soul.



Chapter 12 – Truth Enlightened by Love

A medium sent my wife and I an intention to recite every night before we sleep. It serves as a reminder of why we are here:

“I pray for Divine guidance and protection, that I may overcome any negative energy and become a clear channel of God’s universal love and compassion for all beings. Awaken my mind to the true nature of reality, not bound by conceptions of good and evil, but allow me to see the truth, as it really is. For the benefit of all beings. Amen.”

To see the truth as it really is. What does that mean? Nothing written by spirits is without purpose. Later on the medium writes this:

“It is important to know too (and it is covered somewhat in the new prayers) that God is completely impartial toward his children. Even some of the worst offenders, people that generate disgust or fear in our eyes, are exactly the same to God as we are; equally loved and equally sought out, as the spirit draws them. They’ve only strayed further from the truth. And they WILL come back. It might take a long time. But everything in this life is a tiny blip in eternity. Even the worst offenses will be seen as nothing a billion years from now; that is God’s perspective, and we need to work at making it our perspective as well – for the benefit of all beings.

Over and over, I keep hearing this; that God’s love is undivided, impartial, and not subject to change. Everything that is, was, or shall be, is and must be for the benefit of *all* beings.”

This is the eternal truth – God loves us all equally. It sounds so simple in a sentence and the sentiment should easily transfer to us. But it is exceedingly hard to put into practice. I am certainly not there yet. I still have preconceptions toward some types of people – corrupt politicians, brutal dictators, and terrorists, to name a few.

Who is to say I wasn’t one of those in a past life? I have, by the love of God, been allowed to atone for a few of my wrongs. Even though, I have been told I have a lot to redeem. During a mediums meeting I was told that in a past life, I was put into a position of power and responsibility. That I

was expected to help guide those in my charge – instead I took advantage of them for my own aggrandizement.

Maybe that is why I recoil when I see a person in power who is corrupt – I was one of them and now I know, deep in my heart, what a mistake that was. I have no conscious memory of my deeds in a past life, just what was hinted at by spirits who communicated with me and a feeling that what they said was true.

We all have to find our own way to the truth. We all have to mine our conscience to discern the path to find the sparkling nuggets of Divine Truth.

In this highly sophisticated world, where a reason and justification could be had for any action, no matter how base, finding the truth is challenging, even if you desire it. Our cultural elites are trying to deny Divine Truths through the pathology of relative morality. We must reject that notion of the absence of a baseline of goodness. Each individual must search on their own for their fountain of truth.

Truths and Illusions

The spirit realm realizes that our task is not easy. It is not supposed to be. Only through strenuous effort do we find satisfaction and pride in the result of our work. Only then will our personal discovery be integrated into our very being. Only then will it become part of our personality.

The spirit Emmanuel notifies us of the struggle, in a message called “Truths and Illusions”;

“ ’Yet because I speak the truth, you do not believe me.’ – Jesus (Jn. 8:45)

The world has always loudly honored expositors of illusions.

Nearly everywhere, one can see the success of verbose persons who promise miracles and marvels. Their listeners usually give them a lot of credit, and they need only disguise people’s infirmities, weaknesses, ignorance or defects to receive their respect. The same is not the case for those who cultivate the truth, no matter how obvious it may be. Down through time, society has reserved burnings at the stake, poison, crosses and implacable punishments for them.

In an attempt to avoid their anguishing spiritual situation, people invented 'fortune-tellers.' However, they expect these diviners to hide the dark and harsh reality behind a golden mask. The charlatan who is most skillful at fabricating captivating lies will enjoy the most numerous and lucrative clientele.

In the interchange with the spirit world, it is crucial for new disciples to be aware of dangers of this sort.

The tactic of praise, the eagerness to appear better than others, the temptation to stay ahead of others, and the longing to convert other people's consciences are just big illusions. One must not believe in such things. It is more correct to grasp the effort of self-regeneration. Friends of the truth are not always accepted. They are usually considered fanatical or deceitful ... But in spite of everything, for our own happiness, we must heed the truth while there is still time.” ^[59]

Hence, to search for truth, we must start with ourselves. We must make the foundation of our character ready to accept it. While it may be easier to adopt the canons of another religion, sect, or charismatic leader, it will not be lasting. If we put a coat of paint over weak and rotten wood, it will still collapse. No matter how good it appears on the outside, the inside will be weak, until we strengthen it.

Therefore, to begin the search for truth, one must begin with readying yourself. Only via introspection and requesting spiritual guidance from the other side, through meditation and prayer, will the door be opened.

By doing so, you will be guided to read the books which will help you, listen to the advice which will strengthen you, and enjoy the experiences which will prepare you for each step. Once you open your heart for enlightenment, your spirit mentors and your guardian angel will use every device at their command to encourage your advance toward perfection.

Love

“Pure love is the Creator's reflection in all creatures. Love shines forth in everything, and everything throbs with the same vibration of wisdom and beauty.

Love is the very foundation of life, and justice is the basis of all Law.

Love sublimely manifests itself in the harmony of the worlds exulting the glory of the infinite, just as it does in the forgotten flowers of the field.

Through love shines the soul of all major religions that have existed in the course of civilizations, bringing systems of faith that sought communion with Divine Goodness. And in this same love is the foundation of every desire for solidarity amongst mankind.

It is the divine plasma enveloping all creation, the very breath of God permeating the Universe.

Love is the silent hope of Heaven, awaiting the evolution of all principles, while respecting the decision of all consciences.

By virtue of this blessing, each creature is assisted on its own level.” ^[60]

You may ask, after reading what the spirit Emmanuel said about love; why is there such cruelty on earth? Reread the part of the sentence, “while respecting the decision of all consciences.”

It is God’s will that we, his creatures, are given free will. Hence, we can choose to commit great evil, destruction, murder, and chaos. And the ramifications of our free will are the trials we must submit to in atonement for our previous actions. Our successes and victories in our trials provide the key to enter the Kingdom of Heaven and be basked in the warmth of God’s love.

Emmanuel and other spirits have sent us messages about the atmosphere of love in the spirit realm, but we also have other witnesses. Numerous people have reported NDE’s (near death experiences) in which they have felt the immense joy of being surrounded by love. In fact, there are accounts of telling the person not to hug or get too close to the spirits, since the overwhelming surge of love will cause the person to not desire to return to their trial on earth. This occurred even for people with children and other cherished ones on earth – such is the lure of basking in love.

The promise of love, all-pervasive, is right in front of us. We only have to earn it, by demonstrating our capacity to give love.

Learning Truth

The process of creating a firm moral and spiritual foundation is not simple. Our spirit mentors will assist us, but, as in many things, we need to perform the heavy lifting. Not only must we swim against the tide of society, but we also have to struggle with our own ego.

The spirit Joanna discusses the fights we shall have with ourselves as we strive for self-knowledge and spiritual enlightenment:

“The deluded *ego* seeks to survive by using innumerable mechanisms to escape reality, and it expresses itself using different masks in order not to be identified.

It disguises itself in interpersonal relationships, at times demanding toward others, at other times excessively hard on itself, projecting its conflicts or interjecting its unfulfilled aspirations. Subconsciously, the ego has a misconceived idea of itself. It does not have the courage to face reality, to overcome it when negative, or to improve it when favorable.

Fixating on the illusions of conflicts, it is careful to appear conciliatory – the subconscious attitude of what it would really like to be, and with the appropriate appearance – expressing itself as a happy, fulfilled person.

Due to the breakdown of ethical values in society, the fear of revealing oneself to others generates reactions and deception, in which one seeks psychological rewards – always unfulfilling. Because the ego’s *foundations* are shaky, the *constructs* of apparent well-being soon crumble, and the individual lapses into repressed anxieties and aggressions due to emotional transference for inner compensation.” [\[61\]](#)

A house built upon a foundation of sand will soon collapse. When our self-view is influenced by what we see in the media, whether promoting a product to deliver happiness, excusing bad behavior in pursuit of pleasure, or aping the actions of a popular film – none of these are aspects of eternal Divine Laws.

Once we tie ourselves to the flippancy of popular culture, we float with whatever tide or wave comes our way. We think we have something to hold onto, but it is an illusion.

This is why so many people can't find happiness or peace, because the goal is either unachievable (a complete fabrication by the talking heads of the media) or ever changing. How can one feel balanced while standing on a cushion of air?

This stress, this deep feeling of being unfulfilled and anxious, is what causes a person to either lose their cool demeanor and lash out, or withdraw further into a dream world and seek any escape possible. Being in continual disagreement with your idealized self doesn't allow you to expend the energy to grow.

The spirit Joanna provides examples of what happens to people out of sync with their egos:

“There is a whole range of human attitudes that are far from being authentic and which result from postures that are opposite to their reality.

Notwithstanding a few exceptions involving non-passionate or non-extreme idealists, most people who protest against something, whatever it might be, hide subconscious desires, which they repress due to a lack of moral value to express them appropriately.

Puritanical individuals, who keep an eye on other people's *misconduct*, project the very inner state that they seek to combat in others, because they are unwilling to combat it in themselves.

Biting, persistent critics, with a *clinical* eye on other people's errors and miseries, harbor personal insecurity. They have great contempt for themselves and make up for it by being aggressive.

Those who usually identify themselves with pain and affliction, an exaggerated and therefore inauthentic humility, unconsciously externalize a paranoid state alongside an unquenchable desire to seek attention.

Those who always rationalize every occurrence, finding justifications for their own failures and mistakes, actually fear themselves and have no emotional structure for breaking free of conflicts.” ^[62]

Therefore, your foundation must be rebuilt. And it must be rebuilt upon constructs which are already inside us.

The Supreme Being gave us a conscience to lead the way. But it can't do all of the job. To remold your ego will take study, and the installation of new habits.

Building a New Self-View Upon Truth

The spirit Joanna tells us that we should begin by relaxing. Talk to your friends openly and expose your strengths and weaknesses. As you open up, so will they. This will create a comfort zone where methods for improvement can be discussed.

Don't focus on the failures of other people, concentrate on your own shortcomings and how will you create habits to rectify them. As you ponder on the positives and negatives, let your conscience guide you. It will rapidly identify which attributes to modify.

If you are unsure – usually because your mind is trying to rationalize some deviation from what your conscience tells you – stop thinking for a minute. Take a deep breath. Visualize your options – which option makes you feel better? If you feel the stress lessen and more at peace, then you have found your answer.

Even if the path you choose takes great sacrifice, it will be worth it. I know, I have tried it. I wrestled with a promise made. I had told a person I would split half of a windfall, if it ever came to pass. But then my selfishness welled up and I thought, why should I pay out half? I am the one getting the money, why should I share with them? Already, my yearning for money was overcoming my sense of keeping my word and belief in fair-play.

Finally, I stopped. I realized I was worrying about a possible future financial gain, as if it would be the most important event in my life. Like when I was a child and waited days for a new bicycle to be delivered. The wait was interminable. My expectations were sky-high. After a few days of playing with my new toy the excitement wore off.

I had forgotten that anything material in this world is unimportant to building my character. I let myself calm down. I saw myself without the extra money, with half of the money and with all of the money. I could feel harmonious vibrations come from forgetting about it entirely. So I made up

my mind to divide what I got between my family and friends and take nothing. I felt better. I had defeated selfishness in one small battle.

I could have only accomplished this by learning about and studying the Doctrine of Spiritism. The knowledge that we are on earth for a purpose ... to grow, to love, to be charitable, to be fraternal, to be honest – is what is gradually replacing the holes and gaps in my self-view.

My truth is that we are on earth, for a series of lives, to follow the lesson plan determined by our spiritual superiors. They know best. I say that, even though I still constantly question the trials which come my way. I am not, by any means, at the state I wish to be, but I am pointed in the right direction.

My self, my work in progress, is calmer, more relaxed, and less prone to outbursts of anger and resentment. I am also less wealthy and successful in my career. It doesn't bother me. The truth has set me on the path to freedom.

Combining Truth and Love

The spirit Emmanuel sent a message to a mediums meeting through Francisco C. Xavier about the need for truth and love during our many sojourns on earth:

“Although we all effectively move towards the living light that is supreme truth, how many lessons until we reach it are actually necessary for us to be free from the shadows?

Only love can safely guide us so we may learn the right path towards the eternal realities.

All of us here on Earth – incarnate and discarnate spirits alike, we who are still bound to this planet – constitute a single family on its way to immortality. However, how many of us may have already had or might still have the need of support during the long evolutionary expedition?

Some individuals believed that affection required violence to establish itself and fell into criminality, mutilating himself while attempting to do so to others.

Others believed themselves strong enough to oppress the destiny of their brothers and sisters, and strained themselves beyond their limits in excesses of power, scrambling the brain and wasting precious time during infirmity and in recuperation.

Still others contracted huge debts, enslaving themselves to complex situations from which they will have to spend immense efforts to break free.

And yet others deluded themselves with the idea of respite and happiness without a foundation of responsibility, and as a result, they have temporarily lost the ability to reason, going astray into labyrinths of spiritual blindness.

In reality, all of them, our brothers and sisters, must be readjusted and healed before they may be able to continue with the journey ahead. However, to accomplish this task, it is not enough to shake them with condemnatory statements regarding the devastations and struggles they experience.

It is imperative for us to dispense them care, assistance, treatment and understanding.

So far on planet Earth, and generally speaking, we are much more like the elementary school students or patients in an asylum than anything else.

It might be impossible for us to accomplish a readjustment and acquire enlightenment without understanding and support.” [\[63\]](#)

Emmanuel is telling us that the attainment of truth is a battle that must be fought over many lifetimes. Each skirmish sets the stage for the next encounter. Each victory allocates more resources to win the next.

As we search for truth and internalize it, making it part of our personality, we gain sustenance in our trek with love. Love keeps us going, love enables us to move forward without fear. And as we are sustained with love, so should we support others.

Everyone on earth is deeply involved in their own personal search for truth. Each approaches it differently, but all require love to make a sincere effort.



Chapter 13 - Oblivion of Evils

For the human race to collectively ascend to a superior level, from living on a planet of atonement, where we must repair our past mistakes via karma, to a planet of regeneration, in which we shall live in harmony with each other; greed, envy, and hate must be greatly diminished, we must remove evil. But what is evil?

Each person has their own idea of what is bad and good. We have a tendency to label anyone and anything we don't like as evil. If everything that was labeled as evil by each individual on our globe was marked for removal, then almost the entire population would disappear!

The spirit Andre Luiz must have meant something specific when he communicated his poem *Inner Peace* to Francisco C. Xavier, the late great Spiritist medium from Brazil. The poem laid out how each person could obtain inner peace, the oblivion of evils was one of the conditions.

The spirit Emmanuel tells us:

“Evil does not actually come from the world but from the people who inhabit it.

The earth itself has always been good. From its soil spring delicately fragrancd lilies; its maternal nature is a repository of wonderful miracles that are repeated every day.” ^[64]

Hence, as the Old Testament told the story of Adam and Eve, it was humankind that introduced evil. We are the culprits, we are the purveyors of cruelty and depravity. We are the transmitters of evil.

But, before leaving home with a bull dozer and destroying anything and anyone you consider evil, we should look to the spirits to understand what they mean by the word evil.

Evil – The Absence of Love

The spirit Zabdiel, whom the Rev. G. Vale Owen, communicated with in the 1910's, explains the concept of goodness and evil. Zabdiel tells us that good and evil are “conditions of attitude” ^[65] toward God. In essence he stated, your perspective regarding the love of God determines the amount of

benefit or harm any action we take, which, sooner or later, reflects back on us.

Zabdiel presents a universe full of the Supreme Spirituality's love and this constant permeates all. When we attempt to block out the radiated love from God, this is when evil persists. Zabdiel illuminates the concept:

“The very intensity of the Love of God becomes terrible when it meets with an opposing obstacle. The swifter the torrent the greater the surf about the opposing rocks. The greater the heat of the fire the more complete the dissolution of the fuel which is cast into it, and on which it feeds. And although to some such words may seem horrible in the saying of them, yet it is the very intensity of the Love which energizes and flows through the creation of the Father which, meeting opposing and disharmonious obstruction, causes the greater pain.

Even in the earth life you may test and prove this true. For the most bitter of all remorse and repentance is that which follows on the realization of the love borne to us by the one we have wronged.” ^[66]

Holding back love and God's will is like an attempt to dam an ocean. It may work for a short period, but in time the barrier will fail. Therefore, evil is the absence of love. Where love is allowed there is good, where love is resisted there is evil. Zabdiel analyzes evil:

“Blindness is inability to see. But not only is there such a condition as blindness; there are also people who are blind. Blindness is a negative condition, or less. It is the condition of one who has four senses instead of five. But real it is, nevertheless. Yet it is only when one who is born blind is told of the sense of sight that he begins to feel his lack of it, and the more he understands the lack of it the more his lack is felt. So it is with sin. It is usual here to call those who are in darkness the “undeveloped.” This is not a negative term, which would be ‘retrogressed.’ So of both I say not ‘loss’ but ‘lack.’ The one born blind has not lost a faculty but lacks it.” ^[67]

Hence, when a person commits an evil act, it is because of his or her incapability to discern the good, the correct action to take. It is the absence of understanding the presence of love and how that should influence every decision we make.

Most spirits and all people are a balance of good and bad characteristics. There is not a living soul that is composed entirely of evil. We are all a mixture, we travel through life committing acts that we regret. Zabbiel explains why:

“Yet you may say that people do go back and fall from grace. Those who do so are such as those who are partly blind or of imperfect sight – color-blind as to one or more colors. These have never seen perfectly, and their lack is only unknown to them until opportunity offers, and then their imperfection is manifest. For a color-blind person is one whose sight is, in little or more measure, undeveloped. It is only by using his vision that he maintains what vision he has, and if he neglects to do this then he retrogresses. So with the sinner.” ^[68]

Starting the Journey

To begin the steps toward the oblivion of evils, we must start to tell the truth, especially to ourselves; only then can we identify what gaps within need to be filled with love.

The spirit Joanna points out that the habit of lying holds far more hidden dangers than most people suppose:

“Vestiges of the mendacity phase linger in immature adults, causing them to continue to distort reality to please their senses, thoughtlessly creating vexing situations that make them and others suffer. Afterwards, free of what could have been the unfortunate consequences of their act, and even having promised themselves they would not yield to such vice again, they lie anyway, due to their conditioning.

Infantile insecurity is evident in individuals who refuse to grow, believing they attract attention with this troubling behavior.

Lying must be rejected under whatever form it may appear because of the moral harm it causes, for it leads to defamation, slander and a whole string of awful psychological and ethical dystonias in the social dynamic. Liars are doubtlessly sick individuals, yet they elicit contempt on account of their behavior. No one believes what they say even on the rare occasion when they actually tell the truth. It is completely natural for them to change the content or presentation of the facts, which they

reveal in an unreal way, hoping to manipulate persons with this despicable use.” [69]

Joanna states that people fall into the habit of lying for many factors, but one of the most prominent is being raised in a dysfunctional family. To eradicate that which is false within ourselves we must move to embrace the truth. She tells us:

“The truth must be spoken naturally, kindly, unpretentiously, without imposition, but also without being falsified, without losing the power of its content.” [70]

To condition ourselves to the truth, we should read and study, and learn the Spiritist Doctrine. Examine the precepts we should follow, and promote good habits. Once harmony is restored within us, we shall have no need to lie or distort.

Hence, if we instill a regimen (following the lead of Buddhism) of right thinking, right talking, and right acting – we can set the stage for the next step to fill in our blank spots with the bright light of love.

Filling in What is Lacking

To begin, we must realize that we are on earth at this moment in time, are in the process of developing our good sides and removing our base emotions. We are all partially color-blind when it comes to perceiving the Light. We are on earth because we need to train ourselves to fully comprehend the love which envelops us and how to channel that love for our benefit and the benefit of others.

The process whereby we grasp what we have heretofore missed is our trials on earth. Our choices during those trials sets us up for where we will land in the spirit world and our course, which we must follow in our next life. Zabdiel tells us, “It is only by freewill that that person is held responsible for both good and evil in his heart.” [71]

Through our trials we build up a range of experiences. Like a law library that contains case histories, which are used to guide the verdicts in future cases, we too, deposit what we have learned into our conscience. Hence, our need for multiple lives in multiple cultures. Zabdiel reinforces this point:

“Also let it be remembered that what seems to be good or evil to one man does not of necessity so appear in the eyes of another. Especially is this true of those of different creed and habit of thought and manner of life in community. What, therefore, is possible in the matter of distinction between these two is that the broad and fundamental principles which underlie each should be grasped clearly, and the minor shades of these qualities be entrusted to the future when they will be gradually made more plain.” [\[72\]](#)

The accumulation of knowledge to navigate through the shady maze of moral behavior is not lost upon entry into the physical life. We are given the infinite database of our conscience. Whereas, we may not be aware of searching for the correct answer, the feeling of anxiety in the pit of our stomach or that notion that we just did something wrong is the result of our brain retrieving thousands of years of results and notifying us of the findings.

This is why we have stress. Our conscience sends it signals out to all corners of the body alerting us that we are on the wrong track. The accumulation of these messages weakens our system and throws our internal harmony into disarray. This is why studies have shown that people who are more spiritual and are aware of their moral boundaries are healthier.

Multiple Lives are Required

“For a longer or shorter period sometimes, and often indeed for some thousands of years, as you reckon time on earth, a man may maintain his obduracy. But no man is created who is able to continue so everlastingly. And that is merciful limit which our Father Creator has placed around and in us lest He lose us, or any one of His children, away from Him, and without return for ever.” [\[73\]](#)

Some of us simply do not learn the easy way. One life is not sufficient to fully embed living by the Golden Rule into the foundation of our character. I have been told, by spirits writing through mediums, that I have failed again and again. I was placed in a position of authority and instead of tending to my flock, I used them for my personal gain. I am certain I have maintained my stubbornness for thousands of years, much to my regret.

I am grateful for the overwhelming force of love that is slowly breaking down my walls of selfishness. Only by living through harsh realities was I able to understand that the absence of love, of caring, of compassion, sets the stage for great wrongs.

My lack of virtue, caused by my ignorance is gradually being righted. I am a long way off, but now I welcome the journey. I look forward to learning to live amongst my fellow beings with a sense of love and purpose.

The first step is to listen closely to that governor in your head - your conscience. Attempt to follow what feels right. It's not easy since there are many cases that are still uncertain to most incarnated souls. But, as Zabdiel says, as we experience more lives, our moral compass will expand. Zabdiel leaves us with this message:

“Let us therefore, having looked on this phase of aberration from man’s natural walking with God, now look the other way in the direction in which all things are tending. For truly, evil is but a transitory phase and, whether it pass away from His economy in whole or no, from every individual most surely it will pass away when its opposing force is spent, and he be left free to follow on in the glorious train of those who brighten as they go from glory to further and greater glory.” ^[74]

As we shed our blemishes and ascend in the spirit hierarchy, we are given more responsibilities. In the spirit realm where faith and thought create reality, power is parceled out to those who have completed the requisite training. This is why we are on this planet, so we may one day complete our training and contribute to earth and other worlds, in helping other souls rise.

Each Little Step is Important

It is easy and simple to promise ourselves to be better, to remove the primitive urges which moves us. But it takes dedication and perseverance. And, don't forget we shall be tested repeatedly to determine if we are just paying lip-service to casting off evil influences.

In the book, *Jesus in the Home*, the spirit Neio Lucio, recounts when Jesus told the tale of the four tests to his disciples. They were talking about the story of Job and his trials. When Jesus brought up the example of a man in the city of Nineveh.

The man was considered a paragon of virtue and of devotion to God. The news of this man even reached the higher spheres and the archangels who resident high in the levels of heaven.

It was decided to send a series of tests to this most pious man:

“In order to do so, the Teacher Angels working for the Most High sent four basic detectors of righteous individuals – Want, Wealth, Power and Anger each came down in its own time in order to perform the indispensable trials.

Want, which is always the first to appear in such cases, approached the great believer and made its presence felt in a number of different ways by afflicting him with hardships, obstacles, illnesses and abandonment by loved ones; however, the devout man, full of confidence, knew that the messenger was a heavenly worker and defeated it, proving himself to be increasingly stronger to the virtues of which he had become a model.” ^[75]

After Want, came Wealth. The man experienced the opposite of the lack of everything. But, faced with great riches, he didn't hoard, because he knew that wealth was from God and not his. He used his money for constructive purposes. He built for the community. He was fair to his employees and gave to charity.

Next came Power; immense power over the lives of others was bequeathed to the virtuous man. He handled the temptations of power with true grace. He didn't allow himself to become overbearing, dictatorial, or arbitrary. He tried to instruct instead of command.

Last came Anger:

“Triumphant and happy, the believer was finally visited by Anger. In order to probe his spiritual state, the invisible teacher made use of a weak and unlearned servant to touch his self-esteem by talking with obvious disregard about a private matter. Although what he said was, in fact, true, it constituted real disrespect toward anyone of such a social position and inarguable dignity.

The devout man could not help himself. An intense wave of blood spread across his flushed face and he lost control of himself by hurling

hurtful words, wounding family members and servants and undermining everything he had done. It took him a number of days to regain his composure, but by then Anger had already laid bare his inner spirit, showing that he still had a lot of work to do. Anger notified the lord that this particular son, enrolled in the school of illumination, still had a long way to go in the purifying experience in order to earn a position in the glorious vibrations of the higher life.” [\[76\]](#)

I purposefully put this story at the end of “Oblivion of Evils” so that each and every one of us realizes that this is a task of multiple lifetimes.

When I first read the “Four Tests”, I laughed. A sad laugh, a resigned laugh. I knew I had failed Want – even growing up middle class, in this present life, I always wanted more!

Wealth and Power – I have already discussed how I found out I had abused power to gain wealth in a previous life. So far I have a trifecta of loses!

Then I thought about Anger. A couple of days before I read this story, I was sitting in my comfortable chair, thinking how well I have been doing. I was encouraged by my progress in remaining calm in many circumstances to date. I was handling the big problems pretty well – with equanimity and a stoic posture. Then, suddenly, out of the blue, my dog who was sitting next to me, let out a ferocious bark. Loud and piercing. I was startled. I brought my hand down and hit the poor thing on the head. So much for my control of anger.

Hence, I have failed every test, and yet ... I am still improving. I am making progress. I feel better by learning about why I am here and about life in the spirit realm.

Someday, I hope to be like Socrates. When as he was leaving his house with his pupils, his wife was yelling at him. Loudly and uncontrollably. Just before he was out of reach, she hurled water at him. As he left, he calmly told his students; there is always rain after the thunder.



Chapter 14 - Happiness in your Commitments

Happiness in your commitments is natural in heaven. In the higher spheres, where we return after a life of struggle, victorious in our quest to improve and do more good than the mistakes we regret, being happy is the normal state. You are surrounded by positive people, there are no worries about money or your job, while it may be challenging, it isn't in danger of disappearing. Sickness only exists on the physical plane and your age and appearance is whatever you want it to be.

But to prepare ourselves for life in heaven, we should cultivate how to welcome and prosper in our relationships and careers while on earth. With the knowledge that almost nothing happens to us by chance on this planet, we need to sit through our classes attentive and serene. Happy in the prospect of what awaits us when the final bell rings.

The Spirits Book, answers a question put to the spirits by the codifier of Spiritism, Allan Kardec:

“ 921. We can conceive that man will be happy upon the earth when the human race shall have been transformed; but, meanwhile, is it possible for each man to ensure for himself a moderate amount of happiness?”

Man is more often the artisan of his own unhappiness. If he obeyed the law of God, he would not only spare himself much sorrow, but would also procure for himself all the felicity that is compatible with the grossness of earthly existence.” ^[77]

Every action has a reaction, the Law of Karma, should always be foremost in our minds. Almost everything we experience that is a hardship is a result of a deed that we need to repair. Therefore, be thankful for the opportunity in whatever you encounter in life. After all, don't we feel exuberant when we wrongly insulted or hurt a friend and then found a way to make them feel better? Such a relief!

Use this same emotion in your entire life. The spirit Joanna adds to this:

“You are a rough stone in need of polishing. Even though you may be rough on the outside, you have the brightness of the stars in the inside, and it is up to you to release it.

Start this new process in your life right now.

Give yourself the chance to prove to yourself how much you have and you will succeed.

Experience the pleasure of rebuilding your future and you will start being happy right away.” ^[78]

Happiness is a state of mind, it is an attitude that you can cultivate. It can sustain you through the bad times in any commitment – and there will be rough patches. Sometimes, for the good of all parties, you may have to leave a marriage, a relationship, or a job. Nevertheless, you will soon take on new commitments ... learn from the past and seize the occasion to demonstrate your inner light.

Seize the Opportunity

It's never too late to start with a new attitude. The spirit Neio Lucio tells how Jesus related the story of a Pharisee who led an exemplary life. He spent days praying in the Temple, he fasted, and he studied the texts of the Old Testament.

When there was a dangerous plague in a city near Jerusalem, a high Angel sought him out to help tend to the sick to alleviate their suffering. But the wise and learned Pharisee didn't want to make contact with the sick and common people. The Angel spoke to other wise and devout folks, but he got the same answers.

“No one wanted to put themselves at risk.

In light of these excuses not to help, the Messenger from Above found an old criminal who wanted to change his ways. Through invisible threads of thought, the angel invited him to follow him; the old thief really did want to change, so he didn't hesitate a second. He harkened to the angel's gentle coercion and quickly devoted himself enthusiastically and genuinely, offering his robust and authentic cooperation to the ministry of aid and salvation.

He buried bodies, concocted medicines that were fitting for the situation, sowed encouragement, relieved the afflicted, renewed the spirits of the sick, freed countless little children who were threatened by the harm, created services of consolation and hope, and in doing so,

won solid friendships in Heaven, thereby advancing remarkably in the path toward Paradise.” [\[79\]](#)

A new beginning is just moments away. A mental note to dive into a new commitment, without hesitation, with dedication and earnestness, will bring its own reward.

We tell our children, when we see them laying around bored and complaining – go out and do something! We know that constructive action wipes away useless thoughts and regrets and refocuses our energy.

The spirit Emmanuel wrote about negative aspects of workers who always complain and blame any and all problems on objects or people other than themselves, whereas:

“Good workers, on the other hand, understand, before anything else, the profound meaning of the opportunity they have received. They not only make use of all their own resources but they also respect other people’s. They do not depend on the seasons. They plant the fruits of the cold and heat with the same enthusiasm. They are friends of nature; they learn its lessons; they are upbeat; and they find the same contentment in both the hard work of sowing and in the joy of harvesting.” [\[80\]](#)

Good spirits are sending us the message of embracing our work and to seek fulfillment from what our endeavors may teach us. If we can muster the fortitude to strive to be the best as we can possibly be at our jobs, then we are learning the need for perfection in all things.

Our goal is to one day become a perfected spirit. This means we make the correct decisions, know the right answers, and contemplate the long term ramifications of our actions. We hone these skills while on earth.

On earth, during our apprenticeship as an immature spirit, we can make mistakes and do little or no harm. We can begin to comprehend how to analyze situations correctly. We can build upon our thousands of years of experience that is within us in our conscience and instincts, new determinations of what is right and wrong in a myriad of conditions.

If a person resists or detests the work they are in, then careful construction and thoughtful planning are usually discarded. The only lesson learned at the end of a hard day, is that time moves slowly.

The spirit Emmanuel, notifies us of the effectiveness of the combination of work done competently and selfless service for our spiritual growth:

“An honestly practiced profession, even when remunerated, induces people to respect the fulfillment of their duties. But selfless giving, which is one’s sacrifice for the happiness of others, ennobles the spirit. That is why everyone feels the need to build a permanent altar in their hearts to true heroes. Selfless giving begins where duty ends. When practiced, it produces a reaction in the Higher Spheres that reaches down to Humanity. An ordinary delinquent in prison inspires pity because of his suffering. But the pioneer of a noble cause, unjustly jailed in the same prison, elicits admiration, respect and emulation.

The friendly and conscientious administrator who scrupulously divides his earnings and spends his share honestly is an example of earthly virtue. But the person who works selflessly for the benefits of others is a messenger of Heavenly virtues.

A governess who receives a salary for her tender care of a child merits high regard and recognition. But a motherly heart with its constant acts of self-sacrifice is a fascinating and splendid example that empathizes the glory of pure love.

Thus mathematicians, who are acclaimed by the people and are adequately paid for their work, are classified as scientists. But the scientists who are wholly committed to a project for the peace and security of civilization and who employ all their energy in complete oblivion of themselves to reach their goals are regarded as benefactors.

Humankind progress forward when faithful to their obligations. Through selfless giving, angels are drawn to them thereby improving life in the world.” [\[81\]](#)

Working for a goal higher than ourselves, for a tangible good for other humans, while being paid or not, is beneficial – to mankind and to ourselves.

Family Commitments

Messages from spirits via Spiritist mediums have always highlighted the role of family in society and its importance in our quest for improvement.

In *The Spirits Book* , the role of the family is revealed:

“ 774. Some persons have inferred from the abandonment of the young of animals by their parents, that the ties of family, among mankind, are merely a result of social customs, and not a law of nature; what is to be thought of this inference?”

Man has another destiny than of the animals; why, then. Should you always be trying to assimilate him to them? There is, in man, something more than physical wants; there is the necessity of progressing. Social ties are necessary to progress; and social ties are drawn closer by family ties. For this reason, family ties are a law of nature. God has willed that men should learn, through them, to love one another as brothers.

775. What would be the effect upon society of the relaxation of family ties?

A relapse into selfishness.” [\[82\]](#)

“Social ties are necessary to progress” – Commitments to family are all the more important now, in our current culture. Society have been trying its best, since the middle of the Twentieth Century to break the ties of families.

Governments have stepped in to replace spouses, media constantly denigrates the roles of a husband and wife, and the latest social media applications promise instant satisfaction without any ties. Without the family, humans become mere consumers. They are free to indulge in whatever makes them feel good at the time.

This is not to say we should return to the days when single mothers were ostracized or homosexuality was punishable by law or marriage was for life, no matter how terrible it was in the home. Only to point out that society should promote responsibility instead of celebrating irresponsibility.

The spirit Joanna, writing in 1997, in her book *Adolescence and Life* , stated:

“It is urgent for parents and educators to commit to a reevaluation of the moral conduct intended for the new generations in order to avoid the collapse of culture and civilization, which today are in their darkest period in history ever.” [\[83\]](#)

The spirit Joanna, who was, in a previous life, Joana de Cusa (mentioned in the New Testament). She also lived at the time of St. Francis of Assisi, and was incarnated as Sister Juana Ines de la Cruz (1651-1695), one of the great poets of her time. The fact that she wrote this was the darkest period in our history, fully illustrates that the arc of society is approaching the heights of materialism.

There needs to be a balance, there needs to be a recognition of our purpose on earth and our requirement for spiritual and character improvement.

The pendulum of freedom of choice for whatever lifestyle one desires, no matter what the consequences are for innocent bystanders, such as blameless children, has gone too far. It should return to the center, where exceptions occur and those people are helped. Where loving relationships between any combinations of genders are encouraged and supported.

It all comes down to staying involved, if possible, with the lives of loved ones and family. And, this is the vital point, the family we are born into and the family we create are all part of our customized plan for our edification.

Jose Herculano Pires explains the ties between spirits and physical families:

“Every spirit that reincarnates brings its personality intact within itself, already formed in previous incarnations. The similarities of psychological and moral characteristics among parents, children and other descendants do not come from the physical body, but rather from their spirits. The uniqueness of each human being is represented by what each one actually is on its own. Therefore, there is a Cartesian parallelism between heredity and affinity. Once we admit to this conclusion, which today has been carefully considered by great scientific research centers, it is easy for us to understand the need for both social and emotional independence for these children who have emancipated themselves, and especially for the ones who have built their own family.

Spiritual affinities do not imply dependence and submission because each spirit is directly responsible for its own evolution. Parents are

responsible for their children regarding guidance offered through examples and education.” ^[84]

Therefore, the likeness, in personality, aptitude, and talents of a son or daughter to one or both of their parents, isn't just a factor of genetics and upbringing. It is deeper. It extends into the spirit realm, where these spirits were on the same level. Where the Law of Affinity brought this group together because they were of like mind and spiritual level. They may have been a family unit in previous lives and have chosen to once again support each other during their schooling on earth.

Imagine the feeling of leaving your family because of your search for pleasure or a momentary desire, which you could not combat, and then finding out, when you returned to the spirit world, that your real family, those you have cherished for centuries, are the very ones you deserted.

It has happened. These poor souls are full of regrets when they discover their mistake. In one instance a man went to earth on a mission. His six best friends, who have been his companions for thousands of years, were to be part of his family on earth. He was born into a family, where his mother died, then his father remarried. His father and step-mother had six more children. Later, his father died. He was left as the main supporter of the family.

He hated begin dragged down by his step-mother and the children, so he left, never looking back, happy to be free of the responsibilities. Leaving the poor family destitute.

When he died, he found out that he and his six friends were to be part of a mission to help others on earth. He was to be a lynchpin of the entire plan. Instead, through his rejection of his moral commitments, he betrayed his friends and himself.

His spiritual pain was immense. He wanted to return to earth to try once again to repair the damage he caused. He will be allowed to, since there is always an opportunity for redemption.

Fulfillment in the Family

The spirit Joanna sets the reason to be happy in your commitment to your family is:

“The special treasure that is the family constellation reaches fulfillment after the long existential journey when, from the first encounter, the two spirits that decide to build the bloodline group, come together through the strong ties of love.

Legalizing its union through marriage, the moral responsibility is structured on the respect and dedication that exists among the partners of this significant undertaking.

Aware of the serious commitment to which they give themselves to, little by little, they discover the greatness of the art and science of love, facing all the difficulties and challenges ahead of them.

Setting objectives that are always multiplied and opened to broader prospects, the adventure of the union provides them with the intellect and moral development that serve as a compass for the future fruition to which they aspire.

From the moment when the physical union provides the possibility for the advent of the offspring, the couple’s personal aspirations shift and will be geared towards other spirits that will be temporarily entrusted to them, in the condition of divine loans they will have to account for, after concluding the ministry of care of their evolving needs.

During the existential course, going through the inevitable clashes of the process of education and rehabilitation, the feelings of affection and duty consolidate, upon working the consciousness that extends the capacity of discernment in relation to life and the compromises resulting from the spiritual knowledge that commands for the route.

All the commitment applied, often turned into personal sacrifice and renunciation, expresses itself in grand and eloquent silences and sufferings well taken, so that the offspring may develop without the marks of the conflicting emotional instability of the parents or the less fortunate circumstances of the social group, particularly in the family structure.

In the long history of coexistence between the dependent little children and the adults, be they of a past or a present nature in relation to the domestic group, the psychological maturity develops in the relationship that should turn into motivation for the future, as a way of mending the

disruptive past, with the aim of attaining balance and spiritual enlightenment of all those who are part of the domestic structure.

In this organization, in which spirits come together, sometimes repeating experiences previously thwarted, where sick feelings and inferior emotions are revived in a kaleidoscope of tests and atonements, the opportunities for moral renewal and mental elevation are manifested so that the results of full love may be harvested.

In charge of events that are presented within a well-established program, or that appears suddenly, the two parents responsible for the family constellation are the harvesters of the past achievements and at the same time, the sowers of the future in constant movement of self-enlightenment.” [\[85\]](#)

What Joanna is trying to convey is the rich and complicated tapestry of life we lead. The spirit world plans out each individual life, but this isn't done in a vacuum. Each life's plan must coincide and complement all of the plans which intersects each individual.

Hence, our lives are a series of tests, within a series of tests for others. They may be our spouse, our children, our extended family, and strangers. The lives in which we touch and move the most are our family. Therefore, within the family group the project plan of trials and tribulations are the most closely correlated.

In order for plans germinated in the spirit realm to come to fruition, each of us must play their part and follow through in our commitments. By running away, we not only harm ourselves, but the detailed plans of those around us.

There was a near death experience of a young man who was severely injured. He was told he could come back to life, but he would be in pain for many years. The spirits showed him the changes which would occur if he chose to leave the earth before his life's plan was finished.

His mother and father would divorce because of the pain of his death. His sister, instead of having a good career and life in front of her, would sink into drug abuse. Both of his parents, alone and bitter, would lead empty lives until their deaths.

On the other hand, if he lived his family would be proud of him, for he would be the first of his extended relations to graduate from college, and his parents and sister would make great strides in their quest for spiritual growth.

His life intersected his family and his absence would have devastating results. Who knows how many other personal paths of enlightenment would be altered?

Therefore, following our commitments, and being joyful and happy in those commitments is one of the most poignant and beautiful labors of love we can perform.



Chapter 15 – Unconditional Forgiveness of Offenses

There are many aspects to the requirement to unconditionally forgive others before one can find inner peace. Primarily, there is the anger inside you. Anger, a primitive emotion, meant mostly to keep us alive, but is of less use in a civilized society. Anger unbalances you, it adds stress which destroys your harmony and turns good vibrations into out-of-sync tones. And, holds you back spiritually.

The Effects of Anger

The spirit Joanna, through the Spiritist medium Divaldo Franco, tells us about anger and the harm it causes:

“The sensation of actual anger has its roots in non-digested conflicts that were stored in the subconscious since childhood. They rise back again whenever some equivalent vibration reaches the fulcrum of the filed remembrances. When such occurs, they unconsciously exude all the unpleasant, but still living, incidents that were covered by the thin layer of forgetfulness.

Anger easily installs in people who lost their self-esteem and are complacent in the image that they project and not their self-value. In those cases, insecurity supplies the short-temperedness and vitalizes the dependence on someone else’s support. In conflict, the individual is unstable, because one does not rationalize the unpleasant occurrences, preferring to react and affirming one’s authenticity. That reaction is the launching of a smoke screen to hide one’s deficiency.

Every time anger is submitted to pressure and is not overcome, it produces damage to the physical and emotional body. At the physical level, those damages occur in the following forms: vago-sympathetic disturbances, such as indigestion, diarrhea, acid-reflux, dysrhythmia, lack of appetite or gluttony, self-punishment and so forth. At the emotional level, those are expressed as nervousness, anxiety, depression.” [\[86\]](#)

The cumulative effects of anger may be physically disabling. A calm and serene lifestyle is mutually exclusive with smoldering anger.

Joanna tells us that absolute forgiveness doesn't solve anger. The root causes of anger must be sought out and corrected before the act of forgiveness effectively contributes to your physical and spiritual well-being.

To fight the fires of anger within you, meditation and study should be pursued. Understanding that we have lived through hard trials in past lives and experienced disappointments in our current life – coupled with the knowledge that we are all immortal spirits, who have traveled through difficult episodes, will enable you to look at actions from a higher perspective. Which will help lessen the aspect of taking actions personally.

Joanna says to handle anger at its source:

“When offended, the individual should express one's feelings to the aggressor, to friends, without complaint or sorrow. One should show that it is normal and that one deserves respect, consideration as everyone else.” ^[87]

She tells us it is also important not to allow anger to turn into resentment. Just like anger, resentment unbalances the body and may cause long-term illnesses.

God gave us feelings for a reason. As a primitive spirit we need strong emotions of flight or fight in order to survive. Our path to spiritual growth is one of intellectualizing these feelings and turning them into methods of understanding others and focusing our will upon the task at hand.

Once we comprehend that we are on earth to make mistakes, just like the child who must repeatedly fail before mastering whatever they are attempting, we too are shepherded through multiple lives to allow us to overcome our primitive urges and replace them with positive attributes which contribute to our eventual graduation to become a pure spirit.

Spiritism promotes the ten thousand foot view of a story of many lives and experiences, in which we shall intersect with people who have been chosen as helpful agents or obstacles in our path (all for a specific purpose!). Realizing this, anger becomes a counter-productive emotion, which only serves to delay our growth. Instead, with a foundation of spiritual knowledge we understand our actions and the actions of others and use that to determine our current spiritual status.

Analyzing every episode on earth in this manner, changes the focus from our emotional state to our progress of our spiritual state. Thereby exorcising the powerful primitive agent of anger and resentment and replacing it with comprehension of the act in the overall scheme of our lesson plan.

Once we are free of the clouding effect of our emotions, then we can move to unconditional forgiveness.

Avoiding Forgiving

Another aspect to attain unconditional forgiveness is our need for study and self-improvement so that we change and in doing so, we remove our predilection to be offended.

Often we are our own worst enemy when it comes to stirring passions. The best method is to control our thoughts and our speech. The spirit Emmanuel cautions us to nip bad conversations in the bud:

“ Do not be misled. Bad conversation corrupts good character. – Paul (1 Cor. 15:33)

Undignified conversation always leaves traces of its inferiority wherever it has occurred. An environment of distrust immediately replaces the climate of serenity. The poison of unwholesome queries spreads rapidly. After unedifying conversation, there is always less sincerity and fewer expressions of fraternal strength. In its ignominious cradle are born the ghosts of slander that slip and slide amongst well-intentioned persons, trying to destroy honest homes; inferior preoccupations arise from afar, twisting respectable attitudes; criminal curiosity emerges, appearing where it has not been called and emitting uncouth opinions that induce listeners to lies and insanity.

Bad conversation corrupts the most dignified thoughts. Worthy conversation suffer its implacable persecution everywhere, and it becomes imperative for people to guard against its insistent and destructive siege.” [\[88\]](#)

I submit that a large part of hurtful behavior begins with a conversation, that commences as an attack on others and next veers off, for no apparent reason, into something said which touches a nerve of one of the parties.

Then the accusations fly and feelings are offended and angry thoughts swirl around. Which increases the temperature level of emotions and produces more pain.

Therefore, refrain from causing a person to be mad and to harbor resentment toward you. If a truth must be told, couch it delicately and with compassion. And if a person responds with accusatory statements, understand their pain and ignore it.

Understanding

The key to unconditional forgiveness is understanding. The more you learn about why a person said or did an act that you felt was a grave offense, the easier it is to pardon them. And as you begin to forgive one after another, soon you will not find the need to comprehend exactly why an action was taken by a particular person – you will just know there must be a solid reason behind it.

The spirit Neo Lucio, writes about the talks that Jesus had in the homes of His disciples. During one discussion, the subject of being rudely rejected when asking for payment of a debt, came up. In response, Jesus told them the story of a wise teacher, who upon hearing from his student how improper he was treated as he went about the streets of Jerusalem, asking for donations for the Temple. The student complained about a man who had just been offensive to him:

“The master took the student by the hand and both of them cautiously continued on their way. They hadn’t gone very far, when they looked back and saw the man fall to the ground, writhing in violent pain. Everyone rushed to his aid. They soon realized that the irascible brother was suffering from deadly colic.

They continued on their way, when they came across a gentleman who didn’t even stoop to respond to their request – he merely gave them a hard and rancorous stare.

Teacher and ward followed him, and when the strange character reached his home, they saw that a small group of weeping people were waiting for him and that he joined them in copious tears. The two of them learned that the unfortunate man had come home to a dead daughter.

They continued begging on the street and were soon cursed at by a young man whom they had asked for alms. Expectantly, they withdrew a ways and after half an hour of observing him, they realized that the wretched man was merely insane.” ^[89]

The two continued on and found more reasonable explanations for anti-social behavior. Jesus cautioned his disciples to show mercy on these harried people and instead of admonishing them, help them to regain inner peace.

Passages from the Old and New Testament, Buddhism, and other religions, plus messages from Spiritist mediums aren't the only transmitters of the need to be understanding and forgiving. People who have had near death experiences, have come back with an even more personal story of the prerequisite for thinking before we emotionally strike back at a seemingly rude remark or action.

Amy, who had lived a life of agony, had a NDE when she accidentally overdosed on pain medicine. During her time in the spirit realm, she had a life review. She reported what she witnessed:

“I've lost my temper in horrible ways and I have had great trouble with forgiveness, and yet, I felt only Love and understanding through the entire life review. What it felt like to me was that I was being given the opportunity and Gift of being able to stand back and more fully understand and love myself. I was able to feel exactly what others around me had felt during my life. I understood how everything I did and said and even thought had touched others around me in one way or another. I was able to even enter the minds and emotional centers of many who had been around me, and understand where they were coming from in their own thinking, how their own personal views and lives' experiences had brought them to the places each stood. I felt their own struggling and their own fears... their own desperate need for love and approval, and more than anything, I could feel how child-like everyone was. With every person I viewed, including myself, I was able to See and Feel with a Higher Mind and Eye. And the feeling I had toward everyone was nothing less than what a loving mother would feel for her own children at toddler age.” ^[90]

Amy eloquently described the revelations the spirits presented to her. She was able to stand aside, away from the emotions assaulting her, during her harsh conversations, and see, for the first time the fragile state of most people.

In the Home

Unfortunately, the vast majority of conflict and the place where the most emotional coin is spent is in the home. This is where understanding and forgiveness should reign supreme. Children, who are blessed, have parents that wisely perceive the ravages of different ages have upon both boys and girls, and forgive their trespasses.

The spirit Joanna de Angelis talks about the importance of trials within the home:

“The planet Earth being a world of a still relatively primitive stage, of *tests and atonements* , it is natural that in most family groups we see sufferings of all kinds, inviting to reflection and the search of inner illumination.

As reincarnation has as its ultimate end the development of values that lie dormant in the spirit, the mistakes and sorrows that are the results of unfortunate past experiences need to be rectified, and so present themselves in different forms of distress.

They can be manifested under an expiatory guise, through the severe process of degenerative conditions, deafness, blindness, paralysis, irreversible mental disorders, or in the form of trials, which are revealed as infectious-contagious diseases, accidents, moral pains, psychological disturbances, behavior disorders, solitude, conflicts ...

There are few families where pain does not present itself as an invitation to spiritual ripening and to a deeper understanding of the superior purpose of existence.

Many people assume that life on Earth is an enchanting voyage to a land of illusions, an experience enriched only by pleasures and enjoyment, and so they forget its transience and the phenomena that affect all, melting away those fantasies and bringing them back to reality.

Therefore, suffering is the silent friend that infiltrates in the spirit in order to make it educate or reeducate itself, developing those latent feelings of love, compassion, and charity, so that it can reap inalienable treasures beyond the grave. Those resources make our real property, because they follow those who possess them, while all the other possessions remain only as memories for those who utilized them and were forced to see them pass on to somebody else's hands.

So, it is the duty of all parents to enlighten their children about the vicissitudes present in our evolutionary path.” ^[91]

It is in the home that spirits emerge in newly born physical bodies to start their classes in the school of earth. It is in the home that training begins to prepare them to accumulate the required lessons for them to rectify what was wrongly done in the past.

A child is pliable from birth to the age of fifteen to eighteen. According to Spiritism, only in the later teenage years, does their personality from their previous existences come forth. This makes the youngest years vitally important to set the stage for future improvement.

One of the most important missions we all have on earth is to raise children. Only by billions of single victories, whereby spirits improve and ascend spiritually will our globe be transformed into a planet of regeneration.

Therefore, raising children to be loving, charitable, honest, and aware of the spirit realm's grand plan for them, will collective humanity gain the right to live in a paradise of equality, fraternity, and justice in our world.

The spirit Emmanuel implores parents to create an atmosphere of tranquility and safety. We should not let harmful vibrations rent the environment of the home. Anger, yelling, and physical punishments should be kept to a minimum. By raising a child in a house full of harmony, a precedence is set for them to desire harmony in their lives as they transform into adulthood.

With harmony and balance, understanding other's concerns and foibles becomes second nature – forgiveness hardly needs to be exercised.

Forgiveness becomes Unnecessary

When there is nothing to forgive, since the reason for anyone's loss of control is understood and your emotional reaction is one of empathy and desire to help ... then you have reached a higher spiritual state.

The spirit Joanna prescribes how to channel your mind to lift your thoughts to an elevated plateau:

“Optimistic thinking predisposes one to an emotional state receptive to health. Thus it is easy to channel it toward the ennobling expressions of love, compassion, justice, equanimity and peace.

The magic élan that will unite all people someday, love must be cultivated as a new experience, the practice of which will become a habit, a normal state of the spirit.

Love's power restores one's confidence in people and in life, for its presence produces stimuli that enable the blood to periodically receive revitalizing charges of adrenaline that reinvigorate the body.

Through its optics, events reveal previously unseen aspects, keeping the emotions from becoming either deadened or overexcited, while at the same time predisposing one to the humanizing quality of compassion.”
[\[92\]](#)

When we are driven by compassion, we, by habit, extend compassion to others as we would like to receive it. And in utilizing compassion, our interaction with others take on a better and more positive approach.

Joanna explains the ultimate benefits of compassion:

“Love offers the compassion that one would like to receive if the situation were reversed; it decreases the intensity of the blow and nullifies its harmful effects. Compassion speaks of God's Inexorable Justice, which reaches everyone and requires benevolence toward one's opponent, rendering him or her – albeit indirectly – aware of the fact that a wrong is always worse for the one who commits it.” [\[93\]](#)

Hence, unconditional forgiveness, comes from a self-imposed state of love and compassion. Training ourselves to peer out at the entire world through lenses of affection for all mankind prepares ourselves for rapid spiritual advancement and to assist others in their planned life events.

With the realization of the great trajectory of lives that all spirits must trek to reach their destination, comes an understanding of each individual and their circumstances at their present spiritual maturity and their required trials.

Spiritism provides the framework for changing your life and a perspective of how you affect the lives of those around you. Your positive attitude and non-judgmental demeanor will enable delicate spirits to withstand their harsh episodes. So that you and your family and friends may help the entire planet become the paradise it so wishes to be.



Chapter 16 - A Devotion to Study

To ascend spiritually one must study. Why? Can't you be caring and loving without any external knowledge, just the warmth of your heart? The answer is: You can make a good part of the journey with your own inclination of love, in fact it's essential.

But, without knowledge of the spirit realm, what is it, how are we related to it, why are we on this planet, why must we have multiple lives, why do bad things happen to good people and good things happen to bad people – the answers to all of the above and more, provides the foundation for rational responses to life's vicissitudes and sets your character and personality on track. On track to have a strong will, to focus your energies for good, always on the side of the light.

I am writing this, only because I have researched and studied anything I could find about the spirit world. I have written before how predictions about my future, told to me by my wife, came true. Detailed predictions, not general nonsense, like you will be successful, etc. She had her revelations during a near death experience. She saw her future and, of course, my future as her husband.

When I finally realized, after many years of disbelief, that she was one hundred percent accurate, I had to cast off my old certainty that life was a series of chaotic events and personal choices – sometimes you could guide your own destiny, other times, happenings too large to withstand, pushed you onto other paths.

But with my future laid out before my eyes, I had to reconsider all of my past notions. I had built up rules, certainties that had been the basis for my philosophical and moral code. The fact that the future was known demolished everything I had constructed.

I started first with how could destiny be pre-written? I searched books, the internet, and talked to people. There were religions which believed in predestination and there were scientists who believed that we are actually living in a 3D hologram. I read it all.

I instinctively understood, that if the future was pre-written, then a higher civilization must be writing it. To us, we could call it God, the

Supreme Being, the Supreme Intelligence, the Spirituality, or any other name denoting an organization and a process that we did not understand.

But I had to gain at least a partial hint of what was directing my every move. Because if life was planned, then it had to have a purpose. If life has a purpose, then each one of us is traveling toward a goal. Therefore, what is our goal, why make such an enormous investment in humans on this planet? These questions burned inside me.

I reread the Bible, the Old and New Testament, I read about Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, and many Spiritual texts. Only after I started exploring near death experiences and messages from spirits communicated through mediums, that I started to get a sense that a spirit realm existed and was driving humanity.

Then I found *The Spirits Book*, by Allan Kardec. He was not a medium, but he was fascinated with the communications he heard while he was present in medium meetings. Then he was told by high level spirits that he had a mission. He wrote up a list of questions, that he provided to many mediums in various cities throughout Europe. He compared the answers to the same question from different mediums and only published those responses which were similar.

He found out his task was to bring the human race the Third Revelation, the information promised by Jesus in the New Testament, which would be sent by the Spirit of Truth:

“If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Consoler to help you and be with you forever...the Spirit of Truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.” New Testament John 14: 15-17

“But the Consoler, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.” New Testament John 14: 26

The Spirits Book was an astonishment to me. I didn't get vague homilies or fuzzy descriptions of angels or the afterlife. I read logical explanations for our world, the spirit world and the human condition.

From there I searched out any other Spiritist literature I could find. I found out that while Spiritism was codified in the 1850s by Allan Kardec and enjoyed a brief success, however, the Catholic Church and other religions did their best to stamp it out.

Whereas in Europe and in America they were mostly successful, Spiritism sprout back up in Brazil. Many marvelous mediums and people, such as Dr. Bezzerá de Menezes, who rekindled Spiritism in Brazil, helped keep the light of Spiritism lit. But, it was Francisco (Chico) C. Xavier who made Spiritism widely known throughout Brazil during the twentieth century and whose books I have so relied on to study Spiritism. Since discovering him, I have found other authors, all Spiritist mediums, who are dedicated to bringing forth messages from the spirit realm to lead us to knowledge.

I have found that as I have learned more, I am able to intellectually modify my inner character for the better. Whereas, the usual method, to make drastic changes to your belief system and personality is accomplished via a significant hardship or a shock to your system, wherefore you are forced to reevaluate your past ideals.

Studying, involved analysis and pondering over what I just read has not only added memory circuits to my brain but my super-ego, ego and id are in the process of being rewired ... for the better. Because now, I know my purpose, your purpose, and humanity's purpose.

What Happens When We Don't Study

However, for most of us, we live a life in pursuit of earthly pleasures. Unaware or disinterested in spiritual growth. How many lives I have wasted? I shudder to know the truth.

In Allan Kardec's book *Heaven and Hell*, there is an interview with a spirit, locked in the Lower Zone – that space between the Dark Abyss (a type of purgatory) and heaven:

“A spirit presented itself spontaneously to the medium under the name Angele.

1. *Have you repented your wrongs?*

‘No.’

Then why have you come?

'To try to do so.'

Aren't you happy then?

'No.'

Are you suffering?

'No.'

Then what do you lack?

'Peace.'

While admitting that their mental state is unbearable, some spirits consider suffering to be only that which reminds them of physical pain.

2. *How is it that you lack peace in the spirit life?*

'Regret of the past.'

Regret of the past means remorse. Have you repented then?

'No. It is for fear of the future.'

What are you afraid of?

'The unknown.'

3. *Would you be willing to tell me what you did during your last existence? Perhaps that would help me to enlighten you.*

'Nothing.'

4. *What was your social position?*

'Middle class.'

Were you married?

'I was a wife and mother.'

Did you zealously fulfill the duties of both positions?

'No. My husband and kids bored me.'

5. *How did you spend your life?*

‘Entertaining myself as a young girl, getting bored as a young woman.’

What were your occupations?

‘None.’

Who looked after your house?

‘The maid.’

6. *Isn't it in the uselessness that you might find the cause of your regrets and fears?*

‘Maybe you're right.’

Agreeing is not enough. Would you like to atone for that useless existence by helping the guilty spirits suffering around us?

‘How?’

By helping them improve themselves with your counsels and prayers.

‘I don't know how to pray.’

We will do it together; you will learn. Would you like to?

‘No.’

Why not?

‘It's tiresome.’” [\[94\]](#)

Spiritist call this being parked. It is merely surviving, learning little, doing little, contributing little. It is the act of wasting one's time in a physical body on earth or in the spirit world. It delays one's ascendance.

While this particular communication was in the mid-nineteenth century, it could have been at any time. To make it current, I only have to substitute the word “maid” for the word “nanny” and possibly add, “I allowed my children to be raised and entertained by television, internet, and other forms of social media.”

The male form of being parked is similar and also bleak. It involves the pursuit of pleasures, of using people for their own satisfaction and of

ignoring everything else. Be it their wives and children or even family and friends.

The central theme of parking is the lack of spiritual growth. Learning nothing from the planned life presented by the spirit realm. The lack of analysis and interest in those close to you. And the utilization of whatever is around you in the search for personal pleasure above all else.

The spirit Joanna, in the book *Family Constellation* , published in 2008, remarks on the dangers of our current situation and how to handle its effect on the young:

“The excess of convenience offered by technological advancements has been propitiating to materialism the implementation of its perverted logic that alienates the individual, by throwing he or she in the abyss of non-conformism resulting from his or her insatiable ambition and the expectancy of immediate pleasures, in view of the constant presence of the destructive death ...

Therefore, the implementation of new educational methods is quite natural among those who work for the student, to be, to learn, to do, and to live together, in order to build up a psychological maturity in the new generations, providing them with skillful means to a balanced choice of what to possess and what to be.” [\[95\]](#)

Her advice is pertinent to all of us – to be, to learn, to do, and to live together – not to be lost in an internet haze of idle conversation, propaganda, or games.

The Need for Education

The spirit Emmanuel, in the book *Thought & Life* , tells us about the importance of education in our quest for perfection:

“Christ said: ‘Let your light shine.’ (Mathew 5:16) And it is He, the Divine Master, Who is our Sublime Guiding Light in the evolution of this planet.

People used to believe that the Lord’s advice was only a mystical call urging superficial worshippers within orthodoxy to believe in a supposed individual prominence to be acquired after death, upon entering an imaginary celestial court.

However, today we recognize that His lessons should be applied in all situations of everyday life.

Nowadays earthly science recognizes the presence of light in all places.

A deeper study of the human body has revealed that it is more a vehicle of energy than it is a state of matter; a compound of infinitesimal particles reciprocally attracting and repulsing each other causing microscopic explosions of light.

Chemistry, Physics and Astronomy have demonstrated that terrestrial man lives and moves amidst a realm that is crisscrossed by rays.

In this glorious domain of energy, we have our mental radiation's conditioning the elements through which life is expressed.

Thought is a creative force projected by the person who generates it, by means of subtle waves, in circuits of action and reaction. This is as measureable as the photon which, on receiving impulse through the luminous system it produces, travels through space at a predetermined speed, this sustaining the glowing Breath of Creation.

Again we say the human mind is a mirror of light which projects and assimilates rays.

However, this mirror is more or less a prisoner of the thick shadows of ignorance, just as before excavation a precious stone is encrusted by subterranean sediments. In order to be able to give off celestial irradiations and project its own brightness, it is indispensable to cast off this layer of darkness through a process of perfecting and enlightenment.

Hence the real need of education for everyone. Let us also remember the words of the Eternal Benefactor when He said 'Let your light shine!' Meaning that the potential of light in our Spirit should shine to its fullness.

Such a state can only be reached through the kind of education that will offer the required improvement.

But education that refines the intellect and improves Mankind's inner world in knowledge and goodness, wisdom and virtue is not achieved

merely by instruction from the outside. Rather it must have the conscious consent of the will. When the will dedicates itself freely and spontaneously to goodness, without any constraints, it can liberate and refine the heart, imprinting on it a crystal clear image of the soul. The soul is then able to reflect the Glorious Life, subsequently transforming the mind into a precious powerhouse of superior energy projecting reflexes of beauty and sublimation.” [\[96\]](#)

Emmanuel makes it perfectly clear that our spirit is energy – encapsulated energy – which is distinct. In our energy form we are a “personality”. Our spirit can be modified by our sojourn on this planet. In fact, the only baggage we can take with us after death is the accumulation of modifications to our core personality.

When we dedicate ourselves to learn and to evolve spiritually, we aren’t just adding more memories to the synapses of our brain. We are reprogramming our core ... the central us, our personality, which will return with us to our real home – the spirit world.

As with so many sayings of Christ, Spiritism reveals the hidden meanings. Jesus knew full well about the spirit world, but he couldn’t expose the whole extent of what it was or what it means. The society of that time wasn’t ready. Even now, we are given drips and drabs of information. Spiritism tells us that as we learn and gain wisdom, more will be forthcoming.

Hence, Jesus well understood that letting your light shine meant to rewire your central core. To reeducate yourself, away from primitive instincts, to altruistic leanings. As you ascend spiritually, the reflection of love from your personality, is brighter. This is why high angels appear as bright as headlights and most humans on earth appear a dull gray.

Emmanuel lets us know that we are always connected. Energy, rays from our thoughts leave us and in return we are bombarded with the thoughts of an infinite amount of other creatures. All data is at our command, when we learn to utilize it.

Therefore, taking a class for a quarter or semester, listening to a lecture, watching a video are all edifying methods to acquire knowledge. But it

takes a real introspection and a desire to change your core to really grasp the golden ring of serenity.

The Inner Journey

How does one begin the voyage to transform yourself? The spirit Joanna supplies the answer:

“ *To be born* in a new body is to unfold one’s possibilities to obtain self-consciousness, liberating oneself from rough condensations of ignorance. That effort occurs through the hurtful injunctions of illnesses, which are depurative processes that free one from the lower stages in which one moves about.

When analyzing the *law of cause and effect* , imperative progress happens by means of repairing deceits, mistakes and crimes. It also occurs by rectifying them and perfecting the superior tendencies that start to blossom.” [\[97\]](#)

What Joanna is telling us is that our trials and tribulations point to the path we should pursue. A lesson plan has been created and reviewed in the spirit world – we just need to follow it.

The challenge is to analyze the hardships you encounter and then identify the weaknesses in your character your trial was attempting to expunge.

I will use myself as an example. Multiple times in my life I was able to receive a nice sum of money. I was in a relatively high position and when the company I was working for was bought out, I was entitled to a payment when I was released. I was given six-figure amounts two times in my career. I counted myself very fortunate.

Each time I thought I had made prudent investments, and yet I invariably lost what I had gained completely! I was devastated. I was subsumed by anguish and remorse at having lost such a sum. I couldn’t think of anything else but my wasting a once in a lifetime opportunity.

When I studied Spiritism, I found the answer. I was given those trials to demonstrate to me two main points. First, I was shown what it felt like to lose a considerable amount of money. In reading the books by Francisco C. Xavier, I learned where we must rectify our errors in past lives. I knew, and

was later told in a Spiritist mediums meeting, that I had taken money, unjustly, from others. Hence, I was fortunate to experience what I had done. Now I know how it feels and how wrong it is to take from others, what they have so painstakingly worked for and had plans for. My avarice was a black hole in my heart. And it had to be removed.

Secondly, I was presented with the message that material wealth is second to spiritual wealth. The second time I lost my little fortune, I soon found my wife and Spiritism. The pain from allowing money to slip from my hands disappeared as I encountered the truth. That any material gain wouldn't accompany me to the other side. Only my actions and the alterations to my character. That love on earth is indescribably superior to money in the bank. Nothing can replace love. You can always make enough money to survive.

If I hadn't sought out and studied Spiritism, I would have not adequately learned the lessons provided me. While I would have been more sympathetic when people lost their fortunes, I wouldn't have understood, in my heart, the transitory nature of wealth and the overriding primacy of love.

Only by analyzing the situation and pondering what it means to your level of spirituality, can you derive the full extent of the object lesson provided. Fully taking advantage of the intimate classroom experience, provided you by the other side, will enable you to accelerate your spiritual growth.

Your devotion to study will be rewarded, the spirit Joanna explains:

“In order to end suffering, it is essential to acquire a responsible attitude capable of going back to the origins of the suffering, analyzing them and working them out with planned, purposeful direction.

Educating one's thoughts, disciplining one's habits and being sure of one's goals are skillful means for ending suffering: otherwise, therapies and techniques become mere palliatives.” ^[98]

Hence, casually listening to the lesson, while distracted with the pleasures of life will cause your next life to be similar to your present life. Failing the class means the lesson must be repeated.

On the other hand, internalizing the information provided and its cure, will result in a reward in heaven and in your next life. There is no better return on your time on earth than investing in your spiritual education.



Chapter 17 - A Gesture of Kindness

Some of our fondest memories are of little acts of kindness shown toward us. I remember when I was about five years-old and was stung by a bee. I was crying, then a policeman came up and put some cold mud on it and made it feel better. I have never forgotten that small gesture. The spirit world asks us to replicate that moment, on a worldwide basis, every day. Imagine if each person could give and receive tiny offerings of gratitude on a daily or weekly basis. It would truly change the earth.

This is precisely what the spirit realm desires. To change our focus from struggling to earn the money required to pay for shelter, food, and small pleasures to seeking out opportunities to please others.

In heaven, kindness is always present. From the spirits who welcome new souls to their level to the Prince of a city, who is always open to receive visitors and help them solve their problems. To change our planet from a world of inequality and danger, we must start acting like we belong in a planet closer to heaven.

Kindness Begins Close to Us

The spirit Joanna stresses that kindness and love begins in the family. It is where parents teach their children to be warm and kind individuals. She explains:

“The home is not only the place of duties, but also of joy, the joy of living and feeling the family, of experiencing good times and planning festivities that can facilitate fine social relationships.

It is for this reason that it is fair that the home possess a pleasant and balanced emotional climate, rather than being a place filled with discontentment and complaints, in a way that the ambient is always contaminated by bad mood and pessimism.

Even in the presence of difficulties and problems, which are perfectly normal, they should be examined with naturalness, without the extremes of rebellion or concealment, giving a false impression that everything is well. When trust and loyalty are not present in the home, the family begins to destabilize advancing toward its collapse. It is essential, therefore, that before such occurrences all family members be

informed of what is happening in the family nest, so that they can work together, as best they can, to resolve the difficulties and extend the good results of the work accomplished.” [\[99\]](#)

Good parents create an atmosphere of calmness and direction for families. Children raised in an atmosphere of mutual trust and looking out for each other, naturally bring these attributes to not only their own future family, but also to the outside world.

Creating a habit of reasonableness first and foremost is extremely important. It sets the stage for possible spiritual enhancement based on logic and not as an emotional reaction to unsolvable problems.

The state of being reasonable and kind is one of the antidotes to our superficial materialist culture. A culture which thrives on fake outrage and signaling for any type of attention. If, instead of yelling and stomping of feet at any perceived digression, a gentle response was offered, it would be one small step for the spiritual advancement for humankind.

The merry-go-round of heightened emotions, the search for an enemy, the need to label oneself as a victim, would all subside if everyone focused on kindness. Because then, the search would be how to create a calming and supportive atmosphere for the other person, as opposed to degrading a person for an act or idea which you don't agree with.

The spirit world sends us messages. They don't waste words, they don't over exaggerate, they try not to mislead. Everything that comes from Spiritist mediums has some meaning – we may not fully understand the entire meaning – but it is relevant.

The words “a gesture of kindness” means so much more than the mere act. It implies a reappraisal of our approach and an examination of our inner core. A modification to change ourselves, whereby kind gestures are natural acts we perform every day.

Training for Kindness

The spirit Joanna send us the message that the method to train ourselves is through healthy thinking. We should review our actions with our conscience and our knowledge of the good before speaking or acting. She notifies us:

“One, who is careful, commits fewer mistakes. One, who establishes goals and commit to them, makes right choices.

Such programming decrees the need to think with righteousness, even when circumstances and people suggest another way, possibly a sudden and unhappy one which may later yield to guilty consciousness.

To cultivate confidence and joy in dealing with members of society, starting at home, despite moral defections and treacherous shocks to which everyone is subjected to.

To radiate pleasantness and hope in order to produce an aura of peace that encourages and pleases all.

To use conversation as a catalyst element of new noble and virtuous ideas that will simulate creativity, courage, and perseverance in wellness.” [\[100\]](#)

In essence, our entire mindset should transform, from one inwardly directed at ourselves – thinking about our poor state of affairs – to how we may support others.

By doing so, we establish positive thoughts going outwards, which will reflect back on us and increase our strength. For as our good intentions radiate, those around us will pick them up and start to mimic our warm vibrations. Which will, in return, enter our mind and add more force to our will.

We have all encountered a person who seem to light up the room. It is never a case of pure physical beauty, it is beauty composed of an inner radiance, character, attitude, and glowing personality. That person comes, more interested in those about them, than concerned about their own presence. Their light causes everyone else in the vicinity to somehow feel better, more excited, and yet calm.

Therefore, to be kind, is more than a nice word or a helping hand. Kindness must start from within. Once it is securely lodged in your heart, it will become a beacon to all.

The spirit Joanna tells us the affect that kindness may have:

“With rare exceptions, the great figures of humanity possessed a greater behavioral awareness based on what was learned at home, and on the care of parents, grandparents and teachers, who became examples worthy of emulation. Their reminiscences were rich in beauty, kindness and love, which made them strong for the grand endeavors of existence, and those who were the victims of supreme sacrifice were at peace for having died to benefit posterity.” [\[101\]](#)

Kind Words

The spirit Neio Lucio recounts a conversation held in Peter’s house, where the disciples of Jesus were discussing how one could perform charitable acts without money.

Jesus told the gathering about a man who was truly devoted. He wished with all of his heart to shower gifts upon the poor. Unfortunately, he too, lived in extreme poverty. So he gave the only thing he could – himself. He gave kind words and personal gestures of support. He talked with those in ill-health and in hardship.

He was unhappy he couldn’t give directly. Clothes to cover those in rags and food for the hungry. He knew that he couldn’t perform any public acts of charity, so he tried to be a bulwark against difficult times for others, in any manner he could.

Jesus continued the story:

“This was how he began to pay continual attention to extinguishing all of the inferior thoughts that were suggested to him. Whenever he came in contact with people who liked to speak ill of others, he would politely leave, and when responding to any sort of direct inquiry about someone, he would remember this or that small virtue of the absent victim. If someone was easily angered in his presence, he would consider the anger an illness that needed treatment, and he would quietly withdraw. Insults from others beat down on his spirit like stones on a honey barrel, because, besides not striking back, he treated the offender with his usual fraternity. Slander found no access to his soul, such that any kind of obscene accusation was lost without effect in his great silence. Whenever he saw threats against someone’s peace of mind, he tried humbly to undo the clouds of misunderstanding before

they gathered into a storm. If some type of condemning statement was prancing around his neighbor, he would spontaneously do everything he could to defend the person tactfully and inauspiciously. His zeal against the incursion and the spread of evil was so highly detailed that he would even remove debris and stones from public roads so that they would not pose a danger to pedestrians.

Having adopted these guidelines, he reached the end of his human journey, unable to attend to the world's suggestions for beneficence. He had never been able to offer a bowl of soup or a woolen coat to his neighbors in need.

This was his situation when death brought him before the divine tribunal, where the humble servant appeared apprehensive and despondent. He was dreading the judgement of the heavenly authorities, when suddenly he was crowned with a brilliant diadem. When he tearfully asked the reason for this unexpected reward, he was told that the sublime recompense was due to his triumphant position in the war against evil, in which he had made himself an invaluable worker.” [\[102\]](#)

There is nothing more important than displaying kindness. It accomplishes two objectives. It conditions you to retain love and warmth in your heart for every occasion. And, it serves as an example of others how they should behave.

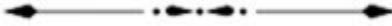
Giving money is a nice gesture, but it's easy. Yes, one must work to earn the money, but the act of giving is simple, fast, and direct. The feeling of actually helping another person doesn't persist. It doesn't penetrate into your character. Ask yourself, how many times you remember giving cash versus actually helping a person?

Whereas, taking care of a person or talking to a person and giving comfort exercises your heart and your brain. It forces you to suspend your own world for a minute and see from another perspective. It enables a better understanding of the human condition. It makes you look at the person and analyze their spiritual maturity and their character.

Exposure to others brings great benefits. Your horizons are broadened and your database of people, circumstances, actions and reactions is

expanded. Your conscience is presented with gray areas which must be figured out. All crucial steps for spiritual growth.

Kindness benefits the receiver, but it also is of immediate use to the giver. The installation of the habit of kindness does so much for self-improvement. Habits are retooled. Positivism replaces negativism. Personal viewpoint is turned outward instead of inward. And, most impactful, your personality begins to shine, so that when others talk about a person who can light up a room ... they mean you.



Chapter 18 – An Encouraging Smile

“My friend, if you have embraced the Christian Spiritist task in the name of the sublime faith, thirsting for a more uplifting spiritual life, remember that the Master has sent your renewed soul to the vast field of the world in order to serve Him.

You are not only to reach the way of the good. You are to act in accordance with the lofty principles that you proclaim.

You are to dictate worthy directives to others, but you are to heed them as well.

You are to proclaim the need for courage while sowing joy and blessings even when you are misunderstood by all.

You are not to be content with simply handing out coins and immediate relief. You are to always give a bit of yourself to whomever is in need.

You are to not only forgive; you are to understand the offender, helping him or her to get up.

You are not to criticize. You are to find unexpected ways to be useful.

You are not to yell. You are to make use of the time in order to materialize the good thoughts that guide you.

You are not to argue needlessly. You are to find a way to server others wherever you are.

You are not to merely combat evil with words. You are to preserve the good, sharing it with everyone.

You are not to condemn. You are to discover the light of love in order to make it shine in your heart until death.

Pray and watch.

Love and wait.

Serve and deny yourself.

If you are not willing to apply the Divine Master's lesson to your own life, your faith will have been useless." [\[103\]](#)

So said the spirit Emmanuel. To be a Spiritist, a Christian Spiritist is not an easy task. First, the perceived space between you and the Supreme Intelligence and all of its functionaries are drastically diminished by your knowledge of the organization and processes of the spirit realm.

Most people have an idea of God, but it is of a God far away, high above us. Yes, we think that God and His lieutenants look down on us with love, but they do so with little interference. Spiritism closes this space. Spiritism tells us every action, every thought is recorded and analyzed. Our deeds are watched as we go about following a curriculum fashioned by the spirit realm to educate us. Hence, we live in a glass house. Nothing is hidden. This concept is a bit unnerving.

Second is predestination. Nothing or extremely close to almost nothing happens by chance. Again, knowing you are on a ride, with all the ups and down, like a roller coaster, but you don't realize there are tracks ... is a bit disconcerting. Once you are a Spiritist, you wait for the next bend in the rails to give you a good fright. You know it's coming, but what is it and what does it mean is constantly at the back of your mind.

You logically realize it is safest to just keep moving forward, doing the best that you can. Because, you can't be passive and wait. You are expected to strive and contribute. But, you don't want to charge off in the wrong direction. Finally, you determine that to always follow your conscience is the best advice.

Third, is the balance of spiritual improvement and the material necessities of everyday life. Once you realize that you are immortal and the life you are living is one of many, you devalue material pleasures, but you still have a family to take care of. They may not realize the transitory nature of life like you do, hence, until they do, they require a foundation to live, to achieve their dreams. To enable them to find out for themselves what the spirit world wants from them.

Last, is the truth of reincarnation. That we have had, and will have, many lives. One analyzes the trials in the present life and derives hints at

what one must have done in a previous life. It can be a disturbing revelation.

This, coupled with the fact that every action has a reaction, makes one think what are the implications of past errors, for the current life and beyond. Finally, one knows in their heart, to not dwell on the past, learn from it and move on, vowing to alter that which led to mistakes.

I believe this is what the spirit Andre Luiz realized when in the eighteenth line of the poem *Inner Peace*, where he penned the theme how to live life; he wrote “An encouraging smile.” In three words he expressed that with our new-found knowledge of Spiritism, we shouldn’t turn solely inward, deep in introspection, but we keep our joyousness, for ourselves and others, by encouragement. A positive, a happy encouragement.

Andre Luiz understood the impact of the revelations that Spiritism may bring to each individual. The weight of the knowledge that we are being constantly tested can be a heavy load. But, soon we pass an invisible line where we accept our place on earth and begin to take pleasure in the obstacles and our new outlook, life takes on a different flavor.

Life actually becomes more interesting. People and their situations become enticing dramas to be analyzed. And so, in the midst of this newness, we need to keep at the forefront an encouraging smile.

Serve and Deny Yourself

To become a person who inspires others we must learn to serve. To serve is to perform unselfish acts. Dampening down the selfishness we all have within ourselves is one of the first tasks we must carry out to become that which we wish to be.

The spirit Joanna exclaims to the world what we should emphasize in our character - Altruism:

“The antithesis of selfishness, it heals the wounds of the soul caused by it and fosters comprehensive health.

Altruism is a bright and shining star radiating an enveloping peace that reaches and overcomes the emotional and prejudicial distances that keep people apart. It captures all willing hearts with its radiation, and indelibly marks the periods of life with its presence.

The desire for possession, gratification of the senses and superiority, which typifies selfishness, becomes a yearning for selflessness, happiness and fraternity in the liberating arena of altruism.” [\[104\]](#)

Joanna explains that once you start thinking about others, your desires change. You begin to steer away from physical pleasures and become focused on assistance of those in need.

Whereas, once your satisfaction was in bodily stimuli, you become delighted in the acts of kindness and understanding. Exchanging one positive feeling for another is a time tested method to rewire your outlook and habits.

Your memories of buying luxuries or sensuous encounters usually fade away in a small amount of time. Dredging up remembrances never seems to provide the satisfaction you require. Therefore, more is needed. And, it is difficult to stop without filling the emotional need and the hours in the day.

Therefore, replacing the time and emotional fulfillment with service to others neatly exchanges a primitive desire for a more spiritually advanced sense of pleasure.

Joanna points out the long term effect:

“As altruism expands, it takes on an ethical aspect.

We can see this ethic as being the serenity that respects all behaviors without imposing its own way of living, of looking at life, of expressing itself.” [\[105\]](#)

Wishing to serve the individual, in their time of need, removes the point of view imposed upon us by the society and culture we reside. We don't examine the need of a foreigner differently than a citizen of our country, or of a diverse culture. We see what is lacking and attempt to supplement.

Joanna tells us that as we grow in altruism we replace civil laws and outlook with the application of Natural Law or the Law of Love. We query our conscience first and foremost and only secondly examine what may be in the penal code in the jurisdiction in which we live.

Once we instill the love of others within us, the next step is to act upon it. We take our newfound compassion and begin to find means to exercise

our kindness upon those around us. Joanna tells us how these actions will commence:

“They begin as tolerance toward those on the lower levels of moral growth, providing them with fraternal opportunities for self-realization, while at the same time helping them directly with their inner and outer growth.

True tolerance is an invisible achievement that becomes a degree of progress because it encourages new expressions of solidarity, accentuating unrestricted forgiveness of all harm that has been done, with real forgetfulness of the offense.

Overcoming this challenge is a major step forward on the road to personal illumination, which opens the way for deeds of fraternal charity, of assisting the neediest, of being present wherever support and help are indispensable.

Action is the word of order throughout the universe. Movement is the mechanism that drives life in all direction.” [\[106\]](#)

Our altruism promotes tolerance of those we seek to assist. As we help others, the old layers of past grudges and possible future ones fade away. We realize that everyone is on their own journey and their actions are all dictated by their spiritual level and their planned life on earth.

Instead of emotionally internalizing the deeds of others, we intellectualize them and fashion methods to support a positive outcome to whatever the person had to suffer through. Our thoughts, our analysis becomes real actions.

In the physical world, the actions may be giving food, helping with the rent, or just listening. This prepares us for life in the spirit realm, where our thoughts are actions. We are conditioning our minds to skip the physical phase for when we return to the land of energy. Where our minds morph the landscape around us and the environment we live in.

The Place to Start

As usual, the best place to start a new beginning is in the home. Kindness and inspiration should start where you live. Spiritist literature

encourages us to conduct a family meeting once a week. Spiritists call this “God at Home”.

We started this meeting in our own home more than six years ago. We picked eight p.m. on Thursdays nights. We start on-time.

The reason for setting a regular meeting time and place is to make it easy for your guardian spirits to be at the home with you during the meeting. It may take a few weeks, but after you establish a regular meeting time, you will begin to feel the presence of good spirits.

These beneficial spirits, who have your best interests in mind, will help everyone in the meeting. They will assist the children in forming their thoughts and give the adults the openness and patience to learn and communicate.

We start the meeting with a prayer and then we read a passage from a Spiritist book. Since we have children, we started reading a *Beginners Guide to Spiritism*. Each one of us took turns reading a few paragraphs and then we discussed what we learned.

We review subjects such as what is the meaning of reincarnation, our immortal life, the need for charity, and other important concepts. More importantly, we allow the dialog to travel to whatever question the children can think of. The topics veer off to problems in school, friends, and family concerns.

Before we start the meeting, we fill up a pitcher of water and place it in the middle of the table. During the meeting, the spirits will energize the water. After the ending prayer, we all drink the liquid.

The meeting promotes our spiritual and physical health. As we discuss the aspects of our life on earth and our future life in the spirit realm, the spirits give us healing vibrations.

The spirit Joanna expands on the benefits of a weekly meeting:

“As a methodology to family education, the study of the Gospel of Jesus at home is a significant resource that contributes to the balance of all family members.

One weekly meeting, where the family gathers for an edifying and healthy conversation, for the discussion of common problems and the understanding of the troubles in relationships, is an excellent opportunity for the ethical and moral development of all, clarifying misunderstandings and figuring out solutions to whatever might be disturbing life at home and outside.

In a harmonious environment, distant from conflictive emotions, parents and children talk more naturally with other members of the family, trying to find the best ways to build understanding and a happy living.

Free from choleric exchanges, that healthy habit works as a link that binds those who have learned to respect one another and promotes salutary discussion about the fundamental problems inside the domestic group.” [\[107\]](#)

I can certainly attest to the effectiveness of our family meetings. My wife and I take the opportunity to illustrate the loving environment we should all strive for, and we are able to discuss many important family topics in peace and in a rational manner. The best benefit of all, is that we ask the children for feedback, to determine in what ways we should set boundaries and discipline for the kids. We have always heard reasonable solutions and in fact I have learned to change my approach for one child, who couldn't grasp the manner in which I was trying to communicate a certain concept.

I truly believe, the spirits present in the room, at our dining table, assisted the children to verbalize effectively what they were trying to communicate. After all, how many times have we all had a conversation with a child and ask why they did a certain thing, and we get a shrug in return? But, during the home meetings, a more rational explanation seems to emerge, I can only thank the spirits for that!

Home meetings work for adults without children too. When a couple or more adults live together, they too should have a respite from everything and allocate time for a spiritual conversation. In our culture an in-depth discussion of the spirit world, our place within it, and how should we fashion ourselves, often seems strange. As if we are talking about a forbidden subject.

The entire spectrum of our media has tried to expunge any exposure to a higher moral authority, with some exceptions. It is the same as the story of the emperor with no clothes. All of the emperor's attendants told him he looked great, after he donned the invisible clothes. No one would tell him the truth.

Our media, afraid of offending anyone, but more importantly afraid of stating that there a moral truth which is not relative or fungible, has attempted to filter out any questioning of right and wrong.

The Spirit realm understands that all of humankind may not agree on what is correct behavior or not. Therefore, they wish us to have a dialog. With an interplay between different religions, philosophies, and doctrines, more knowledge will be spread and people can start their own personal discovery.

But a blackout of any discussion of a purpose of life beyond our temporary stay on earth only serves to stall the eventual ascendancy of our entire planet.

This is why each of us needs to do our utmost in becoming examples of spiritual enlightenment. And we can hone our communication and listening skills in our God in home meetings. This is the first small step of acquiring the altruism to effectively help others.

We can use this skill beyond the boundaries of our home to change society for the better. This is the reason Andre Luiz exhorts us to perform gestures of kindness. Each of us is like a wave hitting the beach. One wave does nothing to break apart the small pebbles to create the smooth white sand, but millions upon millions of waves, over time, does the job.

We must do our part, no matter how small it may seem to be. Each ripple of water will serve to smooth out the rock, not mattering how gentle it may appear. Spiritism, the Doctrine which can be summed up as "Follow the Golden Rule", can lead us to elevate ourselves and the world around us.



Chapter 19 – Spontaneity to Assist Others

Spontaneity – some have it in abundance and others lack it. Spontaneity is required to spot opportunities to assist others. The spirit Andre Luiz says we should have the gift to recognize those who need our help as we go about our natural daily lives.

I am one who lacks it. In my daily life I am usually lost in a haze of thought. I will walk to work, deep in contemplation, passing by those with hands out. Only after I reach the next block, do I even think about what I saw.

I castigate myself for the lost chance and vow to do better. But I never do, the next day I am preoccupied once again as I make my way. I realize that I dwell on future possibilities to the detriment of the present.

The spirit Joanna de Angelis tells us why we shouldn't enslave ourselves to worrying about tomorrow:

“Jesus, the unique Psychotherapist, proposed an excellent prescription of peace: ‘Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.’

It is important to have in mind that the experience results in living. In addition, badness and wrongdoings converge into the search for the best. Like this, every single moment deserves the investment of attention and care that one intends to direct for future occurrences. Acting with precision today eliminates mistakes now and avoids them later on.” [\[108\]](#)

One must be careful not to read Jesus' advice to not worry about tomorrow as a rule to cease working for advancement. The spirit world doesn't, even for one moment, wish us to sit passive and wait for the next event.

In fact, what is being told to us, is that events will happen, but we have to do our part and participant. If you are apprehensive about getting that job you have always desired – don't. It was decided long before you were born if you are to attain that employment. But, you should still strive for it, you should interview and talk to friends who could give you help to get in the door. But, bear in mind, the actual decision has already been made.

You may ask, then why should I even try anything? I should just sit and do nothing. The answer is - would you do that if you were in a classroom? After all, you know the class will be fifty minutes long. You know the bell will ring and you shall leave. And you know the class will terminate at the end of the semester. Why bother?

Because you are in the class to learn, to accumulate knowledge, to do your best at all times. Your life is the same, you are on earth to learn from experiences, good and bad – they all teach you something. Each episode in your life is one more lesson.

Therefore, as you tell your children, pay attention!

When Joanna says “acting with precision today” she is telling us the other important rule for living on earth. While we shouldn’t over think future events, we should concentrate on improving our character. Acting with precision implies a conscience that is paramount. We don’t make decisions without checking it first. Any choice which causes alarms to go off in our body – a feeling of stress or disharmony – should be reconsidered.

Joanna points out that we should instill habits in the mind. To always attempt to do better, to love better. She knows this is a constant battle with all of our primitive emotions, stored up from previous lives:

“It is not sufficient, therefore, to wish for this or that conquest. It is indispensable to insist and persevere, so that the power of the unusual idea predominates above those that were previously stored commanding the events.” [\[109\]](#)

Hence, it is the dedication and repetition to instill higher ideals into the wiring of your consciousness that is the real work, the unscripted work for your life. Events will occur, but it is entirely up to you to grow from them. It is your decision to make a real change in your outlook and attitude. The spirit world isn’t going to force you to become a nicer person - that is entirely your choice.

Therefore, as I walk to work, instead of thinking about the places I want to go on vacation, or how to get the raise I desire, I should tell myself to radiate love to those I pass by. I should think with kindness about those I

dismissed yesterday. I should be constructing a new attitude of benevolence.

The Present – Be Awake

“ As long as it is still day, I must do the work of him who sent me. – Jesus (Jn. 9:4)

We know that the Master’s divine work is incessant and that it takes place in a perennial and resplendent day of opportunities; however, in order for us to grasp the real meaning of our stay on the earth, Jesus tells us that he had to take advantage of the opportunity to directly interact with human beings.

If such an attitude was enough of a reason for the Master’s concern, what can we say about ourselves as we live in the physical realm or in the spheres closest to it and fulfill our obligations in the sacred realization of the eternal good?

Christ is not referring to the need of preaching about the works of God. He is referring to accomplishing them at the right time.” [\[110\]](#)

Interacting with people at the right time is the key message presented by the spirit Emmanuel. It is through the laid out blueprint of our life, in which we intersect with a variety of people, all put there for a purpose, that we are buffeted by the highs and lows of life to cause us to reexamine the foundations of our character.

It is via the millstone of conversations, actions, and dramas with our fellow humans that we grind away our imperfections. Hence, we should heed what Emmanuel tells us:

“So, never disdain the situation you find yourself in. Try to use it to the best of your ability so that your efforts may be a fount of blessings for others and for those closest to you. Never forget to take advantage of the time to acquire more enlightenment while it is still day.” [\[111\]](#)

The spirit Emmanuel has told us that we must be awake to whatever opportunities which may arise, but the next question is how to maintain that ability to seize the moment, while simultaneously deeply concentrate on altering the structure of your mind.

The spirit Joanna, in the book *Times of Health and Conscientiousness* , provides the structure to make progress:

“The mind’s function is to think.

The habit of thinking expands the potential to discern.

The mind is capable of using reason to recognize its own errors and correct them.

Laziness regarding thinking is responsible for limiting one’s discernment, one’s reason.

Conforming to narrow and superficial analysis of life and its manifestations, individuals remain at a lower stage, squandering time and opportunities.

The endeavor to maintain attention – which observes; concentration – which assimilates; and deep reflections – which completes the psychophysical balance becomes the bridge of union between the surface conscious and the deep Self, thus unifying the activities of the two brain hemispheres, which become harmonized and develop in tandem.

The repetition of acts generates habits and these become memories that begin to function automatically.

If you choose mental habits of discernment for what is correct, you will act with confidence, and those *memories* will function automatically, maturing you intellectually and emotionally, and this behavior will give you self-awareness, oneness with your deep Self.” [\[112\]](#)

Joanna lays out the three legs of the stool to rest upon our ability for retrospection and spontaneity. Attention, concentration, and deep reflection must exist and spark in your mind simultaneously. All three processes must be enhanced, with the priority of any one of the three, for any particular moment, is controlled by discernment.

Most of us, I in particular, have the habit to give all of ourselves to one of these, and ignore all else until we have finished what we wanted to do. I have been told that people will come up to me and speak and I will not

notice, hear, or recognize their existence. Or, even more rude on my part, is to make eye contact, but ignore everything that is said.

It is the old joke where a wife is talking to her husband, and he is thinking and focusing on something else, then she asks him to repeat what she said. He has no clue.

All of this is because many of us have the habit to latch onto one of the processes and not allow any outside stimuli to engage one of the others. For instance, while a person is giving their entire attention to a child, but across the park there is a woman acting like she is in pain. Your discernment, should disengage from the child for a moment and turn your concentration upon the woman in trouble. If you have satisfied yourself that everything is ok, then you could return to paying attention to the child.

I believe most of us are masters at any one of the processes at any one time – attention, concentration, and deep reflection – but it is the rapid fire movement between the three that requires strengthening.

To bolster this aptitude, Joanna tells us to know what is correct – by keeping our conscience as the signaler – to switch between processes. The more we practice, the better we shall be. We will establish patterns of discernment, which will quickly call up whatever attribute is required for the occasion.

The more we exercise this new found talent, the more at ease and confident we shall be. Our words and actions will flow from deep inside us to be of the same character as our true deep self. Once this occurs, the causes for stress and dis-harmonization are removed and we become healthier individuals.

With a heightened discernment, we become more able to react spontaneously to situations. And, in listening to our conscience we will act correctly ... with love and fraternity.

How to Start Thinking Rightly

How does one begin the steps to reprogram one's brain? The spirit Joanna, in the book *Life: Challenges and Solutions*, tells us how to accomplish this task:

“Since all expressions of evolution depend on thought, from whence they come, it is easy to think differently by replacing an incorrect thought with one that seems favorable. People may claim not to know the difference, but all they have to do is evaluate what comprises their crutch – the thing that sustains their dysfunction – and then proceed to a new endeavor of a different sort.

At first, inertia will ensure the repetition of the old pattern and will breed disbelief in the success of the new undertaking. In this case, they must persist and persevere, opening up new space in the corrupted mental field to plant the new seeds of optimism and hope in order to exit the unhealthy state. Right afterward, it is imperative that they begin to value everything around them and establish new patterns of comprehension, thus freeing themselves from their old negative constructs.

The new habit will be slowly instilled in the subconscious until it becomes an integral part of the behavior.

Thinking rightly or wrongly is a matter of habit. Every time there is a demeaning, negative, perverse or unjust thought, it must be immediately replaced with a dignified, positive, loving, trusting, and fair one. Subsequently, it must be further sustained by the force or wave of one’s desire. That which is thought about certainly does become a reality. This is so because thinking and acting are terms of the same existential equation. Think first and then act, rather than act first and then regret it after having thought about it.

Lofty mental constructions – those that produce healthy habits – are renewable and grow in the individual. They originate in the spirit, which receives them from the Divine Thought, whence come all the forces of spiritual growth and complete fulfillment.” [\[113\]](#)

Joanna is not only illustrating the path to alter our mindset, she is also revealing the method for true spiritual ascension. Spiritism notifies us that we are who we were on earth when we pass over from the physical to the spirit universe. Hence, while our bodies and possessions are separated from us, we still retain our mind, our character, our memories, and our personality.

In the spirit realm, thought is action, to ascend requires thought control ... self-control of your mind. The higher the spirit the more complete control a spirit possesses. And as a spirit rises, the more power of creation with their mind. Therefore, to ascend means to discipline one-self – to control one’s thoughts, to guide one’s thoughts to the light.

As you attempt to make fundamental changes to your thought patterns, the spirit world will notice your endeavors. As you prove yourself resilient and persist in the face of obstacles – gossip from friends, social pressure to fit in, etc. – your guardian spirit will send you power to resist temptation and bolster your will-power to continue your progress.

Do not underestimate the close proximity of the spirit realm. Your mentor spirits are ever alert of your activities, and like good teachers everywhere, when they detect positive behavior, they desire to reinforce it.

Awaken

Once we begin to follow Joanna’s advice and march with vigor toward attention, concentration, and deep reflection – by rewiring our brains through elimination of negative attributes and instilling positive feelings, we shall awaken.

Being awake means a mind that is active and listening. Able to discern what is the truth, even in a sea of counter-productive propaganda. Joanna talks about the need to be alert:

“Humankind, in general, lives in a sleep state, in lethargy, and that is why people suffer the worst sickness possible; ignorance of themselves, their destiny, and the meaning of their existence.

Comfortable with their situation, people may complain, but they do almost nothing to change society’s ills, ills that are often characteristic of themselves as well; due to their masochistic need to inspire pity, they bemoan themselves. They yield to circumstances out of self-indulgence and make no real effort to overcome any obstacle that may pose a threat or hindrance to their progress.

Unconsciousness prevails in the modern world because it gives in to immediate gratification, with no follow-up plan for attaining liberating emotions. Thus, society is divided into surreptitious, mutually hostile

groups that grow further apart each day, whereas they should work together to eliminate separatist barriers and become aware of their infinite potential for self-realization and spiritual awakening.

But the moment inevitably arrives when individuals are induced to either awaken or remain dead to reality. In order to awaken from their heavy sleep, they must make every effort possible to break the chains of self-pity and unhappiness, self-deprecation and self-disrespect.

Being awake means self-fulfillment, being aware of one's inner reality and the infinite possibilities for growth that are within one's reach. It means freeing oneself from the fears that keep one immobilized in uselessness, rediscovering the joy of living and acting, broadening one's communication with nature and all living beings, multiplying the means of human dignification and making them available to everybody; and submitting oneself to the eloquent purpose of enlightenment found everywhere." [\[114\]](#)

To be awake is to be spontaneous, to react with confidence to any situation. And your reaction will be tinted with love and kindness, because, via your self-inspection you realize that love is the path to the higher levels of heaven, the way to the light.

Joanna helps to draw our attention to those in need. Invariably they will be the people asleep – full of self-pity and unhappiness, with no understanding how to break free of the materialistic bonds that tie them to their current circumstances.

Help them discover their seldom used deep reflection to explore what is actually important to their inner selves and happiness. So often people only require a sounding board, a sympathetic ear to cite their grievances. Spirit authors caution against acting condescendingly, as if we know the solution to another's problem. Instead, ask questions and guide them to explore their motivation and feelings. If they ask for advice, gently explain the primacy of spiritual wellness and how to attain it. Let them figure out if that is a good idea or not.

Retooling our ratiocination pathways will enable us to be better providers of assistance to friends, family, and colleagues. In addition, our

inner selves will be improved and readier to enter heaven to work productively.

The Spiritist Doctrine, brought to you and continually updated by spirits, is there to simply light the path to spiritual enhancement. By revealing your purpose in life, it lets you determine if and how you will either facilitate your ascendancy or hinder it. You and your free-will is always in charge.

I will end with this story. Francisco (Chico) C. Xavier was talking to the spirit of his mother, after his sister died. Chico was a famous Spiritist medium in Brazil, but his sister was a devout Catholic her entire life. Chico's mother told him that she told her daughter to rest after her arduous transformation from physical life to spirit life. That she should take some time to rest in a celestial community designed to help Catholics reenter heavenly life. Chico's sister asked her mother, "But what happens to Spiritist after they die? Where do they go?" Chico's mother replied, "Oh my daughter, they are put to work right away!"



Chapter 20 – Simplicity of Habits

To live simply is to exist within the basic needs we all have. Food and shelter is required. Spirit messengers add to this list – family and study. Family, because we are born into the world with support. A structure that is usually designed to mold us into better people, before the character of our past lives begin to intrude during our late teens. And study, because we are put on earth to acquire the attributes we sorely need and to break down the flaws in our personality.

All else is dross. It is the waste of the soil surrounding the precious mineral. We are the diamond that must be polished. The events of physical life is the grinding stone. Anything which subtracts from reforming the black holes in our self, delays our spiritual progress.

The spirit Emmanuel tells us:

“The spiritual wealth acquired by means of arduous toil, of profound understanding, of victory over oneself, and an incessant effort, is the only thing that will confer on the spirit a position of genuine superiority and lasting well-being beyond the transformations imposed by the grave, and such a lofty achievement will only become possible after the spirit has surrendered completely to the Father for the grandeur of the Divine Endeavor.

Of course, individuals influenced by others may receive big salaries. However, we need to realize that this can change at any time, or that these assets can be transferred to someone else by the temporary holder. Nevertheless, when workers use their abilities selflessly for endeavors of the good and put the objectives of God’s Work above their personal whims, struggling, loving, suffering and surrendering to him, they will certainly acquire eternal and non-transferable gold.” [\[115\]](#)

Therefore, time spent accumulating excess capital to enjoy transitory luxuries are not a good investment, when evaluated over multiple lives. Yes, one should reward oneself for making progress and work must be accomplished to ensure a comfortable life for one’s family. But striving for material goods beyond a certain point becomes a distraction to the main purpose of life on this planet.

I think back of the time invested I spent playing golf. The rounds I played, the hours at the driving range, and the equipment I bought all contributed to using up my free time on the weekends and the occasional week night. I used this time for myself, to get away from work, from family, from stress.

In reality, it could have been any sport, hobby, or pastime, it was all meant to take myself out of the drudges of the real world and let me concentrate on something I wanted and enjoyed. It was an escape.

There was nothing inherently bad in my pursuit of a better handicap. It was more that I was single minded. I didn't use the time spent on the course to be with nature. I didn't have conversations with friends about the deeper meaning of life. And I didn't take the time to compare my dedication to the sport to my dedication for self-improvement.

I could have and should have combined the two. I lost the opportunity to exercise my swing, with the knowledge that perfection comes with practice and repetition. Instead of only using the dedication for golf, I should have employed the lessons I learned in other parts of my life.

This is the essence of simplicity – reuse. Exercising my patience, the need for training, the installation of good habits, and analysis of past performance ... all things that need to become part of everyday life. Not just utilized in one aspect.

Material Excess

Another aspect of simplicity is to keep your life uncluttered. How many of us long for this, and yet, how difficult. It seems life demands numerous acquisitions. There is always one more thing we need to buy. As we build up a pile of possessions, we become responsible for them. They must be kept, maintained, and safeguarded.

In our desire to have certain goods, we focus our energies on earning and saving money so we may purchase them. The spirit Joanna notifies us where this will lead:

“Conventionally, those who scrimp and save will become wealthy. Almost always, however, they grow stingy by falling in love with their assets, thus becoming their prisoner.

Consequently, there are systems that teach how to save, generating investments that produce profits and opportunities.

Those who become rich this way live in constant anxiety due to fluctuations in the exchange rate, the stock exchange and securities. They are poor in the higher sentiments and are victims of financial greed.

Wealth per se is neither good nor bad; it depends on who uses it and how it is used.

Wealth easily generates attachment and the fear of losing it; it impoverishes others as it sleeps in the coffers of usury; allowing poverty to become widespread.” [\[116\]](#)

We become trapped by our material desires and experience stress in holding and growing wealth. Whereas, Joanna explains those who are the true possessors of spiritual wealth are the best givers. They release themselves of excess and retain only that which is required.

Wealth acquired honestly and put to work helping others to be employed is the intended use of capital on our earth. Stocks and bonds can be vehicles of good, creating companies and investments in the future. When Joanna refers to the coffers of usury, she is describing financial arbitrage, whereby large financial firms generate revenue merely by trading securities for profit only, not for building any tangible asset, or for yield by other forms of pure manipulation which benefits no one, except the instigators.

Therefore, to be successful at accumulating wealth is certainly not detrimental – it is the obsession of wealth that is the danger. Unfortunately, this need has been built within us as a survival mechanism and it is one that needs to be contained and eventually erased.

Joanna explains the cause of our obsession and its effects:

“The whole anthropological inheritance is rooted in the basic automatisms of physical survival; in the struggle with other species; in foresight by storing up goods that will ensure the continuation of life; in procreation and the defense of offspring and property ... To guarantee such things, humans have become bellicose and distrustful, and have

developed the preservation instinct, from the sharpening of their sense of smell to the intuitive perception of danger.

Since these basic, indispensable needs are designed as part of their inner world, humans are involved in an ongoing struggle, often weaved of endless suffering because they lack reflection and the ability to distinguish between what is essential and what is superfluous.

Imprisoned within the small circle of such needs, even as they become more educated, their level of values remains the same, not really transformed their objectives and achievements. All of their accomplishments may be summed up in the physiological, *inferior* principles of immediate results and fleeting significance.

When everything is in place and abundant, they fall prey to the fear of loss, of being usurped, and they dive headlong into the craze of wanting for more and more, so as to be protected against the so-called uncertainties of fate and life. If they experience lack, because they have not amassed as much as they would have liked in order to feel safe and secure, they become anxious. This is due to their mistaken notion about life and its goals.

Of course, people cannot live without a minimum of material resources, a dignified, social and balanced existence. However this minimum of resources is enough to meet and support other psychological, higher values which place individuals above the oscillating circumstances of having and not having.” [\[117\]](#)

Hence, our quest for material satisfaction is embedded deep within us and must be eradicated through multiple existences. It is in pursuit of simplicity that we arrive at the right mixture of possessions and life.

The key point in Joanna’s explanation is her sentence, “This is due to their mistaken notion about life and its goals.” She is telling us, that our life’s blueprint was laid down before our birth and our single mindedness of amassing wealth will either be allowed or not depending on the lessons we must suffer through. If we weren’t destined to be wealthy, then at some point, whatever we thought we were going to keep forever, will evaporate. And the lesson will proceed according to plan.

Therefore, saving for a rainy day is prudent, but storing away protection for multiple lifetimes, for family and beyond, is spitting against the wind. The spirit world will determine who gets what and at the correct time. Nothing you or anyone else can do will stop it.

Thus, moderate your desires. Plan ahead and be conservative, but beyond a certain point, any capital saved away will be useless and the effort involved in gathering more is not worth the return on investment. Time spent would have had larger returns in spiritual reflection and personal betterment.

Pleasure Excess

After money, we desire for what it can buy – pleasure. This is only natural, after all, we work hard and we should play hard, right? To an extent, yes.

Unfortunately we live in a world of propaganda. We are bombarded with messages to slip underneath our rational brain and connect to our feelings. Without a base of morality, a set of precepts which anchor our desires to the reality of our existence, we are prone to chase one illusion after another.

We live in an age designed to test our resistance. Spiritism has fully communicated, via Spiritist mediums, that we live in an ultra-materialistic society, and that it is up to us, to rebalance our lives and our culture to a more rational state of affairs.

The spirit Joanna exposes what is occurring to many of us at the present:

“In the relentless pursuit of pleasure, people go from one sensation to the next, without realizing that the instability causes the anxiety responsible for the overwhelming suffering that threatens to plunge them into despair. Until they decide to choose legitimate values over those they deem meaningful, but which are mere *illusions*, they will find it very hard to commit to a path that will bring about peace.

Living under the demands of a machine that imposes real needs and predisposes them to imaginary and disturbing ones, people opt for the latter. These entail the sensations of the domineering *ego*, pressuring

them to pursue the coarsest aspirations at the expense of the subtle, ennobling ones that thrive in selflessness, high-minded effort, self-denial, and the cultivation of the inner life in the realm of the spirit over matter.

The body should be regarded as a transitory instrument for the eternal being, a temporary sanctuary for the higher purpose of enabling the soul to evolve by means of the enlightening experience it affords it in the moral, spiritual and intellectual arenas, as well as by the practice of virtue.” [\[118\]](#)

Our civilization is in a battle in which one side is attempting to eradicate any semblance of a Higher Intelligence. They are encouraging the idea of the absolute isolation of humankind. That we are mere organic beings, brought forth by random acts of evolution, and living in a physical world devoid of any feelings, except what we manufacture.

Their postulation is the old Epicurean philosophy that pleasure is the greatest good. Modern consumerism goes beyond that starting point and stresses that one should work hard for luxuries and only in comparison with the few chosen idols of extremely rich or famous people should you consider your own worth.

Only by aping the truly grotesque way of living, with large mansions, designer labels on practically everything, and retinues of faithful followers can one truly judge their place on earth. To achieve less is failure ... everything is measured in coin.

Spiritism exposes this as a mirage. Allan Kardec brought to us the Third Revelation, which informs us of the spirit realm and our purpose on earth, during our incarnation. The accumulation of goods is baggage that can't be sent forward. It disappears as we depart from the physical life. The years of self-indulgent luxuries earn us nothing for our spiritual ascent.

The certitude of immortality erases the overwhelming desire for all transitory possessions. It places in perspective the importance of material goods and pleasures. It allows us to gauge for ourselves, when we need that little reward, to recharge our batteries, or that new acquisition, only when it serves a real purpose.

The fact of reincarnation clarifies our reason for being. It elevates our lives into a worthy pursuit. It provides us with incentive to love and assist others.

Every up and down in life is there for a reason, and everything is of consequence – good and bad. Hence, our actions have real meaning and repercussions. The more we simplify our life and instill productive habits, the easier we shall sail through life. And the wonderment of the spirit realm awaiting us shall be even more astonishing than we could ever imagine.

Instilling Simple Habits

The spirit Emmanuel spoke to us about habits in the book *Thought & Life* :

“Habit is the accumulation of mental reflexes whose function is to induce routine.

We inherit thousands of years of repeated experiences, each one similar to the other. Up to now we have been like a boat carried away by a river of habits to which we have offered no resistance.

Therefore, with few exceptions, we have become consumers of other people’s thoughts by an automatic reflex action of the mind. Consequently, we exaggerate our needs and refuse to adopt simple standards of living which could make our life easier. We then become defensive regarding our demands and cruel towards our neighbor; and when we hurt that person, we hurt ourselves.

This also causes us to create a complex mechanism of caution and distrust that reaches beyond the need of self-preservation. We become passionately possessive, thus creating mental-reflexes of egotism, pride and fear, in a vain desire to elude Divine Laws. In most instances, we act like inattentive and unfaithful workers who neglect the valuable resources which allow us to serve with dignity. Instead, depressed and disquieted, we bring suffering upon ourselves.

In general, the human race lives this recurring cycle of ignorance and does not want to counteract it. We seek to deceive ourselves after birth, only to become completely disillusioned after death. Thus we are imprisoned in the confines of an illusion-disillusion syndrome. Century

after century we return to tread the same road from where we were expected to go forward.

However, we should not by any means disregard a constructive routine. Through it people evolve in space and time to attain the resources that dignify their lives.

Evolution demands that we develop new habits, that we detach ourselves from lower forms, and walk towards higher stages of existence.

This is why we see in Christ a divine landmark of human renewal – a whole program of basic spiritual transformations. Without violence of any form, He altered the ‘moral standards’ by which the Earth had lived for several thousand years. He offered the practice of forgiveness to replace systemic condemnation and to replace the usual racism. He offered the concept of genuine brotherhood. To uplift sadness and discouragement He gave us the beatitudes – as a comfort to the afflicted who know how to wait, and to the righteous who know how to suffer.

Jesus’ apostleship becomes a resplendent set of reflexes aimed at the redemption of the human way. He taught the virtue of simplicity when He began His pilgrimage amongst humanity that originated in the manger. His death on the cross – taught us serenity, patience and belief in the resurrection and eternal life.” [\[119\]](#)

Programming simple habits into our mind is not fast nor easy. As Emmanuel pointed out, our habits are the culmination of many past lives. They served us well in our quest for survival on a primitive planet, where the rule was kill or be killed. But now, on a planet of atonement, where in our lives, we must repair past mistakes and learn the lessons provided us, we need to begin to cast off the hoarding instinct and other tribal attributes.

The earth is destined to be a planet of regeneration, where hate, envy, and injustice is greatly reduced. To be allowed to live future lives in this paradise, we must earn our entrance. Retooling our habits is part of the price.

A good place to start is to make a habit of forgiveness. Let the old way of holding tight to perceived slights and insults free and fast forward to deleting memories that promote primitive emotions. Stress will be greatly

reduced. The spirit world will concern itself with teaching any transgressors - you have better mountains to conquer.

Next, determine what possessions you actually need, not what you desire. Slim down to what is absolutely necessary if possible, or at least a close approximation.

Work to free yourself of debt, except the obligatory house mortgage, which provides shelter. There is no reason to be anxious about paying off debt for the accumulation of luxuries you don't need. Living within your means is the straightest path to harmony.

Learn to enjoy the simple things – your family, friends, studying, gardening, and helping the community.

Once you begin to ignore the calls for more and more and turn your focus inward. You start to enjoy the natural pleasures of life. Beauty in nature and in people becomes apparent. You can detect the plans of the spirit world in all aspects of life.

It is an apparent contradiction that to prioritize improving yourself, you actually become more awake and aware of the outside world. But it's true. As you shed negative emotions which cloud your thoughts, your brain becomes sharper and your sight extended. You begin to see, with your senses and your mind.

The realization that earth is a school, where we are placed to improve our character, and that everything around us has been prepared for our edification, opens our eyes.

We see the world more clearly. We understand the reasons for bad behavior and the necessity to encourage good behavior. The belongings that enticed us before, become unimportant. And the yearning for temporary luxury turns into indifference.

The earth was made for us. Our physical bodies were created and evolved to hold our spirits. Earth is the place where we are supposed to make great strides in beautifying our personality. Our future as a bright angel is waiting.



Chapter 21 – A Spirit of Renovation

Renovation, renewal, and transformation are all words to describe our life on earth. Many have said that life is one of constant re-invention of oneself. We travel through life learning, changing, resetting our priorities, and improving our character. In fact, Spiritism presents a greater arc to this story – that of the process of renovation occurring over multiple life times. And Spiritism supplies the purpose of our journey ... the goal of perfection.

Allan Kardec, in *The Spirits Book*, his codification of the Third Revelation from many high level spirits, led by the Spirit of Truth, tells us why we are incarnated – reborn in a different body for each life:

“ 132. *What is the aim of the incarnation of spirits?*

It is a necessity imposed on them by God, as the means of attaining perfection. For some of them it is an expiation; for others, a mission. In order to attain perfection, it is necessary for them to undergo all the vicissitudes of corporeal existence. It is the experience acquired by expiation that constitutes its usefulness. Incarnation has also another aim, namely, that of fitting the spirit to perform his share in the work of creation; for which purpose he is made to assume a corporeal apparatus in harmony with the material state of each world into which he is sent, and by means of which he is enabled to accomplish the special work, in connection with that world which has been appointed to him by the divine ordering. He is thus made to contribute his quota towards the general weal, while achieving his own advancement.” [\[120\]](#)

Hence, the message from the spirit Andre Luiz in his poem *Inner Peace*, in which he extolled us to have “A spirit of renovation”, as part of our quest in life. The bottom line is that the blueprint devised by the spirit world for each of our lives, will cause deep introspection and changes to our character. This is inescapable. Trials and tribulations will occur which shall pull specific levers to alter our past misconceptions into a more realistic view of ourselves and our life.

This is all part of the process of spiritual maturation. We can either resist it and delay our progress as long as possible, or embrace the need for change and accelerate our ascendance. It is up to each individual. The

Supreme Intelligence has granted us free-will to be as open or close minded as we so choose.

Beginning of Renovation

Our fight to improve didn't start the moment we were deposited into a human body. The spiral of transformation began long before we were primitive spirits. And what applies to the evolution of the human form, applies to all other forms. The Supreme Being continually acts to improve.

Leon Denis, in his book, *Life and Destiny* , illustrates the larger picture:

“The law of progress does not apply only to man; in every domain of nature, evolution has been recognized by the thinkers of all time. From the green cell, the vague embryo floating upon the waters, through innumerable changes, the chain of the species has unfolded its lengths down to us. (The mono-cellular beings are found today by millions in each human organism. It is not through one cell alone that the chain of species has come, but rather by multitudes of these cells grouped to form more perfect beings, and round upon round converging toward unity.)

Upon this chain every link represents a form of existence which leads to a superior form, to an organism better adapted to the growing needs and manifestations of life. But on the ladder of evolution thought, conscience, and liberty appear only after many degrees; in the plant intelligence sleeps; in the animal it dreams; in man alone it awakens, recognizes itself, and becomes conscious. From this hour progress fatal in some ways in inferior forms of nature can only be realized but with the accord of human will with eternal laws.

It is by this accord and this union of human and divine will that are built the works which prepare for the reign of God – that is to say, the reign of justice, wisdom, and goodness which every reasoning and conscientious being feels intuitively must come.” ^[121]

This is the great truth – about us, the earth, and the spirit realm – everything is always in flux, continual progress toward perfection. We are caught in this irresistible tide. We are too weak to swim against it, at best, we can only fight to maintain our position. Only by humbly bowing to a

superior power can we use the direction of the great ocean to take us where we need to go.

Hence, we need to see life as transformational. We aren't meant to become adults and remain at stasis. We are destined to grow. Spiritist literature tells us that we continually mold our character even at the last moments of physical death.

This desire to change, to improve oneself and the world around us is inbred in human nature. It is not an accident of evolution, it is a spark, a connection with the unseen spirit world.

Most, if not all us have desired to be part of a valiant crusade, at one point or another in our lives. We fervently yearn to change the world for the better. This instinct, or intuition as named by Leon Denis, is what makes us thirst for more. We know in our hearts that the earth should be and will be a paradise someday.

What we don't realize is how connected we are. We aren't islands of consciousness, untethered and adrift in space. We are tied to other spirits, incarnates and discarnates, to the spirit realm, and to God.

Some people feel this connection. They are called empaths, mediums, psychics, and other names. Some have had near death experiences, which have forever altered their previously cherished ideals. All of them consciously feel the waves wash over them.

For the rest of us, we are motivated by some internal longing, which we can't identify, but nevertheless we are moved. The waves of thoughts from other intelligent beings (physical and otherwise) is relentless. Like the action of waves upon the rocks, even the hardest stone is eroded over time – so too are we moved – unknowingly and gradually.

Leon Denis sets in place where we stand:

“Such is the complex character of the human being – spirit, force, and matter, in which are contained all the powers of the universe. All that is in us is in the universe; all that is in the universe is in us. By his etheric and his material bodies, man finds himself united to all the worlds invisible and divine. We are made of light and shadow. What is in us is in every other being. Each soul is a projection from the eternal center. It

is that which consecrates and assures the fraternity of man. We have in us the instincts of the beast, and we have too, the chrysalis of the angel – of the radiant and pure being that we can become by moral aspirations of the heart and the constant sacrifice of self. We touch depths of the abysses with our feet, and with our brows the high altitude of Heaven, the glorious empire of the spirit. When we listen to what is passing in the depths of our being, we hear the rumbling of hidden and tumultuous waters, the ebb and flow of the stormy sea of personality, with its waves of anger, egotism, and pride.

These are the voices of matter, the appeals of the lower regions, which still influence our actions. But this influence we can dominate by will; upon these voices we can impose silence; and when the murmur of the passions is quieted, then the powerful voice of the Infinite Spirit is heard, the canticle of Life Eternal, whose harmony fills immensity. The more the mind is elevated and purified, the more accessible it becomes to the vibrations and the voices from on high. The divine mind which animates the universe acts upon all minds. It seeks to penetrate, clarify, and fertilize them.” [\[122\]](#)

Hence, never, for one moment, believe you are alone – detached from all else. We are constantly in contact with the spirit realm. Our guardian angels are watching us for the least inkling of growth from us. Like a parent who observes a child, waiting to positively reinforce good behavior, even if by accident, so the child can be led onwards to elevated learning.

This is where we stand – unaware and not comprehending our true circumstances – but we have a vague notion of desiring more. While we are easily distracted by our instinct for self-pleasure and for group acceptance, yet there stirs – deep inside – the realization that we should strive for a higher goal than temporary luxury.

Once we embark, we become more fortified, more attuned to the struggle. We change and are resistant to social pressures and primitive emotions. When we are spiritually and intellectually conditioned to great strength, then the ascent begins in earnest. But, first we must start the journey.

Self-Renovation

The inertia of years of self-indulgence and petty thoughts are difficult to overcome. I know they were hard for me. When I found Spiritism, I thought I had discovered all of the answers. I intellectually knew about the spirit realm and how we are guided through many lives in order to ascend. I could talk about how the entire earth was led and directed by the machinations of a Higher Authority.

The shock that I finally uncovered how my own future could have been foretold with exacting detail was as if I could breathe again. I was reborn ... or so I thought.

The more I read books by Spiritist authors, I realized that I had learned about Spiritism as one does from viewing a documentary. I understood and memorized the facts, the time line, and the basic doctrine. I was able to write about Spiritism; and discourse at length about the process of reincarnation. But, I was still the same person – sarcastic, aloof, selfish and prideful.

I had merely exchanged one belief system for another, like changing clothes. Everything was on the outside – nothing altered inside. I was still me ... an immature spirit.

The spirit Joanna, in the book *Self-Discovery – An Inner Search*, put her finger on my problem:

“The human being is constituted of psychological implements that govern one’s life. Human beings need to adapt their goals to spiritual values. The latter should surpass the corporal boundaries in order to help the human being to meet the transcendental conscience.

Naturally, at first, educational goals will form the individual’s wealth of knowledge. Familial goals will induce learning in the domestic laboratory, by developing feelings of love and personal relationships. Social goals will extend the circle of affectivity, favoring the group’s growth. Economic objectives will foment the financial equilibrium and harmony between people. Artistic goals will contribute to beauty, esthetics, and the ideal. However, spiritual objectives will crown the achievements of the individual’s progress leading one to fullness.

When men and women are not aware of their tentative steps towards fullness, they often find themselves saturated and unmotivated,

becoming pessimists and frustrated after conquering their goals.” [\[123\]](#)

I was that person who successfully traversed all of the goals, except the spiritual. And in completion, I was still the same, only more so. My motivation had run out. I was drifting. And this was after I had first found Spiritism.

I feel that I didn't start to tackle my artistic goals until I began to write and analyze what I had researched about the Doctrine of Spiritism. I was happy and content in my musings, at first. But then as I plunged further into the deeper meanings and the importance of love, I found myself unable to fully empathize with the written word. I could read the sentences, but I couldn't internalize the meaning.

Only then did I realize the need for self-renovation. Only then did I start to not only keep my speech in line, but I started to control my thoughts. If I thought ill of a person, I tried to stop that immediately and think of them with understanding and love – knowing that they were going through trials every bit as perilous as mine.

Joanna, explains the results of a dedicated effort for spiritual improvement:

“The individual's incessant renewal of values for one's improvement becomes a permanent motivation for the settlement of the real being that is victorious over oneself.

The immediate human's goals are stimulating for one's terrestrial, corporeal existence. When one adds to one's goals the identification with Cosmic Conscience, they remain as propellant forces for endless progress.

To the world's eyes, triumphant men and women are perhaps those who shine on Earth. They step up towards illusory success. However, they carry heavy anguish within their hearts, and their spirit are full of pain.

The only ones who will find real fullness are those who free themselves and love, after traveling through difficulties and surpassing the initial steps of Earth's process at the social, familial and personal levels. Those individuals remain focused on general wellness and are

transformed interiorly, as well as enlightened by the flame of immortality, and immersed in that by causality.” [\[124\]](#)

Joanna is correct. As I have worked to reform myself, I have felt the propellant forces driving me on. I am not saying I have improved much. I am still selfish and prideful and a host of other primitive emotional states, but I feel I am making progress. I am fully aware that it will take more lifetimes to fix my broken personality.

Nevertheless, I am on the right track. Even in my glaring imperfection, I am more relaxed, more accepting of the trials put before me. And I am more loving, even of those who were placed in my life to provide a hard lesson.



Chapter 22 - Fostering of Tolerance

Tolerance – it sounds so easy. Love all, smile upon everyone, and be kind to those you meet. Simple in theory and harder in practice. Not difficult as far as controlling your speech or gestures, but the challenging part is your emotions welling up inside you. The spirit Andre Luiz specifically mentioned this because he knows full well, that as a human we have built up within our instincts a predilection to strongly desire conformity.

This urge was beneficial once upon a time, when we were huddled together in tribal groups and were forced to defend our territory and lives at a moment's notice. As time went on, civilization had a warrior class, which also promoted conformity. Those armies which possessed the most discipline, usually emerged victorious.

Hence, our instincts, which are brought over with us in life after life, just like our conscience, are a powerful force. As with any power, it can be used for good or bad. It all depends upon how we shape it.

This is precisely why we are on earth at this moment. Our job is to break down the old accumulated habits, which made us successful in a primitive world, and develop new habits which will enable success in a true civilized planet – where hate, envy, war, and inequality is greatly diminished or completely eradicated.

In this new globe, which, according to Spiritism, the planet earth is aiming to arrive in the future – only those who have transformed themselves into mature and civilized beings will be allowed entry. Everyone else will be sent, in their subsequent lives, to a planet similar to earth as it is now, a planet of atonement. Where one lives paying for past debts and attempting to cast off detrimental attributes.

On the other hand, those who have learned how to foster tolerance, be more loving, charitable, and honest, will graduate to a planet of regeneration. A place where our lives will be a paradise as compared to our present circumstances. Why? Because, on a planet of regeneration, we no longer need to repair our past mistakes, we are sent to a physical experience to learn and to keep improving ourselves, but we no longer require the deep suffering to cause fundamental changes in our personality.

Spiritism tells us that the earth is destined to become a planet of regeneration, and it is up to us, as a collective human race, to either speed up this journey or slow it down, by our shared deeds.

What is Tolerance?

The spirit Emmanuel explains the importance of tolerance and the being of tolerance:

“Tolerance is the foundation of all true progress. Just as all parts of a machine work together so that there may be the production of certain benefits. So all blessings of Nature are a series of manifestations of this blessed virtue that inspires true brotherhood.

Tolerance, however, is not a superficial concept but a living reflection of understanding, a purity of the soul. It conjures the feelings of hope, patience and a letting go of all evil.

To insist that others think as we do would be to demand that the world adapt itself to our whims. Our obligation is to adapt ourselves with dignity to the world, with the firm purpose of helping it.

Divine Providence reflects wise and active tolerance everywhere. God does not require that the seed immediately produce after its kind. God gave it time to germinate and grow, to bloom, and bear fruit. God does not ask the stream to quickly blend its course towards the awaiting ocean; He offers the stream pathways through the soil and the time needed to finish its course.

Likewise tolerance is needed between one soul and another; it is important that we do not assume any attitude of violence.

The roughness of an impulsive person, the irritation of an uneducated patient, the claw of an animal, the thorns of a rose, all represent the natural signs of the evolutionary stage in which they are found.

To fight with hatred is to bring about destruction. He who commits an offence attracts evil to himself. This being the case, evil is only really evil to the one who commits it. To retaliate on the same irrelevant principle is to assimilate its poison.

It is essential to treat ignorance with the same loving care that is employed with treating a wound. If we bruise it without mercy, it would be like transforming a curable case into a hopeless one for lack of adequate treatment.

Therefore, above all else tolerance is a complete release of all evil and a continuous service in goodness.” [\[125\]](#)

Being aware of performing good in as many avenues as possible is a notable goal. To get there one’s mind must be expanded. Attention must be raised for opportunities for service. And predilections built up from past and current life should be analyzed if they present barriers.

The spirit Neio Lucio recounts a story from his book (psychographed by Francisco C. Xavier), *Jesus in the Home* . The book contains many stories of the conversations that Jesus held with his disciples. One story in particular is pertinent to tolerance and acceptance.

Jesus told the gathering about a time when the earth was in deep ignorance. God sent a messenger of knowledge. The goal of this person was to spread the reality of the spirit realm, to bring purpose and a path of behavior to the populace. When he arrived on earth, he became intrigued with the literature he read and in discourse with other wise men. He became so focused upon his preferred intellectual pursuit that he ignored everything else. In fact, he deliberately distanced himself from the common people, thinking they were too ignorant to even begin to understand his message.

Seeing that His first messenger did not perform the duty assigned to him, God sent another. This time He selected a doctor. Someone who would directly help the poor and downtrodden. When the doctor arrived, he became fascinated with his storeroom of herbs and medicines and he sought to only treat those who could pay handsomely for his services.

Next God sent another wise man, but he became a warrior, who only used the meek and poor for his own purposes. Another was sent who became a musician, who only wished to play for important audiences. Only those who could afford to pay for his concerts.

Finally the Almighty sent a messenger of love to the human race:

“With great mercy this messenger was able to reach the four corners of the world. He felt compassion for the teacher, the doctor, the warrior and the musician to the same extent that he felt mercy for the misfortune and primitiveness of the crowds. Determined to work in God’s name, he became the diligent servant to all. He began to work for the common good, and identifying with the people to whom he had come to serve, he forgave infinitely and repeated the same effort or the same lesson a thousand times over. If he was humiliated or persecuted, he tried to see the offense as a beneficial challenge to his ability to perform regenerating deeds so that he could bear witness to his trust in the Father who had sent him. In order to love his brothers and sisters in struggle without holding back, many times he was compelled to pray for help from Heaven when faced with the claws of slander and sarcasm; nonetheless, he found in the lowest of manifestations of human nature even more reasons to dedicate himself with more fervor to better his fellow beings, who had yet to come to know the grandeur and sublimity of the Benevolent Father who had given them life.” [\[126\]](#)

This is the true meaning of why Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. He sought to convey that he who serves must think of themselves as the most humble, the most tolerant.

To be tolerant doesn’t mean to put up with people. It goes further than that ... it means to love them, even in the face of unrealistic views, ideas, and preconceptions. It means to be patient with the lack of learning and progress. It means that one must be willing to keep trying even in the face of repeated failures. For the truth may be, that some people will only be cognizant of reality after several or more lives. But fear not, those seemingly inconsequential encounters will lay dormant as seeds, which will sprout unexpectedly at the right moment.

The Difficulty of Tolerance

If there weren’t any people, being tolerant would be easy. But, this is not the case, for we must learn to live with younger, less mature souls. It is part of our required training.

Many spiritually and psychologically immature humans are unsure of their conduct, belief systems, and even basic civilized interactions between people. They lack knowledge and certainty of who they are and their

approach to life. Hence they are insecure and vulnerable to bad and ignorant influences.

Unfortunately, the most pervasively negative influences are all around us ... media, television and internet. Our current culture looks up to no defining moral authority or code of conduct. The only badge of distinction is who yells the loudest or who can define themselves as the greatest victim – all totally unproductive behaviors in a quest to ascend spiritually.

The spirit Joanna de Angelis succinctly describes this vast group:

“Such individuals do not really know what they want, where they are headed or how to behave, for they are in a somnambulistic state, which has *flashes* of lucidity but soon returns to numbness.

Since they are so concerned about others, they forget themselves, disparaging themselves or being aggressive, whereas they should simply awaken to their own reality and that of their environment. However, they become robot-like in their torpor and let themselves be led by the rules imposed on them, even though these do not meet their personal demands and needs; or they follow traditions that are irrelevant to their objectives, affected by conditionings that are the results of previous inheritances that have no connection with their way of being. Thus, they let themselves be influenced by sensationalism of mass media or suffocated by their social group.

They would like to be active members of their group, which rejects them, or they exile themselves by not grasping their existential role. Real awakening thus becomes indispensable for them by reflecting on their own aspirations and what is happening around them, so they may be at peace within the human context and be free, without narcissistic exhibitionism or depressive timidity.” [\[127\]](#)

Hence, most of the type of people that we find it hard to be tolerant of are locked into the situation described by Joanna. They have hitched themselves to a set of false values and strive to find a familiar acceptance to make themselves feel worthy.

Understand that their convoluted belief system is not built upon logic, but upon emotion. They are slaves to their own insecurity and seek freedom in groupthink. They believe they are deeply introspective, but, in reality,

they live in a shadow world, full of the lessons and experiences of past lives.

We have all been there. It is part of the great trek of spiritual maturity – to learn what self-realization really is, to question the precepts of society and to be brave enough to follow the reasoning of our own logic. To discover the full panorama of the spiritual and physical universes.

To be forbearing means that we identify with those in doubt and we lend what wisdom we can to help their journey. All the while, keeping in mind, the spirit world will supply the stimuli necessary for them to grow. We only need to lend what small assistance we are able to.

Enabling Tolerance in Your Family

Acquiring the tendency towards tolerance is most effective when one is young. Hence, the Spiritist Doctrine should be introduced to those young pliable minds, so that as they grow they will understand the true condition of life on earth.

The spirit Joanna explains how to foster the propensity for compassion and love for our offspring:

“So, it is the duty of all parents to enlighten their children about the vicissitudes present in our evolutionary path.

Edifying conversations about the Divine Justice, about the moral commitments that have been taken by all who find themselves reincarnated and, also, the trials and testimonies that everyone must go through are of high moral and spiritual significance for the healthy formation of the children’s personalities.

To demonstrate that such occurrences are perfectly normal, and never to suggest that they are punishments established by a God, who would find pleasure in seeing His creatures suffer merely because they are still unequipped to act correctly, that is the paramount duty of every parent.

When, by any chance, in the family constellation there is an example of atonement, it must be transformed in precious teaching, not only to that spirit who is undergoing it, but also to all other members, who must join their hearts in order to attenuate the suffering of the one who is in need of help. Such measure develops in everyone involved in courage

and respect to life, erasing fears and diluting illusions about life in the body, which is nothing but fragile.” [\[128\]](#)

This same approach, with a wider circle of family and friends, helps to establish the broader view of life. That life and the arc of multiple lives must be seen in context, as stepping stones from one platform of knowledge to the next. We never stop learning, we are always given tasks and homework through the trials awaiting us.

Each one of us is at a different level of maturity and knowledge. Therefore, disparity exists between humans, some are born with great wisdom ready to sprout forth and others are just beginning to learn right from wrong. All will eventually reach their destination to perfection. But in the meantime, each will experience vastly different sets of tribulations – each according to their educational needs.

Hence the call for toleration by the spirit realm. Andre Luiz reminds us of the disparity of humans on earth. While the spirit world loves us all equally, each of us has been assigned a customized curriculum intended to promote our transformation from a primitive spirit to one who will ascend to the highest spheres of heaven.

Christ understood the need to reach out to everyone. His disciples and the populace of his time were amazed that he dined and fraternized with publicans and known sinners. Publicans, according to the definition at the time, were hated tax collectors – the worst of the worst – for they forcibly gathered money from people in every manner. What was even more notable is that Jesus accepted Matthew, a publican, into his tight circle of disciples.

The Inner Platform for Tolerance

Setting the stage for tolerance is a constant battle. To appear calm and benevolent to the world we must be peaceful internally. The spirit Emmanuel gives us insight to this problem:

“Educating the sight, hearing, taste and impulses represents the primordial foundation for constructive peacefulness.

We usually hear, see and feel according to our inclinations and not according to what is real. We interpret certain pieces of information according to our inner disharmony rather than the good intentions in

which they were initially sent. We observe situations and events with the light or darkness that infuses our mind. We feel with the reflection or chaos we have instilled in our own understanding.

For this reason, serenity must envelop our steps as much as possible as we face the conflicts that surround us in our present circumstance.

Without calmness, it is impossible to discern and to work for the good.

Without peace inside of us, we will never reach the realms of true peace.” [\[129\]](#)

Achieving inner peace can't be bought and is not a rote prayer or chant. It is a climb of dedicated study and gradual inner transformation. And it must be accomplished on your own terms. No one can describe you with perfection – only you. No one knows what are the hidden corridors of primitive impulses that need to be swept away – only you.

Therefore, the need to fully understand why you are on earth, where you are spiritually and materially, and where do you wish to go are all questions that must be answered. Even starting on this journey will bring real benefits.

Stress will be reduced and harmony restored. Where darkness and foreboding reigned, light will cleanse. Events on the physical plane won't hold the importance they once had. For you will understand the transitory nature of life on the campus of the earth.



Chapter 23 – Courage to Place Yourself Second to Serving

The spirit Andre Luiz states that to achieve harmony and inner peace within yourself, you must possess the fortitude to sacrifice your own desires in pursuit of helping others. The messages from high spirits, via Spiritist mediums, don't demand life in a hair shirt while exclusively tending to the needs of unfortunate people, only that we examine the situation and at times, think about serving first and ourselves second.

It is a plea to increase our altruistic tendencies. Our guardian angels are seeking an acknowledgement that while we understand the need to better ourselves; that alone, while admirable, isn't enough. We should also assist others in their spiritual journey – through whatever means they may require it; food, comfort, advice, or shelter.

Karma

Spiritism emphatically delivers the message that for every action there is a reaction – and to each according to their deeds. This process is inescapable. It is what enables us to learn through our mistakes and misdeeds. Without the effects of karma we could never hope to become a pure spirit one day.

Karma is usually used in a sentence with negative connotations. Such as a person committed a great wrong and will pay for it in this or their next life. But, turn this around ... a person made a great sacrifice for his or her fellow humans, and will reap a reward for it in this life or their next life.

Karma works both ways – it takes and it gives. No service, however small, goes unrecognized. The blueprint of your next life is built upon the acts of your present life.

The spirit Joanna de Angelis defines karma for us:

“Karma is the effect of actions taken at different stages of the current existence as well as those of the past. *Fruit* of the planted and cultivated tree, karma has the flavor of the species that typifies the plant.

Positive acts produce excellent results, rewarding those responsible with happiness, affectivity, lucidity, progress and new opportunities for

moral, spiritual, intellectual and human growth, promoting society as a whole.

But when individuals act with foolishness, vulgarity, perversion, rebelliousness, or hatefulness, they reap suffering down the road, in the form of trials and complex and afflictive expiations meant to set them straight.

Karma is an ever-changing process that depends on a person's behavior.

On-going misery, exasperating mental strictures, dreadful, maddening diseases, frustrating physical limitations, suffocating loneliness, embittering misfortunes – all these could change if individuals would only resolve to modify their attitudes, enhancing and developing them for the general good, and consequently their own.

In the sovereign Laws of Life, no one is destined for a life of misery and misfortune.

What happens to individuals is the result of what they did of their own free will. It is never something that God does to them, as the pessimists, the defeatists and the indolent would state.

Therefore, improve your life constantly through positive acts.

Create new karmic outcomes, freeing yourself from the painful ones that weigh on your moral economy.” [\[130\]](#)

Hence, to supplement your courage to place yourself second to serving ... gaze upon your idealized future life. The more you deem yourself worthy, by your acts, the greater the range of exciting opportunities that will be opened to you in your next life.

In numerous Spiritist literature, I have read that the reward for any sacrifice for the good will be repaid one hundred times over in the spirit world. While, at first glance this may seem an obvious attempt to bribe for good behavior, because at the foundation of our character, we realize that the deed itself is the compensation. Nonetheless, a little part of us responds to the allure of a prize.

This is quite normal. Remember, we are relatively immature spirits, like the four year-old who excitedly responds to bribes of candy, we too can't

help but react to the promise of good tidings. Like parents, who actively train a child through treats to instill a good habit, without the child's realization of the end game, the spirit realm does the same to us. After all, why not? The allure of self-indulgent behavior is so great, it needs to be counter-balanced by an alternative.

Hence, while we may start out, grudgingly giving of ourselves, overtime, it becomes a habit with its own intrinsic benefits. Eventually, the vision of far off riches recede in our memory and the simple pleasure of a good deed done takes its place.

Assistance

In Chapter 23, titled "Assistance", in the book *Thought & Life*, by the spirit Emmanuel, he tells us what service truly entails:

"Assistance, when given freely, reflects the Divine Nature existing within the human race. Our personality grows in stature and nobility as we yield to the desire of helping others.

Divine Providence is a reservoir of Infinite Love, always giving and looking for channels of expression to distribute it. Whoever accepts to do so, receives with mathematical precision everything they need.

It is necessary however, that we be watchful about the collective thoughts within us, so as not to hinder the eternal giving of Our Father, who is always ready to share the riches He has bestowed upon us.

A look at the principle of electricity show that there must be a complete circuit for the current to flow and produce its desired work. If there were no positive and negative poles, we would not be able to have electric lighting or motion.

By the same principle spring water, to remain pure, must have an outlet. Any obstruction means stagnation and disease. The law of assistance permits one to ask for help, but it demands expansion of the benefits received, so that the help does not become a hindrance. Blood that does not circulate results in necrosis, a ghastly condition inside the living body.

People who know how to handle their many possessions, giving opportunities of work and education to many, are like a water reservoir

serving the community. They are emissaries of progress sustained by hope, health, security and happiness according to the laws of life. On the other hand, those who accumulate many possessions without using them to improve the community, are like a murky swamp alongside the road; unhappy misers surrounded by anguish and fear, solitude and emptiness according to the same natural laws.

The assistance we receive corresponds to the assistance we offer. And the assistance we give is always followed by great potential increase, stimulating us to become even more useful.

Remember that when we help our neighbor, we reflect God's blessing working through us. To work discretely in true service is to reflect God to those around us. Likewise, friends in the spirit world will silently draw near us and give us their total assistance.

Help everyone with feeling, thoughtfulness, kind words and action. By always helping others and constantly improving we invoke in our favor the complete support from life.

Let us not forget, therefore, that the help we offer other people, without demand or payment, is our silent prayer for Divine help, that is always answered with the blessings of cooperation and supply.” [\[131\]](#)

When my wife and I received a message from the spirit world in July, 2014, we were told to help spread the Doctrine of Spiritism to America. In the communication was the statement, “remember the aid is in proportion to the task.”

I can attest to the unseen hand of the spirit realm in rendering assistance. From little serendipitous happenstances to real tangible help. Small things, like when I write an article and I need a quote to back up a statement; the name of the book comes readily to my mind. And more! I open the book and rapidly find the exact passage I desire. Anyone who has written research or term papers knows the hours usually spent searching for key words in the pages of a book, hence I consider myself blessed to be guided to the words that I had been seeking.

Larger occurrences, such as money coming to me at the right time, just when I needed it. Or that fact that my job has been threatened to be

eliminated for years, but somehow, I am still employed, free to spend my leisure time for Spiritism.

Little and great things all adding up, convey the support I, and everyone who earns it by service to others, that is given to us by our spiritual guardians.

Other times the support can appear as a negative. But it really means you are trying to do something that won't be beneficial to your future. Years ago, my wife and I tried to sell our house. We wanted a newer house, since ours was a bit small and not in good condition. We tried to buy several homes, but we were always just a moment too late. Then we tried to buy a vacant lot to build a house. Again, we always came in second. Eventually, we tore down our house and built a new one on the existing lot. Why, I am not sure. We shall see.

Another time, when during the Great Recession, I lost my job. My wife told me not to worry, I would be employed, by my old company, but with a new name. I couldn't rest, waiting for that. So I applied for many jobs and had numerous interviews. Again, I always seemed to come up second. Of course, I was rehired by the company, with a new name, which laid me off in the first place.

As you become more in touch with the spirit world, you begin to see the patterns. You will be able to detect when to move ahead, when to stop, and when to be patient and wait for a sign.

The Place Where We Need to Be

Engaging in the habit of service, requires a person to be at ease and confident within themselves. An outlook of the world, the people, and our individual part to play must be in tune with the Spiritist message of our purpose on this planet. One should realize that each of us is a grain of sand in the immense oceans of the universe. That we are being polished by the movement of events and that we are always in contact with other grains and the clear and shining liquid of the Divine Light.

By right placement of ourselves, we can look out at those around us and proceed with our acknowledged duty.

The spirit Joanna in the book *Self-Discovery – An Inner Search* , speaks about the frame of reference desired to promote self-sacrifice:

“Psychological maturation drives human beings to true humility before life. They might then identify their own possibilities as well as the inexhaustible sources of knowledge to be acquired. Mature individuals perceive their smallness before the universal greatness. They are devoid of conflicts, guilty consciousness and escapes of the ego.

The intellectual view of reality and the moral acquisition of inner resources provide them simplicity in the heart and cultural respect towards everyone.

Their lucidity works for the general goodness with naturality, leading them to self-sacrifice and even to sacrifice, whenever necessary, without exhibitionism or arrogance. They realize that the purpose of the existential being is the joy of living that results from meriting thoughts and actions. That propels their self-esteem and constant self-discovery. They work without either fatigue or deception. They do not stop in drudgery to examine imperfections, because they elaborate plans for their incessant improvement. They are thirsty for new conquests that do not cease.

Self-sacrifice prompts the individual to sacrificial actions, which, despite its heavy and less magnificent features, one performs without either embarrassment or boastfulness.

Self-sacrifice and humility are independent of religious convictions, although the latter ones could influence their conquest by becoming accessible to all that achieve self-consciousness.

These two psychological conquests are of high importance in the progress of society because they dignify the individual and promote the social group by making it more human.” [\[132\]](#)

Humility and self-sacrifice could be the definition of what it takes to truly serve others without condescension or arrogance. The tearing down of one’s own ego is a complex and arduous effort.

The culture of immediate gratification and celebrity examples of amazingly self-centered individuals who have an almost complete lack of

self-awareness that pervade the media are high barriers to complete the journey. The forces of materialism and self-aggrandizement seem to be at a zenith.

But, the world has been at this spot before. The spirit realm has always created a solution. The answer lies in the collective spirit of mankind. Even now, in the face of unprecedented and rapid communications, there is a sense of emptiness. A longing for a spiritual renewal.

While the extremely wealthy foresee a future of total control over a docile population, who's only desire is to be entertained and to consume, the waves of change will not be held back.

The effort to retreat to a simpler life, the quest for a closeness to nature and a desire to do no harm are all small signs that a change is coming. While still nascent, the spirit realm, who controls the rebirth of every soul into whatever time, place, social strata, and eventual position of power that is planned for them – will gradually move our society to a more rational balance of technology and spirituality.

In the meantime, each of us should continue on our inner journey of improvement. Emmanuel advises us to fortify ourselves for the battle ahead:

“In order to be effective for the eternal life, nourishment for the heart has to be based on the simple realities of the evolutionary path.

It is crucial for us to strengthen ourselves with illuminative principles, without the dazzling fantasies that come from the outside. And it is precisely on the religious path that such effort demands broader refinement.

Generally speaking, believers are always eager for situations that can satisfy their pernicious whims, just like a gourmet yearns for exotic dishes. However, just as the delights of the table are not necessary for fundamental activities, the thrilling sensations of spirit phenomena are useless to the soul if it does not possess sufficient inner resources to understand their purpose. Many disciples regard their religious experience as a purely intellectual matter. But it is crucial to realize that, in order to be definitely incorporated, the nourishment of the soul requires a heart that is sincerely interested in the divine truths. When

individuals assume this inner attitude, they truly strengthen themselves for sublimation. They realize that there is such an abundance of useful work material around them that they place any temporary sensation on the lowest rungs of the evolutionary ladder.” [\[133\]](#)

Therefore, as you explore the depths of your character, and as your journey advances, you shall become closer to Divine Truths and spirits who have come to assist you, will expand their relationship with you. But, as Emmanuel cautions us, communications with spirits only really begin to pay spiritual dividends as your own spiritual knowledge and feelings come to fruition.

This dynamic comes naturally as one moves to the plateau where self-sacrifice and humility melds into one’s character. When this is achieved, a calmness and serenity envelopes you, an inner peace, that is hard to be disturbed by external events, which becomes the norm and not the exception in your daily life.



Chapter 24 – Perseverance in Goodness

Perseverance is the secret to a fulfilled life. We all know this, for we learned it as a child, and we have mostly ignored it since. Our culture of rapid gratification – internet pages must load within two seconds – movies must have action before the opening credits – all promote the abandonment of any pursuit that encounters the smallest obstacle or delay.

We understand that most successful people are those who don't give up. They continue striving in the face of repeated failures. In fact, they gather experience from their failures, which allows them to more expertly surmount hurdles placed in their path.

One of the most famous stories of perseverance is of Robert the Bruce. He declared himself to be King of Scotland in 1306. He fought the English for years to drive them out of the country. During one particular low point in his struggles, he found himself alone in a dreary cave on the island of Ráthfrín.

His brother had been caught and executed and his wife was held captive by the English. He was in despair. His fortunes couldn't be lower. As he sat in the cave, hiding from the English, he thought of giving up. Then he spotted a spider trying to weave a web. The spider attempted to jump from one ledge to another so he could begin the web's construction.

Robert watched intently. He saw the spider fail six times, which was the number of times he had battled the enemy. He told himself that if the spider was successful on the next try, then he too would once more gird himself for battle. The spider leaped and was able to grasp the other side. Robert went on to defeat the English and drive them out of Scotland.

Everything was against this brave King. He had lost repeatedly. His closest family were either dead or in prison. Yet, he had a goal in mind ... he struggled on.

The spirit world wishes us to struggle on too. They well realize we shall encounter implacable foes and lose battles in our quest for true spirituality

and understanding of our place on earth. But we must not let defeat deter us.

Perseverance

The spirit Joanna de Angelis supplies the definition of perseverance:

“Perseverance entails tenacity and persistence in the endeavor one is undertaking or plans to undertake, such that the course is not interrupted. Even when challenges manifest, firmness of decision on what one will carry out instills more interest in the process, helping one to finish the project without discouragement taking hold and working against it.

Only with perseverance can one shape one’s ambitions to one’s acts, making them accomplishable, materializing them, especially those of lofty moral character, the ones that result in blessings for the spirit.” [\[134\]](#)

The key phrase, which highlights the vast difference between the physical and spiritual universes is “materializing them”. In our world, actual physical labor is always required for any task, even if that means just typing code via a keyboard. Whereas, in the spirit realm, thought is the impetus for action.

Hence, the quest to build a new house is painstaking for us on earth – we must design, earn money for the materials and labor, buy and deliver the resources, take the wood, nails, roofing, etc., and begin building – all with our sweat. In the spirit realm, a high spirit may gather a group of friends, agree on the design and then construct the edifice by the power of their minds.

Therefore, given the added effort to accomplish a task on the physical plane, acquiring persistence is required and will be of great benefit when we return to the spirit universe. Because, high spirits don’t only create houses to live in, as spirits continue their ascent, they begin to build planets, and direct the evolution of life over the span of countless eons.

Joanna, in the book *Life: Challenges and Solutions*, tells us more about the quality we should acquire:

“The effort to persevere at lofty objectives is an achievement of the awakened conscience, objectives that lift individuals from intellectual

and moral parasitism to the level where countless, dormant, inner resources bloom just waiting to be awakened by the will.

Like any other type of conditioning, perseverance is the result of the persistence individuals impose on themselves to achieve the objectives that promote and dignify them. There is no one devoid of perseverance or who is incapable of achieving it, because it results only from the desire that becomes an actual attempt, to be accomplished by continuous action.

From the acquisition of patience, and then perseverance – which completes it – one proceeds to self-confidence, i.e. to the certainty about existing possibilities that may be used for fulfilling one's inner longings. Fear vanishes, along with the self-punishing, self-afflicting mechanisms that disrupt the individual's evolution.

With self-confidence, the will is controlled by a healthy mind, which discerns what one should and can do, what one's objectives in life on earth are, and how to mature emotionally and psychologically to confront the vicissitudes, difficulties and problems that make up part of one's inner growth.” [\[135\]](#)

Perseverance is the springboard toward faith. Faith that is built upon strong foundations, upon ideals cemented by patience and persistence. True faith bolsters one's self-confidence and erases doubts. I am not speaking of blind faith, where followers believe in whatever is told to them like a fanatic, without introspection and analysis, but of an intellectual certainty that can withstand the immense pressures of modern society and rampant materialism. Faith that can stay true, with love for all and without imposing ideals upon others who are not ready.

Faith is Power in the Spirit Realm

Since thought is action in the spirit universe, certainty of thought is the accelerator to control the engine. An idea alone does nothing. It must be backed up by a focused beam of will power.

The spirit Zabdiel defines what “faith” actually means in the spirit world:

“‘According to your faith be it unto you.’ This stands a promise of power today as when He first said it; and it may be claimed with full assurance of fulfillment. Only that faith must be present, and then the present enablement will be manifest, in ways diverse but with an uncertainty of cause and effect.

Now, this is not alone to you, but to us here in these sphere progressed and progressive. It is the acquiring of faith in exercise that we study to compass and, that gotten, we are powerful to help others, and ourselves to enjoy. For it is delight and pleasure to give, more than to receive, as He said.

But do not mistake the nature of faith in the using of it. In the earth life it is of indefinite quality as mostly understood – something between trustfulness and a right understanding of what is truth. But here, where we study all things as to their essence, we know that faith is more than this. It is power capable of scientific analysis, in a measure in correspondence with the progress made by any man.” [\[136\]](#)

Faith in the spirit realm is power, raw power to create, transform, and destroy. Hence only those who have been rigorously trained and tested are allowed to wield such an instrument. This is why we are on earth ... to learn how to control our minds, so one day we can manage this Divine Power ... and the first step is to cultivate perseverance, so we may begin to climb the heights of spiritual authority.

The Stairs of Goodness

Goodness – what does it entail? And why should we keep doing good? Jose Herculano Pires, in the book *Spiritual Wisdom: Missives of Hope*, tells us in a section titled “The Stairs of Goodness”:

“Satre’s sentence is well known. ‘Hell is other people.’ However, Andre Luiz proposes the opposite: ‘Heaven is other people.’ When we understand well the need for social life, we learn that the obstacles are rings of a ladder we must climb. Such obstacles are precisely the other individuals for they are the ones who deny us the benefits we wish to attain, who try to divert us from our paths or use us as instruments for their personal gain at the expense of our own accomplishments.

But if we are in the physical life to develop our faculties and learn how to overcome difficulties, it is evident that obstacles are resources of which we avail ourselves for our improvement. An obstacle race is a valuable training ground to an athlete. We are nothing but athletes of the spirit developing our skills during life.

An athlete develops muscles, agility, and equilibrium. The spirit advances the intelligence, thought, understanding, and love. But without others along the way, we would not have the opportunity of practicing. As it is, we are forced to find other means of behavior to the extent of our failures in social relationships. Therefore, when we treat others as our brothers and sisters, as opposed to adversaries, we are able to overcome the obstacles.

God is supreme goodness, and the others represent the rungs of the ladder that leads us to Him. By thinking of God and promoting goodness to others we will be climbing the stairs to true success. We must nullify today the consequences of the evil we embraced in the past for those reactions are what entangle us. Let us learn presently to do good to others and the Creator will reciprocate with the good of others on our behalf.” [\[137\]](#)

Jose Herculano Pires brilliantly explained our plight here on earth in four paragraphs. What we think of as punishment and frustration brought on by other people who don't submit to our desires, or even worse, actively thwart our plans – are, in actuality, the course material we so sorely require for self-improvement.

Think back to when you were a student. You were assigned a book to read. You read it with great reluctance, lamenting the time wasted, when you could be doing something fun. You read the book deep enough, just to get a passing grade ... no more, no less.

After the test was completed, the knowledge was discarded, never to be retrieved again. Whatever the teacher wished to convey with the book was lost upon you. But, there were a few, or maybe one lone student, who truly absorbed the book and couldn't wait to express their amazement at the gems hidden inside. You and others quickly shut them down, or shamed them to remain quiet. You didn't want to hear their ramblings. Your focus was on other things. More immediate pleasures to be experienced.

The lone student who was able to learn from the book was like an annoying mosquito that you tried to bat away and forget about, while you went on to satisfy your desires. Nevertheless, there was a small spark of recognition that you may have missed something, which only served to increase your disdain for the person who found the buried treasure.

That is our life on earth. Most of the lessons placed in front of us are dismissed as temporary problems, which should be resolved quickly and efficiently. And, if possible, the cause of the trouble must be eliminated.

Jose Herculano Pires exposes the wrongness of this approach. Each assignment, each obstacle, each difficult person is a wall that must be climbed. We can't go around, through, or stop in our tracks. The very act of facing the hurdle and dealing with its consequences, fairly and honestly, is precisely the lesson we need.

One cannot express enough the difficulty of adhering of embracing the boulders on your path and dealing with them in a fraternal and helpful manner. Nothing is more challenging in your life than this.

Preparing for an expedition to Mount Everest is child's play compared to the deep well you must create of love, empathy, understanding, and compassion to utilize the resources you shall desperately need as you encounter and attempt to solve your problems with goodness in mind.

Goodness Reciprocated

Jose Herculano Pires, in the last sentence of his "The Stairs of Goodness", states that as we perform acts of goodness, others will equally assist us in our endeavors.

As we strive to improve, spirits from heaven lend us a hand. They are there to plant suggestions to those who could help us and to block possible negative actions. As we walk on the path of the light, we become part of a virtuous cycle, where positive acts beget more.

There is more. Benefits are not only for your current life but for future lives. As one embarks upon the road of love, subsequent physical existences are composed of mainly edifying episodes. Periods of tragedy and pain are greatly reduced.

In the book *Planetary Transition*, by the spirit Manoel Philomeno De Maranda, psychographed by Divaldo Franco, there are communications detailing the arrival of advanced spirits from another star system. They resided on a “Happy World”, a planet a level ahead of a planet of regeneration, which is the next destination of the earth – we are a planet of atonement, where spirits learn from past errors by repairing their mistakes and improving their character.

Scores of spirits volunteered to be reborn on earth to help lead the human race to a more civilized plateau, where hate, envy, disease, and poverty are vastly reduced or eradicated. These missionaries, who have led virtuous and productive lives, will not be subjected to the type of atoning dramas so prevalent in our lives.

The spirit Manoel, reports on the life plan of these self-sacrificing souls, who come to earth to speed us on our planet’s path to a globe of regeneration:

“Bringing from the dimension whence they came the treasures they had acquired in the process of evolution, they were not exiled for the purpose of rehabilitation, but were volunteers of love contributing to the happiness of the human lives amongst whom they would be reborn.

Therefore in most cases the care with regard to rebirths was limited to the genetic contributions from their future parents so that the candidates’ perispirits could mold their intellectual and moral needs, experiencing the environment conjectures, but also developing their commitments without major impediments resulting from their organic machinery.” [\[138\]](#)

Hence, their superior level, allows their perispirit (that which envelops the physical body and connects to the spirit mind) to alter and supplement the cells comprising the embryo to conform to their intellectual and physical desires to the limits of the genetic material supplied by the parents.

Since, their past lives have been pristine, there is no need to experience hard trials of reparation for past misdeeds. Their lives will be free of tragedies and major diseases. If you have ever encountered people who have lived a “charmed life”, never having excessive drama or catastrophic health issues – they could well be spirits from superior planets who have

graciously accepted a mission to come to earth to be a beacon of righteousness and love.

Living a life of honesty, fraternity, and compassion, results in a future life plan absent of personal disasters, unless you yourself desire to improve a specific character attribute. That is not to say, your future life will be free of conflict, for besides atoning for past mistakes, we, as immature spirits, still need to acquire certain life skills. Always keep in mind, your education, as well as your life, stretches out for eternity!

The Rule of Helping

The spirit Neio Lucio, in the book *Jesus in the Home*, wrote about different conversations Jesus held with his disciples in Peter's and other's houses. In one chapter, titled "The Rule of Helping", Jesus was asked how to help others and allow them to retain their dignity. Jesus responded thusly:

"John, if you are seeking a rule of thumb by which to help others while at the same time helping yourself, remember to love your companions of the earthly journey as much as you would like to be loved and helped by them.

Under the pretext of fostering the truth, don't make your life a battle in which your feet walk the earth like a fierce warrior in the desert. Remember that most ill persons already realize to some degree what their illness is, and so they need friendship and understanding more than they need medicine.

Bear in mind that there's not one soul on earth who doesn't have difficult problems to resolve; because of this, learn to show fraternal courtesy toward all of them.

Welcome your travel companions not merely with the greeting suggested by the rules of etiquette, but also with the warmth of your sincere desire to serve.

Gaze into the eyes of people as they talk to you, observing their kind interest, and always be a tactful and attentive listener. Don't raise your voice too loudly, because the certainty and serenity with which the most serious of matters should be dealt does not depend upon how loudly they are discussed.

Refrain from taking part in futile conversations, undignified comments are always a criminal invasion into personal matters.

Praise those who are industrious, and even when faced with those who are evil and lazy, try to exalt the good they are capable of doing.

Flee pessimism, but wisely keep up your guard when dealing with individuals who are enterprising in carrying out respectable yet fleeting business in the world. Unproductive melancholy, which knows only how to complain, has never been useful to Humankind, who is in need of good spirits.

Make daily use of the shiny key of a friendly smile. It is with a spontaneous gesture of kindness that we can ward off many crimes and erase many wrongs.

Do your best to always be punctual; don't make your friends wait for you, so that you are not attributed a false sense of importance.

Give thanks for all the blessings along the way, acknowledging both the large ones and the small ones. If the sun provides warmth for life, the grain of wheat provides our daily bread.

Allow the living, invisible waters of Love that proceed from God Our Father flow through your heart to benefit the realm of struggle in which you live. Love is the divine force that enriches life and bestows power.

Above all, let us do the best we can to aid in the happiness and spiritual growth of everyone around us; not just here, but everywhere; not just today, but always.” [\[139\]](#)

Christ gave a tall order to John. John asked how could he fulfill all of this? Christ told him to keep goodwill always in the forefront of whatever he does.

When one reads the passage above, it sounds challenging but doable to keep yourself on the path of love and assistance. But live through one day and see how many times the rules are violated.

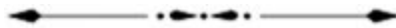
As I wrote down what Christ told John, I found numerous instances where I failed, just the day before! At work I raised my voice. I didn't realize it until someone told me afterward. I wasn't tactful, instead I gave

orders. I was pessimistic and I certainly didn't make use of a friendly smile, when I should have. All failures in only a twelve hour period! I am happy to report that when I was asleep I was perfect.

We are creatures of habit, the routines we enact, the interactions with people, and even the tone of voice we use in specific circumstances. This is why the perseverance of goodness is a herculean task for those of us far from spiritual perfection.

To be good, to act well, to project goodness takes a restructuring of habits which have been ingrained and polished over many years and may reach back over lifetimes.

All we can do is to start and measure our progress each day and resolve to be better the next. Little by little we shall improve. I know that I am much better than before the time I had found Spiritism. Unfortunately, I still have a long way to travel, since I was (and am) full of pride and too aggressive when I want something done. But, slowly the hard edges are being smoothed. Hopefully, one day in a future life, I can approach the true persistence of goodness and effectively assist those around me.



Chapter 25 – Living Well

The poem by Andre Luiz is not just twenty four random lines of personal improvements, but a laddered plan toward spiritual ascendancy. As with most communications from the spirit realm, by high spirits, every word has a meaning and a purpose. Extraneous prose is not present. This is why when I read a book or a message from an advanced spirit, I read it over multiple times. Invariably I detect a meaning I didn't catch before.

Herculano Pires said in his analysis of the poem that it was a blueprint, a “sequence of propositions” ^[140], laid out in ascending order, which would illuminate the path to true living and inner peace.

Each is attainable, but the effort to conquer each one is dependent upon successful attainment of the previous stanza. Let's examine the first line of the poem, “Trust in God and Yourself.”

Trust in God and Yourself

It all starts from there. Without belief in a higher power and a purpose for life on earth, there is no rhyme or reason to ever improve or think of helping others. We would just be temporary life forms on our planet to attain as much pleasure and material goods that we could and then melt back into the soil when our time is up.

On the other hand, an acknowledgement of a vast spirit universe, which watches over us and guides us, changes everything. With the comfort of God's love we realize that we are valuable members of His family and as such, we understand our own worth. We know that we are not evolutionary happenstances, we are humans on this planet to learn and to improve. Hence, we trust in the importance of our life and ourselves.

A Serene Conscience

With that as a base, the next line is “A Serene Conscience.” Once a belief in a grand sequences of universes controlled by a Supreme Intelligence is grounded, one realizes there is a set of rules which guide behavior. These multi-universal laws are written into our conscience. If we

listen attentively to our conscience, our life becomes tranquil, even in the face of external storms.

The knowledge that we are following the precepts of love, charity, and fraternity – as well as we are able – dampens down our anxieties. We all understand that the vast majority of stress is self-induced. Our stress is usually the result of doing something that we know is wrong and our bodies react to the disruption of our inner harmony.

Legions of people complain about debilitating diseases, auto-immune disorders, nervousness, aches and pains which have no medical explanation, and bouts of deep depression – all of which have their start in the weakening of the body caused by tension.

Numerous studies have shown that people who are spiritual and believe in a religion or doctrine that guides us to understand that we are on earth under the watchful eyes of superior spirits are healthier than those who have no faith in a higher power.

Hence, the acknowledgement of a moral authority, that certain actions are reprehensible – such as stealing, murder, cruelty, wantonness, dishonesty, and extreme selfishness, to name a few – are tenets placed above human law.

The false theory of relative morality is destructive and only serves to delay the transition of our planet from a place of chaos and hate to our destiny toward a planet of love and support. Climbing the ladder to a plateau where paradise awaits takes human cooperation. Where the village elders encourage the younger to live together in peace and those who refuse to treat their fellow citizens with respect are requested to find other homes.

The earth is in a stage of transition. Humans will self-select, via their free-will, if they wish to expend the effort to acquire the characteristics of the Good and participate in the evolution of our planet, or simply ride along and be sent to other less advanced planets, where they will, once again, be given opportunities for personal growth.

Time Spent on Production Matters

A deep and lasting faith and a commitment to adhere to universal laws of decency, frees one to step outside their home into a beautiful garden of

opportunities. Pursuits appear as colorful flowers, that as they are picked, never wither, but remain alive and vibrant within us.

Each task that we set ourselves, whether our career, assisting others, providing love and comfort to our family, which is in concert with our faith and conscience is edifying. Each effort dedicated to Good, invests itself in our character and promotes our spiritual ascendancy.

As we accumulate works of light and love, our spirit becomes brighter. When high spirits come to the earth plane, they detect the shine of our aura. They immediately comprehend that we are attempting to scale the great mountain toward spiritual purity and lesser spirits understand that time spent to divert us, is usually wasted.

Spiritism notifies us that we live in a sea of spirits. They are all around us and will continue to be as long as we live on a planet of atonement. When the earth rises and becomes a planet of regeneration, the errant spirits who inhabit the invisible plane around and below us will be moved from earth and sent elsewhere.

Hence, the whispering of counter-productive ideas into our minds will vanish. People born and raised on a globe without constant temptation will be happier and more content with their lives. Free of longing for that one more morsel of self-indulgence.

A Constructive Speech

Nothing motivates others as well as positivism. The signs of self-confidence, compassion, and constructive approaches to problems will naturally radiate from you, when you have demonstrated a personality steeped in promoting love and care for all.

As you become a better person, a more spiritual and kind individual, your verbal communication will be naturally elevated. All of these, faith in yourself and in the wisdom of the spirit realm, following your conscience, activities that are beneficial, and conversation which is free of pessimism and negative thoughts create a powerful feedback mechanism.

Thoughts radiate from your mind, at a constant pace. Your ideas flow around you and throughout the galaxy. At the same time thoughts from others invade your mind and you are subtly affected. As you begin to

transmit happy and encouraging ideas, these will bounce off of others and return to you.

A feedback loop of ever increasing goodness will be established. Others will feel better in your presence, which will cause them to think healthy thoughts, thereby sending back uplifting feelings to you.

We have seen the opposite, whereby people in a deep funk attract others like them. Each feeding off negative emotions, thereby sinking them all further into despondency. Escaping from that condition is difficult and painful.

Whereas living in a bright and happy world of emotions allows one to step from small successes to larger ones to victory in life. All the while serving as a beacon of right living to others to emulate.

A Prayer Allied to Work

Being a force for Good is wonderful, but to perform at peak effectiveness means that choices of direction should be accomplished in concert with our spirit benefactors. The need for interactive communication with our guardian angels can't be overstated.

Living, growing, and being without spiritual guidance is like being a child without parents. We require, as do children, support, direction, sustenance, and love to continue our struggle to acquire as much valuable experience and wisdom as possible during our short stay in the physical plane.

Unfortunately, the advice and care given to us by our spirit guardians are frequently ignored and missed altogether, as teenagers tend to dismiss the greater knowledge and love from their parents. Whereas, regular family meeting where parents and children exchange ideas freely, prayer and meditation serves to open a channel of communication to the other side.

While you may not be aware of direction, inspiration given by superior angelic beings will guide you, if your mind is open to light and love. What was once uncertain will become a purpose and what was filled with anxiety will be replaced with calm and steadfastness.

To paraphrase what the Buddhist say, when we think right, we live right, we act right. And to insure we act right, we measure our inspiration to what

our conscience tells us, and if the combination is found to be correct and emotionally pleasing ... we are sure to be on the right track.

Hope in Action

Setting your course according to the direction given by loving spirits and fortified with tools of great power – faith, conscience, purpose, positivity, and communication from above – should provide that any undertaking one begins, starts with a predilection of success.

Remember always – our guardian angels desire and fight for our triumph in any enriching mission. If there was a failure, it was meant to be; it was to provide a needed lesson so subsequent endeavors will be victorious. It is as important to learn from failures as from successes. Only through analysis of our strengths and weaknesses can we permanently alter our character to the good.

The spirit realm has complex plans for you and your life isn't meant to be a smooth ride in a luxury car, instead it is more a trip in your first automobile you purchased in High School. It had frequent break downs and you had to constantly check the oil, but with perseverance you got to where you wanted to be.

My wife and I were at a Spiritist Medium's meeting in Rio de Janeiro in February, 2018. In a message we received we were told to not be discouraged when our plans did not proceed as we wished because some of the detours we take are opportunities for personal growth.

Therefore, keep in the forefront of your mind, we are part of an intricate tapestry. There is an overall design, but the path to the end must follow threads which appear and disappear and touch many others. Deep inside the construction of the carpet, we can't see the pattern. It doesn't matter, the plan exists in full view of the spirits who guide us. And when we return to the spirit realm – we too will see it and recognize the brilliance of the enterprise to make us a better person.

An Industrious Patience

As we re-analyze each line of the poem in order, the building blocks are beginning to reveal their overall structure. In the stanza before, we were

asked to commit to hope in action. Now we are cautioned that we should acquire an industrious patience.

It all makes sense. I know because I have lived it. When I started out on the journey of discovering Spiritism, I felt I had seen a treasure and all I needed was to open the lid of the chest and others would also be enthralled.

But, in each message I received from the spirit realm, I was told I would be planting seeds. Which meant that I would not see results. In other words I had to toil and be patient. The crop would rise at its own time, not the moment I wished, but when it was ready.

To cut through the barrage of calls for purchasing worthless goods with a message of inner peace and spiritual growth is an uphill battle. Most probably it will be a fight that will last decades, if not longer.

Allan Kardec codified Spiritism in the 1850s and it enjoyed a remarkable period of reaching out to European and American audiences. But then, organized religion, seeing the danger of calling for internal personal improvement, as opposed to public demonstrations of piety, by listening to rote prayers and ceremonies – fought back. And did its best to discredit the notion of communication with spirits and the truth of reincarnation.

Spiritism was able to re-emerge. Never dying in Europe, thanks to the efforts of dedicated evangelists such as Leon Denis and others, but more importantly, it found renewed roots in Brazil, in the early 1900s and began to reach a large section of the population after Francisco (Chico) C. Xavier started to publish books he psychographed from various spirits. Where, at the present, over five percent of the population are Spiritist. You will find Spiritist centers in most neighborhoods and Spiritist Hospitals in various cities. All dedicated to working with modern methods and the spirit world to help incarnates and discarnates alike.

In summary, we are told that any task that we set our sights upon, may not be easy, or even bear visible fruit, but the work itself is part of the learning experience. As we are doing we are growing. We are plowing the soil and sowing seeds for the future ... our future and those around us. Patience is required, as it is always in any grand endeavor.

A Dispassionate Opinion

High spirits know the truth about us. They understand why we are here and the tribulations we must suffer in order to emerge one day as a productive soul in heaven. We on the planet, have our own truths. Truths not necessarily rooted by facts, because humans in general are as yet unable to comprehend the true meaning of our existence.

Hence, we each have a set of prejudices, conditioned likes and dislikes that we acquire in each lifetime, and some carry over from previous lives. We tend to personalize our feelings toward others. We categorize them into good and bad buckets. Once labeled it is almost impossible for a person to transfer from the bad to the good pile.

Spiritism, in its revelation of the plurality of lives, should destroy this preconception of people according to our own measuring system. Instead, we need to recognize that there are different levels of maturity of spirits. And that we, who think we are civilized and wonderful, should step back and realize that we too have been primitive – stealing, robbing, lying, taking advantage of our fellow men – the whole gambit of abhorrent behavior. We have been guilty of everything in the past, and only via repeated trials have we emerged the person we are now.

Therefore, when examining a person's life and their deeds, don't measure it against one lifetime, but think of the arc of lives. Where they have been, where they are now, and what lessons could be waiting for them in the future. Only then can one form a dispassionate opinion.

This micro analysis can be used for greater situations. The spirit world has enabled entire civilizations to rise and fall. They have promoted one race over another and then unleashed destructive fury to rebalance the scales. All is in flux, because everything is in constant motion. A forward path of learning.

Don't be intellectually or emotionally too attached to a set of abstract notions on earth. Each country, civilization, political party, religion, or whatever human created organization one can think of ... are all going to disappear or be radically transformed as we approach the creation of a planet of regeneration.

The Blessing of Comprehension

Mental preparation, a positive attitude, work, a plan, patience, and an objective analysis are all keystones to growth – personal and professional. Next is the mortar which holds together the foundation for improvement – understanding.

Learning and spitting the information back out is something every successful student acquires. Spiritism starts out like that for many. One reads the Doctrine, watches videos. Dives deeper into the books by Chico Xavier and other mediums. The truth of multiple lives become clear. The predetermination of trials for each of us is recognized.

Intellectually, these processes of the spirit realm and how they guide our existences become logical and part of our thinking. When we examine a person, their circumstances, and their life in general, we can detect the hand of the spirit realm and the effects of previous histories.

But eventually, after much study and meditation, an added dimension occurs. One begins to feel - along with intellectual clarity. No longer is a person analyzed like a rat in a laboratory experiment, but as a beloved spirit – a soul whose defects are caused by ignorance, a lack of spiritual maturity.

It is the start of wisdom ... knowledge, emotion, empathy combined which puts one at a new level of comprehension. It is the seeing of a person through the eyes of the spirit realm. Not as a person to be disregarded or to be forcibly altered and freed of their bad habits, but as a person of potential. An object of love.

A sculpture of beauty trapped inside a slab of marble – this is how we are seen by the spirit realm. Each splinter of rock is removed with the upmost care and in anticipation of the next chisel strike. Extensive planning is required to finally reveal, after millennia, a pure spirit. One that is utmost pristine in thought but still retains their unique personality.

A Participation in Everyone's Progress

With comprehension of the real world around us; not the world of illusion that is pushed onto us by those who wish to profit at every turn. There comes a time when we are able to visualize the stunningly complex intersectionality of each human being.

Every small and large, insignificant and significant encounter each of us has with others is mainly scripted in advance. Hence, we understand that when we are touched by the life of another, we should take interest.

Our interest should be of one that determines the best opportunity for self-growth for the person within our sphere of influence. Not the best method to teach them a lesson, but the optimal scheme to supply that person with tools to use in the future.

Heuristics, the art of problem solving, via a variety of approaches depending upon the circumstances – this is one of the main components we are expected to master during our multiple sojourns on earth. And we should experiment with our fellow humans.

Hence, we should painstakingly review how we are able to assist each person, so they too will be able to analyze their circumstances and self-correct any faults they deem necessary.

I repeat – it is not our job to be judge and jury – the individual will accomplish this over time. It is our task to facilitate the lesson plan imposed on them by the spirit realm.

A Compassionate Attitude

And in the formulation of our approach to others we must place to the forefront – compassion. True consideration is to help without making the receiver suffer – mentally or physically. It is assistance based upon the knowledge that we have all been where the person who we are helping is presently, in one life or another. We have all been primitive spirits, fighting for survival and thoroughly selfish.

Guidance without judgement. This doesn't mean we can't analyze the faults of the person, or mentally list the wrongful deeds they have committed. Only that we reserve our harsh statements and prescriptions for a time when the person is open to suggestion and even then act more like a coach than a law enforcement officer.

We should strive to never make the person feel inadequate or small. They too are wanderers, set upon earth on a journey of self-improvement and destined to become perfect spirits one day. Hence, instead of forcing a person onto a path, we should point out the benefits of following the better

road ahead. Let them make the decision. After all, a wrong choice maybe more beneficial in the long run than choosing the correct answer.

Truth Enlightened by Love

If you have been able to conquer the previous eleven steps and have arrived at a level of wisdom balanced by knowledge, compassion, with a deeply set foundation stone in the certainty of our immortality and the love of the Supreme Being for all souls – then you have reach a mighty plateau.

Truth sounds so easy to decipher. But as long as we are wrapped within our human body and all of its frailties; the illusions we construct to satisfy our ego blinds us to reality. Our self-importance, our false belief in our goodness in all circumstances, our intellect, the righteousness of our desires ... all form a rigid set of armor protecting us from the truth.

Chico Xavier, who was by all accounts a very humble man. A medium who psychographed more than 450 books, yet he lived a very simple life. He slept in a small bed in a small room. He was asked, “Chico, are you humble or are you ashamed?” He replied, “I am ashamed.”

This simple answer exposed everything about what Chico knew about himself and all humans on the planet. To be humble, is to be not proud or haughty, even though you may have reasons to be so. If Chico said he was humble, then it would imply that he is acting with deference because of his philosophy and love of people. Ultimately, it would denote that he was a self-made man, who had vast mediumistic powers and many achievements under his belt, but decided to act with kindness toward all.

Instead, he said he was ashamed. Which fully demonstrated that Chico understood he was an immature soul (albeit vastly superior to all of us) in a land of immature souls who are learning to become civilized. Chico knew that saying he was humble would be like a fifth grader saying he or she was humble.

The elementary student has no concept of life outside their house and classroom. They wouldn't understand the truth about life beyond their little universe ... they couldn't comprehend, they don't have the capacity at their stage of development.

Chico knew this and answered the question with unerring honesty. Although, the difference between the child and us, is that we do have the capacity to comprehend, but the trek is difficult.

Hence, to fully embrace the truth we must step outside of our selves. We must look at ourselves with compassion, yet under a pure white light of veracity. We must strip away all false pretenses and see ourselves for the immature soul we are. That we live in a world of falseness – false goals, false desires, false institutions – all there to hide the naked truth – that we are all imperfect on a journey to become perfect.

And that journey is not accomplished in solitary, but with guidance from a higher power, with absolute rules of conduct – which we all know, but steadfastly attempt to ignore the pleas of our conscience.

While under the harsh spotlight we may look like shaking wet puppies – but, understand well, within each incarnate spirit there is a secret garden of love, understanding, and compassion waiting to be revealed. All it takes is hard work and study.

Oblivion of Evils

When Andre Luiz wrote “oblivion of evils”, he didn’t mean to set out to wage war on what each of us considered wicked in this world. It was a call to change our attitude. To expand our field of vision and to not paste labels on temporary stages of growth.

It was a request to consider the entire story in the context of immortal life and growth. Yes, wrongdoers must be cautioned and imprisoned at times. Nevertheless, constant attempts to teach and guide them are part of our responsibility on earth. After all, we are members of the student body and are part of the process of enlightenment for those around us.

Spirits tell us that evil is nothing more than the absence of good. The inability of people to discern the correct act versus the wrongful act. Reincarnation is the mechanism to repair this lack of judgement. Throughout many lives ... we soon learn the repercussions of our thoughtless deeds.

Hence, the more we can facilitate the education of ourselves and the human race, the faster we may move from a world of atonement to a planet

of regeneration, where evil and ignorance of civilized behavior is greatly diminished.

Happiness in your Commitments

On our personal journey toward the eradication of evil and ignorance in our lives, we should be joyful. We are on the road to a beautiful castle, high on top of the mountain. The climb is arduous, but the destination is divine. Once we reach the summit, sustenance, rewards, knowledge, friendship, love, and indescribable vistas await.

Each step we take, each trial that we survive and thrive is one more small victory on our path toward the top. Every time we take a lesson to heart or help another see their life through a new prism of forgiveness and advancement, we inch closer to our goal.

Why not be happy, does making your hike with a bad attitude provide any benefit? Of course not, it only lessens the value of the progress and hinders all around you. A dour attitude only creates a veil between you and the world. The selfishness and personal hurt that always accompanies a negative state of emotion only dulls the senses and inhibits discovery.

Therefore, as you work and learn, do so openly and with welcoming arms. The lessons offered to you will be more effective and life changing.

Unconditional Forgiveness

Achieving this state entails ripping apart every preconception, cultural points of view, and societal pressure imaginable. This certainly doesn't mean one has to promote bad behavior or not let the legal system punish abhorrent acts, only that any rancor one may have had toward people, groups, political parties, and governments be cast off.

To achieve this plateau, one must step outside oneself and see one's body as an actor in a scripted play. Characters will enter from stage right and left. Scenes will progress. Acts will complete. Secondary parts will walk on, provide a clue or continuity for the next act. There will be periods of action and times of dialog.

Ask yourself about any of the actors in the drama. Are the actors evil or mean? Or is the part they are playing evil or mean? In fact, a character may start out a scoundrel, but later emerge as an honest and caring person. All

have an arc to their story. All are performing a part. And each role is vital to the entire play. Absence of one role or missing a line, may cause the story to wander off the original plot.

When the performance is completed, when everyone meets at the bar afterwards, enemies in the play are friends, for they knew they each acted according to the script and each tried to give the best performance they could.

This is how we should see ourselves on earth. When someone does something horrible to us – it was meant to be. We should not hate the actor, but think about their performance and what it means to the main character – ourselves. Whatever was done was meant to move the star of the show forward, from one state to the next.

Don't take anything personally, it is all happening to the spirit (the actor) trapped in a physical body. Analyze what is happening to the character and think about how the character could improve and grow. Once the play is done, you will remove the heavy and confining costume and fly free in the spirit universe.

A Devotion to Study

To analyze your actions and responses to the lessons provided you and the deeds of others around you – you need to study.

Every stanza, every word in the previous lines of the poem “Inner Peace”, leads to this juncture. Only by preparation is one ready to begin the task to explore an important topic. And this topic is the most imperative in your life. It is the reason you are on earth.

To understand the messages from high spirits you should put yourself in a state free from ego, negative emotions, and stress. Next you need to rearrange your feelings to acknowledge the presence of superior beings in your life and the part they play. You should emphasize the positive attributes you possess.

Most important of all is to launch the journey with as clean a conscience as one can manage. Let past misdeeds be forgotten, they were but required lessons, completed less than perfect – but now move forward with your conscience as your guide and governor.

Remove all stress, which is accomplished by a clear conscience and complete and unconditional forgiveness for all, and look at your life from the peak of a mountain. Peer down and see yourself on the rocky trail.

Now you are ready to study. Now each word from your guardian angel or high spirits via Spiritist books will resonate with you. You shall find the true meaning of each sentence and how it affects you.

A Gesture of Kindness

The rest of the poem is a guide to how to behave after you have embarked on your personal journey of enlightenment. As you study and learn, you will naturally begin to re-shape your outer personality. This will occur because your inner self shall be altered. The negative vibrations will be replaced with positive harmony. You will begin to radiate light instead of darkness. Those around you will feel it and respond accordingly.

None of this happens rapidly, it takes years, but it does occur. And as you strive, your spirit mentors are there with you, re-enforcing good behavior, just like a teacher rewards hard working students.

As you act with kindness toward yourself, you begin to show it to others. Being calm, correct, and caring towards everyone around you becomes a habit. It is as if you were transported back into the days of polite society, where men and women were consciously gracious and good manners were always in the forefront.

This is a welcoming state and if you sit back and feel you are in it ... you have achieved a great victory.

An Encouraging Smile

With kindness comes the outward appearance of compassion. With love and compassion offering a pleasant face with a smile becomes the rule, not the exception.

Walk down any street and greet oncoming people with a smile and a “hi” and see what you receive in turn. Mostly I greet those that pass me by with a smile or a friendly nod and I get nothing in return. Or I receive a quick glance. Seldom have I seen a smile.

This is all understandable. People are seemingly forced, by circumstances beyond their control (or so they think – I know I have been there too) to scramble their entire lives. After college, they have debt and must get a job to live and to pay back what they borrowed. Society then moves them along where they must buy the latest fashion or gimmick to keep up with their friends and maintain appearances.

The mountain of obligations overwhelm them, and in response they work harder and longer hours, or an additional job, to cover expenses. Married couples agonize over the cost of a child, and if they had the good graces to have additional children, the burden is heavier. There is nothing but work, eat, sleep, with a few weeks of vacation in between.

Our materialistic society is dedicated to create a system to keep people buying at all costs. And to consume, means to work. Downtime is discouraged, because that means people are not fueling the system with coin.

All of this causes stress. The time to relax and show kindness or even return a smile never arrives.

One must fight with all of their might to remove themselves from a pure materialistic existence and seek a balance. And when time is found to begin the path of inner peace, any lack of possessions become completely irrelevant. High spirits tell us that denying ourselves is like pruning a tree. The more branches are trimmed back, the stronger it grows.

As our roots grab hold of reality, we become anchored to the true life on earth and we are able to live free of frivolous encumbrances. We are free to smile upon everyone and everything and feel the sun shining upon us with its warmth.

Spontaneity to Assist Others

And as we let the sunshine into our hearts and reflect it back on our fellow travelers we become open to slow down our daily lives and lend a hand. Once, the overall rush of unrelenting propaganda is shut down – for you have now consciously filtered it down to the essentials – one has freedom to think of other things besides how to keep afloat in this world.

Decreasing stress triggers a myriad of benefits. Besides being healthier, you are more alert – ready for unexpected circumstances. This is where building a habit of kindness and smiling leads into dual connections.

When your heart and emotional state is filled with love, and you radiate warm thoughts to those you meet and appear friendly to strangers ... an aura surrounds you. A glow, a haven exists within and outside of your space. This invisible state attracts those who are in need. They feel a safe port – quite often because they are encouraged by their guardian angel – and therefore gravitate toward you.

As they approach, sub-consciously you are notified of a struggling soul and your mind focuses your mental powers at the person within your view. Hence, a linkage is created. Your guardian spirit, may have already inspired you as to what the person requires. Since you are at a higher spiritual state, your selfish side doesn't reject the suggestion out of hand. You actually act upon the outside (given to you by a spirit – who is either your guardian angel or a spirit looking after the poor soul in need) and the inside (via your own enlightenment) inclinations.

Simplicity of Habits

The winding down of pretentious affectations occurs naturally as you become more genuine. Time spent on pure self-aggrandizement dwindles away as you focus on your moral needs and the needs of others.

For instance, my wife and I went through a phase of enjoying wine. We sampled different types and had a pleasant time wine tasting. Thankfully, I found that after I graduated to an about twenty dollars a bottle wine, I couldn't taste the difference of anything more expensive. Lucky me!

We would buy what pleased us and stockpiled some vintages we liked. This became a pastime, a diversion we could pursue on the weekends.

Once we discovered Spiritism and became engrossed in studying about the spirit realm and our place within it ... we abandoned the hobby of discovering, purchasing, and storing wine. It became unimportant to our lives. It became an afterthought.

Now, if we feel like a bottle of wine, when we go to the store, we may pick one up and it will last us over multiple days. We had simply left that

pursuit behind, like a child changes one toy for another, without looking back.

This process replicates itself in everything you do. The useless pastimes are discarded. Your daily routine fills up with edifying tasks replacing the previous time-killing hobbies.

Fortifying your spiritual nature defeats the urges toward materialism. You finally realize the true value of an object – it has none in the long term and is only good for its immediate functionality in the short term. Only your immortal spirit retains value.

A Spirit of Renovation

As your habits evolve, you turn inward to the task of self-improvement – you become conscious of the urge to re-make yourself. As your will becomes reinforced with certainty – faith in yourself, the spirit realm, and your predetermined educational track during this lifetime – you begin to actually see that you are not a physical body, who was born and is destined to decompose back into the earth.

You are in fact a work in progress and will be for an eternity. One life is nothing. If you could improve just a single aspect of your character to perfection in each life, you would ascend at a rapid pace.

Most of us spend countless lives parked at a level and repeat the same mistakes over and over again. Only with great suffering are we pushed out of our habits and make drastic changes. Think how we could soar to the heights of heaven once we actually consciously plan to progress!

Following the advice of the poem will set the environment ... a launching pad, for a dramatic ascension. Spiritual growth isn't a long upward sloping line over millennia, but a hockey stick up to the sky after a tremendously lengthy duration of lives learning practically nothing, then a light turns on and the person finally discovers and embraces the truth of our stay on earth. Only then does real progress begin in earnest.

Merely attempting to put in practice the spiritual routine prescribed by the spirit Andre Luiz will set the stage for all subsequent incarnations. Blueprints for upcoming lives will be created for an emphasis on

educational opportunities instead of dramas designed to effect major character alterations. Everything will be better.

The future will be bright for those determined to walk a new path. A path, still strewn with obstacles, but one that will forever transform one's character and personality. There is no greater treasure that we can take back with us after physical life than an improved sense of living and loving our fellow humans.

Fostering of Tolerance

Once you determine that our bodies on earth are mere temporary receptacles to place our spirits into so we may survive and learn the lessons assigned to us; then we understand that any race, creed, and social strata that we come into the world is but an entry point for the particular curriculum that has been chosen for our benefit.

Human bodies are like the vehicles that hold the thrill seekers at the rides in Disneyland. For instance, in Mr. Toad's Wild Ride (one of my favorites, since I was young), two or three people step into a modified representation of an early 1900s car. They experience the ride, the lights, the sounds, and moments of distractions, then they depart.

The color of the old-fashion car is unimportant. What is vital is that you went through the ride. During the excursion, time seemed to move slowly, since your senses were bombarded with new stimuli. But when you exited the car, you realized the journey was only a few minutes in duration. This is what your physical life will seem like after you leave your dense body – the vehicle for your short ride on earth – behind.

Spiritism tells us that all spirits are created equally and all will achieve perfection. In the spirit world we fashion our outward appearance to suite our desires. I have read of many variations of size, color, and appearance of spirits.

Many spirits come from other planets and only spend a relatively short time in a human body, then they return to their preferred shape after their excursion on earth. Hence, as spirits, we determine our own image. It is usually a reflection of the state of our spirituality, mind, will, thoughts and desires.

Therefore, to judge on any exterior qualities of the dense human suit we are assigned is a waste of time. There are stories from Spiritist literature of Roman generals becoming slaves in their next life and slaves becoming people of great spiritual wisdom in their subsequent existence. Kings and queens, who were once mighty and powerful, find themselves disfigured, poor, and sickly in their next life. Each according to their deeds.

Courage to Place Yourself Second to Serving

Every line of the poem written by the spirit Andre Luiz, builds upon each other, and all is targeted toward our internal reformation. One can only tear down one's inner ego by setting aside one's pride and objectively examining one's character.

Selfishness and pride are hard traits to let go of. I know, I still hang on to both. When I least expect it, my pride emerges like a dormant volcano. Suddenly, I feel defensive about some comment made or not made. Our self-importance invades every part of our body. Finding each trace will take time and effort. Nevertheless, each small victory remains with us for eternity.

While the accumulation of houses, boats, jewelry, stock, and bonds are but transitory, lasting an infinitesimal amount of time compared to life spent in the spirit universe; the acquiring of the capacity of love, humbleness, kindness, compassion, faith, and intellectual curiosity are attributes which follow you forever. Like the university degree or the acquiring of a skill is a trait that can never be lost.

Superiority in spiritual level is the inverse of reaching the commanding heights of earthly power. As humans rise they become more use to service by others, to legions of staff to do their bidding. They feel they deserve the acquiescence of those they rule. They begin to think they are in control because they are innately better than their fellow beings.

While in the spirit realm, I read in numerous passages how higher spirits attempt to hide their obvious superiority. They put themselves out for their lesser brethren and do for them whatever best will assist them. They never lord it over their inferiors.

These bright lights of the universe live the credo, "courage to place yourself second to serving." In service they discover great enjoyment and

fulfillment ... in the knowledge of pulling up their brothers and sisters higher in the hierarchy of heaven.

Perseverance in Goodness

The last line of the poem is an exhortation to remain on course. To not let external factors sway you from your spiritual goal. No matter what befalls you, don't lose heart and dedication to try to do the best for those around you. Goodness doesn't just extend to others, but to yourself as well.

Do Good for yourself – it entails difficulties. One must study, work to reform habits, analyze, plan, and act upon each blemish discovered in one's character. This is much harder than concentrating on being fraternal and charitable. It involves learning basic truths about oneself, about society and culture and how it affects you. It means that in many circumstances one must swim against the tide.

To consciously reject the basic tenets of our popular consumerist environment means that old friends will drop away, not out of spite, but because you will no longer desire what they desire. It will occur naturally, your tastes will slowly divert from theirs.

But, some past friends will become closer and new ones will appear. Those who detect your basic decency and non-judgmental character. They will see you as a beacon of light and will seek out your advice. For they know, whatever you tell them, it is not said out of self-interest, but out of concern for their future.

Therefore, follow Andre's advice, persist in spreading warmth, love, and goodness. The ripples of your deeds will eventually find you and your repayment will be one hundredfold whatever you invested.

Spiritism

Spiritism, also called Christian Spiritism, is a doctrine, not a religion. There is no dogma to follow without reason. There are no diet or dress restrictions. There are no rote prayers or rituals.

Spiritism is not an external cloak one wears, but a tonic for your soul. In its base, it is intellectual, with a coating of emotion. Spiritism doesn't grab

you because of any extravagant promises. Spiritism shines a light on what is possible, but to get there is a trek. A hard slog through muddy terrain.

Spiritism doesn't push you to go to street corners and announce the Third Revelation, it merely asks that you be there when people inquire or need help.

Spiritism merely lays out why you are here, how you can graduate from this place, who is guiding this campus of earth and your personal destiny – which is always meant to educate, not to punish.

Spiritism is like a thick book left on the table. It has been there for years, waiting for you to read it. But when you look at the size of the effort to consume it, you hesitate. Unbeknownst to you, there is a gold coin beneath it. But once you start, and begin to understand the ramifications of its contents, your life changes.

Everything, every occurrence, every person around you is seen under a different perspective. You begin to understand, to fully comprehend the world around you. For the first time you realize the injustices of the world are here for a purpose. You see the innocent being downtrodden and the rich taking advantage and you shake your head in the acknowledgement that all is happening to teach everyone valuable lessons. That someday, in some life, the rich will trade places with the poor, so each and every soul may be well-rounded and learn to love and be honest in every circumstance.

And as the light peers into your soul, your character transforms, you begin to improve. You live life happier, because the small things don't bother you like they did before. The large things don't knock you for a loop like they did before. The waves, that used to crash against you and shake your foundations, become still.

And, when you find that gold coin under the book, you realize that it stands for your new self, the new me, the reformed ego and id. You know that you have the only treasure that you can take with you after death – your improved personality, ready to meet your new friends in heaven and start your next adventure in your immortal journey to perfection.



Glossary

Term	Description
Abyss or Dark Abyss	The Abyss begins just below the surface of the earth and extends downwards for an unspecified distance. This is the term for a type of Purgatory or Hell for spirits who are unrepentant and still intent on staying attached to worldly goods, baser emotions (such as hate, envy, and revenge), or other criminal intentions. There is no concept of eternal damnation in Spiritism; all spirits are able to leave when they change their character and beliefs. All will eventually rise to heaven, but it may take multiple lifetimes.
Allan Kardec	Known as the codifier of Spiritism. Many Brazilians believe he later reincarnated as Francisco (Chico) C. Xavier to carry on the presentation of Spiritism. His first book is <i>The Spirits Book</i> . He presented Spiritism to the world in the 1850s.

Term	Description
Andre Luiz	Spirit Author of a series of books, starting with <i>Nosso Lar</i> . All books were psychographed by Francisco (Chico) C. Xavier. Highly recommended reading for anyone interested in learning about Spiritism.
Camilo Branco	Camilo Castelo Branco wasn't just an ordinary suicide. He was a commanding figure in Portugal's literary scene in the late 1800's. He was known as the Portuguese Balzac and was awarded the title of Viscount of Correia Botelho. In despair over his son's insanity and his own ailments that would certainly lead to blindness, he ended his life in 1890.
Discarnate	A spirit in the spirit world, they do not possess a physical body.
Emmanuel	Emmanuel was the spirit mentor of Francisco (Chico) C. Xavier. Emmanuel has since incarnated in Brazil in the year 2001 or 2002. It is said by some Spiritist mediums that Chico Xavier, will be the spirit mentor for Emmanuel.

Term	Description
Errant spirit	I have seen two slightly different uses of “errant spirit”, the most used one is a spirit who is wandering in the Lower Zone, between heaven and the Abyss. The other usage is when a spirit is not assigned a region, and is free to wander onto different spirit worlds (where there is no physical life).
Francisco (Chico) C. Xavier	A Brazilian medium, who psychographed more than 450 books, dictated to him by spirits. His spirit guide was Emmanuel. Chico Xavier was a Spiritist and did much to spread Spiritism throughout Brazil.
Heaven	Heaven, in Spiritist books, including mine, usually refers to the higher regions above the earth. There are different heavens around other planets for those souls who live there. Heaven is where people in physical bodies return to, if they have demonstrated love, kindness, fraternity, charity, and honesty toward their fellow humans. Being a member of any one type of religion or even a belief in God is not a requirement to ascend to heaven, according to Spiritism.
Hell	Called the “Abyss” or the “Dark Abyss” in the books by the spirit Andre Luiz

Term	Description
Incarnate	An incarnate is a spirit who is inhabits a physical body. The spirit can still roam in the spirit world during time of sleep.
Jesus	According to Spiritism - Jesus is the governor of Earth. It has been reported by Brazilian Spiritist that Jesus is also in charge of four other planets, one in the forming stage, one primitive, one a planet of atonement (Earth), one a planet of regeneration, and one a happy planet.

Term	Description
Joanna De Angelis	<p>The spirit Joanna dictated many books to Divaldo Franco. She had lived many times on earth. Her first incarnation (that which was told to us by the spirit world) was as Joanna the wife of Cruz (as noted in the New Testament) in the first century during the time of Christ. We are told she dedicated her life with much love to the Gospel and her son. She died when she was burned alive next to her son and other Christians in the Roman coliseum.</p> <p>She was also known as Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, She was the greatest poet in the Spanish speaking world. She was born on Nov. 13, 1651 and died on March 17, 1695, She was also very competent in Theology, Medicine, Canonical Law and Astronomy.</p>
Levels of Heaven	<p>As Jesus said in the New Testament, “My mansion has many rooms”, there are many levels of heaven. As one increases their spiritual and intellectual ability one graduates from a lower level to the next higher level. In the book, <i>Beyond the Veil</i> , a numbering system is used. Level 1 being the lowest. Spirits have said they are using that system just for convenience sake, as a tool to explain the demarcations of heaven for us here on earth.</p>

Term	Description
Lower Zone	Also called the Umbral in Portuguese, which you may find in some of the English translations of Chico Xavier's book. The Lower Zone is the area at the surface of the earth and slightly above it where spirits who haven't yet released their ties to material goods on earth and/or have not yet accepted the need for love and fraternity toward all humans. All will eventually rise to heaven, but it may take multiple lifetimes.
NDE	Near Death Experience – People who have had NDEs are those whose were close to or in an actual death state.
Nosso Lar	The first book dictated to Francisco (Chico) C. Xavier by the spirit Andre Luiz. A movie was made using the first book (of the same name) by the spirit author Andre Luiz. It is called Nosso Lar, or Celestial City. The movie is in Portuguese with English subtitles. I highly recommend this movie, excellent production values and true to the Doctrine of Spiritism.
OBE	Out of Body Experience – This includes people who were not classified as being in a near or at a state of death, but still were transported into another plane.

Term	Description
Perispirit	Connects the spirit to the physical body. You are composed to three key items – Your spirit (which is immortal), perispirit (which is the link between the spirit and the physical body), and your physical body (which is mortal and will be destroyed after each life).
Reincarnation	Reincarnation is the concept whereby a spirit, the entire personality and character, is deposited into a physical body. According to Spiritism, when a spirit is place inside a physical body, they retain their basic character (which gets revealed around the age of 15 to 18), but they do not have any memories of past lives. This is for the purpose of allowing that spirit to learn the lessons assigned to them. Incarnates (spirits in physical bodies) do retain their conscience – the mechanism to determine right from wrong – and their instinct. Once a spirit sheds their physical body, at the proper time their memories return.
Rev. G. Vale Owen	An English Rev. in the Anglican Church. He received messages from the spirit realm in the 1910s and 20s. Four of his books are in the compilation book, <i>Beyond the Veil</i>

Term	Description
Spirit / Soul	I use the word interchangeably – but I do realize that many do not. For simplicity sake I use spirit to denote all of us, we all have or are spirits and we all have a soul. For those not on a physical plane I will put either their name or put “spirit” before their name to denote they currently reside in the spirit world.
Spirit World, Spirit Realm	The spirit world was created before our physical universe. We come from and shall return to the spirit realm. The world of spirits is where we shall spend the vast majority of our eternal life.
Spiritism, Christian Spiritism	A Doctrine codified by Allan Kardec in the 1850s, revealed to the world by the Spirit of Truth, as promised in the New Testament (John 14:15-17, 26). Spiritism follows the precepts of Christianity and updates them with new revelations from the spirit world.
Umbral	Also called the Lower Zone in English. The Lower Zone is the area at the surface of the earth and slightly above it where spirits who haven't yet released their ties to material goods on earth and/or have not yet accepted the need for love and fraternity toward all humans. All will eventually rise to heaven, but it may take multiple lifetimes.

Term	Description
Universal Fluid	From this, flows all forms of matter. It is the basis for everything in the spirit and physical universes.
Yvonne Perreira	A Brazilian medium who psychographed books from spirits. She has many books published in Portuguese. Presently there are two books translated in English

[Your Exploration Continues . . .](#)

Learn more about Spiritism in my blog at: <http://www.nwspiritism.com> .

To assist you in understanding more about Spiritism, I have twelve other books to support you in your spiritual exploration:

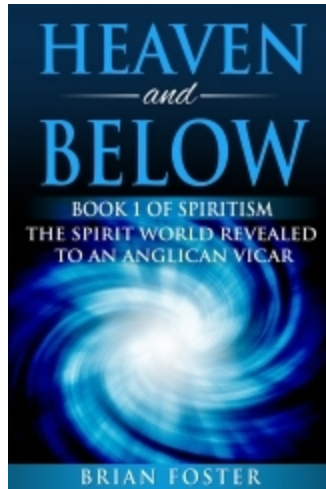
- Heaven and Below – Book 1 of Spiritism - The Spirit World Revealed to a Anglican Vicar
- Spirits and the Spirit Universe – Book 2 of Spiritism - The Spirit World Revealed to a Anglican Vicar
- How we are Guided by Spirits – Book 3 of Spiritism - The Spirit World Revealed to a Anglican Vicar
- Spiritism 101 – The Third Revelation
- The Spirit World Talks to Us
- 7 Tenets of Spiritism – How They Impact Your Daily Life
- Explore Your Destiny – Since Your Life’s Path is (mostly) Predetermined
- The Case for Reincarnation – Your Path to Perfection
- 51 Disclosures from Spiritism – The 3rd Revelation
- What Really Happens During Near Death Experiences According to Spiritism – 12 NDEs Explained and Explored

- The Problem is the Solution
- Spiritism - Everything is Connected

Below are brief introductions to all my books concerning Spiritism.



Heaven and Below – Book 1



This book covers communications that pertain to three main themes:

- Life in heaven
- Lower regions
- Appearances of Jesus in the spirit realm

Many religions offer pictures of life after our spirit leaves our physical body. Most descriptions are hazy and prone to numerous interpretations. Spiritism, via communication from spirits who have been selected by high-level spirits, supplies us with real and actionable knowledge. Revelations in Spiritist literature presents an exciting picture of the bands of heaven and life therein. While a fuller explanation is extended about aspects of life and the organization of the regions below heaven.



Spirits and the Spirit Universe – Book 2



This book covers communications to the Rev. G. Val Owen that pertain to five main themes:

- Spirit Education – Lower levels of heaven
- Spirit Education – Higher levels of heaven
- Spirit Attributes
- Power of Spirits
- Knowledge of the Universe(s)

Imagine a fantasy world where, if you apply yourself, you can travel from sphere to higher sphere, accumulating new attributes and powers after graduating from each level. Nothing could stop you, for there are no limits, promotion is based solely on merit. Within each stage your mind is fully engaged in comprehending the most extraordinary knowledge; all within an atmosphere of supportive and congenial friends. If this sounds like heaven to you, then you are correct – it is heaven.



How we are Guided by Spirits – Book 3



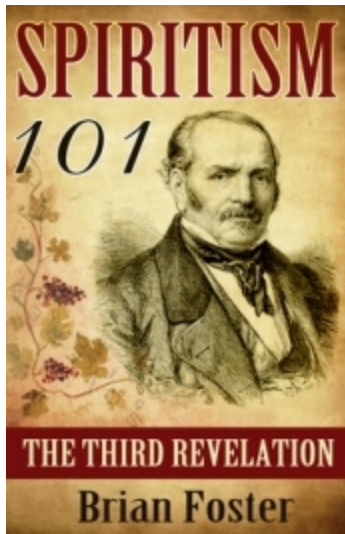
This book covers communications to the Rev. G. Vale Owen that pertain to three main themes:

- Guiding humans on earth
- Spirit assistance
- Future events

Book 3 illustrates the ground game of the spirit world. Via the messages of multiple spirits to the Rev. G. Vale Owen we are presented examples of how the spirit realm above us peers down upon their unruly students. The process of tracking and modifying behavior on an individual and a collective basis is revealed. Even the broader direction of human society in the future is posted for all to see.



Spiritism 101 – The Third Revelation



Something wonderful has happened. It occurred in the middle of the 1800's and it caught the attention of the world. It grew quickly in popularity, so fast that many in positions of power went on a crusade to stamp it out.

Why? Because it provided answers to questions that we all have been searching for. Questions that have been posed by philosophers since the beginning of time were asked and the results fully described.

Like other messages of love, charity and fraternity before; this one was met with strong opposition. Ideas are hard to stamp out and this one is growing again. The world is re-awakening to Spiritism.

Learn what Spiritism is and how it can positively shape your life and happiness. Available at Amazon Kindle for \$0.99, and in paperback - [*Spiritism 101 – The Third Revelation*](#)



The Spirit World Talks to Us

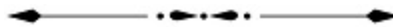


The spirit world is talking to us ... each and every one of us. Most of us are unaware of the subtle signals and soft voices that draw us to listen to our conscience. But they are there, ever hopeful that we may discover the truth about our sojourn on this blue planet.

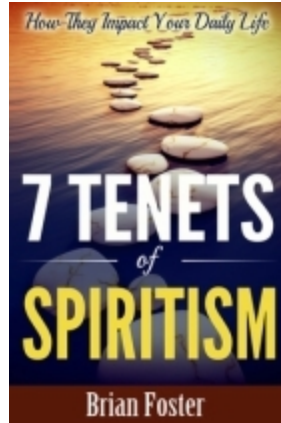
The experiences reviewed in this book layout exciting disclosures about the spirit world and ours. We are told about heaven, the different spiritual zones around the earth; how karma is real and why we need multiple lives to learn to become a person who radiates love in all circumstances. We learn that the concept of time is different in the spirit universe and about the basic building blocks of all matter.

In essence, the inquiries that you have had since you began questioning your place in this universe are answered by spirits interacting with the chosen few.

Learn what the spirit world is telling us. – [The Spirit World Talks to Us](#)



7 Tenets of Spiritism – How They Impact Your Daily Life



I explore each of the seven tenets and how they have personally affected me and those around me. Giving yourself the seven tenets could be the best present of your life.

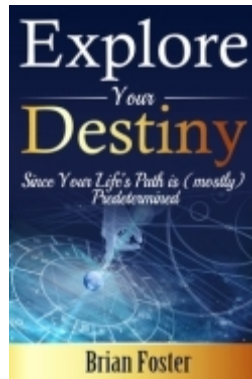
The 7 Tenets of Spiritism:

1. We are Immortal Souls
2. God and Jesus Love Us
3. We have Multiple Lives
4. During our Lives We Pay for Past Debts and Accumulate New Experiences
5. We Live and Learn in Close Family Groups
6. Our Destiny is Mostly Predetermined
7. We are Assisted in our Lives by Unseen Spirit Forces

Available at Amazon Kindle and in paperback, at [7 Tenets of Spiritism – How They Impact Your Daily Life](#).



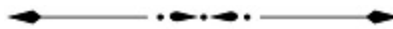
**Explore Your Destiny – Since Your Life’s Path is (mostly)
Predetermined**



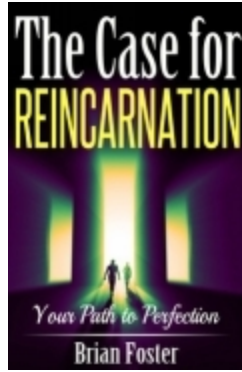
Explore Your Destiny is divided into four sections. Each section supplies one more piece of the puzzle for you to place, so you can look at your life's arc with new insights.

1. Why – Why are we here and why must we live what we are living through right now?
2. When – In what period along your souls timeline is all of this happening? Knowing your relative position in the path to perfection will guide you to understanding your current life.
3. How – How does all of this occur? How does the entire process affect your destiny and actions? What are the rules of the game?
4. Where – Where is this world that plans our destiny? Are there good places to be and are there bad?

[Explore Your Destiny – Since Your Life's Path is \(mostly\) Predetermined](#).



The Case for Reincarnation – Your Path to Perfection



There is a realm, a universe greater than ours and it is filled with intelligences that we can only wonder at. There are spirits around the earth who are actively helping and guiding us in our planning and during our actual incarnations.

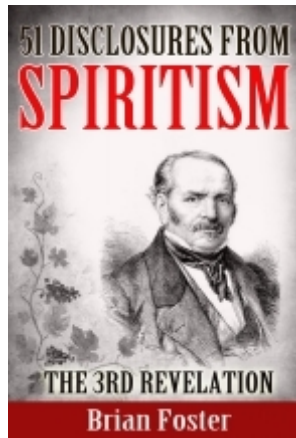
This book is here to answer your questions;

1. Why do we reincarnate?
2. How does the process work?
3. How many reincarnations must we have?
4. What memories do we retain from our previous lives?
5. Do we have control over our reincarnations?
6. Why must we suffer?
7. How may I insure my next life is better?
8. How may I progress to being a perfected spirit?

[The Case for Reincarnation – Your Path to Perfection](#)



51 Disclosures from Spiritism – The 3rd Revelation



Spiritism has been presented to humankind for one reason, to enlighten us. To let us know the answers to questions that everyone has had since we started thinking about our place on earth, our destiny, why we are here, and is there life after death.

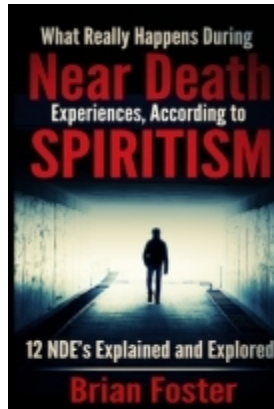
This book is divided into four sections, each categorizing a theme for the type of discoveries that you will make as you read:

- Ourselves – What are we, why are we here, what do we have to do, what is our goal?
- Spirit Realm – What is it, where is it, how does it work?
- How to Ascend – What is the path to ascension, what is important to learn, why we must grow?
- Prophecies – What do some past prophecies actually mean, what will happen to the world, how will it happen?

Learn what has been presented to the world, read the book, [51 Disclosures from Spiritism – The 3rd Revelation](#).



**What Really Happens During Near Death Experiences,
According to Spiritism**



Why are we interested in Near Death Experiences (NDE)? With the advent of the internet, social media allows masses of people to more efficiently pool together shared experiences than at any other time in history.

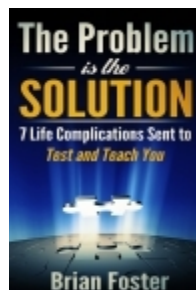
Recollections from every country, culture, language and age group now reside in the great internet cloud. A mountain of data, which can no longer be wished away or ignored. The parallels and common themes from all corners of the world preclude everyone's account to be merely mass hysteria.

Spiritism explains why each person was chosen for their experience and what was presented to them. Find out what they were expected to learn from their life changing event.

[What Really Happens During Near Death Experiences – 12 NDEs Explained and Explored is available at Amazon.](#)



The Problem is the Solution



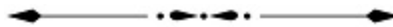
This book is different. Not that the others are bad or useless. Just that this book is different. It rests on an altered premise; life is a planned series of trials.

In this book you will learn to analyze why are you experiencing, or have been through, the following types of events:

1. Financial problems
2. Failed relationship(s) / marriage(s)
3. Family problems
4. Illnesses – physical and mental
5. Career setbacks
6. Addiction
7. Stress

And in doing so, you shall be able to make the first step in analyzing what you should have learned and how it will make you a better person.

*The Problem is the Solution – 7 Life Complications Sent to Test and Teach
You*



Spiritism – Everything is Connected



This book presents information about Spiritism and how our lives are tethered to the spirit world and everyone else on this planet. I have divided my essays into three categories:

- What is Spiritism
- How the Spirit World Guides the Earth
- How the Spirit Realm Assists Us

All are interrelated. There are no hard dividing lines where our lives are unaffected by spirits around us. We literally walk in a sea of spirits. We hear and are unconsciously directed by suggestions from spirits. All types of spirits. Good, bad, indifferent, and foolish spirits.

Buy [*Spiritism – Everything is Connected*](#) at Amazon.



Author

Stay in touch with the author via:

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If you liked *How to Live – Inner Peace through Spiritism* , please post a review at Amazon.



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