

THE BIG IDEAS

Being in Integrity
Live unapologetically.

Blink!
And lighten up!

The Voice
That keeps knocking.

Replicate Yourself
Not someone else.

Go For the Light Inside
Not your name in lights.

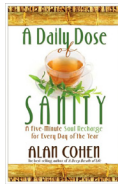
Inner Fan Clubs
vs. Inner critics.

Angry?
What are you afraid of?

Mastering Love
Starts within.

Riddikulus!
Boggarts begone!

Bamboo & You
Embrace the seasons and grow.



A Daily Dose of Sanity

A Five-Minute Soul Recharge for Every Day of the Year

BY ALAN COHEN · HAY HOUSE © 2010 · 384 PAGES

“Acts of genius are less a matter of doing, and more a matter of allowing. Less trying, more flowing. Less forcing, more being. You quit being the doer and you become the vessel.”

~ Alan Cohen from *A Daily Dose of Sanity*

This is the third Note on one of [Alan Cohen](#)'s books and it won't be the last.

As I've mentioned in the Notes on [Why Your Life Sucks \(and What You Can Do About It\)](#) and [Relax into Wealth](#), Alan has become one of my favorite writers and people!

He's awesome. And so are his books.

This one, [A Daily Dose of Sanity](#), is precisely what the sub-title promises: “*A Five-Minute Soul Recharge for Every Day of the Year.*”

If you're into more wisdom and less time you'll love the book. (Amazon it [here.](#))

For now, let's jump in with a quick peek at a few of my favorite Big Ideas!

BEING IN INTEGRITY

“I have a very simple definition of integrity: you are in integrity when what you are doing on the outside matches who you are on the inside. I respect people who live unapologetically. I know people who do things I do not agree with or would not do myself, but I honor them for being 100 percent who they are. They are in integrity.”

Are you integrity?

Does what you are doing on the outside match who you are on the inside?

If not, what can you do to get in integrity?

As you ponder that, keep this wisdom from Alan in mind: “The secret of success is to be total. If you are going to do something, really do it. Do not second-guess yourself, let guilt undermine your joy, or wonder if you should be somewhere else. Either do it with a whole heart or do not do it. Be total.”

[Osho](#) has some *great* wisdom about being “total” as well.

See the Notes on [The Book of Understanding](#) where he tells us: “When you are total, it is good; and when you are divided, it is evil. Divided you suffer; united, you dance, you sing, you celebrate.”

And: “It is not a question of which part you follow, it is a question of whether you go totally into it or not. To be total in your action brings joy. Even an ordinary, trivial action done with total intensity brings a glow to your being, a fulfillment, a fullness, a deep contentment. And anything done halfheartedly, however good the thing may be, is going to bring misery.”

[Buddha](#) echoes this goodness. He tells us: “If anything is worth doing, do it with all your heart.”

“Consider a question you are wondering about. If you knew the answer, what would it be?”

~ Alan Cohen

Back to you.

How are *you* living?

What can you do to become more “total”?!

BLINK!

“My friend Ernie and I were granted an audience with the revered Swami Satchidananda, an enlightened yogi who introduced spiritual practices to America beginning in the 1960s. He opened the legendary Woodstock music festival with his invocation. My friend and I were ushered to the swami’s inner chamber and seated before him. At that time, Ernie liked to make deep, heartfelt eye contact with people and he did his best to peer into the swami’s soul. After a few minutes of our conversation, the swami turned to me and asked, “Why is this guy staring at me?” We all broke into laughter, including the swami’s very serious disciples. It was truly a moment of enlightenment!”

That’s hilarious.

I don’t know about you, but the “unblinking ones” (as Alexandra and I like to call them) freak us out a bit. :)

I’m all about intimacy but, as Michaela Boehm describes in her Art of Intimacy class at the en*theos Academy, locking someone into your penetrating, unblinking gaze isn’t intimacy—it’s more like walking up to someone you’ve never met and shoving your hands in their pants.

True intimacy involves respecting social norms and healthy boundaries while allowing a true connection to form over time rather than trying to prove your spiritual superiority through unblinking stares.

Ah...

Glad I got that off my chest. :)

Here’s to blinking normally and not taking ourselves *that* seriously as we lighten up and enjoy the ride!

P.S. [Swami Satchidananda](#) is amazing. Check out the Notes on [The Golden Present](#) for some of his wisdom goodness!

THE VOICE THAT KEEPS KNOCKING

*“God is a circle of which
the center is everywhere
and the circumference is
nowhere.”*

~ Attributed to Empedocles

“The difference between those who move the world forward and those who stay stuck in a rut is that the world movers trust the voice that keeps knocking, and they act on it. You can and will be among the movers if you listen to the persistent call of greatness and move with it.”

We all have a little voice that comes knocking. The question is, will we answer it?

Here’s how [Joseph Campbell](#) puts it: “*To refuse the call means stagnation. What you don’t experience positively you will experience negatively.*”

And, Jesus says this: “*If you bring forth what is inside you, what you bring forth will save you. If you don’t bring forth what is inside you, what you don’t bring forth will destroy you.*”

* knock knock *

...Hear that sound?

It’s your destiny calling.

Time to answer. :)

"When you discover your mission, you will feel its demand. It will fill you with enthusiasm and a burning desire to get to work on it."

~ W. Clement Stone

REPLICATE YOURSELF

"My friend Ben admired his spiritual mentor so much that he took a summer to live and study with the master at his retreat in the Northwest. One day Ben asked his teacher, "How can I be more like you?"

The healer smiled and answered, "The best way to be more like me is to be more like yourself."

This brilliant answer contains the wisdom of a lifetime! If you are trying to imitate someone else's greatness, you have missed the point of greatness. The secret is to find your own unique style and talents and bring them forth. No one has ever attained mastery by replicating another. The truly great simply replicate themselves."

Amen to that.

Emerson comes to mind. And so does [Leo Buscaglia](#).

In his must-read classic, *Self-Reliance*, which is pretty much an ode to this Big Idea, [Emerson](#) tells us: "*Insist on yourself; never imitate. Your own gift you can present every moment with the cumulative force of a whole life's cultivation; but of the adopted talent of another, you have only an extemporaneous, half possession. That which each can do best, none but his Maker can teach him. No man yet knows what it is, nor can, till that person has exhibited it. Where is the master who could have taught Shakespeare? Where is the master who could have instructed Franklin, or Washington, or Bacon, or Newton? Every great man is a unique. The Scipionism of Scipio is precisely that part he could not borrow. Shakespeare will never be made by the study of Shakespeare. Do that which is assigned to you, and you cannot hope too much or dare too much.*"

—> *Insist on yourself! Never imitate!!*

—> *Do that which is assigned to you, and you cannot hope too much or dare too much.*

Wow.

[Leo Buscaglia](#) (see Notes on [Love](#)) puts it this way: "*You are the best you. You will always be the second best anyone else.*"

Are you in integrity?

Being total?

Replicating yourself?

How can you be all of those things *even* more powerfully?!

(And, as always, is NOW a good time to make that happen? :)

GO FOR THE LIGHT INSIDE

"When asked how to remain an individual in the face of great commercialism, Bradbury suggested, "You just live your life and write your stories. If you set out to write a bestseller, it can't be done.... People who try to make a name for themselves are usually surpassed by people authentically expressing their joy and talents."

Those who live to see their name in lights usually miss the light within themselves. They place fame and glory at the top of the ladder of success and overlook personal satisfaction and creative expression. People who sweat to become stars rarely do, while those who live to share their gifts and enjoy the ride often find their way to the upper echelons of success."

This is amazing: "*Those who live to see their name in lights usually miss the light within themselves.*"

"If you are struggling, stop and ask yourself how you would proceed if you made creative self-expression the platform for your vocation rather than ambition for glory."

~ Alan Cohen

Fact is, when you obsess about achieving some extraordinary level of fame or power or whatever, you're less likely to get it.

AND...

Perhaps most tragically, you're also less likely to ever discover and live with abiding happiness.

It's the whole intrinsic vs. extrinsic dealio we come back to again and again.

Science **unequivocally** shows us that those who go after the fame/wealth/beauty and other EXTERNAL markers of success are significantly less psychologically stable than those who focus on deeper relationships, personal growth, making a contribution and simply expressing themselves authentically—the INTRINSIC stuff we want to pay attention to that leads to fulfilment.

Yah?

So, where are you putting all your precious energy?

P.S. This wisdom from Howard Thurman is good to keep in mind as well: *"Don't ask yourself what the world needs. Ask yourself what makes you come alive and then go do that. Because what the world needs is people who have come alive."*

INNER CRITICS & INNER FAN CLUBS

"Fire your inner critic and reinstate your inner fan club."

Love that.

Time for a little role playing...

::

You: "Inner critic?"

Your Inner Critic: "Yes?"

You: * Insert Trump cobra-like hand gesture *

—> "You're fired."

::

With that out of the way, it's time to promote your inner fan club to the most important job in your head!

ANGRY? WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF?

"Anger is fear under pressure. Behind every angry upset there is a fear. If you attempt to deal with anger at the level of anger alone—by either venting it or repressing it—you are manipulating the symptom without addressing the cause. If you can discover the fear behind the anger and dismantle it in the light of awareness, the anger dissipates. The next time you are angry, ask yourself, What am I afraid of?"

That's powerful.

To repeat: *"Anger is fear under pressure."*

Are you a tad angry these days?

What are you afraid of?

Odds are the inner critic is running the show and creating compelling visuals of all the things that will go wrong in your life. That fear bubbles up in anger (usually about something unrelated

*"Choose to live, rather than
study how to live."*

~ Alan Cohen

to whatever it is you're supposedly so upset about).

So...

Next time you're feeling angry, check in and see if you can identify what you're afraid of.

As Alan so wisely tells us, if we can *"discover the fear behind the anger and dismantle it in the light of awareness, the anger dissipates."*

MASTERING LOVE

"Psychic self-injury is neither heroic nor practical. You cannot say that you have mastered love until you include yourself in its embrace. If you make everyone in your life happy but yourself, you have missed the point of living and loving. Self-honoring is the beginning of true service. When you practice self-nurturing, others around you will catch the energy and you will create a wave of well-being that far supersedes the illusory benefits of self-sacrifice.

Do not do anything to yourself that you would not wish on anyone else. Instead, do everything for yourself that you would do to make others happy ... and the world will be a happier place for everyone."

Reminds me of [Ayn Rand](#)'s gem that we cannot say "I love you" until we can say the "I."

As Alan so beautifully shares, love starts within.

[Tal Ben-Shahar](#) echoes this wisdom in his great book [The Pursuit of Perfect](#) (see Notes) where he tells us: *"Why the double standard, the generosity toward our neighbor and the miserliness where we ourselves are concerned? And so I propose that we add a new rule, which we can call the Platinum Rule, to our moral code: 'Do not do unto yourself what you would not do unto others.'"*

I love that.

—> The Platinum Rule: *"Do not do unto yourself what you would not do unto others."*

Tal also tells us: *"When the Dalai Lama was then asked to clarify whether indeed the object of compassion may be the self, he responded: 'Yourself first, and then in a more advanced way the aspiration will embrace others. In a way, high levels of compassion are nothing but an advanced state of that self-interest. That's why it is hard for people who have a strong sense of self-hatred to have genuine compassion toward others. There is no anchor, no basis to start from.'"*

Here's to including ourselves in our loving embrace and remembering to rock The Platinum Rule as we remember to love ourselves first!!

P.S. How can you do that a little more today? (And tomorrow? And... :)

RIDDIKULUS!

"The film *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban* depicts a group of young wizards in training standing before an imposing armoire—a boggart box—which contains terrifying shape-shifters assuming the form of whatever a person fears the most. Luckily, instructs Professor Lupin, a very simple charm exists to repel a boggart: "Riddikulus!" After the students practice the chant, the professor explains that what really finishes a boggart off is laughter. One by one the boggarts come forth, and when the students proclaim them "Riddikulus!" and laugh at them, they shrink to humorous, nonthreatening forms.

A truer teaching was never revealed."

That. Is. Awesome.

Are you getting all freaked out by boggarts?

Time to grab your wand and get your inner wizard on with your “Riddikulus!” charm, eh? :)

Seriously.

Try it the next time you’re getting harassed by your inner gremlins.

BAMBOO & YOU

“The record books never list
the score at halftime.”

~ Source Unknown

“Bamboo is a fascinating plant, the fastest growing in the world. A bamboo stalk can grow six inches or more in one day! I know a fellow who swore he actually saw it growing.

One of the clever adaptive qualities of bamboo is that it grows its leaves in the summer and its roots in the winter. It takes advantage of each season, and while it appears dormant, it is not. The roots grown in winter prepare for rapid branch and leaf development in summer.

We, too, go through seasons, all of which afford us opportunities for different kinds of growth. In a prosperous economic season, there is a lot of building and external expansion. When an economic winter comes, with little activity in the outer world, that is the time for inner deepening.”

Are you going through a challenging time?

If so, remember that we all go through seasons and be like the bamboo and take advantage of every season as you develop your roots and get ready for your next phase of rockin’ it!!

B

Brian Johnson,
Chief Philosopher

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[A Joseph Campbell
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[Love](#)

[The Pursuit of Perfect](#)

About the Author of “A Daily Dose of Sanity”

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Alan H. Cohen is the author of 18 popular inspirational titles, including *The Dragon Doesn’t Live Here Anymore* and *Dare to be Yourself*. A frequent guest on television and radio, he conducts life mastery seminars in Hawaii and on-line, and is an acclaimed keynote speaker for educational, health, church, and corporate groups. He lives on Maui, Hawaii. Visit www.alancohen.com to learn more. (from Amazon)

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Brian Johnson loves helping people optimize their lives as he studies, embodies and teaches the fundamentals of optimal living—integrating ancient wisdom + modern science + common sense + virtue + mastery + fun. Learn more and optimize your life at brianjohnson.me.