

THE BIG IDEAS

Our Minds:

A mad, drunk, jumping monkey.

The Sovereign Agent

The beholding mind.

Wayfarers on the Way

... To self-discovery.

Oh! You Like This??

I'll give you more than. :)

What Others Think

Ignore it.

Divine Being

points at you

Overconcern

For a suffering world.

Hypnotist

Be your own.

Food for the Spirit

Yummy!

Find Your Center

... And walk on.

It Has Happened!

Let it be!

Walk after the Spirit

That's the path.



Take Off From Within

BY ERVIN SEALE · DEVORSS & COMPANY © 1993 · 120 PAGES

“If it is true that as a man thinks so is he, then thinking is the most consequential activity of a human being. In these pages I have tried to recall to mind and present anew some of the tools of the trade whereby one may become a better craftsman in the production of health and happiness.”

~ Ervin Seale from *Take Off From Within*

I don't remember exactly how I got turned on to this little gem of a book (I went on a little old school New Thought binge awhile ago) but I'm glad I did!

[Ervin Seale](#) was a leading New Thought minister who, for 32 years, addressed a large audience at Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall and Lincoln Center in New York City.

He's in the same genre/lineage as an Ernest Holmes, Louise Hay, James Allen and this book is a slim 120 pages. Easy read. Lotsa mojo. Highly recommended if you're into this kinda thing. :)

OUR MINDS: A MAD, DRUNK, JUMPING MONKEY

“Many centuries ago, Oriental thinkers recognized that the mind is a constant mover and that it is next to impossible to stop it altogether. But one can learn to manage it by skillful use of the handle of control. They compared the mind to a jumping monkey. To intensify the image, they added that the monkey was maddened; then someone got him drunk; and finally, a scorpion bit him.”

Hah! How's that for an image of our minds?

First: Get a jumping monkey. Then make him mad. Then drunk. Then get a scorpion to bite him.

That little mad, drunk, jumping, scorpion-stung monkey running your life these days?

If so, time to get it tamed, eh? :)

THE SOVEREIGN AGENT

“Not people or events, but the beholding mind, is the sovereign agent in all human experience. See this until it becomes an absolute with you, and then you will have power—you will not give your power away to people and events and things. In every distressing situation, as soon as the mind retires within itself and anchors itself to a few principles like this and returns to equanimity and harmony, it has the distressing situation within its power.”

EVERY single teacher we profile says the SAME thing on this subject.

I like to repeat these because repetition is the mother of genius. So, here we go:

[Marcus Aurelius](#) (see Notes on [Meditations](#)): “If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself but to your own estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.” Another Stoic philosopher, [Epictetus](#) (see Notes on [Enchiridion](#)): “We cannot choose our external circumstances, but we can always choose how we respond to them.”

“It is what you think of this situation that governs you and not the situation itself. Causation is always in mind and not in things.”

~ Ervin Seale

"Underlying this weakness is the too strong belief that events are causative and not enough awareness that the soul is the arbiter of destiny."

~ Ervin Seale

[Eckhart Tolle](#) (see Notes on [A New Earth](#)): "The primary cause of unhappiness is never the situation but your thoughts about the situation."

Shakespeare (*Hamlet*): "There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so."

[Viktor Frankl](#) (see Notes on [Man's Search for Meaning](#)): "Everything can be taken from a man but one thing; the last of the human freedoms - to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way."

We've GOTTA (!!!) get this idea.

It's literally the key that unlocks the door to happiness. The moment we live from the understanding that NOTHING outside us has ANY power over us, we're free. We're free to choose our response. And THAT is true power.

Of course, it's *really* easy to keep on blaming everything outside ourselves but it's time to build some new habits.

Next time you find yourself distressed by anything, take a moment and ask yourself if there's a more empowered way to respond. Make it a game. Alchemize every challenge into an opportunity to embrace life, grow, and expand into an abiding state of joy.

WAYFARERS ON THE WAY TO SELF-DISCOVERY

"If you understand that all men are wayfarers on the way to self-discovery, you will not be incensed that some men live beneath themselves, including yourself sometimes."

Love that.

We're all just taking the next step in our journey of self-discovery. When we *really* appreciate that, we can ease up on our judgments, become a lot more playful and a lot more fun to be around!

Seale continues: "The discerning mind will first of all have kindness for itself, and then it cannot be unkind to anyone either in thought or act."

Amen.

Let's develop that kindness for ourselves and project that light into the world! :)

OH! YOU LIKE THIS??

"Keep any description of trouble or sickness or error minimal, for there is something inside which is listening, and it says, 'Oh! You like this! I will make you a lot more of it.'"

Do you complain a lot? Do you criticize and blame a lot, too?

Icky.

Be careful because there's something weird that goes on when you do that.

Not only are you just NOT pleasant to be around (which will repel people from supporting you in the way you'd like in and of itself), but there's something else going on. Call it the Law of Attraction or whatever you want (and see all my Notes on Abraham-Hicks for more), but know that you attract that which you think about most of the time.

So, if you don't want all the stuff you're complaining about, STOP making it such a big part of your consciousness!!!

Start talking about the beauty you see and the wonderful people and events in your life and groove your brain to THAT tune. And see more of that goodness show up in your life! :)

"The unorganized mind will always be restless until its content is reordered."

~ Ervin Seale

*"You were born to succeed
because you come of a
divine source."*

~ Ervin Seale

CARING WHAT OTHER PEEPS THINK

"There is one recurring, persistent, perennial, and dogging personal problem which, more than any other, steals the force and peace of people and ruins projects and enterprises and careers. It is the habit of feeling hurt because of what others do or do not do and what they say or do not say."

Ah, worrying about what other people think of us.

If there's one guaranteed way to make sure we feel up and down and up and down, this might be the PERFECT way to get there: Just make sure that your well-being is totally tied to what other people think of you! :)

And, if you want an equally fool proof way to feel great, get independent of the good or bad opinion of others. Just be you. All of you. Release all the restrictions. Become independent of the opinions of others and go ahead and rock your life.

Terry Cole Whitaker wrote a book called, "*What You Think of Me Is None of My Business.*" Hah. That's classic. Imagine living with THAT attitude. (Then do it. :)

[Marcus Aurelius](#) says: "*The approval of such men, who do not even stand well in their own eyes, has no value for him.*" In other words, why in the world would I care what someone thinks of me when they don't even like THEMSELVES?!?! That's INSANE.

The fact is that you can be the SAME EXACT person one day to the next day and get two TOTALLY different responses from the same person. Why is that? Because their opinion of you says more about THEM than it does about YOU. If they're having a great day and are rested and feeling the mojo, then you'll prolly look great in their eyes and get treated nicely, complimented and all that jazz. If, on the other hand, they're feeling cranky, didn't get a good night sleep, are stressed at work, whatever, guess what? They might just be a little pissy toward you. And, ultimately, that has nothing to do with you.

So, remember that what people think of you is none of your business, get independent of the good or bad opinion of others and enjoy authentically being your radiant self. :)

A DIVINELY GENERATED BEING

"One can never love himself as he ought until he esteems himself in terms of his spiritual heritage—a divinely generated being, destined to win, to achieve, and to express the nature of his source. As water rises no higher than the level of its source, so a man can rise no higher than his personal estimate of his source."

Amen. Do you embrace *your* spiritual heritage?!?

As [Wayne Dyer](#) says, we're not human beings having a spiritual experience, we're spiritual beings having a human experience.

Let's become more and more aware of our divine heritage and live from that place of knowing!

OVERCONCERN FOR A SUFFERING WORLD

"Overconcern for a suffering world is often a projection of one's own need. And many a needy one has helped himself by helping others. Some have become ineffectual nuisances because they did not realize that the main business of living is individual growth, the seeking of the kingdom of heaven which is within. Let one take care of what has been given him—his thoughts, sensations, faculties, and he will be the best of all help to his fellow men. Of all the people I know who are serving society, those who are making the greatest contributions in alleviating human ills and wants are those who have themselves in hand."

Powerful. You want to make a positive impact on the world?!? Awesome. Me, too.

*"As Gandhi once said,
'Renounce the world,
then take it back again on
other terms.'"*

~ Ervin Seale

"Nature obeys us in proportion as we first obey nature."

~ Ervin Seale

But do you find yourself constantly talking about the suffering in the world? If so, go grab a mirror and ask if there is some stuff within YOURSELF that really needs to be addressed that you're projecting into the world.

As [Byron Katie](#) says (see Notes on [Loving What Is](#)): "Since the beginning of time, people have been trying to change the world so that they can be happy. This hasn't ever worked, because it approaches the problem backward. What *The Work* gives us is a way to change the projector—mind—rather than the projected. It's like when there's a piece of lint on a projector's lens. We think there's a flaw on the screen, and we try to change this person and that person, whomever the flaw appears on next. But it's futile to try to change the projected images. Once we realize where the lint is, we can clear the lens itself. This is the end of suffering, and the beginning of a little joy in paradise."

Yes, the world's got challenges and yes, it's our natural calling to want to shine our light brightly to inspire and empower those around us. AND, the world's more amazing than it's EVER been. BY FAR. If we're caught up exclusively in all the negative stuff, that's a really good sign we might be projecting our own issues.

You can only see that which you are and you can only give that which you have. So, if you REALLY want to give, know (!) that the way to truly serve is to discover the kingdom of heaven with you and live from a deep place of integration and power. Fun. :)

"It is not what is happening to you but rather what is happening in you that determines whether you succeed or fail."

~ Ervin Seale

OUR OWN ENLIGHTENED HYPNOTIST

"This mental work has to be done repeatedly. We have to be our own enlightened hypnotist, or else the 'racial' mind will hypnotize us according to its beliefs."

[Maxwell Maltz](#) says something similar in his great book [Psycho-Cybernetics](#) (see Notes): "It is no exaggeration to say that every human being is hypnotized to some extent, either by ideas he has uncritically accepted from others, or ideas he has repeated to himself or convinced himself are true. These negative ideas have exactly the same effect upon our behavior as the negative ideas implanted into the mind of a hypnotized subject by a professional hypnotist."

We talk about hypnotism a bit in the Note on [Psycho-Cybernetics](#). It's pretty amazing. You can take a champion weight lifter and, under hypnosis, convince him that he's not strong enough to pick up a pencil and voilà! The pencil is way too heavy to life.

Applied kinesiology is another way to look at the subtle impacts of hypnosis. Someone's strength will drop simply by saying, "I hate myself" or imagining a time when they felt frightened. Conversely, if you say, "I LOVE MYSELF!" and imagine a time when you felt most confident, loved and radiantly alive, you will, in that moment, gain strength. Amazing.

Our mind works in mysterious (!) ways and we wanna be diligent in programming ourselves consciously, yo! :)

"When we are not Self-conscious, we are self-conscious."

~ Ervin Seale

FOOD FOR THE SPIRIT

"The mind, with its emotions, is composed of ideas and impressions, and it is healthy and vital when it is continually replenished with inspiration, confidence, hope, wisdom, and understanding. No man lives long without food of the spirit."

You eat every day? Me, too. We wouldn't live long without food, eh? Miss a day or two or three and, unless you're consciously fasting and chillaxing, you're gonna get lethargic and fatigued. Go a little longer and you're gonna start getting all Gandhi-emaciated like. Keep on going and, well, you're dead.

So, our bodies need food. Pretty simple. Well, NEWSFLASH: so do our SOULS! Sure, our physical bodies will continue to cruise around and go through the motions of daily life, but if

"The event has happened. Be willing to have it so. There are an awful lot of folk who resent the event after it has happened, and that means they are keeping it alive. To resent means 'to feel again.'"

~ Ervin Seale

"There are none so tense as those who try to be outwardly perfect. There is great release in acknowledging your foibles and laughing at your mistakes."

~ Ervin Seale

"There is one power of causation and creation. It is consciousness."

~ Ervin Seale

we don't feed our souls, our soul-body's gonna get all emaciated and weak and light-headed. Thankfully, our soul doesn't just die from starvation, so we can always nurse it back to life!

How? Soak yourself in inspiration—from quiet time reading and meditating and journaling, to time in nature, with your loved ones and simply soaking in the beauty that is our life with a sense of love and appreciation from moment to moment to moment.

What do YOU do to feed your soul? Time to go on a shopping spree for some more yummy nutritious soul goodness?!? Get on that! :)

FIND YOUR CENTER AND WALK ON

"For them the counsel of William James is in order: 'Action and feelings go together. There's no more useful precept than that which bids us pay attention to what we do and express and not care too much for what we feel.' Don't wrestle with the bad feeling, don't fight the problem; do and act the best you know in spite of how you feel, and return to your center of inward sovereignty and walk on."

Genius.

This is a focus of [Dan Millman](#)'s philosophy (see Notes) which is influenced by [David Reynolds](#)' [Constructive Living](#) (see Notes).

The essence? Accept your feelings.

Then ask the question: "Now what needs to be done?"

Then, of course, just do it.

You're action and feelings go together! If you're feeling down, accept it then just do what needs to be done!!!! (And you'll find the negative clouds pass by. Trust me. Try it. :)

IT HAS HAPPENED! LET IT BE!

"It has happened! Let it be! So you made a mistake, you failed, you came short of your goal, you are chagrined, put out, embarrassed, or cast down. Beware of resenting any of those facts. There is an immediate release of tension when one admits that we all make mistakes and fail. But one should quickly match this admission with the knowledge that failure is not defeat. Our failures only indicate that we are trying for new summits of achievement, and if we are not failing we are not trying. It is not the individual failure that matters, but rather the overall progress. As the Chinese put it, 'The fault is not in falling down, it is in lying there.' There are none so tense as those who try to be outwardly perfect. There is great release in acknowledging your foibles and laughing at your mistakes."

Brilliant...

Are you replaying some event from your past again and again and again? And finding yourself either totally incapacitated or just not quite flowing as strongly as you could?

First, we need to get over ourselves. :)

As [Rumi](#) says, there's nothing worse than "this pretense of perfection."

There are NO perfect human beings and, hate to break it to you, you aren't gonna be the first. :)

When we embrace this FACT, we can LAUGH at ourselves. And, OMG, as a recovering need-to-be-perfect-or-else dood, I can speak to the joy and the freedom that comes by letting that go.

AND, know that the only reason we experience mini-failures is because we're challenging ourselves. We're playing at our edges. We have standards that we care about. That's GREAT! We just need to learn to EMBRACE the oopses rather than dwell on them.

*"Think on these absolutes
until the mind itself
becomes absolute and
ceases its debate."*

~ Ervin Seale

As I learn how to teach effectively, sometimes I'm *really* on and, well, sometimes I'm not. The other day in class I had one of those brain freeze moments (you know, where everything goes blank and then a gremlin comes on the air and says: "Wow. You sure are getting ready to *really* bomb this one. Go you!"). Yikes.

Anyhoo, recovered and had an OK class but what was cool was that not only didn't I beat myself up, I kinda laughed, totally realized it's all part of the process and remembered the SWEET Michael Jordan commercial where he says: "I've failed over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

Made me think about my favorite athletes and the fact that when they have a 4-19 shooting night or shoot 3 over par or whatever, they DON'T dwell on it. Imagine a professional athlete replaying their WORST performance in their mind OVER and OVER and OVER again. Not gonna happen. (Or they won't be a pro much longer.) They "Let it be."

And THAT is one of the primary reasons why they rock. How about you? Have you had an off-day/night lately that you need to "let be"? Now a good time to let it go? Sweet. :)

WALK AFTER THE SPIRIT

"To walk after the spirit means to listen and to believe that God does not mock when he sends us the heart's true desire. To walk after the spirit means to accept the desire as the promise of God, to believe that that which sends the desire will also send the fulfillment. Then, just as one was formerly compelled into anxiety and trouble, so he will now be compelled into peace and good fortune."

We talk about this theme a fair amount as well.

[Emerson](#) (see Notes) tells us that nature is not capricious—she doesn't play games—and that you'd only have the desire if you had the ability to manifest it. Goethe tells us that the desire foreshadows our abilities.

We've just gotta KNOW that a heartfelt desire is God's will. It's our job to sober up and to tame the monkey in our minds long enough to get out of our own way, walk after the spirit and shine!

B

Brian Johnson,
Chief Philosopher

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Dr. Ervin Seale (1909-1990) was a leading New Thought minister, gifted writer and speaker who addressed a large audience at Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall and Lincoln Center in New York City for thirty-two years.

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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.