

MIND MAGIC

Doorways into Higher Consciousness

by

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Chapter 8

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8.

“IN ACTION, WATCH THE TIMING”

— *Tao Te Ching*
of *Lao Tsu*

Act only when you decide
that the loss in value associated with delay
is probably greater
than the gain in value associated with thinking further
about the motives, possible consequences,
and alternatives to such action.

Start now.
Do not move any part of your body
from the position it is now in.
Regard any such movement
as an action to be evaluated prior to action.

If you have a feeling that you want to change position,
search inside you for the source of that feeling:

is it that the body wants to move
into a position more comfortable to it?

Is it that you want to go get something?
What part of you wants that something, and why?

Do you feel you should respond to someone
who is looking at or talking to you now?
Why do you feel you should respond?

Are you curious
about something that is now going on nearby?
Why are you curious?

What specifically will you gain by looking?
Why do you want to gain this?

*If you question yourself
as deeply as you can learn how to,
prior to even what seems to be
the most trivial of actions,
you will suddenly discover*

a whole new state of reality.

Progress through a personal appraisal at natural speed
prior to action.

Be aware of, but unmindful of, voices and feelings
which tell you that you must decide now
or must take action now.

These voices and feelings
are a force that has had power over you until now;
they originate in society;
society which expects you to perform in certain ways.
Society has conditioned you to perform,
not to appraise.

Give precedence to your own judgment:

critically evaluate all information,
whether it comes to you from inside or from the outside,

and then make your own decision
based on that evaluation.

Do not move

but observe yourself not complete the intended act.

You have not changed position;

you have not gotten up to get something;
you have not responded to your friend
and you have not looked at what is going on nearby.

You can visualize in detail
what it would have been like
to have done any of these things;
you can see how others would have reacted.

Having done none of these things,
you can see that the world has not come to an end,

although your body may be uncomfortable
and your friends may wonder why
you are strangely immobile.

*By having called a moratorium on undeliberated action,
you have entered a deeper level of thought.*

The greater and the more continuous the periods
over which you let such a moratorium prevail,
the deeper will be the level of thought you attain.

And there are depths currently unimaginable to you.

Your objective in communicating with others
is to find out what information they are working with
that you may not be working with,
so that you can evaluate it for yourself.

Your objective in communication
is not to establish for others the greater rightness
of your viewpoints;

such greater rightness applies only for yourself:
each other individual
should set its own decision above yours.

Thus, if your friends believe that you are strange
because you are immobile while you deliberate action,

but you are testing whether this is a useful means
of thinking more deeply,

then you should remove all force
from the feelings inside you
which tell you to move
in ways which will reassure your friends.

Live each scene as if nothing else exists
in the past,
present or future.
Do not let yourself think beyond the current scene
to the next one;
this is evidence that you are doing the current scene
to get past it,
rather than doing it for its own sake.

Avoid activities that you would do
merely to have them done;
i.e., activities which are satisfying
only in their elimination.
Get the maximum out of the current activity:
immerse yourself in the moment.

Make each movement a deliberate one;
hurrying is usually evidence that you are trying
to get the activity over with,
rather than getting the most out of the activity.

Hurrying is rarely justified
and almost always deleterious.

If you detect that you are impatient
to reach a decision
on a subject you are thinking about,
temporarily put the subject aside
and think first
about the subject of why you are in a hurry.

Do you want to get through thinking
so that you can engage in another specific activity?

If so, then think about which activity
you really want to engage in now.

If you are going to put off thinking
until a time when you really want to do it
and can therefore do it with total immersion,

then write down
whatever you have already established about that subject
in your thinking
which might be forgotten.

Writing your thoughts down
should have the effect
of freeing your mind from the subject completely,

so that you can go on
to fully immerse yourself

in whatever other activity
you would rather be doing now.

**Slow down thinking
until you can see each thought.**

This is the most direct payoff of non-rushing:

when thought itself progresses at natural speed,
the speed at which the thinker is aware
of the full meaning of each word
and fleeting image,

the probability of right decisions
vastly increases.

Judge slowly but make progress with every statement.

Do not seek to resolve matters,
but rather seek to add to the solution process.

**The longer you restrain yourself from a final solution,
while adding relevant and maximally objective observations,
the higher you raise the probability of right decisions.**

The quicker you reach positive or negative judgment
the more you are leaving out:

you are not seeing the positive opportunities
hiding in something you reject,

or you are not seeing the pitfalls to be overcome
in something you accept.

Consider *all* of the ways
you observe yourself use time as *projects*,
and review them in light of allocation
within available time;

specific friends, vocations, avocations,
periods of seeming rest, and so on:

all of these reflect implicit goals
which you have to make explicit
and weigh in relation to the others.

In all of these activities
you are engaging in self-selected work
to express yourself and actualize your goals;

therefore find out what it is specifically
that you want to get
out of each of these activities,

and allocate each activity
the appropriate proportion of your time
so that each can make progress
at its own natural speed.

Keep all projects moving forward.

If you find that you have a number of projects, allocate your time among these in a way which will maximize achievement of your goals.

This allocation may result in some low-priority projects being shelved temporarily or permanently, passed on to others or combined into other projects.

Constantly adjust your list of projects and time allocations to projects

so as to keep all projects moving forward at natural speed.

In all things, move forward at natural speed.

Avoid the common tendency to go faster; this usually results in greater speed but less intensity of development.

The intensity with which you can experience
and realize your own creativity
is more important
than meeting self-imposed deadlines.

Inspection of self-imposed deadlines
usually reveals them
to be internalized-other-people's deadlines.

*The time you spend not creating
may also be essential to the fullest development
of your creativity.*

Strive to achieve an appropriate balance
between time spent *doing*
versus time spent *not doing*.

If you spend too much time doing,
your conscious mind will block the functioning
of your subconscious mind,
and you will interfere
with the stream of consciousness
coming from the latter to the former.

If you spend too much time not doing,
you will underactualize your own goals.

If you always do what you want to do
at any given moment,
this will help you to automatically achieve
an appropriate balance between doing
and not doing, for there will be times
when you will not want to do anything:

at such times,
do not try to work at anything,

but simply flow with what is happening
into directions you find yourself naturally seeking.

Set achievable time goals

based on objective review
of your own past performance.
Emotionlessly revise these goals
if they are revealed to be too ambitious.

There is a tendency to understate
the time requirements for any task,
based on such factors
as not seeing all of the steps
which will be required until the task is underway,

or not seeing all of the distractions
which will inevitably occur
and must be allowed for.

Compensate for this tendency
by undershooting when setting time goals
(it is *not* necessary to undershoot
with respect to *what* you hope to achieve).

On occasion, you will note
that you sit down to do a task
at a moment when you have just received useful input
to that task from another quarter:

obviously, it would have been unfortunate
had you forced yourself to begin that task sooner,
without the benefit of the input which just arrived.

This is a specific instance
of the benefits to be gained by non-rushing

and by accepting what happens as relevant
even if it does not seem so.

Assertion of your will
as dominant over the will of input

requires that you place yourself, at any given moment,
in the precise number of input streams
you are willing to accept at that moment.

If you desire to have no input other than your own,
you must be alone and inaccessible
to communication of any kind;

this is an extremely valuable state
that is too rarely used:
many individuals are alone only when they are comatose.

By submission to any and all input streams,
most individuals have forgotten themselves,
and are slavishly programmed by their inputs.

You, however, know that you have a mission;
and this mission can only be interpreted and executed
by looking inside.

*Remember who you are, remain awake,
focus on your own goals:
control the valve which lets in distractive inputs.*

This may contrast sharply with the more common state
of diffusing the consciousness
across many streams of uncontrolled input
which are allowed to demand of you
at their convenience,
with you in a constant state of adaptation,
slavishly trying to cope
with all of these streams at once.

In this common state,
you engage several inputs at once,
without full motivation or preparation,

and are vaguely conscious of a sense of disquiet
at being trapped in such activities
without full desire and preparation;

simultaneously,
other inputs are piling in,
in front of and behind these current ones.

The usual product of this common state is confusion, indecision, and self-loathing.

This state is brought about by submission to the will of the input; i.e., you agree that any input has the right to communicate itself to you at its will, not yours.

Program yourself for action before engaging in it.

Review your goals for the upcoming activity.

Have a waking dream in which you see yourself engaging in the activity; this will alert you to contingencies so as to arm you with contingency plans.

Program the environment by eliminating possibilities of distraction, and by having the right tools for the job handy.

Do not be lazy about getting the right tools first; this will turn out to be false economy of time.

*If you try to do something too soon
It will snag.*

*You saw it,
Now let it happen in the dance.*