

You Know You Can, but Think You Can't

Dreamers in a Wide Awake World

I have limited space for this writing, and wish there was more. I have much more to say about many of the items you will find here. So, if after reading you have any questions or comments, please email me at Christian@christianschaal.com

Felt Reality

Wrecked and wounded, paralyzed and stiffened, trapped in the muck and mire that your life has become. Or so it seems to you.

How many feel just this way on a regular basis? How often does the crushing weight of realizing you are not what you feel you should be (or where) dominate you? For many, the answers to these questions reflect a darkened and dissatisfied soul.

Humans carry dreams, desire, and a sense of who they truly are deep inside of them. Each KNOWS that this is a destiny for which they must reach and attain. However, the affects of life all too often preclude any chance of a true manifestation of such a destiny. The reality - you THINK you cannot. This reality is a ghost and nothing more. You can!

Here is one of my favorite quotes. It is from the book, "99% Inspiration", by Bryan W. Mattimore. It has inspired me daily for a long time now. *"It is important to know that locked within your childhood is the seed of your own genius. In the memories and experiences of our youth are the skills and talents that make each of us unique, and potentially great. Some of us have forgotten these roots, and feel unfulfilled in what we are now doing. Others of us have been true to our childhood loves and find ourselves achieving, or about to achieve, unparalleled success and happiness. Still others of us are only now beginning to awaken to our own potential, and are excited at the prospect of rediscovering who we really are, what we love to do, and consequently what will help us lead happy and fulfilled lives. No matter where you are in this; it is never too late to start the rediscovery process."*

I am absolutely convinced that we each can be more than we currently are, and we KNOW it!

Why are We Less?

Why is it that so many of us disregard what we know and travel along the path of what we think? Why not simply become what we know we are to be? Seems simple enough, right? The harsh truth is that in so many cases, we simply do not know how. We are frozen by fears, low self-esteem, and the unforgiving wounds and restrictions others have skewered us with over time.

It may be that discouragement and criticism dominated you as a child. Or, abuse at the hand of family members (or others) has plunged your spirit into a fetal position and it has remained that way. Maybe we committed our own compromising acts and continue to have remorse or guilt over them.

Many times societal rules and imagined restrictions stop of us from trusting we can become what it is we know we can or should be. A simple one would be curb appeal of our homes. In most neighborhoods, a well manicured lawn, neatly trimmed hedges, and a clean looking structure are implied requirements. It is, of course, something we all would like to have, but in some cases, it is just not that easy. A job loss, poor health, or any number of things may hamper either physical ability or financial ability to maintain equal curb appeal with your neighbors. Guilt may set in. This guilt may then become an avoidance of your neighbors, leading to a seclusion of sorts. This then becomes further reason to feel guilty and darkness may begin to set in to your soul. All because of the implied societal rule of accepted curb appeal. Sounds silly, but this example is common.

Anytime we feel weighted down by anything, our ability to achieve is degraded. Let me outline some perceived weights and how to eliminate them. We will deal with the top three.

Guilt

For most, alteration is easily accomplished. Some, however, are psychologically predisposed to feel certain ways. I am only addressing the majority.

Guilt is a powerful emotion and sometimes justified for a short time. In the long term, however, the power of guilt will tear away your soul and leave you in a debilitated state of being. Left unchecked and unaddressed, guilt will push levels of anxiety higher and higher. As anxiety becomes higher, self-confidence moves rapidly lower. The combination of these concurrently growing self-perceptions may cause you to alienate yourself, first from society,

then from friends, and finally from family. None of which solves the problem of your feeling of guilt. In fact, this progressive movement in alienation will certainly create additional and deeper guilty feelings.

Removing guilt from your life is accomplished by addressing whatever the issue is directly with emotional courage (not always easy). All of us have hurt others, damaged others lives in some way, or done things in direct opposition to principals we know we should live by (these principals can be different each of us). There is no way to move through a lifetime in perfection. And the longer guilt has impaled you, the more difficult it is to deal with and remove; but it can be done.

First, be honest with yourself about what you are feeling and why. Then determine if the level of guilt you are feeling is justified. The longer guilt lingers, the more unrealistically deep it will be felt. Next, be prepared to correct whatever issue may have caused you to feel this way. It may be a simple admission and apology is all you will need to offer. Maybe some restitution will be required. Whatever the cause, address it. In doing this, do not expect immediate forgiveness. This is not something you control. If you expect forgiveness or any sort of instantaneous peace and resolution, and do not get it, you will probably become angry or defensive. This will exponentially deepen the original problem.

An apology must come from the heart. If not, the recipient will realize this at a conscious, subconscious, or spiritual level. In this case, nothing will be accomplished. Therefore, you must first follow the above steps of realization, truly understanding the issue, before you can properly address it.

Once you have done all of these things, you must then let it go. Again, you are completely unable to control how your apology, restitution, or whatever, is received. You are only able to control how you deliver it. When you do not control something, you cannot allow it to control you. You will have done your part, and now must move on; hopefully with a sense of accomplishment and peace.

Fear

One of the best acronyms for fear is this, False Expectations Appearing Real - F.E.A.R. When I first had this put to me I had an epiphany of sorts. In that moment I finally realized that my own fear was based not on those things that were actually real, but what I created them to be in my own mind.

The key word from above is not fear, but expectations. Expectations are very powerful things. We expect the sun to shine each day. We expect our children to be safe. Expectations of a sexual connection in a marriage are strong among men. In turn, expectations of honesty by women and from men are just as intense. These are normal and healthy. The same power, though, is carried in expectations that are false and unlikely.

Driving your car down the highway, for example, is a normal occurrence. However, for some, this is terrifying. A feeling of pending doom arises in them each time they are in an automobile. Accidents do happen, but the chances are very low, especially if you are a safe and defensive driver, that you will be in one. Flying is another example, and one I sometimes carry. I have no fear of flying, only crashing. But planes just do not crash very often. Other unhealthy fears may include doctor visits, germs, financial doom, loss of a loved one (death or divorce), or any number of things you are probably already aware of. It is the EXPECTATION of any of these that renders us useless at times.

Many unrealistic fears are rooted in some past event. Some are unexplained. Each feel very real and can be crippling. So what to do?

Discovering what you truly fear is the first step. Sometimes what we realize on the surface is only a symptom and not the foundation. Using the above flying example, which was personal, I will tell you my fear, was not so much in the flying and crashing, but more in the lack of being in control. So, in order for me to properly deal with my fear, I identified its root source. The fear of flying simply magnified the lack of control I was experiencing. That is only the first step, however. Next, I needed to identify why I needed to be in control, and why I feared a lack of control. This was actually quite simple for me. Control became an issue for me because my life was so out of control in many other areas. So, making corrections in those areas, i.e. living right, greatly reduced my fear. Of course, this took some time and effort, much of which is not appropriate for this writing.

Once you have discovered what is your truly fear, it becomes a matter of facing your own reality sets. This you must do. I cannot identify them for you here. If you wish to [contact me](#), I certainly am able and willing to help you in this discovery, however. Reality sets are those things you live by subconsciously. These can be recognized by patterns and habits you have developed and practice in your life. Generally we develop these sets in order to feel safe in our life, or to gain a sense of control. They are not all good and not all bad. They just are. Identifying them will aid you in discovering the root of your unrealistic fears and why you hold

them. Only then will you be able to honestly work at removing them and their drain on your potential for living and living well.

Remember this - it is the EXPECTATION emanating from your unrealistic fear that is the debilitating factor. Again, expectations are powerful. We tend to see them as already real, and therefore feel the affects of them.

Insecurity

Who among us has never felt insecure? Raise your hand(s)! My hand stayed down; as I am sure yours did as well.

The list of reasons related to feeling insecure is nearly infinite when you factor in degrees of feeling. But there are some primary factors we can address with confidence. Before moving too far ahead, let's look at a list of some of these reasons.

- Physical disability or impairment
- Appearance
- A sense of being, or having been, unloved
- Pending medical procedures, such as major surgery
- Feeling unneeded
- A lengthy time of being berated by some close (spouse, parent, etc.)
- Inability to achieve what *others* feel you should achieve
- Financial instability
- Erectile Dysfunction (men - seriously)
- Body Image (women - this is one I feel is a societal creation)
- Being made fun of while young

This list is minuscule as it relates to life, but the general idea is delivered.

Feeling insecure at certain levels is tantamount to being diseased. Symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and stress are coupled with feeling insecure and can be extremely incapacitating. Stress, for example, demands a tremendous toll from the body, even to the point of actual disease and death. For a brief on the relation of stress to body see, [Stress and Chronic Illness](#).

In my own life the feeling of being insecure has been the greatest detractor to my holistic success in life. Looking back at the above list, I experienced six of the ten to varying degrees, and at different times in life. However, the "different times" were all connected developing a

constant of sorts. My own level of insecurity fluctuated on the surface during this time, but internally (most important) it grew with the rage of an active volcano - until I dealt with it.

Insecurity keeps us from so much in life. Accomplishments, joy, happiness, success, a sense of completeness, and more will be prohibited or lessened by feelings of insecurity.

Imagine the child who is brutally teased on the playground in elementary school. Take a moment to picture this child in your mind (maybe it was you). Now, through imagination and empathy, feel what this child is feeling. He (or she) is quickly developing a strong sense of insecurity and you can feel his pain and despair.

As this child develops, and the insecurity is left unchecked, the pain roots itself deeper and deeper into his spirit. Anxiety envelops him at just the thought of having to wake up and go to school. As the anxiety builds, isolation becomes a pseudo way to survive. Once isolation becomes a routine, depression will creep into his being. And on it goes, from childhood to adulthood.

I used the above example because most of us had this experience in some form or another when we were young. It is common.

Dealing with insecurity is difficult at best. It is webbed throughout our entire being. Unlike guilt and fear, insecurity is mostly caused by outside sources - not ourselves. Generally speaking, individuals, organizations, or society gives us reason to feel insecure. Guilt is something we cause for ourselves and fear is somewhere between guilt and insecurity.

If possible, isolate the cause of your insecurity. For the disabled or diseased person, this is a bit easier. But for most others this task can prove quite difficult and at times may require the involvement of others. The time needed to eliminate the debilitating affects of insecurity will vary. Most of the variation is due to two factors. One, how far back in your history can its root be found; and two, the degree and duration of the root cause infliction.

The important first step is to understand what you are feeling and be honest with yourself about those feelings. This cannot be understated. Too many of us, especially men, disregard the critical importance of emotion and feeling. The evidence of danger in doing this is reflected in the culture of discontent we all now experience in this world.

Journaling is an excellent tool and one I personally use. Note I did not say “used”. To this day, and since 1991, I have used journaling as a source of healing, self-adjustment, and self-discovery. One unexpected realized benefit is the fact I now have some history to look back on; things I would normally have forgotten with time, much having to do with the growing of my three children.

Keeping an honest journal will allow you a place to be yourself completely, which I believe to be healing in itself. The trick is being you; being honest with everything. To do this you must trust your social environment, believing that others will not read your journal. Or, just keep it private.

Hopefully I have provided you with some element of understanding and motivation concerning any insecurity you may have and eliminating it. There is much more that could be said in this area, and again, if you have any questions please feel free to [contact me](#).

Becoming

The point to all of this is that so many of us are less than we know we are supposed to be. The three areas of disability listed above are but a few. And even those mentioned have tentacles of variation and degree. Striving to know yourself deeply will allow you to become.

It is important that you be allowed to dream and realize your dreams. The truth is, for the most part, you are the only one stopping you from doing so. Life and all it has delivered you has compressed your dreams and visions, holding them hostage to the false self-perceptions you carry each and every day.

I say live your dreams. Maybe you want to write a book, or a song. Is it you who will invent the next product of convenience, possibly altering how we all live today? I know you have grand designs for yourself. I know you want to be a positive and influential person. I know you want to live with a sense of completeness and joy at levels you do not currently experience. So do it.

You know you can, but think you can't. There lies in each of us a deep sense of knowing who we really are or can be. I have said this already and freely say it again. It needs to be said over and over again, not only by me, but by you and to you.

Remove the shackles that have locked you up for so many years and discover the hidden you. Growth is something each of us should experience throughout life. Stagnation, however, is what seems to be the water of so many lives today. Begin to notice the smaller things in life, which really are the larger. The construction of a flower; the fragrance of an ocean breeze; the eyes of a wondering child; and the love you want to give but hold back. These are but a few of life's beauties. When you begin to allow that beauty to penetrate you, when it becomes a part of your desired experience, you will be amazed at the exponential rate of your personal growth. The speed at which you are propelled to your greatest desires will increase by levels you never imagined.

If this all sounds like pillow fluff to you, you are trapped by some of what was mentioned earlier. There is no question about that. So there is your gauge.

This world needs and requires more dreamers, more believers, and more doers of what is implanted in them. To say you have none of this within you is to say you were created with no purpose. We all were created with a purpose; each and every one of us. Denying this is ludicrous and defeatist. Do you want to live in a world, society, or even neighborhood, where this attitude is prevalent? I do not.

What if Thomas Edison had quit? What if Henry Ford gave up on providing automobiles for the middle class? What would our national pass-time (baseball) be if not for Abner Doubleday? What if Abraham Lincoln decided to not live by his conviction no matter the risk? These are but a few dreamers you will recognize. There are many you would not, and those are the most important. It is the everyday man or woman who decides to follow a know path that truly create the progress of humanity. Be that person and begin now.

In conclusion, I have a simple word for you: Live.

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