

10. Without Fear, of Death or Anything, Engage in Life and Experience & Develop Wisdom!

Respect death and life by not fearing death, or anything, knowing death as an integral part of life, showing respect and allowing dignity in all life and death experiences, including relationships with other beings we kill as food, and by engaging actively, proactively and in positive ways with life and life experiences, living life fully and allowing all other life to live fully, in order to develop wisdom.

For too many, throughout our culture, fear is painful, prevalent and persistent. Its only real positive purpose is to release adrenaline to give us an edge, extra speed and power for flight or fight in situations of immediate physical threats. Otherwise, fear inhibits. "Fear is the mind killer." When we are afraid, our abilities to reason or do anything other than escape or fight are compromised. We get stupid, and we give away our power to whoever or whatever promises to address the fear for us, behaviors which are exploited in a culture of fear. Some want us in fear, because we're easier to exploit. Keep us afraid, via scary news stories, religious beliefs, overblown terrorist threats, and setting it up so we really do have problems with crime, loss, health, poverty, terror and safety, so we give away our power.

Fear disables, sickens, weakens, creates suffering and causes us to be withdrawn, hesitant and timid. We make mistakes and experience harms, because we're less functional in a state of fear. We agree to be and do things and let others be and do things that violate our values when we're debilitated by fear. We give the very people who create the fear leading to our suffering the power to make us afraid. Anxiety is fear without focus, an epidemic source of problems. Fear and anxiety are curses to be lifted.

Fear is an energetic state. We have the power to choose energetic states. Don't give away that power! We do not have to choose to be in the low energetic state of fear, or be in any lower energetic state. We can just as easily choose higher energetic states like love, trust, openness, creativity and sharing. Stop fearing! Just say no to fear! Choose trust, openness, love and creativity! No more fear!

While there is much we don't know about life support systems and life, we do know all living beings die. Death is an inextricable part of life, and death of individual life forms cannot be avoided. That's OK. That's the way it is. Individuals die, but life goes on. As far as we can tell, everything changes with time. Anicca. Death is life energy being released to change form. Death is natural, normal and inevitable. There is nothing wrong with death. Death is just the other side of the life coin.

Death is not something to fear, as long as the species, life and Earth's life support systems continue, and we are doing our best to live fully while we're alive. To have a healthy relationship with death and life, we must each know death and life, rather than ignoring and hiding from death and treating it as failure. To not fear death, we must treat it as the inextricable part of life it is and know it throughout our lives. We need to know and engage with both life and death, deeply and personally, throughout our lives.

We know and develop respect for death by living in close communities, in which people die, people we personally know, care for and support while they are living, and personally know, care for and support as they approach and go through death, rather than isolating and insulating ourselves away from death. We know and develop respect for death by being in nature and observing death as a natural and needed part of all life and natural living systems. We know and develop respect for death by personally and respectfully cultivating, supporting and taking good, satisfied and fulfilled lives in our food systems. Cowering, hiding from, ignoring, avoiding and fearing death harms life.

We honor and respect death by appreciating, honoring and respecting the life that precedes death, letting go of fear of death, choosing to live while we have the opportunity to live, and trusting death to the same natural systems that create the incredibly beautiful planet we live on, the miraculously pure and complex life support systems that sustain us, and the mind-boggling diversity of life we have here. In the same way we don't know what life is, but we live, trust, appreciate and engage with life, naturally, we also do not know what death is, but we die, and we can trust, appreciate and engage with death, naturally. Life and death are greater than we are, and that's OK.

We are each us. All of our deaths matter, just as all of our lives matter. And each of our deaths are OK, if we take our opportunities to live fully. Nature will replace us with others, for the benefit of all, provided we do not interfere with nature's ability to do that. If we knew death better, we'd know that. It's not just our own lives and deaths that are important and sacred. All of life is important and sacred. All life deserves the chance to live, grow and evolve fully, including other species, other forms of life.

There is nothing wrong with a natural death after a full and rewarding life. There is something wrong when we do not allow ourselves or others to live full and rewarding lives. We need to stop insulating ourselves from death, by living closer to it in our communities, natural environments and food systems. We need to personally know and show respect for death to appreciate life. We need to show respect for life when we take life and encounter death. Live, and let live! No fear, for death or anything!

When we do encounter death, it teaches us an invaluable lesson: that our opportunity to live is when we are alive, now; live now! Feel, think, grow, experience, appreciate, be love, make love, share love, do, create, know beauty, share experience, cultivate life and health, eat, drink, have fun, serve others, play, raise consciousness, evolve! We're here now. We're alive. Let's go for it! Let's make this good! Let's show each other how important we are to us while we can. Express love! Be grateful for life!

Some of us need deadlines for motivation. Death is a literal deadline that motivates us to live fully. Whatever we want to do, do it now! However we want to be, be that now! Whatever we need to communicate, communicate that now! Whatever we want to experience, experience that now! Whatever we want to create, create it now! Death is a pep talk. We all need that from time to time.

Show gumption, engage with and say yes to life and life experience! We're not just spectators of life. We're here to create, enjoy, appreciate, learn, grow and develop wisdom through life experience. Experience new things and perspectives! Try it! Go for it! Engage! Be an active participant in life! Expand awareness and consciousness! Engage in civic society! Dig into it and get our hands dirty! Cultivate passion! Feel good by doing what feels good! Get up! Rise up! Shake it off! Work out on life! Experience, grow and evolve! Take control of our lives! Create the worlds we want to live in! Trust it! Get knocked down by it, figure out what went wrong, get up and try again! Feel free to be and do it! Create! Respect and encourage others to get up, be and do it! Do no harm, but do it! Get wise!

Wisdom is holistic, objective and subjective, information, knowledge, understanding and their applications developed through deep, personal experience. As a culture, we get the value of information and knowledge, but we don't do a very good job developing, using and valuing wisdom. When we experience something freely, deeply and personally, we experience much more than just the dry facts of information and intellectual logic. We experience not only measurable objective elements; we also experience subjective elements.

We receive information directly through our senses, minds and bodies and process it with the totality of our being. We experience sensations in our bodies, and the emotions associated with the experience. We have a rich array of feelings. We get to draw on the intelligence of not only our minds, but also our bodies, guts and hearts, inputs and understandings we may not quite grasp with our brains.

Direct experience delivers rich and full ranges of sensations, feelings, thoughts and reactions, far beyond the intellectual exercises of processing abstract data and computing logic. Direct experience is full, rich and analog, while intellectual experience is often dry, digital and limited. Personal experiences are real. Intellectual experiences are artificial models. We can apply the full range of the abilities of our beings to personal experiences, but we typically apply only our intellectual abilities to indirect experiences. Wisdom is knowledge developed through the full range of our experiences, not just our intellects. Knowledge is good. Wisdom is better, because it is more than just thinking. Wisdom is grokking it.

We do not do as good a job developing wisdom as we do knowledge, because we limit our experiences. Most of us have a relatively constrained portfolio of experiences. We go to similar schools, do a limited set of things, and work in specialized occupations, doing a limited range of things. We intellectualize. We consume. We get few new experiences, because we take few vacations and devote those we do take to inadequate recovery and restoration, and because we don't seek and create new experiences.

We consume spoon-fed news and passive entertainments. We buy our stuff from others rather than create it ourselves. And we stitch it all together with autopilot habits, driving around similar roads, staying in similar places, eating similar meals in similar restaurants, consuming similar entertainments, and maybe doing similar exercise. We do a lot, but we have a limited range of personal experiences. We're busy, and we accumulate lots of information and knowledge, but relatively little wisdom.

With wisdom, we understand impacts of experiences on the outside world, but also on internal worlds. We know how an experience is affected by motivation, energy and feelings. We personally experience how different energies, emotions, attitudes, views and behaviors affect experiences, things like: anger, fear, hate, love, happiness, despair, meanness, respectfulness, apathy, helpfulness, pride, grief, hope, suffering, trust, effort, humiliation, bullying, regret, optimism, reverence, empowerment, aggression, despondency, encouragement, desire, misery, peacefulness, courage, shame, neutrality, willingness, discouragement, forgiveness, aggression, support, craving, caring and scorn.

Wisdom allows holistic thinking and problem solving, based on holistic lessons and experiences that encompass objective, external facts, information and knowledge, as well as subjective feelings, energies, motivations, emotions, behaviors, beliefs, and worldviews. It's kind of cool we have knowledge and abilities that can destroy ourselves and most life on Earth, but it's ever so important that we also develop the wisdom not to do something so short-sighted, selfish and thoughtless. Information and knowledge are built through the intellect. Wisdom is a product of rich and full, personal life experience.

It is very important to value and develop holistic wisdom and to prioritize the creation of wealthy personal portfolios of diverse real experiences that broaden and deepen that wisdom. Wisdom is common sense developed through experiences and shared experiences. We need a lot more of that.

No fear! Know and accept death! Engage deeply in life and life experience! Develop deep wisdom!

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