

# THE LESSONS OF LIFE

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You came into this life with a history. Whether it be from a previous life, if you believe in reincarnation, or from the womb itself. You had your own ego-consciousness, sense of direction attached to yourself. As you progressed, learned the norms and dynamics of this time and environment, that ego-consciousness was altered. Its past forced to be forgotten as new concepts were given to you in “how to relate to this world.”

Phantoms. You find yourself hitting brick walls. It all seems to be the same brick wall, but in different disguises -- maybe it's your boss at work who frustrates or infuriates you; or the lack of money in your bank account. At any rate, it's *struggle*.

Now, some would say it is the Challenges and Struggles in life that force us to learn and grow. Stressing yourself out promotes expansion? Perhaps. But what about the opposite? Couldn't love and happiness and compassion also promote growth and happiness?

If reality is a manifestation of beliefs, and we have a belief that states “growth is a result of Struggles, Challenges, and Stress,” then by what aspect or orientation are we going to be placing ourselves when it comes to becoming More of what we are? What viewpoint are we going to be looking through when it comes to doing things that will give us growth? And then we wonder why we keep hitting the same brick wall.

Hello! The brick wall is the Phantom. The perspective of challenge, the bearer of difficulty, which, in the act of our struggle and martyrdom, will propel us to being More than what we are. The bearer of wisdom and enlightenment. A supposed better life, right?

Not necessarily. Stress usually lessons our bodies in so many ways. It attacks our immune systems, it messes with our sense of focus, and can severely affect our notion of Self. Our lives are actually shortened by challenges, because they force us out of living in the Now while we scramble for a solution -- to get us past the Challenge and move on -- hopefully wiser and better. Time is lost to the Challenge.

This is the tough road to life. This is what happens when you buy into psychological frameworks of “You're born a sinner; Life is tough; Challenges make you grow.” All this as if to say the exact opposite would lead you nowhere. Imagine hearing all that psychological “advertising” for thousands of years. Not only from an individual perspective, but also from mass sociological settings -- Entire generations and millions of people being told “You're born to be bad, you cannot escape that truth.” What is truth if not a matter of perspective? Any

psychologist can tell you what behavior a child will exhibit after years of being told by his/her parents he/she was “a bad child.” How would such bantering result on a mass level if it was not carried to only one individual, but the entire human race? “Human race, you will always fall short, always be bad, you were born that way. All good is beyond you, it must come from some other source.” Hold that thought, we will come back to it later.

If you notice the Struggles and Challenges that come before you, and compare their intensities, you’ll find that stress at any level is still stress -- the brick wall -- and it’s all the same. Again, this is the Phantom -- it’s singular -- but appears to you in many different disguises, providing you with the same road of learning you’ve accepted as the only route, as you’ve been told for eons.

Struggle. Stress. Pain. Which scientists and other doctors now prove to shorten your life. Bring on cancer and other maladies.

Now, reconsider how long-told frameworks of being born Instantly Bad has affected the world. Carry that through, generation after generation, eon after eon, child after child. It stands to reason that crimes would increase, violence would beget more violence, terror after terror. Do we not live in that world? Then, imagine if you will, carrying the next line through, for thousands of years: “I am a loving and compassionate aspect of the Universal Creator.” How about this: “I learn and grow through love, happiness, and compassion. All else -- Challenge, Stress, Opposition -- are phantoms and serve no good to the quality or length of my life, or that of any others.” How do you think life on this planet would be after being told that for thousands of years? Naïve? Think about it. One year to the next. Generation after generation. Child after child. “You are a loving and compassionate aspect of God” vs. “You will always fall short and Be Bad.”

Now, some would say “challenges provide necessary growth steps. You must fall several times before you stand and walk.” Walking to a child is not a challenge, it’s a state of development. And it’s done happily and lovingly, too, I might add. What happens when parents see their child trying to take his/her first steps? They don’t knock it down -- they encourage the child. In most cases, help the child stand having him/her hold the parent’s hands. This, through joy and happiness, is not a challenge, it’s not hitting a brick wall, it’s love and encouragement and compassion. That provides the growth. Struggle? It’s a happy one with mommy and daddy smiling and “walking you” like a marionette. You can’t help but learn to walk!

So now we see, it’s equally possible to learn and grow without stress, without letting the problem be a problem or brick wall. How? Because learning doesn’t have to come strictly as the result of a Challenge That Must Stress You Out. It can come as a series of events, expressed and filled with love, compassion, kindness, and gratitude that make you grow. Love, kindness, and compassion also take the “sting” out of the lesson and lets it sit more firmly and grounded in our hearts. Challenges learned by Stress -- sure we’ll take its message, but we don’t want to deal with its emotional constructs. Constructs

that, let's face it, we gave our time and life too. In other words, our Valuable Life. Our Valuable Time. Which, when we look back on it, we say "Wish I could've gotten that sooner." Why? Because it has stolen Our Time and a portion of Our Life.

Being, learning, and loving our lessons in life wouldn't be leaving us with a sense of precious time wasted, and the value of the lesson isn't any less learned. In fact, through love and kindness, happiness retains the best knowledge, the best message of the lesson, and gives us a fuller, longer sense of life Being Lived. If I feel I can live a longer life, then I can learn more and be more. If my lessons are coming from Stress and Challenge, and robs my consciousness as it steals my life and time in the solving of that problem, then it shortens my life and even keeps me from learning MORE lessons, lessons that truly do come better and learned more fully through the aspect orientation of love rather than Obstacle.

Phantoms. Are they worth it?

So when an Obstacle approaches, instead of seeing it as an Obstacle, how about this approach: Embrace it, give it love, then send it on its way. Let it know that whatever lesson the Obstacle is there to teach you, you will learn it better through love, compassion, and kindness, not through the Stress and Challenge the Obstacle wishes you to believe you must endure. It doesn't serve your life in the long run. It makes it less healthy, less joyful, and not as fulfilling or long-lasting.

#### SOME POINTS TO PONDER:

Gratitude keeps you in the framework of loving and growing upon what you have, versus the need to explore the opposite, to love and appreciate more of what you had *lost*.

With love and compassion, you can build on what you have, knowing that what you have is great and can become even greater.

Love and compassion will always breed the best outcome. Stress and Challenge will only breed what is necessary at the time.

We know sick people heal through laughter. They say "Laughter is the best medicine." They also say "Love is the answer to all the Hate in the world."

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