

Pieces From My Road

by David Weimer

David assembled the following advice for a session he conducted with Jim Burns at the April 2003 TAT Gathering near Wheeling, WV. His article originally appeared in the April 2003 edition of the TAT Forum.

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Live the impossible. You are not smart enough or capable enough to find the Answer. No one is. Have determination. Be honest. Be willing to do whatever it takes. Don't give up.

Don't lean. Not on the words of Buddha, not on God. They are all wrong, as far as you are concerned. Until you find out for yourself, it's pure fiction. Don't lean on someone else's life.

Use comparison. Comparison can turn you into a resentful person -- if you don't live to your potential. A true seeker is nondiscriminating, using everything. Be what you can be. Make that your center. You'll be in the company of the Roses, the Jordans and the Einsteins. You'll use comparison and not be used by it.

Know it's your right. Do with your life what you feel is right. We are all equally important. No one has the right to steer your boat.

Become an expert. The skater is never again as bad as the first day. Each one of us is going to become an expert at something. Most of the time, it's automatic when you stay somewhere long enough. You can become an expert meaning-of-life-finder.

Make the class your own. We are stuck in class with a feeling of resignation, putting in time until we can do what we really want. *Why?* You'll learn the other stuff -- but you will LIVE in the things that you are interested in. Bend each assignment to your fascination. Most teachers are relieved to find a student excited about something even remotely related to their subject.

Do something "other than." One-hundred-percent conviction is the subtle clue that the devil has his mouth to your ear. So-and-so is my enemy. Be willing to do something other than what you would normally do or not do. You don't even know what that could be. Paradigms are worlds in themselves. Willingness is the key. The world can flop over; all the enemies become just normal people and the truth will set you free.

Meditate. Follow your fascination. Make it a habit. It could be an intellectual, exclusive concentration on a problem, or a yearning and pushing forward into the desire to KNOW with all of your being, or allowing yourself to be completely absorbed by the subject of your attention for the sake of the truth. It doesn't matter what you do. Do something, anything, and nothing.

Read. Take time to track down the books your curiosity responds to. If someone gives you a book that you don't think will help -- open it anyhow.

Help others. What you think is help usually isn't.

Talk. We think that we *know* just because we feel comfortable (we're still intact and untested). A girl with a dog could say something valuable. Check your intuition or feelings. Ask people what they think. See how your discoveries about human nature hold up. Explain your ideas.

Make a commitment (again). It was a big step. You made your first uninformed commitment and walked into the unknown. That's not the end.

Try to have common sense. If you can't live the unlivable or buy the unbuyable, then remember that there have been some -- Buddha, Rose, Ramana Maharshi -- who have lived their lives a certain way contrary to the norm, and who have said and written things. When there are times of serious doubt, look at the whole scene, the whole picture, weigh it, and try to have some common sense.

Live without regrets. Walk into a fearful situation and do your best. There will be moments of singular choice when you will know without a doubt that a door is open for you. Almost all hesitate, and the door swings shut again (it always does). Later, people say, *I could have done something*.

Make a commitment. Until you make a commitment, there is fear, hesitation, indecision and ineffective action. If you find yourself facing a direction not braved by the majority of comfort-addicts, you may feel uncertain. But you have to either go forward or quit.

Work. Doing something you don't like takes ten times more energy than doing something you do. Follow your fascination and do the 'work-that-is-not-work.'

Become smarter than the problem. People have killed themselves and gone crazy beating their heads in the same place on the wall. Look for a door. Insanity is continuing to do something and expecting different results (a borrowed definition). Become smarter than the problem.

Throw the sticks back in the fire. Put the ends back into the fire and use every scrap of wood and waste nothing. Nothing is irrelevant in the quest for the Answer. This is not a euphemistically described "learning experience" or trying to tell oneself that something bad is good. The lessons are in the events in our lives. Use everything that uses you. Keep the fire burning.

Be honest. Or you're lost -- and you won't even know it.