

## Introduction

This email came in response to an initial newsletter announcement about this book. The working title was *The Quantum Key: Solving Life's Problems...*

*Why not give the book's subtitle a more positive spin? Instead of focusing on "life's problems," how about the phrase "revolutionary lifestyle"? Or perhaps this title: "Radical Solutions to Anti – Aging"?*

Thoughtful, plausible suggestions. I can see how my previous books have influenced her. She's read them, and now holds reasonable expectations. I appreciate that!

With this new book, I'm *defying* expectations. This new venture is definitely not just another book about healthful eating. Nor is it focused on "radical solutions to anti-aging," or on the kind of "revolutionary lifestyle" you'd expect from a raw foods advocate. No blueberries, broccoli, or beauty sleep here.

Still, the email got me thinking. We're conditioned to think about that word *problem* as naming something that's inherently negative. To be sure, the word *problem*, in one definition, does carry a distinctly negative flavor. Tribulation, hardship – a situation "regarded as harmful and needing to be overcome," as one dictionary puts it.

A mathematician by education, I couldn't help seeing some mathematical parallels. Is a math problem a *negative* thing? Is a research problem somehow a detriment? Of course not! Let's allow another definition to kick in to define that old word *problem*: an inquiry, starting from conditions we're

handed, and moving through investigation toward demonstration of some fact, result, or law.

The day I started seeing every “problem” in this light was my turning point. I did change the book’s subtitle. You would agree, the word *trial* looks better on the cover. It carries just a snippet of salt, perhaps of pain. But it also brings to mind the notion of *trying* or *testing*, so it better reflects what the book is all about.

Throughout my writings, I use the word *problem* with that second definition in mind. In math, you always move forward after solving a problem. The very same thing happens in dealing with life’s challenges.

A trial in life is a signpost to a better you, *if* you follow it. You’ll have to go somewhere you’ve never been before. Sure, you’ll have to put out some effort. But in the end, you have been led to something valuable. You’ve learned something new. You have grown.

There are two parts to every locking system: the lock itself and its matching key. The metaphor is: The solution is always a part of the problem. Even where there’s no easy, obvious key, you’ll find the most organic, most effective solution somewhere within the problem itself, amid the conditions that created the problem in the first place.

We’re going to use problems to find solutions. That means looking not *at* the problem, but *through* it. Seeing how the problem works, and why it’s there.

This is not a book about “conquering” problems. It’s about transcending them. Going beyond them. And, always, mining the difficulties of our lives for the treasures they contain.

After reading this book, I hope you’ll never again think

about your “problems” as your adversaries. They are, in truth, your allies.

Everything in this book I have tried myself, transcending some of my most challenging life’s trials. Let me start with my own childhood condition.

*Gale’s Encyclopedia of Children’s Health says: Unless corrected soon after birth, congenital hip dysplasia (CHD) can cause a characteristic limp or waddling gait in children. If left untreated, the child will have difficulty walking and may experience life-long pain...*

Some medical conditions are as bad as they sound. CHD is one of those. My problem was not “corrected soon after birth.” Hospital stays and endless surgeries consumed my childhood. Pain, most likely to be permanent, was my reality.

Orthopedists warned that untreated hip dysplasia would lead to arthritis and debilitating deterioration of my hip. They were right. I limped for fifty years. My entire body, head to toe, suffered misalignment from trying to compensate for my damaged right hip.

At 42, I had both hips replaced. There were complications. My orthopedic doctors told me I’d be wheelchair-bound for life. (On the positive side, I would always get great parking spaces.)

The doctors weren’t right about everything. Today, at 58, I have no trace of my once-pronounced limp. No crookedness. And there’s no wheelchair or walker hidden in my closet, waiting. Instead, I now have a graceful body, with the proportions and the flexibility of an 18 year-old!

Does it sound like I’m bragging here? Like I’m typing this while wearing my Wonder Woman costume? (Note to self:

Check eBay for one of those.) Maybe there is a little hubris here. But give me a break, won't you? I want to encourage you, so that you, too, can solve your problems, no matter how impossible they may seem now.

Do you, for example, have marital or relationship problems? So did I. Soon after the wedding, I understood why marriage is called *wedlock*. For the first sixteen years, I felt locked in an unhappy union. Today, I'm blessed with a loving, caring, supportive husband. And guess what? He's the same guy.

Are you struggling financially? I know how you feel. In 1991, when we first immigrated to the USA, we had to literally count pennies to make it, one day to the next. Now I have my own beauty company. The products I've created are used in more than 50 countries. I've written eight books, even though English is my second language, and have thousands of loyal readers around the world. (My thanks go to everyone of you.)

After years of bouncing from one of life's challenges to the next, my discovery that you can solve *all* your problems was quite a revelation. I just wish I'd seen it sooner.

You *can* solve *all* your problems. I really like that phrase. I used it in drafting an article once, but my editor had the audacity to remove it, dang him! The word *all* bugged him, I suspect. Exaggeration, he likely thought.

But perhaps you, too, think this line — *You can solve all your problems* — is presumptuous, if not downright preposterous.

What about the person with late-stage cancer that doctors have pronounced terminal, or someone sentenced to life in prison without parole? No solutions, right?

Our robust sense of reality does compel us to admit some

solutions are beyond the frontier of the possible, and deep into the impossible. But is there a definite line between the two? Patients sentenced to death by disease do get healed. The imprisoned do get pardoned. Not every day perhaps, but often enough for us to hear of such cases.

That's the purpose of this book – to explore what makes the difference, what helps find the answer in difficult, even desperate straits.

Dealing with my life's problems, I've learned a lot. Now I believe I can help *you* find extraordinary solutions to *your* challenges.

Too much "I" here? I—Oops! Here it is again—felt that way in writing this chapter, racking up my accomplishments. But how could I say I did this or that, yet also convey that it wasn't some separate, disconnected, ego-centered *I* that solved those problems?

Language is where the trouble lies. Those pronouns – *I*, *you*, *he*, *she*, *my*, *them* – imply distinction, difference, distance. Truth is, I had a lot of help dealing with those trials. (Just as you could have.) All that *I* notwithstanding, this book is about *you*. It's about *us*. It's about how we can all enlist the help we need to become happy, fulfilled, and free.