



THE QUANTUM KEY

TRANSCENDING LIFE'S TRIALS

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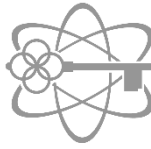
Transcending Life's Trials

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CHAPTER 23

Do Not Judge —You Can't Afford It!

In my twenties, whenever I saw girls wearing short skirts, I passed unkind judgment on them. I thought they were just downright *immoral*, and, to my chagrin, sometimes I even voiced my harsh opinion. (The men I knew didn't seem to be bothered by this fashion phenomenon. Go figure!)

But here's the real story... In those days, *I* had no choice but to wear long skirts or pants, trying to hide a two-inch difference in the length of my legs. No Carnaby Street micro-mini for me.

Now, let's fast-forward my life to age 42. I had surgery to lengthen my shorter leg. And guess what? Other women's skirts stopped bothering me, no matter how short. Now, *I* wanted to wear miniskirts myself! Nothing like a little perspective.

My judging had been just a projection of my jealousy. These days, when I encounter a woman griping about, or frowning upon, someone else's belly button ring... a short top...

a bit too much cleavage... or something glitzy, like a pair of metallic leggings or vinyl jeans, I feel a pinch of compassion. She reacts this way mainly because *she* can't wear those things.

It's true of her, of me, of all of us: Our criticism of others discloses more about us than about them. In lamenting others' shortcomings, we broadcast our own unfulfilled desires, insecurities, frustrations, and fears. Why would we bother to comment on someone else, unless our criticism corresponded to something inside us?

Recently, we had a visit from a longtime friend, Ivan — a nice guy. We were all watching a famous male singer performing with a group of beautiful, remarkably long-legged young women. Ivan pointed at the singer and surprised us by saying, "Must be in his late sixties, yet he's always with these young girls."

"You're jealous, Ivan, aren't you?" I meant it as joke. Although a moment later, I regretted my thoughtless remark, as his face betrayed an admission. He seemed equally flustered by his own reaction. Turns out, Ivan had long harbored the desire to be a professional singer, but thought he'd grown too old.

Once you understand how criticism works, and grasp its reflective nature, two things begin to happen. First, the criticism you hear about yourself no longer stings. Second, you'll begin feeling compassion for your critics. Through their words, you'll see the drama that's being played out in *their* lives.

I recall one of my subscribers — I'll call him Fred — who unsubscribed from my e-newsletter. His reason was that he took offense at my occasionally eating raw eggs. *Your chicken-fetus eating for B12 has grossed me out. I've lost all confidence in you.*

One of the most barbaric things in this world is women who eat animals. Goodbye.

I do know that feeling. It only looks like Fred is tough with me for eating an occasional raw egg, or with millions of other women who eat meat. In reality, he's being tough on himself. One suspects there's something in Fred's life, something within him, that he deeply wants to change, much more than my way of getting B12 into my raw food diet.

Not only that, his resentment fuels the very issue he wants to change. If you want to avoid cruelty to animals, harboring negative feelings toward people who eat meat doesn't help. Whatever we object to emotionally, we make stronger. What happens whenever a book or a movie gets negative press? Sales go through the roof.

Just by resenting it, you're contributing to and, in a way, supporting the issue. Instead, focus on the fact that millions are improving their health by choosing to eat more fresh organic garden foods.

Happily, organic food sales have increased *thirty* times in the USA since 2000. By accentuating the positive, you'll be making the world healthier and more humane. (I know – sweep in front of my own door. You're right. *I* need to make fewer presumptions myself. And watch my language, while I'm at it.)

Every time *I* criticize someone, I'm at least implicitly placing myself on a higher plane than the person I'm censuring. And when you're on that higher plane, how do you see someone? – By looking down on him or her.

When I don't like a book or some other creative work and feel strong negative emotions arising in me, I ask myself: *What is it within me that resonates with this work? Do I envy that person's*

success? Does the work present some kind of accomplishment I believe I can't ever match? Does it make me uncomfortable because it tells me something I need to know, but don't want to hear?

Sometimes such a work lacks quality, in my perception, and I'm looking from lofty heights as if *I'm* the expert, needing neither learning nor improvement. Here's what I tell myself in such cases: That work in front of me, is my chance to exercise love, compassion, and tolerance. Somebody cared enough, to give up a considerable part of his life to create that work—an achievement that in itself merits praise. Plus, it teaches me how *not* to do things.

This brings us to the issue of “constructive criticism.” When asked to critique somebody's work, or when volunteering to do so, what counts as truly constructive criticism? One vital element defines constructive criticism: does it encourage and stimulate the recipient to grow and use your advice as stepping-stones, and not give up on the project altogether?

Aside from constructive criticism, rarely do we criticize for someone *else's* good. Even though that's our apparent intention, too many times (and often too late), I've realized my real motivation. Usually, it's one or both of these: making myself feel good, or making myself look better compared to the person I've judged. What did I get from judging? No more than a moment of moral superiority. That feeling rapidly disappears and leaves a bad aftertaste.

Unless you're in the business of giving advice, unless you're paid to improve somebody's performance, unless you're invited, you're better off not criticizing. When we busy ourselves scrutinizing others' flaws, harboring resentment toward people different from us, we damage ourselves. Resentment, a

wise man once said, is a unique fluid: It corrodes only the vessel that contains it.

If it's not for the other person's sake that you'd want to hold back your criticism, do it for your own sake. You get back what you send out. Remember: The closer we are to the state of love, the more creative power we have. We must avoid unkind criticism at all costs. To find genuine happiness in life, we cannot afford negative thoughts – especially those that may lead to strong, continuing negative emotions.

“Stop judging others.” Yeah, we've heard that before. The trouble is: Any attempt to stop judging others is doomed to failure so long as we believe the “others” we're judging are separate from us.

Ancient wisdom teaches that not a single ray of light would judge another, for all know their common Source.

When we catch ourselves criticizing or judging others, it's helpful to remember the principle of quantum nonseparability. All is energy. If I emanate harmful emotions, thereby attracting more of the same, I'll be the one who will be hurt.

“Don't judge others because they sin differently from you.” This is just a saying, but its profundity strikes me. The word *sin*, translated from Greek and Hebrew, originates in archery and literally refers to missing the “gold” at the center of a target. We all have sinned by giving into the illusion that we're separate from God, and as a result, we all “fall short of the glory of God.” In other words, we “miss the target.”

Each of us suffers the “disease of ignorance,” thanks to our senses' illusionary and deceptive nature. In India, people act compassionately toward prisoners. Their attitude: *We're all criminals – they're the ones who got caught.* Even in a common

thief, they'll see a poor soul that merely forgot its divine nature.

If we were honest with ourselves, and self-aware, we'd see we're not capable of a rightful judgment. To judge someone rightly, you'd have to know that person through every moment of their life, their thoughts, emotions, interactions with others — *everything*, else the judgment would be amiss.

If her past were your past, her pain your pain, her level of consciousness, your level of consciousness, you would think and act exactly as she does.

— Eckhart Tolle

Experience shapes each of us uniquely. True non-judging sees any condition, any act, or any person as being in its rightful place for learning purposes. I keep reminding myself: Who am *I* to deprive another of his right to develop his soul with whatever experience he chooses?

On occasions, when I've managed to sustain prolonged moments of non-judgmental attitude to life, I realize that having a judging outlook is energy draining for body and mind. An accepting and loving attitude toward others, in contrast, will energize you, revitalize you, and facilitate your own growth.

Our journey toward experiencing Infinite Love has to start with the surrender of judgment. Only when seeing God in all things: giving each person, each thing, each situation its right to exist, do we begin to vibrate at those frequencies where God can be "found."