

## **being responsible**

an excerpt from the book, *the way things are*

responsible: Being a source or cause.

agent: One that acts or has the power to act.

You can't always control or predict the circumstances of life. You have, however, complete authority over your experience of the circumstances. You are the source or cause of your experience in your life. This is your power. This is your God given gift of absolute authorship of your life. Acknowledging this truth is acting in alignment with the way things are and is spiritual integrity. To deny this is a lie. You are the responsible agent in your life. Responsible has nothing to do with fault, shame, or blame.

This is by far the most liberating of all the concepts covered in this book. In fact, it is the foundation of all the work in this book. There is no question of the validity of this concept. It is the truth. It requires no belief. **You are the responsible agent in your life.** Will you acknowledge this or not? That is the only question to ask yourself.

The alternative is to operate as though you are 'victim'. For the purpose of this discussion 'victim' is a frame of mind that can accompany the events in our life, where we experience the events as 'happening to us'. Victim is a state of mind that events are filtered through, generating the corresponding emotions of resentment, helplessness, blame, or fault. From the mind-set of victim we are operating as though we are not the source of our experience. It appears that life is happening to us and thus is causing us to think, feel, and act in specific and limited ways. We say, "There was nothing else I could do." And it truly appears this way.

Although things do happen to us, and the actuality of them we do not cause, it is handling life from the mind-set of victim that poses the problem. Having problems or having problems thrust upon you does not make you a victim, but handling problems from that position does. Even horrendous problems that you could be seemingly born into do not make you a victim. Simply explained, in the mind-set of victim, your circumstances generate your experience, including your thoughts, emotions, and actions. Naturally, it will appear that you are not the source or cause of your experience. It is by far the most self-defeating

thought process we can operate from.

Operating as though you are victim is not wrong, and there are consequences. Consequences always include both the prices to be paid and payoff to be reaped. When you put your quarters in the candy machine you fully expect when you pull the handle you will get 'the goodie'. It is the same for your victim machine. You pay the price fully expecting the payoff or goodie of your victimhood. The prices for operating as though you are victim can often be loneliness, poverty, illness, depression, stress, separation, and divorce. The payoffs people often accept include being right, looking good, sympathy, approval, attention, and blaming others. So we get to blame others and 'be right' (the payoff), but we have to experience loneliness or stress (the price). Or we get attention by our victim act, but we pay with illness or poverty. (It has been shown that patients that fight to get out of the hospital early are known to actually heal faster than patients that somehow create the enjoyment of the attention of hospitalization do.)

Let me ask you some questions. What is your experience right now? How do you feel? What are you thinking? Where is that experience coming from? Is this book forcing the experience on you? Maybe you believe that I am forcing your experience on you? Maybe the air your breathing is making you think or feel something? Maybe your father is making you feel something? Or maybe the weather is making you feel something? What are you assigning your experience to right now? Whatever it is, it is important that you notice that you are doing the assigning. Is that too subtle? You are the responsible agent in your life, period. You feel something and then assign the feeling to some outside condition.

Since you are the source of your thinking, you are actually the source of the mind-set of victim. You are the source of your mind. You built your mind. You are the source of your experience.

What's that, you say? You say that someone or something else helped you build your mind, or even built it for you. How long will you hide out behind that lie? Were there people there when you decided things or experienced the circumstances of your life? Yes. Did they want you to do things and be things? Yes. But you still bought it. You went along to get along. You bought something and paid with something. You made a deal. Maybe, you went along to survive, or be loved, or manipulate them, or look good, or fit in, or be liked, or avoid pain, or whatever. The lies you are telling yourself about your non-responsibility are killing off your aliveness right now. "I didn't want to feel this way. I don't make-up my feelings. It is because of my past that I feel this way."

Forget about what happened 20 years ago, are you fully alive right now? Does

your life work at the level of joy and satisfaction right now? No one is further from being alive than someone who is trying to 'be right' about his or her past or present circumstances. That is what lies do. They kill off our aliveness. They obscure the truth of 'who we really are' and imprison us in our minds, limited by who we think we are. The truth is like gravity; it doesn't require a bunch of beliefs or positions to prop it up. The truth stands alone, and the truth will set you free. But first, it will usually piss you off, too bad. You are the responsible agent in your life. The sooner you get that, the better off you will be. Nobody makes you mad. Nobody makes you feel good. You have feelings and you assign them to outside circumstances. You are a genius at editing and re-editing your life. Get how incredibly powerful you are to create experiences and beliefs and drama and relationships and money, or even a lack of all of that. Poverty or abundant experiences are both evidence for the genius of the human being. Out of the most horrendous circumstances courage and faith can emerge. While out of the most beautiful and abundant condition greed and hate can result. Conditions and circumstances are not the source of our greatness or how small we can be. We are.

When you begin to acknowledge your responsibility for what you experience and create right now, even when you are not presently able to see the 'how' of your creating it, some amazing shifts begin to take place in your world. First, it will appear that 'you' are happening and not the events. So when asked the question, "What's happening?" The answer will occur to you as, "I am." You will simply be a more objective and impartial observer of your 'stuff'. (Your 'stuff' is made up of your opinions, beliefs, judgments, and positions about life. And some of your 'stuff' has you acting as though you are a victim.) You will feel more alive. Secondly, things or people that have occurred to you as problems or irritants will transform. They won't necessarily do anything different, only show up in your experience as different. Problems that have persisted or that you have put up with will simply clear up in the act of living your life. Thirdly, your ability to solve larger and larger challenges will expand. With responsibility comes creativity. And fourthly, you can start to have your life work at the level of joy and satisfaction, instead of just survival. This is your right. This is the genius you really are.

"The price of greatness is responsibility." - Winston Churchill

### **How to Train a Flea**

Let's say that some day you might need a bit of extra income. So you decide to open a flea circus as a part time job. Here is how you train fleas for the circus. Everyone has heard of a flea circus, but few have ever seen one. The reason for that is the awesome commitment it takes to create and promote them. Few people are that committed and as such few flea circuses exist today. It isn't

because you aren't able to train fleas. Fleas are, in fact, very trainable. The biggest problem with a flea circus is the fleas, though. The average North American flea can jump 30 feet in a single bound. This is an extremely undesirable trait for circus fleas, for they will quickly escape the circus. The first lesson for your flea is to learn to not jump at all. Here is how you train fleas to stop jumping.

Step one:

Get a seven-inch tall mayonnaise jar.

Step two:

Remove any and all mayonnaise. (This is a major step. You cannot skip this step.)

Step three:

Put the flea in the jar and screw on the lid. (Actually, this is two steps in one.)

Step four:

Shake the jar.

At this point the flea will begin to jump in the jar. It will sound and look similar to this: Click. Thump. Click. Thump. Click. Thump.

It is important to shake the jar occasionally to keep the flea involved in its training. An involved flea is a trainable flea. Click. Thump. Click. Thump. As the flea continues to jump and hit its head on the lid of the jar it will begin to notice that it hurts to jump. This is due to the innate intelligence of the flea. It only takes a couple of hours and the flea will then learn to jump six inches in a seven-inch jar. Click. Click. Click. Voila! Stage one of the training is now complete. For the rest of the flea's life it will never again jump 30 feet in a single bound. The flea now knows a new limit. Even if you take the lid off the jar, the flea will not be able to escape. Put the flea in a smaller jar and repeat the process. Two smaller jars later the flea will never jump again. It will give up its essence (jumping) to survive. You now have the beginning of the Smallest Show On Earth, a flea circus. Life's just clicking along.

It is estimated that half of the content of our mind, the beliefs, the judgments, and the programs that operate our auto-pilot are in place by the time we are 4 years old. Click. Thump. What did you buy when you were 4 years old? By the time we are 8 years old as much as 80% of our belief systems are in place.

Click. Thump. And as much as 95% of our daily actions are generated from this content of our mind, albeit unconsciously. Click. Thump.

This "auto-pilot" part of the mind operates much like the computer on your desk at home or work. It is programmed for survival, or what you tell it survival is. From your first day you began to collect the programs necessary to survive.

Through repetition and emotional involvement you collect your programs and the unconscious mind stores these programs as though they were reality. Click. Thump. Click. Thump. You have collected and created programs about everything in your life, programs about what it means to be a man or woman, about money, wealth, age, time, intimacy, commitment, love, friends, etc. - every aspect of life. Click. Thump. Click. Thump.

Before you knew how to drive a car, you simply did not have the program necessary to drive. You wanted to learn, so you took lessons and practiced. In the beginning, before you had a "program" to drive a car, the conscious mind did the driving for you. This was a very difficult proposition at best, since the conscious mind can only think of one thing at a time.

Everything you did to drive that car, in the beginning, was a conscious thought; how to park, change lanes, make left turns, pass someone, or just start the car! Driving a car with only your conscious mind was a chore. But as you were consciously learning to drive your unconscious mind was paying close attention. Your unconscious mind was learning a "program" - how to drive a car.

Now with an unconscious "program" for driving a car, you don't even have to be consciously in the car to drive somewhere! How many times have you driven somewhere and had that strange feeling that YOU DON'T EVEN REMEMBER THE DRIVE THERE? Did you bother stopping at red lights? What route did you take? Don't know, can't remember the drive there - 'program' in charge. How many times have you driven somewhere, gotten out of your car and realized THIS ISN'T WHERE YOU WERE GOING? Somehow you automatically ended up there.

The same experience can occur in our marriage, or our business, or our career, or with all of our other relationships. This is because of the programmed part of our mind is not limited to driving cars.

"How did we get here? What happened to our marriage? This isn't where we set out to go." "I don't recall much of all the last few years with you. Where did all the time go?"

Most people never even realize that they have stopped jumping in life. They feel like they just somehow arrived there. Or if they know they have stopped

jumping, they justify it with, "This is just who I am." Or "I am doing the best I can." Only the mediocre are at their best. You can give that one up right now, if you want. They experienced the jar lid when they were children and haven't jumped since. It seems as though some people are just having a tantrum, a very long tantrum. Or they jumped once or twice and it hurt so much they stopped. Or they feared something would hurt, so they didn't jump. What did you buy (lids) growing up? And what lids are you not being responsible for? Meaning, are still blaming someone else for your limitations? You bought them, so now own them. If you don't generate the experience of buying and owning them, there is nothing you can do about them. You just get to play victim. Click. Thump.

What lids did you buy and trade for? In other words, what content did you fill your mind with, that you now believe to be the truth? Read this entire list. DO NOT SKIP ANY ONE OF THEM.

You are just like your father. Click. Thump.

Children should be seen and not heard. Click. Thump.

I am just not good at math. Click. Thump.

Mommy won't like you if you do that. Click. Thump.

You never do enough. Click. Thump.

Why can't you be like your brother? Click. Thump.

My parents never cared about me. Click. Thump.

I am a slow learner. Click. Thump.

I have to be the best. Click. Thump.

I can't make mistakes. Click. Thump.

I can't trust. Click. Thump.

I can't have intimate relationships. Click. Thump.

If it is to be done right, I'll have to do it. Click. Thump.

You have to work hard. Click. Thump.

Money doesn't grow on trees. Click. Thump.

If you love me, you'd change. Click. Thump.

Nobody knows how I feel. Click. Thump.

Who do you think you are? Click. Thump.

Time is money. Click. Thump.

Everyone should like me. Click. Thump.

Life should be fair. Click. Thump.

I'll give if you give. Click. Thump.

People like you are a dime a dozen. Click. Thump.

You have to have money to make money. Click. Thump.

You can't get ahead without an education. Click. Thump.

You grew up on the wrong side of the tracks. Click. Thump.

Nobody ever believes me. Click. Thump.

Life is hard. Then you die. Click. Thump.

Be a good girl. Click. Thump.

Be a good boy. Click. Thump.

There isn't enough love in the world. Click. Thump.

There isn't enough opportunity in the world. Click. Thump.

I was deprived. Click. Thump.

Nobody loves me. Click. Thump.

I don't deserve it. Click. Thump.

I am not worthy. Click. Thump.

You never listen to me. Click. Thump.

I can't commit. Click. Thump.

Never volunteer. Click. Thump.

Never give in. Click. Thump.

I have the greatest parents in the world. (Can I ever live up to their greatness?)  
Click. Thump.

I have no lid. (I have arrived.) Click. Thump.

It will never work out. Click. Thump.

Don't dream too big of a dream. You'll just be disappointed. Click. Thump.

Be realistic. Click. Thump.

I don't matter. Click. Thump.

Clean your plate. Click. Thump.

Do I have to do everything around here? Click. Thump.

Get your head out of the clouds. Click. Thump.

Don't be a loser. (Am I?) Click. Thump.

Stop being a wimp. (Am I?) Click. Thump.

Big boys don't cry. Click. Thump.

What were you thinking? Click. Thump.

Are you going to let them get away with that? Click. Thump.

You deserve what you get. Click. Thump.

This will hurt me more than it does you. Click. Thump.

When will you learn? Click. Thump.

Had enough? Click. Thump.

Did you run away and join the Smallest Show On Earth, the circus of victim-fleas? Have you given up some of your essence in order to survive? Congratulations, you survived! Now let's get on with your life. I challenge you to jump again. The only lids you have are the ones you bought and traded for. Take the lids off of your dreams. You are the dreamer of your dreams. You are a genius at creating! You are totally responsible for your lids. You are totally responsible for your experience of your lids.

You are totally responsible for what you hear, see, and feel in your life. Instead of trying to change or manipulate your 'stuff', you are responsible for observing your 'stuff' (Content of Your Mind), and knowing it is not who you really are. You are the responsible agent in your life. You are a genius at creating life, albeit an unconscious genius. Wake up. Who do you think you are, anyway? You are more than your mind/body. That much is clear. Will you acknowledge this, or not?

In the next chapter you will discover that you become what think, if you don't wake up.

### Assignment

Answer the following questions everyday for the next seven days. This will be in addition to any other assignments you do in this workbook over the next week.

Where are you operating as though you are victim?

What are the prices you pay for operating this way? In other words what does it cost you, or what do you give up to operate as though you were a victim?

What are the payoffs for operating this way? What goodie do you receive? (Looking good, being right, getting attention, explain your lack of results?)

Are the payoffs worth the prices?

When you operate from victim what are your predominant feelings?

Imagine the future you'd create by continually operating from the mind-set of victim. Write it out in detail.

Imagine the future you'd create by acknowledging you as the responsible agent in your life. Write it out in detail.

Write out ten beliefs (lids) you would be willing to let go of:

Be the future that you want today, since you already are.  
<http://www.being.com/responsible.html>