

Ultimate Simplicity and  
Efficiency



Basic Principles for Life  
Preview Chapters

Copyright ©2009 by Neil Keleher  
All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission from the copyright owner except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles or reviews.

Published 2009

Cover Art and Design by 柯博文

For more on Basic Principles go to

[Ultimate.zeroparallax.com](http://Ultimate.zeroparallax.com)

Send questions to the author at

[consciousnessconnects@gmail.com](mailto:consciousnessconnects@gmail.com)

For Mum and Dad  
I love you both



# INTRODUCTION



*Sensing options we can choose from among them.*  
*Sensing limits we can move within them.*

## **An Abundance of Ideas**

While waiting for a friend at a restaurant one day I pondered the idea of teaching yoga to kids. I thought it would be a way of helping them to learn their bodies true potential before they became filled with ideas of what they couldn't do.

I live in Taiwan. There are quite a few foreigners here teaching English and I was once one of them. I wanted to train those same teachers to teach Yoga as part of their kids exercise time.

I thought it would be a great opportunity for the teachers to learn to teach something other than just English. Also, the schools could benefit from the fact that they were offering yoga and I would get the chance to develop a training program that would benefit teachers as well as the children that they taught.

To promote this idea to both the schools and the parents I thought that I could tell them how a flexible body would lead to a flexible mind.<sup>1</sup> The problem was that I wasn't aware of any evidence that supported this notion and so I thought that perhaps the mental flexibility could come in the way I taught yoga.

So that the kids would become flexible thinkers my idea was to first teach them a set sequence of yoga poses. Once the children had learned this sequence then we could teach them how to vary it. We could show them variations of both the sequence and the poses themselves. Using the original sequence as a framework they would learn how to make changes within that framework. They would then learn that there isn't just one way to do something and that while it is helpful to learn a single way to do things at first it is also good to learn variations

---

<sup>1</sup> And by a flexible mind I mean being able to think creatively or outside of the box.

so that then they can choose the best way depending on the circumstances they are in.

Eventually they wouldn't even need the framework, depending on how well we taught them they could learn to create their own sequences of poses, perhaps with a particular intent.

When my friend arrived I told him about my idea and I asked him if he be interested in helping me to make it real. He told me not to worry about this particular idea, that it didn't matter if we did it because there were plenty of other ideas to go around.

I thought about that for a while. I later took it to mean that it doesn't matter if someone else "steals" our idea or if the idea<sup>2</sup> has already been done. There are always more ideas to make real and not only that, there are different ways to make those ideas real. In either case there are options.

It's a little bit like what I wanted to teach the kids, how to be aware of options, in their case for moving their body. I also wanted to show them how to be aware of the affects of those options by noticing the way each change made their body feel.

---

<sup>2</sup> Well, maybe it does matter, but more to the point if we can't get the idea back then there are always more of them out there!

By connecting kids to the idea of yoga I was hoping to help them learn their body and its potential so that they could then use it if they chose. And even if they didn't act on that awareness at least I've given them the opportunity to choose.

And that was the importance of my friends comment; being aware that there are is an abundance of ideas, the more ideas we can sense then the more we can choose from those which to make real.

Sensing ideas and choosing from among them we can learn to be free.

### **A Little Bit about Me**

Once upon a time I didn't know how to feel my body. I didn't know how to relax my arms so that I could feel the weight of my bones. I did not know how to feel my ribcage or my spine. I didn't know how to move gently or softly or lightly but now I can and I'm constantly getting better.

I've learned how to kick a soccer ball so that it goes where I want it too. Before that I was happy when I was just able to kick the ball without missing it. Once upon a time I could barely reach past my knees but now I can touch my toes and even reach beyond them. I can very

nearly do the full splits and my side splits are opening up too.

I now have to remind myself that once I was inflexible, uncoordinated and clumsy and how much I have learned since that time.

I quit high school before graduating to move to England to join the army. It was what I thought I wanted to do with my life, be a soldier.

When I joined the army I didn't believe I was smart enough to learn about electricity or electronics, it was like magic to me. However, as I continued my education in the army by taking correspondence courses I realized that I was capable of learning about electricity and electronics, so much so that when I left the army I applied to and was accepted in the Electrical Engineering program at the University of Waterloo. So much for not being smart! Although I started in Electrical Engineering I eventually graduated from Systems Design Engineering instead.

Going back to school was one of the most enjoyable times of my life. I loved to learn. At the same time I wondered what I would do after I graduated. I ended up as a test engineer for about three years before quitting. Then I thought I was going to become an actor.

Taking acting lessons I learned that knowing what my character wanted was a powerful thing. It could drive the lines that I spoke so that they came out of my mouth naturally, in response to the situation I was in. But prior to that I had to practice my lines and I had to figure out what the character wanted. It was a little bit like life, figuring out what I wanted to do with it so that I could get on with living it. Engineering was similar. A lot of time was spent figuring out problems. Once we figured out what the problems were then we could go about fixing them.

I teach yoga now and I think that one of the things that helps me as a yoga teacher is that I lead with a clear idea of what I am trying to do. I also spend a lot of time trying to figure out how the body works so that I can share that understanding with others. By understanding how things work, whether it is my body or things outside of my body, I can use that understanding to make life simpler, more efficient. I can choose the easy way to do things and I can get things done.

One of the things I've been trying to figure out are a set of Basic Principles that can be used in any context to help figure out what we are trying to do and then how to get it done in the best way possible. I thought my life (and other people's lives) would be so much simpler if

we all had simple tools that we could use to help us understand any situation so that then we could go about handling it. But even better than just being able to get things done, these same principles could be used to help us enjoy life and to experience it.

That really is the key to learning to do things well, to experience things as we do them. That means using our senses and responding to what we sense and then afterwards resting so that we can look back at what we have done and thus make the experience a part of ourselves. That is how understanding comes about, by making experiences a part of ourselves so that after we can venture outwards again to experience even more or what life has to offer.

## **Why This Book**

This book has many catalysts but perhaps one of the most important ones was a friend named Steve Richardson who said that he would like to take yoga to big businesses. Not as a yoga teacher teaching the employees but teaching the people who run the company the principles of yoga so that they can run the company based on yoga principles.

This book isn't necessarily about the principles of yoga but it is based on a similar idea, basic principles that

can be applied in any aspect of life whether running a business or using the body or even maintaining a relationship with a loved one.

It's a little bit like my idea for teaching yoga to kids. Instead of a framework of yoga poses this is a framework of ideas, each connected to the next to form a cohesive whole, Basic Principles for living life and enjoying it.

## **Categories of Doing and Resting**

A big part of enjoying life is having a balanced life. One way of balancing our lives is by first understanding the elements that need to be balanced. And so I came up with the categories below.

The idea was to come up with categories, in this case five, that are essential to a balanced life. These categories may overlap or rather you may find that one activity you do can fit into more than one of these categories. What is important is that each category gets the attention it needs.

Below are four general categories for things that we do.

- i. Learning for personal pleasure, for profit or both
- ii. Enjoying ourselves whether by ourselves or with family and friends.

- iii. Creating income whether by working for someone, creating a business and running it, investing, buying and/or selling.
- iv. Watching other people do things.

While all of the above may be required for a balanced life the list below is a way of further classifying the types of things that we do:

- Designing, Creating, Building, Problem Solving, Entertaining, Working, Playing
- Leading, Selling, Teaching, Fixing
- Piloting, Driving, Riding
- Working using our body, working using Simple Tools, working using Complex Tools
- Doing while physically connected to someone else.
- Working individually, as part of a team, as part of partnership or a Family
- Observing what is around our selves.

There is also a fifth category of Doing that is actually “Non-Doing” or resting. This is not the same as watching others doing. Doing or watching others do things we are using our senses, our awareness is expanded outwards into space. While Not-Doing we pull inwards from space. We are looking within.

Resting we might be “Not-Doing” the following:

- Doing nothing while thinking about what we have done or what we would like to do
- Doing nothing while resting so completely that we aren't even thinking, we are completely still.

## **The Basics**

Through out this book I will talk about ideas as the things that we do. We can also think about ideas in terms of the changes that they create. Doing something, making an idea real, here is the general cycle of what happens from when we first “think” of an idea, to when it is complete.

1. First we sense ideas as possibilities.
2. Then we choose an idea to make real.
3. We learn the idea(s).
4. We express the idea (or experience it).
5. Finally we Rest.

For step 1 we can sense ideas by looking around us and seeing what we might like to do, whether it is riding a motorcycle, starting a business, learning to dance, learning our body, designing a car, a shoe or a backpack.

We then can then move to step 2 and choose from among these ideas an idea we would like to make real.

Once we have chosen an idea to make real then for step 3 if it is a Big Idea like designing a car then we break the Big Idea down into small ideas that are all connected or related so that we can work on them one at a time.

If we are trying to solve a problem then part of step 3 is figuring out what the problem is. When we know the problem then we can get on with solving it.

Once we've chosen an idea and once we've learned it and understand it we can then we can move to step 4 and express it. That might mean building it, or doing it or somehow making the idea real.

While we are expressing an idea or doing it, we "do" the following:

- a. First we know what we are trying to do
- b. We then use our senses to sense our selves and what is around our selves.
- c. We then respond to what we sense based on the idea of what we are trying to do. We give ourselves room to move, room to do what we are trying to do.

If part of what we are doing is working with other people then the important thing is sharing the idea of

what we are trying to do. When all parties know what they are trying to do they can get on with doing it.

Step 5 is important so that we can enjoy what we have done in retrospect. Having expressed an idea we can look back across time and see what we've done and see how it has affected our selves and others. Then we can repeat the whole cycle again, choosing to express the same idea in a different way or choosing a different idea.

## IDEAS AND CHANGE



*Ideas are the basic building blocks of the universe. They are what we want to do, what we want to make, what we want to create and more. As well as being the things that we think about in our heads they are also the things in the world around us whether living or made.*

*They are anything that we can label with a meaning, a point or a purpose. They are the change that they create when connected to other ideas.*

*They are the basic elements, atoms or strings that are at the base of all things*

*We can be ideas.*

## Ideas that I like

A question I've asked myself is what would I do if money wasn't a worry. What are the things I would like to do with my life if I wasn't wasting time, if I was living the life that I would love to lead?

I'd teach more people about basic principles, so that more people can get on with doing what they want.

I would write a book on practical anatomy and feeling it in our own body. Closely related, a users manual for the body. What we can actually do with our body so that we can do all the things that we would like to do given the natural limits of our body.

I would write books on doing yoga and Tai Ji teaching how to feel our body as we do these practices. And I would teach about leading our body with our mind by knowing the idea of what we are trying to do while at the same time knowing what our body can really do.

And I'd teach people how to be free so that they can choose freely not to listen to bad news or all that is bad in the world, so that they can focus on what is good or on making things good.

I would continue to work on my Chinese-English dictionary project, making a translation program that

was easy and convenient to use, that helps people to learn the language even as they use it.

I'd design a bicycle with an electrical transmission and a fluid one for that matter. And I'd design ergonomic backpacks that not only fit the body well but fit our life and our fashion sense and I'd make them work well. I'd design clothing for guys for yoga and martial arts. I'd design motorcycle protective gear that is cool to wear in the summer.

I'd take motor cycle racing courses and car racing courses and oh yes, go to one of those schools where they teach you how to drift like in the movie "Tokyo Drift." I'd study and learn more martial arts.

I'd have fun making things with friends and I'd have fun relaxing and hanging out.

Those are some of the ideas that I want in my life. Some of them I already have. Some of them I am already working on.

Knowing the ideas I want to make real I can look for the opportunities to allow them to happen. That could be looked at as one of the keys to efficiency, giving ideas the room they need to be made real. Allowing things to happen or creating space to allow things to happen, life is less about struggle and more about joy. We then become like observers watching ourselves experience life.

## The Building Blocks of the Universe

I studied Systems Design Engineering in university. A System is as a collection of interconnected things that work together to serve some purpose. It is something that has some meaning or creates some sort of change or experience. Our body is a system and it has lots of sub-systems such as the nervous system, the digestive system etc. A motorcycle or a car is a system and the roads we drive on are part of a system too. There are systems of yoga and Tai Ji, systems of thought and philosophy. Governments and languages are systems. Families can be systems too. Plants, animals and the world around us can be thought of as systems or parts of systems.

We can think of systems as ideas that have some purpose or create some change when they are connected to other ideas. Our body is an idea designed so that we can experience life. Motorcycles are ideas that allow us to get to places fast. Yoga and Tai Ji are ideas of poses or movements for the body that can instill health and help the practitioner in being present. Languages are ideas that help us to connect to each other. Governments are ideas that control the ideas that are a part of it.

We can think of systems as ideas but not all ideas are systems. Sometimes they are just parts of a system. These ideas also create change via their connections or

relationships with other ideas. To differentiate between these levels of ideas we can call the system a Big Idea or Core Idea and the parts that make the system up Small Ideas or Component Ideas. Depending on our point of view an idea might be a Big Idea in one context and a Small Idea in another. As an example, to us the Earth is a Big Idea. In the context of the solar system or the Galaxy the earth is a Small Idea. In either case, knowing the meaning of an idea we can say: "It Does This!"

What is the point of using ideas as a basic unit of meaning?<sup>3</sup> The Idea as a unit of meaning gives us a general way of talking about things. Being able to think about anything in terms of Ideas we can apply a simple set of principles to those ideas. Understanding the point of any idea that we sense or see we can act on that understanding if we so choose.

Another reason for using ideas as general units of meaning is that they are scaleable. I got the term from the book "Planet Google."

---

<sup>3</sup> We could say that understanding the point of an idea is the point. As an example, understanding the idea of what we are trying to do we have a direction we can move in, something to guide what we are doing. Likewise, understanding the point of the ideas we sense around us can help us to understand why an idea acts the way it does. If we think of ourselves as ideas at any moment in time the idea of what we are trying to do can define us. Aware of the idea of our selves at any moment in time we can change that idea if we choose.

The software and hardware that Google uses is scaleable because they can easily keep on adding more computers to their system without ever slowing down the speed of their service. They can get bigger without sacrificing the quality of what they do because they can simply add more of the same basic building blocks to their system. Instead of worrying about how to help more people, they can add more computers to their system they and actually get on with helping more and more people search.

For ourselves, using the concept of ideas over and over again, we can look around us and see everything in terms of ideas and understand the changes that those ideas create. We then have a simple way of identifying the world around us. We can then act on that understanding if we choose. Sensing the change an idea is creating we can respond to that change.

We can apply this same process to our selves and anything we do. Knowing the idea of what we are trying to do we then know the change we are trying to create. We can then look for the way to create that change or to allow it to happen.

## Making Ideas Real

Using our senses we can identify the world around us in terms of ideas and the changes that they create. We can then respond to what we sense. We can then also create change, in particular the change that we want to create. Knowing the idea of what we are trying to do we can respond to what is around our selves and within our selves in such a way that we give the energy of an idea a path to flow along. We allow the idea to be made real.

It's like we are surfing and we are looking for the way to continue to surf. To do that we monitor our selves and our connection to the board so that we stay balanced but we also sense the waves and the wind so that we know what changes are about to occur so that we can handle those changes. We then smoothly carry on surfing, perhaps even moving from wave to wave, until we hit the shore and then we swim back out again to catch the next wave.

Eventually the waves die down and so it is then time to take a rest. We can then look back on our experience and make it a part of ourselves. We can enjoy it for what it was or we can look back and see what we can do better, perhaps a way to make our surfing even smoother, more effortless. And so the next day we get back on our board and we ride some more. But this day

the waves are different than the day before but that's all right. We stay aware of our selves and what is around us and we build on the experience of the past so that we can handle bigger waves or rougher waves as we meet them.

We then make this experience also a part of ourselves.

We may reach a point that with enough experience we can handle anything that the ocean has to offer. Then we are free to surf because the idea of surfing is truly a part of ourselves.

## **Qualities of Ideas**

Because ideas are the basic units of meaning in this book I associate with them certain qualities that help to make them more practical from a larger standpoint. These qualities give us ways of modeling the interaction of ideas. It is a way of understanding ideas so that we can choose the ideas we connect to and also choose the ideas that we disconnect from.

One of the qualities of an idea is Gravity. This is a special sort of gravity. It only attracts when we give an idea our attention. We could imagine that the gravity of an idea pulls us through time so that we can connect to the idea and then make it real.

Initially we may have to put regular or frequent attention on an idea in order for it to draw us towards itself. However, once we connect to it, we may not need to give it so much attention. We are “close” enough for the gravity of the idea to keep us connected.

When we finally do connect to an idea, the connection is inside of ourselves. Our center connects to its center. To disconnect we first have to be aware of our connection to the idea in the first place. We have to go into the center of ourselves. Then we can let that connection go.

Another property of ideas is that they have energy or spin. This energy radiates outwards from the center of an idea. When we connect to an idea it is this energy that helps to drive us and make the idea real.

In real world terms, in the process of being drawn into an idea we could in fact be learning the idea. Perhaps it is the idea of learning to ride a motorbike. As we learn the elements of riding we get closer and closer to the center of the idea of riding. Then once we have learned all the parts necessary then we can ride. We have connected to the idea of riding a motorbike and now the energy of the idea of riding is helping us to make it real.

Of course, a tank full of gas helps in this process.

If we are connected to an idea and are making it real it is the energy of that idea that can carry us and help us to make the idea real. But we have to be connected to an idea in order for us to be “energized” by it.

Connected to an idea, we can liken the energy of an idea to a wave that carries us through time. While in the process of connecting to an idea it’s gravity pulls us forwards through time, once we connect to the idea, the energy of its expression carries us through time.

Another aspect of an idea is its center. It’s not so much a quality of an idea so much as it is the point of an idea itself.

## **Relationships and Change**

When two ideas are in a relationship they create a change. Ideas might be physically “connected” but if there is no change then there is no relationship, no connection. As an example, the parts of a computer may be connected but if no electricity flows through that connection then the connection is useless. When electricity flows as either power or information then the parts are “connected” because information, energy or change can flow.

We could be holding someone's hand but not notice it. There is then no connection. If we notice the warmth and feel of their hand then there is a connection.

For our purposes a connection is something that changes the ideas that are connected. A connection creates change or transmits it. Connections allow energy or information to flow. Whether a connected idea is electrical, mechanical or biological in nature, we can say an idea is connected when it changes or change is created as a result of that connection.

## **Free Expression and Limits**

Initially we may learn one way to express an idea. Then as we improve our understanding we can learn other ways of expressing the idea. As we continue to learn an idea we get better at sensing the limits within which the idea functions best. Rather than hindering us these limits allow us to focus the energy of our expression. We might then try to vary the limits. Going back to the surfing analogy, we might try out different boards, longer, shorter, wider, different fin configurations, different waxes. We try out one board and then another. Where initially we might use a particular board for particular weather conditions or for

a particular type of ride, we may reach a point where the type of board we use ceases to matter. Whatever board we are using we can use well.

With ideas in general, we may have learned an idea in enough different ways, with enough variation in the limits that we are no longer limited. We've learned all of the options and can dance among them freely. Better yet, we've learned enough options that we can always make the idea real no matter what the circumstances. It's as if no matter what happens we can handle it.

We've become free.

And it was using limits, or sensing them, that helped us to become free.

## Clear Ideas

One of the ways that ideas change each other is via another "connecting" idea. As an example, the parts of a computer can be connected via wires and cables. These wires transmit energy, information or change from one part of the computer to another. Ideally when information is transmitted from one part of a computer to the other it is unchanged in the process of transmission. Usually, the better the quality of the connection between the parts of a computer the smaller are the chances of information being lost or distorted.

One of the ways we can create change is to connect people outside of ourselves to an idea. The clearer we understand an idea and the clearer we can transmit this understanding, the easier it is for us to then connect others to this idea.

Helping other people to connect to an idea, whether employees, customers, team mates or partners, the clearer we make the idea for others to see, the easier it is for them to connect to it. As a leader, the clearer we make the idea for others, the easier it is for others to follow.

We can apply this even when we aren't leading others. Leading the idea of ourselves, perhaps all the parts of our body, the clearer we understand what we are trying to do and the clearer we transmit this idea, the easier it is for the parts of ourselves to follow. So if we are simply focused on doing something, whether it is work, a hobby, being a good father or mother or husband or wife (or child) or friend, or neighbor, or team mate or work mate, or boss, or employee, the clearer we understand what we are trying to do or be, the better we can do it, become it or lead it.

Being able to transmit energy or information clearly, we can help others act on that information. We thus become a conduit for change.

## Big Ideas and Small Ones

Whether we are leading our selves or others one of the problems we may encounter is that an idea seems “Too Big” to handle. If that is the case then we can break down this Big Idea into smaller ideas that are easy to handle.

The important thing when doing this is to make sure that each of the smaller ideas has a purpose.

Perhaps the idea is that of going to the gym or working out. We could go to the gym once a day and each time start of with cardio both for its own sake and as a warm-up, and then do weights. Afterwards we can stretch and also use stretching as a cool down. However, if we don't have enough time to do all of these at once, we can break this Big Idea down into the smaller ideas that make it up. We can go to the gym once a day and do cardio for 15 or 20 minutes. We can go at another time to do weights. Finally we can stretch for 20 or so minutes at home whenever we feel like it.

Being able to break Big Ideas down into smaller ideas that have meaning, no matter how busy our day is we can find time to squeeze these smaller ideas into our schedule. In addition, these smaller ideas offer a way for us to balance our lives. Needing a break from brain work we can exercise our body. Needing a break from working

out our body we can do brain work instead. In either case, breaking down Big Ideas into small ones we can then fit all the ideas we need to do into our day.

If our life is full of ideas that are seemingly at cross-purposes we can go the other way. Instead of breaking a Big Idea down into smaller ideas we can figure out a Big Idea to unify the small ideas that makeup our life.

Looking at the possible ideas we can bring into our life, the ideas that we want to keep in our life and the ideas that we want to disconnect from we can make our decisions based on one unifying Big Idea. As an example, if the Big Idea is that of Living a Life that we Enjoy then we can choose the smaller ideas that we have in our life based on this Big Idea. We can ask ourselves the question of anything that we do, "Will this bring joy into my life?"

If we don't think that an idea will bring joy into our life then we can choose to disconnect from that idea or not to connect to it in the first place.

# BEING CONSCIOUS



*Part of Being Conscious is being aware of our mind, our body and all that is around our selves. We can then respond to what we sense.*

*Experiencing life while being conscious we can take experiences inside of our selves so that we can learn from them and grow.*

## **Consciousness, Time and Space**

Being Conscious means being aware of our self and what is around our selves. It means knowing what we are doing while we are doing it. It means knowing the change that we are trying to create.

Being conscious we can sense change, create it and enjoy it whether it comes from inside of ourselves or outside.

Consciousness has two main modes of operation, we can be “Thinking” or we can be “Doing.”

When we are thinking our consciousness is expanded across time. While we are doing it is expanded in space.

When our consciousness is expanded across time we can visualize it as contracting in from space, pulling inwards into the center of ourselves. When it is expanded across space we can imagine it radiating outwards from the center of our body so that we sense ourselves as well as what is around us.

Pulling inwards our consciousness expands into imaginary space. This is where we can think about things we’ve done or things we’d like to do. We can think about ideas or changes that we’ve already experienced or would like to experience. We can think about Big Ideas and the small ideas that make them up. We can think about what we have to do and how we can go about doing it. When our consciousness is expanded in space we can use our senses and recognize what they are telling us.

If we are in imaginary space then even if our senses are telling us something we are not there to notice what

they are telling us and we certainly are not there to respond.

When we are “Present” our consciousness is fully expanded into space. Being present we can respond to what we sense. Present we notice all that is going on around us and we respond accordingly.

In imaginary space we are using our mind, hence we may be unaware of our selves or what is around us.

Making good use of time and space we use imaginary space to think about what we want to do and how to do it and then we expand our consciousness in space to go about doing it.

By learning to think and then do we are learning to “Lead with our Mind.

By learning to control when we think and what we think about we are learning to “Lead our Mind.”

Leading our mind we can think about what we want to do and how to go about doing it and then while doing we can direct our selves to sense what we are doing.

Eventually we learn think about what we are doing as we are doing it, the act of thinking and doing become one.

Sometimes we do and sometimes we watch other people do and sometimes we just enjoy the world around us (or within us).

In one case we are conscious of what we are doing. In the other we are conscious of what others are doing. In one case we emit energy in the other we take it back in.

Being conscious of what others are doing is not the same as thinking. Rather, it is like listening. Listening our mind is still. We are present. It's a way we can experience life to the maximum, enjoying the experience of ourselves as well as others.

Watching others, listening we can see new ways of doing things. But we may watch others for the simple joy of it.

*Is being conscious something we can all do or be? Is it something that can be learned?*

Yes it can and yes it is. It's a choice we can make, to be conscious, and then we simply take little steps at a time towards being more conscious until we are fully conscious, fully aware most of the time.

*What happens if we expand into space completely or expand fully into time?*

My believe is that by fully expanding in one direction or the other we can move beyond time and space all together. We move into the realm that contains them both or we move into the realm where they are no longer separate.

Going the way of maximum presence, our passage through time slows down. We are "Riding the wave of

time.” We notice what is going on around us now so it is that much easier to see what is going to happen next. As a result we can respond to change as it is happening. It’s as if by being present we tune in to the same source that drives the change around us.

If we go the way of time and expand completely into imaginary space we enter the realm of all-that-is in a different way. This is when we become highly susceptible to the “Aha” moment where thinking about one thing we get the answer to another, or when just being still answers to problems are handed to us as if they were there all of the time.

We can also get these “Aha” moments while being maximally present. In either case solutions tend to be presented whole and complete.

*Is thinking bad, are we being unconscious when we think?*

Thinking isn’t bad. We can be conscious while we are thinking if we notice what we are thinking about. We can then direct our thoughts usefully.

We can then lead our mind instead of being led by it.

## **Simplicity**

Being conscious we can see or sense the simple ways to do things.

Doing something or trying to get something done, we can think about what we have to do or the way we are going to do it and then we can get on with doing. The simpler something is the less time we have to think about what we have to do or how we are going to do it. We can then focus on what we are doing because we know what we are trying to do.

If something isn't simple then we can break it down into small ideas so that it is. Consciousness is what we use to do just that, break down big ideas into small ideas that are meaningful.

Another way of making our lives simple is to have someone else make the choices for us, have someone else take the lead and break Big Ideas down into smaller elements so we can get on with doing. As an example; when I started to work with a personal trainer at the gym I found working out became so much simpler than doing it by myself. She told me what to do and I could just get on and do it.

After that experience I realized why people listened to me when I taught a yoga class. They wanted to be told what to do. They wanted to be led. They didn't have to think, they only had to do. I helped them with that by choosing what they could do. We divided the roles of

consciousness and as a result became part of a bigger idea.

My trainer and I were part of the Big Idea of working out. My students and I were part of the Big Idea of a yoga class.

Working with someone else or with a group of others we can create Big Ideas that work if we divide the roles of consciousness: someone leads and the others follow. We choose to lead or we choose to follow. We can also do the same thing by ourselves. We can simplify our lives by choosing a Big Idea to lead our selves with. Then we can follow it.

If we have a Big Idea to lead our life choosing the smaller ideas that make it up becomes simpler because we have something to guide all of our decision making processes. Then in any choice we have to make we can base our decision on how it helps the Big Idea of our life as a whole.

Once we choose a Big Idea to lead our selves with, life becomes simpler because we can base all of our choices on this Big Idea. And then if later we realize we don't like our Big Idea, we can change it or modify it if we choose.

## Efficiency

Efficiency can be defined as a lack of waste. Things we can waste include time and energy. How do we waste time and energy? By worrying or by thinking<sup>4</sup> about things we can do nothing about, by not enjoying ourselves, by not enjoying our lives, by doing something with no possible benefit or enjoyment for ourselves or anyone or anything else.<sup>5</sup>

How do we eliminate waste or reduce it? By knowing what we are trying to do and by using our senses and acting on what we sense depending on what we are trying to do. In other words, by being conscious.

Using our senses we can sense the best way to do a job and we can do it. If there is only one way to do a job then using our senses we can sense that way quickly and then get on with doing it. In both cases efficiency results from us using our senses.

Knowing what we are trying to do, being conscious, we can sense if what we are doing is helping us get what we want done or if it is hindering us. We can then notice

---

<sup>4</sup> Thinking isn't a bad thing, rather, thinking about things that we can do nothing about, worrying in other words, that is a waste of time based consciousness. How can we work around worrying, by focusing on what we want to do or are trying to do.

<sup>5</sup> If we are enjoying ourselves by thinking about something that makes us smile then that is a good use of time.

when we are acting in the best way possible or the most efficient way possible. If we need to we can then change what we are doing or the way we are doing it to get what we are doing done.

If we don't know what we are trying to do then that is what we focus on, figuring out what we are trying to do or how to go about doing it.

If we are teaching or telling someone else what to do then the road to efficiency is speaking clearly and plainly and listening to what we are saying so that we understand what we are saying and so that we can make sure that our words match our meaning. We can also sense if the person we are speaking to understands what we are saying and even more importantly, our meaning. If not then we say the same thing in a different way or we ask them what they understand or don't understand so that we can clarify. Sensing how the other person responds to what we are saying we can then tell when or if we have communicated the idea and we can act accordingly.

Efficiency: knowing what we are doing so that we can get on with doing it, communicating an idea clearly so that others can get on with doing it also, sensing what is around our selves and within our selves so that we can act on what we sense, enjoying life.

## Defining Ideas and Sensing Change

Being conscious we can define ideas and the change that they create. The way we define an idea depends on how we are viewing it. Being aware of how we are viewing an idea we can define ideas in such a way that they are meaningful for ourselves. We can also “redefine” ideas so that they are meaningful for others.

Looking around us and sensing ideas we define boundaries for those ideas. The boundaries of an idea delineate the idea. They create separation between the idea and what is around it.

The boundary of an idea contains connections between the idea and what is around it and it is across or through these connections that change can be transmitted.

We can liken these connections to bridges that link the idea to what is around it. These bridges can have doorways or gates at either end. If a bridge has doorways then the flow of change in or out can be controlled.

With respect to our selves and our body we can define the boundary of the idea of our self as being the limits of what we can sense. Our senses then bridge the boundary between our selves and what is around us.

Generally as change from outside of our body impinges on any of our senses, it elicits a response on the

inside of our body. In turn changes within our body that radiate outwards can affect what is outside of our selves.

Sensing the connections between the parts of our body we can learn to sense the flow of change within our selves. Knowing where to “look” within our body we can find the connections between the parts of our body.

Looking at other ideas in the same way, we can notice how the change that originates outside of the idea affects the relationships within it. And we can notice how the changes within an idea affect that which is outside of it. We can also notice what changes have no effect. A change might be happening on the inside and have no effect on the outside and vice versa. In these cases there is no connection between the inner and the outer to allow that change to be transmitted. Noticing the changes that are transmitted we can look for the connection that allows them to be transmitted. Noticing the changes that aren't transmitted we can look for ways to create connections so that it can be transmitted.

Teaching yoga I teach people where to look for the bridges between the outer world and the inner so that they can sense the changes that those bridges transmit. I also teach them to find the bridges between the different ideas within themselves.

As they become aware of their body and how the parts relate they build bridges between their mind and their body. Their mind and their body can then begin to act as one. When the mind transmits change the body responds.

Defining boundaries for an idea we can sense the change that crosses those boundaries and so we can see how an idea interacts with what is around it. Even though we may define limits to define an idea, it isn't to separate the idea from its environment rather it is to understand it.

Being consciousness we define ideas, we delineate them so that when we understand them we no longer need the definitions.



## MAKING IDEAS A PART OF OUR SELVES



*When we understand an idea it becomes a part of our self, it's center connects to ours.*

*We then know the idea of what we are trying to do we can do it without having to think about it.*

*Learning an idea is the process of taking it apart and reassembling it inside of our selves.*

## Fixing Problems

While I was in the Army I learned how guns worked so that I could fix them.

When I received a weapon in need of repair I listened to what the user had to say about what was going wrong and then I examined the weapon based on what the user said. My understanding of how the weapon worked coupled with the new knowledge gained from what the user told me more often than not told me where I needed to look to find the source of the problem. Once I found the problem I could go about and fix it.

Sometimes the problem wasn't with the weapon it was with the person who was using it. In such cases the user was sent away with a gentle admonishment on what to do with the weapon and themselves. In both cases my understanding of the weapon allowed me to fix problems quickly and easily whether the problem was with the weapon or with the person using it.

## Making Ideas a Part of Our Self

Building our very own Custom Harley Davidson motorcycle<sup>6</sup> my dad and I had lots of problems, in particular with the second hand parts that we used.

Working with an old clutch basket we couldn't figure out why when we tried to start the bike the starter motor turned but did not engage the ring gear on the clutch basket.

We realized that a previous owner had modified the clutch basket so that the ring gear was in a different position. As a result the gears didn't marry. We got the gear ring taken off and re-welded on at the proper spot.

After we got that problem fixed our bike still would not start. We figured out that the second hand starter motor we had bought was spinning the wrong way. We reversed the brushes on the motor so that it spun the right way.

Our bike still wouldn't start.

---

<sup>6</sup> Strictly speaking what we made wasn't a Harley although it looked like one. The only thing that was genuine Harley was the speedometer and the stickers on the gas tank. Those stickers were expensive!

We realized we needed to put more gas in the tank.

Because we'd never built a bike before we learned as we built. The actual process of building a bike helped us to understand how bikes worked. We learned that certain frames can only take certain types of motor and certain motors can only be mated with certain types of gearboxes. By physically taking the bike apart and putting it back together we made the idea a part of ourselves. It is as if as well as building the bike outside of ourselves we were also building a version inside of ourselves. Thus we understood it.

If we had built another bike, but perhaps the next time taken the time to assemble our own engine, we would have increased our understanding. We would then have that much more flexibility for building the bike the way we wanted it to be. And once we know engines and how to put them together it doesn't mean that we have to. We also have the option of buying engines that are already put together.

Having options or knowing them we can choose from among them depending on what we want to do.

To learn a Big Idea we might not have to physically take it apart. We might not be able to.

Imagine having to take our body apart in order to understand it! Instead we can learn to disassemble and reassemble it in our minds (in imaginary space).

In either case the better we learn an idea the better we can express it or build it in any circumstance. We know the smaller ideas and how they connect.

## **Understanding Relationships and Change**

Understanding something what we understand is the ideas that make it up and the way that they change each other. We understand the way the parts relate.

Working with guns I understood that the part of the trigger called the "Sear" connected to the part of the hammer called the "Bent." When the trigger was pulled, the sear disengaged from the bent allowing the hammer to snap forward. The hammer was driven by the power of a compressed spring. When released, it "impinged" on the firing pin driving it forward so that the firing pin in turn impinged on the percussion cap of the cartridge causing the mercury fulminate inside to explode.

As an armourer I understood the parts, how they related and how those relationships changed in the process of the rifle being operated. I also learned the tolerances within which each of those relationships worked best.

If a firing pin protruded from the bolt too far it could pierce the percussion cap. If it didn't protrude far enough then it wouldn't hit the percussion cap with enough force.

If the barrel had a bulge in it, that bulge would allow gasses to leak past the bullet so the bullet wouldn't travel as designed. If there was a block in the barrel, then the bullet might be stopped and cause the gun to explode in the operators hands.

Understanding all of these relationships and how they could change I could make sure that guns would continue to work and I could also fix them when they didn't work.

Working with computers after I graduated from university, I understood that a Video Conferencing "codec" compressed and decompressed video signals. I knew that the decompressed video signal had to be sent to the video card so that the video could be displayed on the computer monitor. The compressed

signal meanwhile had to go to the modem to be sent to another computer via a telephone line.

Knowing what the parts did and the changes that they created I could connect them correctly so that they worked and I also knew where to look for problems if they didn't work.

Building a bike, my dad and I learned what each part did and how the parts had to relate. Once we understood the parts we could assemble then so that the bike worked. Then we could ride it.

Learning to ride the bike I learned how to steer and I learned how the action of using the brake and the accelerator affected the bikes speed. As I continued to learn how to ride I learned more about the importance of the relationships between the parts of the bike and the changes that they created. I also learned about my own relationship with the bike and how the changes in that relationship changed the bikes relationship with the road.

The better I understood the bike and how to relate to it, the easier it was for me to ride it. Then the easier it was for me to handle the changes that happened around the bike and I.

In all of these cases, whether the "thing" I was working on was mechanical or electrical, what I learned to understand was the parts, the relationships between those parts and the changes that happened within those relationships.

In the case of guns, the relationship might be measurable with a ruler or other mechanical device, a firing pin protrusion of so many tenths of an inch. In the case of computers, the change might be measurable as a video image appearing on the screen as it is supposed to. In the case of a bike, building a bike the change might be measurable as the engine starting when the starter button is pressed or the bike slowing down when the brakes are operated.

In all of these cases, the better I understood how these things worked, the easier it was for me to create the change that I desired. I could fix a gun so it worked, I could fire it also. Riding a bike not only could I use the brakes and the accelerator I could then use them in such a way that I could handle the changes that happened outside of our selves like bends in the road or other traffic.

Learning a sequence of Tai Ji movements I learn how each move relates and connects to the next.

Likewise I learn how to feel how each part of my body connects and relates to the next part. I learn to feel the relationships and the changes that happen when I move. Sensing myself as I move I can then position each part so that it relates to all the other parts in the best way possible. I give each part room to move.

When I've learned a sequence of Tai Ji moves, I can feel my body as I do the moves and at every instance give each part of my body room to move. I can then smoothly connect each part of the Tai Ji sequence to the next part.

That's basically what I did when making sure that the guns that I worked on worked. I made sure that every part had room to move, room to do what it was supposed to do.

## **Training the Brain**

While waiting at the Hong Kong airport I bought a book called "Training The Brain." The book contained a series of exercises to be done everyday to improve brain function. The exercises were simple math problems, adding, subtracting, multiplication

and division and the intent was to complete each worksheet in the shortest time possible.

Doing the math I would look at each question and then answer it, timing myself to see how long it took to answer all the questions. I achieved the bronze level of proficiency in a few weeks but silver took a little bit longer. Just to test how fast I would have to work to achieve the gold level I tried writing out a series of answers without worrying about getting them right. What I found was that in order to make the gold standard I would have to write continuously without stopping and then maybe, just maybe I would get that time. The question I asked myself was how could I get that time and also try to get the answers right?

I practiced looking at the next question while I wrote the answer to the previous one.

As I finished answering one question I moved my eyes and my pen to the next question. After I saw the question I let my hand and another part of my brain take care of answering it, meanwhile I was looking at the next question. My eyes led my hand by one question ahead.

It was as if by looking at the next question, instead of worrying about the answer to the question I was writing, I just did it, I gave myself room to answer the question. I didn't have to think I just had to allow. Then as I finished writing one question I'd move on to the next one but because I'd already seen the question again I could just allow myself to get on with answering it.

Part of the reason I was able to do this was because of the times I spend writing out my multiplication tables as a kid. I wrote them out so many times that I remembered them and they were a part of me. As a result I no longer had to think about the answer to a question, I could just answer it.

Knowing how to do something without having to think about how to do it (or without having to refer to a manual) we can say that the idea is a part of our selves.

We can then get on with using our senses and responding to what we sense, giving ourselves room to move, room to do what we are trying to do.

If we can't do something without first having to think about it then we can practice it until we do know it. Then we can flow.

## KEY CONCEPTS

**Center** is the heart of an idea. It is the point of an idea or its purpose.

**Connection** is what we use to sense change and to transmit it. A connection joins two ideas.

**Consciousness** is what we use to define ideas. It is also what we use to sense change. Consciousness can expand outwards into space or outwards across time. It can also move beyond them both.

**Foundation** is a reference for change. It is what allows us to create the change that we desire. It is also a means of measuring change. In a relationship the idea that is viewed as the foundation provides a reference for changing the other idea.

**Ideas** are units of meaning. Depending on the relationships they are in they are also units of change. They have the qualities of Gravity and Spin.

**Relationships** are formed by two or more connected ideas.

**Room to Move** is room to do what we are trying to do. To create room to move we have to know what we are trying to do. To maintain room to move we need to be aware of the change that is happening within ourselves as well as outside of ourselves.

**Zero Parallax** is understanding ideas and how they relate. It is the unimpeded flow of information.

Go to <http://ultimate.zeroparallax.com> to order a full copy of the book.

Other Books by Neil Keleher

# Formulae for Freedom:

Advanced Practices for the  
Dance of Shiva



Neil  
Keleher

Check it out via <http://shiva.zeroparallax.com>