

An End to Loneliness:

A personal journey through transpersonal experiences.

By

Ion LIGHT



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An End to Loneliness: a personal journey through love and transpersonal experiences.

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Forward:

What is this?

This is a self-help book that is not a self-help book. I am going to break with the tradition of giving advice. I am breaking with the tradition of making lists, and point by point steps for you to check off and say ‘accomplished.’ Some of you might be saying “Yay!” but if you require that, this is not your book. I will be making some incredible leaps of faith and assumptions that you, the reader, are intelligent and capable of figuring things out. I believe whole heartedly that you are the expert of your life, and no one can advise you. People can walk with you, but you’re the captain. So, again, what is this? This is a conversation. Okay, so I am doing all of ‘talking.’ The conversation part is where you hold a dialogue in yourself over the topics, or you engage me directly. Can you engage me directly? Absolutely. Feel free to email me constructive criticism. I know, there are grammar mistakes, even after several editing’s, and it is one of my annoying personal setbacks that I struggle with. If you can suffer through that, the bane of all my work, you might discover there is still something here. This is a work in progress, and I am open to dialogue.

In writing this, I will endeavor to be as direct as possible, while keeping it approachable. Though many of the ideas written here are not ‘approachable’ in terms of general popular discourse, everything here should be in reach of anyone capable of reading my writing, grammar issues and all. Also, everything contained in here is not original. Like I’ve said, this book makes many assumptions, such as you know how to use a google search engine and that if you are interested in trying out some of the ideas for yourselves, you will find the technique and or protocols on your own. I am doing it this way partly because, I don’t want to re-write everything others have already written about that anyone can access, for free, but also because, there is huge amount of evidence that if a person wants it, they are more likely to achieve something if they put some effort towards what they want. So, I am implicitly inviting you to do your own work should this be something you wish to explore further!

So, what is this book? It’s mostly a discussion, a way of clarifying for myself, and sharing with others my journey. I have experienced more success utilizing the protocols discussed in this book than in years of life, therapy, and just surviving. It may be that the entire journey as a whole was/is necessary, just as Dorothy had to travel the Yellow Brick Road, but I

can't help but wonder if I had access to all of this earlier on, things might have balanced out sooner. There is no end to this sort of speculation, so we will table it for now.

I am compelled to lead with this: though there is research to support much of what I will discuss, some of it isn't covered, and most of this is not mainstream. I am not writing as a professional. I am writing as a human being, hoping to engage other human beings in a unique dialogue. Let me iterate: nothing written here is new; I am not pitching you some scheme about how this 'secret' will open your life and make everything wonderful; there is certainly enough of that in dominant culture. And people are buying it. How many copies of 'the Secret' sold? More importantly, how many people found 'enlightenment?'

Does anything in here work? Yes, but I am not advocating for social change or for you to take up the protocols. At best, this would be considered as experimental, in terms of academic or professional standings. I will be quoting professional, academic, spiritual, and esoteric sources where I can, but not in an APA format that would make this book something it's not intended to be. As I said, I am not creating a new thing from scratch, but drawing on wisdom already available, and presenting it in a very different way; different being 'from my voice.' Maybe this isn't a self-help book, but I am not sure how to categorize it perfectly. Those of you familiar with the genre might be thinking, "thank god." It would seem that many self-help books give huge set ups before following with a list of things for you to do, which may, or may not, actually work. (I think the biggest variable in that is the personality type of the person accessing the self-help book, not necessarily the protocols.) In general, self-help books help people. I imagine even 'the Secret' helped some people, or there might not be as many people recommending it, though I imagine a darker scenario to answer the why. But in general, 'self-help' doesn't help everyone. That book hasn't been written yet. And this won't be that book. I am going to lead with the number one recommended exercise, and then give you variations on the theme of that exercise, and when you discover what it is, you will either tune out or dig in. I would like to point out this is free; at free-ebook.net. Some things should be free, like clarity, water, air, electricity! Yeah, I am a fan of Tesla. Generally, helping each other should be free. This is meant to be helpful; opening and engaging in a dialogue is supposed to be helpful. This is definitely a work in progress, and I am open to you telling me what I missed, or perhaps what should have expounded on in more detail. That's a dialogue. Send it.

Unlike other self-help paradigms, especially the esoteric kind, in which the writers of the technique or protocols want to establish classes and have you pay for the book, I don't want any of that. No baiting or sucker punching and promising stuff to get you in the front door so I can say, 'oh, but if you want the rest, you have to send me one million dollars.' (Insert evil laugh.) That is not this. You can hold me accountable. If you see this selling on Kindle, it is not because I put it there, and if you want to bypass kindle and email for a free copy, please do. Ideally, it would be nice to have a legit contract with a traditional publisher, because that might, if I continue to pursue writing, enable me to do more writing. If this books goes that way, I will push for the free PDF to be available. The world of publishing is changing; writers and publishers and the readers are in the most important dialogue of our lives, and change is coming. It could be really good for everyone. Youtube and commercials generating profit seemed like a great idea for hosts wanting to create dialogue, but books haven't figured that part out yet.

So, again, this is a work in progress. It may be years before I work out all the grammar issues. I am human, and some of you will tune out because of grammar, which is reasonable. We all have our strengths and weaknesses. I am fairly articulate and do great in person. I am not leading with my credentials, because, as a human being, I think they're irrelevant. If you absolutely need that, read the authors note. If I were judging you, in terms of whether or not I would like to share with you, because that, too, is part of any negotiation, I would be handing you a card and asking what you see: if you say "it's a hat," I am going to box you in a certain way. If you say it's a "boa constrictor that ate an elephant," my esteem for you will have increased immensely, and so when I say the stars are laughing, yeah, we're on the same page. And, again, iteration, (not reiteration!) I am making some assumptions that you know some things. It's okay if you don't, few people laugh at my jokes, but if you are curious, and you pursue it, you will unravel some essential ingredients that clearly influenced my journey, like the above allusion to the Little Prince. (Just read the first chapter. The Disney Movie of 'the Little Prince' was actually pretty well done, too.)

Some of you might tarry past the initial exercise. I hope so, because it is my intention to give you arguments for why it works, how it has the possibility of changing your life if you engage it, and then explore whether or not you actually want to change your life. You may actually not want to. Contrary to popular belief, and the news, our lives are pretty good!

Do I believe people have the power to change their lives with thoughts? Absolutely, and changing the way you think is paramount. Will you teleport gold from Fort Knox into your bedroom by thinking about it? Absolutely not with what I am giving you. (Besides, there is no Gold in Fort Knox. A lot of security, though. Weird.) This book is not that. The intent in writing this is not to change your financial situation. Can it? Unquestionably. Any tool can be used to influence income and ability to earn, but this is not “Think and Grow Rich.” That book has been written and it is the benchmark for that category of book, and I highly recommend it. My opinion is, if your inner world isn’t right, no amount of material wealth will make you feel better. There is a tremendous amount of data that backs that up. Just look at the statistic of how many win the lottery only to end up broke, divorced, estranged from family, and or dead from suicides. Further, The World Health Organization continuously shows that while Americans lead the world in material comfort, we consistently rank as the unhappiest, most depressed, and loneliest people on the planet. (So, if it correlates that money and material wealth doesn’t make you happy, why would I want to give you more of that? Better, why would I even promise to sell you philosophies to entertain the idea of getting more of that so you can tarry in your present unhappiness of not having while struggling to make yourself unhappier in having? What a horrible thing to do to a fellow human being!) And we are hell bent on making the rest of the world ‘American’ like us? Life is strange. Anyway, secure your inner world first, and the rest sorts itself out. I think you will find a few esoteric teachers offering variations of that.

And what do I mean by securing your inner world? I suppose even that has a range of responses that require examining. Different people define it differently. Some want peace. Some want love. Some want peace and love, or a piece of love, I always get that part mixed up. Some want to feel happy. Not be in pain, not be depressed, not be lonely... Those last three are the ones I have personally struggled with, much of my life. Securing your inner world, however you define that inner quality, so that regardless of what happens in the physical world you remain resilient and able to function is the key to any life endeavor, including life. You can see that in Joseph, after being thrown into a pit and then later sold into slavery, or Viktor Frankl’s “Man’s Search for Meaning.” (Compared to Frankl’s, Joseph’s pit was a luxury hotel.) Both of those should be on your reading list if you haven’t already partaken. (If you go with “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat” go with the original Broadway release. Sorry Danny, I love you, but the original is my favorite. Say hi to Marie for me.)

I am specifically focusing on loneliness in this book. I think ‘the exercises’ we will discuss can help with other things as well, such as depression, with some caveats. I will address some of those caveats as we go along. Let me be very clear on this: these protocols or procedures are not a substitution for medicinal regimens or counseling. Statistically, the research is very clear when it comes to mental health: Medicines help reduce symptoms; Counseling helps people get better; Medicine and counseling simultaneously consistently provides the best results. Can you practice ‘the exercise’ without counseling? Yep. (I did, and survived. Has anyone not survived? That’s out of my purview to answer. (Does anyone survive life?)) I consider it highly efficacious to practice any and all of this with a licensed counselor or psychologist, but it isn’t necessary. I recommend counseling because what I am about to propose actually works. Let’s be clear about what work means. It opens things in you, in your subconscious, and if you aren’t ready to examine that, you might want to post pone practicing. Sometimes, there are reasons why our subconscious has suppressed stuff. Don’t engage this believing it will absolutely make you happy and satisfied today, without any consequences, or grief, or revisiting past pains, imagined or perceived. Imagine you have had a recurring dream where you have been chased and plagued since childhood. I will be asking you to draw a line in the sand and decide no more running. If you’re not ready for that level of intensity, you’re not ready for this. I say that, though, and suspect, if you’re not ready for this, it’s because you’re already employing the techniques outlined in this book in a way that keeps you stuck where you don’t want to be. And if that’s the case, just reading further to see how you could be using stuff to hold you back also makes this something worth exploring.

If you think that you have tried everything else, but you still find yourself lonely, what else do you have to lose? (You really haven’t tried everything. Have you tried bouncing on one foot while rubbing your tummy and saying limericks? No, then, regardless of absurdity, you haven’t tried everything. Go absurd! Do something different. (There was a professor who was not known well for being social who one day took up wearing a tail. It hung from his suit, and when he wrote on the board, it got laughter. It was bizarre, but it made him so much more approachable that his class became the student’s favorite and they learned more from him. He became happier, professionally and personally.))

So, before we go further, let’s just get this part out of the way. This book deals with imagination. This is very straight forward. I will be drawing on multiple sources of inspiration

and I will be asking you to take imagination to a whole new level. Imagination is the most powerful tool at your disposal. I am going to ask you to pretend, do mental pushups, and go beyond ‘fake it till you make it.’ Like I said, this not new stuff. Athletes use the power imagery to help improve skillsets. Therapists use the power of imagination to help clients move forwards. Has anyone ever proposed the ‘magic wand’ question to you? Imagination is likely the most underrated, underutilized tool which everyone is equipped with. You may even have the false belief that you’re not imaginative enough to do this, but you are. If you can tolerate my writing, you have sufficient imaginations to do what I am about to introduce you to. Again, I dare say, you’re probably already using imagination, unconsciously, to keep yourself stuck. If you have ever thought, “I am not imaginative” you have just used your own power against yourself.

If you wish to email ‘recommended edits’ or just thoughts, and reactions, you may send them to solarchariot@gmail.com Please put ‘an end to loneliness’ in the subject line. My number is also available, but I do not live by it, so don’t be surprised if I don’t answer a call, or there is a delay in a text response. I will eventually answer a text. 214-907-4070. Email may provide for a more comprehensive response.

I wish you well on your journey. Always, Travel Light.

Ion

If you are like me, you were probably taught not to day dream. It wasn't seen as a practical skill, especially by your teachers, and yet, any day dreamer worth his salt would remind the teachers, "They said that about Albert Einstein, too." (He continued his 'day dreaming' into his adult life and day job, and considering how boring his day job probably was, he probably did a lot of day dreaming; a survival skill. Maybe that's why he renamed it 'thought experiments' because day dreaming just seems too slacker-ish. (Did Einstein also suffer from self-esteem issues?)) Pointing out how adults are wrong usually resulted in going straight to the principal office, or my bedroom, which was great for me because, I got to indulge in more, uninterrupted day dreaming! I was lucky in some sense. I missed that window where I could have been diagnosed with ADHD inattentive type, as opposed to just having a great imagination. My family went a bit further and also dismissed the dreaming life, too. No one wanted to hear about my crazy dreams. They were just fanciful fluff, the products of watching one too many horror films or science fiction. Dreams were important to me, and I would journal them, but essentially, I had no one to share them with, and so they didn't go anywhere. (It wasn't just horror films. The Flying Monkeys scared me. The kidnapper in Chitty Chitty Bang Bang bothered me a lot. But that 1972 Gargoyle movie, that really bothered me, because it put a face on something else I was already experiencing.)

I want this part to be clear. I am not blaming family, or the educational system. It is way too easy to get caught up in blaming people and systems, and I can spin all levels of conspiracy theories. We could spend hours talking about society and systems and never make any fundamental change or even headway, in society or ourselves. It's not helpful. What we have to do is start where we are. The past is past. Our present situations are what they are. I don't expect anyone to sugar coat crap. Babies with cancer suck. Dead puppies suck. It is what it is.

That said, when we get stuck emotionally and mentally, it's because we are revisiting stuff in our imagination. Our imagination has a profound effect on our physiology, and consequently our reality. Placebos and Hypnosis can absolutely change your physiology. Do you really think pharmaceuticals would waste time and resources on double blind studies if that weren't true? If you believe in a cure, whether it is a real drug, a placebo, a psychic, tribal dance, or even hypnosis, you are changing your physiology at a biochemical level, and when you do that, you are changing your world. And I do mean world. If you are peaceful and happy, people

tend to be peaceful and happy around you. When you are happy, there is a cloud of happy around you. This is not just new esoteric, pseudo-science. Science is just now mapped out a cloud around human beings. You know the Charlie Brown character 'pig pin?' We are that! Floating around us, extending out to a specific range, is a cloud of particulates that is us. It is bits of our DNA and RNA. It is dead cells. It is live cells. It is the bits of flora and fauna that live on you and share a symbiotic relationship with. You are a planet and you are the host of your own atmosphere and host to living beings and when planets pass, we share stuff on a fundamental, basic, physical level. It has been said you cannot enter a room without gaining something, or leave a room without leaving something. This cloud around you is so distinctively you, it is synonymous with a finger print. If you are familiar with shows like CSI, and one hair at the scene of the crime could be incriminating: there is tech coming down the pike where if you were in the vicinity of a crime within a certain time frame, people will know because your cloud is in the air or has settled to join the dust on the surface of things.

Yeah, that's scary and cool, but lends credence to what gurus of old, Depak Chopra, and Wayne Dyer have been trying to get into our thick skulls. If you are peaceful, you breathe out particles of peacefulness. If you are angry, you breathe out anger. (You also re-breathe your own peace or anger.) And for whatever reason, anger seem to be more contagious than peaceful, maybe because we are socialized to believe that being peaceful and happy is reserved for only those we 'trust' like family or friends. At any rate, if people can't abide your peacefulness, they will 'fight or fly.' There are those who will try and alter your state by bringing you down, but if they can't do that, they will rise to your level, or they will depart. There is no other option. How do people bring you down? They mess with your mind. They engage your imagination and adjust a control setting, and they send you places.

Some people are better at manipulating or changing your emotions and your beliefs than others. Again, this is not blaming others for our situational ups and down, but a recognition that there are some serious skills employed by others. And don't think you're not one of them. We all learn to manipulate systems to our advantage. It is a part of our nature. For example, babies with big eyes are employing physical attributes to manipulate you into caring for them. We don't just do that because it's fun. (Yeah, it's fun, too, but so manipulative, and that's why Disney movies are always high on the 'manipulative' scale. Come on, if Wally's pathetic little voice and big eyes didn't produce an emotion in you, you weren't watching. Or, "I hid under the porch because

I love you.” OMG, manipulation!) If you ever went “Ahh, what a cute baby!” you were manipulated. Crying is manipulation. We are born manipulators and few of us grow out of that. So be at peace with that in yourself, and you will better understand others. In my family, manipulating the way others feel was a survival tool. If that ‘one’ person was happy, everyone was happy. Unfortunately, what I really learned was how to make that person happy, directly, in order to indirectly make me happy. Talk about control!

Epictetus wrote: “A man is not affected by events, but by his thoughts on events.” This would become Doctor Albert Ellis’ primary mode of interacting with clients, utilizing REBT, Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy. You can find his book easy enough: “Feeling Better, Getting Better, Staying Better,” by Albert Ellis and it’s pretty easy to access. It’s one thing to feel better, another thing to get better, and another thing to stay better. Changing beliefs, for Albert, was absolutely crucial. It requires your imagination and intention and persistence.

But he isn’t the only one that went here. Lots of people offer this as a treatment modality. You can find another self-help book, and, I highly recommend this one: “What to say When you Talk to yourself” by Shad Helmstetter. Google that. You can find a free PDF of it, and a free PDF summary. It’s basically changing your outcomes by changing your tapes. We all have tapes. Tapes are our daily indulgences in imagination that keep us where we are. It takes effort to change them. Ellis would argue it’s irrelevant to focus on how they got there, the only important thing is recognizing them and then changing them. And you can change them. You could spend years in therapy, one hour a week, and you will eventually gain some ground. Or, you can read Helmstetter’s book and learned some basic truths about tapes, some great affirmations, and you can work 24-7 on you. Let’s face it, counseling is helpful, but you are with you all the time.

Because you are with you all the time, it is imperative to let go of any and all past arguments, regardless of validity. I am not saying this is easy. It can be done in stages. But if you’re going to take charge of your brain, you’re going to have to employ some serious imagination. You’re going to have to learn to day dream. You’re going to have to learn to day dream productively. It isn’t enough to rehash old dialogues and figure out things you wish you had said or things you’re going to say. That way fuels anger, and locks onto the past and the grievances. The grievances can be valid, but as someone once wrote, hanging on to anger is like drinking poison and hoping the other person dies. I forget who said that, but I have been assured, it wasn’t Buddha.

There is good research that suggests memories are malleable. I am not a good researcher, or a good ‘professional’ writer, so I am not going to tell you how to find that. You can find it if you’re interested. Memory is also greatly affected by perspective. This is basic REBT stuff. If you change your perspective, you change your emotional response, which changes your physiological response. If you adopt, imagine, a perspective which incorporates gratitude and forgiveness, as way to engage loving imagination, you will have more positive outcomes than if you do the opposite; indulge the grudge, fuel the fire. I am not saying to rekindled old, past relationships with others. I am saying you have to change the relationship you have with you.

Now, we are about to go off the deep end. Each following chapter will be one step further into the deep end, and we will proceed in this fashion until the bottom drops out, and there is no more floor.

For this chapter, though, I want to invite you to imagine a friendship. Yep, you heard me. I want you to create an imaginary friend. More specifically, I want this friend to be the most ideal, loving, peaceful relationship you can muster and tolerate. You can create a whole new person from scratch, if you can’t think of anyone specific you would like to imagine. You can imagine anyone from history, past or present. You can imagine any fictional character you have an affinity towards. This can even be someone crucial to your religious faith. In the beginning of this exercise, you will be imagining a helpful dialogue, not to change others, but to change you. If that means, every morning you sit alone and imagine coffee with Jesus, I am okay with that. If Jesus does it for you, I highly recommend the book “God on a Harley” by Joan Brady. Can you do anything as imaginative as that? Dive in. If you want to mirror Brady’s book, word for word into your psyche, that’s okay, too. That’s why she wrote the book! No, it’s more: that’s why she made it available! That’s the only purpose to share a story or a song is to change ourselves and then the world.

I personally didn’t go with Jesus. Partly because of my background and family issues. Not blaming, I am just recognizing that to engage that figure imaginatively required more energy than I could muster when I started this. I began with a fictional person, and soon after I started, I was engaging other ‘characters’, imaginatively. Day Dreaming. That’s what it seemed like at first.

Here’s how it’s going to go. You may balk at doing this. Resistance is okay. It’s part of the process. It doesn’t matter what you think or believe about the exercise. Do it anyway. And

when you're ready to give up, keep doing it. In the beginning, you will be doing the entire dialogue, for you and the friend. You will be imagining yourself talking and imagining the responses. It will feel like fluff.

What are we doing? We are engaging a skillset that our human brains are best at, modeling and predicting. Children are known to engage in this until we encourage them out of it. (We're leaving autism spectrum disorder off the table, because this changes the dynamic a little, and autistic fantasies, which is a very real thing, can be socially detrimental when fantasy doesn't line up with reality. In other words, this system will work best if you have a reasonable grasp of reality to begin with.) If you recall doing this in the past, or know a child that does it, and you listen to their conversations, what is most interesting, and rarely remarked upon, is that their conversations flow naturally. Very rarely does a child engaging this stop the conversation and start over when it doesn't go the way they think it should. Now, when the same kid plays pretend with another adult, and the adult strays from the script, the child will be the first to speak right up, "No! You're not playing right."

Making an imaginary friend utilizes your brain, but transcends the brain by directly engaging the subconscious mind. In the West, we minimize our interaction with the subconscious. We are taught very early not to trust intuition. Not blaming, simply explaining why some of us will resist engaging an imaginary friend, beyond the fact most of our adult friends and family would call us crazy for doing so. All day dreams, all REM based dreams, engage the subconscious. When you first start doing this, you will be doing both sides of the conversation, partly because the subconscious mind, the observer, is not sure what you are about. If you have never engaged it before or listened to it, why would it trust you are ready to start having conversations with it now? But if you persist, you keep engaging the imaginary friend, you will eventually cross a threshold where the imaginary friend will make an observation or a challenge which will not have been scripted by you.

Welcome to the new you. This is some spooky level, Ouija board kind of stuff. It's not magic. It's not spirit, at least in the religious or esoteric connotation. This is you at the fundamental level. Is there more to it than psychology? Well, I am biased and believe there is more here than just tapping into our unconscious mind. But that is definitely the first level. If you're not completely surprised by the observation or challenge, I would be amazed. If you

choose to stop the exercise at this point and not proceed further, I would completely get that. If you persist, this will evolve into Twilight Zone level freaky and change your world.

Whether you believe in a higher power or not, there is always a 'higher power.' Don't believe me, challenge the next police officer who pulls you over. Your unconscious mind knows more than you, and is a higher authority than you. You think you make the choices in your life, but you, your personality, are governed by your subconscious. Scientists have studied people in real time making 'conscious' choices under an fMRI and they have concluded that the unconscious mind has made the choice anywhere from 3 to 7 seconds prior to the 'conscious' mind being aware of making the decisions. No joke. The scientist watching the information can predict what you are going to do before you do it and then they start freaking 'subjects' out by pretending to be psychics! You move through the world thinking you're in charge, but you are on autopilot. Your responses to external events is an automatic, pre-chosen, frequently rehearsed, response to stimuli. These are your tapes. When you hear that inner voice chime in, and it's negative, it's because something internally or externally has triggered that voice to chime.

Being on automatic isn't a bad thing in and of itself. None of us multitask as well as we think we do, per research, but we couldn't do it at all if we couldn't assign tasks to the unconscious so we can focus on something else. When we learn something, what we are doing is handing it to the unconscious. When you first learned to drive, you were hyper focused on everything. Am I sitting right, how much pressure does it take to push the accelerator, how much do I have to slow for this the shallow corner as for the right angle corner, OMG that guy is too close, I hate getting on the freeway... Till one day, you hopped in your car and you went from point A to point B, on your cell phone, switching radio stations, and having conversations and don't recall the journey! You drive on automatic. Most of us live more of our life on automatic than we live consciously, which is why so many good therapists teach mindfulness exercises to help change tapes and responses. And this is why, if you practice engaging the imaginary friend, at some point in the practice it results in a voice contrary to your script: it becomes automatic, and the unconscious takes over the responses, based on the personality attributes you assigned to the imaginary friend.

Don't think you have to be perfect in your practice, or hold a certain level of intelligence, or be especially endowed with creativity. You do something, anything, long enough, it gets programmed into your unconscious. If you're familiar with the 10,000 hour rule, forget about it,

or at least, heavily modify it, because what you have understood about it isn't necessarily correct. That study, and the subsequent writing about it that followed, dealt with 'master' level abilities, not general abilities. It won't take you 10,000 hours to get results with any of the imagination scenarios that follow this chapter. I can make strong arguments for this. For example, to learn to fly an airplane, you need a total of only 40 hours in order to meet the requirements to fly and test out to earn your license. You will have flown solo before acquiring the 40 hours. Some people may fly more than 40 hours before they take their test, but it isn't necessary, and most people test out at 40 because flying at student rates is expensive. 40 hours is not 10,000 hours! Every license you add on top of private pilot license, like instrument rating, water rating, that is just extra, and people will count their hours for life, and if you keep at it you will have 10,000 hours of flying, which is master level flying, but doesn't necessarily make you a 'master' pilot. If you are an occasional, weekend flyer, 10,000 hours or not, you are more likely to be so casual as to make a mistake, where the serious, master level pilot comes at it with a 'masters' level professionalism, because for that person flying is a serious endeavor.

Want another argument that 10,000 hours isn't necessary? Driving education is not 10,000 hours. In high school, it's a semester. If you take a class outside of school, it's a couple weeks, or a couple weekends, not 10,000 hours. No state requires 10,000 hours of driving before you can be licensed. Most people would give up if that were the case. Do some people need more hours than the minimum that is required? Yeah. But if you have the minimum and can pass the test, you're done. You proved yourself capable.

By engaging the imaginary friend, eventually the unconscious will assume that role, it will become 'automatic' and you are now engaged in a conversation with self that will allow for script changes.

Here's the deal. Your unconscious mind wants to engage you. You ignore the unconscious at your own peril. The unconscious mind has always been in a conversation with you, but it will allow you to persist in your ways and allows you to think you are in control. It will occasionally send out reminders, suggesting another path. It's always with us, always suggesting, but never intrusive. But if it wants you to change, it will give you something, like a health problem. And if you persist, it will increase the volume until you hear it or deal with it, or you don't and you die. Ignore anything long enough, things get out of hand. Your unconscious mind is you, but it feels like a separate person. It is not limited to your personality constraints.

Doctor Milton Erickson, world renowned psychotherapist and hypnotist said this: “Trust your unconscious, it knows more than you do.” He said that before I said that, I just said it before I shared it. ☺

But, want more? Consider the words of someone I think was the smartest person in the world. I am not the only one who believes my hero was the smartest. For example, when Einstein was asked by a reporter, “How does it feel to be the smartest man in the world?” Einstein responded: “I don’t know. You should ask Tesla.” Einstein admittedly came up with his ideas on relativity using ‘thought experiments,’ floating in a rowboat looking at clouds. Consider your imaginary friend a thought experiment.

But you can also trust Einstein when he said Tesla was the smartest man ever. Tesla considered himself crippled by imagination. He couldn’t get through the day without day dreaming, but faced with a choice of fighting it, or going with it, he decided to just go with it, and see where it took him! Imagination soon became his super power. Tesla wrote: “I soon discovered that my best comfort was attained if I simply went on in my vision further and further, getting new impressions all the time, and so I began to travel; of course, in my mind. Every night, (and sometimes during the day), when alone, I would start on my journeys – see new places, cities and countries; live there, meet people and make friendship and acquaintances... This I did constantly until I was about seventeen, when my thoughts turned seriously to invention. Then I observed to my delight that I could visualize with the greatest facility. I need no models, drawings or experiments. I could picture them all as real in my mind... I do not rush into actual work. When I get an idea, I start at once building it up in my imagination. I change the construction, make improvements and operate the device in my mind. It is absolutely immaterial to me whether I run my turbine in thought or test it in my shop.”

When you and your imaginary friend cross that threshold and your script stops feeling like a script and more like a dialogue, you are going to change. You are going to grow in confidence. When you are internally confident, your social outcomes change. People are naturally drawn to and want to engage people who are socially confident. When we approach others from a position of weakness, like doubt, or with feelings of worthlessness, or from just desperation of loneliness, people shy away from us. Not because others are bad or they don’t want to deal with you or your perceived lack, but because, in truth, everyone is struggling with something. Think honestly on this. When you pass the homeless person on the street, the guy

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