

Achieving Escape Velocity

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I was asked by my good friend and colleague, Charlie Smith, to write an article on Escape Velocity, the energy required to break free of the gravitational pull not only of the earth but of “the way things are.” As he puts it, “the possibility that each of us can break free of our own gravity pull about ‘the way it is’ and create moments of transcendence, individually and collectively, and at any point in time.” I have a few personal experiences to draw on that inform my thinking on this topic.

Those Amazing Molecules

When I was about 10, we had just learned about atoms and molecules, the basic building blocks of matter, we were told. A few days later, I was in my basement walking toward the door that led to our back yard. Just as I reached for the knob, I heard someone upstairs open the front door of our house. At that precise second, I saw the downstairs door, which was ajar, jerk about an inch as if it had been pushed. I was fascinated! Air molecules must have done this, I thought.

The one thing I couldn’t figure out was this, “How did the air molecules travel all the way from the upstairs door to push the downstairs door so quickly?” The two door events seemed to happen almost at once. At the time, this didn’t make any sense to me .

I later realized that all the air molecules in our house were already connected and the air was saturated with them so no real distance had to be traveled from one door to the other. A change in one affected all of them and the pressure on the upstairs air molecules affected the downstairs air molecules almost simultaneously . That was one of my first experiences of how, on some unseen level, things are connected to each other. That realization changed my view of myself in relation to my environment.

Life After Death?

In another example, I have read many accounts of people who were pronounced clinically dead but who were later revived. It’s called a near-death experience. One woman claimed that unlike our experience while on earth where we have to physically travel to get from one place to another. After she “died” she found she was able to travel to her sister’s house in Texas just by thinking about her sister. Instantly, she was in her sister’s kitchen watching the sister answer the phone to receive the news of this woman’s death. Later, the woman was able to recall the exact wording of the conversation that the sister used after hearing the news. I can’t prove whether any of this happened but it does present an interesting paradigm for the manifestation of one’s intentions.

Functioning as a Separate Entity

Today, I still function, as do most of us, as if we are all separate entities operating in empty space. I perform my actions to accomplish what I intend. My energy and individual effort generally makes it all happen. Even though I interact with people and am grateful for their assistance, I don't often experience myself as part of a great web of interconnected cooperative energy unless I think about it.

Left to my own devices and based partly on my brain's tendency toward ADD and ADHD, my progress in accomplishing my goals through my own efforts is erratic and uneven. My patterns of fits and starts are pretty familiar to me and I find myself at the effect of my long held beliefs about myself, life and others. So how am I supposed to generate the escape velocity to break through these predictable patterns and beliefs that limit me?

Self-Motivation

Here's what doesn't work for me (despite what Tony Robbins recommends in his courses)—massive effort towards my goal. In my experience, using my will to generate my own head of steam to accomplish something leads inevitably to overwhelming resistance. As they say, "Will power creates *won't* power." After a lot of effort and excitement toward accomplishing a new goal and some initial progress, I tend to conclude that "I deserve a break today." I go from, "I'm definitely doing this" to "I don't think I want to do this anymore." Usually, it isn't even a conscious decision. I just find myself drifting to other more interesting projects with often similar end results.

The Importance of Relationship

Even though I and many others feel the gravitational pull of our own internal resistance and tend to procrastinate after setting an intention, I find that I am much more likely to do what I have said I will do when I have given my word to someone else. Curiously, the strength of that relationship is often stronger than my relationship with myself. I may let myself down but I won't let my friends down. I like the idea of being someone my friends and loved ones can count on so I tend to keep my promises to them. I wonder if I would have finished this article on time had I not promised Charlie that I would.

Invoking the Power of the Unified Field

Getting back to the woman who presumably died and came back to talk about it, what if, on this physical plane, we didn't need to make any extra effort to bring about our goals? What if, like that woman, all we had to do was think about something for it to manifest for us. On some level, doesn't that happen to us already? Have you ever been thinking about someone and they called you a few seconds later? Have you ever envisioned something that later manifested in front of you without your making direct effort to make this happen? Is that just a coincidence? Maybe not. Quantum physicists would point to this as evidence of what they call the unified field, the matrix of all matter, the everywhere-present context or energy from which all creation springs. According to them, our very focus on something, giving it our attention, changes the unified field and brings the unmanifest into physical form.

Feeling is the prayer

In Gregg Braden's, *Secrets of the Lost Mode of Prayer*, he states that, according to the Tibetans, the native Americans and even ancient Christian and Jewish traditions, *feeling IS the prayer*. Using this method, the Native Americans don't pray *for* rain. They don't pray *for* anything. They simply and silently *pray rain*. In meditation, they allow themselves to experience what it would feel like if they were in the presence of rain, as if their prayer had already been answered. According to Braden and many quantum physicists, the universe responds to our feelings and reflects back to us through manifestation our present level of consciousness.

That's Too Easy

The hardest thing to overcome might be our whole notion of velocity not to mention our unwillingness to allow wonderful things to come to us easily and gracefully. We have all been taught the value of hard work, the sin of laziness, that money doesn't grow on trees and if you want something done right, you need to do it yourself. Expressions like "No pain, no gain", "The harder I work, the luckier I get," "When the going gets tough, the tough get going" abound in our culture. These ideas reinforce the necessity of overcoming obstacles and achieving velocity through perseverance and hard work. What if all you had to do was envision what you wanted, get turned on and excited by the idea, allow yourself to feel the way you would feel if your vision was already realized, and then do what you felt inspired to do? Most people would say, "Nah! Not possible."

To See Things Differently

If you read the many quotes from the astronauts after they have been in space, it becomes obvious that the impact that space travel had on these brave men and women was not from reaching the moon or being able to live weightlessly in orbit, as magnificent as those accomplishments were. Rather, the life altering experience came from a change in *perspective*. Staring at the earth from 200,000 miles away changed everything for them. As Alfred Worden said, "Now I know why I'm here. Not for a closer look at the moon, but to look back at our home, the Earth." "When you're finally up at the moon looking back on earth, all those differences and nationalistic traits are pretty well going to blend, and you're going to get a concept that maybe this really is one world and why the hell can't we learn to live together like decent people." — *Frank Borman, Apollo 8*.

By the same token, the near death experience mentioned earlier draws its impact from a dramatic change in perspective. If we believe her near death account, not only was that woman able to travel at the speed of thought but she had to rethink who she was when she found herself fully conscious and staring down at her lifeless body in the hospital bed as doctors pronounced her dead. Needless to say, after a dramatic change in perspective, life just isn't the same.

We're ready to kill our son

Years ago, when I used to do family therapy, I remember a couple coming to me complaining bitterly about their 18 year old son who wasn't filling any of their expectations during the summer of his senior

year. "He told us he was going to find work this summer but never applied for a job. Instead, he stays out until 4 AM partying every night with his friends, sleeps until 2 PM and then lays on the couch watching MTV until it's time to go out again with his friends. He never eats with us anymore. He's supposed to start college in 3 weeks but we aren't sure we can last that long without killing him!" His father bemoaned, "He was such a good kid and all we ever do now is fight. It's horrible. We were hoping for one last good summer with our son and now, when he finally leaves I'm afraid I'm going to shout, "And *stay out!*"

As a therapist, it was my job to enroll them in a different perspective, one that would take these same circumstances and, by seeing them differently, have them evoke a completely different emotional and behavioral response. I asked, "Did you say that this is all going on in the summer before he leaves for college?" They both nodded. "Oh good. I'm so glad this is happening. This is really great!"

"Great?" "Did you say 'great'?" they cried. "This isn't great. It's a disaster!"

I said, "This scenario is quite common and sometimes necessary for a good adjustment to college life." They were bewildered. I further explained that this type of behavior and the antipathy between them would help him make a clean break from high school and not suffer any home sickness or separation anxiety when he left for college. The fact that they couldn't wait for him to leave was a good thing as well. It would make them less inclined to miss him and worry about him once he was gone.

I said, "Suppose you and he had had a wonderful summer and a close relationship right up until the day he left. He'd probably miss you terribly and want to come home on the weekends rather than face the adjustments necessary for acclimating to college life e.g., roommates, hazing, making friends, managing his time, etc. You see, Its really all for the best."

They left my office slightly dazed by my point of view but later told me that after that session, they saw him differently and had more compassion for what he might be going through. They didn't argue with him as much. He did fine his first semester and their relationship improved after he had been gone a short while.

Nikola Tesla

Nikola Tesla (1856 -1943) is one of my heroes. He's been called, the inventor of everything else. While most people know of Thomas Edison's many inventions, few remember that Tesla (once Edison's employee) is now credited not only with the invention of alternating current but also the radio (years before Marconi), x-rays (before Roentgen), fluorescent bulbs, remote control, wireless communication, robotics and a host of others.

I heard that before he died, he expressed regret that he had introduced alternating current to the world because of the limiting paradigm it created about energy. The use of AC current power plants left people with the impression that energy had to be produced in one place and then distributed from that source to outlying areas. Tesla believed and demonstrated that this wasn't true. Electrical energy, which he

called Radiant Energy, was universally present and free and with the right tools could be tapped into and utilized by all.

Imagine the implications for our planet if people believed this idea. Would we need fossil fuels, fracking, power lines, man-made grids? Would Greenland be melting? Would we be setting the stage for a global game of “Who Moved My Cheese?” (or coastline). The gravitational pull of our existing beliefs about the scarcity of energy and how we create it may seriously affect our survival yet, thus far, very few are escaping its grip. What would it take, short of a natural catastrophe for us to change our perspective in this area?

Nothing to Escape From

The notion of an escape velocity presupposes a kind of effort needed to overcome the pull of the laws that currently govern us. That assumption may be incorrect. Maybe no effort is needed at all. Rather, the only thing required to transcend our current boundaries is perhaps a clear vision of what we want and an experience of how we would feel having accomplished our goal. We’d still take actions but they would be inspired actions rather than ones borne of fear, a belief in hard work, or some moral imperative.

We’d also need to believe that this could be possible while letting go of what we think we need to do to make it happen (the “how”). What if the only thing we needed to escape from is our own narrow understanding of how manifestation occurs and our belief in how separate we all are from each other (remember the molecules?) I often wonder how our lives would be different if our collective perspective aligned with the quantum physicists and the spiritualists and we functioned as if we were living in an intelligent, conscious and participatory universe.