



part one

Awakening

MORE TO OFFER

You have so much more to offer. You sense it. You may have known it for a long time. It's a truth that lingers, waiting patiently for us to pay attention to it. It's a soul sense, and when your soul senses such a thing, it should never be ignored.

You may find yourself thinking or saying...

“Something is missing...”

“There must be more to life...”

“I have so much more to offer...”

These are sacred truths. But we often treat them as human malfunctions. We think something is wrong. We think we need to be fixed. We view these sacred

truths as problems to be solved, and that is a tragedy.

When you experience these yearnings, something is very, very right! You are not malfunctioning. Nothing could be further from the truth. Your heart, mind, body, and soul are working together to get your attention. These longings are amazing signs that your whole person is functioning beautifully.

When you sense that something is missing, that there must be more to life, or that you have so much more to offer, your intuition has never been so sharp. Claim these as sacred truths about yourself. Listen and follow where they lead.

Each of these yearnings is a summons to live a more meaningful life, an invitation to live life to the fullest, a sacred call to become all you were created to be.

We crave more because we were made for more.

We try to satisfy those cravings with trivial activity and meaningless things. But this foolishness just leaves us exhausted, dissatisfied, and hungrier than ever. These cravings testify in your heart that you were created to strive for more.

Toward the end of his life, Michelangelo observed, “I regret that I have done so little for my eternal soul and that I am but beginning to learn the alphabet of my craft.” He was eighty-eight years old and indisputably a genius who had lived a life of astonishing worldly accomplishment. But what was his regret? Care of the soul.

The advantage you have over Michelangelo is that you still have time to do something about it. How much time? Impossible to say, but not enough time to waste any. So, begin today.

You have so much more to offer. But to contribute more, to experience life in new and exciting ways, to accomplish things far beyond your accomplishments so far, and to discover who you really are and what you are here in this world to contribute, you need to start paying closer attention to the sacred truths bubbling up within your soul.

You were made for more. It’s time to find out what that “more” is. Holy Moments will draw out your potential.

THE TWO HUNGERS

Are you hungry? What are you hungry for? We're all hungry for something. Knowing what you hunger for is wisdom.

The Bushmen of the Kalahari Desert in Southern Africa talk about "the Two Hungers." There is the Great Hunger and the Little Hunger. The Little Hunger yearns for food while the Great Hunger, the greatest hunger of all, is the hunger for meaning.

"There is ultimately only one thing that makes human beings deeply and profoundly bitter, and that is to have thrust upon them a life without meaning. There is nothing wrong in searching for happiness. But of far more comfort to the soul is something greater than happiness or unhappiness, and that is meaning. Because meaning transfigures all. Once what you are doing has meaning for you, it is irrelevant whether you're happy or unhappy. You are content." This was the beautiful and profound observation of the South African author Laurens van der Post.

We pretend our hunger baffles us. We try to feed

our hunger in a thousand ways, but still our hunger remains, because it will only be satisfied with meaning. We cannot thrive without meaning. Our need for meaning is as urgent and unceasing as our need for water.

Ernest Hemingway was living in Paris when he was trying to make it as a writer. He was young and restless, and wrote about the many yearnings we experience. This was his reflection on a nagging hunger he couldn't satisfy, "My wife and I had a wonderful meal at Michaud's, but when we had finished and there was no question of hunger any more the feeling that had been like hunger when we were standing on the bridge was still there. It was there when we came home and after we had gone to bed and made love in the dark, it was there. When I woke with the windows open and the moonlight on the rooftops of Paris, the hunger was still there. I put my face away from the moonlight into the shadow, but I could not sleep and lay awake thinking about it. My wife slept sweetly now with the moonlight on her face. I had to try to

think it out. Life had seemed so simple that morning when I had awakened to the spring...”

Have you ever had a night like that? Tossing and turning, wondering about the purpose and direction of your life.

Have you ever had a hunger that would not be satisfied? I suspect we all have.

What are you hungry for in your life right now? Do you know? You may not, and that’s okay. We will find out together. But whatever your hunger is, more of the same, more of what you have been trying to satisfy it with until now isn’t the answer. Are you open to trying something new?

A MOMENT OF CLARITY

When I was fifteen years old, I had a great spiritual mentor. I don’t know how my life would have unfolded if I hadn’t met him. But it’s difficult to imagine that life would have been anywhere near as fruitful or rewarding as it has been.

He encouraged me to read the Gospels. He taught

me how to pray. He showed me how to care for the poor and visit the lonely. He encouraged me to read great spiritual books. He watched without judgement as I foolishly wrestled with God. He listened patiently to my questions, doubts, excuses, and resistance. And perhaps most of all, he encouraged me to honor those sacred truths that were emerging in my soul: Something is missing, there is more to life, and you do have more to offer.

One of the fruits of this friendship was a moment of clarity so piercing that it has defined my life.

I was walking home from meeting with him one day, when everything we had been discussing for months came together in a single clarifying thought: *Some moments are holy, some moments are unholy, and our choices can guide a moment in either direction.*

It was a rare moment of clarity in a chaotic and confusing world. It was also a moment of intense joy. I can still see myself walking down the street. I know exactly where I was in that moment of awakening.

Everything good in my life has been connected to

that moment. And all the pain and disappointment I have caused myself and others has been the result of abandoning the wisdom that was revealed in that moment.

It only took a moment. In that moment I realized what was possible. In that moment I learned to collaborate with God and create Holy Moments. It was a moment of grace like none other. And I have spent my life trying to help others discover that same clarity and joy. It is the only way I know to express my gratitude for the infinite blessings that moment brought to my life.

It was a moment of awakening, a moment of realization, a moment of discovery, a moment of clarity, and a moment of pure unmitigated joy. It was a Holy Moment.

Now it's your turn. This is your moment. The moment when you realize that despite what your life has been up until now, and regardless of anything you have done in the past, what matters most is what you do next.

WHEN LIFE FINALLY MAKES SENSE

Once we discover that some moments are holy, some moments are unholy, and our choices can guide a moment in either direction, life finally begins to make sense.

This is no small thing. Most people in the modern secular world cannot make sense of life. The culture has exiled them from God, religion, and spirituality. So, each day is a frustrated attempt to put together the jigsaw puzzle of life without crucial pieces. We are baffled by life. This bewilderment is deeply personal, because we are not only struggling to make sense of life in general, but we are struggling to make sense of our own lives.

The more disconnected from God our lives become the more meaningless life becomes.

Holy Moments give meaning and divine purpose to our lives. Meaning is crucial to our health and happiness. We cannot thrive as human beings without it. And we cannot live a meaningful life by filling our life with trivial things and meaningless

activities. Holy Moments solve the meaninglessness of our lives.

There is a moment at the end of each day, when we lay our head on our pillows. Our bodies are tired, our minds relax, and our egos let go. It is a solitary moment. If we listen carefully in that moment, we will discover where we stand. Where we stand with God, where we stand with those we love, and where we stand with our truest self. That moment never lies. It reveals the meaning or meaninglessness of our lives.

Meaning binds your life together into one coherent whole. It connects all the many aspects of your life. We live more vigorously and courageously when we are able to connect our daily activity with the greater meaning and purpose of life.

The simple truth that some moments are holy, some moments are unholy, and our choices can guide a moment in either direction, reveals the profound meaning that each and every human act contains. This one idea holds the power to bring meaning and purpose to every moment of your life.

Holy Moments inject meaning into every moment of your life.

WHAT IS A HOLY MOMENT?

We have established that some moments are holy, some moments are unholy, and our choices can guide a moment in either direction.

We have established that our ability to guide moments toward what is holy demonstrates that each and every human act contains profound meaning.

Now, let us explore exactly how “our choices can guide a moment,” for this is the essence of collaborating with God to create Holy Moments.

The crucial question is: What is a Holy Moment?

A Holy Moment is a single moment in which you open yourself to God. You make yourself available to Him. You set aside personal preference and self-interest, and for one moment you do what you prayerfully believe God is calling you to do.

These Holy Moments, these tiny collaborations with God, unleash the pure unmitigated joy that I

first experienced walking home that afternoon when I was fifteen. The same pure unmitigated joy that is about to flood every corner of your being.

So, begin today. One of the beautiful things about this idea is that you can implement it immediately. You do not need to study it for years. No special qualifications are necessary. This alone demonstrates the power of the Holy Moments principle.

You are equipped right now to collaborate with God and create a Holy Moment. The coming pages will teach you how to recognize opportunities to create Holy Moments in any situation; show you how to practically apply the principle in your daily life; connect you with the meaning and purpose of your one short life; and flood your relationships with goodness. But you know everything you need to know right now to begin activating Holy Moments in your life.

You can begin today.

And here's the beautiful thing. If you can collaborate with God today to create one Holy Moment, you

can create two tomorrow, and four the next day, and eight the day after that. There is no limit to the number of Holy Moments you can participate in.

THE MOMENT OF DECISION

If you only learn to master one moment in your life, learn to master the moment of decision.

We all make choices. That's the easy part. The hard thing about choices is living with them. We all have regrets. We have all said and done things that we would do differently if we could go back in time. We know we can't. We may have made peace with those choices to some extent, but still, in the quiet hours they haunt us.

If I could give only one piece of advice, it would be this: Make choices that are easy to live with. Make choices you can look back on longingly, like you do upon the best of times with the best of friends.

Life is choices. We are constantly making them. But are we choosing wisely? We are not born great decision makers. It is something that must be learned.

The wisdom of Holy Moments will teach you how to become a great decision maker.

When you have a decision to make, consult your future self. Imagine yourself twenty years from now, looking back on this moment, and honor what your future self advises you to do.

A young man decided one Thursday night to rob a convenience store with his friends. Only something went horribly wrong. The cashier ended up dead and the young man was sentenced to life in prison. He never intended to use the gun when he bought it. He set the gun on the counter during the robbery, and it went off. For more than forty years he played that moment over and again in his mind. He wanted to know what happened, what went wrong. But memories fade and all we are left with are the consequences of the choices we have made.

“Every day I feel regret. I was nineteen then and I am sixty-two now. Forty-three years, locked up in a cage. Some days I can taste the regret in my mouth when I wake up. Other days, I will almost make it

through the whole day, and then the smallest reminder will trigger a memory, and the memory will trigger the regret. That kind of regret, even after all these years, is like being punched in the stomach by a gorilla. I ask myself over and over: Why? I didn't need the money. I mean I didn't have any money, but I didn't really need the money. We were just kids being stupid in a grown-up world. I wish I could go back and change just one moment of my life. Change that one decision and my whole life would have been different. I wish I could go back and talk to the young man I was the day I bought that gun. I wish I could tell that young man, 'Stay home tonight.' But I can't."

That's what regret sounds like. I have my own regrets. We all do.

Regrets teach us that choices have consequences. Regrets reveal that we need to become better decision makers.

We teach little children that choices have consequences. It is one of life's fundamental truths. But

adults often adopt the temporary insanity of imagining that our choices will only have the consequences we intend. But it is the unintended consequences of our choices that often wreak havoc in our lives and the lives of other people.

Choices have consequences. We know that. But we throw this indisputable truth aside in order to deny the consequences of our unholy moments. But by denying that our choices have consequences, we abandon our power to create Holy Moments, and render ourselves spiritually impotent.

When we teach children that choices have consequences, the emphasis is usually placed on the consequences of poor choices, while the powerful and positive consequences of wise choices are often overlooked.

Holy Moments are choices with powerful and positive consequences. Holy Moments are choices that are easy to live with.

It's time to start filling our lives with Holy Moments. If you glance back at your life, the choices you

find hardest to live with were unholy moments. And the choices you find easiest to live with, the ones you are rightly proud of, those you cherish, they each held the seed of goodness. They were Holy Moments.

Decision making is a powerful force in our lives. Our decisions quite literally shape our lives. We make the future with our choices.

The beautiful thing about choices is you have more to make. Choices got you here, but if you don't like "here" all you need to do is start making different choices.

Your choices have power.

If someone had an incredible power and used it for evil that would be a horrible thing. But what about if someone had an incredible power and didn't use it for good? There's something tragic and wrong about that too, isn't there?

That someone is you. You possess an incredible power. You can choose what is good and holy or you can choose what is unholy and destructive. Your choices have power.

THE REST OF YOUR LIFE

So, let me ask you: What are you going to do with the rest of your life?

More of the same? Continue to distract yourself with meaningless nonsense? Focus on what you can get? Keep dreaming about a change you know you will never make? Or are you finally, once and for all, ready to do something about the nagging dissatisfaction in your soul?

You have one short life. We all waste some of it. How much are you wasting?

If you are ready for a change, it only takes a handful of Holy Moments to flood your soul with joy and show you a new and exciting vision of the rest of your life.

There is a beautiful story in Matthew's Gospel where Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up a high mountain. There he was transfigured. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as light.

The definition of transfiguration is a complete change of appearance into a more beautiful spiritual

state. Each Holy Moment is a mini-transfiguration. Holy Moments allow us to see what is possible, even if only for a fleeting moment. Each Holy Moment reveals who you are capable of being, and who you are capable of being is amazing.

So, don't let your past rob you of your future. You are more than the worst thing that has ever happened to you. You are more than the worst thing you have ever done. God is never more than one choice away. It only takes one Holy Moment to shift the momentum of your life in the right direction.

The rest of your life is waiting for you. It will be filled with moments. Will they be Holy Moments or unholy moments? The choice is yours.

