

One

truth [trootH]

the formless, indefinable and untouchable essence whose
nature is inherent joy that is not of this world

TheHamsterWheelsNotMotorized.com

Twenty-two

myth [mith]

an invalid collective or individual belief or experience
that is used to project a seeming reality

Thank you

Thank you to my wife Narmada for inspiring me to write and expressing the dance of life in its most sublime form.

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Thank you to everyone reading this
– and everyone not reading this.

aum

Benjamin Ramakrishna

THE
HAMSTER WHEEL
IS NOT
MOTORIZED

BUSTING 22 MYTHS THAT SEEMINGLY RESTRAIN US
FROM BEING FULLY ALIVE

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You are full of life

Preface	2
How to read this book	5
Uplifting at its core	9
Overture - my starting point is fabricated	11

1

*You already are
what you are looking for*

<i>Myth 1</i>	It is more important to be happy later than now	17
<i>Myth 2</i>	I cannot follow my dreams because I have to earn my living	27
<i>Myth 3</i>	I need to push away my fear	35

2

You are invincible

<i>Myth 4</i>	Judging makes me stronger	47
<i>Myth 5</i>	I need to get rid of my ego	57
<i>Myth 6</i>	I have to defend and justify myself	65
<i>Myth 7</i>	I have free will	73
<i>Myth 8</i>	Death is something I need to be afraid of	81
<i>Myth 9</i>	My thoughts are from and about me	89

3

The world is in you

<i>Myth 10</i>	There is an objective world out there	101
<i>Myth 11</i>	Media paints an objective picture of the world	111
<i>Myth 12</i>	Pressure comes from others	126

4

You are good enough by nature

- | | | |
|----------------|--|-----|
| <i>Myth 13</i> | I have to earn my worth through the approval of others | 135 |
| <i>Myth 14</i> | I have the need to be loved | 146 |

5

The outside is a reflection of your inside

- | | | |
|----------------|---|-----|
| <i>Myth 15</i> | I have to be serious in life | 159 |
| <i>Myth 16</i> | I need to avoid failure | 169 |
| <i>Myth 17</i> | I improve through feedback | 181 |
| <i>Myth 18</i> | The highest goal of all is to be a good, respected and successful citizen | 192 |
| <i>Myth 19</i> | Schools are more useful than harmful | 205 |
| <i>Myth 20</i> | Developed countries are more developed than developing countries | 217 |

6

*You are happy - whether with or
without your partner*

- | | | |
|----------------|----------------------------------|-----|
| <i>Myth 21</i> | I own my partner | 229 |
| <i>Myth 22</i> | My partner gets boring over time | 237 |

O

You are full of life

PREFACE

*The best way to get out of something
is to realize you were never in it.*

– Paul Hedderman

Imagine you are dreaming, and in the dream, you are cheating on your boyfriend or girlfriend, which leaves a very unpleasant aftertaste. You feel extremely guilty and cannot comprehend how you could have done what you did to someone who really means something to you. You are immensely worried and confused about whether you should tell your boyfriend or girlfriend and whether he or she would find out about it. You are becoming more and more worried and hopeless and do not see any way out of this difficult situation.

Suddenly, you wake up realizing that all of it was just a dream. What seemed to be an unbearable problem during the dream – from the perspective of the person in the dream, which you identified with, and hence, felt as real as it can get for you – no longer represents a dilemma for you in the waking state. It is not only that the problem disappeared, but also that it never even existed in the first place. You did not solve the situation by using a conventional method, such as finding a compromise, going to therapy or learning how to think positively, but by realizing you were never the person in the dream. As soon as the identification dropped, the problem was gone. The person in the dream would have never been able to solve the issue with the same quality as you did by waking up; neither through any method nor any meditation practice. At best, you could have slightly

improved the situation or learned how to cope with it, but it would have always been a burden in your life in some way or another. You cannot truly sort out an issue by looking at it from the same perspective that caused it initially. Put differently, the problem was not derived from cheating on your boyfriend or girlfriend, but from identifying with something that is different from your true nature, that is the *dream-constructed* person.

This dream analogy points out that, in everyday life, the vast majority of us are disoriented and seemingly lost because we have forgotten that we are not in the dream, but the one dreaming. It is essential to understand that we can only seemingly be in the dream, but never in actuality. While to the person in the dream everything within it appears to be real, it can never be real to the one who is awake. I was seemingly stuck in the dream for a long time myself without even having the slightest idea of its mechanism. I was so immersed in the dream trying to look for long-lasting remedy always *banging my head against a brick wall*, not seeing that who or what we are is never to be found within the dream.

Although so-called personal development or self-improvement methods can have a positive effect on us, they require effort, discipline and repetition and their efficacy is very limited because they work within the dream. They mainly numb or reposition symptoms, but do not enable us to see our true identity. Instead, they even reinforce the seeming reality of the dream by keeping us within that very realm. We can only find a long-lasting cure-all for the events happening in the

dream when being awake. As the person within the dream, we can never understand how it feels to be awake.

This book is an invitation to be open-minded to the possibility that we may not be who we think we are. Life does not have to be an ongoing struggle for survival or fight for acceptance and love. It is possible to live a light-hearted life and be successful without having to worry or be greedy. Life is very simple: no matter what happens, it is always enough to be ourselves.

Therefore, this book is not about learning yet another method or set of beliefs, but about challenging the status quo and discovering together whether it is possible to be completely free – and not just a little. While we may experience a temporary relief when trying to be free as the person within the dream, we experience ongoing freedom when realizing that we have never been in the dream in the first place. All chapters of this book are about discovering our inherent nature using different everyday situations as a starting point.

HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

Each chapter consists of two parts. The first part describes *what we believe or seemingly experience to be true*. Or put in other words, it describes 22 myths about how we usually experience life, especially when conforming or being *well-adjusted* to society in terms of what we should think, what values we should have and how we should see the world. It takes the representative perspective of someone who acts upon the common belief system that we acquire through our upbringing in society. That first part does not represent the perspective of the author.

The words *believe* and *seeming* play a key role here. Beliefs can have the power to appear to be real to us in the realm of thinking and feeling. This means we are usually not able to differentiate between what is real and what is only a belief. This is so powerful that it does not only affect our self-image and actions, but also how we perceive and feel about others and the entire world. All of us experience this when, for example, seeing the world through rose-colored glasses when being in love. In such a case, almost everything and everybody suddenly appears to be much more beautiful and nicer than usual. Whenever we change our view about others and the world, it is not the world or others that necessarily change, but our beliefs and feelings about them. This first part reflects how we perceive reality when we do not question what we are told and when we listen more to second-hand information than to our intuition. When I used to live according to this limiting perspective, my life

was exhausting, also because I lived for others and not for myself. It was a life full of worries always living in the past and the future, rarely experiencing moments of deep peace and happiness. From this perspective, it seemed as if it were impossible to ever be fully free.

In the second part of each chapter, we bust those respective myths by pointing at *what may actually be happening*. It is essential to understand that this part does not intent to demonstrate the one and only right way of living, but instead does the following: firstly, it provokes our current beliefs and conditioning, which helps us to become aware of and eventually free from them. And secondly, it invites us to be open-minded towards a practical way of living that I and many other people since the beginning of mankind have found to work on many different levels.

The crucial point here is not to blindly adopt any preconceived wisdom or way of living, but to discover it afresh for ourselves; otherwise, our new way of living would be based, yet again, on another acquired belief. We are not interested in propaganda for a new movement, but in freeing ourselves from any movement, method or belief. Furthermore, we do not propose how one should or should not live one's life or what one should think about the world. It is not about learning *what* to think, but rather about *how* to think. As a natural consequence, we are able to live a more light-hearted and joyful life characterized by a peace of mind and authenticity without having to sacrifice our lifestyle.

While reading this book, it may help to direct your attention not so much on the words themselves, but more

on the *perfume of the book*, from which the words spring and point towards. At the same time, I invite you to closely observe your reactions, judgments, thoughts and emotions triggered by what you are reading. This may help you to strengthen your intuition, one of the most valuable vehicles most of us have forgotten to use on our way to adulthood. You may also notice an inner dialogue or argument between what your thoughts tell you on the one hand and what messages your *heart* gives you on the other hand. I invite you to observe from moment to moment whether you give more credibility to thoughts or to your intuition. Whenever you observe yourself resisting or denying something expressed in this book – and also in life – put some extra attention on it as it may point to some hidden aspects looking for your attention.

This book is designed to be read either from the beginning to the end or for you to directly jump to specific chapters that you resonate with at the time you pick up the book. The sum of reading all chapters provides you with additional value painting a more holistic picture. Since this book is not about acquiring knowledge, but works on a more substantial level, you may also find some intentional repetitions that take effect on you, which by the way, works no matter how much you may agree or disagree with its content. Since life itself is a paradox, you may also encounter statements that may superficially seem to be inconsistent with other statements in the book. I invite you not to treat this book the same way you would treat a scientific paper because life itself does not follow scientific rules. It is rather the case that science tries to understand and simulate life.

Since this book is intended to be of highly practical nature, it includes guiding questions and space for notes after each chapter. If you like, you can use it as a practical workbook that could almost act as if it were your personal coach. It is for all people who want to roll up their sleeves and look for long-lasting remedy. When using it in that manner, and not in a purely theoretical way, you may be able to transform your life in a way you would have never been able to imagine. It can help to make your private life lighter and your relationships more fulfilling. At the same time, it can help to make your business more successful and increase your performance as an athlete. Discover what it means to be fully alive in your own life.

Keep in mind that the most essential element is not the book itself, but what meaning you give to it. Similar to quantum physics, in which the observer has the biggest influence on any experiment, you are by far the biggest influence on this book, not the author or its words. This book is nothing without you and can be everything with you. You are reading it based on all your conditioning, beliefs, memories, and perspectives about the world and yourself. Yet, the more you are able to seemingly let go of the latter, the more you will discover the dance of life that I experienced while I was writing it.

UPLIFTING AT ITS CORE

This is not a conventional book containing acquired knowledge as we may be used to. We do not read it to restock our knowledge base, hear about new theories or methods to then try if they work or not or discuss about them. It is not based on knowledge from the past, but it is designed to take us beyond the realm of thinking, that is, to a timeless *space*, whose nature is to make us feel fully alive.

At its core, this book is uplifting in its most radical, human form. While it uplifts our heart, it is provocative towards our limiting beliefs, which often times we identify with more than with our heart. The provocative statements are there to rattle our current image of the world. The intention is not to criticize any specific people or institutions or to create any conspiracy theories. The point is rather to challenge the status quo, which is far-off from any conspiracy. We usually do not see how our acquired knowledge from yesterday keeps us from seemingly being free at the given moment. Therefore, the provocative elements are also used to *slap or tickle* us out of the known allowing us to get a taste of our true nature. The choice is on our side: either we get caught up in the content defending our current point of view and judging this book to be provocative, or we stay open-minded enough to be able to challenge our own status quo.

At the end of the day, this book is not about itself, but about you! You do not care about this book, but about how to be able to live a life full of joy. Therefore, it is one thing to have insights while reading the book, and yet

another to be able to translate those insights into actual life situations. We all have met people who have deep insights, but who do not apply them in most part of their lives. So, do not keep your insights in your head or show them off in conversations with your friends, but embody them in every given situation, whether you are by yourself or with others. Our journey on this pathless path is not about aiming to receive approval from society or others about our degree of wisdom, but about embodying wisdom in every step and breath we take.

OVERTURE – MY STARTING POINT IS FABRICATED

*None are more hopelessly enslaved than those
who falsely believe they are free.*

– Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, born in 1749

We are not who we think we are. We can read this statement in at least two different ways: firstly, we are more than our thinking and what we imagine to be, which means our essence is beyond what we are able to grasp with our mind. And secondly, we identify ourselves with something we are not. Both meanings play a role in this book. As a result of this misidentification, our days are characterized by an almost constant struggle. While we usually assume there is something wrong with the world, the system or other people, it rather seems as if there were something wrong with the way we approach life in every situation, that is, our starting point. Those of us, who claim to be fine despite the struggle, may not be aware of our true nature, having forgotten what it means to be fully alive. Throughout this book, I invite you to challenge the status quo of our world, and even more importantly, of our starting point, from which we approach every situation in life.

To illustrate what impact a wrong starting point can have on our life, let's take a look at a simple analogy. Imagine a big tray full of glasses, plates and silverware. The tray's surface is slippery and has just been tilted. As a consequence, all objects on the tray have slid down and some of them have fallen on the floor and broke. The people responsible for the tray try to solve the given

challenge by setting up a non-slippery surface in between the spaces that they can reach on the tray, building protective cushions in between the glasses and plates to avoid scratches, setting up sophisticated noise cancellation devices and many other fancy high-tech solutions. To ensure the highest quality possible, they only hire highly recognized people who have a proven track record and know everything about the ideal materials to be used and about the given environmental factors, such as the impact of humidity on the glasses. Very quickly, the tray looks highly sophisticated and is equipped with state-of-the-art computer and engineering technology. They even set up call centers to keep the owners and investors of the glasses and silverware informed about the progress. Over time, more and more people get involved in this business. Once they manage to solve one particular issue, different issues appear in other areas of the tilted tray. While the implemented solutions never work for all objects, they mainly protect the glasses and silverware owned by the most influential people. Even without any bigger problems being present, people pretend to be busy managing one thing or another on the tray, although it may not make the overall situation better. Despite dealing with many problems, most people are very happy with the overall situation of the tray, are proud of their achievements and even make it their business to give each other rewards for outstanding achievements. Some of the best managers educate new generations of tray experts, who then apply the best practices from the generation before and even improve those further. The standard of the tray technology

constantly improves. The people in the tray society are convinced they have the best tray in the world wondering whether there may be other trays on other planets.

If one day the *tray people* were approached by a humble, wise man telling them that the cause of all their problems lied in the tray being tilted, they would arrogantly laugh at him claiming he was crazy and not qualified for commenting on the tray. Since all of the *tray people's* jobs rely on the tray being tilted, nobody would even be open to entertain the possibility that the tilted tray is the core problem, even denying it to themselves, let alone daring to talk about it in public without being afraid of being judged by others. Another reason for not being open to identify the core problem is that all generations before had lived on the tray and all the important people in society support and lobby for the conventional tray business. Even if some of them had a clue about something being wrong with it, they had no choice but to play along the important *tray game* because it would be the only way to find acceptance and make it in this society.

In this analogy, the tilted tray represents our wrong starting point, on which we have seemingly built our entire reality. When starting from that wrong point, the world will always feel distorted, no matter how sophisticated our solutions may be, for the simple reason that we ignore what is actually happening. It is enough to clearly see that the tray is tilted, which reveals its true functioning nature, that is, being in balance. Seeing this may require being able to unlearn what we were indoctrinated with, being utterly honest with ourselves

and standing up for the truth even if everyone else told us
and acted as if the opposite were true.

1

*You already are
what you are looking for*



MYTH 1 – IT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO BE
HAPPY LATER THAN NOW

He who is not contented with what he has, would not be contented with what he would like to have.

– Socrates, born in 470 BC

What we believe or seemingly experience to be true

We usually give more attention to the future than to how we feel at the present moment. Even while reading this sentence, we may be half *here* and half attached to our thought process planning the future. We think and say things such as I *will* be okay, hoping the future will be better than what life is currently presenting to us. Or put differently: we believe we can be happy once certain conditions are met, such as having enough money, the right partner, the right friends, the right job, good health or enough time.

An example of how we sacrifice our wellbeing in order to eventually benefit from something in the future is going to office every day where we spend time with people we do not connect with and do things we do not really like. We agonize over this because we believe that this is just the way life is, hoping in secret that one day we are able to do what we really like.

What may actually be happening

The very act of postponing our happiness gets in the way of being happy at the given moment. By making this a habit, we put ourselves in a constant chase for happiness forgetting what it means to feel fully alive. We ignore

that life never takes place outside of the *now*, neither in the past nor in the future. We can never actually live in the future, but only *think* about it, the latter also taking place in the *now*. The future never becomes reality because by the time it *arrives*, it is again the present moment. This means, we spend most our time on something that does not even exist. By constantly planning to be happy in the future, we try to conserve and reproduce certain activities and moments that we think caused our happiness in the past and hope it will bring back the same feeling, without being aware that the very act of doing so causes us to suffer.

Something seems to be fundamentally wrong with our quest for happiness. It is as if we put the horses not before but behind the horse-drawn buggy. In this analogy, we try very hard to move the carriage forward – always with our best intentions. But every day, the result looks the same. The horses stumble right into the carriage pushing it a few yards forward, get hurt, dust themselves off and try again. Though certain experts, who provide us with professional advice on how exactly the horses should run, help us to make the process a bit smoother, they also oversee that the horses belong in front of the carriage. And although our intuition tells us something is wrong, we still continue to follow such a failed approach because everyone else does as well.

During waking hours, our attention is almost constantly on thoughts. Rare and short breaks only occur when we find relief by engaging in activities such as working out, taking drugs, engaging in spirituality, helping others, experiencing pain, meditating or eating,