



# Get Out of Your Own Way

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By Abby Eagle

## A Zen Story

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A poor man is driving home through peak hour traffic in a rusty old bomb. A driver in front stops then does a three point turn to pull into a parking space. "How is it," he mutters to himself, "that it is always these rich people in their late model cars who are always the ones to hold up the traffic, as if they owned the road? They have so much confidence. And look," he continues, "look at all that gold jewellery, I bet she has never worked a day in her life." Driving off again he can feel the all too familiar anger and resentment build in his chest.

A hundred meters down the road he stops at the traffic lights and glares at the driver of an expensive BMW in the next lane. "And look at him, he's up himself too. Windows up, air-conditioning going I bet. Yeah, and it sounds like he's got a fancy CD stacker too. Yeah and there's the navigator on the dash. I bet he doesn't have to worry about anything. Why aren't I driving a car like that?", he thinks to himself. "Haven't I worked 60 hours a week for the last 20 years? Haven't I struggled? What makes him better than me?" The anger and resentment continues to boil.

As the lights turn green and he steps on the accelerator the car stalls. He looks at the empty fuel gauge. "Haven't I suffered enough?" he groans with despair. He gets out of the car and struggles to push it through the intersection. None of the other drivers seem to care. They honk and manoeuvre their way pass his car, giving him long stares. "You too, mate," he shouts at one of the drivers. A cloud of exhaust fumes fill his lungs and make him feel nauseous. The lights turn red before he can get the car across the intersection. Biting back tears of frustration he looks skywards and pleads, "Please God will only someone stop and help me?"

At that moment he collapses unconscious on the roadway.

He is then surprised to find that he is hovering above his body and that it is as if time has stopped. Everything looks different – the colours are all pastel and

things have changed in some way that he can't really describe. He can see his body lying on the road. Everything seems to be in a state of suspended animation. The traffic has stopped. Even pedestrians and a bird in the sky seem frozen in space and time. Then from out of nowhere a man appears. He is the sort of man that you would not generally take a second look at. He is of middle age, slim build, unshaven and a little unkempt, except that he is wearing an expensive pair of outdoor shoes.

"Well, well, well," says the stranger, "it looks like you could do with a bit of help. Do you need a hand?"

"Who are you?" says the man.

"My name is Abby Eagle, can I help you?"

But the man begins to cry. The tears turning into uncontrollable sobbing as if nothing in the world could ever console him. Eventually he settles down and wiping away the tears with a handkerchief he tells me his life story. He explains that he has worked hard his entire life and yet still finds himself living in poverty while others seem to attract health, success, money and loving relationships with little effort. And now it just feels all too much. His car has broken down in a busy intersection and he feels all alone.

"What do you want for yourself?" I ask.

"I don't want to be poor any more and I don't want to suffer. I just want enough money so that I can relax and be happy but I don't seem to get anywhere. And I am scared that I will die without having achieved my true potential in life."

"Okay," I say, "are you truly committed to changing your life?"

"I am," says the man starting to cry again.

I continue, "Let me give you an outline of what you need to do to turn your life around but first you need to understand that there is no quick fix and from your position it is going to be hard work. But the way that I see it life can't get much worse for you, so now the only way for you is up. So that means you have something good to look forward to does it not?" The man nods his head with a look of interest on his face.

"What you need to understand is that you attract into your life what you think about. So if you think about how others are better off than you then this is what

you will attract. So if you resent rich people then you will create situations where you are able to experience resentment of rich people. But on the other hand if you learn to have empathy for rich people then you will create opportunities to bring more wealth into your life. Do you follow what I am saying?"

"I don't know." said the man. "Why would I want to have empathy for a rich person?"

"Because it will bring understanding," I say, "and understanding how another person experiences the world will give you valuable insights into how to change your world. In fact knowing how to learn from your experiences and generate a feeling of understanding at the level of the unconscious mind is the real secret to attracting more peace, happiness, money etc into your life but that lesson will have to wait for another day. If you want to improve your life then we have to start at the beginning."

At that moment a book appears in the air between the two. The corners are a little dog eared and it has a black cover with the words: Zen and the Art of Living embossed in gold leaf into the surface. Taking hold of the book and opening it to a page entitled 'the secret of creating your destiny' Abby begins to read:

"Step 1. Be grateful for just having this experience of life. Life is precious, treasure it.

Step 2. The next step is to dream up what you want from life. Start by making a list of all of the experiences that you want to have. Just let your imagination run wild.

Step 3. In step 3 we run your dreams through the SUCCESS model. The success model is a set of guidelines that successful people have used to achieve their desired outcomes time and time again. This is no secret it is just that you have not known where to find this information before today.

There are seven check points to the SUCCESS model and for now I am just going to give you the outline:

1. State your goal in the positive not the negative so state what you want not what you don't want. Create images in your mind of what you will have when you get the result that you are after.
2. Undeniable reality. Is your goal realistic?
3. Contextualised. When and where do you want this outcome?
4. Congruency. What does achieving this goal mean to you? For what purpose do you want your desired outcome?
5. Ecology. Does any part of you or any significant people in your life have any objections to you achieving this goal?

6. Self initiated and maintained. Are you solely responsible for achieving this outcome or does it rely upon luck or some external help?
7. Simple. Keep the goal simple.

Today let's focus on the ecology check? Understanding the ecology step of the SUCCESS model is where many people fall short. If there is any part of you or any significant person in your life that objects to you achieving your desired outcome then you will find it difficult to achieve. Let me explain:

Let's say that you want to drive a late model BMW and all of your friends drive 20 year old vehicles then their jealousy and resentment as you move up in the world could hold you back. The choice could be between your friends or the BMW, unless of course you and your friends are on the same path. Sometimes we can not have both. Are your friends, family and colleagues going to help or hinder you as you take action towards your goals?

In addition if there is an unconscious part of you that objects to you achieving your desired outcome then this part could sabotage your efforts too. To make this more clear think of the smoker who wants to quit. If he has no internal objections to stopping smoking then why does he continue to smoke? Habit? Chemical addiction? What we really have is the conscious mind in conflict with an unconscious mind that is more like a 2 year old that can only communicate in feelings and actions.

Getting back to our rich man example. If you want what the rich man has then you have to be willing to let go of any jealousy, resentment, anger etc that you have towards people who are wealthy otherwise these emotions could block your path. In addition at some level you are probably aware that releasing the negative emotions could also bring up feelings of hurt around your past poverty."

"So," I say to the man, "are you willing to move yourself into the position of wealth? Are you willing to change your perspective on life situation? "Yes!" says the man with a sense of conviction in his voice.

I continue, "then I'd like you to imagine that you can stand in the shoes of the driver of that BMW."

"I can't do that." says the man.

"Why not? I say.

"Because then I would be like him and I hate what he stands for."

I laugh, "Do you want poverty or wealth? The choice is yours."

"I want wealth says the man but I don't want to be like the rich man."

"Okay," I say, "the problem is that in your mind you have an idea about the rich man but it is just an opinion that you have built up over the years and it is stored in your mind as pictures, sounds and feelings. The feelings of hate, resentment, anger and jealousy are what you have created for yourself out of your own mind. What is in your mind does not exist in reality. Just think of the mind as being much like the internet with its millions of web pages hyperlinked to each other. Mind is just past memory and future imagination. It can either work for you or against you. Now do you want poverty or wealth?"

"Wealth." says the man with tears in his eyes as it dawns on him that he has to make some deep personal change before he can achieve his goals.

"Okay, now in your mind imagine that you can float over into the position of the man who was driving that BMW and look back at yourself out of his eyes. Now tell me what you see?"

"The man says, "I see a boy who came from a poor background. Both my parents worked long hours. My father got the basic wage and my mother slaved in the kitchen and made our clothes. She was always busy and never had time to relax. Christmas and birthdays were not happy occasions because of the lack of money. We did not communicate that well either and there were often arguments. I did not feel loved. I remember my mother telling me that they did not have the money to send me to University, and my mother often reminded me of how difficult life was for her and my father when they were children; my father was taken away from high school even though he received a scholarship because his parents needed the money that he could bring in from working. So I began to feel guilty about achieving more success than my parents. Ever since I entered the workforce I have had to constantly struggle to make ends meet. I have spent much of my life feeling jealous, resentful and angry. And the last few years I have sometimes felt terrible hurt and despair because I have not achieved much with my life."

"I'd like you to notice," I say, "that you have developed a new perspective and understanding on the situation have you not?"

"I have." Says the man.

"Okay," I continue, "now from the position of the rich man I'd like you to

reach up into the source of universal love and healing energy as a golden light and have it come down through the crown chakra of his head and into his heart filling his heart with the love and healing energy as a golden light. And then allow the love and healing energy to flow across to yourself filling your heart and your body with the golden light and notice that once again this gives you a different perspective on the situation does it not?"

"It does." Says the man.

"Now move back into your own body so that you can look across at the driver of the BMW. Reach up into the source of universal love and healing energy and have it come down through your crown chakra as a golden light and into your heart allowing your heart to fill with the golden light and then allow it to spread throughout your entire body and then allow it to flow across to the rich man filling his heart and his body.

"Now step back behind yourself so that you can see both yourself and the rich man in your minds eye. Now once again reach up into the source of universal love and healing energy as a golden light and see it come down through your crown chakra and into your heart, filling your heart and then flowing throughout your body and then allow it to flow across to the rich man filling his heart and his body. Most importantly see that both you and the rich man are both connected to the same source of universal love and healing energy and that it is in fact coming down into both of your crown chakras and then into your hearts and flowing backwards and forwards between both of you. Now that you have done this process tell me what has changed for you?"

The man says, "I can see that the poverty in my life came out of my childhood conditioning from my parents, relatives, school, society and the media. I can see that as a child I did not understand what was happening to me but now I feel more as a master of my destiny. And I strangely feel more connected to the rich man. The resentment and jealousy have gone. There is less anger. I feel more accepting of myself. I came from a poor background and my present situation is very challenging but I can see that I just have to work a lot smarter than others. The BMW driver might have come from a more prosperous background and life may have been easier for him but I can see that a hard life has taught me a lot. I feel I have a degree from the university of hard knocks." He laughs. "Now I feel that I can turn my life around and aim for what I want and not what I don't want. Perhaps I should try and meet this rich man and see if I can learn something from him."

At that point the man returned to his physical body murmuring words of gratitude and praise. "Thank you he says, thank you, how can I ever repay you?"

“Just relax,” says a professional looking man bending over him. “I am a doctor. I pulled over when I saw you collapse on the road. You are going to be alright. You look a lot better than when I first got here though.” He adds thoughtfully.

At that moment a group of young men run up to the car and enthusiastically begin to push it off the road. The man looks up at the small crowd that has gathered around him. Their concerned faces turning to smiles of relief as they can see that he is going to be okay. The man feels a new sense of connectedness with each and everyone of them. He recognises the woman with the gold jewellery and the driver of the BMW. He looks at them both with a new understanding in his heart and knows that from now on life is going to get better.

“Let me give you a lift home.” Says the driver of the BMW.

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#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Agency: Dreamstime.com