

Celebrating Sixty Years of **STAR TREK**®

BOLDLY GOING ON YOUR INNER VOYAGE:

THE UNAUTHORIZED
STARFLEET

**DAILY
MEDITATION
MANUAL**

FIFTH EDITION

**SAMPLE
SELECTIONS**

FEATURING OVER 430 QUOTATIONS AND REFLECTIONS INSPIRED BY STAR TREK'S BIG-SCREEN AND SMALL-SCREEN ADVENTURES, FROM **STAR TREK: THE MOTION PICTURE** TO **STAR TREK: BEYOND**, FROM 1967'S ORIGINAL TV SERIES TO **STAR TREK: DISCOVERY!**

Mark S Haskett

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What's New in this Edition

The format, for one thing.

While previous print editions of *Boldly Going on Your Inner Voyage* were published in a “handbook” size featuring only one daily meditation per page, this new edition offers two on each (larger) page, or four meditations per “page spread.”

According to feedback the publisher has received over the years, most of the book’s readers weren’t using their handbooks like other “daily devotionals” that were popular when *Boldly Going* first came off the press. They were reading several meditations at one sitting, or even a month’s worth. Or they were using the new Topic/Character Index to read all the entries related to a single issue, or that were inspired by quotations from one specific character. This was especially true for readers who could use the ebook edition’s touch-screen technology to instantly transport them to every meditation related to “Living in the Present” or “Self-Acceptance,” say, or to those inspired by quotes from Spock or Data or Captain Janeway.

The ebook was also first to incorporate meditations based on lines from Star Trek’s spate of movie “prequels” as well as the short-lived *Star Trek: Enterprise* TV series. Moreover, it introduced an Appendix that brought back all of the meditations that had been successively “retired” to make room in the 366-day annual cycle for new entries. This edition not only includes these popular updates, but additional meditations drawn from the characters and most quotable lines in 2017’s spring blockbuster, *Star Trek: Beyond*, and now in the latest TV incarnation that premiered in the fall, *Star Trek: Discovery*.

Ever-improving print and ebook technologies now hold the promise of continuous updates of *Boldly Going* for as long as Star Trek’s newly-introduced characters continue saying things worth meditation on! In the meantime, we hope you enjoy the current edition.

Be inspired. Again.

*IF Books
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Preface

After all this time, it’s still an issue. Ever since the first print edition was published in 1996 under its original title, *The Unauthorized Starfleet Daily Meditation Manual* – and now, in both an up-dated eBook and print-on-demand edition – many would-be readers automatically assume this is just another “Star Trek book.”

It wasn’t meant to be. And for the majority of people who have purchased a copy, it still isn’t. Because the voyages of the starship Enterprise were never primarily about frontiers in space. They were about the frontiers within ourselves.

Nor were all those fanciful aliens merely the inhabitants of distant planets. In reality they represented members of our own species and our own communities whom we see as “different,”

(continued on next page)

Preface *(continued)*

or who continue to challenge us in some way. Or maybe they stand for aspects of our own personalities with which we are still struggling.

Even for the serious Trekker, boldly going “where no one has gone before” was only a ruse, a gimmick to make our Inner Voyages seem more dramatic and compelling. “Space” made a convenient symbol not only for going within, but for forging ahead – into the future.

Two decades into our Third Millennium, the words spoken by Star Trek’s diverse characters continue to give voice to our ongoing efforts at self-discovery and self-understanding. But as profound as those words may be, there is nothing really new in them. They simply bring the wisdom from centuries of human experience into the futuristic setting of starships and space stations, alien civilizations and “the undiscovered country.”

As it turns out, Spock and Picard are only repeating lines spoken by earlier prophets and sages. Guinan and Kes merely echo the timeless voice of Mother Earth. Kirk and Dax, Worf and Burnham are simply reprising the role of scriptural hero. And the clues to our own salvation – or “self-realization” or “self-improvement” or “personal fulfillment,” if those terms seem less loaded – are only translated for us, not essentially changed.

Of course, those of us who continue to enjoy an occasional late-night episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, or the latest big-screen release, don’t watch with all this symbolism in mind. In fact, as with any good film or novel, moral and spiritual messages often have a much greater impact if they reach us at a subconscious level. That’s why, in order to get the most from this Manual, we’re going to transport ourselves several centuries ahead in time, into Star Trek’s vision of the future.

In other words, we’re going to, well... *pretend*.

Using This Manual

To begin with, we are no longer Americans or Europeans, Africans or Asians. We’re Starfleet personnel whose homeworlds are scattered all across the galaxy. And now we’re embarking on a year-long mission of exploration into even more distant regions of our universe.

To optimize our mental and spiritual well-being during what might be a long and potentially dangerous Voyage, we will start each new day with a thought-provoking meditation. And who better to provoke those thoughts than “past” Starfleet officers, crewmembers and other colorful characters whose words have been recorded in the starlogs of Federation archives?

The period immediately after awakening, but before reporting for duty (“work” or “school”) makes an ideal time for personal reflection. So too is the hour before we settle into our bunks at the end of our day. A quiet break in the midst of our work routine might also be effective. But what’s most important, as most spiritual disciplines have confirmed through centuries of practice, is that a daily (or at least *regular*) regimen has the most lasting impact.

Of course, readers of an ebook version of the Manual may be less likely to follow this

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Using This Manual *(continued)*

once-a-day ritual, if only because there are no separate pages to “isolate” each meditation as there were in the original handbook. Likewise this latest print version, where four consecutive day’s readings are spread before you, making it harder to quit after just one. Regardless of your reading regimen, it’s best to allow time to ponder each meditation, to reflect on how it might relate to your daily life, and to repeat the “affirmations” at the end of each one. If a different affirmation or action would be more appropriate to your specific circumstances, feel free to create another for yourself, and be sure to recite it aloud. Either way, *applying* it at the first available opportunity – to “learn by doing,” as Captain Kirk would say – is the most efficient way to turn each daily lesson into genuine personal growth.

Since the numeral preceding each quotation/meditation/affirmation corresponds to Earth’s solar calendar, you may want to begin the book by turning to whatever today’s date happens to be. Or you can simply let the meditation on page “01.01” represent the first day you start reading the Manual, whether the current day is June 8th or November 23rd. After all, *somewhere* in the galaxy, a brand new year is beginning right now.

As you commence your voyage, keep in mind that the quotations that inspire each meditation were spoken in the context of “previous” voyages of exploration. For this reason alone they should have historical significance for those of us who follow. But there are also deeper meanings hidden within them... meanings that transcend the boundaries separating past, present and future... that blur the distinction between Star Trek’s warp-speed space adventures and our own, more deliberate voyages into our selves.

And it doesn’t matter whether you’re a seasoned Trekker, or you have only a passing familiarity with the franchise. The stories of The Enterprise, Voyager, U.S.S. Discovery and all the rest are *our* stories. The challenges and obstacles their crewmembers faced are the same ones *we* face every day. And the inner resources they learned to call upon, that gave them strength to overcome all those challenges and obstacles, are the same resources now available to us.

Inevitably, by the end of this year’s Inner Voyage, we will all be different people. By next year, chances are we won’t simply be “going along for the ride.” We may even find ourselves in the pro-verbial Captain’s Chair.

Make it so.

**Sample Daily
Meditations
begin on the
next page**



Sample Meditations

01.01

A person's life — a future — hinges on each of a thousand choices. Living is making choices.

— CAPTAIN PICARD : A MATTER OF TIME : 45349.1

Some decisions feel like they're "forced on us." Some events occur that seem beyond our control. And yet our lives are still basically in our own hands, if only because we can control our reactions to those "uncontrollable" events. We can choose to feel angry or helpless... or we can choose to learn from the experience and move on.

More importantly, we can also take the initiative. Because all around us are keys to our own future. These are the choices we make hundreds of times a day, that accumulate slowly, over time, to make us what we are. They're the opportunities to stop and listen to another person – or hurry off again because we're "late for an appointment." They're the frequent occasions we have to break old habits, to exert a little self-discipline; to say a kind word rather than an angry one; to forgive and release rather than hold on to the past.

We often fail to acknowledge how crucial these little choices can be. For they not only express Who We Are, they literally *re*-create us with each new moment. They take us along the same familiar path, or they point us in new, more promising directions – perhaps to where no one has gone before.

I am ready to go where I have never gone before, into the future I will create through my choices, by first accepting that I alone am responsible.

01.29

There are a million ways to the Captain's Chair. Find your own.

— SCIENCE SPECIALIST BURNHAM : LETHE : Stardate 1412.3

Having a mentor or guru who can offer wisdom and reassurance, who can help us navigate life's most treacherous waters, can be important to realizing our ultimate goals and inherent power (i.e. the "Captain's Chair"). But we have a right to be skeptical of any counselor who charts a too-detailed course, who dictates the exact steps we must take to follow our dreams.

Those steps may only retrace the path our mentor took to find his own way, or the route prescribed by an organization to earn a certain rank or level of expertise. It may be how a friend might accomplish a specific task if it were assigned to her, or how a fellow alcoholic (or workaholic) managed to overcome his addiction. But it's not necessarily *your* way.

Because all of us are different, with unique personalities and talents. Because there are too many variables on our journeys for anyone to foresee – from random events to unexpected opportunities. We must be ready to take advantage of them, to be willing to let go of our best-laid plans, to leave the prescribed path if The Universe shows us a shortcut, or perhaps a side trip that may take longer but adds to our experience and confidence.

Yes, we should definitely listen to others who are ahead of us on the trek we too have embarked upon. But let's remember that their success isn't guaranteed; their journeys aren't over yet. And that the best advice is about being *on* the journey, not what's waiting at the end.

I will consider others' advice, but pay greater heed to the Spirit moving within me, and to the messages The Universe is writing on my soul.

02.01

For everything there is a first time.

— SPOCK : THE WRATH OF KHAN : 8130.3

"Are you serious? No one's ever done that before!" "Me—? I could never do that!"

I could never... No one's ever... These litanies of negativity act as reverse affirmations. Because if we tell ourselves we can't do something, we usually can't. If we keep pointing out that a certain goal has never been achieved, we build barriers against achieving it. Or at least *our* achieving it.

And yet, everything good that was ever done had once *never* been done. If we let that stop us, there would be no new achievements, no breakthroughs. Our barriers are often less a problem of difficulty than of attitude.

Then again, sometimes not. Many of the things we haven't yet accomplished – whether as a species, or in our personal lives – are genuinely difficult. Achieving them requires stretching our abilities, taking risks, making sacrifices... perhaps even changing certain aspects of ourselves. But that's why "firsts" get into our record books. They are hard won. And they deserve to be celebrated, if only to encourage us to achieve many more of them.

A continuing succession of these firsts is another definition for "growth."

I will search my life for opportunities to do for the first time the things I know I must do eventually. I will act boldly and celebrate my successes.

02.07

You must trust yourselves.

— DR. CRUSHER : SYMBIOSIS : Stardate Not Given

Sounds too easy, doesn't it? Just *trust* yourselves and everything will take care of itself.

And of course it isn't that easy. But not because the doctor's advice is mistaken or simplistic. It's because we seem so unwilling to believe there's a resource within us that we can trust to guide us and give us answers.

Furthermore, some of us have tried "trusting in ourselves" and we know better than to do *that* again! The results have often been disastrous, or at least not encouraging.

The problem is, trusting that inner guidance is a learned skill. It's natural to get "mixed signals," mentally speaking. How do we separate the messages our hormones are sending us from the counsel of our rational mind – and from the intuitive urgings of our Higher Self?

But remember: A four-year-old can't just hop on a bicycle and ride it the first time, either.

Remember also that, in trusting "ourselves," we don't rely solely on the limited, fallible resources of our own conscious "ego." The Self we must learn to trust is linked in some subconscious, hyperspace-like way to the wisdom and power of The Universe itself. Through that Self we can access a perspective that harmonizes our own needs with those of others, that guides us through life's obstacle course to our goals... that trusts us even when we don't.

I respect my own guidance. I am learning to trust myself even as The Universe already trusts me.

02.25

We're lost... but we're making good time!

— COMMANDER SULU : THE FINAL FRONTIER : 8454.1

How often we repeat Sulu's observation – and what we're really talking about is our own lives!

After all, we seem to be going somewhere in a hurry, don't we? – our engines at warp speed, our daily lives filled with all sorts of activities (and maybe even a taste of personal satisfaction). And all that activity is sometimes a good sign that we know what our lives are about.

Then again, it can also be a good sign that we *don't* know.

Because being busy often results from our lack of direction. We rush breathlessly through our lives, hardly stopping, often taking on new projects in a desperate search – though usually an unconscious one – for something that might give our lives meaning and focus. Or we simply keep ourselves so preoccupied and "rushed" that we don't have time to reflect on how lost we really are.

But we must stop; we must give ourselves time to breathe, to reflect, to ask the important questions: What does The Universe uniquely want to say through me? What is the Prime Directive in my own life?

Without an answer – even a tentative, changing one – "making good time" is only the joke Sulu meant it to be.

I hereby commit myself to regular opportunities for reflection. The busier I am, the more I will stop to review where I'm going, and whether I'm getting there.

03.01

Our function is to contribute in a positive way to the world in which we live.

— DATA : THE OFFSPRING : 43657.0

You'd think it would be obvious. But even with the best intentions, short-term self-interest can cloud our vision. After all, we can see the results of selfish efforts. We try to do something to benefit ourselves – and either it works for us or it doesn't. Even if it fails, at least we know.

Long-term self-interest is harder to track. We often lose the connection between what we did, and the benefit we finally receive. We may not feel rewarded, even if we are.

Contributing “to the world” is even more obscure. We can rarely see the slow, cumulative effects of our altruistic efforts. The positive influence we've had on certain people, the difference we've made in the wider scheme of things – these are difficult to identify, much less take credit for. So we fall back on behaviors that give us immediate reinforcement: Being selfish.

What we don't realize is that our contributions to the wider world *are* selfish. Computer scenarios have proven it again and again: Members of a theoretical society who work toward the “greater good” actually produce more benefits to the individual than if each member worked only for himself.

But computers don't help us *feel* that fact. It comes down to having faith. And acting on it.

Each day for the next month, I will do at least one nice thing for someone else – a different person every day – without thought of my own benefit.

03.14

Live long and prosper.

— SPOCK : AMOK TIME : 3372.7

The traditional Vulcan benediction is repeated so often, and in so many parts of the galaxy, that it's now become one of the most common slogans of our time. So common that we rarely pause to reflect on what it means anymore.

Certainly it means more than the parting words humans uttered for centuries – the lukewarm “Good day” or, later, “Have a nice day.” Then again, compared with some of Earth's other benedictions – like “Peace be unto you” or “May the Lord shine his face upon you” – the Vulcan “Live long and prosper” sounds almost... well, *commercial*.

But the literal meaning is less important than what happens when one person speaks the words to another. Because it's more than mere words. It's what the Ancients called “well-wishing” or, in spiritual terms, a “blessing.”

When we bless someone, we are essentially affirming their connection to The Universe. We are reminding them that all the bounty and goodness the universe has to offer can be theirs – in fact it's *already* theirs.

And that reminder is not lost on our own ears, either. Because if we can affirm the goodness of the universe for others – or even “bless them that curse you” – we not only claim it for ourselves, we unleash such a positive flow of energy that lives can be changed overnight.

I will wish others well in both word and thought – especially my so-called “enemies” – and watch as my relationships, and my world, are transformed.

03.31

Thy will be done.

— CHIEF ENGINEER SCOTT : THE VOYAGE HOME : 8390

It's probably the most common meditation, the most common prayer, in the universe. It is also the most deeply religious, for it symbolizes what amounts to our own salvation.

The fact is, sooner or later we realize who – or *what* – is truly in command of this Voyage. After trying to live as if we were the center of the universe, something comes along to turn our world upside down. The “precipitating event” is as different and unique as we are. But all of us learn, at last, that our lives are in the grasp of the same Power that fashioned the stars and the planets; and that, under its direction, we are like so much soft clay.

We also figure out that *other* lives are likewise being shaped and sustained by that Power. And we realize that our very survival – both together and individually – depends not on trying to carry out our own separate wills, but in aligning ourselves with *its* Universal Will.

Ironically, this life-changing realization can't come through meditation. Even as “Thy will be done” becomes our meditative mantra, we can't learn its truth except through life experience. We must hit the streets, interact with other people, perhaps even live as if we *are* the center of the universe until, inevitably, Reality catches up with us.

Or sometimes pounds us into pancakes. And the saving grace is, it turns out to be the best thing that could've happened.

By surrendering my will to The Universe, I won't lose it. I'll find it – transformed and newly empowered.

04.18

The honor is to serve.

— LIEUTENANT WORF : PEAK PERFORMANCE : 42923.4

The injunction to “be of service” is so prevalent throughout the spiritual archives that it ranks alongside food, clothing and security as a Primary Need.

The idea of serving others is not some burdensome call to fulfill ones “duty.” It's not an obligation to repay others what you may owe them for years of childhood nurturing or a good education, or for the benefits of living in the Federation. The call to service comes as a natural, voluntary response, at the point in one's life when others' needs are suddenly understood to be as important as your own. It represents the emergence of a new self, a higher self. In spiritual language, it is “the birth of one's own divinity.”

G.B. Shaw, a playwright living on 20th-century Earth, described it in these terms: “This is the true joy in life,” he wrote, “the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one; the being thoroughly worn out before you are thrown on the scrap heap; the being a force of Nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy...”

Or more simply, “The honor is to serve.”

I affirm and celebrate the fact that others are part of what I am. Their needs are part of my needs. My service to them is a gift to my higher and better Self.

04.25

I have found myself and my place. I know who I am.

— SPOCK : THE FINAL FRONTIER : 8454.1

Here is the affirmation we all long to make someday, the “place” we all want to be in, the sense of identity that’s beyond physical location, or time, or circumstance.

One ancient spiritual tradition called it *gnosis*, from the Greek word for “knowing.” It means knowing not only Who We Are, but what our purpose is in the Grand Scheme of Things. It means seeing ourselves not merely as others might describe us, but as The Universe envisions us.

It is a humbling, yet empowering view. Because knowing our place gives us permission to play our unique role to the fullest, while allowing others to play theirs. And like pieces in a jigsaw puzzle, our lives suddenly... *fit*.

The question is, how do we arrive at this place?

The path is different for everyone. And yet the same. It involves what another ancient tradition calls “following your bliss.” The fact is, The Universe wants us to know Who We Are, and what our unique purpose is. And its surest clue is that feeling of lasting fulfillment we get only when we pursue certain kinds of activities and not others – the inner sense that *this* is The Way and not that.

Which is not to say things will be easy, or that we’ll always be happy. Only that we know it’s worth the effort.

I am a “work-in-progress.” I may not fully realize Who I Am yet. But I’m in the process of finding out; I’m on the way to my “place.” And that is enough for now.

05.02

But then again, all good things must come to an end!

— Q : ALL GOOD THINGS : 47988.1

If it’s true, this would surely seem to be one of the most depressing statements ever.

Why must all good things end? Why can’t goodness, once achieved, be kept forever? Why are the times of rest and peace so short-lived, and the struggle so unceasing? Why shouldn’t we be able to enjoy the blessings we’ve toiled our whole lives for... indefinitely?

We’re forgetting one important factor here: Our own responsibility for what happens.

Because in most cases it’s not as if someone else is taking away the “good things” we’ve earned. It’s in our natures to extract what we need from the present situation, consolidate what we’ve learned, enjoy our new level of achievement... and then *move on*.

Which simply means that all good things come to an end only if we want them to. And the truth is, even what’s “good” has only so much to offer us before we tire of it, before we need a new challenge. We may not be consciously aware of that need. Like a child whose parents tell him it’s time to leave the carnival, we may protest and sulk a bit. But we are only following an even greater good: The path to our own spiritual destiny.

The good is there to enjoy, and to encourage me to keep moving along my Spiritual Path. The end of one good thing is the beginning of another.

05.28

If there is a Cosmic Plan, are we not part of it? Our presence at this place, at this moment... could be a part of that fate.

— COUNSELOR TROI : PEN PALS : 42695.3

Even though we're all busy working on our own personal plans and goals, we must never lose sight of the wider Plan of which we're part. Because as we grow more spiritually aware, it's only natural to begin receiving occasional "casting calls" from The Universe – offers for us to play some important role in a larger cosmic drama.

At such times other people's needs, or even some life-transforming event, must take precedence over what we happen to be doing at the moment. It may be frustrating and sometimes painful to put aside our own "work." We may be so wrapped up in our own lives, or so convinced we're already doing something important, that we'll even pretend not to hear this call. But our response is crucial.

For one thing, if we expect to receive assistance from the Spiritual Network, if we believe that people often come out of the blue to help us just when we need it – and they often *do* – we too must be willing to perform the same service for others.

But there's also this: The Cosmic Plan does not call on us arbitrarily. More often than not, what we assume is only a side trip on our Voyage turns out to be exactly where we needed to go, and teach us exactly what we needed to learn, at exactly the right time.

I am part of the Cosmic Plan. I am grateful for all the help The Universe gives me on my spiritual path, and I gladly offer assistance to others when called.

06.19

The important thing is to cherish whatever time we have together, whether it's a day or a decade.

— KES : JETREL : 48832.1

Often we can change things. Often we can't. And all-too-often we spend so much time brooding over what we wish we could change that we fail to enjoy what *is*.

This tendency to let our "real lives" slip through our fingers while we brood or fantasize is especially evident in our relationships. Either we have such high expectations for our friends or mates that we fail to appreciate who they are, or else we never find any friends or mates to begin with. Or maybe we're lucky enough to have plenty of friends, but we spend so much time wishing we had more time with them that we can't enjoy the time we *do* share!

It's good to "want more" as a first step toward a new, more enriching reality. But those expectations must not blind us to the riches we already have. Because we gain far more by learning to cherish what is, than by constantly striving after what's new.

Better yet, we also develop a skill that pays off in every other area of our lives. To "cherish" something is to experience it fully, to extract all the goodness and joy available to us right now if only we would open ourselves to it. And once we do, days and decades lose their importance, because living in the present is as good as it gets.

I will cherish my days rather than count them, to enjoy what I have before asking for more.

06.24

I am proud of what I am. I believe in what I do.

— ENSIGN CHEKOV : THE WAY TO EDEN : 5832.3

This time we'll start with our daily affirmation, by repeating Chekov's words just as he spoke them. Go ahead: Say them to yourself. Out loud. And *loud*.

Now once more... and *mean* it this time!

Unfortunately, some of us can't seem to "mean" it, no matter how loud we shout. After all, what if we *aren't* particularly proud of what we are? What if our lives are full of activities we *don't* believe in – at least not passionately? Most of us are still searching; we're far from perfect; we're still on that long, laborious journey to becoming the person we'd like to be. Surely we're not being asked to lie to ourselves, to pretend to be something we're not.

Actually, there's no need to pretend. To realize you're on that journey of "becoming" is a proud tradition in itself. To recognize you're imperfect, that you're still searching, is to believe in the Self within you which *is* perfect, the Self which is the culmination of your search.

Besides, we aren't being asked to be proud of the outward roles we may play in this life – whether teacher or Starfleet crewman or migrant spacedock worker. Our deepest pride comes from what we already are, what each of us will always be: A child of The Universe. To repeat Chekov's words is to be transformed by that.

So once again, say it. Out loud. Loud. And *mean* it.

I am proud of what I am. I believe in what I do.

07.26

The best defense is a strong offense. And I intend to start offending right now!

— CAPTAIN KIRK : THE EMPATH : 5121.5

The Captain isn't implying that we should stop being polite or respectful. Nor is he suggesting we demonstrate how strong we are by going out and picking fights with everyone.

He's talking about our attitude toward life. He's pointing out that many of us have an unfortunate tendency to build protective walls around what we've managed to gain – materially and spiritually; that we often become more concerned about keeping what we have than risking it on new gains; that our lives thereby become more like a defensive position than an expeditionary force.

The problem is, we can never live victoriously while in this "protective" mode. Nor can we rise to our potential if we simply react to whatever life sends our way. Instead, we must go out looking for experience, boldly exploring new territory, taking the risks required for us to continue growing.

We must also be willing to raise a few eyebrows in pursuit of our dreams and our life's mission. Perhaps other people will be offended after all. But not because we've run roughshod over them. It's because our courageous attitude forces them to wonder what they're missing.

By living fully, we can show them. Right now.

It's okay for me to be forthright in the pursuit of my spiritual goals. As I live exuberantly, even "offensively," I give others permission to do the same.

08.01

I don't pretend to tell you how to find happiness and love when every day is just a struggle to survive. But I do insist that you do survive.

— EDITH KEELER : THE CITY ON THE EDGE OF FOREVER : 3134.0

This is bliss: To understand that human life is a series of starts and stops, gains and losses, painful struggle and sweet grace; and to pronounce all of it “good.” *All* of it.

But sometimes in the depths of struggle and loss we can lose our perspective. We forget The Big Picture. We are no longer able to envision the smooth sailing beyond the storm-tossed seas of the present. Life seems hopeless.

Our Inner Voyage is of little value if it cannot help us overcome these inevitable periods of hopelessness. And the Voyage teaches us that, at such times, forgetting The Big Picture is actually the beginning of recovery. Because we are forced to remember that we must still live day by day. To get “from here to there” requires living fully in the present moment, concentrating on the details, taking one step at a time. And rediscovering that the source of genuine fulfillment is not some out-ward goal but within ourselves.

Inner bliss will come. Whatever our problems, “This too shall pass.” What lies beyond is worth living for. Even if, in the meantime, the best we can do is survive.

This is my pledge: I will survive, and I will thrive. The days ahead will make all my struggles worthwhile. I hope, therefore I am.

08.05

Look at us! We're each fighting with ourselves!

— LIEUTENANT TORRES : FACES : 48784.2

Most of us never get the chance to witness, much less experience, what B'Elanna Torres learned when her core personality was ripped into its two competing components. In her case, the two halves were Klingon and Human. But they could just as easily have been male and female, or animal self and spiritual self. The lessons are the same.

And the key words are, “Look at us!”

Because when our primary personality components fall out of harmony with one another, when they *dis*-integrate, they are not so much attempting to destroy each other as trying desperately to call attention to themselves.

The first thing we must do, therefore, is to stand back and look. Not join the conflict, but seek perspective. The mode of communication may be primitive, yes; but what is all that fighting trying to tell us? What primal needs are going unmet in our “Klingon side”? In our human half?

The fact is, conflicts within us are appeals to remember and honor the positive qualities that each of our personality components brings to the larger unity of our Self. They are calls to restore balance, not to “take sides.”

And as it is with us personally, so it is with our communities. So it is with our world.

My conflicts – external and internal – are signs that I need to work on myself. I accept the challenge.

08.24

The problem is not in the stars, but in ourselves.

— GARAK : THE DIE IS CAST : Stardate Not Given

Earth's most famous playwright, Shakespeare, was among the first to put it in the poetic terms Garak quotes here. And it's true: When things go wrong, when we're not happy with our lives, we tend to look outside of ourselves for someone – or *something* – to blame. Other people are usually at the top of the list. But once we realize that others are really no more in control than we are, most of us end up shaking our proverbial fists at The Universe. Or maybe at “the stars.”

It's understandable why we do. The stars are a potent symbol for “the way the universe operates.” After all, powerful forces are obviously at work, distant forces that were here long before we dropped in, and they seem to shine on our lives in ways we may never fully comprehend. The best we can do is try to “align” ourselves with them, to figure out their signs and cycles and conjunctions. But the bottom line is, *they're* in charge, not us.

Which – again, symbolically – is true. It's also why the primitive craft of astrology still has its fascinations. But even astrology places final responsibility for our lives on us. Because it's still *our* job to learn the rules. And we can act in harmony with those rules, to find the hidden opportunities in them. Or we can pretend they don't exist.

In which case we have no one to blame but ourselves.

“The stars” represent What Is. My “problem” is to accept What Is, and then to organize my life accordingly.

09.01

In this galaxy alone there's a mathematical probability of three million Earth-type planets. And in all the universe three million million galaxies like this one. And in all that... only one of each of us.

— DR. McCOY : BALANCE OF TERROR : 1709.1

We are defined not by our specific location in space and time, not merely by the fact that our consciousness is localized here and not somewhere else. We are defined by what we've learned, by what talents we have, by the opportunities only our lives can provide.

Even the rare “duplicate selves” some voyagers have encountered elsewhere in the universe are not really duplicates. Rather, they are chances to further define our true selves, to discover the unique, core identity which makes us *us* – despite all outward appearances.

It's as if The Universe is calling each of us to reaffirm our own uniqueness, to identify and reclaim Who We Are... and then to be that person no one else can be.

A story told by one of Earth's “Pious Ones” recalls a teacher named Zusya. His students asked him why he couldn't be more like their role model and prophet, Moses. “When I arrive at heaven's gates,” Zusya replied, “the Holy One will not ask me why I was not more like Moses. He will ask, Why was I not more like *Zusya*?”

I will treasure the lessons uniquely given for me to learn. I affirm and celebrate the person whom The Universe is calling me – and me alone – to become.

09.24

It doesn't matter what you're made of. What matters is who you are.

— COMMANDER CHAKOTAY : PROJECTIONS : 48892.1

A half-century earlier and seventy thousand light years across the galaxy, Captain Picard had already expressed a similar idea this way: “Let us not condemn anyone,” he said, “for their bloodlines.”

Not that the idea was original even then. Three thousand years before, a Romulan general wrote that he had more in common with the attacking Klingons he was trying to repel than his fellow Romulans who had fled their assault.

In other words, courage and commitment are more important than chromosomes. Standing for something is what counts. Heroism transcends heritage.

Which is as true today as ever. What distinguishes us from others – or what makes us alike – is not a question of race or planetary origin. Or whether we're composed of flesh and bone, bionic parts, or pure energy.

As a great King once said, it's “the content of our character.” It's the way we relate to the natural world and to other sentient beings. It's whether we tend to think of others as competitors or compatriots; whether we treat the universe as a resource to waste and exploit, or a garden to care for and cultivate.

And thereby cultivate Who We Are.

My body is only a vehicle. In the way I live my life I define my true identity. By the way I treat others I expose – and continue to refine – who I am.

09.27

The beginning of wisdom is... I do not know.

— DATA : WHERE SILENCE HAS LEASE : 42193.6

Look again. It's not that Data is confused about our concept of wisdom. He knows exactly where wisdom begins: By openly admitting that “I do not know.”

Get it?

A similar statement can be found in a five-thousand-year-old Bajoran text. And in the ancient record of Earth's most famous gadfly, Socrates. “The truly wise man,” as Socrates described him, “is he who knows how ignorant he is.”

Which doesn't mean *stupid*. Stupidity is usually the mark of an individual who thinks he knows everything. This person is open to very little, can be taught very little, and will consequently grow very little. That's just stupid.

In contrast, it is our frank admission that we are ignorant of so much – compared to what there is to know – which starts us down the path of knowledge. It is our willingness to live with partial answers along the way which keeps us open to new information. It is our joyful acceptance that learning never ends which keeps us growing, improving... alive.

And that's wise.

I will cheerfully admit when I do not know something. I will ask questions, and I will open myself to the truth, wherever it may lead.

10.09

Courage doesn't mean you don't have fear. It means you've learned to overcome it.

— LIEUTENANT PARIS : FACES : 48784.2

The person who truly feels no fear probably feels little else, either. Because the problem with trying to suppress any undesirable emotion is that you usually numb yourself to the desirable ones, too. If anything, the fact that your fear can pump you full of adrenaline and put every nerve-ending on red alert is a healthy sign that your emotional channels are fully operational.

Courage is often considered an “antidote” to fear, as if it’s some drug that’s supposed to calm jangling nerves and pump liquid confidence right along with the adrenaline. But that analogy is as unfortunate as it is untrue, because it implies that courage is a “feeling.”

The fact is, courage is an attribute of our behavior. It means taking action even when we lack calm and confidence. Ironically, we are most “courageous” when we are fearful, when we’re trembling in our proverbial boots; and yet something needs to be done and we do it.

As one of Earth’s pre-holographic “movies” envisioned it, our life’s mission is not to accumulate knowledge, not to “save our souls,” but to overcome our fears.

On our Inner Voyage, the three are really one.

My courage lies in combining these three things: My knowledge, my connection to divinity, and the emotional energy that lies even within my fear.

10.12

The riskier the road, the greater the profit.

— QUARK : LITTLE GREEN MEN : Stardate Not Given

The same sentiment comes in a dozen shapes and sizes, a few of which we’ve already encountered in this Manual. Quark could hardly be expected to keep from putting his own monetary spin on it.

Not that he’s wrong. In purely economic terms, we *do* increase our “profit potential” by learning a skill others don’t have, or performing a job others won’t do. The more unique the skill, or the more willing we are to take on a certain task, the more economic value we have.

For Quark, “riskier roads” mean opportunities. If the risks were small, if anyone could do it, the competition would inevitably push prices down. But with higher risk decreasing the competition, prices soar. And thus profits.

Of course, this isn’t a lesson in economics. What we’re really talking about is the road which leads to *spiritual* rewards – inner wealth, not latinum. We’re talking about valuing ourselves not by what the market would pay us, but by the refinement of our character. And by our willingness to take the risks required to further refine it.

There is another sentiment that also comes in a dozen shapes and sizes, and goes like this: “What does it profit us if we gain the whole galaxy, but lose our souls?”

The greatest risk, it turns out, is not taking that Road.

I measure my "profit" by the improvements I make in my character, not in my credit account. Taking risks is the price of transforming myself.

10.23

It's a miracle!

— NAVIGATION OFFICER DARWIN : STAR TREK / INTO DARKNESS : CIRCA 2259

The reason for including Darwin's joyful announcement in this Manual – no doubt repeated countless times in all sorts of situations, and all across the universe – doesn't lie in the statement itself but in Spock's counter argument: "There are no such things."

On one level, Spock is absolutely correct. Anything that actually happens can't be "miraculous" in the sense that it doesn't conform to physics or logic or "natural law." To reply that an event is "supernatural" doesn't help, either. Even something that happens by "divine intervention" must also follow some kind of "law." It's just that we're not aware what it is.

That's not to say the word "miracle" has no meaning. It's simply to suggest that a miracle is less about physics or logic than expectations. It's about how we often prepare for the worst, and are shocked that things turn out better than we could've hoped. It's the goal that seems impossible, and we achieve it despite the odds. It's the Prodigal Son returning. It's when the walls that separate us suddenly come a'tumblin' down.

And what makes these unexpected events truly miraculous is not that they're so rare, but that they're so commonplace... if only we'd open our eyes to the beauty that surrounds us. If only we'd realize, deep down, that what seems "super" is really completely natural.

My expectations have power. By believing in the goodness of others, and in the benevolence of The Universe, I make miracles happen.

11.05

Who am I to argue with me?

— DR. BASHIR : VISIONARY : Stardate Not Given

Conflicted. It's a word that describes the psychological state when one part of us says "yes," while another part says "no." It's the painful condition of having an idea of where we want to be, while realizing how far we have to go before we get there.

In Bashir's statement, "I" represents the self we *can* be, while "me" is the person we are *now*. Too often, who we are dominates the argument. Which effectively stops further growth. Our present identity, with all its weaknesses and self-enforced limitations, remains in control.

But the very fact of internal conflict is actually a good sign. Conflict confirms that we stand at the threshold of change, and it's only natural to experience some resistance from an ego that fears being replaced.

The Vulcan approach can help us here – first, by simply reminding us that our egos are not our selves. Who we are right now is a transitory phenomenon, a work-in-progress. And if we look at that "work" without emotion, without attachment, we can begin to decide what kind of person we'd like to be... and then make the logical choices that take us there.

Who am I to argue with me—? "Me" considers it an argument. "I" understands that it's really a healthy discussion about how best to realize our potential.

It is natural to experience inner conflict. I trust the Voyage I have embarked on to guide me through conflict to higher awareness, and to my higher Self.

11.18

You choose your enemies, you choose your friends. But family, that's in the stars.

— CHIEF O'BRIEN : THE ICARUS FACTOR : 42686.4

In one sense, O'Brien's claim seems to contradict other advice you'll find in this Manual. Haven't we implied that each of us defines "family" for ourselves? Isn't our support network, and the spiritual tradition we align ourselves with – which we choose – our family too?

Of course. But biology is still at our core. Every species has its "blood relations." Even with genetic engineering, we cannot change our heritage.

Nor should we try. The Universe does not toss us into biological units haphazardly. There is meaning and reason for this specific mother and father, that brother or sister, this uncle and that grandmother. Or sometimes the lack of them. For O'Brien, "in the stars" is shorthand for acknowledging just how important these relationships are – not merely in terms of our physical existence, but for our spiritual growth.

At some point in our lives, it's not uncommon to wish we could replace this biological unit with a different one. But these most intimate relationships, as difficult and confrontational – and yes, even abusive – as they may be, are those we are destined to learn the most from.

By facing both their pain and their joys, we take on a heritage beyond biology, as deep as boundless Spirit.

I accept the family locked into my chromosomes. I unlock my spiritual self by learning the lessons only these relationships can teach me.

11.30

May the sun and moon watch your comings and going, in the endless nights and days that are before you.

— CADET TILLY : CHOOSE YOUR PAIN : Stardate 1408.7

What are commonly known as "blessings" are found in every society our explorations have encountered, from the most primitive to the most advanced. And if the latter comes as a shock, it's only because many of us have lost touch with what they are meant to express.

Clearly, they're not meant as expressions of scientific fact. The sun and moon in this particular blessing cannot possibly "watch" our daily activities, even if our ancestors imagined they could. So when we repeat them, we're simply acknowledging, first of all, our historic connection to a people who *did* believe this, while also affirming that our own progress was a direct outcome of their pre-scientific efforts to understand what was constant in their lives.

We're also affirming that whatever this "constant" might be, it applies equally to everyone and everything, that it is a beneficial influence, a source of illumination rather than darkness; that wishing it upon others is not only good for them, but good for us.

Tilly's blessing has other meanings, too, like the phrase "endless nights and days" symbolizing the assurance of immortality, or at least the promise of ongoing opportunities for us to "see the light," even when we stubbornly refuse to open our eyes.

All of which is hardly primitive. In fact, it's today's best hope for a brighter future.

I affirm the goodness the Universe bestows on me, and on others through me.

12.02

That is the exploration that awaits you: Not mapping stars and studying nebulae, but charting the unknown possibilities of existence.

— Q : ALL GOOD THINGS : 47988.1

No matter how far we may go on our travels among the galaxies, we are never more than a heartbeat from the primary object of our explorations: *Us*.

Q knew what we only suspected. Stars, nebulae, and alien life-forms were never really the point. Bringing back new information about the cosmos, or new technology and artifacts from other civilizations – even forming new alliances – are only by-products of The Real Adventure.

Because in pushing the boundaries of the known universe, we are actually expanding the limits of our own minds. In journeying through space and time, we are really charting the hidden dimensions within us. By mapping stars and the routes between them, we are not only connecting with one another but to Existence itself.

Many of us remain blissfully unaware that our explorations “out there” are only symbols for this Inner Voyage. And maybe that’s as it should be, because the adventure can also be enjoyed for its own sake. But someday, when we look back, we’ll see that we haven’t so much been on a journey through the universe, as a quest into *ourselves*.

Today offers a new opportunity to explore my self. With each new task I redefine Who I Am. With every new challenge I transform my life for the better.

12.16

Kind of exciting, isn’t it? We just don’t know!

— ENSIGN RO LAREN : CONUNDRUM : 45494.2

Most of us prefer to have things “settled.” We like our problems solved, our investigations completed, our mysteries explained. It’s nice to have a challenging puzzle to work on now and then. But we seem driven to put the pieces together so we can get on with our lives.

And yet there’s a sense in which *not* settling everything is good for us. To think we know it all, or that we can answer all of the Big Questions, is to presume we’re larger than Life, to rank ourselves equal to The Universe. To recognize mystery – in fact to celebrate that Mystery – is to accept our place in the grand scheme of things.

Which isn’t so bad. Just imagine how boring life would be if there were no riddles left to solve, no facets of ourselves left to explore. The “Hell” described by many primitive religions, in which sinners are subjected to eternal torment, is child’s play compared to the condition in which the universe holds no more secrets, in which we know everything about everything.

To realize there will always be something we don’t yet know – or perhaps can’t ever know – keeps us energized, excited, alive!

And humble.

I celebrate the Mystery of existence. I give thanks for the challenges The Universe holds in store for me, no matter how much I’ve already accomplished.

12.25

The channels are open and you are tied in.

— LIEUTENANT UHURA : THE ENTERPRISE INCIDENT : 5027.3

A more profound statement of spiritual Truth has never been uttered. Because the same Source that created the universe, that created all life – that created each of *us* – remains connected to us in ways we've only begun to imagine. One of Earth's ancient traditions described that Source as being "closer to us than our jugular vein." Another explains that we are sons and daughters of The Creator, each one embraced like a beloved child in a parent's arms.

Some traditions go even further: We are literally gods-in-the-making, sentient beings whose present form is like the caterpillar to the butterfly, the hatchling to the eagle. We are destined to soar ever higher. We may need help in learning how, but we certainly don't need to ask whether we *may*.

In fact, according to every one of these traditions, we have not only received divine "permission" but all the help we need. Channels to the deepest resources of The Universe are already open, or built into the fabric of Reality and awaiting our discovery. Better yet, discovering and using those channels requires no outside agency. We are "tied in" by virtue of our consciousness, empowered by a Spirit that is the incarnation of universal, creative energy.

With that same energy we can transform ourselves and our world. And we begin simply by saying *Yes* to it.

I say "Yes!" to the awesome power within me; "Yes!" to my connection with The Universe and everything in it!

12.29

I can only hope that the future holds even greater challenges.

— CAPTAIN SIKO : THE ADVERSARY : 48959.5

If we pause to consider the past year, or the past five years, chances are we'll be astounded at how far we've come. We've learned, we've grown. We are changed people. And most of our changes have been for the better.

What's better about us is no accident. Because it's not from having won the Tarkassian lottery. Or because some genie granted our wish. Most of our progress was earned.

And most of *that* came from being challenged. Despite the fact that it was hard, grueling work at the time, having to overcome obstacles and climb mountains was good for us. Even the times we slipped, even when we hurt ourselves, the lessons were worth the pain.

And even if it's a cliché, hardship *does* build character. Because the stronger our opposition, the more we must learn to be creative, the more we must learn teamwork, the more we must search our souls for inner strength. It is our Adversary that brings out the Hero in us.

Which is why Sisko could plead, in all sincerity, for a future filled with even greater challenges. For only then could he – or can *we* – continue to improve.

Our challenges are gifts to grow on. We are not given more than we, with help from The Universe, can bear.

I will list three things I've learned from my challenges over the past year. I will think about my biggest challenge today, and what I might learn from it.

A-03

We are all part of a greater community. We cannot ignore it.

— MIRASTA : FIRST CONTACT : Stardate Not Given

The trouble is, we *can* ignore it. And often do.

What we can't ignore – at least for very long – are the consequences for refusing to join the greater community. Because if we attempt to maintain our isolation, we lose in the long run. *Everybody* loses.

The practical benefits of joining together are obvious: New markets and new technologies; new solutions to common problems; exposure to new ideas, new art, new culture.

True, there are potential risks. But centuries of interplanetary experience, under the guidance of the Prime Directive, have shown that distant societies can join forces with one another in productive ways without losing their identities and their roots. After all, it is our different perspectives and histories that make “community” so enriching.

So it is on the spiritual level – individually and collectively. Only as we view the One Truth from different perspectives can we fully absorb its riches. Only as we see the different words in which Truth clothes itself can we recognize the deeper, richer meanings within them.

And only in relationship with others can we discover the richness within our own lives.

I celebrate my inter-relationships with, and inter-dependence on, others. I affirm who I am, and who I can become, within the greater community.

A-19

I can give you a long and boring analysis. Suffice it to say... I don't know what's going on!

— CAPTAIN JANEWAY : PARALLAX : 48439.7

Most of us are quite adept at making excuses. We can rationalize our lack of understanding and invent logical justifications for how little we know. We can even devise brilliant explanations that make our continuing ignorance seem like a special kind of knowledge – what past generations referred to as “smokescreens” or “snow-jobs.”

But a much better approach to not knowing something is simply to admit it. Because when we put our energies into making excuses, there's little left for finding answers. When we try to justify why we don't know or haven't learned, we create a psychological predisposition for *not* knowing and *not* learning.

However, by fearlessly acknowledging that “we don't know,” we open the door to solutions. Defending our ego is no longer an issue. Others come to our aid because it's not a matter of “me” or “you” finding the answer, but *us*.

Captain Janeway was wise to admit whenever she had no answers. And she was no less a leader for it. In fact, leadership is rarely about having answers. It's about the *search* for answers. It's about inspiring others to join us on that search.

It's about being on the search... *together*.

I am always ready to admit when I don't know. Not knowing is the prelude to growth.

A-22

Ever feel like you're really not wanted?

— ENGINEER LA FORGE : ANGEL ONE : 41636.9

What's your threshold for rejection? At what point do you finally get the message that nothing you do will ever be enough? That it's not even what you do; it's, well... *you*?

Social rejection is one thing. It's a common occurrence when two people just don't "hit it off." Most of us have learned to accept that. And then we move on.

What's worse is when our ideas and our hard work aren't appreciated; when we've put our hearts and souls into some project and our efforts are ignored, or even dismissed. Our self-worth can drop right off the scale.

But only if we depend on others for our worth.

One of life's primary lessons is learning to take satisfaction from the task, not from its outcome or from what other people may think. Even where a job is assigned to us by someone else, we must find our own reasons for doing it. How can this help me grow? What can I learn from the experience, regardless of the end result?

And ironically, what often happens is that when other people see the satisfaction we're getting from a task, they begin to take greater interest in it. When others know we're doing something because we believe in it, and not simply to impress somebody, *they're* impressed.

What's also ironic is, by that time it doesn't matter.

Whether I'm "not wanted" by others is not my concern. Doing what I believe in, and leaving the outcome to The Universe, is.

A-43

If there's nothing to lose – no sacrifice – then there is nothing to gain.

— LIEUTENANT WOLF : PEAK PERFORMANCE : 42923.4

Not that gambling has much to recommend it. But putting your hard-earned Federation credits on the line at some deep-space casino *does* symbolize one important Law of the Universe: Nothing of real value can ever be gained without risking something valuable of your own.

Often the only risk is your time – the hours spent learning a new skill, or exploring a different path. But time once spent can't be recovered. We tend to forget how truly precious time is until the universe reminds us there's only so much remaining.

Sometimes the risk is more obvious. Or frightening. Like putting our lives on the line, or our careers, or our integrity (which all amounts to the same thing). And what's ironic is, the times when we're most afraid can be the *least* risky. In fact, it may not be a "gamble" at all. Because even our losses can teach us something. And when our very future is at stake, what do we have to lose?

Energy is never lost, only transformed. The positive efforts we make will be rewarded. Even if the reward isn't exactly what we expected. Even if it may not come according to the timetable we've established.

I will take risks for what I value most... and for the person I hope to become. No sacrifice is too great to attain that which gives my life ultimate meaning.

A-50

A ship is only as good as the engineer who takes care of her.

— CHIEF ENGINEER SCOTT : RELICS : 46125.3

There's a phase in the evolution of all technological societies, (usually when computers are first coming into use), during which expectations leap far ahead of effects. A kind of disaffection sets in... followed by questions.

Like: With all this new number-crunching power, why hasn't the Federation's annual budget been balanced? Or: With graphics programs that can simulate practically anything, why isn't art thriving? Or: With access to limitless information only a mouse-click or voice command away, why haven't we solved all of our problems by now?

The answer is simple. Improving our tools does not necessarily improve *us*. The person behind the hardware remains unchanged. The computer – or the ship – still relies on someone to operate it, to use it purposefully, to keep it functioning at all.

And all the hardware in the Quadrant can't replace the roles only we can play. All our upgrading of technology won't change a thing until we upgrade *ourselves*.

We are the engineers of our own lives. The vehicles that carry us along – our bodies, our possessions, our present circumstances – are “only as good” as Who We Are, and who we will become. Let us make taking care of *that* our top priority.

I can wait for the latest model computer or personal shuttlecraft. I can no longer wait to begin remodeling myself into the person I want to be.

A-65

You can handle defeat in two ways: You can lose confidence, or you can learn from your mistakes.

— COUNSELOR TROI : PEAK PERFORMANCE : 42923.

Watching an infant learn to walk is an instructive, even inspirational, experience. The child gets up, stumbles, falls – cries, perhaps – then gets right back up and tries again. Confidence has nothing to do with it. Worrying about “how it looks” doesn't enter the child's mind. Nor do self-defeating thoughts about not being “allowed” or “able” or “deserving.”

There is only an innate knowing that *making an effort to walk leads to walking...* along with the simple acceptance that falling down is a necessary part of the process.

We can look at our own failures or mistakes in life as “falling down.” Unfortunately, as self-conscious adults we may become overly concerned about what others think, or whether our failures point to some deeper flaw in us. Or whether we'll ever, *ever* learn.

But learning is precisely the point. Our mistakes are among the best teaching tools The Universe has at its disposal. And it just so happens that the most resounding victories often occur after the most abysmal defeats. Breakthroughs – revelations – are more likely to arise from failure than a steady string of successes.

The Spiritual Path knows this strange irony as Grace.

Failure will not stop me. Defeat is my opportunity to reassess and to learn. Success is sweeter, and more permanent, if it comes from raw experience.

The expulsion from Paradise... it is a reminder to me that all things end.

— SPOCK : THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY : 9521.6

The legend Spock refers to is not unlike creation stories found all across the galaxy. In Spock's own spiritual tradition, *Sha Ka Ree* is the mythical planet from which creation spread throughout the universe – and from which Vulcans were banished just as humans were expelled from Paradise. Stories about the Klingon equivalent, *Qui'Tu*, and the Romulan *Vorta Vor*, are embellished with similar themes.

All of these are intended to remind us that we were not designed for stasis. It's in our natures that we cannot live in an ideal world, where nothing changes because everyone and everything has already achieved perfection. If anything, our sense of *imperfection* is what drives us – to build, to grow, to improve ourselves and our world ... and to *keep* growing and improving, else we cease to exist.

Of course there are periods in our lives when we enter what seems like Paradise, where we can finally enjoy the fruits of success, and we'd be happy if nothing ever changed.

The Expulsion represents the fact that, even when things seem perfect, we still need to keep moving along our Path. Because our salvation depends on it. And what sometimes feels like punishment is really the gift of new life.

I celebrate that inner Spirit which calls me onward, even if it means leaving behind what's familiar and comfortable. This day is a new beginning!

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Characters / Quotations Index

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The number for each meditation is followed by the abbreviation for the character whose quotation inspired it. Character abbreviations may be found in the preceding Index (reproduced at left).