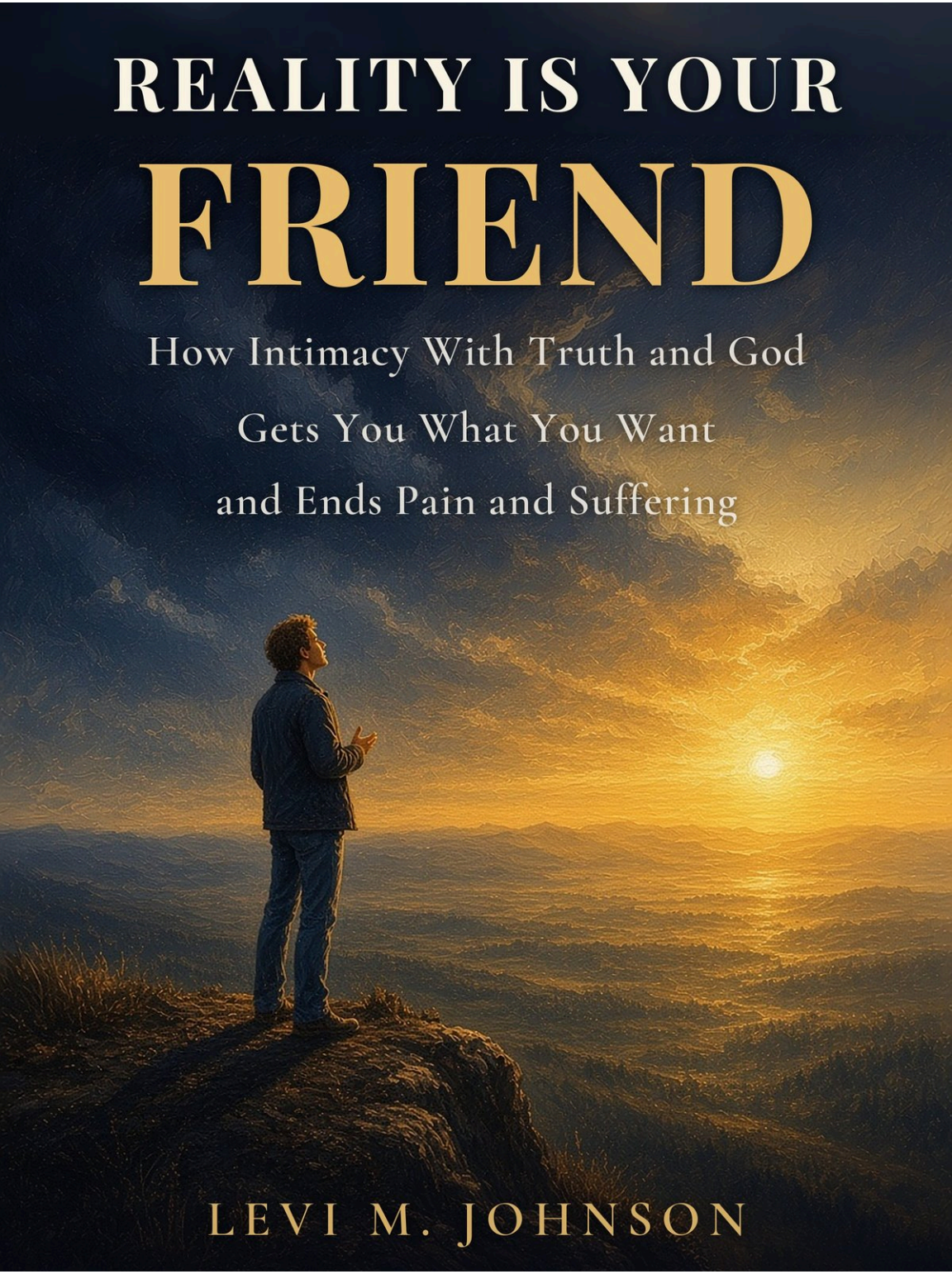
REALITY IS YOUR FRIEND

How Intimacy With Truth and God Gets You What You Want and Ends Pain and Suffering



LEVI M. JOHNSON

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INTRODUCTION

1. My Story Relating to Reality

I was raised in construction by my impressive dad who has built custom homes all over northern California. This also means he has collected a lot of stuff which comes in useful for when the next project comes up.

After having returned from China in 2018, I felt burnt out and disillusioned with the university system in which I had taught, and with my life. Actually, burnt out is an understatement. I had been struggling with suicidal thoughts and feelings off and on for at least two years in China but managed to keep them at bay while I built a career as an educator. When my career crashed and burned and I decided to return to America, the only real option for a place to stay was with my parents.

One night I felt so alone and suicidal at my parents' house, that I knew I needed to send a cry for help because I couldn't suffer alone anymore. So I made an Instagram graphic. It was a black square with the word, "Help," positioned in the middle, and then I posted it to Instagram which also posted it automatically to my Facebook profile. Later, my dad caught the post and called two of his friends who were therapists. One of them contacted me to meet up.

When we met we made small talk, at least my version of small talk which isn't small talk at all. Eventually, he brought up my struggle with suicide and suggested I see him as my therapist. "Great!" I thought sincerely. "Someone is paying attention to me."

We started meeting on a weekly basis and things in my life started to improve.

One day, I was doing an odd job for my dad; remember he has lots of useful stuff from his years in construction. It should have been a miserable job. I was tasked with un-stacking, cleaning off, and then restacking enormous garage door panels that had been

disassembled sometime before. It was dirty and manual labor. I should have been miserable.

Then I went to my next therapist meeting and we started talking about the work I was doing. He asked how it went. In that split second before I answered, it's kind of like time stopped and I saw that I had two options. The first was to call the dirty, heavy work what it seemed to be; miserable. "Okay, that's an option. But what's another way to interpret it?" I thought.

The other option I saw was in some sense choosing to celebrate the dirty work. That seemed more positive, so I said something like, "I had so much fun!" When I made that selection and took a positive perspective to what could have been considered a miserable time, my entire emotional relationship changed as it pertained to the work. Suddenly, the "suffering" related to it, or at least the possibility of it, vanished. It was replaced by joy and gratitude. It was a viscerally positive emotional shift that I didn't expect and it was extremely real. I had decided to love the reality of the work while talking to my therapist, which converted my suffering into painlessness and happiness and positivity. My new positivity wasn't forced or pretended. It was real, because I had chosen to love what was real about my work situation.

2. A Path to Suffering's End

I knew at that moment that I had experienced a breakthrough and that I had discovered a principle. The principle I discovered was, "If I learn to love reality, my suffering ceases." Something, I believe God, offered me a different way to interpret the harsh realities of life in that moment, and I decided to explore that way of seeing things going forward.

My experiential epiphany led me down a path. "If loving reality causes pain to cease, then what is reality?"

Previous to this epiphany, I had been intellectually and philosophically tangling with the question, "What is truth?" I knew there had to be a definition to it but I didn't know what it was. Jesus said He was the truth, and I believed it, but that still didn't make

what truth is clear enough and if you know me you would understand my need for precise and practical definitions for words.

I'm not sure the timing, but at some point while pondering these questions I listened to a message Kris Vallotton preached. He quoted the verse where Jesus said, "You will know truth, and the truth will make you free." But then he added that a more accurate translation of that verse would be, "You will know reality, and reality will make you progressively more free." There was my answer. A concise definition of truth is that, "Truth is reality." So then, the real question isn't, "What is truth?" The real question is, "What is reality?"

I came to understand that reality is the fabric of what's real. But that was in stark contrast to many of my experiences in life. One thing porn had taught me is that it isn't real. That is, the emotional promises it had made to me my entire life, about how I wouldn't be alone anymore, weren't real.

I lived in China, in the cities of Harbin, Bengbu, and Beijing, for about three and a half years. Especially in Bengbu, there were multiple construction developments that looked good on the outside, but upon closer inspection had paint peeling off, and few if anyone living there. In the United States, developments of this type were usually filled with stores and occupants. But in China, even though their massive apartment buildings and commercial spaces projected an appealing image, they were often unoccupied. Their image didn't line up with their reality.

3. When the Image and the Contents aren't the Same

In conjunction with many cultural lessons I learned in China and in my life, I had started to form a simple way to distinguish between what was real and what was not real. What was real were those people, places, and things whose image represented their inner qualities as well. If it looked good, and the inside of it or an experience of it was also good, then it was real. But experience had taught me that there are many people, places, and things that

present themselves as good, but are not good. Their image doesn't represent what's inside them and an experience of them accurately. They look good. They seem good or pleasurable or fun or peaceful, but an experience of them yields markedly differing results.

Through a lot of thinking and experiences, I came to understand reality as that which is most real about any given person, place, thing, experience, ad infinitum, because it doesn't really matter how good something or someone looks if their inner qualities and experiences of them do not materially represent how they look.

You might think that I'm someone who was always interested in the truth, but you would be wrong. For many years of my life I didn't value what was good or true, but instead I valued projecting a put together image, even though often times I felt little if any real substance in my inner being. What was important for so many years was projecting an image of success and having it all together, while trying to wrangle out some sense of self-worth and satisfaction despite all the pain and suffering and isolation and shame and guilt I was going through.

4. My Turning Point

One night in my twenties, I was driving down Miracle Mile in Redding California feeling empty and trapped under layers and layers of religious fakeness. I finally got fed up with the version of Christianity I was living and my utter lack of a sense of identity that I said to God, "God, I'm going to do what I want [from now on]. If you want me, come and get me." Nothing seemed to change that day, but it was a significant shift for me towards authenticity.

Gradually things started to change though I made a lot of mistakes and errors. I met a mentor who told me to start attending Co-dependents Anonymous, where I gradually worked the 12 Steps. Around the same time, I met a group of friends who challenged me to be more authentic with them, though I couldn't have expressed it that way at the time.

One time while me and my friends were hanging out, as we were talking I allowed myself to be real about some thoughts and emotions I was struggling with. I cried. Perhaps it was an ugly cry.

The next day, something was different about my inner being. I felt better. I was different. I hadn't stuffed my emotions but instead had gotten real about them with trustworthy people who wanted to experience the real me, not some artificial façade. Between my work with my mentor, Co-dependents Anonymous, my new friends, and desiring a real inner and outer life that would improve my self-esteem, I started moving closer to becoming an authentic man. I started taking on a value for the truth.

Eventually I moved to South Korea where I went through several healing experiences with a pastor there that taught me another side of improving my inner world. I started reading many books and I continued to peel away the layers of lies and emotional pain I had accumulated from a divorce, and many other unresolved personal issues.

I had learned time and time again that there were substantive things I could do, not to manipulate myself or shove down or try to control my emotions (and other people), but to make material moves towards a sense of inner worth. I could tell the truth and let out the emotions I was feeling, I could tell my secrets to trustworthy people, and I could allow God to love me, and then I would not only feel better but also be better in my inner world.

The more truth I learned about myself and how to relate to other people, the better I felt as I emoted my old emotions and let them go. This led me to want to understand as much about what was true as possible, but I couldn't have necessarily put those words to it at the time.

I would go through many more struggles of identity and purpose and addiction and belonging and self-acceptance, but through it all God continued to pursue me and continues to pursue me to this day.

I pursued this path of growth and self-study and learning how to relate to myself and other people more and more authentically

until I started dating my future wife in October of 2021. The amount of realness and study and experience I had of relationships to that point was intense, as many of the things I do usually are. We married after 67 days of dating and 1 day of engagement because we were so real with each other about as many personal topics as possible, thanks to God's help.

5. Who I'm Really Writing This Book For

In my life, many of the things I went through were training me to discern what is true and what is not true. It took me a long time to inculcate truth into my life about myself, and without God and generous people, it would not have happened. I have learned that without speaking the best truth I know at the time, there is no progress. And that is why I'm writing this book. Someone needs to delineate what truth and reality is in enough detail that it becomes clear.

Although most people have some number of questions in life, there is a specific group of people who have far more questions than other people on average. This need for them to ask many questions is mainly about their need to understand the answers, and to understand the contexts they are facing. I'm writing this book for these people; the people who have a strong need to get their many questions answered because not having their questions answered causes this group of people a certain amount of discomfort.

Although my need to ask questions isn't as strong as theirs, it isn't far afield. As I've said to people before, there are certain individuals who seem dumb because they have so many questions, but that need to question isn't because they are dumb. It is because they see so many possibilities and layers of existence and fine distinctions that they need their knowledge gaps filled in so as to be able to make choices and solve problems. I've struggled with this myself, and I know there are many people out there who need their questions answered even more than me who are also extremely intelligent.

I've noticed that other people seem to have a handle on life from the beginning. They know what they want to do from a relatively early age, and then they focus on it and become successful. Somehow, they don't seemingly need that many details filled in or questions answered. I am not that kind of person.

The longer I've lived, the more questions I've had. The more I know, the more I know I don't know, as the saying goes. It took me many years of experience to discover that I need many of my questions answered before I begin to master something. Name a personality type assessment, I've probably heard of it because I've taken several of them because I needed to know the details of how I actually work. My need to understand how life works, how business works, how learning and teaching works, how relationships work, and how many other things work, has propelled me. After getting fired something like 20 times, running different businesses, and teaching in seven different cities in three different countries, and being married since late 2021, I finally decided that I wanted to be an author. It took me 42 years to discover my vocation, but now, having tried so many different ways of making money and serving people, I know this is the way. This is because I got virtually all my questions answered, and for me, that was a process that I needed to go through.

I'm writing this book, not for the people who have everything figured out. I certainly don't. I'm writing this book because I know there are other people like me out there who need their questions answered thoroughly, in detail. I don't know all the answers. But with help, I've learned enough of the important details that it's time to pass them on to other people. Thankfully for you, you don't need to go through all of the mistakes, errors, challenges, studying and suffering I went through to get your questions answered about life and truth and reality.

I'm writing this book to help fill in the blanks about as many facets of reality as I can, given my experiences, what I've learned, and my time limitations. There were many years I took things literally, including other people's words. I don't do that as much anymore, because I can often see behind what seems real to what is real.

Because God and other people and adventures filled in my questions for me, I want to help fill in some important details for you. This isn't a book that's meant to address all the questions about truth and reality that you have. It's my best attempt to get at the heart of what's most real and help you see it so that the next time someone or some circumstance tries to deceive you, purposely or not, you can see through it to the truth, to that which is most real. This will help you avoid a lot of suffering.

6. What You Will Get Out of this Book

My approach to reality isn't cynical, but hopeful. There is real, authentic good in this world despite all the evil, and it behooves you and me to stay focused on it. When you are done with this book, you will be able to see what's most real in many more contexts. You see, there is evil in this world that portrays itself as good but isn't good. On the other hand, there are people and places that don't initially seem that appealing, but upon further investigation reveal themselves to be genuinely good. But it can take a radical acceptance of reality, of yourself, of others, and of the nature of things to see what's good even when it doesn't feel or seem good. With this book, I've done my best to chart the land of reality well enough to change your perceptions so that you can see through what seems real to what **is** real.

I want to inspire in you a love and understanding of the nature of reality so deep and compelling that your suffering and pain are dramatically decreased.

People have argued over the problem of pain for a long time. Some Atheists have problems with God because evil exists. I could be wrong, but I believe I've solved the problem of pain. When a person learns to love what is most real, the problem of pain is solved. This is a very simplistic expression of the equation, but I hope you'll give me the chance through this book to put forward my case. To the best of my abilities, I want to show you what is most real. You may believe me, or you may not and that's okay. I wouldn't blame you. Who is a man to assert that he's solved the problem of pain? I'll tell you. I'm simply a man who wants to do the best I can

with what I've been given. I've been given far more than most people, like someone who by virtue of their birth inherited a fortune. They can't change the circumstances of their birth, but they can steward well what they've been given. That's what I want to do, so I wrote Reality Is Your Friend for you.

I hope this book changes and improves your life greatly, because if you are open to the truth, that's exactly what it will do.

7. Life is a Series of Tests

When definition is added to the world that aligns with what's most real, it makes things clearer. I live in some sense to seek out and explicate what is most real not only so that I will understand life better, but so that you will understand where you are and where you are going.

People are attracted to simplicity, but that doesn't mean that the message is true even if it's simple. What makes a message more effective and gives it the power to endure through long periods of time is when the message is clear and also true.

What is truth? Pilate asked Jesus this question not to have it answered but to make a point, because he was in a political fight with the Jews over whether or not to crucify Jesus. But I'm hungry to know what truth is and I'm pretty sure you want the answer too. Not some ambiguous answer that points to subjectivity in all things, but a specific answer and definition that works.

I've listened to people whose success formulas and ways of thinking don't align with their branding. I've written this book to be a tool in your life. Life is a game, but more accurately life is a series of different kinds of games. There are ways to win those games and ways to lose those games. What's important in life, to some degree, is gaining the ability to perceive, judge, feel, sense, and intuit what's real in any given situation so that you can make decisions that lead you to your desired outcomes. If you can't see the game being played because you can't see what's true, then other people will take advantage of your naiveté and you will find yourself slave

to other people's wishes. That is not a good outcome, because then it is less likely you are going to get what you want and need in life.

However, if you gain the ability to see the truth about people and situations and games, you can win. Some people and organizations play evil games, others play good games, and still others play games to test you. In all honesty, in life, everything is a test, and you likely need training in how to pass life's tests, because it's then that reality promotes you even if it doesn't look like anything outwardly has changed. If you have improved internally, then your life will improve because your outer life is a manifestation of your inner life.

I'm not writing this book, in some sense, to tell you what I think. I'm more like a detective who is searching for facts so that I can report them as accurately as I can to you. So here I am, writing about what is most real because I want to add clarity that's true to you so that you can win.

8. You May Not Like This Book If You Don't Like Jesus

If you don't like Jesus or language about Jesus or the Bible, you're not going to like this book because I use Judeo-Christian language. I don't do this to be preachy or religious. I do this because I want to get at what's most real because I want this book to be highly practical and applicable.

This book is going to talk about human flourishing, the Kingdom of Heaven, Jesus, and other politically objectionable things. I don't care about being PC. I care about what's real, and if you're not ready to engage in a radical acceptance of reality, this book won't work for you.

However, if you are a truth and freedom maximalist this book will help you. If you genuinely want to increase your spiritual, philosophical, relational, practical, and financial intelligence so that you can build your life's house on the bedrock of reality, this book will help you.

9. You're an Extraordinary Creation

This book explores the timeless question, what is truth (reality)? I delineate several dimensions of life and truth from the perspective of reality itself, because truth is reality, so ultimately I will be defining what reality means. You and I will explore reality in this book far beyond the typical understanding of most people. Since I only get to keep what I give away, I present this book to you as a way to help you rapidly gain competence in the context of life.

You're an extraordinary creation, capable of a big life or a quiet life, or a bit of both. These are good options.

There are many people who want to steal, kill, destroy, or enslave you and who do not want good things for you. But I do, and God does. If you read something in this book that helps you, keep it. If you read something that doesn't help you, flush it. I am not here to tell you how you should live. I don't like it if people "should" on me.

Awareness is often 50% or more of the solution to a problem. I want to give you awareness and options. Jesus said, you will know reality and reality will make you progressively more free. He spoke these words in the context of being His learner, but I think these words apply in many different contexts. I want this book and the words herein to give you awareness that makes you more and more free to select what's real over what seems real but isn't.

Truth exists that isn't subjective and doesn't change. Part of what I love about reality is that people who violate it, including me, can't get away with it no matter how hard we might try.

Reality is an excellent teacher. By the time you finish this book, you will be able to detect what's real better than before. I want you to have an encounter with reality, and even with God and eternity through Reality Is Your Friend, so that your internal and external life becomes better.

Remember, if you resist reality life becomes more painful. But if you learn to love reality and even use it to your advantage and to serve other people, suffering ceases.

Thank you for reading this book.

Sincerely,

Levi M. Johnson

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS TRUTH?

If you continue in my word then you really are my disciples.

Then you will know reality and reality will make you progressively more free. - John 8:32

1. Truth is Reality

Truth is reality. Reality is that which connects all things. Reality is truth in a form that is at once below verbal articulation, and at the same level as it. Reality is meaning. Reality is that which comes before and below what you want to say, what you think, and what you experience. Reality can be intense and harsh. Reality is elastic yet indelible and will not be hidden. As Jordan Peterson observes, if you push against reality it will snap back into place.

Reality is the highest truth of any particular situation, whether spiritual, psychic, or physical. Reality is true facts, and true meaning, and true stories. Reality is the sneaky meaning between the lines of the wise sentences and insightful words, and poetic stories. Reality is the art which lifts a man up in spirit and that which exalts the woman seeking to articulate or express that truth which she was born to give the people of the world.

2. Resisting Reality Injures People

Reality is limitless. There is no limit to reality as there is no limit to the universe and no limits to God. Reality reigns across dimensions, across time and space. Reality is at once what a person perceives it to be, and simultaneously what they have yet to perceive.

Reality is light. Reality is true narrative. Reality is not false narrative, and yet, if people believe a false narrative is in fact the

true nature of how things are and how they exist, and those people believe it and act on it, then their reality takes on the image of reality while suddenly being divorced from what is most real. Reality cannot be ignored without causing pain, sometimes great pain to many, many people. The degree to which one or more people are deluded or divorced from reality is the same degree to which pain is being produced. There is no pain in reality, so the pain noticed when facing reality did not originate from the noticing of reality, but was already there, just hidden or ignored.

3. Reconciling with Reality Heals

Facing reality and deciding to stop ignoring and avoiding it is the first step in creating Heaven as a part of the process of healing, that is, rooting out why things are in their present condition and seeking to do something about it which realigns those circumstances with objective reality, and therefore produces miraculous restoration and alleviation of pain, sadness, and hopelessness.

How does healing take place? By rejoining realities. By reconciling them. By bringing them back together to exist in cohesion with one another, and that is accomplished by speaking truth about what actually exists. Telling the truth about what exists, even if it doesn't seem logical or rational according to the norms of society is the first step to bringing about a reconciliation of realities that have been divorced from one another. Why? Because, telling the truth, even if it's about emotions inside oneself which don't align with what you know intellectually, is a form of giving validation and acceptance and value to something which exists.

4. Believing Fear Leads to It Happening

Take for instance the alcoholic. The alcoholic is an alcoholic because someone taught them that the best way to interact with reality was to drown it out, to make it fuzzy, or to just plain forget about it. Someone told them the story, even if they told it to themselves, that to overcome reality, that is, pain, they needed to distance themselves from it as much as possible. Fear told them

that story. Fear is the story that something bad is going to happen to make things worse. The problem is, when people obey fear, that is, to take actions to avoid the reality they are most afraid of, they sow into it the seeds necessary to make what they fear most come to pass. That's because choosing to be afraid of the image of something bad happening in their mind is the first step in causing that image of reality to manifest in their lives.

The problem with acting on fear, that is, the narrative reality which says something bad is going to happen, is that because of the mechanics of the human heart, mind, imagination, and spirit, the person becomes the passageway through which the image of what they fear is conceived, brought to term, and given birth to. That which you continually choose to believe and see, whether consciously or non-consciously, is that which you are giving permission to come into existence through your soul, imagination, and body.

5. Fear Does Not Intend Good for You

When someone chooses the path of fear, they are choosing to believe the voice of fear which says, "I have your best interests at heart. I will protect you. I will keep you safe." Of course, these are the voices, the lies, which proceed from the mouth of one who hates reality. Fear says reality isn't safe, that it's to be avoided or destroyed, that reality is painful. Of course, reality isn't painful. Reality and the love of reality is pain-free. There is no pain or sadness in reality, reality being that which is real even if or when all other realities have gone the way of disorder and denial. Reality embraces sadness and pain as a way to find itself again, because reality tells the truth even when telling the truth doesn't feel good. But that's the trick. Reality isn't afraid of letting unpleasant things pass through itself on the road to self-reconciliation. To self-congruity. To re-alignment. To integrity. The only lies in reality are those which it's continually revealing to be lies.

6. Reality Wants to be Found

Reality then is that which divides between truth and lies, parsing what exists to lie in either of the two realities, but for the purposes of acknowledging what they are, and allowing them to be what they are without the need to make them something other than what they are, what they're comprised of, what ingredients make up their fundamental nature. Reality cannot ultimately be hidden because, like the one ring in Lord of the Rings, as Gandalf said, "It wants to be found." Reality cannot be hidden because it is an aspect of light which cannot cease to exist.

Reality speaks to us. Reality is continually speaking to us about what exists, endeavoring to point the way to freedom. It is trying to get our attention all the time, trying to tell us what exists and trying to point us towards itself. It is always trying to shepherd a person towards that which the person would rather avoid; that which would elevate the person to the station and fulfillment of their divine inheritance and identity.

7. Truth is THE Mirror

Reality is THE mirror. It is not politically correct, and does not accept violations of its nature. Violating the nature of the design of reality introduces another reality, an un-reality. Un-reality is when the mechanics and narratives and stories are not the same as the fundamental essence of truth. The energy which goes into powering its narratives produces after its own kind. It is just as Jesus said. Sane people don't get angry at an apple seed for not producing a lemon tree. Some insane or ignorant person might be angry about getting an apple tree from an apple seed, but that is because they expect reality to bend to their will rather than the other way around. They see themselves as God, because in their minds, they are God, and any person who acts as if they are God despite not being God is sure to destroy themselves because they don't have the power, sovereignty, or limitlessness to enforce what they believe about themselves. There is a big difference between being a god, and the God. The former is true. The latter is not true. But, someone may ask, "How do you know what is true and what

isn't true?" Being able to discover, unearth, and parse truth from lies is dependent upon a person's willingness **to let themselves know** what is obvious to them.

8. To Those Who Steward, More Will Be Given

Knowing reality in an involved and intimate relationship is in some sense a layered experience. When a person is willing to tell the truth about what is obvious to them, and does so in the best way they can to represent what reality is to them at that moment, reality rewards them by revealing more of itself to them, or more accurately, people who decide to become willing to tell the truth about and steward the portion of reality that has presented itself to them, in some sense, gain the ability to perceive more of it.

Gratitude for, acceptance of, and validation of reality enable a person to handle more of it if they don't quit. But the way people are designed assures that those who don't steward what they have are sure to become unable to see, acknowledge, and validate that which had made itself known to them because reality does not throw its pearls before swine. It is however willing to cooperate with any person who is humble enough to notice, comply with, and team up with it.

9. The More I Know, The More I Know I Don't Know

Reality is what's best at any given moment with any given focus. What allows a person to see reality is letting go of the belief, "I know best," or as Jordan Peterson would say, "All I know is all I need to know." It becomes very difficult for people who think they know all they need to know to see reality for what it is, because people who think they know all they need to know have entered into a denial of reality, into a lie against the truth.

The Bible says that the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom. Why? Because it is an acknowledgement that you are not God, that God alone is God, and that God has the power and authority to do as He wishes. Jesus said not to fear those who can kill the body, but to fear the one who can throw the body and soul

into hell. There is a price to pay for insisting on having things your way, according to your reality, if your way and reality don't align with reality as it exists. Seeing reality for what it is demands submission because no man or woman is God and no one can escape reality regardless of how hard they might try. Reality says to submit to it, and to allow one's self to submit to the reality of how things are. The irony is that submitting to reality unleashes freedom to make choices you couldn't make before that moment. When you submit to and learn to love reality as it is, you are on track for learning how things really work and gaining the skill to use reality to your advantage.

Operating in accordance with how things are gives reality the connection it needs to remove from your emotions, intellect, and belief system anything which doesn't align with it and then imbue you with what's true. The more you submit to reality, the more it frees you from what hinders your connection to it, enabling you to see more of what is true. The humility of the man and woman who submits to reality, and then not only submits to it but then gets their shoulder behind it to partner with it, and in the process accepting and improving the reproofs and affirmations of its feedback will reap the fruit of the freedom to be authentic, freedom to act out convictions, and the freedom to create the good future you envision.

10. Reality is the Loving Teacher

Reality as THE fundamental feedback mechanism is that which is continually trying to guide people back into alignment with itself so pain ceases and joy increases. Reality is a teacher, a coach, and a shepherd. Reality never, ever gives up on a person because in order to do that it would need to cease to exist and reality can't cease to exist because it is eternal, unchangeable, and all powerful. It is a force that is at once unyielding but can seem flexible. Jesus said that God will not be mocked, and that whatever a man sows that will he also reap. This is illustrated by a brief interaction with Booker T. Washington. Someone implored Booker T. Washington to respond to his detractors, but he replied that when people attacked

him that it was **they** who got weaker. A person can violate reality, but in doing so they are actually violating themselves. There is no escape from reality but only reconciliation to it which brings freedom and wholeness, or some level of resistance to it which causes pain, sickness, suffering, or wanton destruction.

The laws that proceed from reality, and that which reality demands of a person, are set up to maximize success, and to get people into a position to receive Heaven for their lives, that is, to help them be and do all that they were designed to be and do. Abiding by and embracing reality, despite life's setbacks, is the best path to finding joy and happiness. Resisting reality is hell, and spreads hell. Making reality your ally, relating to it as a deeply intimate friend, and desiring to know it even when all the other forces intrinsic and extrinsic to you push you to resist it, creates Heaven in and around your life that can't be stopped.

11. No Friend is a Better Friend than Reality

Seek to know Reality. Seek to know Reality with all your heart and mind, because it will deliver you from the snares of living which would deter you from your identity and destiny. Seek to know Reality, because it will teach you, guide you, inform you, lead you, comfort you, and redeem you. Reality will give you joy for pain, Heaven for sadness, life for death. There is no end to the grace and mercy and kindness of reality, because reality is good. Reality is so, so good. People come and go. Circumstances change. Life throws its curve balls. But reality is like a close brother, an intimate friend, a close ally in the battles inevitable in existence, in the journey of life. Reality wants the best for you. Reality loves you so much, it will not let you settle for less than glory. It will not let you settle for less than the beauty it believes you deserve.

So many people desert reality, leaving it behind to pursue other distractions and ways of being, seeking survival as a way of life, deluding themselves into thinking the best path forward is to avoid death. But, as John Eldredge poignantly expressed from CS Lewis, we are too much satisfied with little desires.

12. Love Reality in Decision and Action

Reality is a well of deep desires, longings, hopes and dreams. Reality touches the ground of our souls, the very earth undergirding all that exists. It is deeper and more profound. Reality is the superlative to all. It reigns supreme in dominance, in prevalence, in what is best, most, and deepest. Reality is that which satisfies the deepest longings of the human soul. Only reality touches the need for authenticity in the heart and essence of man.

Have you found a man discontent? Surely then, his heart, the essence of his soul and spirit and body, are fragmented by the damaging separation from resistance to reality, because reality tells the truth at any and every level of what is and what men can know.

Reality is the unspeakable goodness, the wellness and depth of meaning. There are no depths you can plumb in the well of reality which will exhaust it. Reality for the human soul is a well of life, a well of living water, an ocean of satisfaction that multiplies after itself exponentially, forever. Reality speaks to the eternal, to the longing unsatisfied by anything else. Reality is the force which permeates all things. Nothing is untouched by reality, and nothing is separate from it. Nothing is more than a breath away from it. Nothing soothes, satisfies, comforts, and heals like reality, by embracing it and loving it and accepting it as it is without attempting to tell it what it should be.

People who love reality ask, “What exists?” And they are open to the answer. They are observant and mindful. They notice what exists. They are willing to know where they have been wrong, mistaken, and ignorant. People who love reality are willing to admit, “I don’t know. I need to know. I want to know. Will you teach me? Will you help me?” Reality never says no. It says, “Engage the process.” It says, “Let me mold you into someone greater. Let me refine you, knock away the edges and crap and dirt to reveal who you really are, to reveal your glory.” Reality is not passive. It is interactive, alive, and willing. It is the greatest teacher, and it does not lack resources. It is the giver of all good things.

13. Reality Knows How to Win

Reality is sneaky and shrewd and underhanded. It plots for the demise of your fake self, to disassemble your fake self's structures, lies, and narratives. It is sharp enough to cut into or fit into any space, to remove any cancer of the mind, body, soul, spirit, and relationship, to set you free, and then to continue the process of releasing you from bondage into freedom, forever.

Those who embrace reality will be given great gifts. The gifts of peace, rest, hope, love, riches, friends, and fulfilled dreams. Nothing is ultimately withheld from those who let go of and quit being their own Gods independent from God, while allowing themselves to join with the truth. Reality is that which always is, always was, and always will be. It can't die. It can't be killed. It can't be eliminated. And it can't be avoided.

Every person can know what reality is even if running from it has been their life's pursuit. Reality knows the human spirit, soul, and body through and through. It is the Unstoppable Force and the Immovable Object. Those who love it find rest for their inner world because it helps a person become integrated instead of remaining disintegrated. The soul cannot survive without the sustenance of reality, because reality is truth, and the path of reality leads to more and more freedom. Reality leads to life. It is the ground we stand on. It is the spiritual granite we walk on, which sustains us, holds us, protects us and shows us the way to wholeness.

Reality Is Your Friend

How Intimacy With Truth and God Gets You What You Want and Ends Pain and Suffering

Levi M. Johnson

The whole book is here:

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