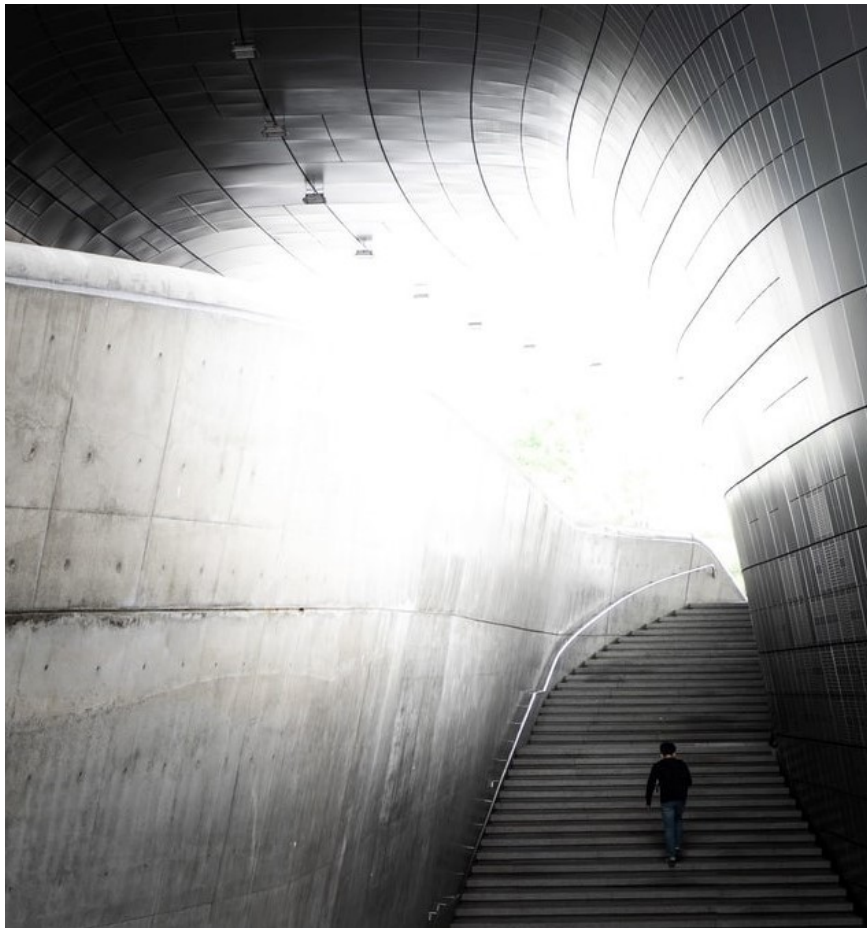


The UFO Principle

Onwards, Forwards, Upwards!



Maxwell Dodd

The UFO Principle

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A un jeune homme de Bruxelles

Maxwell Dodd

A GIFT OF ENCOURAGEMENT

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Upwards, Forwards, Onwards

On the night of Monday 15 July 2019, I was placed in seat 5B in a Flixbus service from the international bus terminal at the Midi Station in Brussels for the overnight run to London's Victoria Coach Station in Buckingham Palace Road. Seat 5A was occupied by a tall fair-headed lad then of 19 who to my surprise started to chat to me - and in English (I had expected French or Flemish). For the next eight sleepless hours, the occupant of Seat 5A one William to whom this series of brief essays is dedicated and I carried on easy and easier conversation both on the bus and in the dining room of the ferry from Calais to Dover. I still recall with delight the magnificent summer sunrise over the White Cliffs and the sight of them turning a gentle pink in the early morning light. I was utterly unprepared however for the longer term contact of an ever deepening quality that I would meet from William to the point where the lad's inward being and mine have found an enriching bond of common delight. The wonders of travel!

What fascinated an Australian-born regular visitor to Europe (who actually could have conversed in French if necessary) was the quality of the vision of the lad William and his clarity of ambition. I was not chatting to a young man whose interests ended at football and girls (important as such pursuits are to one of his age - I shall still watch a rugby match with eyes transfixed) but one seeking a major medical qualification and the possibilities to which that qualification might lead including recognition and economic benefit. In short, I was dealing with that wonderful adventurer in life who saw possibilities in all that surrounded him and was unabashed at making those ambitions clear to a retired battle-hardened lawyer turned guide to wider questions of living. *Bravo, William.* This small work of guidance is dedicated to you not as one who needs its wisdom but as the developing embodiment of the lessons it offers.

William was delighted to find that I used a motto as my guidance to enriched living. "*Upwards, Forwards, Onwards.*" He was also amused to find that it lent itself to the abridgement of "*UFO.*" It meant not the search for alien life but the very fulfilment of vigorous living on Planet Earth, the very ambition that was so obviously beating within his soul.

The UFO Principle is written as the companion work to another of my writings on personal growth and enriched experience called *Fingerposts to Greatness*

which has now been so successfully adopted for publication and which seems to be bringing much to readers in all manner of places. The message of *Fingerposts* is a simple one that in our age of deep anxiety and insecurity is indeed mildly revolutionary. It is of the immensity of the potential within any life and the disappointment that is to be known when that potential is not explored or developed. William is one of those younger ones blessed by the necessary sense of adventure and the willingness to be challenged by the measure of his own inner compass. But with the aid of my publishers and all who sail with them, we can seek to guide others out of the deepening darkness of our times to the uplands of sunshine and comfort.

The work has exactly the same purpose as its predecessor - the guidance of that most important of individuals - *you* - on the daily development of all that you are to the discovery of all you can be and the larger blessings that can come to the wider world through you. It recognises that you are not an island but that we live in a much grander environment and that our obligation to that environment is to have made the most of ourselves for its development. Shared winning is the result and better communities will be the assured outcome.

I have taken the same approach as I did when I put *Fingerposts to Greatness* together as long ago as 2007. It is a series of brief essays of no more than 500 words on particular areas of concern for the development of the being such as courage, discipline, trust, confidence and other virtues of the strong and constructive. I have indeed found other areas on which to write but the great point of commonality between the two works is the passion for the growth of the individual whose experience of living will meet the books and who will be courageous enough to apply their guidance to the day to day challenges of an expanding life.

I have come over nearly two years to find a rich and deeply satisfying bond with a young man from Belgium (notwithstanding the immense age difference - as ever, the things that bring together are stronger than the apparent reasons for division). I look forward to an encounter with a growing you, the reader, with whom I look forward to sharing the adventure of a complete Life.

Upwards, Forwards, Onwards!

Maxwell Dodd

Sydney, New South Wales, Australia
Saturday 1 May 2021

RESILIENCE

As we open up the guidance, it is easy to find a starting point. Resilience. That great virtue of being able to “bounce back” when things do not go according to plans. We are so easily put off trying again and seem so willing to accept the burdens of defeat when the real lesson of a setback is that it sets us off in a new and quite probably more successful route. I am aware that, as the great inventor Thomas Alva Edison watched his factory burn down in the very early years of the 20th century, he saw this as an opportunity to build a better, more productive unit. The place was producing again within a month. Resilience, plus.

I think too of the national resilience exhibited by the Western Allies in the years of World War II and of their willingness to accept restrictions and rationing and the absence of so much in the name of the wider victory. Life took a long time to return to normal but when it did, it was the upshot of courage and continuity.

Courage and continuity. The great gift of resilience. When life has taken a sad turn, when an opportunity offered is not what one hoped of it, when the gremlins of defeat are reporting loudly of your failures and limitations, it is time to show resilience and energetic response. We are built to be winners and victors but life does not provide us with constant victories and never will. It will however provide a substantially larger number of victories over defeats if we are willing to undertake the hard labour and vigorous application of vision that is necessary.

You may be down but that is not the permanent state of affairs of which you are afraid. But only you can find the way out of your dilemma but equally only you ultimately can celebrate reconstruction and revival. All that you want remains to be won and it lies with you alone to be the one who seeks victory and to be the one even more importantly whose sweaty brow reflects the vigour being applied to its discovery.

Upwards, forwards, onwards are not pretty words. They are the signals of the future to the one brave enough to apply them.

Bounce back higher as only you can.

ENTHUSIASM

The great quality of the achiever. The man or woman of golden commitment to the journey ahead.

Enthusiasm is a wonderful word whose origins lie in classical Greek and in the idea of a possession by a god. It connotes the quality of utter involvement and outpouring energy allied to the sweat on the brow of the one deeply charged with the light of his or her ambitions and hopes. We are so impressed by our friends who find in some activity or some good cause a reason for deep surrender to that goal and its lessons. I am intrigued in Australia to observe the interest shown by so many in the protection of native fauna and flora and I say that as one who finds (let me happily confess) that I am not so called. To say that, however, is not to deny the worth of the hopes and energies of so many but again to recognise that we are all so different and so varied in our inner and outer lives. It is, as we should be saying endlessly, that measure of variation that makes for the full tapestry of an enriched existence.

Enthusiasm is wonderful to observe and it is even more attractive in the simplicities of youth and clarity of purpose. It has indeed one great further quality - its capacity to touch others and indeed to inspire them to share one's ambitions and aspirations. You do not need me to tell you of those whom you have known to be possessed of some great interest which seems so all-consuming. You have seen their commitment and been touched and blessed by it.

There is nothing negative in enthusiasm. It is such a positive rich colourful quality of the few who see the future in a special way. It is the way of the man or the woman who can see clearly what it is that stimulates and challenges that man or woman and who will walk with commitment and courage to the fulfilment of their dreams.

The fulfilment of the dream. Let that be your watchword and allow yourself to be consumed by it. Be the one possessed by a vision that has to be seen to be of a higher origin. The world will be blessed by it.

CONCENTRATION

We have all conducted the experiment in childhood of concentrating light with a magnifying glass and watched paper burst into flames. We have been dazzled by it and smiled when our teachers have told us that this quality of concentration of the force and power of the light was of major importance in life, both for the scientist and for the student. The teacher almost certainly then sought to get it into the heads of children that this quality of empowerment was important in all ways and in much larger activities.

This was so true and the lessons of it so numerous as to defy listing. I confess that I was watching only yesterday a rugby match where two minutes short of full-time a young square-jawed athlete and an example of physical perfection had the opportunity of kicking the penalty goal that would have made sufficient points for his team to guarantee victory. His opponents would not have had the time to make up the deficit. His face and his whole demeanour were of a total commitment to the task and his inner qualities of self-management were impressive. I need hardly report that the kick was successful and the game won by his side.

We take from this lessons for ourselves in the myriad experiences of life where it is mandatory for us to be utterly in charge of ourselves and probably to be in charge of others. Great endeavours lie within all of us but bringing out the power and the energy necessary to achieve the outcomes we wish will always require deep concentration on the purpose of the effort and the denial of the obstructions and restrictions to be met on the way. No plan for the future of any quality was ever going to be handed to us “on a plate.” Victory was always going to turn on the devotion of our souls and our minds and our bodies to its attainment.

That quality of certainty of victory lies within all of us and is manifest best with the simple virtue of concentration on the result. The challenges and setbacks along the way to its achievement will become as gentle breezes on the face of encouragement and stimulation.

You will have brought concentration of thought and action to account and the result will be the very one that lay in the original dream.

Think of the power of light and burning paper. You can be the one whose force brought the aim to reality and have all the benefits of succeeding in the challenge.

Upwards, forwards, onwards - again the truth of the future.

COMPASSION

The great guidance of Buddhism lies in this simple word. Buddhism is concerned with your inner life as much as your outer life and indeed finding that balance is a very significant part of the journey to the wholeness of which we are speaking in these writings. But the journey inwards, important as it is (meditation is an important daily balance of great significance to the vigorous creators of the world both commercially and socially), must be matched by the recognition of the other.

Compassion comes from two Latin roots which can be easily translated as “with love.” It is the experience of seeing the other as an equal at all times and having a willingness to allow that equality to manifest itself. This is obvious in the life of a married couple and the family who surround them (and even their four-legged tail-wagging allies). But it connotes the dignity and worth of that other individual - the one to whom a duty of unity is clear. I am reminded of the Jewish theologian Martin Buber and his 1923 work on the importance of “Ich-Du” (in English, *I-Thou* - the second person singular is of real importance) and of the application of the principle in the writings of the remarkable German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer and “the nearest *Thou* at hand.”

Winning in life is not the chase for the “best deal,” important as that can be, but rather the respect to be shown to the dignity and merit of that other, even if that other will be in contact with you only briefly. I am disappointed by what I see in the public concourses of life of railways stations and shopping malls at the lack of a recognition of one’s neighbour. But the true victor in life is the one for whom the cosmic architecture of otherness is an essential part of his or her own equipment as tools of advanced enriched living.

This is not a sermon and I am not seeking religious conversion. Christianity and Buddhism make much of the equality of the other and it is in the most practical application of that equality that the society of which we would want to be part will be created.

Seek the other and find yourself and be immensely rewarded. All the other victories in life will be more fulfilling accordingly.

LEADERSHIP

The leader is the one who sees the future and the journey to it and has the fire in his or her belly of sufficient force to provide the route. We are in an age so we are told when great leaders seem so rare. A real tragedy.

The leader is the one most aware of the journey and holds the vision of its attainment. The history books are full of great leaders in all manner of activities from wars to social reconstructions. One can see Gandhi, Churchill, Martin Luther and Martin Luther King (even Napoleon and Julius Caesar) in one sentence and be dazzled by their willingness to work to a goal and to give up so much to its attainment.

But the leadership which is more easily seen in our daily lives is that of the teacher, the carer, the social worker, who has to deal with the devastating manifestations of failure and pain to which life takes them so often. That these people are able to continue to function normally is a massive tribute to them and to their detachment. Buddhist thinking makes much of “detachment” not as a form of separation but as a willingness to be an observer and not necessarily to be a participant. Those whose lives benefit from the generosity of the detached person should realise what an astonishing gift they are observing. This is real leadership though no history book will say so.

Those who move the world in any of the ways in which it is to be moved and much of it is far from publicly seen are to be congratulated and to be encouraged. The societies in which we live and the complexities of modern urban life in large cities and even in places without such numbers turn on the activities of such people and their leadership though the word may not be applied to their activities. Leadership lies within each one of us and our willingness to step forward into the void as a leader should be axiomatic for each of us. To be the one who can see the future and implement the route to it rests in each one of us, often awaiting discovery. We have been so often trained in obedience but it is the independent man or woman of leadership and courage whose clarity will be what matters.

The qualities of intelligence, boldness and simple integrity exist within all of us but we are conditioned to be well-behaved and respectful of authority. The leader

in you knows nothing of this and we invite you to meet that part of your being and to shake his hand and welcome him as a trusted ally and friend.

The world will be a better place for that encounter and you will have discovered more of yourself. *Victories all round.*

ENCOURAGEMENT

The operation through which I write I call “A Gift of Encouragement.” It was a term used by a marketing friend in 1995 when I did a tape called “Messages for Champions” which is still available upon request. He saw the messages for champions being offered in two brief lectures each of 22 minutes as being “a gift of encouragement.”

The wider lesson however is to remind us that we can always be able to encourage and stimulate others and thereby be ourselves lifted by our own advice. The lesson of seeking to encourage others to grow and expand and to find more in all departments is that it makes us individually larger. I am reminded that it is suggested that the teacher learns more from the student than the student does from the teacher. This is so true.

But the encourager will find that the more he or she encourages the more again that one will be stimulated to grow and become and to do more. It is the strange cycle of ever-widening circles. Adventures require encouragers to excite within the consciousness of the travellers the riches of their endeavours and the simple pleasures to be known from them.

The world is in great need of encouragers. Excitement is a necessary part of a fulfilled life - the excitement of the achiever on meeting a reward or a challenge or, better still, a prize. Nothing quite matches encouraging others to achieve but it is its own enormous reward to the very people providing the encouragement.

In short, we are seeking to encourage you to be a winner and the man or woman of your dreams. There is no time like the present to launch into your own vision of the complete *you* but the strange thing is that in encouraging you to grow I am myself (we are ourselves) encouraged to grow.

Carry the vision you hold of yourself and encourage yourself to pursue it with all energy and commitment. But remember to encourage others to seek their own fulfilment. Nothing will work better for you than such a course.

In short, go forwards!

WELLBEING

We all hope to be physically well and as I see from the advertising in the press and on television and on the internet we place great emphasis on good health.

Good health is necessary for the fulfilment of the effective constructive life that makes the world turn. But good health is not merely of the body. It is of the deepest essence of any one of us and is the consequence of a journey of much commitment to its attainment.

We are well aware of our needs physically. Go to any pharmacy and look at the seemingly endless potions and prescriptions available for care and maintenance of good physical order. They come as either the consequence of man's scientific inventiveness or the wisdom of those who seek more "natural" treatments.

What I am discussing here is something much wider. The word "holistic" comes to mind to define a measure of wellbeing that encompasses good physical health but as part of a much wider wellbeing that sees balance and good order in our minds, in our emotions and in our souls. I am sure that long life and rich experience have all to do with the maintenance of good fully balanced wellbeing of mind and soul as much as of body. That this work has an essay dealing with inactivity says much of that understanding.

What we are recommending is that the fulfilled life (whatever may be its definition for you of wholeness and completeness) will only come with the richest commitment to wellbeing of soul and mind as well as body. Meditation and the regular devotion of time to its enrichment (I can use no other word for its benefits) will be the way of the high achiever just as much as a visit to the gymnasium or the running track are part of our daily programmes. To say this is not to deny the virtues of rigorous exercise pursued consistently. I have been a proponent of it for a lifetime and, in greater age, I am seeing my rewards with unusually good physical order, let me add. It is however to suggest with all strength that the attainment of fullness of living is of soul and mind and body and will find all that we are functioning harmoniously and with a joyful and easily observed balance.

Good health is your inheritance. Nature has provided you with a remarkable being brilliantly equipped for a life of vast experience and enormous enrichment in all ways. Keep up the exercise, keep up the meditation, be careful to have a balanced diet (without too much restriction on simple pleasures!) and find that in greater age your youth has not entirely left you.

DECISIVENESS

The most obvious mark of the champion will be his or her willingness to make a decision. We are in thrall to those who seem to be brisk and clear. Such people impress and are always given the right of passage. But it is so easily forgotten that the stamp of greatness upon such a person is that he or she is willing to take the risks (they exist) of a prompt decision. “Do it now” seems their watchword and the results seem so astonishing.

Nothing is more destructive of ambition or vigour than the unwillingness of those with authority to resolve a question to do so and the attendant frustrations. Those in charge forget indeed that their uncertainty is part of the problem in their dealings with those below them in the hierarchies that mankind is so competent at building (often to his enslavement). Clarity of direction turns on the ability and self-confidence of the one with the power of decision. We use the word “leader” rightly for such people.

I remember (it is now nearly 60 years ago!) that one of my own mentors was a senior accountant himself nudging then 70 with an astonishing career in the management of company collapses and business failures. His elegant footwork so to speak in the disasters he had to unravel turned on his maxim that all decisions were to be made *today*. He was emphatic that the principle worked well in practice as nearly all decisions would prove correct and that the few that did not would be shown to be inadequate quickly and could be comfortably adjusted. As one at a high level of the corporate world, he was hugely respected for his miraculous outcomes but his greatest strength was his simple lack of fear in making up his mind. As one of his students of the long ago, I smile as I record his impact on my professional development. The man of courtrooms had as good a guide as could have been sought.

All that is set out in this series of essays and the writing of *Fingerposts to Greatness* is to guide those who would be high achievers in the pursuit of great accomplishment. In the listing of commercial or corporate virtues, decisiveness would rank at the top. But even for those of us whose lives may not involve walking tightropes daily, the quality of a rigorous clarity in seeking the outcome of a dilemma is equally significant. It may not be that we shall find the

consequences as large as those my mentor did, but the lessons to be taken are relevant in any of the areas of fully constructive living.

There are times when the decision has to be to defer a decision. I happily concede the point. But the occasions when the practice is a virtue are much fewer than we believe.

Decisions and doing it now are the markers of leadership and competence and you can bear those marks and wear the signs well. The real question is whether you have the courage to be the victor or the one wallowing in indecision and vagueness.

I rest my case, as the American advocate would say.

PERSEVERANCE

The journey of living will require much of it. In *Fingerposts to Greatness*, I make much of commitment, that wonderful ability to see the goal while on the journey to it and especially when the road seems bumpy or difficult. That is perseverance.

Perseverance is in a sense the simple ability to keep going. It is necessary to see the object of the journey at all times during its course. The dream must be allowed to glow with a passionate clarity at all times and for the setbacks and disappointments that will always come (they are part of the learning process) to be seen as nothing more than challenges to be defeated - and as quickly as possible.

I am reminded that, when he was setting up the new establishment in Sydney in the years after 1788, Governor Arthur Phillip used the word “persevere” to his staff at the times of great difficulty in the earliest years of the colony. Phillip was chosen indeed out of his retirement as a naval officer in the West Country for his role in the colony not for his naval record but for the recognition that he had agricultural skills which would be mandatory in the new world. Where I am writing is the result of his perseverance and his simple clear leadership. Again the man of this small *opus*.

Every long term project of any kind from a university course to an Olympic gold medal (or actually getting to go to the Games themselves) will require much perseverance. It is the real essence of victory and when you hear a concert pianist at his or her most scintillating never forget that what you are dealing with is the upshot of deep commitment and no doubt many sorry and unhappy hours.

This quality of continuity is the stuff of all that we desire and however bleak and cold it may seem at the time, it is the price we pay for daring to stay with a purpose and not to allow the temptations of the moment to have what will finally be a damaging victory.

This is not boring stuff. It is the price we pay for the journey to the success of which we are writing and whose attainment has led you to read this small work. It is the price you pay for being the man or the woman of your dreams.

Simple as that.

INACTIVITY

You may think that this is an odd inclusion in a work of personal growth. It is indeed in accepting the need of times of rest and inactivity that we shall prove ourselves the real victors.

In *Fingerposts to Greatness*, I make much of the need for the truly successful and winning to find deeper and richer accomplishments. There is an essay dealing with the delights of meditation and the significance of its daily pursuit. That message is in a sense now being restated such is its importance on the journey to wholeness.

The longer term journey to a truly rich experience of living in which we have done as much as time would allow to meet the true essence of our own highly idiosyncratic beings (to record that no two people are the same is hardly worth the printing!), will call for balance. That balance will require the application of vigour and energy to the demands of the challenges and victories we are seeking but it will also demand that we take time off to sit quietly and be at rest. Lives reflecting the vivid development of our journeys will require this measure of balance more than most. Those whose lives are seen to be the most successful (and as I have said in the other work I do not see commercial success as the only definition of success by any means) need most to find the magic of good order. Business people are parents and counsellors and gardeners with obligations to families and even pets and many others and in denying those obligations to others they reduce their own ultimate effectiveness. I remember meeting the son of a very well known American some years ago who astonished me by reporting how little he saw his father. This he clearly felt had reduced him in childhood - I smelt indeed some resentment. I was astonished but the message was valid - and significant.

All that is in this small work and in *Fingerposts to Greatness* is of the capacity for us as individuals (I am not remotely interested in groups or communities much as we as individuals make them up) to explore the immensity of our individual possibility. But that exploration will need, by the usual paradox of growth, to involve times of quietness, meditation, and simple "letting go."

Doing so is not denying achievement. It is simply allowing the system a break from stress and making well ordered living more likely to be successful in all departments and of larger value to those for whom we care.

GENEROSITY

A very necessary lesson on the journey to brilliance and reputation is the recognition that we are not alone in life and that we are part of a much larger cosmic architecture. We are part of a wider world and while those to whom and of whom I am writing are the ones who will give that larger world direction and guidance, they must at all times be aware of the simple significance of giving in all its varied manifestations.

Generosity is not merely a large cheque. Providing such a thing is indeed dishonest as it can be simply a device to get away from our universal duty of support and kindness. It is the question of time and perspiration and the willingness to give of oneself at a deeper level. It is also part of our responsibility as developed and developing citizens to recognise those who may at any moment be in need of something we (perhaps alone, indeed) can provide.

I am so disappointed, as I have already mentioned, at the behaviour I witness in the concourses of life of such things as railway stations and shopping malls. The unwillingness of passengers at railway stations to allow those disembarking to do so before boarding themselves says so much of our selfish restricted vision. This reflects so badly on us and tells much of our failures in being part of wider communities.

The strange paradox as ever is that those who give seem most to be the ones to whom much is given. Life is rich in paradox and perhaps this is one of its most easily observed manifestations.

When you are tired and battling with a major decision and all seems difficult is not the time to reject the hungry mendicant. Giving of all that one is and not merely of one's material strength is the true victory of generosity. We are so much more and it is in giving of ourselves in ways which are silent and indeed secret that the true worth of the real winner will be seen.

Give and give again - and watch yourself being given!

SINCERITY

A very important part of the equipment of the successful. Simple sincerity. The remarkable ability to say what you mean and mean what you say.

The world is busy asking us to play roles and spend our lives appearing to meet the standards fixed by others. We are the victims of major social pressures to conform and be obedient and to meet standards created by others. We are in times when we are living with enormous bureaucratic structures around us where we are expected as good citizens to perform rather like performing seals.

Questioning those who would impose rules upon us is a fundamental of our world and especially of the man or woman to whom this small work is directed - the one whose final destination will be one of having done much to fulfil one's own self. I am even aware that there can be major social pressures upon us to be well-behaved. I am mindful that in the course of our daily lives there are times when we have to meet standards created for the sake of social harmony. One thinks of driving in such a context and the road rules.

What I am discussing is the willingness to be genuine and real in our dealings with others. It is helpful in encountering that other to remember what we want that other to take away from meeting us. We should never want more or less than a view of us that accurately reflects our nature at its most decent and accommodating. That requires simple sincerity and a willingness to be open and trusting.

As the former advocate I have had the responsibility of making many pleas before judicial officers on behalf of those whose next port of call might be a jail. My duty to the court (both personal and professional) was the self-evident one of being honest in my presentation of the one I was representing. In short, I had to be sincere with my words on behalf of the accused to keep him (they were nearly all men and nearly all younger men with too much testosterone) and my successes on their behalf (I was at times astonished!) turned on their willingness to be sincere with me.

As usual, the wider victories turn on qualities of the positive and generous. *Again, mean what you say and say what you mean.*

AMBITION

No work on personally developed enrichment would be complete without a significant part of it dealing with ambition. Ambition is the plan for the future that should be burning brightly within us at all times in life. Even one of my age (I am nudging 80 years of age) should not be without ambition.

Ambition is the eye for the time ahead and for its fulfilment. It is the stuff of all hopes and aspirations from the hopes of a young sportsman or sportswoman to win a championship to the dreams of the musically talented to play in London and Vienna as well as New York and Sydney. It is the basis of the university course being undertaken by the prospective doctor or lawyer who has ambitions even in his or her 20s to make the most of his professional qualifications by doing major research or becoming a Chief Justice. It certainly is found in the man or the woman seeking electoral preferment through a political party and indeed the hopes of those seeking such advancement will usually be of the “top job.” (Greater age - and good sense - may reduce that ambition!).

In short, ambition is a necessary part of the toolkit of the one seeking seriously to lead a hugely fulfilled life. Even I concede that I am hopeful that in the presentation of this small work and *Fingerposts to Greatness* I shall find that they are widely accepted and bring much to many. Just think of the interesting people I shall meet around the world and in addition the financial rewards! It is all exciting in the extreme.

Ambition is the desire to be oneself at the most complete. It is a very positive ambition and one to be applauded. There are always those whose ambitions are less than pleasant and this must be acknowledged but for all that, it is imperative that we have an aim for the future and a plan for its fulfilment.

I do indeed weep for the one whose experience has so reduced that person that he or she has lost any sense of something wider. Life is significantly more than mere survival and the challenges we meet are the guarantees that mere survival is not our daily ambition.

It is indeed to be remembered that ambition connotes the widest and richest hope for an exciting and recognised future and that it also means the daily perception of the translation of ambition into the demands of the here and now.

Dream and have ambitions and have no fears for their fulfilment. Be proud of your ambitions and pursue them with vigour and rigour but with a profound respect for the other who may not share them.

The challenge of life is for you to find how to manage ambition and the road to its achievement.

Upwards, forwards, onwards has all to do with a proper ambition of higher merit.

HUMILITY

Humility is a very challenging entry in a work on personal development. Ambition, purpose, resilience, leadership, zealotry - the “far hills” - all ring true, but humility?

It is offered as deeper wisdom on the journey to wholeness. These works are interested in *your* journey in *your* most personal way to the fulfilment of the highly individual man or woman you are. They are to offer you a vision of yourself and all that you can make of yourself and encourage you to do all in your power to achieve that insight, whatever it may be.

The truly great, and we hope you are one of them, will always be humble. We are all aware of the character Uriah Heep in Dickens’ *David Copperfield* and his very false interest in being seen to be “umble.” Humility connotes a willingness not to be excessively proud or conceited and to accept where one stands without apology but without arrogance. In a sense, humility is the willingness to be open and trusting and for the wider world to be allowed to see that one judged to be “successful” is still totally in touch with his or her deeper self. In a sense, humility is indeed a negative quality - an absence of bravado and shallow posturing.

For all that, the man or woman who is truly great, and we hope that you will be, will always deal with those around him or her with a charm and a sense of equality which that other will recognise with comfort. It is a very challenging attribute and one in which so many people considered successful fail, but its presentation is probably the ultimate test of the worth of the journey to that ultimate victory of which I am writing.

That those without the decorations that may be seen to attach to large public careers, can be accepted by those who have had such times is itself the test of a genuineness of humility which will say so much of the individual achiever.

Very difficult and challenging but the true mark of the being of character.

VICTORY

A work on personal growth and the victory and victories to be known in life will obviously say much of winning and all the things that go with winning. The sporting champion will have won the race or his or her team the grand final and the world will be temporarily his or her oyster. There will be wide smiles and photographs in the newspapers and on the evening news.

Great achievers in many other ways will share the same acceptance and publicity and see their names splashed around. I am told that it is a sign of fame that the press can refer to you by your surname alone and that the world will do proper translations. Fame will accompany victory.

Not all victories will however attract public recognition and, indeed, most of them will not. I am reminded for myself of the final victory at the end of my professional course and the circumstances of it but those matters are not of wider knowledge. We have all had victories in ways that we have forecast and or ways that were utterly unexpected and surprising. That did not diminish the delight of the victory.

In short, we are offering guidance on the journey to victories, however that term will be applied in your life. For most of us those victories will not be a matter of public interest but their significance will not in any way be reduced by such a thought. We shall celebrate them with those who share them with us and who will no doubt take as much pleasure from them as we do ourselves.

What matters is that we have done something with our time that reflects well upon us and with our capacities however idiosyncratic they may be. It is to that quality of victory that we are seeking to guide you.

Fingerposts to Greatness takes its name from the principle of the signpost and indeed the name of the work was suggested to me by the young man (as he then was) whom I know as Tilli because he saw the metaphor of the signpost to be especially relevant. It points in the right direction but it does no more than that. The journey to the destination is entirely for the enquirer and the application of his or her own energies to its achievement however defined.

The UFO Principle extends that vision with a dose of encouragement to the achiever to set out on the journey wherever he or she may now be in his or her own journey of living. The world is in great need of individuals of character and quality. This is intended like *Fingerposts* to be a very general work of guidance on personal growth whose sole purpose is the invigoration of any individual to seek a larger life of greater and richer satisfaction for all.

We are sure that individuals can be or do or have anything. Genius and heroism are part of the fabric of each one of us and it is imperative that we pursue those qualities and implement them fearlessly. We are all challenged to make the most of our time and to do as much as possible with all that we are, and to do so moment to moment and effectively.

In short, be the man or the woman of your dreams and celebrate all that that you discover. You owe that to yourself and to a wider world.

Upwards, Forwards, Onwards!

Your guide

Maxwell Dodd is a fifth generation Australian who was born in the Hunter Valley in New South Wales in August 1942 at the time of great fears of Japanese invasion. After a traditional, indeed, classical education at the Australian equivalent of a Public School, he qualified as a solicitor and practised in the courts of London and Sydney as the advocate for those who were poor in spirit and of estate. He realised from his dealings with the courts and their customers that his real vocation did not lie in advocacy for all his professional success, but in a wider ministry of personal development and spiritual growth. After spending many years as the carer of his elderly Mother, he has now embarked on his second career as an enlarger of the soul, the traveller and cyclist, and a guide to the great human adventure called Life.

He is a bachelor and, while Sydney is in a sense “home,” his paths regularly take him to the wider world of Britain and the Continent.

A Gift of Encouragement is an operation that reflects his vision of the individual’s potential of attaining spiritual and earthly fullness and its purpose has the wider aim of assisting people of all ages and experiences to find balance and much more in their fulfilled lives.