

"We are what we pretend to be, so we must be careful about what we pretend to be." Kurt Vonnegut

Would the real Soul, please, stand!

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I still don't have a clear idea of where I am going with this project but, tentatively, I will say that, because the novels I write are always on the theme of Social Realism and are intended to flag societal issues, the dark ones most often imposed on women, I am thinking that alternating between expository and narrative formats might be a cool way to blend genres.

To help me with the latter I might pick Alex, the main character of my debut and somewhat autobiographical novel, *North and Left From Here [Take II]* as, some seven years later, I bet she, too, would be ripe for a little soul searching of her own :)

Having said all that, I now wish to flag the fact that this project is not a clever and oh so subtle marketing ploy intended as a teaser for the next Saint-Clair novel.

Hand on heart, whether any raw *footage* born of this endeavor ever gets edited into a book that I will ultimately publish or convert into a series of marketable podcasts, I have already decided that this document, in its entirety, will remain a publication all can access as free downloads – from the first capital letter to the very last dot.

Since I am not [yet] a philanthropist and would not want to pass for the altruist that I am not - bad karma - I should perhaps explain why I am going to forge ahead with such a project:

1. The process of thinking out loud with the aim of sharing, and therefore being understood by others, means that I have to put a great deal of order and clarity to the many thoughts that are, for now, colliding, whirring hard, sparking new synaptic connections inside my brain, inside my neural net, inside my mind ... inside my energy field.

[*] Soul's copyright, though not recognized in a Court of Law, is not as irrelevant as one would think.

2. Not everyone reading this or listening to the podcast will come in to these texts with as little understanding as I had on matters of spirituality.

Therefore some of the more involved concepts and beliefs I will attempt to put forward in Moriya's pared-down style will strike a familiar chord in some, an instantaneous spark of interest in others. And me, I get to give back to the cosmos some of what it has brought to me through the teachings of Moriya who, for reasons of detachment from all that is material, is not at all interested in writing her own book. There is no point in Googling her – she is not there :)

3. Since Moriya has yet to accept from me *anything* more than a few tiny tokens of thanks, indeed very few, how could I then *sell* the fruit of the spiritual guidance I am receiving free when it is given to me so unconditionally?

No way, right?

Right! But before anything, I need to flag that, although I have used the expression *bad karma* in the paragraph above, it is seriously erroneous to think of karma in that way. Karma is neither good nor bad. Like the sea around the swimmer, it just is. More on that later.



OK, so now that the groundwork has been laid, let's cut to the chase and start with the relatively easy bits - some of the fundamentals I have come to understand and accept –

- I am the current incarnation of my soul.
- My soul, like all souls, is energy.
- Cosmic spiritual energy is pure. It cannot become impure.
- When someone questions my integrity or when I get deeply startled, I know my hand flies to the center of my chest, not to my brain, not to the spot where I can feel my heart beat.

So rather than think my soul radiates or floats above my head like a halo or a beacon, I accept that my soul-energy permeates the spot in the center of my chest.

- My soul, like all souls, is ancient. She has been incarnated many, many, many, many times over. Personally, I have no interest in tracking down any of my past lives, as I have plenty to work with figuring out this one, the only one that matters, the only one I can maybe alter, one moment at a time, if and when I am able to transfer the theory to the practice.
- The only thing my soul, any soul, aspires to is to be taken offline – off the incarnation cycle.
- My soul cannot escape from the incarnation cycle until I, C.C., and all my soul's subsequent incarnations, have managed to edit out all the *bad* karma i.e. the killer-waves, the dark troughs and chasms as well as the energy-charged *I* moments, the *me 1st/mine 1st* moments - in short the ego-centered moments when I am not present in the moment - out of my energy field – the theory being that, as the universe is perfectly harmonious, no soul can walk away leaving behind a mess of unfinished business – karma not amended.



Guilt and prayers, remorse and flagellations only amount to emotional crutches intended to make us feel better, but fail.

Which brings up the well-worn phrase *Consumed by guilt*.



La Petite Chartreuse, directed by Jean-Pierre Denis, a French film about a introverted man, an antiquarian, who accidentally runs over an eight-year-old girl, offers a thoughtful illustration of what amending karma can look like.

Indeed, the only way to karmically right a wrong is to *undo the wrong* by reversing the deed through personal involvement and from the heart. Not out of a sense of duty. Karma can only be amended when we can repair *directly* with our *victim* - should we be so lucky as to still have her/him within reach. There is no other way.

N.B. I have decided to refer to my soul as *she* as I don't think *it* would be appropriate, not even a bold *It*, and I cannot possibly refer to MY soul as *he*, not even if spelt with a capital H, even though I know all souls are genderless - such are the limitations of language, but here is not the place to be pedantic about language.



Just as a computer has a motherboard - our brain, for its functioning, relies on a software program – so, too, does our energy field in which our karma is encoded.



When I am in a *mood*, this *mood* in all of its vibrational characteristics is encoded in my energy field.



Karma is our personal, accumulated, fateful load – our score sheet as inherited from our soul's previous incarnations, compounded by the karmic balance of what we have managed for ourselves in THIS incarnation, this lifetime.

Put simply, since I am past middle age, and since I show no signs of turning into a clone of mother Teresa or of passing as a credible entrant in a Gandhi think-alike contest, it is safe to assume that my soul has already been screwed out of any early plans of Nirvanic retirement.



I, who never ever used to spare a thought for my soul, have come to accept that we do not merely *get* a soul in a random way. Instead, it can be said figuratively that a soul puts its little hand up to accept us as the new vehicle through which she hopes to process some of her karmic baggage. Souls pick us to be their upgraded vehicle to karmic enlightenment - go figure! - which is why it is tacitly accepted that we ARE able to overcome all and any of the karmic challenges that come our way - if and only if we can tackle them in a spiritual manner which, of course, is not the way our western culture has ever taught anyone to overcome anything.



It can be said that, like a net, our energy field hardens around us, a little bit more with each passing incarnation, making it each time more difficult for us to amend *the way we are*. Which is probably why, by now, unless we get a very strong wake-up call - a sometime metaphoric, a sometime literal, blow to the head - it is that much easier to go with the flow and keep on *being ourselves*.



I have come to realize that the only spiritually correct answer to “Who am I?” is **I am my soul!**



So, who is this person looking back in the mirror? The one with spiky gray hair who, every morning, gels up her hair and picks around till she finds the right sea pebbles or the right plugs to push into her earlobes? Ah, yes, that one! Well, her name is C.C. and she is an ego-persona. She is my soul’s flawed vehicle for this lifetime.



We do not usually hear the whisper of our soul over the din of the monkey chatter, the erratic whirl of our mechanical actions/reactions as they cruise in and out, like teenagers at a party.



Some time ago, while trying to clarify a point on a forum I moderate, I came up with a little analogy that has helped me understand better the relationship between the soul - pure, clean energy – and the ego-persona/energy field. It goes like this: imagine there is a pond and, lying at the bottom, there is a quartz crystal. This crystal has been there for quite some time and, looking at it from the edge, it appears dingy green, perhaps from pond slime.

In my mind, our ego-persona/our energy field is symbolized by the pond water while the crystal symbolizes the soul that is unable to shine through our emotional clutter, turmoil and the resulting relative negativity of our energy field.

While I was working this out, I initially thought that the crystal WAS green because it had become contaminated by pond slime. Thus, I thought what needed to be done was scrub that crystal clean to allow it to shine freely, as crystals do - but I was wrong. The crystal, our soul, NEVER becomes impure or contaminated. It always remains pure energy. It is just that its energy cannot shine through the stagnant water of the pond.

So what needs to be done is simply purify that water till it is all clear and then the crystal's energy and brilliance can radiate through the water, all the way to the surface, even as it remains at the bottom of the pond.

Make sense?



Souls cannot think straight in the face of our ego's gross matter – our energy field loaded by the energy released by the myriad of desires and weaknesses we indulge daily, monthly, yearly, even though we all manage to repress some, maybe even most.



There is a misconception that some souls can become dark and bad. Souls are souls, divine energy, and so they remain, no matter what we get up to.



Every time we pay into the culture of our culture, we fail to be present. Pleasurable pursuits such as retail therapy, sex and holidays are all good, harmless and legal, but they are all engineered to take us away from the moment, from our *present*. They are, after all, called *escapes*.



We taint the moment energetically by releasing *spikes* of energy, of adrenalin, each time we want to possess whatever object, person or moment because as well as the exciting high of the chase, such pursuits trigger irritation, anger, fear, resentment, disappointment and insecurities.



Even the rush to end-of-year sales triggers its spikes. However harmless they appear to our ego-persona, all add negative blots to our energy field - to the general karma that we actually need to edit out of *our* energy field.



Possessiveness is an indulgence that denotes emotional insecurity, whether what we are losing is a lover, a friend, a pet, an object, or a way of life.



Adult possessiveness is no different from the fear a child has of losing her teddy bear or that favorite hair band that cannot possibly be replaced, in her eyes, at least.



No action ever happens in isolation. Every action triggers a reaction. Always.



Moriya told me a Zen tale that has been around for a while:

A man stood on a hill. Three men were out walking and notice the man in the distance. They began to argue about the man's purpose in standing there.

One said, 'He has probably lost his dog.'

The second disagreed: 'No, he's probably out looking for a friend.'

The third said, 'He's only standing up there to enjoy the fresh air.'

The three could not agree and were still arguing by the time they approached the man himself.

The first man asked him, 'Tell me, have you lost your dog?'

'No, sir', was the reply. 'I have not lost him'.

Another asked, 'Have you lost your friend?'

'No, sir, I have not lost my friend either.'

Finally, the third man asked, 'Are you here to enjoy the fresh air?'

'No, sir.'

One of the men finally blurted, 'Why, then, are you standing here for since you answer no to all our questions?'

The man said, 'I'm just standing'.



With any possession we clutch to our bosom, physically or figuratively, comes the fear of losing it. The two make a whole.



Because I accept that my moods, my anxiety, have twin corollaries imprinted in my energy field, even the buzz that I am feeling, as I type these words, is questionable.

If, as agreed, I am *only* my soul's vehicle for this lifetime, then the thoughts lined up on these pages are all hers. I am only the keyboard operator. As long as I recognize my little spike of excitement for what it is, I know I am aware.



No different, either, for A.A.s or Weight-Watchers: amendment, editing out of detrimental habits, begins *only* after a sincere wish to change has been formulated and is followed up by rigorous self-observation.



"Tov [OK, good, in Hebrew], C.C.," said Moriya. "Here is a little humor for you to decode in a spiritual way because a little humor goes a long way towards helping understanding.

A man who was obese went to a doctor for advice.

The doctor said: 'Look, I've just put together a new weight-loss plan that I think would suit you.'

The patient agreed trustingly, and the doctor led him to a very big hall and left him there, locking the door behind him.

Out of nowhere appeared a beautiful naked woman who smiled at the man.

She said: 'Catch me if you can, and I'll be yours!' She trotted off and the large man ran after her, around and around until the doctor returned.

When the man climbed on the scales, it was clear that he had lost three kilos in two hours!

The doctor asked: 'Are you mabsut [satisfied] with the result?'

'Oh, yes,' replied the big man. 'Mabsut meod, Doctor. Very satisfied, indeed.'

“On his way home, this man met a friend who was equally large. Proud of the three kilos he had lost in two hours, he recommended the doctor’s treatment, saying that, he, himself would be returning the following week.

And so, the friend also had his first session in the big hall. However, after the doctor had locked the door behind him, instead of the gorgeous naked woman he was anticipating, it was a huge man, a body-builder, who jogged towards him – totally naked.

“Hey, mister,” said the body-builder, shaping his fingers into a fist. “Start running now because -- if I catch you – you’re mine!”
The poor man ran with all his might to stay ahead of the naked man whom he thought was hot on his heels.

When the doctor returned and had the man weighed, he asked, ‘Are you mabsut with the result?’

The big man answered: ‘No, I’m not! Why is it my friend had a hot chick to run after but I had Hulk running for my buns?’

‘Tov, what do you expect,’ replied the doctor. ‘Your friend paid full-price for the treatment since he doesn’t have insurance cover.’

‘And so?’

‘And so, he gets the most enjoyable treatment. You, on the other hand, your paperwork, shows that you’ll be able to claim all of it back, so ... it’s all free for you, so what are you complaining about?’

Admittedly, though that little piece made me smile, I was like, “OK, but where’s the spiritual content here?”

So, here is Moriya’s deconstruction from a spiritual perspective.

“C.C., what we see in this story is that both men were very large and wanted to lose weight, yes? Symbolically, the extra weight the two men carry represents the emotional clutter that weighs them down. This clutter, that weight, though they despise it, gives them the illusion of being insulated from the world. Their extra weight is a metaphor for hiding the self behind something as large as the Great Wall of China.

They went to the same doctor and both of them lost the same amount of weight.

Their decision to seek treatment means they agreed to get rid of their weight clutter and because they were ready to pay for it in one way or another, they expect results. Though the first man didn't know what he was in for, but trusted the doctor, the second man clearly expected the experience to be wonderful – not too challenging, not too confronting, and totally enjoyable.

Why was one of them happy while the other one threatened to sue the doctor?

Because one had a most pleasant experience while the other one thought he had had a hellish one. But, really, C.C., you have to agree that it's all very subjective, yes?

What if the second large man had been gay? Would he have objected so much being chased by the naked man?

Again, if the first large man in the story had also happened to be gay, would he have enjoyed having to run two hours non-stop after the naked woman, however gorgeous she was? Would he have run fast enough to lose three kilos in two hours? Would he even have bothered with it at all?

If we look at this from a spiritual point of view, the process the men underwent shouldn't matter at all as, in the end, they both got what they paid for – a weight-loss program that worked. But, C.C., surely you can see how the whining ego-persona got in the way of the second man's progress. You see, the second man wanted exactly what the first man had had, like a child who wants what his little friend has. When he didn't get it, he became angry. Later, he will probably whine in self-pity, but what has happened is that the second man had a hidden agenda for joining the program. He had expectations; he would not be risking much of himself, not much out of his wallet, either. And though the program worked for him, the hidden lesson is that he needed to trust, to give more of himself, to be ready to dig deep inside himself and for the right reasons - not out of fear.

And so, what this joke tells us is that, when on the spiritual path, we get back exactly what we put in. I mean, the greater the open-hearted commitment, the greater the reward.

But also, C.C., the doctor's behavior is not spiritual, either. You see, he made a difference between a client who paid full-price and the other one who would get a rebate. No matter how you look at it, this is separation. This is not universal love, which is about treating everyone equally and from the heart."

"Groan," I moaned, once Moriya had finished. "So much for a little light humor!"



It is true that, to some degree, ignorance is bliss. At the moment, I do not feel ignorant and I do not feel blissful. Now that I know what I know, I also know what I don't know and I feel my practical work on the ground still sucks big time. And if I let this perception turn into frustration then, it will be the sure sign that I have dropped out of the present-moment, that I have let old thoughts intrude, that I am no longer flowing. Grumble, grumble.



While I was in the process of writing each of my novels, I would joke that I had a muse hovering above my left shoulder, as I sat at the keyboard. How else would I have come up with seven novels in three years and the luminous or evocative language appreciated by readers that surprises even me – I, who had never thought of writing anything?
These days, I know I have a muse, and my muse is my soul.



The main stumbling blocks to my spiritual evolution are finite words, lazy thinking and the lack of awareness that my ego-persona leads me 'by the nose,' as easily as the farmer leads his cow by her nose ring. That - and my western education.



Imagine a maze of labyrinthine proportions. Imagine it white. Imagine darkness all around it. Now, half a meter into the maze, imagine a tiny white mouse.

This little mouse, nose a-twitchin', scootles through and around a few sections until she hits a dead-end.

The little white mouse scoots back to the nearest opening and trots off, seemingly unperturbed, in another direction altogether. This mouse is actually quite a clever little mouse. There are some, you see, that would keep trying to get through the same passage way, again and again, so sure that the piece of cheese is right there, on the other side, but they get zapped again and again.

Back to our clever little mouse. Luck is on her side. With a clean run ahead, she puts a wriggle in her wiggle - she has things to do, places to see and she senses that the piece of yummy cheese is within her reach. Woohoo!

Oh, ouch! Just as she thought she had this nailed - ZAP!!! A little shock on the tip of her pink nose makes her whiskers twitch. She sits on her haunches, shakes her head a couple of times, scratches behind an ear and off she goes again, but in another direction altogether.

Like the ball in a pinball machine, totally random, bouncing off from stimuli to deterrents, the little mouse keeps going - the blind little mouse that she is.

She cannot guess which section of her labyrinth will take her on the long and happy run to the nice bit of cheese nor can she anticipate which turn will lead her to yet another dead-end or, worse, to the electric shock that zaps the tip of her nose.

After all, our clever little mouse is no more enlightened than all the others.



The way I see it, these days, the cause of our miseries is not so much the sequence of dead-ends inherent to the karmic maze we have been dropped into pre-birth, little mice that we are. I accept that the cause resides in our ego-persona that has learned, from the dawn of time, to follow her nose, her conditioned *lust* for life and her creature comforts which include, unlike all other creatures, her need to crave and hoard more

than she needs, yet seldom feel she has enough – as well as a damning compulsion to sift the present through the tight mesh of her memory.



Every time we have an itch, you see, our first impulse is to scratch it, to indulge it.

This works well for our pets and for all other animals but, we, humans, need to know that emotional itches should not be scratched any more than physical ones, otherwise the bites never cease to itch; they get puffy, infected, creating the extra side-effects that keep us in our blind-mouse ways, disconnected from our soul, and oblivious to the added dots of unhelpful karma that connect in our energy field.



Sure! My soul is looking down the barrel of an ongoing cycle of incarnations, along with most of the souls currently incarnated which, for our souls, amounts to nothing less than an endless string of life spans spent in captivity, 🤖 bag-over-head, with a disorientated sort of *feeling*, even though in the eternal spiritual realm, lifetimes are over and done with in the blink of an eye.



Our soul *can* suffocate over time. 🤖 When she does, we become terminally ill, psychotic, or chronically depressed because *she* has given up hope of any karmic amendment from us, and she is sinking.

It has to be understood that matters of the soul can only manifest themselves to us at the mental/physical levels – how else would we take notice?



As long as we react from an automated response system, what we put out comes back to bite us on the tail, and we complain about our bad luck and the futility of life.

Our souls cannot exist independently from our thoughts and our deeds. What we sow, they reap.



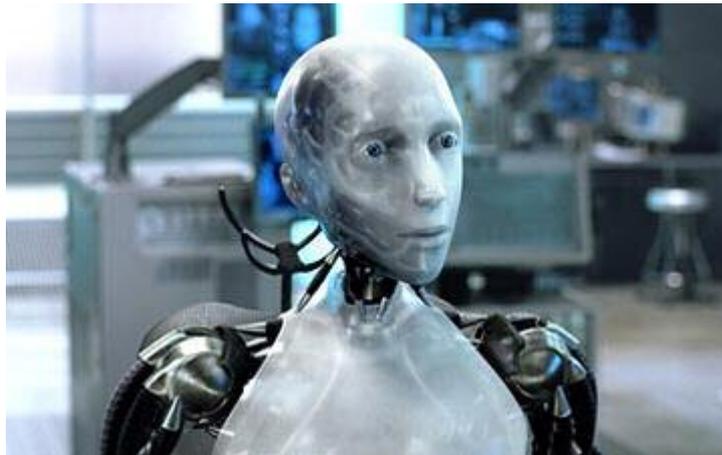
Karma is our personalized balance sheet. Unlike our bank statement, keyed in by a human, the spiritual tabulator of our consequences is infallible.



Here is a quick checklist that recaps essential soul-facts, as I currently understand them.

1. Every soul is ancient. As such, she is loaded down by the karma accumulated by *all* her previous incarnations.

Just as a mother is responsible for her child, or a scientist for her creation, be it Frankenstein or C-3PO [**Star Wars**], Erasmus [**Dune**] or one of the Decepticons [**Transformers**], a soul is responsible for *all* her incarnations' actions. However, like Sonny, the blue-eyed robot in **I, Robot**, we have



become misguided.

For over two thousand years, our ego-persona [our energy field], has been our body's built-in *party-girl*,

[1] one who seeks happiness through sensory gratification and impulsive behaviours, while our soul seeks to secure for us the highest source of happiness - nothing less than paradisiac happiness - through good old-fashioned spiritual enlightenment. Which explains why, by now, our karmic tail is probably as long as the tail on comet Hyakutake's. Back in 1996, its tail, as recorded by the Ulysses craft, spanned some 571 million kilometres.

2. Compounded by our karmic inheritance, the compulsive nature of our struggle to hold on to what is impermanent and illusory - like the child who tries to trap water in her fist only to watch it drip away - maintains our soul permanently captive of our ego-personas.
3. Because of our karmic baggage, we, as incarnations, have an ego-persona [energy field] made up of energy that is known as *gross energy*.

Point to remember: the more evolved we become - the thinner, the more sensitive our energy field becomes. The more powerful, too, because it is cleansed of [gross] low-frequency vibrations.

Imagine how much better our old car would run if we treated it to more than the humdrum grease and oil change and kitted it out with a new carburettor complete with its assortment of pumps, valves and tubes? Moriya might well be right when she says, "It would fly!"

4. It is important to remember that our soul is our higher self – it is pure energy – it cannot be made impure. Never. No matter what we get up to.
5. Since our ancient soul is the only real *I* and the only real *me* we have, it is our responsibility to amend some of the cumulative karma created by all her previous incarnations, as well as the karma we create every minute we are not *in the moment* in this, her current incarnation.

But wait! There's more!

Après moi, le deluge [After me, let the deluge come i.e. come what may] the French phrase usually attributed to Louis XV, but that might actually have been spoken by Madame de Pompadour, represents the antithesis of how we need to concern ourselves with what will come to pass ... after we are gone.

In fact, the most important thing - the one over which we have the most control - is to **not** create any new karma for whoever will inherit our soul, once we shuffle off our mortal coil.

6. The task of our ego-persona [our energy field] is to be a tool that is clear and pure, so as to enable our soul to gain realization, awareness and enlightenment **through** our own doing, through **our** actions – a step on the upward spiral of spiritual evolution. *Our ultimate aim should be to surrender the controls to our soul, to let her see through our eyes and to let her guide the vehicle that we are.*
7. Karma *forces* souls to cycle through the incarnation spiral. The selection of souls operates according to Cosmic order and hierarchy. Guides - maybe angels - are a part of the selection process.
8. No soul can walk away from a karmic debt and, so, the magnetic force of karma will attract our soul back to earth until she has amended all that her incarnations have left unfinished.
9. As I understand it, souls that have to re-incarnate too soon cause the incarnation to be emotionally unstable. I am going out on a limb, here, thinking that, if this were to be true, then, a mass murderer's actions might be prompted by an ego persona that is unusually powerful - but diagnosed as having a severe mental condition. Having said that, I do believe that a soul - which is constant, pure energy - cannot deliberately lead the ego-persona to commit a heinous crime.
10. Any crime committed is executed under the influence of our ego-persona. I tend to think that the same reasoning applies to individuals who suicide.

An overly powerful ego-persona creates a massive short-circuit that causes it to destroy the life it was intended to protect.

I suspect something similar happens with individuals who are overly charismatic. They enslave those of their followers who depend on them for a sense of personal worth while they, themselves, are often deeply miserable and misguided human beings.

11. However, drugs, alcohol, hardcore pornography, as well as mental disorders - all blur the senses and clamor like a flock of parrots in a tree, over a soul's whisper. Extreme doses of this erratic clamoring lead some individuals to robotic, *dead-heart* behaviors that are humanely incomprehensible.

12. What our civilization amounts to is some 6 billions worth of egos going about their business as usual, while some 6 billion souls are suffocating, only able to whisper or weep but, mostly, I suspect, they are asleep.

13. Gaining realization through successful karmic *edits* made by the ego-persona is sublime. At its best, it is about uniting with the highest energy there is and becoming whole. For our soul, it is the final Homecoming - the end of her incarnation cycle. Free at last.



As ego- personas, each one of us can only aim for some sort of evolution. We must set ourselves goals. We must go beyond dreaming, beyond wishful thinking. We should open ourselves to the challenge of hearing our soul's whisper over the din of our existence, but, gently, gently. As Moriya likes to remind me, "*Too high a voltage in too small a bulb and the bulb explodes.*" And the only way to safely increase the capacity of *the bulb* is to be monitoring ourselves, our spikes, how our buttons are being pushed in our present-moments.

