

ROZWÓJ OSOBISTY

Maya Arenas Guerra



LIVING BY DESIGN, NOT BY DEFAULT

Nonsense-Free Life
in a Beautiful World Full of Crap

W WERSJI DO NAUKI ANGIELSKIEGO

POZIOM B2+

NAGRAMIE MP3



ĆWICZENIA DO TEKSTU



SŁOWNIK NA MARGINESACH



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Chapter 0

Critical Thinking, Coaches and Going Your Way

VOCABULARY

0.1. Start Digging*

This book is actually written the other way around. I kind of start from the end and finish at the beginning, with the chapter: *You need to keep finding out what you want.* What the heck! I think it will be more useful this way for many people because I have noticed that there are much more people around than you would expect **who don't really know what they truly and deeply want.** For sure, they once knew or had an approximate idea, but for a series of reasons they forgot or gave up. Or maybe some really didn't dig deeper and never found out, and just followed the preestablished path. Or they once knew what they wanted and lived accordingly, but it is not enough anymore, and they try to re-invent themselves.

And those people who supposedly don't know what they want... I mean, they **know what they should or have to do to have a socially accepted life**, a good job and a family. But chances are, many people don't really think about their own values, their own needs and what they would like to give out to the world. And they should! Some philosophers would even say it's their obligation. Looking for their vocation, for what makes them grow, expand internally. Overcome one's limitations and not yield to mediocrity.

Others would add that not expressed potential transforms into pain. When we shut parts of ourselves off,

the other way around: na odwrót, odwrotnie

What the heck! = What the hell!: Do diaska!

approximate: w przybliżeniu, orientacyjny

preestablished: ustalony wcześniej

accordingly: odpowiednio, zgodnie z

re-invent: wymyślić na nowo

supposedly: rzekomo, hipotetycznie

chances are: prawdopodobnie, wygląda na to, że

vocation: powołanie

expand: poszerzać się, rozwijać

yield to: poddać się, ulec

mediocrity: przeciętność, mierność

shut off: wyłączać, izolować

re-emerge: pojawić się ponownie

pathology: patologia, stan chorobowy organizmu

weave: tkąć

cocoon: kokon

hatch out of: wykluć się z

abundance: dostatek, mnogość

revealing: tu: odkrywczy

device = appliance: urządzenie, przyrząd

fix: tu: sposób, metoda

they might re-emerge as pathologies, anxieties and other reasons for therapy.

We weave our cocoon world. The cocoon-like reality might be useful in our primary growth, but as we grow older our consciousness should help us hatch out of this cocoon-like reality and see the world around us. Be brave enough to open your eyes, look around and act accordingly and consciously. If you have a tight soul and tight mind, you will create a tight world around you. For yourself and the people you are surrounded by. And you might even not notice it!

Open up! Just a little bit! Take one tiny step towards the new, towards the freedom! And bear in mind that from the very beginning of your change process it is good to adapt the abundance mentality. Focus on what you already have and what you are trying to get or change. Don't say: "my personal life sucks, I need money, I'm fat and unattractive". Say to yourself: "**I'm in the process of** creating a great relationship, making more money, getting in shape..." But, of course, mean it and start working on it. Step by step, *paso a paso*.



Finish the sentence "I'm in the process of..." at least in three different ways.

Do you know what you really want? What is it?

Would you like your life to be "larger"? In what aspects? In what ways?

0.2. On Coaches and Quick Success

It's nothing revealing to say that we live both in easy and difficult times. We (in many parts of the globe of what we normally call the "Western world") have access to "things", applications, and devices to make our lives easier. Still, there's always the other side of the coin. The psychological or spiritual life will always be challenging, no matter the technological progress and all the appliances that make our everyday life less complicated. Also, we somehow got used to quick fixes. A quick fix for a headache, a quick fix for our emotional problems, etc.

But, as we all know deep inside, **nothing worthwhile can be fixed overnight**. Nothing worthwhile can be achieved overnight. You cannot learn anything overnight, you cannot write a book overnight, you cannot lose weight overnight. Understanding the notions of hard work, consciousness and delayed gratification is a prerequisite for real, conscious change. Travelling on a 2-week meditation course to Thailand will not fix what you have not fixed in years. Travelling far, far away to find sense of life is senseless because **everywhere you go, you will have the same shitty companion: yourself**. (Or anywhere you go, you have the same great companion: yourself.) But, when you will have changed, that would also mean you will be able to stay relatively happy wherever you are. Of course, in some way changing our environment is useful because in a changed environment it may be easier for us to observe ourselves. But then it's about observation, not quick fixes!

On the other hand, life's full of coaches. They pop up all around, not because suddenly we have had an outbreak of particularly wise individuals who want to shed light on our paths just out of charity. **Telling people at a loss what to do is a profitable job**. And it is even more profitable to teach already wealthy people how to multiply their wealth and power, right?

Sometimes the job coaches do contribute to maintaining social stereotypes. For instance, coaches who "specialize" in women's self-esteem. They ask women: "What do you do to feel beautiful?" As if they were totally unaware of the fact that they would never pose a similar question to a man. Maybe they would ask a man: "What do you do to feel satisfied with your life?" Be wary of people who base their help on gender stereotypes. Unless you don't mind, of course.

There are also a lot of apparently successful individuals who have become famous because of telling people how to become "successful". But are they really that successful? Is their definition of success the same as yours? And **why are there no courses on how to be free?** This is where literally everything begins.

gratification: gratyfikacja

prerequisite: warunek wstępny

outbreak: tu: wysyp

shed light on: tu: rzucać światło na

charity: tu: miłosierdzie, dobre serce

at a loss: zagubiony, w kropce

for instance = for

example: na przykład

self-esteem: poczucie własnej wartości

wary: czujny, ostrożny

switch to: tu: przechodzić
(np. do innego zajęcia),
zmieniać

horde: horda, duża grupa
osób

background: tu:
wykształcenie, przygotowanie
zawodowe

conduct: prowadzić

meaningful: znaczący, ważny

predator: drapieżnik

NLP = neuro-linguistic

programming: programowanie
neurolingwistyczne

absorbing: pochłaniający

edited: tu: wyedytowany,
zmodyfikowany

Moreover, at least in Central Europe there's a group of people growing every day who leave their not so well paid office jobs (HR, marketing, journalism) and **switch to** coaching, looking for their professional El Dorado. Which many of them find. It's the beauty of capitalism. Please, bear in mind that those people **on many occasions have no specific education and no specific skills** (and not so much experience in complex psychological issues!) **but are very able in sales: in selling their own greatness and uniqueness and hope of a better future to hordes of needy people.** If they do have a **background** in psychology and **conduct** regular therapies, that's a whole different story. But most of them don't. They frequently don't have other "education" and "skills" than their arrogance and the ability to sell.

In my humble opinion, the thing is NOT to tell people how to be happy and make money out of it. The thing is to tell people to have a **meaningful** job, happy relationships and a fulfilling, creative life. Look harder: people who sell happiness used to work in... sales, often in marketing or public relations, or just in big corporations. If I attended a course like this, I would like it to be conducted by a happy translator, engineer, actor, etc., not just by a sales-man or a sales-woman!

I was wondering hard at some point why I dislike some coaches so much, even if I agree with some of them on *certain* stuff. And I realized that many are just **sales predators**, skilled in **NLP** and all sorts of manipulation. They have **absorbing** energy that leaves no space for you. For your thoughts. Your analysis. They give you the perfect solution, they want to be seen as "gurus" (sure, they make money on this). The thing is, they don't invite you to a real dialogue, they don't want to hear your story, they are selling theirs, over and over again. An **edited** story of their success. Still, so many of them are really famous and doing really big money. Maybe it's because many people are not willing to start a journey of their own to seek their path. And a **good teacher/coach/mentor always gives the student space to grow.**

The aim of this book is totally different. I want this book to accompany you in your self-discovery by telling a story, making *some* suggestions and inviting you to do

a series of exercises. Your self-discovery will probably be totally different from mine, as well as your path, values, dreams. But there might also be some similarities which will help you (hopefully) start a **fulfilling conversation with yourself**. You are invited to add the quotes you like on the margins. Your own observations. Nothing would make me happier than you making this book yours. Think of it as an exercise book, as your space to think, space to grow, space to **cultivate** your well-being.



*What (or who) is your definition of success? Why?
What are your most important dreams at the moment?*

0.3. The Relationship with Your Self*

Many people tend to care **excessively** about their relationships with other people and **living up to** their expectations. Don't get me wrong, cultivating relationships is of great value, unless we **neglect** **undoubtedly the most important relationship, the only one that accompanies us through all our life: the relationship with oneself**. It is always our own self that we will find at the end of our journey, so the sooner we face that self, the better. During your adult life (roughly from your 20s to mid-30s or 40s) you **create your psychological capital for the rest of your life**, so better make sure you do it well!

Also, only when you understand that other people (your mother, your partner, your friends) or circumstances (having a kid, founding a family, having a well-paid job) will not solve your internal problems, and you decide to do something about them, will you grow as a person. It's not about **fate**. It's not about circumstances. It's a conscious decision you make and **execute**.

Please notice that people tend to blame circumstances, other people, bad luck (or lack of luck) for their not-so-happy life. Of course, you need to take into account the circumstances, other people, etc., but wasting your energy on all this really is not helpful to make your life better. On the other hand, some people **stick to** other people and

cultivate: tu: pielęgnować

self: własne ja

excessively: zbyt, nadmiernie

live up to: sprostać, spełniać
czyjeś oczekiwania

neglect: zaniedbywać

fate: los, przeznaczenie

execute: wykonywać,
wprowadzać w życie

stick to: trzymać się czegoś

parasite: pasożyt

peer: osoba równa wiekiem
bądź rangą

adolescence: wiek
dojrzewania, wiek nastoletni

marked by: naznaczony

wound: rana

entitled to: uprawniony do

starve: zagłodzić

commiserate: tu: użalać się

flaw: wada, skaza, usterka

want to grow thanks to and stuck to other people's backs and wallets. As if the growth of some other person could become their own growth. They are social and emotional parasites, often unconsciously.

I believe that to have a satisfying life, you need to work on your own strengths. The stronger you get, the clearer your goals will be, and you yourself will be more independent of manipulation and pressure of other people. Bear in mind that, as they say, a truly strong person does not need the approval of others any more than a lion needs the approval of sheep.

Many people are unhappy about their past, unsatisfied or hurt by the relationship with their parents or peers in adolescence, or marked by romantic tragedies. Your wound is probably not your "fault", you are totally entitled to "feel bad" about certain things, but **healing and moving on is your responsibility**. Stop being and/or feeling victimized. Self-pity is destructive and toxic. Stop hosting the pity party (I sometimes allow myself half an hour to cry and feel like shit, and then I say: "fuck it!" and move on) or, in a more positive way, starve problems and feed opportunities! Stop commiserating, stop thinking about how other people behaved towards you, stop repeating what monsters and jerks they were. Possibly it's true, but **cooperating with the wound solves nothing**. It gets you stuck where you are. Instead, try to turn your wounds into experience, into wisdom. Think about how you benefited from your wounds, how they made you stronger. And, again, in case of more serious problems or if you feel unable to deal with certain issues on our own, it's highly advisable to look for professional counselling. Reading self-help books or talking to your friends might not be enough. And it's perfectly okay. Getting counselling is one of the ways to take care of yourself.

We need to push ourselves to become the best possible version of ourselves. We need to learn to see ourselves beyond our current limitations, fears, flaws. Because we always act in a way that is deeply connected to the way we see ourselves. The more we "invest" in ourselves in the mental and psychological aspect, the stronger and better

prepared we will be to face challenges. The more open we will be to see new paths. The more enthusiastic about life.



What is your relationship with yourself like?

What problems do you need to starve? What

wounds do you need to stop cooperating with?

What opportunities do you need to feed?

*Can you remember the **traits** you liked in yourself when you were a child?*

What negative thoughts do you have about yourself? Do you know where they come from?

trait: cecha

0.4. Autonomy and Responsibility

In theory, we are all free. But in practice, the question is **if we really choose to exercise that freedom**. When you have the freedom of really not giving a damn about what others think, it opens you a whole new world of possibilities. But this kind of freedom is not given “for free”: there are consequences. Your family might **cut you off**, some friends may want to **loosen** the relationship, etc. I cannot imagine living in mental chains. For me, no price is too high to be free. It’s something many people will never believe nor understand unless they really have tasted it. Have you?

In my opinion, our main goal here on Earth should be that of becoming an *autonomous* person: a highly functional adult who knows what she wants and is able to deal with problems and difficulties, including the financial, health-related and existential aspects. Yes. It is very hard. Yes. On many occasions I’d prefer someone else dealt with this shit (and sometimes they did). But being a functional and independent **human being** requires you to do it yourself. Again: “This is a world, not a womb”.

Why would you like to be independent? Why not **rely on** your loving family, a rich and caring husband, on your **tribe**? **In order to make your own choices and decide about your own life**. Again, you might not want that. You might be okay with other people deciding for you, taking care of you, and having the **steers** of your life, *indirectly*. If

cut off: tu: odciąć

loosen: poluzować

human being: istota ludzka

rely on: polegać na

tribe: tu: paczka (przyjaciół), grono (np. rodzinne), brać

steers: stery

outcome: wynik, rezultat

ultimate: ostateczny,
najważniejszy

at all costs: za wszelką cenę

thrill: dreszczyk emocji

indication: wskazówka

principle: zasada

so, put down this book and go and ask your partner, kid, mother, or boss what you can do for them. Because me, or this book, we can't do anything for you.

I believe trying to make your life easier is just silly and childish. Life is hard and living it in a good way is a terribly difficult job. One of the goals of life should be to live wiser and wiser every day. You design your life, and also you are responsible for the **outcome** and adapting certain decisions and techniques to concrete situations in life. **The ultimate goal is to take your own decisions, and accept there is no one to tell you whether you are wrong or right.** On the other hand, **it's a privilege to be in the situation where you can figure out what you want to do.** But it's also a responsibility. A responsibility many people do not really want. Consciously or not, they prefer shortcuts and simple instructions. Maybe because it seems less painful, less complicated.

I have a nice metaphor for people who expect somebody else to make decisions about their life or look for shortcuts **at all costs.** Life is like a taxi ride. Would you enter a taxi without knowing where you want to go? Maybe as a kid you would, just for the fun of it or some **thrill.** When we are little, somebody else decides "our rides", "chooses the route", "pays the taxi driver". But as adults, would we get into a taxi not telling the driver where to take us? Would we offer him all the money we have and let him choose the route? Maybe if he is a good, nice, wise guy, following his **indications** would actually be good. Could be. His suggestions might be good. Or not.

And the other interpretation of the taxi ride: there is a taxi *and* a car. You are the driver. You choose where you go, you decide about the route, the speed, the landscape. This journey has to be about living your dreams, your desires, your **principles**, your values. It's not so obvious in the world where lots of people internalize a whole bunch of someone else's rules of how to live their lives. If you are one of them, you will not even know what I am talking about. Take a moment to think: Where do you want to go? Where will your car go? **What pain do you seek? (I mean, what do you want to fight for in your life?).**

LIVING BY DESIGN, NOT BY DEFAULT

Nonsense-Free Life in a Beautiful World Full of Crap

W WERSJI DO NAUKI ANGIELSKIEGO

Czy humanist(k)a może odnieść sukces i wieść szczęśliwe życie – a na dodatek głośno o tym mówić? Czy można być szczęśliwym i spełnionym bez codziennego wdzięczenia się w social mediach? Czy więcej warty jest glamour czy dobrostan?

Living by Design, Not by Default to nietypowy poradnik samorozwojowy. Maya Arenas Guerra, polska filolożka i psycholożka, zaprasza do eksplorowania różnych aspektów ludzkiej egzystencji. W 11 dynamicznych rozdziałach zachęca do refleksji nad takimi zagadnieniami, jak zarządzanie czasem i energią, wyznaczanie celów życiowych, relacje, a także kreowanie własnej filozofii życia.

CZYTAJ – dzięki oryginalnemu angielskiemu tekstowi *Living by Design, Not by Default* przyswoisz nowe słówka i nauczysz się ich zastosowania w zdaniach. Wciągająca treść sprawi, że nie będziesz mógł oderwać się od lektury, co zapewni regularność nauki.

SŁUCHAJ – pobierz bezpłatne nagranie oryginalnego tekstu książki, dostępne na stronie wydawnictwa. Czytaj, jednocześnie słuchając nagrania, i utrwalaj wymowę.

ĆWICZ – dzięki różnorodnym ćwiczeniom zapamiętasz poznane słownictwo, a odpowiedzi do wszystkich zadań znajdziesz w kluczu.



Książka dostępna także jako e-book i audiobook.



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