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# PARTNERSHIP WITH LIFE



Psychologists, business consultants, and coaches have been devoting considerable attention as of late to technologies for managing reality. How can interactions with Life be structured in a way that makes all her resources available to us? Could this be called a “partnership” in the given situation, or would that be megalomania? Here Michael Borodiansky, psychologist and author of the book *Managing the Future*, answers these pressing questions.

**P**artners are those who are on equal footing in a system. Note that to be on equal footing does not mean equal shares of a thing. As in any business, you and Life may have different shares, but if you feel like a partner, then you can still manage great potential. Unfortunately, from childhood on, we have been taught little about partnerships. We have basically been trained to adapt—either up or down. Vadim Zeland perfectly described ways of adapting in his book *Ruler of Reality*.

The first version of adapting down is that of the Requester. Requesters constantly feel a lack of resources and luck. They explicitly or implicitly appeal to Heaven: “God (Nature, the Universe, Life...), send me something good. I try so hard, I do so much! I feel that I’m worthy, that it’s high time...” For Requesters, this course of action is familiar and habitual, and at times, the only one possible. They addressed requests to their parents, caregivers, and teachers while growing up, and now they petition their employers or officials in the same way. Life reacts to this approach in a peculiar way: she throws a small bone so that the petitioners survive, but there won’t be any big prize—what we have come to call “luck”—from her.

The second course of adapting down is that of the Offended. These people have already despaired of getting the necessary support from Life. It’s possible that they were once Requesters who grew mortally tired of that path. Or perhaps, though it’s unlikely, they were born this way. They, too, appeal to Heaven, but in a different way: “Look, I’ve already done so much, and Life has given me nothing. The world is unjust, and my existence is unbearably difficult...” Behind these words one immediately sees the faces of the little children who once found a way of getting what they wanted from adults: it only required aggrieved theatrics. But childhood passed, and the game played itself out. Life answers the Offended with silence: it’s as if there’s no longer anyone “up there” to turn to.

The ones who adapt up are the Warriors. They live under the illusion that they are more powerful than Life herself, and thus must by strength and tenacity win all they need from her. When obstacles appear in their path, they grab a baseball bat and bash them with all their might, shouting, “I will overcome all obstacles, withstand all trials, and achieve my goals! I’ll never give up!” It’s interesting that society traditionally encourages this course, as if warring with obstacles were a feat indeed. Are there victories on this path? Yes, but in truth they are far rarer than the

defeats. It’s just that we know more about victories because we see more about them in the media and in books. But we know little about defeats: it’s awkward to show losers beating their heads against obstacles, especially if they could have overcome or circumvented them instead. But even those who “win” in this way rarely gain happiness. Yes, they know the thrill of victory, but happiness and harmony rarely visit their lives. I have clients who have achieved great successes in business as Warriors. They have money, status, fame, but for some reason they’re spending time in a therapist’s office rather than on the beach enjoying themselves and taking pleasure in their families. It’s interesting that, in contrast to the first two personality types, it’s very difficult for Warriors to ask for anything: they’ve grown accustomed to adapting up, over everyone.

Those who are on equal footing with Life are the Rulers. They understand perfectly the difference in scale between their own person and the Universe, and it doesn’t perturb them in the least.

Let’s draw a parallel. When serious entrepreneurs apply to a bank for a loan, they’re not taking the position of a Requester; they’re not adapting down. They are presenting themselves to the bank as partners. Yes, their capital might be only a millionth of the bank’s, so these figures aren’t comparable in scale, but their collaboration will be a success precisely when they partner. The Ruler’s interactions with Life look similar. When you enter a partnership with Life, you can realize your goals and dreams feeding off her energy instead of your own. After all, the entrepreneurs realize their projects on the bank’s money, not on what’s in their wallets. They invest quite different things in the business: the great ideas they’re passionate about, their experience and ability to manage. These are what the bank experts evaluate when deciding to issue a loan.

The same is required of you as you move toward your dreams in partnership with Life: business ideas, a clearly-defined goal, focused intention, and the ability to manage events. These are the things Life “evaluates” when placing her energy at your disposal. But people often live differently: they try to direct events using their own energy. What awaits them in that case is chronic fatigue, loss of goals, burnout, and illness.

Let’s take a metaphor: in a car, you don’t pedal as you would on a bicycle, and you are neither the engine nor the fuel, the energy. You are the one driving the car, slightly

turning the wheel. And if you are an experienced driver, then your movements are precise, and hardly noticeable from the side. Professional chauffeurs will tell you that while driving they become one with the car. A pilot melds into a single system with the airplane to fly it flawlessly in the most unexpected of circumstances, but it wouldn't occur to anyone to compare the energy of the pilot and the airplane. This is how partnership with a system far greater than you looks. So, respect for a large system? Yes. But adapting up or down—under no circumstances.

To understand the technique for building a partnership with Life, let's turn yet again to a metaphor. Imagine that two people are playing chess. When your turn comes, you make a decision and take your turn, after which you press the button on the chess clock. At that moment, you transfer control to your opponent, your partner in the game. Until he has made his move, you can't change anything: even the time on your clock stands still! You can, of course, plot future moves and fantasize about how events may develop, but your active influence on the situation at the given moment is zero. Only when your opponent makes his

move does an opportunity again arise for you to direct the course of the game.

Transfer this principle to normal life. You make your move: come up with an idea and set a Goal, expending a certain amount of effort. Your turn may be a minimal action or even simply the honing of your intention—and at that moment your “transfer of control” to Life. Takes place. Now the main work will be done by her, as she has inexhaustible energy resources to devote to your situation. Life will choose the optimal path for you to reach your Goal, and when your turn comes to make a move, she will show you clearly.

And what are you to do while the Universe is busy bringing your ideas to life? Stop paying so much attention to the Goal. Tap into the here and now and be in it, accomplishing everyday tasks. If you continue trying to actively influence the situation, you're not giving Life her turn. This is a great recipe for engaging in pointless activity, draining your energy, and endlessly protracting the path to achievement of the Goal.

