



What is the value of thinking? The almost universal verbal response to this question would be along the lines of: “That is a stupid question! Certainly people should think!” In contrast, if you look at what the mass of people do you would have to say: “Probably very little.” (No, hypocrisy isn’t just an issue of motives – we can be hypocrites even when we don’t realize it!).

Back to our question: What is the value of thinking? Thoughts (the consequences of thinking) contain great power; wrong living is largely the result of poor thinking (at least initially, before an addiction, urge or drives “hooks” us) while the hope of right living is the outcome of good and right thinking leading to the power to do what we want to do.

Thoughts, Good and Bad, Hold Enormous Power!

One of the great confusions about thinking, however, is erroneously equating it to learning facts (what is today referred to as “education”). Yet it is obvious that some of the most “learned” and best educated people are poor thinkers – they have man’s credentials to manage large organizations but their thinking is not good! While, conversely, some “common” people just “get it” – they know how to make things work – they know how to think!

A Case in Point An Important Example!

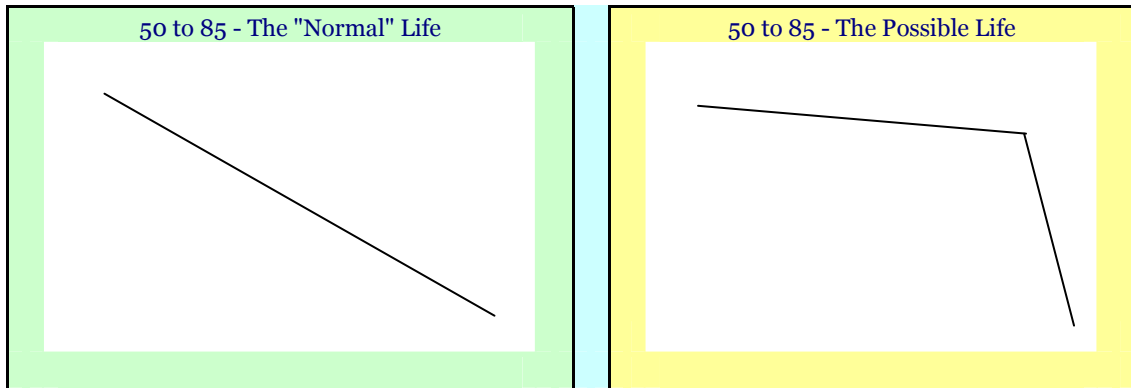
Take the word (and thought) *inevitability* – wrong thinking about inevitability is having a major impact in diminishing many peoples’ quality of life for today, tomorrow and forever.

A poor (but common) way of thinking about inevitability is that if something is inevitable we don’t have any control over it – take aging for example. We live, grow old and die – that IS inevitable. BUT, if we think about it, to a large degree we can control what occurs between now and the inevitable end.

The authors of *Younger Next Year: A Guide to Living Like 50 Until You're 80 and Beyond* claim: “You can choose to live like 50 until you’re in your 80s . . . 70% of what you feel as aging is optional.”

They are right! They say most people live until about age 85 – whether they have been relatively healthy or not since age 50. “So,” someone may say, “that just makes the point: why the ‘blood, sweat and tears’ associated with exercising?” Because, you can expect to have a MUCH better quality of life for about 34 years!

They illustrate their point with a graph similar to the following – showing how, with exercise, the decline in quality of living, from aging, is much less between 50 and about 80. Most people can expect to die at about 85 – but it is not inevitable that the rate of aging will be the same.



Instead of being focused on (and boring everyone else with) symptoms, medicines and doctors day, after day, after day, a person can be healthier, more productive, useful for many more years! And besides the greatly improved quality of life, can you imagine the macro impact this would have on the economy if a good number of people decided to think and do what is right and smart?

Another Case in Point An Even More Important Example!

And this will take only a sentence or two. It is inevitable everyone will die – this is not the/an issue. The great question is: “By thinking (and the power thinking provides), can we change the *consequences* of this greatest of all inevitabilities? Or is it smart to ignore this certainty and ‘hope for the best?’” That is a question worth thinking about!

Fair and Personal

There is one great truth about thinking – it is largely personal. Just as with exercise (the small cost and the GREAT benefits are personal – no one can exercise for someone else), thinking is also analogous in this way; those who develop and exercise the discipline of thinking (learning to use ideas, truths and facts) receive great benefits!

Thinking is not inevitable – it is relatively easy to go day after day (year after year!) without thinking in the sense of making a difference in the direction of life! It is not wise to leave our thinking at the office – we need to think at the office, but how much more do we need to think about the rest of our life – to harness the power thinking offers us?

As I have advised my nephew-in-law Andrew (a Top Top Gun AF Fighter Pilot) – *Keep Your Brain Idling* (don’t turn it off) because many people have switched their brains off and have forgotten where the lever is!

It is sad to look back a week, month, year (how much worse a life?) and realize the brain has been switched off! The opportunities and power lost, mistakes made . . . for the lack of the discipline of failing to . . .

