

125 Sets of Self-Guidance Questions from
**Personal Revolutions: A Short
Course in Realness**



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#Intro

This booklet contains 125 sets of **Self-Guidance Questions** taken from the first twenty five chapters (or 'revolutions') of **Personal Revolutions: A Short Course in Realness** (see olianderson.co.uk/revolutions). Each question is designed to help you raise awareness of both yourself and your world so that you can take better actions towards the goals that are most important to you and build a world that most matters to you.

You can do whatever you want with these questions, but it is probably worth writing down your answers to the questions that 'speak' to you the most so that you can articulate your views to yourself as clearly as possible. Once you have answered the questions, try and take action on what you learn so that you are able to move from the realm of ideas and into the realm of action, the only place where anything ever actually happens.

You may also find it useful to reflect on these questions and share your answers with the people that are closest to you. This will help you to gain insight into each other's lives and experience and to gain a greater mutual understanding.

If you find this book useful, you may also enjoy the complete version of **Personal Revolutions: A Short Course in Realness**, which contains 166 'revolutions' in total and over **2000 Self-Guidance Questions** (166 sets of 10).

#1: Physical Laws / Sociocultural Laws

"If it isn't a physical and immutable law like gravity then you can change it. This doesn't mean that it's going to be easy, or even that you can do it on your own, but it does mean that if you're motivated and can find people to share your vision then you can bring it into fruition. Don't feel powerless; when thought turns to action great things are within grasp of possibility."

- 1. Look at your life. What sociocultural laws are holding you back? What changes could you make to yourself and your world if you weren't afraid of external pressures? What's stopping you from reaching out or stepping forward? How can you stop waiting for permission and give it to yourself anyway?**
- 2. What would you do differently if cultural etiquette wasn't an issue? What dreams do you hold for yourself? What goals? What ambitions? What boundaries would you cross if you weren't afraid of disapproval? What small risks might you take or leaps of faith? What have you been convincing yourself that you don't need to do to be happy but know deep down that you might have to step up and challenge yourself?**
- 3. Think about the life choices you've made so far. What cultural considerations influenced the decisions you've made? What choices have you made based on your own volition? What choices have you made because of what is deemed socially acceptable or as merely the 'done thing'? What possibilities have you swept under the carpet because they don't belong in the mainstream? What options are available to you if you see things more audaciously?**
- 4. How is the picture that you see for your future constrained by what your culture has told you is possible? What limiting assumptions have you picked up from the major narrative of your culture? How are these assumptions holding you back? What happens if you dig beneath the surface?**
- 5. List as many barriers to your progress as possible in a given area of your life. How many of these exist in thought alone? What is the correlation between the self-limiting beliefs that you carry and the expectations of yourself and the world carried into your life through culture?**

#2: Activity / Passivity

"Life can either be something that happens to you or something that you make happen. This statement isn't particularly revolutionary or ground-breaking but the point it raises is something that we can easily forget: you call the shots, you have the power, you are ultimately in control of your life and how it unfolds. Nobody is going to save you but yourself and the 'best' and only way to do so is through action."

- 1. What could you do differently to live life more actively? What qualities do you need to develop? What do you need to know about yourself and your mission or purpose? What process can you dedicate your days to so that your actions become more purposeful and self-directed? Where are you heading and how will you get there?**
- 2. What are you waiting to have happen that you could make happen? What information are you waiting to fall into your lap? What answers are you seeking? What conditions are you waiting to arise? Where are you waiting for permission or a sign that what you want to do is what you should be doing? How can you take steps towards actually doing it?**
- 3. What areas of your life could you take more control over? Where are you too passive? What have you convinced yourself that you don't need even though your heart is singing for it? Where might you have become complacent? Where are you rationalising your goals away because you lack the courage to step up and take action? What's stopping you and how can you stop it?**
- 4. Where are you giving away control to someone or something that has the result of holding you back? What decisions could you be making by yourself that you have deferred to something or somebody else? What externalities are you using as an excuse to prevent you from doing the necessary inner work? How can you change this?**
- 5. What qualities or virtues do you need to develop to start taking a more active approach to your life/goals? Where do you need to be more courageous or disciplined, for example? Where do you need to be more creative? More accepting? More patient? What else? How can you work to develop these things?**

#3: 80:20 / 100:0

"Giving 100% 100% of the time will lead to burn out, a lack of motivation, and the death of your passion. Give 110% in short, sharp bursts of frenzied activity, but as a general rule stick to the 80:20 ratio; give 80% of your time and effort to chasing your goals, but don't fret about spending the remaining 20% on recharging your batteries..."

- 1. Be honest with yourself: Do you spend too much of your time focused on actions that don't take you to where you want to be? Where are you busying yourself to distract yourself from what you know in your heart you should really be doing?**
- 2. What would you like to spend more time doing? How can you rearrange things so that you can start working a process of action that will carry you into the version of yourself that you know you can be? What can you stop? What can you start?**
- 3. How can you start investing your time instead of just spending it? Are there any areas of your life or routine that could be 'layered' so that they become more productive? Classic example: listening to audiobooks on the morning commute or at the gym.**
- 4. How much do you value your time? Do you give the most valuable resource you have away too easily? Where might you have an opportunity to reclaim your own time from the hands of somebody else?**
- 5. Do you put too much pressure on yourself? What stops you from giving yourself a break when you need one? What are you trying to prove? What approval, appreciation, or acceptance might you be seeking? How come? Do you really even need it?**

#4: Control / Inevitability

"This world is your world but that doesn't mean you can always stop it from burning. Some things are inevitable and out of your control, others are within your sphere of influence."

1. Which of the facts about your life can't be changed in any way, shape, or form? What inevitabilities are you wasting time worrying about? How can you start doing something about what can be done?

2. What unchangeable facts about yourself do you waste time worrying about? How do you know that these things can't be changed and that you aren't rationalising powerlessness or evading responsibility? If you really can't change certain things what's the plan?

3. Think about the problems that concern you at present: What elements of these problems exist only as 'what ifs'? Where are you creating more anxiety for yourself by focusing on unknown futures? How about pasts long gone?

4. How can you reframe certain inevitabilities such as the fact that you will die as a positive instead of a negative? How can you be grateful for each moment, for example?

5. If you can't change your problems physically, how can you change the way you perceive and attack them? This isn't about tricking yourself: What good is there, even in the 'bad'?

#5: Present / Past

*"The past is gone, the present is here, and the future is uncertain.
Which of the three seems the easiest to work with?"*

- 1. What moments in your life have allowed you to feel most 'present'? What did these moments teach you? How did you feel? What did you learn? How did you reach the state of presence and how can you learn to do so more often?**
- 2. Where would you say you mentally spend most of your time: in the past, the present, or the future? How is this consistent with how you usually feel? Do you feel down? Anxious? At ease? What can we learn here, if anything?**
- 3. Without the 'present' how would your life be different?**
- 4. Set a timer on your phone for three minutes then sit in silence without any distractions. How did you find this experience? What happened? How do you feel? What did you learn?**
- 5. What aspects of your thought and behaviour have been carried over from the past? Which of these things are no longer relevant to who you are and where you now find yourself? Where are you in 'survival mode' for an environment that no longer exists?**

#6: Responsibility / Victimhood

"Victimhood is a reactive state; personal responsibility is a creative state."

- 1. Take a cold hard stare at the problems on your plate. As an experiment: imagine that you're 100% responsible for both causing them and dealing with them. What do you need to do to make things right?**
- 2. Be honest with yourself: Do you 'enjoy' some of the problems that you have because they make other areas of life slightly easier? How would things be better in the long-run if you took off the 'professional victim' badge?**
- 3. What are you feeling sorry for yourself about and what can be done about it that you haven't been doing? Have you spent too much time throwing yourself a 'pity party'? What happens if you stop trying to invite others to join you?**
- 4. What problems have you blown out of all proportion? What problems do you want to be worse than they actually are because it makes things easier in the short-term?**
- 5. What benefits do you get from people giving you sympathy? How do these benefits hold you back overall? What do you want sympathy for? What happens if you seek empathy or understanding instead?**

#7: Contribution / Blame

"If Responsibility (#6, above) can be seen as accepting the fact that problems are inevitable and that we have control over our reactions to dealing with them, then contribution can be seen as understanding that we play a role in the placing ourselves in difficult interactions and situations."

- 1. Think of a troublesome relationship you have with somebody in your life. How have you contributed towards the discord? Honestly, what could you have done differently? What can you do to start repairing things?**
- 2. What remains unsaid that could probably start to move things in the right direction? How can you find the right time and place to say it? What conditions can you create to ease the process?**
- 3. What does the fact that you may be involved in a certain predicament or argument say about you that you may not like to face? What can facing this about yourself help you let go of? What are you hiding from?**
- 4. Think of the last time you had a bad day. Don't judge yourself but how did you contribute to whatever unfolded? What did you learn?**
- 5. What's so bad about taking the blame even when we deserve it? What does the answer to this question give us to work with? How is our ego involved? How can we better manage it?**

#8: Process / Event

"Happiness', success, financial reward, misery, failure, poverty; none of these things or anything else that life might 'throw at you' is an acausal event that just happens out of thin air. They are all the intellectual understanding of cumulative effects of processes that have been building up, and which you have either wittingly or unwittingly contributed to the unfolding of as time has progressed."

- 1. What events are you looking forward to and how have you contributed to the process recently? What internal and external actions have you taken? How are you getting closer day by day?**
- 2. What activities do you often volunteer to participate in that don't move you forwards? Where are you giving away your most precious resource (time) without due attention or care? What processes are you allowing to suck the life out of you?**
- 3. Try to list as many of the different processes that you're contributing towards: Which are helpful? Which are hindering? What will be the most likely of possible futures if you keep working the processes that you're working?**
- 4. What values are honoured in the processes that you are most motivated about? How can you continue to 'make your values valuable to others'? What are you doing to contribute to the betterment of yourself and the world around you?**
- 5. What process is the reading of this book and the answering of these questions contributing towards? What actions can you take to speed things up? How can you ensure that there is as more process than event here?**

#9: Death / Life

"If death is the worst thing that can happen then learning to accept it makes everything else either bearable or inconsequential. Don't fear death, fear not living. Accepting its imminence and overcoming the fear of death is one of the most important steps on the process to living a meaning life."

1. Look at your hand, seriously (if you have one). One day you won't be able to move those fingers anymore because they'll be gone. Reflect on that for a moment. What happens?

2. Look around you, seriously. Everything you experience in this moment will either crumble or be destroyed. Imagine the walls breaking away, the buildings crashing against the earth and forming piles of dust and detritus. How do you feel?

3. Look at yourself, seriously. Focus on your breath and realise that one day you will take your last. What happens? Look at the people around you (if there are any): acknowledge that they'll all be gone one day. What happens?

4. If you knew you were going to die tomorrow, what would you have to do today to go peacefully and with grace? What's stopping you from doing it RIGHT NOW and how can you change that fact?

5. How afraid are you of dying? How does this fear stop you from living fully? How can you overcome this fear? What do you think of the following quote by Epicurus: "*Why should I fear death? If I am, then death is not. If Death is, then I am not*"?

#10: Uncertainty / Certainty

"The world is only static in the mind so any attempt to grasp at it completely is doomed to failure. Convincing ourselves that we have absolute certainty about something, that we truly 'know' it, forces it to slip through our hands, because as soon as we tell ourselves that we 'know' something as a concept we have placed distance between its reality and ourselves."

- 1. List ten things that you're certain of: Where might you be wrong?**
- 2. What facts of life are certain outside of thought? How does thought cloud our vision? How does it cause unnecessary fragmentation between things? What can we find in the gap between concept and reality?**
- 3. What are the benefits of seeing your beliefs as being probably right, as opposed to absolutely? What are the benefits of thinking in terms of interpretations over facts? How does this open you up to a more open world?**
- 4. What examples from your past can you think of where you were certain you were right only to find out you were wrong? Where might this be happening now? What can you learn about life and humans in life?**
- 5. Think of the 'stubborn' people you've met in your life. Were they 'happy'? What does openness to uncertainty lend to 'happiness'?**

#11: Causes / Reasons

"Reason and order and stability are products of our minds and intervention alone. We think in terms of patterns and narratives, and though of course there are examples of these things in nature, there is no need to make the leap from this fact to the idea that 'everything happens for a reason', that your life is designed and pre-destined and ultimately out of your hands. Yes, we live in a material and causal universe where A causes B in turn leading to C, but don't confuse this natural unfolding with intentional reasons. Sometimes things just happen; they always have causes, but they don't always have reasons. This isn't to say that there absolutely is no 'designer', just that we don't need to leap to attributing reasons as a default."

- 1. Think of the problems in your life that seem inexplicable or unjust. As an experiment: imagine that there are no reasons, just causes that you may or may not be able to determine. How do you feel?**
- 2. What are the benefits of seeing the universe as being ultimately indifferent to the lives of human beings? How does this empower you? If you believe in God, imagine for a minute that you're no more important to him than an ant amongst many is to you? How might this be helpful after the initial shock?**
- 3. Think about the patterns and narratives you use to understand the chaos of your own life. How could you recut the footage to see things from a more helpful perspective? How does the story you tell yourself about yourself affect who you are and what you can become?**
- 4. If there is no punishment or reward outside of the realm of human influence then how might you be able to reinterpret the chance events that have affected your life?**
- 5. What if the only reasons that mattered were the ones that you determined to be of importance? What would you do differently?**

#12: Flux / Stasis

"Nothing is static, everything is fluid. That includes you, yourself, and everything in the world around 'you'. The 'self' is a process comprised of ever-changing concepts; disidentifying from this process and observing it increases your power over it and aligns you with a reality in flux."

- 1. How have you changed mentally and physically over the past few years? What gradual or subtle changes are unfolding within and without right now? How can you learn to accept these inevitable changes so you can better work with them?**
- 2. What changes have been most prominent in your world over the last year or two? What have they taught you? What does change have to teach you in the present?**
- 3. What changes, good and bad, can you envisage on the horizon? How can you ready yourself? What processes do you need to work? What skills and qualities do you need to cultivate?**
- 4. How do you normally react in the face of change? Do you run and hide or run with? How does your current attitude help or hinder your happiness? Do you need to loosen up or are you too loose? How can you find balance?**
- 5. How can you ensure that you learn from change in the future? What expectations do you need to carry about who you are and what the world is?**

#13: Reality / Turning Away

"Most problems linger due to an inability or unwillingness to face the truth. The more you know about 'reality', the better off you'll be in the long run. Reality is always always your teacher, no matter how uncomfortable its revelations may be, and no matter how far removed the current conditions are from the ideal scenario you believe that you deserve to be indulging in."

1. What initially uncomfortable truths have you had to accept about reality that now serve to make your life easier? What do you still need to confront or explore? What are you trying to escape from?

2. What are you neglecting to admit about yourself or the world that may help you to make the progress that you need? What darkness do you need to embrace about yourself? What about humans as a whole or the world that they created?

3. What do you need to find out if you are going to have a shot at getting what you want? What questions do you need to start asking? What do you need to start questioning?

4 Be honest with yourself: What are your strengths and weaknesses in relation to the main processes you've built your life around? What do you need to do differently? What qualities need polishing?

5. What facts about reality do you hold with utmost certainty? How do these beliefs affect your life on a day to day basis?

#14: Human Order / Universal Order

*"The simplest version of **Human Order / Universal Order** is that the majority of us live somewhere in the vague gap between two realities: the symbolic, chosen world of culture and economics that influences our behaviour en masse (Human Order), and the chaotic striving and conflict of the various necessary laws of nature and the myriad creatures living within and fighting for resources in the framework provided as the battleground (Universal Order)."*

- 1. To what extent do you feel that you are a product of your times. What timeless human qualities do you embody? What connects you to all that have walked before you and all that will follow your footsteps?**
- 2. What aspects of your identity are a product of chance and what has been actively chosen? For example, if you were born in a different country, would you have different religious/spiritual beliefs? What beliefs have you taken 'off the shelf'? What symbols are you living out even though they're not 'yours'?**
- 3. What natural urges (sexual impulse etc.) have you been taught to try and hide from yourself because of what is deemed socially acceptable? Where is there room for you to find an outlet for these things without harming anybody?**
- 4. What natural needs go unexpressed or unmet because you fear social ramifications (we are talking about things that cause no harm to others)? Where are you holding back because you bought into the myth that you're not the ultimate judge of your own thoughts, feelings, and behaviour?**
- 5. How do express your natural masculine or feminine 'energy'? What outlet do you have for these important facets of your being (sports, relationships, sex, etc.)?**

#15: Need / Self-Interest

"Nobody cares about your 'brilliance' like you do and your personal experience matters little to others if they can't relate it to their own lives. Don't impose what you think people want, often in the form of your own self-perceived genius or the commodification of your own experience alone; instead, look around at the reality of what people actually need and figure out how you can give it to them."

- 1. What do you 'love doing' that you might like to turn into some kind of a career or side project? Be honest with yourself: how valuable is what you offer to others? How can you increase the value provided?**
- 2. How can you find out if there is a market for what you have to offer? What research do you need to do? Who do you need to talk to? What values could your work potentially embody and how could this be valuable to others?**
- 3. What, if anything, do you want people to want from you so that you feel better about yourself? What validation are you looking for and where do you think this need comes from? How can you stop seeking the Class A drugs of approval, appreciation, and acceptance and focus on solving actual problems?**
- 4. What unmet needs do you note in your social circle or environment and what can you personally do to meet them? What problems can you work on solving in a way that honours your values?**
- 5. How can you connect to yourself and the world around you through your work? What do you need to start or stop doing to get better results? What might you be trying to get from the world at the moment and how might this desire be affecting your work?**

#16: Solutions / Problems

"Problems are inevitable. Everybody has them and if you didn't have the problems that you currently do you would invariably have others. Accept this as one of your basic assumptions about reality and use this knowledge to be compassionate towards others and stop yourself from wearing your own problems as a medal or badge of honour to distinguish you from the other people around you."

1. When faced with a problem do you tend to focus on the problem itself or on what you need to start doing to solve it? What action might cure some of the problems you're currently facing?

2. How do you feel about self-pity? Do you like to indulge in it from time to time? What benefit does this bring to your life? How does it hold you back? Where might you have had enough sympathy already and be able to shift into solutions?

3. How does the fact that everybody has some kind of problems to be dealing with put your own problems in perspective? How might you be able to use this to affect some of the relationships in your life?

4. What solutions might there be to some of the problems you are facing at present? Sit down and take some time to write as many possible options as possible, go crazy with it. Get creative.

5. How can you use your emotions to help you solve your problems? Go meditate or something and figure out what you're really 'feeling'?

#17: Planning / Coping

"Coping is a passive way of being in the world, a way of letting the world shape you, instead of shaping the world to your own will and demands."

- 1. As an experiment: Think about the lifestyle that you want to live in the future, be as specific as possible. How much money do you need to earn? What do you need to do to get it? How can you be sure this vision is based on what you actually want, not just what you think you want?**
- 2. What situations and events have just 'happened' to you or fallen on your lap? Where are you being complacent? What actions can you start to take to regain control? What are you coping with that you might be able to change?**
- 3. What are you coping with at present? What plan can you come up with to change the situation? What actions will take you there and how likely are you to take them?**
- 4. If you had no responsibilities or attachments, what would you do differently? Which of these responsibilities or attachments aren't 'real' anyway? How much leverage might you have to change? Where might there be room to grow?**
- 5. What do you desire most voraciously in the different areas of your life (family, work, leisure, etc.)? Write up a plan for the next year, five years, and ten years. Check and rewrite these goals regularly to ensure you stay on track. How can you stay real with yourself?**

#18: Action / Ideas

"Words, concepts and ideas are a starting point but they're not enough. Without action and tangible effects within the world and upon experience these things are essentially useless."

- 1. What ideas have you harboured for a while that you haven't taken action on? What can you actually start working on right now and what should you forget about or give to somebody else to move forwards?**
- 2. What problems in your life can be cured by action?**
- 3. How many projects have you got on the go at the moment? Have you got an incomplete novel or screenplay, for example? What do you need to focus your attention and directed action on to complete? What do you need to forget about completely?**
- 4. What makes you afraid of action in certain areas of your life? How can you get over this fear? What do you need to do? How can you build in increments?**
- 5. Who do you need to talk to or team up with to take the most effective action possible for you at this time? Where can you find people that might share your vision and values? Who do you already know that shares these things?**

#19: Reality / Assumptions

"At their simplest, assumptions are data that we treat as being factually aligned with reality, even though we haven't made the effort to find out that this is actually the case. This isn't to suggest that assumptions are inherently bad - we have no choice but to make use of them to get through the day - but it does mean that if we forget that our minds operate in this way then we can fall into the trap of believing that our opinions are facts instead of interpretations; that the way we choose to see things is the way that they actually are."

- 1. What assumptions did you have about your life that reality has failed to align with? Where did they come from?**
- 2. How can you ensure that your assumptions about reality are as realistic as possible? Look at some of your most cherished beliefs and take it to the fundamentals: ask yourself WHY you believe what you do, then ask WHY of the answer and then WHY to the answers of the answers. How many layers of the onion can you peel without bursting into tears?**
- 3. What assumptions do you carry about yourself based on past mistakes? Which of your beliefs about yourself might be out-of-date with the changes you've been through?**
- 4. How has the world changed since you started holding certain beliefs? How can you get up-to-date information on the things that are most important to you? Where areas might you be holding beliefs past their expiry date?**
- 5. Think about a problem in your life: How could you change your mental model of it to get the most out of it? For example, I wrote this book on dialysis because I managed to switch from a model that sees dialysis as a 'Burden' that drains my time to one that sees it as an 'Opportunity' to set time aside (luckily, I always wanted to write...).**

#20: Dedication / Interest

"Dedication requires three major components: vision, values, and the drive or passion created by an awareness of where you are at present in relation to where you want to be in the future. Dedication is a product of passion, the force borne of vision that pulls you into the process of being where you need to in order to become your authentic self. This is why it's so vital to know your values and the things that drive you. Core values motivate you, peripheral values interest you.

- 1. List some of the major goals in your life process. On a scale of 1-10, rate your levels of dedication and interest to both. What is stopping you from moving up the scale? What do you need to do?**
- 2. What goals are you only 'interested' in and could perhaps benefit from forgetting about for the time being?**
- 3. What goals must you absolutely lift yourself from interest to dedication towards if you are to hope of succeeding? What's influencing your current state of holding back?**
- 4. What would you live and breathe if you could? What's getting in the way? What do you need to learn to move to the next level? What actions can you take? What core values that you hold is the world screaming out for more of and how can you provide these?**
- 5. What's your vision for the future of yourself and your goals? What values are motivating your pursuit of this vision? How passionate are you? How can you maximise that passion? What do you need to do?**

#21: Chosen Path / Predetermined Path

"The future may be unwritten but the preliminary notes are being written as we speak. Think of yourself as being an extension of the explosion that announced the beginning of the universe. You are being propelled in a certain direction but this is because you are being pushed by what is behind you, not being pulled by what's in front."

- 1. As an experiment: If you had chosen your life or your current situation what would be different about it? What actions can you take to narrow the gap between this ideal and current reality?**
- 2. What instances of synchronicity have you experienced in your life? Regardless of whether or not these events are seen as being preordained or something, what information did they provide you with and what choices were you able to make as a result of them?**
- 3. As an experiment: What if some things were inevitable and destined in the sense of being unavoidable? How could you benefit from CHOOSING to work in alignment with what may or may not unfold? How can acting as though you intended to be facing whatever you are facing empower you?**
- 4. What are you doing to prepare yourself for unseen opportunities? Are you narrowing the focus of your learning or expanding it? How can you ensure that you're 'ready for just about anything'? What actions can you take to prepare for the probable and improbable future?**
- 5. What is it about the idea that 'everything happens for a reason' that most people seem to take comfort in? What benefits might there be in just seeing some things as 'just happening'? I'm not talking about acausal events, just some things that may be outside the realm of our understanding.**

#22: Long-Term / Short-Term

"When we focus only on gratifying our immediate desires, we reinforce the idea of ourselves and who we are in the world at present. If we are too passive about being present in this way, we don't take steps towards becoming the authentic version of ourselves that we know we need to become in order to be fulfilled and add value to the world. Much of this involves unlearning what we have taught to be so that we can become what we actually are."

- 1. What is the major source of conflict between your current and future self? How does the present make it difficult for you to make progress? Where do you most need to work on yourself? What qualities do you need to develop to make progress?**
- 2. What areas do you need to work on maintaining self-control? Where do you tend to give into immediate gratification (sex/food/cigarettes/sex with edible cigarettes/etc.)? How might this hold you back? What do you need to do to take control?**
- 3. What are your long-term goals? Write down a list of your goals for the next one, five, ten, and twenty years: What actions do you take on a daily basis that are dedicated to the process of attaining some of these? What else are you missing?**
- 4. What do you think you want now? How is this aligned with who you want to become? How can you figure out what you really want in the long-term?**
- 5. Where are you wasting energy in focusing on activities or distractions that only really serve you in the present? What can you do in the present to maximise your potential? How can you merge the present with the future through knowing your values and channelling them into a workable process?**

#23: Similarity / Difference

"We tend to think in terms of how we see ourselves versus the rest of the world. Our default stance is to focus on the differences between ourselves and the world around us, partly because of the survival value that being able to do so offers, but also for the sake of our egos, which like to divide and fragment and compartmentalise the world around us so that we can convince ourselves we have a sense of control or certainty amidst the chaos of reality."

- 1. As an experiment: think of somebody in your life that you don't particularly get on with. What similarities do you share with this person? How can you use these similarities to strengthen the relationship between you (if you so desire)?**
- 2. How do you consider yourself to be 'different' to most people? Where might this belief hold you back? Where might it stop you from reaching out?**
- 3. How do you consider yourself to be 'similar' to most people? What is most human about you? How can you build on these similarities to reach out to others? What is most timeless about your experience as a human being and how can you bond with others around this? How can you make your story their story?**
- 4. When it comes to social interactions: What do you take pride in? What do you fear? What do you desire from others that affects your interactions with them? How do these qualities help or hinder your happiness or progress?**
- 5. What barriers do you place between yourself and others? When are you most open? What qualities in others do you tend to connect with the most? What qualities in others make you become more closed? What can you do with this knowledge about yourself?**

#24: Make Happen (Create) / Have Happen (React)

"1) You and your life aren't defined by the things that happen to you but by the things that you make happen, 2) Even if we can't control everything about ourselves and our lives, we usually have more influence over things we may initially think. Don't just become something; decide where you truly want to be and then take yourself there."

- 1. What have you been waiting too long for? What is starting to look like it will only happen if you make it happen? How is action the cure? What steps do you need to take to make it?**
- 2. Would you say that you are more reactive or creative? What steps can you take right now to create the life you want with the tools at your disposal? What strengths do you already have on your side?**
- 3. What impact have major events in your life had on you? How have you let them define you? What action can you take to defining these events in relation to you? How can you use the problems in your life to develop the personal qualities that will help you find the solution?**
- 4. As an experiment: Think of a major problem in your life at present. List as many creative options as possible for solving it? What are the craziest ideas you can think of? Where do you have more control than you initially thought?**
- 5. What is your mission? What is your purpose? What are you going to do with your life? The more clarity you have over the answer to these questions the easier it will be to get back on track when life gives you an unexpected blow or knocks you off kilter. What is your vision? Where have you chosen to be headed? What are you actively becoming?**

#25: Shades of Grey / Black and White

"Reality itself is amoral; we interpret stimuli as being either 'good' or 'bad', depending on our experience and the context of our lives. Even with this being the case, nothing is 100% of anything, especially within the realm of human concepts and the ideals that we project upon the world. Though classification and fragmentation help us to function in the world by making it easier for us to deal with certain hardships or difficult people and situations, we rarely find ourselves in situations that are absolute cases of either/or. Nobody or nothing is completely good or completely bad. We are all creatures red in tooth and claw but we are all capable of acts of great selflessness and of caring for and showing compassion towards the people in our lives that most matter."

- 1. Where do you tend to think in black and white terms? Where can you find some middle ground and clarity in your thought process? How does black and white thinking limit your experience of yourself and the world? What are you missing out on?**
- 2. What are some good points about the 'bad' people you know in your life? What are the bad points of the 'good' people in your life? Where are you falling into the trap of thinking of yourself as totally A or totally B? Where is there room to manoeuvre?**
- 3. What situations do you sometimes find yourself in where you only focus on your weaknesses? What about your strengths? How does the focus of your attention affect the results you are able to achieve?**
- 4. Would you describe yourself as an optimist or a pessimist? What steps do you need to take or realisations do you need to make to become more of a realist? What do you need to learn about the world to be able to deal with it more harmoniously?**
- 5. What areas in life or aspects of reality are you certain are either all good or all bad? What are the benefits of seeing things in this way? How does this way of viewing the world add value to your life? How does it detract value? Imagine for a moment that certainty is an illusion anyway.**

The complete Personal Revolutions: A Short Course in Realness contains the following chapters ('Revolutions'):

- #1: Physical Laws / Sociocultural Laws**
- #2: Activity / Passivity**
- #3: 80:20 / 100:0**
- #4: Control / Inevitability**
- #5: Present / Past**
- #6: Responsibility / Victimhood**
- #7: Contribution / Blame**
- #8: Process / Event**
- #9: Death / Life**
- #10: Uncertainty / Certainty**
- #11: Causes / Reasons**
- #12: Flux / Stasis**
- #13: Reality / Turning Away**
- #14: Human Order / Universal Order**
- #15: Need / Self-Interest**
- #16: Solutions / Problems**
- #17: Planning / Coping**
- #18: Action / Ideas**
- #19: Reality / Assumptions**
- #20: Dedication / Interest**
- #21: Chosen Path / Predetermined Path**
- #22: Long-Term / Short-Term**
- #23: Similarity / Difference**
- #24: Make Happen (Create) / Have Happen (React)**
- #25: Shades of Grey / Black and White**

- #26: You vs Me / Me vs You**
- #27: You Think / They Think**
- #28: Purpose Driven / Destiny Driven**
- #29: Learning / Knowing**
- #30: Significance / Success**
- #31: Entrepreneur / Employee**
- #32: Dialogue / Debate**
- #33: Read / TV**
- #34: Boring / Bored**
- #35: Person / Reptile**
- #36: Human / Person**
- #37: Force of Nature / Nature's Plaything**
- #38: Compliment / Criticise**
- #39: Embrace Change / Fear Change**
- #40: Ideas / People (Talk About)**
- #41: Gratitude / Entitlement**
- #42: Your Voice / Your Parents' Voice**
- #43: Brutal Honesty / Self-Deception**
- #44: Brutal Honesty / Honest Rationalisation**
- #45: Reason / Faith**
- #46: Faith / Reason**
- #47: Plan / Planned For**
- #48: Fallible / Infallible**
- #49: Imperfect / Perfect**
- #50: Servant / Slave**
- #51: Negative Visualisation / Positive Possession**
- #52: Wholeness / Fragmentation**
- #53: You Belong to The Earth / The Earth Belongs to You**
- #54: Self-Acceptance / Self-Esteem**

#55: Shared Vulnerability / Neediness

#56: Self-Transcendence / Self

#57: Self-Creation / Self-Discovery

#58: Realistic / Catastrophic

#59: Vision / Blindness

#60: Accountability / Acknowledgement

#61: Situational / Dispositional

#62: Meditate / Masturbate

#63: What You Need To Hear / What You Want To Hear

#64: Acceptance / Surrender

#65: Your Decisions / Cultural Decisions

#66: Collaborate / Assert

#67: In Steps / All At Once

#68: Systems (Interdependence) / Silos (Independence)

#69: Context / Concrete

#70: Substance / Symbolism

#71: Not to Do / To Do

#72: Positive Thinking / Wishful Thinking

#73: Intelligence / Intellect

#74: Ownership / Disownership

#75: Reflect / Deflect

#76: Self-Reflection / Self-Definition

#77: Purpose / Accident

#78: Interpretations / Facts

#79: Self-Investment / Tearing Others Down

#80: About Them / About You

#81: Authenticity / Pretence

#82: Ritual / Habit

#83: Solitude / Loneliness

#84: Future / Failure

#85: Higher Self / Lower Self

#86: Friendship / Acquaintance

#87: Belief / Defeat

#88: One Thing / Another

#89: How / What

#90: Change in The World / Change from The World

#91: Moments / Things

#92: Impact / Intention

#93: Potential / Pathology

#94: Conscious Choice / Habit

#95: Your Reality / Their Reality

#96: Originate / Imitate

#97: Mix it Up / Same Old, Same Old

#98: Unleash / Explode

#99: Opportunity / Failure

#100: World Class / Local Hero

#101: Impact / Cost

#102: Problems / Symptoms

#103: Progress / Perfection

#104: Participation / Observation

#105: Social-Responsibility / Self-Responsibility

#106: Motivation / Fear

#107: Listening / Having Ears

#108: Seek Value / Expect Value To Appear

#109: Alongside Others / Above or Below

#110: All of You / Part of You

#111: Doing / Arguing

#112: Internal / External (Locus of Control)

#113: Surrender / Control

#114: Wisdom / Power

#115: Open System (Becoming) / Closed System (Being)

#116: Self-Guidance / Self-Control

#117: Presence / Distraction

#118: Boundaries / Barriers

#119: Potential / Present

#120: Acceptance / Resistance

#121: Unconditional Love / Conditional Love

#122: Reality / Expectations

#123: Forgive / Begrudge

#124: Presence / Projection

#125: Mental Partner / Mental Master

#126: Teach / Learn

#127: Make Time / Find Time

#128: Influence Reality / Create Reality

#129: Comfort / Complacency

#130: Need / Greed

#131: Spirituality / Religion

#132: Love / Life

#133: Polarise / Pacify #134: Purpose / Meaning

#135: Experience / Concept

#136: Love / Bondage (Co-Dependency)

#137: Choice / No Choice

#138: Opportunity / Problem

#139: Collective Intelligence / Individual Intelligence

#140: Broken Heart / Closed Heart

#141: Trust / Calculation

#142: Clarity / Concentration

- #143: Strength / Confidence**
- #144: Thrive / Survive**
- #145: Edge/Centre**
- #146: Passion / Peace**
- #147: Ends/Means**
- #148: Possibilities/Shoulds**
- #149: Interdependence (Relationships) / Independence (Things)**
- #150: Nature / Nurture**
- #151: Grower/Shower**
- #152: Yourself/Unique**
- #153: Self-Awareness/Self-Obsession**
- #154: 'Happiness'/Love**
- #155: What You Need/What You Want**
- #156: Abundance/Scarcity**
- #157: Action / Fruit**
- #158: Total Compassion / Partial Compassion**
- #159: Consciousness/ Conscience**
- #160: Give Value/Take Value**
- #161: Confrontation /Avoidance**
- #162: Standards (Values)/Rules**
- #163: Honesty/Transparency**
- #164: Question/Defend**
- #165: Resolution/Resignation**
- #166: Character (Self) / Personality (Ego)**

Visit olianderson.co.uk/revolutions for more info.