

Five Reasons Why Bad Things Happen



How to Turn Tragedies Into Triumph

by Brownell Landrum

FIVE REASONS WHY BAD THINGS HAPPEN: HOW TO TURN TRAGEDIES INTO TRIUMPH

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CHAPTER 3: THE BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

In order for this book to have meaning for you, there are nine basic assumptions that need to align with your belief system. Or you should at least have an open mind that these ways of believing might be valid.

The Basic Assumptions are:

1. There Is a Higher Power
2. God is Love/Loving
3. Our Lives Have Purpose
4. Free Will - Destiny Isn't Fixed, But Is Affected By Our Decisions and Actions
5. There is Life After Death
6. Each Human Has Three Selves or Aspects to His or Her Being
7. Survival of The Fittest
8. Evil Can Be Explained
9. Divine Guidance and Assistance is Available

BASIC ASSUMPTION #1: THERE IS A HIGHER POWER

All matter originates and exists only by virtue of a force... We must assume behind this force the existence of a conscious and intelligent Mind. This Mind is the matrix of all matter.
- Max Planck¹

Whether you believe in God, Allah, Buddha, the Universe, Divine Intelligence, Love, Spirit, Cosmic Intelligence, Infinite, I Am, the Light, the Force, the Source, the Creator, Christ Consciousness or the interconnection and interaction of energy in the universe, for the Five Reasons Why to have

¹ Nobel Prize-winning Father of Quantum Theory.

meaning for you, it's important to have belief in a Higher Power. If you're agnostic or atheist yet still have a scientific view of the connection and effect of higher-level, creative energy, you qualify as having a belief in a (albeit somewhat different) Higher Power.

Throughout this book, you'll see references to "the Divine,"² as well as a Higher Power. This is to help unify the beliefs of all kinds.

I pity the man who says there isn't a Supreme Being...Everyone who is seriously involved in the pursuit of science becomes convinced that a spirit is manifest in the laws of the Universe.
- Albert Einstein

BASIC ASSUMPTION #2: GOD IS LOVE/LOVING

No matter how you define this Higher Intelligence, as energy or as an entity, the meaning is the same: Love. God is Love. The Divine is Love. Not human, emotional love but a benevolent spiritual power that influences everything in the Universe, from atomic structure to planetary alignment. We connect with the Divine when we express and share love.

In a novel I wrote, DUET stories Volume III: *A Chorus of Voices*, the character (a guru named "Goo") offers this description of "God:"

"Think of it like the sun. Some people are closer to the source of that love and light, and can bask in the warmth, while others are further away. Some look toward the light, while others face the opposite direction. "Now think of the sun as God or the Divine...or, let's say 'pure love.'" So, if God is Love, the more you love, the closer you get to God.

This might be a difficult assumption to accept, if you're going through something really tragic, because you might be inclined blame your Higher Power, either for creating the problem or for allowing it to happen. Once you understand the Five Reasons Why, you'll be able to realize the truth that your Higher Power wants the best for - and from - you. For now, you just need to want to believe that the Higher Power - the Divine - is Love.³

² Personally, I prefer "the Divine" because to me the phrase, to me, conveys a power which is undeniably loving and compassionate.

³ Note: a discussion of the concept of God as an all-encompassing power, including love and non-loving energy can be found on the ReasonsWhy.com website. For the purpose of this book, the Divine energy we are discussing is exclusively higher, pure and loving.

BASIC ASSUMPTION #3: OUR LIVES HAVE PURPOSE

Do you feel like your life has – or should have – a purpose or meaning? It's important that you have the desire to believe in some kind of Grand Plan, whether you know what it is for you or not. We are not here by accident.

The whole history of science has been the gradual realization that events do not happen in an arbitrary manner, but that they reflect a certain underlying order, which may or may not be Divinely inspired.
- Stephen Hawking

The Universe isn't random. Although our planet may seem random, because the events that happen don't seem to connect or make sense, that's mostly due to three factors. First, there's often a delayed reaction or result of our actions. The boomerang can take years or even lifetimes to return. Second, time is not only relative, but also influenced by our choices and awareness. Third, sudden obstacles may appear that we have to handle. These can be the result of the actions (free will) of other people, or they can be something we created.

In a children's book I wrote called, "Sometimes I Wonder," I offer the following verses:

We decide on our lessons
The paths we will take
Awards we might go for
And mistakes we might make

For life isn't easy
And not always fun
But easy is boring
Like games always won

Finding meaning and purpose can be challenging, especially during times of overwhelming stress. But, if we remember that the Divine is Love, we know the most basic explanation is that we're here to express love – to ourselves, to each other and to the planet. The way we demonstrate it, however, varies with each individual, as do the tests in our lives that can challenge and question that Divine mission.

Love is both the question and the answer.
- From *DUET stories Volume III: A Chorus of Voices*

In order to accept this Basic Assumption, you need to have had at least one experience in your life that provided clarity and meaning. Something

happened that made you realize there is more going on than random events. Whether you experienced déjà vu, creative inspiration, telepathy, or just a strong connection with another human, you know, at least on some level, there's a higher-level force impacting your life.

*"It is an energy field created by all living things. It surrounds us, penetrates us, it binds the galaxy together."
- Obi Wan Kenobi (Alec Guinness) explaining the Force to Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) in Star Wars*

I distinctly remember a discussion I had with someone I knew years ago. We debated whether "things happen for a reason" or "things happen for the best." He kept arguing that things happen for the best and I took the alternate view. I won't say opposing view, because we both believed there was a reason things happen, but I wouldn't concede they're always "for the best." I had recently been through a relationship, where I had a lasting impact by being victimized, and not only was I bitter, but I could not – would not – see how it could possibly be for the best.

Depending on where you are in your process with the Bad Thing that has happened or is happening to you, you may feel the same way I did. How can what is happening to you be for the best?

*I trust that everything happens for a reason, even when we're not wise enough to see it.
- Oprah Winfrey*

Now that I have more perspective and have experienced several additional bad things, I can agree with the idea that things *can* happen for the best – if you understand and resolve the Reasons Why. There is the potential for a gift in every situation, no matter how horrible it may seem. What determines the success in our mission is how we use our free will.

BASIC ASSUMPTION #4: FREE WILL - DESTINY ISN'T FIXED, BUT IS AFFECTED BY OUR DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

*"Do you believe in Fate, Neo?"
"No."
"Why not?"
"Because I don't like the idea that I'm not in control of my life."
- Morpheus (Laurence Fishburne) and Neo (Keanu Reeves) in the film The Matrix*

We have much more power and influence than we may realize. Because we are all a reflection of the Divine, we are all creators. When planning our lives with Divine Guidance, we create a kind of map that indicates significant choices and influences – potentials that can happen in our lives. Intersections and forks in the road are decisions we can make, like which job to take, where to go to school, where to live, what to major in college, whether or not to get married or have children, etc. Significant relationships will also be indicated on our self-created maps.

We have the free will to choose what course and direction to take, how fast to go down the path, whether to appreciate the scenery, focus squarely on what's up ahead or look through the rear-view mirror. The choices we make determine who we meet and where we end up.

Key lessons and individuals are probably reachable via many paths. You probably know someone who had several opportunities to connect with their mate. My friends, Lisa and Keith, are a good example. They're the same age, grew up in the same town and spent summers at neighboring beaches, but never met. They went to rival colleges and lived in the same small apartment complex, and never encountered each other. Keith and I used to go to the same park and jog and walk our dogs together, and Lisa got a dog and used to meet me at the same park, but the two of them still never connected. Then, one night she called me and told me about a guy she'd met. She revealed two or three clues and I immediately knew who she was talking about. Although the Universe (what I call Traffic Angels - see Guidance, below) had to work very hard to orchestrate the collision of events, they were clearly destined to be together.

We all have the ability to make our own decisions in life. As described above, we choose which road to take and how quickly. And we can make mistakes and have bad judgment. We can meet our soulmates⁴, for example, but if we don't do our best and follow Divine Guidance, we might lose them.

*A man does not always choose what his guardian angel
intends.
- Thomas Aquinas*

⁴ I believe the true definition of Soulmate is someone you have known in a previous existence that you were destined to meet. This means that we can have many soulmates in our lifetime and they can be spouses, friends, relatives or other significant relationships. You two could have met in a previous life, or on the other side, but the main component is that you were destined to meet. A Soulmate relationship may not always be a smooth and effortless connection, and often they are the relationships that offer the most challenges and opportunities to learn. I do believe, however, that our Soulmate relationships have the opportunity for the greatest amount of love, if we are willing to do the work and face the challenge.

Not all roads lead to the same destination, which points to the age-old debate: is everyone always doing the best they can?

I don't believe we're all doing our best (see evil, below). We can make errors in judgment that lead us to a life of pain, evil or greed, and not reach our highest destiny. Or we can go the way of love, peace and kindness. It's up to us. This is the definition of free will.

I believe that the Divine gave us the gift of free will so we could be closer to Him/Her. If we consider the alternatives – either that everything is predetermined or that we always acted in accordance with Divine Will – what would we learn? And if we couldn't (or wouldn't) learn, how could we get closer to the ideal?

*Let men decide firmly what they won't do,
and they will be free to do vigorously what they ought to do.
- Mencius*

BASIC ASSUMPTION #5: THERE IS LIFE AFTER DEATH

*Personally, I would be delighted if there were a life after death – especially if it permitted me to continue to learn about this world and others. It is really quite striking. People in different cultures, with different religious assumptions, still report remarkably similar near-death experiences about rising towards a brilliant light and having some glorious figure waiting for them. My guess is that there are just too many cases of that sort – cross-culturally homogenous – for these experiences to be just conventional descriptions or useful figures of speech.
- Carl Sagan⁵*

If our lives have reason and purpose, it follows that that our souls existed before we were born and will return to another dimensional existence after we “die.”

Upwards of ninety percent of the world believes in life after death. And most, if not all, religions include some form of afterlife, the place our souls return to when they leave our earthly bodies. In fact, it's nearly impossible to have a belief in a Higher Power and not believe in some continued existence.

⁵ In response to a question about Near Death Experiences and life after death.

Otherwise, what's the point? Even if you take the more scientific approach and think of the Divine as higher-level energy, you know from Einstein that energy continues as it evolves. I'll discuss life after death in more depth in the chapter on resolving your Reason Why, but it's important that you have some belief in (or hope for) life after death.

BASIC ASSUMPTION #6: EACH HUMAN HAS THREE SELVES OR ASPECTS TO HIS OR HER BEING

"You are a three-fold being. You consist of body, mind and spirit. You could also call these the physical, the non-physical, and the meta-physical. This is the Holy Trinity, and it has been called by many names. Your psychiatrists have recognized this triumvirate and called it conscious, subconscious and Superconscious. Your philosophers have called it the id, the ego, and the super ego. Science calls this energy, matter and antimatter. Poets speak of mind, heart and soul."

– "God" (Neale Donald Walsh)

Have you ever...

- ...been driving and zoned out, thinking about something, and arrived at your destination without conscious effort?
- ...gotten inspiration that felt outside of yourself?
- ...gone to sleep with a question, and almost miraculously woken up with the answer?
- ...gotten angry or upset, and you knew your reaction wasn't really rational?
- ...instantly liked – or disliked – someone you've never met?
- ...been searching for something, but only once you let it go and relaxed, you found it?
- ...eaten something without remembering any of the bites you took?

These are all examples of the three selves, inside any of us, and how they affect our lives when we're disconnected.

Whether termed Id, Ego and Superego; Inner Self, Outer Self and Higher Self; Subconscious, Conscious and Superconscious; Basic Self, Middle Self and Higher Self; Lower Self, Mask and Higher Self; Unipili, Uhane & Aumakua; Body, Mind Spirit; Nefesh, Ruach, and Neshamah; or Father, Son and Holy Ghost, a lot of belief systems and scientific disciplines acknowledge that we're all made up of three Selves. Although the theories of Freud, Jung, Murphy, Millman, Pearsall and other experts differ somewhat on the definition of the three selves, many of the principles are the same.

- Our Inner Self or Subconscious is below the surface, usually not recognized by the conscious mind, and is the seat of our emotions. It is also the physical being and the automatic functions of our bodies. This is the “self” that reacts emotionally. It’s also the self that regulates our physical bodies, and it’s the part of us that unconsciously fulfills our conscious wishes, like continuing to drive to a destination without our thinking about it.
- Our Outer Self, Conscious, Middle Self, Uhane, Ego or Combined Self is the thinking, logical, conscious mind. This “self” makes decisions and is sometimes considered the parent of the Inner Self or subconscious, because it often will guide or direct the subconscious toward specific goals.
- The Higher Self, Superconscious, Superego or Spirit Self is our soul connection to the Divine, Infinite Intelligence, and Unconditional Love. This “self” is our source of inspiration. It’s also the part of us that continues after we die. (See Basic Assumption #5). Napoleon Hill, in his classic book *Think and Grow Rich*, describes Higher Self guidance as Creative Imagination:

Creative imagination: the finite mind has direct communication with Infinite Intelligence. It is the faculty through which “hunches” and “inspirations” are received. This is where all new ideas are handed over to man.
- Napoleon Hill

Have you ever felt “in the zone” – when everything felt connected inside yourself? When you were focused on what you were doing, and you knew you were aligned physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually? That’s how you feel when all three of your Selves are aligned toward a goal. Recognizing and understanding our three Selves is very important in understanding, resolving and preventing Bad Things. You’ll get more information on the three selves and how to connect with them later in this book.

BASIC ASSUMPTION #7: SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

A few months ago, a friend asked, “How could people follow a leader supporting killing and violence?” My answer: “Social Darwinism.”

I’m not talking about evolution here – I’m talking about the basic drive for survival on the planet. Survival of the Fittest suggests that those who are mentally, emotionally or physically stronger will survive over others. Objectively, the planet’s model of Survival of the Fittest has benefits: it ensures progress and advancement.

The major problem with Survival of the Fittest is that when people are feeling vulnerable, their instinct is to find someone to subjugate (put

down/overpower) to be more “fit” than another, which is known as Social Darwinism. Misaligned political leaders take advantage of this impulse by unifying the public against a common enemy, thereby instilling a sense of superiority. Certain religious figures use the same strategy: inciting a false attitude of supremacy over other groups, even going so far as to say that unless someone follows their particular faith he or she is destined for hell. Individuals follow this behavior also through condemnation, criminal acts, abusive behavior, corruption, domination and greed.

Gary Zukav, in his book, *The Seat of the Soul*, uses the term Personality to describe the Inner Self or subconscious, and Soul to describe the Higher Self. He then describes how, due to Survival of the Fittest, the Inner Self is focused on the five-sensory physical world, where “the basis of life in the physical arena is fear.” Zukav said, “Fearful and violent emotions, that have come to characterize human existence, can be experienced only by the Personality (Inner Self). Only the Inner Self can feel anger, fear, hatred, vengeance, sorrow, shame, regret, indifference, frustration, cynicism and loneliness. Only the Personality (Inner Self) can judge, manipulate and exploit.”

One problem with Social Darwinism is that it’s in conflict with the Divine Law, “Love your neighbors as yourself.” This conflict produces discrimination, intolerance and imperialism, thereby generating negative behavior and retaliatory action – making Bad Things Happen. Another problem is that by putting down our fellow citizens of Earth we’re destroying our planet, thereby eventually obliterating ourselves – the ultimate final tragedy.

In addition to the three strengths mentioned above, I also suggest a fourth, and infinitely more powerful, strength that not only contributes to, but ensures survival: a strong spiritual connection. I’m calling this Spiritual Darwinism⁶. When we’re able to connect to our three Selves and with the Divine, we’ll be able to eliminate the negative associations with Survival of the Fittest and find a way to prevent Bad Things from happening – to us and to our planet.

Where love rules, there is no will to power; and where power predominates, there love is lacking.
– Carl Jung

BASIC ASSUMPTION #8: EVIL CAN BE EXPLAINED

Webster defines evil as, “morally bad or wrong; harmful injurious; unlucky, disastrous; wickedness and sin.” Nowhere does Webster refer to an

^{6 6} More on this subject will be discussed in the chapter entitled *Spiritual Darwinism: Preventing Bad Things*.

outside source creating the effect of evil. All the elements of the definition of the word can be – and are – created by man. All of the so-called evil in the world can be explained by both Survival of the Fittest and the Five Reasons Why.

I was talking with a close friend the other day and he said, “the evil was back” in his life. He was upset at a number of negative, Bad Things that were happening. His analogy was that we were living in dangerous woods where man-eating bears could come and attack you at any time.

My response was “Yes, there are bears in the woods, but they won’t attack you unless there is a reason. There’s a lot of evil out in the world, but it won’t affect you unless one of the Five Reasons Why are happening in your life.”

So, what is evil? Evil comes from human thought and action, whether conscious or not. Evil is separation from love, from the Divine. The *devil* is dark, destructive, low-vibrational energy, generated by collective human thoughts of anger, envy, fear and hatred, which stem from the competition generated by "survival of the fittest." When an individual has one of these thoughts himself, he separates himself from the Divine. At this point, it’s up to him whether or not to join into the vicious cycle. If that individual joins the injurious energy, he will commit egregious crimes against himself, against humanity and against the planet.

*The belief in a supernatural source of evil is not necessary:
Men alone are quite capable of every wickedness.
– Joseph Conrad*

However, we tend to think of evil as “out there,” instead of inside us. Why is that? For two reasons. First, it feels that way. Because these feelings and actions usually come from the darker “shadow” part of our subconscious that we suppress, we’re often not aware of this fear-motivated and control-dominated drive within us and our fellow man.

Second, it’s a way we can take the responsibility away from ourselves and just say, “the devil made me do it.” The problem with that approach is that not only is it erroneous, it disconnects us from the influence and control we have in our lives. It places the blame outside of our free will.

**BASIC ASSUMPTION #9: DIVINE GUIDANCE AND
ASSISTANCE IS AVAILABLE**

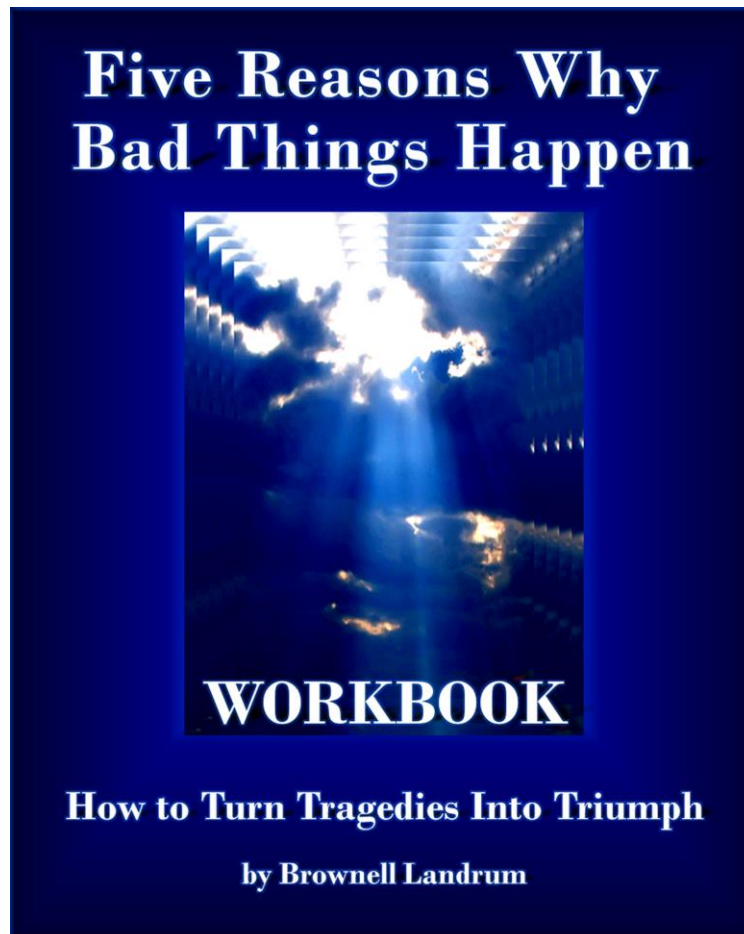
*Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock,
and it shall be opened unto you.
- Matthew (7:7)*

The above statement does not mean you be able to always get what you want. But it does mean there's always help – Divine help – available. Whether you believe in Christ, Buddha, Mohammed, Allah or Energy/Science, the phrase “Seek and Ye Shall Find” applies to most belief systems. We can receive guidance if we're sincere and open in our request. Assistance is available in most situations, although not necessarily in the form we're requesting.

In addition to our own Higher or Superconscious Self, every human also has one or more angels or Spirit Guides available for support, love and direction. The responsibility of our Spirit Guides is to provide direction and guidance and love – when we ask for it. They can show us the way to achieve our earthly and Divine goals. They may not, however, intervene unless we specifically ask for their help, so we need to do this on a regular, consistent basis.

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