

FOREWORD

“You gotta meet this guy!”

That was my introduction to Doug Wilson earlier this year after a close friend of mine (and Kundalini Yoga teacher) participated in a workshop he conducted in suburban Melbourne. It wasn't a physical meeting between myself and Doug, of course, but it was energetically powerful enough for me to feel completely drawn in. Upon hearing his story, I immediately decided to reach out, and not long afterwards Doug was a guest in my home one Tuesday evening to speak to the 20 or so that had assembled for the weekly men's circle I have hosted for nearly two years now. To say his message was captivating would be a profound understatement. We were spellbound. Not just by the extremity of his life story, but by the discipline and drive Doug brings to every endeavour he undertakes. Here is a man who, once his mind is set, takes things to the limit of what's possible. And far beyond.

I was reminded of the late Charles Bukowski and his poetic words: “If you're going to try, go all the way. Otherwise, don't even start”. Yes, indeed.

The energy Doug exudes is palpable. It filled the room. He is living proof that we are all luminous beings. Put simply, that's his message. If we are to understand anything at all on this road of life, we must tap into this life force, this energy, that radiates from within each of us. Doug found it in the most extreme of circumstances.

This book stands as testament to that and, as such, it makes for compelling reading.

Over the weeks that followed Doug's first visit, we had many more opportunities to get to know each other and we formed a strong bond. Our paths had plenty in common – we'd both grown up in similar environments, found ourselves increasingly at odds with the model of life we had been presented with, but carried on despite uncertainty and persistent anxiety. We each pursued corporate careers (coupled with the extracurricular vices that kept the wolves of doubt and fear at bay). We both also faced major health battles, which served as the catalyst to thrust us out of our slumber and into conscious living and true purpose. While I followed this initially into teaching meditation, Doug did things a little – read: a helluva lot – differently, and thus our paths diverged, but ultimately we were both led by the same simple truth.

Doug's story, unsurprisingly, mirrors the hero's journey – Joseph Campbell's monomyth that is the trajectory, more or less, for all of our lives. However, Doug's own version has an edge which stands it well apart. After rebelling against his conditioned environment – or numbing it with increasingly intense drug and alcohol addictions – his continual running from life transformed into exactly that – running – and one gets the feeling as his story unfolds that after overcoming some enormous obstacles – such as staring death right in the face – he reaches the bottom of the abyss and starts running back towards life itself. The journey home, if you will. But he returns with a gift from that dark place – an intense awareness that we are more than the vague impressions of who we think we are, that we are infinitely more than our physical bodies, a job, a relationship, or even a brain tumour. And, perhaps more importantly, that we are each capable of so much more than we are inclined to believe.

Doug Wilson – part Hunter S Thompson, Forrest Gump, Haile Gebrselassie and Yogi BhaJan – stood on the precipice that many

people face, confused about their place in society and searching for something more, something else. They feel alone and inflicted with an ancestral wound and societal imprint that they simply can't fathom. This is a theme Doug continually returns to.

This resonates deeply with me and the many others I have shared conversations with on the topic. It's a feeling which drove Doug to the brink of extinction with drug addiction and finally on his extreme adventures around the globe to become a world-record-setting marathon runner. Finally, after discovering Kundalini Yoga and undertaking hours of practice that may seem mind-boggling to most, Doug began sharing his experiences and hard-fought-for gifts.

Which brings me back to that night in the men's circle. It seems obvious now that Doug would find resonance with those gathered. The ones who felt a growing discontent and a yearning for self-mastery, and who had already taken the first (major) step of knocking on the door and questioning the meaning of their existence. Doug was able to help them realise that they are – as the great Sufi poet Rumi put it – knocking from the inside and that the answers they seek lie within. More importantly, that they are connected to something much bigger than themselves.

Even with this understanding though, for each of us, unlocking our full potential takes work, discipline and an ability to be comfortable with being uncomfortable, an art that Doug has mastered in the extreme.

Doug's own work continues and the best is still clearly yet to come. He is already a highly-sought-after Kundalini Yoga teacher and motivational speaker who possesses a wealth of knowledge and, at only 36 years of age, there's almost no doubt he has not yet hit the sweet spot of peak performance in marathon running. I'm humbled to contribute the foreword to this remarkable book and I can't wait to see the next chapter unfold in his extraordinary life.

As Doug himself would say, "What will I do next?" Whatever

it may be, one thing is for certain, he will go all the way, for as Bukowski concluded, it's the only good fight there is.

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