



Unencumbered By Thought, by Magliozzi Brothers

There is a process for reaching nirvana and it is this: You must repeat the mantra. And the mantra, which happens to be emblazoned on our flag, is: Non impediti ratione cogitationis. Which, of course, means: Unencumbered by the thought process. Now, I am going to give a

very brief history of how this mantra has helped me. If you repeat this mantra, what happens is everything slows down. Life slows down. Being unencumbered by the thought process allows you to identify and hear and see defining moments in your life, things that will change your life. Unencumbered by the thought process. You say it over and over again. And as everything slows down and begins to stop -- we call these, by the way, moments of inertia. I had to use it though. I had to. I was once trapped by the scientific, logic, left brain life. I graduated from MIT and I went to work as an engineer. And I will tell you about my defining moment. I was driving -- I lived in Cambridge at the time -- I was driving from Cambridge to my job in Foxboro, Massachusetts, and I was driving in a little MG. It weighed about 50 pounds and on Route 128 I was cut off by a semi and I almost, as they say, bought the farm. And as I continued my drive, I said to myself, if I had in fact bought the farm out there on Route 128, how ticked off would I be that I spent all my life -- that I can remember at least -- going to this job, living a life of quite desperation. So, I pulled into the parking lot, walked into my boss's office and I quit, on the spot. Now, most people would have just bought a bigger car. Those people would have been using their left brains. I had been saying my mantra in the car. That's why the guy cut me off. I think I cut him off. In any event, I quit my job. I became a bum. I spent two years sitting in Harvard Square drinking coffee. I invented the concept of the do-it-yourself auto repair shop and I met my lovely wife. None of which would have happened if I had been using my left brain. My second great defining moment came also showing the power of

the mantra, unencumbered by the thought process. I was having an argument with my lovely wife one day. I mean how can you argue with such a wonderful person. Well, left brain people do that because all they can think of is: this is an argument. This person is over here and I am over here and I am going to use every ounce of logic and skill that I have so that I can win this argument, and my wife says to me, do you want to be right or do you want to be happy? Holy ****, says !! I wanted to be happy. So now I have reached nirvana I can help you to reach it. Repeat after me, unencumbered by the thought process. Say it. --Tom & Ray Magliozzi (1999 MIT Commencement Address) [full speech online]

