

DAMON DIMARCO

Sample Packet

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 - My Two China's: The Memoir of a Chinese Counter-revolutionary (Prometheus Books/Rowan & Littlefield, 2011) Memoir
 - Tower Stories: An Oral History of 9/11 (Santa Monica Press/PGW-Ingram, 2021) Oral History

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AUTHOR SUMMARY

Damon DiMarco is an author, collaborator, and actor. His books have won praise from Gov. Tom Kean, Chairman of the 9/11 Commission; Pulitzer Prize winners David Mamet and Stephen Adly Guirgis; Academy Award-winning actors Sam Rockwell, Olympia Dukakis, and Mary Steenburgen; Emmy Award-winners Patricia Heaton and Christine Lahti; SAG Award-winners Richard Schiff and Gretchen Mol; media outlets such as the New York Times, MSNBC, and CNN; and thought leaders such as William F. Buckley and His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Damon's oral history work has been compared to that of Studs Terkel and the WPA Slave Narratives. He also writes plays, screenplays, and science fiction/fantasy novels.

Damon is a member of Actors Equity Association and SAG-AFTRA. As an actor, he has appeared in daytime and primetime TV shows on major networks, independent films, and regional theater productions. He has also appeared as a guest on CNN, NPR/PBS, the Premiere Radio Network, National Geographic Channel, and others.

Notable collaborations include Damon's books with William Esper, the late internationally renowned acting teacher; Tang Baiqiao, the Chinese dissident who helped plan the Tiananmen Square pro-democracy demonstrations; environmental entrepreneur Richard Fuller whose NGO has saved millions of lives from the scourges of toxic pollution in more than fifty countries; and Roy Simmons, offensive linebacker for the New York Giants.

As the founder of the Writing for Public Intellectuals workshop for PhD students at Drew University, Damon has a particular talent for helping experts translate their expertise into clear language designed to inform and excite a lay audience.

In his free time Damon can be found parenting, running, practicing yoga and tai chi, teaching workshops and seminars, playing blues riffs on his guitar, or collecting, refurbishing, and using vintage manual typewriters.

Damon DiMarco

Writer/Editor/Ghostwriter Book Doctor

160 W. 85th Street #1E, NYC 10024

Cell Phone (646) 901-3765

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SELECT LIST OF PUBLICATIONS AND PROJECTS

ORAL HISTORIES

Author, *Tower Stories: An Oral History of 9/11* (various publishers, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2021) with a foreword by Tom Kean, Chairman of the Independent 9/11 Commission

Author, *Heart of War: Soldiers' Voices from the Front Lines of Iraq* (Citadel Press, 2007)

MEMOIR

Co-author, with Roy Simmons, *Out of Bounds: Coming Out of Sexual Abuse, Addiction, and My Life of Lies in the NFL Closet* (Carroll & Graf, 2005)

Ghostwrote, *The Hill of Angels*, a memoir of the Vietnam War with Sergeant David Martin, USMC retired, FOB leader, about the siege of Côn Tiên (self-published, 2008)

Co-author, with Tang Baiqiao, *My Two Chinas: The Memoir of a Chinese Counterrevolutionary* (Prometheus Books/Globe Pequot, 2011) with a foreword by the office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Co-author, with Bill Baroni, *Fat Kid Got Fit: And So Can You* (Lyons Press/Globe Pequot Press, 2012) with a foreword by Dr. Howard Eisenson, Executive Director of the Duke University Diet & Fitness Center

Co-author, with Richard Fuller, *The Brown Agenda: My Mission to Clean Up the World's Most Life-Threatening Pollution* (Santa Monica Press, 2015)

BUSINESS/LEADERSHIP

Ghostwrote, business memoir by a legend in corporate turnarounds, now being brought to market (2022)

LEGAL/TRUE CRIME

Ghostwrote a true crime non-fiction title for a prosecutor on a notorious murder case in Middle America (Berkley Penguin, 2010)

Ghostwrote a true crime non-fiction title for a reality TV show host on a well-known cable network (Law & Crime/Simon & Schuster, 2021)

Co-author, with Dr. Rokea el-Azhary, M.D., Ph.D., Mayo Clinic, *A Gift of Fire*, now being brought to market (2022)

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FANTASY/SCIENCE FICTION

Ghostwrote a fantasy novel for an independent client (self-published, 2011)

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Ghostwrote, sci fi novel, *The Eye of the Elders* (unpublished, 2018)

Author, *Virtua* (sci fi novel), now being brought to market (2021)

Ghostwriter, screenplay novelization for a noted Australian film director (2022)

ACTING/PERFORMANCE CRAFT

Co-author, *The Actor's Art & Craft* with William Esper, (Anchor Books/Random House, 2008) with a foreword by Pulitzer Prize-winner, David Mamet

Author, *The Quotable Actor: 1001 Pearls of Wisdom from Actors Talking about Acting* (Santa Monica Press, 2009)

Author, with William Esper, *The Actor's Guide to Creating a Character* (Anchor Books/Random House, 2014) with a foreword by Emmy and SAG-Award winning actor, Patricia Heaton, afterword by Pulitzer Prize-winner, David Mamet

STAGE PLAYS

Playwright, with Jeffrey Harper, *My Mariners: A Play with Music* (commissioned by and premiered at SunDog Theater, Staten Island, 2004) **Performance history available upon request

Playwright, *Shock & Awe: A Play in Two Acts* (adapted from my book *Heart of War: Soldiers' Voices from the Front Lines of Iraq*) **Performance history available upon request (2009)

Playwright, *The Martinis' Christmas Wonderland, a Full-Length Play with Music* (2019)

Playwright, *The Monk and The Hangman's Daughter* (adapted from the novella by Ambrose Bierce, 2020)

Playwright, *Tower Stories* (adapted from my book, *Tower Stories: an Oral History of 9/11*, 2020) **Performance history available upon request

SCREENPLAYS/TELEPLAYS

Screenplay, *Allegiance*, with Dominic Fumusa (optioned by director Mary Stuart Masterson, 2007)

Television script and series bible, *Tailgaters* (2010)

Television script and series bible, *Empire on the Hudson* (2013)

Screenplay, *Dojo* (commissioned by Compass Needle Productions (2018)

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SUMMARY

A candidate whose exceptional skills at writing, communications, and storytelling allow him to synthesize complex information into effective strategies for B2B communications and customer enlightenment. With experience using social media platforms to reach sector-specific audiences.

EDUCATION

M.F.A., Professional Actors Training Program, *Rutgers University, Mason Gross School of the Arts.*

B.A., Literature and Theatre Arts, *Drew University.*

EXPERIENCE

Partner, Compass Needle, a privately funded think tank

04/18 - present

Responsibilities include:

- Researching and synthesizing community, partnership-based, non-zero-sum solutions to family, social, and political dilemmas.
- Writing and editing white papers that illuminate interpersonal disciplines such as parenting, giving, and national service.
- Creating pilot programs of national service and "guerilla giving" that concretize our founder's belief that the best way to serve one's self is to serve others.
- Writing the screenplay "Dojo" to demonstrate the viability of non-zero-sum outcomes in traditionally zero-sum situations.

Senior Marketing Analyst, The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

6/10 - 04/18

Marketing Department, B2B Marketing Unit

Responsibilities included:

- Serving as primary author of the non-financial section of the agency's Annual Report.
- Creating and developing award-winning newsletters for the Port Commerce Department and Office of Business Development and Civil Rights.
- Writing speeches for department Directors based on personal interviews and first-hand knowledge of agency objectives.
- Developing and producing all manner of collateral, including public notice advertising, brochures, posters, and banners from conception to production across a variety of print and online products for internal and external clients.
- Writing video and radio scripts highlighting agency expenditures surpassing \$1 billion, such as the Bayonne Bridge Raise the Roadway project.
- Monitoring and managing social media channels, including Twitter and Facebook via Hootsuite, as well as monitoring, developing, and updating content on existing agency website pages.

Course Founder and Leader, Drew University

1/12 - 6/14

For the Caspersen School of Graduate Studies, PhD program in History and Culture

Responsibilities included:

- Creating and conducting a course in "Writing for Public Intellectuals," working intensively and exclusively with PhD candidates each Spring semester.
- Coaching PhD candidates in written and oral presentation skills to maximize translation of their highly specialized academic knowledge to the broader segment of lay society.
- Reporting directly to the Dean of Graduate Studies and strategizing with him on the progress of individual students.

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Consultant: I3

4/09 – 05/09

Procedures Documentation Project for Bank of New York

Responsibilities included:

- Conducting an intensive, six-week, surgically-targeted project to author, verify, and streamline meticulous procedures related to federal financial services legislation. (Details fall under a non-disclosure agreement.)

Consultant: GoldenSource

6/09 – 4/09

For Training Department/Knowledge Center

Responsibilities included:

- Operating as the company's sole U.S.-based RFP Specialist, responsible for composing 12 – 15 account-winning RFPs per year on behalf of the GoldenSource EDM suite and all related products.
- Dialoguing closely with 10 - 15 sales and presales associates, 3- 5 product managers, and technical personnel based at GoldenSource international headquarters (NYC) and throughout the company's offices in London, Austria, and Mumbai.
- Assisting the documentation team in wordsmithing several thousand pages of technical/procedural documentation for newly-released versions of the GoldenSource EDM suite and related products.
- Authoring and narrating software training videos, which were deployed across the company's international offices.
- Drafting collateral for new and updated product releases.
- Creating and maintaining a library of technical, procedural, implementation, and security documentation for use during RFP and presales efforts.
- Creating and maintaining training guides for new clients, plus the company's Disaster Recovery Guide.
- Conducting test procedures for the newly-installed company-wide Wiki.

Freelance Writer: Tower Stories, Inc.

9/01 – present

Books, Plays, Screenplays, and Television Pilots

Responsibilities include:

- Authoring or co-authoring critically acclaimed books, including:
 - *Tower Stories: An Oral History of 9/11* (Santa Monica Press, 2007, 2009, 2021)
 - *Out of Bounds* with NFL offensive linebacker Roy Simmons (Carrol & Graf, 2005)
 - *Heart of War: Soldiers' Voices from Iraq* (Citadel Press, 2005)
 - *The Actor's Art & Craft* with William Esper (Anchor Books, 2008)
 - *My Two Chinas: The Memoir of a Chinese Counterrevolutionary* with Tang Baiqiao (Prometheus Books, 2011)
 - *The Actor's Guide to Creating a Character* with William Esper (Anchor Books, 2014)
 - *The Brown Agenda: My Mission to Clean Up the World's Most Life-Threatening Pollution* with Richard Fuller, 2015)
- Authoring several stage plays, screen plays, and television pilots, both produced and unproduced.
- Consulting privately on contract-winning non-fiction book proposals for submission to major publishing houses across several genres.
- Writing, editing, and/or consulting on literary projects (novels, screenplays, stage plays, web copy, slide show narrations and television pilots) in all phases of development from infancy to finished product for private clients.
- "Ghostwriting" books and articles for various media, including imprints of "Big 5" publishers.

FORTHCOMING TITLES

August 2021

**With New
Retrospective
Interviews**

"Arguably the most successful attempt at capturing the enormity of the events of 9/11, Damon DiMarco's sprawling oral history [presents] human stories . . . with a raw candor a thousand times more affecting than any cold statistic offered by a commission . . . a riveting and disarmingly emotional read."
— *MSNBC Today*

" . . . heart-breaking reminiscences by New Yorkers who survived the attack and then endured . . . denial, doubt, and rebuilding."
— *The New York Times*

"The only widely available oral history of 9/11 from the perspective of New Yorkers, this monumental work has been updated for the [twentieth] anniversary of the national tragedy. . . . DiMarco's contribution to the memory of that horrific day is enormous; the testimonies collected here form an amazing, one-of-a-kind account."
— *Publishers Weekly*

"The material [*Tower Stories*] offers is unique, a multitude of firsthand experiences preserved as few other 9/11 books have done. . . . expanded with many more photographs and with updates about a number of the witnesses interviewed. Recommended for all public and undergraduate libraries."
— *Literary Journal*

"I hope this book remains in print for a very long time to come because everyone should read it. Our children should read it."
— Governor Thomas Kean, Chairman of the 9/11 Commission

"This volume defends the understanding, as also the horror, of that day. We are indebted to Mr. DiMarco for the effort and for the editorial acuity."
— William F. Buckley, author and commentator

**20th Anniversary
Commemorative
Edition**

TOWER STORIES

AN ORAL HISTORY OF 9/11

by **Damon DiMarco**

New Foreword by Governor George Pataki
Original Foreword by Governor Thomas Kean
Chairman of the 9/11 Commission



**Damon
DiMarco**

TOWER STORIES



www.simonandschuster.com



US \$27.95

LAUNCH: ARTS, COMMUNICATIONS & LANGUAGES CAREER COMMUNITY



Alumni Spotlight: Damon DiMarco C'93, Writer, Actor, Playwright, Screenwriter, Storyteller

Damon DiMarco has authored or co-authored nine non-fiction books with boutique, mid-sized, and Big Five publishers. He's also written four plays, plus several screenplays and television pilots. Damon's books have been endorsed by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwrights David Mamet and Stephen Adly Guirgis; Chairman of the 9/11 Commission Thomas H. Kean; comedian Amy Schumer; Academy Award winning actors Olympia Dukakis and Mary Steenburgen; and His Holiness the Dalai Lama. After graduating from Drew with a double major in English Literature and Theatre Arts, Damon studied acting at Rutgers University's Mason Gross School of the Arts Professional Actor's Training Program and earned his MFA under William Esper. Damon's acting credits

include performances in regional theater, recurring roles on soaps, prime time television, commercials, live hosting, and live industrial shows. He is a member of Actors Equity Association & SAG-AFTRA. He's appeared as a guest on national television and radio programs for CNN, The National Geographic Channel, FOX News, Odyssey Networks, Premiere Radio Networks, and other venues. In 2012, he initiated the Writing for Public Intellectuals workshop for PhD students in the History and Culture program at Drew University's Caspersen Graduate School. As a performance consultant, he's worked with actors and people from all walks of life to hone their audition or scene skills or to sharpen their presentations, speeches, keynote addresses, and story pitches. As a writing consultant, he's helped private clients produce non-

fiction book proposals, novels, screenplays, stage plays, and television pilots working through virtually every stage of development from inception to finished product. Damon lives in New York City. For more details, visit his website, www.createX3.com.

DAMON AT DREW

Damon was born and raised in New Jersey. When he first visited Drew and saw its beautiful campus, the facilities, faculty and students, going about their business, he said it felt like home. "I fell in love with Drew," he says.

He had always been a writer and began doing plays in high school. "At first, I had all these doubts about acting, wondering if I could make a living at it and wondering if I should do the responsible thing and get a degree in accounting or computer science or whatever. But you can't tell a duck not to swim. It turns out my degrees in English and Theatre Arts were exactly what I needed."

What Damon loved about the Theatre Department at Drew is that everyone has an opportunity to be both in front of and behind the scenes. "I specialized in acting but I was told I had to swing a hammer, build a set, direct a play, hang lights, and be a stage manager. I mention this to everyone when I talk about Drew because it's the perfect way to approach theatre education. You learn that theatre is a collaborative art form. For a show to work, everyone needs to pitch in. The same is true in publishing where there are editors, proofreaders, attorneys, and so on. In other words, it's not just about writers, it's about sustaining a whole collaborative ecosystem. You understand very quickly that no one functions in a vacuum."

Damon's first performance at Drew was *Zagrowsky Tells*, a one-man show adapted from a short story by Grace Paley. He was a first-year student playing a bigoted 79-year-old Jewish man whose only daughter has a son with a black man. In his waning years, Zagrowsky finds himself alone with his biracial grandchild whom he loves, but who represents everything he despises.

"It was a wonderful story about an incredibly complex character," Damon says. "And timely, especially now. It was also a technical challenge on a level I'd never confronted before. The play was 90 minutes of me on stage, talking to an imaginary 3-year old. I spoke with an accent. I walked stooped over. They aged me with make-up ... it was just an incredible experience, overwhelming for a freshman, but incredibly validating. I can't think of another college or university theater department that would have given me that chance."

Some of Damon's best memories of Drew are those he associates with teaching. After earning his MFA, he returned to Drew as an adjunct teaching undergrad students in the Theatre Department for 7 years. Later, he returned again, this time to teach a writing course he developed for PhD students in the History & Culture program at the Caspersen School.

"It was great to be back on the campus I fell in love with as an undergrad. And to realize I had knowledge to share now."

Damon points out that Drew's motto, inscribed on the university's front gate, is "Freely have you received, freely give."

"That sums it up for me," he says. "Teaching is about giving back what you've learned, and learning more in the process. That's the best part about the job, and it's especially true when you're working with artists: you're constantly exposed to new ideas and fresh inspirations."

DAMON AND ACTING/THEATER/FILM

After graduating Drew you went on to get your MFA at the Professional Actor's Training Program at Rutgers' Mason Gross School of the Arts. You've also done some acting in soap operas, television and film. What attracted you to acting? Are you still acting today?

What attracts an accountant to numbers or a scientist to epidemiology? Acting has always made sense to me. [Sanford Meisner](#) said that acting is, "living truthfully under imaginary circumstances." [Bill Esper](#) and I later sharpened that line a bit by specifying that "living is doing."

If you think about it, from the moment we're born to the moment we die, we're all of us, always doing things. Every action we commit, no matter how apparently small – breathing, sitting, thinking, brushing our teeth – it's all a part of the fabric of living. As an actor on stage, film, or TV, you're living the same as you would in real life, except the world you're living in is imaginary. Meaning that you, the actor, are clipping your toenails. But the imaginary circumstances dictate that you're the mayor of a small town who just found out you're being indicted for embezzlement. Or whatever the script is about.

Ultimately, acting for me is a practice of empathy. You inhabit somebody else's life as if it were your own. Not all the people you play will be people you want to spend time with. If you play a misogynist or a racist, for instance, you can't judge that person. We all have flaws. So you try to find the good parts of that person and lay it all out there, the good and the bad, in a banquet of truth-telling.

All art forms celebrate our humanity in their own way. A painter tries to capture their sense of truth in a bowl of fruit or a person or a landscape. A musician tells his or her truth through song. But the actor is unique in that someone else gives you the lines you'll say, the costume you wear, the lights you'll stand under so people can see you. With all that taken care of, one might ask, Well, what is the actor's job? The actor's job is to live in a way that most of us would never dare to do. Your job is to bring everything you are – your understanding of life, your emotions, your humanity, your imagination – to bear on serving the story. It's a very selfless act at its height, and there's no other work like it on the planet. Except maybe writing. Which I guess we can also talk about.

As far as acting today, I've lately gotten into the audio book world. It's incredible fun and it's a booming segment of the publishing industry. These days a lot of people would rather listen to books than read them in the traditional manner. It's basically acting into a microphone. You have to invest the material with everything you have. When you hear a book read well, you become transported. You enter that world because the actor was able to take you there.

Did you ever want to direct or produce?

Probably both at some point. Lately, on my website, I've been experimenting with short films about various topics related to creativity. But I'm very happy in front of my typewriters.

I have 14 or 15 vintage manual typewriters. Every morning, I sit down in front of one and bang out my work. Typewriters help me lock into what I'm doing without distractions. The oldest one I have was made in 1929. It works as well as the day it rolled off the factory floor. So I sit in front of these old machines. My fingers work the keys and there's that lovely sound which, to me, is as pleasant as meditating by a river.

A lot of people ask me, "how do you get anything done on a vintage typewriter?" Honestly my output has tripled since I started using them. I can get more work raw work done than ever before. Eventually I move everything I write to a computer for editing and shipping. But my publishers and producers don't care how I do my work. They just want it done, and this is what works the best for me. Typewriters keep me inspired. I also learned to restore them so I do that a lot these days when I'm not writing.



(Two typewriters Damon restored: (l) a 1929 LC Smith #8 and (r) a 1934 Torpedo Model 16)

You came back to Drew a few times. First to teach theater to undergrads, then writing to grad students. Can you talk a little about the experience of teaching these different subjects?

First off, I didn't teach anyone anything. I always saw my students as colleagues. It's less teaching, more like artist management. It's sort of like being a director. Great directors don't tell you what to do, they just ask you a lot of questions. They want you to come up with your own answers because they know that's where the gold is. You guide them and try to get them to see possibilities they haven't noticed yet. And you try to keep it fun.

Working with actors and writers is different. With actors, instead of pulling words, essays, and story arcs out of people, you help them access parts of themselves they might never have realized are there. It can be revelatory stuff. When an actor allows him or herself to be surprised by their reaction to something, the audience gets surprised. They can't help it. It's a natural reaction.

A lot of younger, inexperienced actors walk on stage and try to be bulletproof. It's not interesting. They're not doing their job, which is to experience something the audience is afraid to experience on its own.

The word "theater" in Ancient Greek means the "place of seeing." This gives us a clue as to what the purpose of theater is. We go to see something we know is part of life, but are too afraid to experience ourselves. Most people want to run away from emotional experiences because these experiences frighten them. But in a film or a play, it's the actor's job to experience all those emotions for their audience, so they can live them through the performance.

I mostly teach acting by asking questions. A very important question is, What are you doing? Many actors don't like this question because they think acting is about the lines. It's not. The lines don't matter so much as intent. Without an intention, an actor is nothing.

There's a famous story about the playwright, Edward Albee. He held auditions for one of his plays. When one of the actors was finished presenting a monologue, Albee said, "That's very interesting. You said the words precisely as I wrote them." The actor thought this was a compliment. But Albee said, "I know what the words are because I wrote them. What I was hoping you could supply is why I wrote them."

In other words, Albee was asking, What's the reason you're saying these words? Why do they have to be said right now? What are you hoping to get out of another person by speaking them? When you come up with answers to questions like these, you're an actor. And it can be tricky.

For instance, you'll never catch a great actor acting. They personalize everything they do to such an extent that there's really no difference between them and the role they play. The ego

part of them is gone. It's one of the most selfless acts you can ever witness. Very compelling on screen or in person.

You have also worked as a technical writer and Senior Marketing Analyst. How do you feel your education and training in theatre arts helped you do well in those positions?

Theatre taught me to improvise. There are many times in an artist's life when you have to take a job to secure good health benefits, pay the rent, pay bills, make sure that baby has shoes.

My training at Drew essentially gave me two things. First, it gave me many skills which I could apply in different arenas to secure gainful employment. Second, and more importantly, it instilled in me the passion to say, I don't care if I hate this job, it's only temporary. I'll plow through it to get to the other side where I'm busy pursuing the work that I love.

At the end of the day, artists are inspiration junkies. We live to take something from our insides and contribute it to our outside, meaning the world. At it's best, this is a selfless dynamic. Everyone wants to be of service to something. It could be your children, the community, your art form, or all these things combined. If your values are important to you, it may prompt you to march in protest over a wrong doing, or reach in your wallet to make a donation.

Acts like these get us outside of ourselves. Paradoxically, when we get outside of ourselves, we discover who we are inside. It's when we ask how we can give or help, that we end up receiving the most.

DAMON AND WRITING

You've written plays, screenplays, and few pilots, and authored and co-authored many books. Can you tell me about your writing process? Do you have a schedule where you write at the same time every day?

I'll steal this line from Somerset Maugham, who said, "I only write when I'm inspired. Fortunately, inspiration strikes every morning at 9 a.m." I always have something to work on. That's good news and bad news. Sometimes you get paid for the work. A deal has been struck so there's an advance or a fee or whatever. But if a subject really catches you, you have to write it regardless. You won't be able not to write it.

Hopefully, as has happened to me, three, maybe four years after you finish something, you're having lunch with an agent, producer, or director. And they say, "Gee, I really wish I had a book or a play or a short film that dealt with this topic." You say, "I'll send it to you when I get back to the office." I've sold a lot of projects like that.

My process is always a little different because I've done plays, screenplays, fiction, and non-fiction. Rather than deal in the differences, let's discuss the commonalities.

What's common is that you sit in your chair. You listen to what inspiration is telling you. Then you try to put it on paper. I always set an alarm so I can get lost, then found in the process. After two or three hours, your work is done for the day. You get up and do laundry, be a parent, eat a late breakfast, have a regular day.

In many ways, my real job is to do everything necessary to enjoy life so I can get back to that other place where I'm writing. That's where I'm comfortable. That's the process.

You co-authored two books on acting with Bill Esper called, [The Actor's Art and Craft](#), [William Esper Teaches the Meisner Technique](#), and [The Actors Guide to Creating a Character](#). Can you talk a little bit about the Meisner acting technique you worked on with Bill and why you prefer it to other techniques like Method or Stanislavski's technique?

[Bill Esper](#) trained and worked with [Sanford Meisner](#) for 17 years. There's a lineage there from Meisner to Bill to me -- and tens of thousands of other people who are part of this very large, very diverse, extended family. I think most people who like the Meisner technique find it very accommodating. The tool it makes the most use of is our imagination.

In the 21st century, we talk a lot about renewable resources. The human imagination is utterly inexhaustible. Everyone has an imagination, and everything in life began in someone's imagination. They pushed the idea outward into manifestation and it became real. When you can harness that power, there's nothing in the world you can't do.

But I want to clarify something. This doesn't mean that if you studied, say, Method Acting and it's working for you that you shouldn't use it. Bill was my mentor, teacher, and dear friend. He was most closely associated with Meisner technique because that was his heritage. But he encouraged us all to explore other avenues and come up with a technique that, ultimately, was ours and ours alone. At Rutgers, for instance, he had us study with Lenard Petit, a master of the [Michael Chekov](#) school of acting. And Joe Hart, whose ensemble techniques were drawn from the work of Joseph Campbell.

No, Bill wasn't clannish at all. He believed that your development as an actor is entirely up to you. You are there to learn everything that activates you in front of an audience and allows you to do your job.

I watched the [Compass Needle Interview](#) on YouTube and I was struck by your comment, "everything is here so God can show itself" and other references to being in the moment, and going within. Do you approach acting from a "spiritual" perspective? Also, you mentioned [Joseph Campbell](#). Have you read him? Your references to everyone having a gift and being on a journey recalled to me his ideas on mythology.

I've read a lot of Campbell and other thinkers like Alan Watts, Erich Fromm, Richard Rohr, and Dr. Viktor Frankl. The simplest answer I can give to your question is this: what most people call a spiritual experience is, I suggest, the experience of being alive.

I think the experience you're having on earth is entirely up to you. Certainly, we have little power over what transpires outside us. But we always have control over how we respond to what's outside us.

This all goes right back to listening to the blank page. You can only do that when you stay right here, right now, in this moment. Mediation teaches you this. Don't focus on the past, that's either regret or reminiscing. Don't focus on the future, that's either anxiety or anticipation. The truth is, there is no past, no future. Every act of creativity – life itself -- takes place in the here and now.

That's not being spiritual. I see it as being practical. The trick to staying creative is to get outside of our egos as much as possible. Inspiration only happens when we let go. When artists accomplish this, they suddenly find themselves connecting with powerful stuff with which to make their work.

Your book [Tower Stories: An Oral History of 9/11](#) was endorsed by former Governor of New Jersey and Drew University President [Tom Kean](#). Can you talk about how this book came to be and what readers can learn from it?

On the morning of 9/11, I woke up in my first New York apartment on West 82nd Street. I got coffee, went into the living room, and stared at the TV with my roommates. We were stunned. Everything you and I now remember about that event took place just 4 miles south of us.

When the second plane hit, we knew it was no accident. The world as we knew it had come to an end. We had already entered what we now call the post 9/11 world. One of my roommates was down there under the towers that day when they fell. He came back to our apartment covered in ash. He sat down and told us what he'd experienced. While he was speaking, I thought someone should be writing it down. I had this suspicion the event was going to change everything, and I thought it might be helpful if someone documented firsthand accounts from the people who were there. So that's what I did for the next 18 months.

In all, I interviewed about 100 people. I spoke with them, transcribed their stories, and edited them for the sake of cohesion. When I thought I had a book, I shopped the collection around for a while but no one was interested. Still, it got me my first agent.

Then one day I was speaking with a publisher who said he was looking for something about 9/11. It was one of those instances I mentioned where I said, "I'll send it to you this afternoon." It was gratifying to have the work published. The book's gone through many editions. I'm working now with the publisher on an updated 20-year memorial edition. I also adapted the book as a play. It was set to debut in New York this past spring but then we got hit with COVID.

Recently, I realized that the book is all about service. What I found most interesting is how so-called "ordinary" people gave so much to complete strangers. No prompting. All of their own

volition. When tragedies happen, it can bring out the best parts of us. For a while, Americans – the whole world, really – displayed an incredible capacity to nurture, to protect one another in that moment. If that doesn't teach you something about humanity, I don't know what will.

Of course, we all went back to our old ways. We went to war. We fought with each other. Still do. But I see the same dynamic now as the world confronts COVID-19. There are always people willing to help, to look out for and safeguard their fellow man.

It's a little-known fact that Charles Darwin never believed in "survival of the fittest." That was a construction drummed up by his students, Herbert Spencer and Thomas Henry Huxley. No, Darwin came to believe that kindness and cooperation are the key factors in helping a species excel. It's all over his later work, *The Descent of Man*. And it's certainly a subject worth pondering.

So many people say such kind words about [Tom Kean](#). What are your memories of him being at Drew?

First, I should admit that I'm a huge Tom Kean fan. He was a conservative who cared about education and the arts, a leader respected on both sides of the aisle. I'm sure that's why they tapped him to chair the independent 9/11 Commission. It's rare to find a principled man in an age that's become so polarized.

Did you know? When he was President of Drew, Tom came to see every play we put on in the Theatre Department. Every play. That's how much he cared about the arts – and the spirit behind the arts, which is to explore the frontier of what's happening in society right now, and give it expression.

I remember he ran a senior seminar for political science students. Some of my closest friends took it and said it was the best class they took at Drew. Tom apparently sat at the table with them and listened like a colleague. I can imagine him doing that.

As a student, he majored in a history and he's always been an astute scholar. What better place to be than at Drew?

For years, he rode around campus on a bike that had this little bell on it. He would pop in on classes and sit in the back and just listen, smiling and learning. He was always approachable. Anyone could walk right up and talk to him about anything. One time, I walked into Mead Hall and went right to his office on some matter I needed help on. It wasn't a usual thing but he never gave the impression of being put off by it. His attitude was that he was there to serve. In that way, I think he catalyzed a lot of us to be the best we could be.

I wish we had more leaders like him now.

Tell me about writing plays vs. screenplays. Which do you prefer?

Plays are about bodies on stage while screenplays are entirely about what you see. In film, a lot of the storytelling gets done in the editing room. The editor dictates focus whereas in a play, you can't tell audience members specifically where to look.

Screenplay writing and play writing are similar in that, as the author, you have to break down the story and know what's happening at all times. Often you don't let the audience know what's going on until the end. If you set it up properly, the climax is the payoff of your hard work setting things up. This demands that you be in control of the process. A revelatory moment at the end of a play or screenplay is never haphazard. It has to be earned.

Are you writing anything presently?

I am. Eleven years ago I drew a map marked in a foreign language I'd never seen before and didn't understand. Between other assignments, I started building a history of this place, figuring out the language, crafting religions, histories, star charts, calendars, all that. I can't seem to get it out of my system.

Lately, I noticed I've returned to this place more often. I ended up writing books to serve as backstory to the book I first set out to write. So I think I'll start shopping this material soon.

FINAL QUESTIONS

What do you feel is the key to your success?

Probably that I'm too stupid to quit. Also, on my better days, I have the capacity to be disciplined and playful at the same time.

What do you think is the most important characteristic in a successful person?

Tenacity. In any career, you'll experience obstacles and disappointments. Some of these will be earth shattering and you can't control that. The only thing we can control is how we respond to it. Take your lumps, cry if you need to, and go to work the next day. Be thankful for the lessons you learn. When you lose, don't lose the lesson.

Put differently, don't focus on the physical thing but on the metaphysical thing. Ask yourself how is this making me into a better person, more open and empathetic, more humble in life? A better artist? Therein lies the key to any resilience in any capacity for anyone.

Resilience is not taught very much in our society, but it's so important. Without resilience we crumble.

What advice would you give a student who is interested in a career as an actor?

Act. Remember that there is no job which is beneath you. If someone asks you to be in something, do it. Or write your own piece and produce it. Get friends involved. Make relationships. Collaborate. You will find that you lift each other up in ways you can't possibly imagine right now.

Continue, continue, continue at all times. Don't let anyone stop you. If you feel you need training, get training. Remember that everything's part of your journey. When you have that mindset, good things happen.

Remember, too, what your personal definition of success is. Satisfying that is the only thing that matters. Is it necessary to become a big star? Or is your goal to simply make a great living while having fun and doing what you love? Would you rather be paid \$20 million to be miserable or a good wage to love what you do each day and to work with people who inspire you?

These are questions worth asking, I think.

What advice would you give a student who is interested in a career as a writer?

Write. And be aware of the industry. I personally feel that being a good actor can make you into a good writer and vice versa. Find your path. Stick to it. Honor the people you meet along the way, the ones who inspire you. You'll know who they are. That first editor who says, "I want to see your first 50 pages." Or the first agent who says, "You know? I think I can sell this."

Meet people who are invested in what you do and what you like. And remember it's always about what you produce. Meaning it's about the material: your book, your play, or your screenplay. Write your ass off. Edit. Repeat. And make sure to take vacations.

If you could try any career other than your own, what would it be?

Musician. I play the guitar and sing. It's about letting something move through you. In any creative act, the artist disappears. Sometimes I find that happens to me with a guitar and an old blues song.

If you could travel anywhere in the world tomorrow, where would you go?

It's not a geographic location that anyone would know. It's a house by a lake on top of a mountain. There's bright light coming in off the water, great coffee in the kitchen, lot of space for guests, and a room full of typewriters where I clatter away every morning. My family and friends are there, doing their own things. For lunch, I make everyone eggs and, in the afternoon, I play my guitar, we barbecue, and go swimming.

Could you share a fun fact about yourself?

As a hobby, I repair and restore old vintage manual typewriters.



(Some more typewriters Damon has restored and uses: (l) a 1947 Royal Quiet DeLuxe; (center) a 1954 Royal KMG; (right) a 1952 Royal Quiet DeLuxe.



Overall Winning Essay, 2012 Essay Competition

BROWN IS JUST AS IMPORTANT AS GREEN

*By Damon DiMarco
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The city of Gorlovka, Ukraine is literally a bomb waiting to go off. The ruins of a former Soviet chemical weapons factory sit on a 400-acre campus in the middle of town. Within the crumbling concrete halls, stacks of rotting metal barrels leak deadly mono nitrochlorobenzene, a key ingredient in the manufacture of nerve gas.

MNCB is so toxic that half a teaspoon ingested, inhaled, or absorbed through the skin can kill a human being. The barrels at Gorlovka hold over 15,000 tons of the stuff. But as bad as this sounds, it's really just the beginning of the problem.

Right next to the MNCB, someone stockpiled 30 metric tons of TNT in underground sarcophagi. Other buildings onsite contain large amounts of various highly corrosive acids. And right next door to all this, an abandoned fertilizer plant holds large industrial vats full of stagnant liquid ammonia.

Currently about 260,000 people live in Gorlovka, but that could all change from a stray bolt of lightning, a cigarette butt tossed blithely aside, a spark born aloft by a hot dry wind. The

slightest provocation could set off an explosive chain reaction that would turn Gorlovka into an event to dwarf the Chernobyl and Bhopal disasters combined. Those citizens not killed in the initial blast would likely choke to death on a chemical cloud the approximate size of Rhode Island.

Experts have called Gorlovka one of the worst instances of legacy contamination in human history, a deadly threat to both the environment and human health. So why hasn't anyone heard about it? Perhaps it's because so many environmentalists focus on the Green agenda when places like Gorlovka represent something altogether different -- something more frightening and potentially destructive. Gorlovka represents the Brown agenda, and it's high time people started talking about it.

The Brown agenda combats the proliferation of manmade toxic pollutants, especially in low to middle-income countries. Brown sites affect the health and well-being of up to a billion human beings per year -- innocent people who sicken and die because their country either cannot or will not clean up the messes left by government and industry initiatives.

If you live in a wealthier country, chances are you can't imagine the horror of these conditions. The United States, Canada, Europe, Australia, and Japan leverage powerful disincentives to keep pollution at bay. Laws punish infractions. Government agencies levy hard fines. A free press thrives on indicting unfair or inhumane conditions. Society rears up against grotesquely exploitative ventures. Sadly, the same can't be said of developing nations who often race to increase their industrial capacity at the expense of their own people and land.

Like Zambia for instance, where a state-owned mining conglomerate allowed the largest smelter in Africa to decay, poisoning the local soil and water supplies with staggering doses of lead. Over the course of generations, lead infected the nearby town of Kabwe and ripped through its population like a plague. Independent scientists studied blood samples taken from Kabwe's residents. Ten parts lead per deciliter of blood is considered dangerously high, but the people of Kabwe often logged between 120 and 300. Worse yet, the effects of lead poisoning were painfully obvious. Imagine a population of approximately 200,000 people where nearly everyone is crippled, neurologically damaged, infertile, mentally retarded, or dying. Kabwe presents a perfect example of how Brown sites can overflow environmental concerns to create genuine human rights atrocities.

Children always fare the worst in these situations since their small, developing bodies are more vulnerable to disease and mutation. As a demographic, children make up only 10 percent of the world's population, but they shoulder over 40 percent of the global burden of disease. Recent estimates pose that more than three million children under age five die annually from Brown sites. But as devastating as they are to human populations, Brown sites can exact even worse tolls on the overall environment.

Take, for example, the city of Norilsk, Siberia where pollution from a local mining operation has turned the snow black and a single blade of grass won't grow for 50 kilometers in every direction. Or the Matanza-Riachuelo River basin in Argentina where more than 3,500 tanneries, illicit sewage pipes, heavy metal and chemical plants dump effluents into the water, creating 'flammable slums' – literal rivers of filth on fire. Or the inappropriately named

community of God's Paradise in the Dominican Republic where visiting activists once found a 30-foot high pile of old car batteries leaking lead, sulfuric acid, and other contaminants into the soil where local crops are farmed.

There's a place called Chelyabinsk in the Ural Mountains of southwestern Siberia where one in four children are born with genetic mutations and less than 2 percent of the population can be called clinically healthy. Workers in Chelyabinsk rarely live to retirement age. At one point not too long ago, 70 percent of the local population had leukemia. Cancer rates throughout the region have spiked to as high as five times the Russian national average. Rates for child morbidity and mortality have reached three times higher than the national average. In Chelyabinsk, death is a way of life. But how did it get this way?

In their race to develop an atomic bomb, the Soviets pushed their workers hard and neglected to implement even the most basic safety precautions. From 1949 to 1956, the Chelyabinsk plant dumped untold quantities of medium to high-level radioactive waste into a local river, the Techa, which sustained the surrounding communities.

Soon after that, a cooling unit at the enrichment plant failed, causing an explosion that sent about eighty tons of radioactive waste into the atmosphere. The toxin cloud contained twice the amount of curies released at Chernobyl in 1986. It covered some 24,000 square kilometers and spanned three Soviet provinces while irradiating thousands of innocent people. As the ultimate insult, Soviet officials denied that anything happened and offered the victims no aid.

It's hard to argue against the importance of Going Green, but the truth is, it's a luxury, the environmentalist equivalent of a high class problem. There's really no place for the Green agenda in most parts of the world where the problems faced by developing nations fall short of what's Green and land in a deeper, more filthy, despicable pond: they land in what we call Brown.

Going Green can be seen as a choice, whereas those affected by the Brown agenda have no options.

At this point, some readers might be asking, So what? Why should I care about people in Russia, Argentina, or the Dominican Republic? Isn't that someone else's problem?

Actually, no. The chickens in foreign countries may seem laughably distant, but they still come home to roost. While environmentalists keep pushing us to Go Green, Brown sites are successfully rotting the planet right out from under us.

The fact is, every Brown site on the planet slows, if not entirely halts the progression of a global Green agenda. For instance, Brown sites contribute enormously to global warming since toxic emissions from unregulated industrial sites often spew massive quantities of greenhouse gases into our atmosphere.

And a recent study by a Danish research group concluded that Green burdens have actually grown at least in part because political and economic bickering have allowed Brown sites to proliferate.

Chelyabinsk serves as a perfect example. It should have been cleaned up years ago, but it's such a complicated and daunting situation that nobody wants to touch it. So the cycle

continues even as the Tech River continues to nourish the surrounding countryside with deadly toxic substances. Plants are dying, fish are dying, humans and animals are dying, but by all means, let's start a plan to recycle old newsprint.

When confronted by true cases of Brown, some Green groups have actually exacerbated environmental problems. This happened at Gorlovka. An NGO called Blacksmith Institute hoped to remediate the site before the whole city exploded. It came up with a simple, two-phase plan: first, use counteractive chemicals to render some of the contaminants inert and bury them; second, pack every material that couldn't be counteracted in secure plastic containers, haul them to incinerators, and burn them.

The second phase gave rise to stiff resistance from local environmental groups who said that incinerating some chemicals would release trace amounts of dioxin particles into the atmosphere. Yes, Blacksmith said, that is certainly true. But the dioxins would be in such low quantities as to be harmless. Besides, which would you rather contend with? Trace amounts of dioxin particles spread across several kilometers of atmosphere? Or a city gone up like the hearth fires of hell, with thousands of people sprawled dead at your feet?

Brown problems aren't about doing what's perfect because perfect doesn't exist. They're about doing what's right. The technology to remediate even the worst of these sites exists within the industrialized world. We just have to rally our collective will. We just have to make it an issue. Remediating Brown sites is hard, dirty work, but excellent results are often had for shockingly small sums of money.

But cynics are a stalwart bunch. When confronted with Brown truths, the cynic very often resorts to a crude form of isolationism, insisting that this sort of thing isn't their bailiwick. Why should I care about what goes on in other parts of the globe? Why should I care, for instance, about the increasing deposits of lead and other heavy metals found in Indonesian soil samples?

Someone with a more overarching view of environmental interconnectedness might answer: You shouldn't, of course. The same way you shouldn't care about last year's Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster, which *made no impact whatsoever* on human beings, fish, and wildlife throughout the entire Pacific rim. Or the 2010 explosion at BP's Deepwater Horizon which *didn't* create immeasurable damage to marine and estuary life all along the Gulf Coast. Or the incorrigible way that Western industries *aren't* dumping approximately 50 million tons of used computer equipment each year into e-waste deserts that have rapidly smothered Ghana, Nigeria, Mexico, India, Thailand, China, and many other countries. To say nothing of the poor villagers who each day poison themselves and their children by sifting among the dunes of broken machines, searching for heavy metals to sell.

The high-minded answer to all this is that ecosystems are interconnected. The strands that each of us occupy interweave to form a giant web of life. If one of those strands should strain and break, it imperils the whole structure, and everything within it.

But if this doesn't work, consider a more practical perspective. American might well consider that Brown sites exist right here at home. The U.S. currently festers with an estimated 1,600 Superfund sites, many of which rival the toxicity, environmental and human degradation of the locations mentioned above.

For example: the Tar Creek Superfund site in northeastern Oklahoma, where decades of mining for lead and zinc have accumulated 70 million tons of toxic chat heaped in piles that stretch ten stories tall. Prairie winds blow the toxic dust all over the nearby towns. The rivers and streams run bright orange, tainted by lead and cadmium leaking from 14,000 contaminated mineshafts. Local fish, wildlife, and children have shown elevated levels of toxins in their blood. In and around Tar Creek, cases of kidney failure, behavioral problems, neurological damage, and mental retardation have become common.

In 2006, the U.S. EPA declared the nearby town of Picher uninhabitable and evacuated its citizens. Picher now sits quietly in the shadow of looming chat piles. The spine of the roof on a boarded up church has broken, falling in on itself. The windows of abandoned buildings along Main Street gape in empty-eyed wonder. This ghost town stands as a monument to everything we have long ignored, and what we can no longer afford to.

Of course, we must pursue the Green agenda. But while doing so, let's include space for the Brown.

Damon DiMarco is the author or co-author of several books including "Tower Stories: An Oral History of 9/11", "Heart of War: Soldiers' Voices from the Front Lines of Iraq", and "My Two Chinas: The Memoir of a Chinese Counterrevolutionary," featuring a foreword by His Holiness the Dalai Lama. Damon teaches Public Intellectualism in the PhD History and Culture program at Drew University's Caspersen School of Graduate Studies. His forthcoming book is titled, "Dirty, Filthy Trouble: Toxic Pollution and Toxic Ideas in Indonesia and Beyond."

THE ACTOR'S ART AND CRAFT by William Esper and Damon DiMarco (Anchor Books /Random House, 2008)

PROLOGUE



"If one really wishes to be master of an art, technical knowledge of it is not enough. One has to transcend technique so that the art becomes an 'artless art' growing out of the Unconscious."

—ZEN MASTER D. T. SUZUKI

In my senior year of college a theater professor took me aside and said, "I know you want to become an actor, and you have a lot of talent. But talent is like water. Without a vessel to contain it, it's useless."

"What is the vessel for talent?" I asked.

My professor answered, "Technique."

"Fine," I said. "Then I'll learn technique. Where do I go to do that?"

"If you're going to bother at all, you'd better learn from the best and study with a Master Teacher."

"Show me where the Master Teachers are and I'll study with them," I said. And so it was that, days later, I borrowed a friend's car and drove to Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey, home of the Mason Gross School of the Arts. I was going to meet Bill Esper.

He wasn't what I'd imagined. I suppose I had this vision that a Master Teacher of acting would be a rakish man in a beret with a

Mephistophelian mustache. Imagine how surprised I was to meet a kindly, quiet man with salt-and-pepper hair who waved me into his cramped office at Mason Gross's Levin Theater. This was the famous Bill Esper? Impossible. This man was a regular guy with a well-trimmed goatee and piercing eyes behind spectacles.

We talked for about forty-five minutes, and I'm sure I was trying too hard to make a good impression, because I honestly can't recall a single word that Bill said. Except this one part: Toward the end of our talk, Bill asked me, "Why are you interested in coming here? What interests you about studying with me?"

I said, "I studied the Meisner Technique a little in college and I got a lot out of it. Now I want to learn it top to bottom."

Bill didn't respond. He just sat there looking at me. Finally, very quietly, he said, "If you come here, you won't be learning Meisner Technique. You'll learn *my* technique, the Bill Esper technique. And—God willing—if you leave here, you'll leave with *your own* technique. Do you understand this?"

I didn't. Not really. But I was young. I lied. I nodded my head and said, "Yes."



Now, more than ten years later, Bill has asked me to visit him. The door to his studio swings open, and I walk through a short vestibule with red-painted walls, heading straight toward his office. It's a cramped, busy little room, and the first thing I notice is the metal umbrella stand just inside the door. It holds three umbrellas, a battered vaudeville cane, a Louisville Slugger, and a fencing foil. Surely this is an actor's office.

I glance up. Bookshelves cover the wall behind Bill's desk from floor to ceiling, the wooden slats bowed under the weight of his library. Spiral-bound notebooks are crammed onto the shelves

at impossible angles. Manila files jut forward like stuck-out tongues, each bursting with what appears to be a lifetime's worth of scribbled musings. Tchotchkes from around the world sit on the shelves, too. Some of the items must have once served as props in a play: a leather armband beset with glass jewels, a feathered headdress, a white fluted vase with a single silk rose erupting from it in a brilliant red comet. A tiny metal box stands next to a battered, blue-bound copy of *Webster's Unabridged English Dictionary*. Carved wooden horses stand here and there—they appear to serve as tiny guardians for this eclectic library.

My teacher sits behind his cluttered desk, reading the morning paper. He glances up. "I hope this is a good place for us to work," he says. No other introduction, though we haven't seen each other in years.

"It works for me," I say. This office is obviously a sanctuary for the imagination, and therefore a fitting place to begin the task at hand. "Will it work for you?"

Bill grins. "I'm not sure. I've never written a book before."

"It's easy," I say, "if you know where you want to begin. Let's take a moment to introduce you." I reach into my bag for a micro-cassette recorder, which I click on and place on Bill's desk. "First of all, why do you want to write this book? What do you want to say?"

Bill thinks for a long moment. Then he says, "I've been very fortunate to devote the past forty years of my life to continuing Sandy Meisner's legacy. In that time it's been my great pleasure—and fascination—to refine his technique and, in some cases, to extend it. I apprenticed myself to Sandy for seventeen years when he was at the peak of his career. Then I worked nearly thirty years more to experiment with the technique, distill it, and apply it to areas Sandy wasn't able to, like the classics, for instance. Plays with heightened language. Sandy loved style and theatricality, but

he never had the time to work in these areas in any extensive way as a teacher.”

“For a moment,” I say, “let me play devil’s advocate. There are lots of acting teachers out there. What have you got to say that’s so special?”

Bill nods. “These days most people who call themselves acting teachers do so because they offer helpful hints and anecdotes to performers who are desperate for real instruction. I don’t consider that teaching. The way I see it, very few teachers have done what Lee Strasberg and Sandy did; very few teachers have developed a concrete, step-by-step approach to training a truly creative actor—a system that takes an artist as raw material and builds the skills necessary for him to excel at his art from the ground up.

“Craft—technique, if you will—is vitally important to art, but so many people don’t understand it. The biggest misconception I hear about acting technique is that it restricts the artist’s talent. Ridiculous! Ultimately technique does not constrain the artist’s instincts; it frees them.”

“How does this apply to Meisner Technique?”

“Learning to act is very much like building a house. First you have to pick a spot to build and clear the land. Then you must dig a good foundation and shore it up against the elements. These are the very first stages; perhaps they’re also the most important stages. If the foundation of a house isn’t properly laid, the entire structure will eventually collapse under its own weight during the first good wind. In Meisner Technique, we uphold this analogy by practicing a regimen of exercises which create foundation, a stable floor upon which we build our craft.”

“You generally work with actors over a two-year period,” I say. “In terms of this training, how do you lay the foundation?”

“Utilizing the Meisner approach,” Bill says, “my students spend the entire first year of their training developing themselves into

truthful acting instruments. If you like, you could say that this first year is all about training the actor in the basic skills required for professional acting.”

“I’ll play devil’s advocate again,” I say. “A lot of acting schools consider the basic skills for acting to be voice, speech, and movement. What do you believe?”

Bill waves his hand. “Voice, speech, and movement are external skills. Very important to acting, yes. But not so important that you study them to the neglect of an actor’s inner life—his emotional core. An actor without an emotional core is like a cardboard cutout of a human being.

“These days the most common piece of advice you hear people telling a young actor is ‘Be yourself.’ Of course, this leads the actor to ask the next, inevitable question: ‘Who am I?’ The way I see it, until an actor learns to work from the core of his own truth, all the voice, speech, and movement training in the world will only succeed in creating a highly skilled puppet. I don’t want to train automatons. I want to develop actors who are unique! Who are alive!

“Painters make their art from brushes, canvas, and hues. Sculptors work in clay and bronze, stone, and plaster. Writers use pens and paper—lately they use computers. Musicians have their instruments. But what does an actor use to create his art? Some would say nothing, but this isn’t true. In fact, the actor has the most complicated instrument of all—*himself*! His experiences, his imagination, his sensitivity. His physical body and his observations. Everything that makes up the sum total of a person’s humanity is part of the actor’s instrument. As Eleonora Duse once said, ‘All that I have to offer as an artist is the revelation of my soul.’”

“That sounds a lot like Stanislavsky,” I say. “Why not simply use his work?”

MY TWO CHINAS: THE MEMOIR OF A CHINESE COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY by
Baiqiao Tang and Damon DiMarco (Prometheus Books/Rowan & Littlefield, 2011)

to a desolate area and began to interrogate her.

My sister was alone, a teenager, and terrified. One of the policemen pulled his sidearm out of its holster, a big Type 54 semiautomatic, the Chinese copy of a Russian Tokarev. He threatened my sister with the gun, then put it beside her ear and fired it. Yan Hong gave up the money after that. And something inside her changed. She'd been such a wonderful girl, bubbly and extroverted. She was never really the same after that. What few words she spoke were issued quickly and always in a low voice.

The cadres would also instigate prisoners to attack me physically. Some of my cell mates stood with me at first, but even their patronage started to wane when they realized they would be beaten, too, for the crime of lending support. Soon, I was out of champions.

One occasion sticks out in my memory. Seven or eight of the toughest inmates turned on me at once. Two of them were murderers, famed throughout Changsha. They beat me so badly, I couldn't move for more than a week to come. I complained about these assaults. My jailers shrugged and nodded and moved me to a different cell where it soon became clear that my new cell mates had been told to keep right on beating me.

During all this, I was constantly denied medical treatment. The wardens said they could do nothing for me since—as I'd been told in Jiangmen—I hadn't yet been arrested formally. I was still a detainee and therefore not entitled to the rights of a full-fledged prisoner. As a detainee, said the wardens, my interrogations and incarceration were considered part of “performing one's civic duty.”

They were government stooges one and all, willing to do whatever was asked of them, and small wonder. The bar for prison employees is very low in China. Quite often the most brutish and uneducated people end up working in the penal system. As far as I could see, the wardens and guards tortured people for two main reasons. First: to

vent frustration over their own pathetic lot in life. Second: to create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, which thereby allowed them to maintain better control over the prisoner population.

During the period I was incarcerated, prison officials favored the widespread use of electric batons. These weapons first appeared in the hands of Chinese law enforcement during the mid-1980s. By 1989, they were standard issue for all police, who plied them however they wished. The central authorities had drafted regulations governing the use of electric batons, but, like most Chinese laws, these regulations were nothing more than characters written in books. No one actually followed them.

Many times, I would watch the guards order a man to kneel. "Straighten your back!" the guards would bark. "Face the wall! Hands up high! Palms on the wall!"

The prisoner did as he was told, as if he had a choice.

The guard would then flip the switch to power on his baton and touch it against the metal cell door. Sparks would fly. There'd be a sinister crackling sound. The prisoner would be terrified, a natural reaction. The guard would then enter the cell and poke the back of the prisoner's neck, shocking him, burning him, making him scream, making him turn away. But the moment he moved, he had broken the order to remain frozen. So the guard would beat him severely, then ply the electric baton about the prisoner's mouth or his ears. Which, of course, made the prisoner flinch away, and so the cycle repeated itself.

Usually, this kept going until the prisoner passed out, whether from fear or pain or shock, the result was always the same. If the prisoner showed special fortitude, the guard would simply hold his baton against the prisoner's skin to inflict a burn that crackled and smoked, producing a smell that was sweet, like sugar in fire. Melting flesh twisted like sweat-soaked silk, marking the man forever. If

necessary, another body part was selected, and the burning was repeated. In prison jargon, this process was called *dianliao*, or “electro-curing therapy.”

Another technique the guards used was *gui bian* or “down-on-knees whipping.” Evidently, this practice was peculiar to Changsha jails. During my time in Chinese prisons, I met a lot of men who’d been incarcerated in other facilities. None of them had seen *gui bian* practiced anywhere else but Changsha.

Gui bian involved role play. The guard played the part of the parent. The prisoner took the role of the child. The guard would say, “Pull down your trousers! Kneel, and face the wall!”

The prisoner took the same posture he’d assumed for the rite of *dian-liao*, only this time with his buttocks bared. The official then plied a bamboo switch that measured two feet long. He would slice it into the prisoner’s flesh, causing great pain and humiliation, but all in the name of good theater. This was the torture part of the act. The guard who played the part of the punishing parent would say, “Ho ho! Are you well-behaved?” Plying his switch with a *whack whack whack!*

The prisoner would cry out, “Yes, sir! I am!”

“Oh, yes?” said the guard. *Whack whack whack!* “If you’re so well-behaved, then why am I whipping you, hmmm?” *Whack whack!*

“Yes, sir!” the prisoner would cry. “Perhaps it’s true! I’m badly behaved!”

“Aha!” the guard would say. *Whack whack whack!* “Badly behaved, is that what you say? Well, well! In that case, I’ll whip you some more!”

I watched the toughest men I had known beg for mercy when treated like this. Men who had terrorized whole city districts. Thugs with heads like iron ingots, their knuckles as knobby as ancient trees,

their guts layered in muscle and fat, with arms as thick as prize-winning hams. One and all, they fell and wept like babies. They promised the guards they would henceforth obey their every word, their every command, their every filthy syllable. But it wasn't over yet. God, no. Like all good theater pieces, a finale had to be reached. When the prisoner finally broke, when his sobs were enough to make other men weep, one of the *laotou yuba* would rise and offer the prisoner sage advice.

“Say, ‘Thank you kindly, Mr. Cadre.’”

Which the prisoner would repeat, gasping as though this surrender were air itself, sweet in his lungs. At which point the cadre would often bow, a Shakespearean actor finishing *Lear*. He would exit the cell. Was the punishment finished? No. Not yet. The prisoner was left to endure a second, more powerful agony: the dawning realization that he could no longer sit or lie down. His beaten flesh would not allow him comfort in any position at all. Sometimes his buttocks bore permanent scars—a further humiliation, but also indelible testimony. The broken man had been marked for life, tagged as a recidivist, a fact the guards would exploit at will whenever they wished to dine on stale meat.

Another form of punishment was *liao quan jiao*, or martial arts practice. Technically, it was illegal for guards to punch or kick a prisoner. But during my time in the jails of Changsha, there were several young guards who loved nothing more than to bludgeon their captives senseless. Many were local yokels hired as temporary personnel. They had no training in law enforcement, not that this matters in China.

Guards who practiced *liao quan jiao* were dubbed with the moniker *sha*, or “killer.” For instance, I recall one guard whose name was Luo Jian. We called him Luo *Sha*, or Killer Luo. Luo *Sha* would beat a prisoner for no good reason at all. Staring through the bars, he would point out a man at random and call him to come to the door.

The prisoner would approach and stand before him, trembling, with sweat rolling down his face. Killer Luo would make small talk, asking about the man's family. Then he'd spin and strike without warning at all, dropping the man to his knees.

I once saw Killer Luo tell a prisoner to kneel down and face the wall. The moment the man had assumed the position, Luo *Sha* spun around and landed a flying drop kick straight to the small of the prisoner's spine. To this day, I confess my surprise. It's a miracle that the prisoner wasn't paralyzed. As it was, he couldn't move for two weeks. All things considered, a small price to pay.

Not that Luo *Sha* would have cared. He always remained nonchalant. His first strike done, he might walk around, talking with other prison guards, discussing the weather, gossip, news. Then he'd amble back to the man he had kicked, always in his own time. He'd repeat the kick again and again until he felt that he needed a break, or the prisoner collapsed, whichever came first. After which, Killer Luo would leave, his practice for that day finished. Curiously, he only struck with his feet. To this day, I can't say for certain why, but some of us thought that Luo *Sha* feared he would bruise his knuckles if he ever used them in "combat."

Not all the guards were so rabid, though. There was one I remember, a man called Number Two Officer Yang. Yang was also dubbed *sha*, but he was much more gentlemanly when practicing *liao quan jiao*. Yang would always pick a fight before he beat up a prisoner. It was such an odd thing for a guard to do, my cell mates and I had to wonder. Why was Killer Yang so tender? We thought it must have to do with his station. After all, Killer Yang was only a Number Two Officer, the low man on the totem pole. Perhaps if he ever rose through the ranks, his tenderness would evaporate. Perhaps then he would start to strike without warning, adopting the habits of Luo *Sha*, his superior.

TOWER STORIES: AN ORAL HISTORY OF 9/11 by Damon DiMarco (various publishers, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2021)

30 TOWER STORIES

and he told us, "Wait a moment, then follow me." But none of us waited. We saw that open stairwell and went for it.

Apparently, there were two Operations guys who came up looking for people. That's what someone told me later on, but I only saw the one. One went down the stairs from our floor and the other guy went up. I assume they were checking to see if they could open more stairwells.

I found out later that the guy who headed downstairs lived. The guy who went upstairs didn't. Later on, I saw a television show on The Learning Channel, and I think I recognized the guy who went up as the Head of Operations, a Port Authority guy.¹

We started down the stairs. There was nobody on them, it was eerie. There were only 11 of us—five from my office, five from Kosmo, and the elderly guy.

Later on, we were told that everyone else on our floor had been killed.



We reached the 82nd floor and someone said that the stairwell was blocked. We'd have to cut across the building and find another pathway down. So we opened the door to the 82nd floor and started walking around, looking for another stairwell.

Eighty-two was completely devastated. The smoke was so thick, you couldn't see your hand in front of your face. And the burning smell . . . I'll still occasionally catch a whiff of it for no apparent reason. Something tangy and pungent, similar to burning rubber. The floor was covered with piles of debris, collapsed plaster walls, and big chunks of metal that looked like beams.

Somebody in our group got the idea to light our way through by turning their cell phone on and off. This little green light would come on in the black smoke and the phone's owner would wave it through the

¹ From other interview accounts in this book, it is likely that this man was Frank DeMartini. Mr. Martini worked closely with Rick Zotola at Lesley E. Robertson Associates. See Rick Zotola in the "Ground Zero and the Volunteers" section of this book.

air and around fallen objects so that we could see where they were and crawl through them.

Fire surrounded us everywhere but you still couldn't see anything. You could only see the fire when you got right on top of it. It was extremely hot. The sprinklers had popped on here, too, so we were drenched. Fire emergency strobes would flash but we really couldn't see them through the obscurity of debris.

When we got to the next stairwell, we started down again, and now we began to see people; occasionally, we'd pass somebody going down. We didn't stop for them, we kept to the course and we kept to ourselves. We were tired and scared and very determined.



When we got to the 78th floor Sky Lobby,² we encountered a railing of sorts, a long hallway that allowed us to keep going without actually venturing out onto 78. And at the end of this hallway were two doors, standing side by side. Two guys were standing in front of them and they were yelling at each other.

One door said "EXIT" on it with a sign pointing down, and one man was saying that they should follow that sign, the sign showed the way. But the other man yelled, "No. I've done this before. This other door goes to the bottom. If you take the stairs with the EXIT sign, you'll have to cross the building again."

"I'm following the sign, I'm following the sign!" said the one guy.

And the other guy said: "You do what you want, I'm going this way."

They were very angry and I didn't recognize either of them.

I was in the front of our group at this point. Somehow we'd lost the people from Kosmo Services, so there was just the five from our office and the elderly gentleman. I said, "I'm following this guy if he says this

² A Sky Lobby was a sort of dock that increased office space without having to put in more elevators. There were elevator banks at the base of each Tower that would go direct to the Sky Lobbies on 78 or 44. From there, you would take a local elevator to the floor you worked on.

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door leads to the ground." Not the guy who followed the sign, but the guy who said, "I've done this before."

And that's the way we went.



We entered another stairwell but this one was flooded. Water was rushing ankle-deep in a constant flow down the stairs from the sprinklers or maybe from broken pipes. At some points the flow was so heavy you had to hold on tight to the railing. It was incredibly hot and we were soaking wet.

In the stairwells, you'd see items that had been discarded by fleeing people. A pair of shoes, a tie, a briefcase. As if someone had said, "Screw this, I don't need this tie anymore," and tossed it.

We encountered a lot more people around floor 50. Before that, we'd seen small groups here and there, but there were actual crowds on 50. People were yelling out their floor number as they went down in order to let people know who was evacuating. Not once did we hear any number higher than our floor.

A few people were stopping to drink Cokes, soft drinks, and water from jugs. I heard someone call out, "Does anyone want a Dr Pepper?" Uh uh. Were they kidding? We didn't stop for anything or anybody. Actually, that's not true. A couple of elderly women were having trouble getting down the stairs at one point where the water was serious. We helped them get past that area.

We weren't abandoning anyone but we also weren't allowing how tired we felt to affect our mission, which was to get the five of us the hell out of there.



We'd been walking down the stairwell two by two all along but this started to break up around the 50th floor since, occasionally, someone would come up the stairs—a building manager or an occasional EMT.

When this happened, we had to shuffle ourselves around to make room so they could pass. By the 30th floor, so many people were coming up that we were down to proceeding single file.

And on the 30th floor, we saw the first fireman. He had his full gear on and a hose over his shoulder. I couldn't believe he had the energy to walk up the steps with a load like that. He looked exhausted, ready to drop. He took his helmet off and someone poured water into it. Then he put the helmet back on his head with the water still in it and kept climbing.

It was devastatingly hot.

People weren't panicked on the stairs. No one was pushing. Everyone seemed friendly and calm. I guess we all thought that, by getting to the stairs, we'd be safe. We'd get out. After all, the fire was behind us. It was just a matter of keep walking, keep walking. At that point, we still didn't know what kind of devastation had taken place.

The line was moving slow but the water was moving fast. As we got lower and lower, you had to hold onto the brackets that held the banister to the wall. The force of the water was that powerful.



"Fish Out of Water" by Tom Haddad. Tom says that none of his drawings have anything to do with his experience on 9/11.



At about the 3rd floor we found a woman sitting in a chair by the stairwell doorway. She had two firemen by her side and she was in hysterics, saying that she couldn't go anymore, she absolutely could not walk anymore.

The firemen were saying to her, "Please. You have to keep walking. You only have three floors to go . . ."

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Two regular office guys moved past us carrying a person in a wheelchair via a board slung between the wheels.

A door opened out onto the plaza level. Technically, this was floor two, the courtyard between the two Towers. The Trade Center really had two ground levels, this plaza level and the true ground level at the bottom of the escalators.

I saw that the huge glass windows of the plaza were still intact and there was a line of police officers stretching all the way back. The police were shouting to us, "Don't look out the window! Just keep walking! Go!"

And at this point, the five of us got separated. Frances and Sabrina had gotten ahead of us in the stairwell and were lost from sight, but I was still with Lynn and Evan.



A guy walked past me and started through the plaza. He was bald and had a massive head wound that stretched all the way over his skull from temple to temple. It was pouring blood onto his white dress shirt.

A cop yelled out to him, "Hey, buddy are you okay?" and ran forward from the line.

The bald guy had a heavy, matter-of-fact New York accent, and he said, "Yeah. I've had better days."

Then the cops suddenly started yelling, "If you have the energy, run! If you can, you gotta run!"

Lynn took off running down toward the escalator.

I turned my head and looked, just like they'd told us not to. And time stopped dead for me, like it had immediately after the plane's impact. It's tough to describe. I was still walking, but I was completely hypnotized by what I saw going on through the windows in the plaza outside the building.

The Sphere³ had been smashed. It had a huge dent in it and a piece of the building on top of it. A large chunk of the building façade had

³ Sculpture by artist Fritz Koenig. A huge gold sphere made of steel and bronze, created in 1971 as a monument to world peace through international trade.

landed right outside the window and was blazing fire. And occasionally you'd hear these devastatingly loud *thumps*. At the time, I thought they came from more falling pieces of the building. It didn't register, but there were hunks and piles of meat all over the ground . . . nothing I recognized as body parts. Later on, I found out they were the remains of jumpers.

Somehow I kept walking and got to the top of the escalator leading down to the concourse level.

The escalator wasn't working, it had stopped so we climbed down as if it were a flight of stairs. The bottom steps were knee-deep with water. All the glass leading out of the concourse was broken. All the revolving doors? Broken. The floor was covered in glass.

Here, the staggered line of police officers was directing traffic past the PATH⁴ station, around a corner by the A train to another escalator up to the plaza level. We exited to the Trade Center campus. I think we were on Church Street, just Lynn, Evan, and myself.

And here there were more police officers and they were yelling, "Don't look up, just keep going!" Which is, of course, exactly when I decided to look up. I hadn't even thought to do it until they'd said *not* to. That's when I saw we were standing directly in front of Building 2. I was looking straight up at a gaping hole with fire coming out of it, the same thing you've probably seen on the news.

We decided to walk across the street.

In front of an iron gate surrounding a church, Lynn said, "Whatever you guys do, don't leave me. I don't have any money or identification. I left my purse upstairs."⁵ She was very nervous. We all were. At this point, Evan hadn't really said anything, but he's a pretty quiet guy.

Then I heard a sound, like a creaking. Almost like when you have an upstairs neighbor and they're walking around, the beams in the ceiling squeak and squeal. Sort of like that, but really, really loud. And then it was thunder. I turned around and saw the building was coming down. We were only a block away.

The three of us ran in different directions.

⁴ Port Authority Trans-Hudson Corporation. A series of trains connecting points in New Jersey, notably Hoboken, to stations scattered throughout Lower Manhattan.

⁵ The church mentioned here was probably St. Paul's.

The Critical Hour: Lose Weight by Thinking ... and Only for an Hour a Day!

I'll never forget the shock I felt when I learned these important statistics.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:

- The average American spends about 9.75 hours a day conducting personal care. This category includes sleeping.
- That leaves about 14 hours a day for all other life activities to take place, such as working, making telephone calls, purchasing goods, spending time with our loved ones, pursuing educational activities, and so on.
- Within these 14 hours a day, the average American spends 71 minutes—just over an hour—eating and drinking.

That's right. Take a look at that last point again. **Each day, the average American devotes only 71 minutes—basically an hour—to eating and drinking.**

This point becomes crucial as we strive to lose weight. You'll hear me say time and again, shedding pounds and getting fit begins with a basic mathematical formula: calories in and calories out. But now, thanks to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the "in" side of our equation is more quantifiable than ever.

Think of it this way. **For most of us, our eating habits contribute to our being overweight. So the best way we can start to lose weight is to reevaluate our habits, but this is simpler than it may seem. We don't have to stay hyper focused all the time. We just have to pay attention for about 71 minutes a day.**

That's really good news.

When I tried to lose weight in the past, and failed, I galumphed through every moment of every day worried about how I was going to achieve my goals. From the moment I woke up to the moment I went to bed each day, I was anxious about how my program was going. Would I reach my goals or not? I was always rating myself on

my performance. If a negative thought entered my mind, I would chastise myself and feel miserable for not having the right kind of willpower to succeed.

Days and weeks went by like this until, finally, exhausted, I fell off the wagon. I simply gave up and went back to old habits.

No wonder I never lost weight! I was being too hard on myself. I should have worked smarter, not harder. **Everything started to change for me when I focused not on 24 hours a day but on those 71 minutes a day I spent putting calories into my body.**

I call those 71 minutes the Critical Hour. And during the Critical Hour, I changed my thinking. I asked myself questions like:

- **What foods are available to me now?** In other words, what choices can I make about what I eat?
- **Which of the foods that are available to me are the healthiest?** Meaning they will provide me with calories that fit in my goals while also providing me nutrients that will give me the energy I need to be outstanding.
- **If I don't like the choices available to me, what preparations can I make for the next day so that I feel comfortable that I'm getting what I need to meet my goals?**

And so on.

In his excellent book, "The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari," author Robin S. Sharma writes, "When you control your thoughts, you control your mind. When you control your mind, you control your life. And once you reach the stage of being in total control of your life, you become the master of your destiny."

This is so true, and it all begins with our thoughts. Not all of our thoughts, please understand. Again, that would be exhausting. **From now on, try changing your thoughts around food for just 71 minutes a day.** Don't be surprised if this starts creating massive change in your life.

Here's to your health, wealth, and happiness.



Today is Your Monday

Has this ever happened to you? You feel upset with yourself over your weight. Your body isn't moving the way it used to. Your blood pressure's up and so's your cholesterol. Your doctor frowns at you whenever you enter the office. They tell you something's got to give, and soon. Like you didn't already know that. You no longer fit in your clothes. Heck, you don't even feel comfortable in your own skin.

You know it's time to lose weight. You even imagine you can do it. You've just got to start.

"Monday," you tell yourself. "I'll just do it Monday."

But Monday never comes. Or rather it comes and you don't do anything about it.

On Monday, you roll out of bed the same way. You eat the same things for breakfast and go through the same routine all day. Monday rolls into Tuesday at which point you remember you've got to lose weight, you start to beat yourself up over not following through on your plan. So you set your sights on Monday again. "Next week," you tell yourself. "Monday. That's when I'll start."

Guess what happens on Monday? You got it. Nothing. This starts the cycle of inaction all over again. But now it only makes things worse.

Plenty of studies have been done on the subject of procrastination.

[\[Why Wait? The Science Behind Procrastination – Association for Psychological Science – APS\]](#)

Most of them conclude that people who procrastinate might experience short term emotional relief from stress. In the long term, however, their stress piles up. The preponderance of it squashes them under its weight until the doorway to a possible new outcome, which once stood open to them, seems closed.

I've seen this behavior countless times in my life as a financial advisor. It's basically the same principle. A client would rather buy something frivolous—a car they don't need, new clothes they'll never wear, a trip they can't afford—rather than spend that money on an investment that will eventually blossom into a fortune.

The trick to overcoming procrastination is to visualize the long-term gain and focus on that over short-term gains. When it comes to weight loss, it means waking up every day and actively imagining yourself at your ideal weight. See yourself doing fun activities with the people you love. Feel yourself looking in the mirror and smiling at the person you see because they look happy and healthy.

Don't pay the price of procrastination. Purchasing procrastination never gives you anything of real value. Instead, pay the price of committing to your weight loss goals. Believe me, this investment will pay dividends you won't believe—and then some.

So what are you waiting for? Don't look at the calendar. Today is your Monday. Every day is your Monday. Choose life. Choose you.

Here's to your health, wealth, and happiness.



Losing Weight Put My Diabetes into Remission

Back when I weighed 341 pounds, my doctor told me I had to start taking diabetes medication. I didn't like that at all. My mother, Geri, had been a diabetic. I'd watched her struggle with mood swings and energy dips all her life. It was hard to see her struggle like that. I didn't want that for me or my family. But here was my doctor telling me one of my worst nightmares.

“How long will I have to be on the meds?” I said.

“For the rest of your life,” my doctor said. Then he recommended—actually, he insisted—that I sign up for bariatric surgery. In his mind, bariatric surgery was the most reliable way for an obese person like me to lose weight.

I put my foot down. I told my doctor I wasn't doing the surgery. I knew six people who'd had it done. One of them had lost weight and kept it off. But four of them lost weight then gained it all back—plus a whole lot more. The sixth person died the day after he got the surgery.

“No way I'm doing that,” I said. But it was clear I couldn't keep living the way I was living. So I made my doctor a deal.

I would lose 100 pounds in twelve months. I had no idea how to do this but that was the promise I made. If I didn't lose 100 pounds in twelve months, I'd get the surgery. My doctor agree to this plan provided I started the diabetes medication and we checked in month by month.

That's basically where my journey began. The journey that led to me founding COMPANY NAME.

A lot of surprising and wonderful things have happened since that day. One of the best took place about six months after I started taking the meds. By that point, I had lost about 70 pounds. I went to check in with my doctor as we'd arranged. When I walked in his office, he had a tears in his eyes. He was holding a piece of paper. Instantly, I feared the worst.

“What is it?” I said.

“Ron.” My doctor's voice was choked.

“Just give it to me straight,” I said.

“Your blood work.” He waved the paper. “It shows ... you don't need the meds anymore.”

I think I just stared at him. “How can that be? **You told me I'd have to be on those meds for the rest of my life.**”

My doctor grinned. “I tell everyone that. I have to, Ron. Because most people can't be bothered to lose weight.”

Everyone's medical profile is different. Everyone's journey is different. But I'm telling you this from personal experience: mountains can be moved when we set our will on reaching a goal. Theodore Roosevelt once said, "Believe you can and you're halfway there." He was right.

Believe that you can lose weight. Believe you can take back control of your life. Believe that this moment, right now, is the start of a whole new beautiful existence that can be yours. Then go out and get it.

I promise you, if you do this, things will change, and for the better.

Here's to your health, wealth, and happiness.



If You Can Do Simple Math, You Can Lose Weight

I used to get flustered about losing weight ... until I realized there was nothing mystical about it. It was totally quantifiable. It all boiled down to simple math.

That math concerns calories. Let's define what those are.

Calories are the units of fuel that keep our bodies running. Think of it this way: we put gas in our cars by the gallon, we put fuel in our bodies by the calorie. It's as simple as that.

Each day, we burn a certain amount of calories just by breathing, thinking, and letting our hearts beat constantly in the background. As we sleep or do passive activities, like when we sit around watching TV, we burn around 1 calorie per minute. If that's all we did for an entire day, we'd burn about 1,440 calories.

Obviously, most people are more active than that. Even people we would call couch potatoes walk around their workplace talking to colleagues. They stroll through a grocery store shopping for food. Maybe once a week they go out and mow the lawn or pull weeds in their garden. By accounting for simple activities like these, **the calorie count for an average adult human arrives at 2,000 per day.** Please notice that I

specified adults. Since their bodies are constantly changing, the average count for kids ranges between 1,600 and 2,200.

Let's stick with adults for the moment. Assuming we take in 2,000 calories a day and burn off 2,000 calories a day, our weight should remain consistent. But what happens when we take in more calories than we burn off? The answer is simple. Our bodies store that excess energy as fat, and we start to gain weight.

Again, there's nothing mysterious about this process. It's math, pure and simple.

For instance, it's commonly understood that 3,500 calories equals one pound of weight. Therefore, **when we accumulate 3,500 excess calories—meaning calories that we don't burn off—our bodies will gain one pound.** However, that math can work in reverse. Meaning: **when we go into deficit by 3,500 calories, our bodies will lose one pound.**

At this point, the only thing left to do if you want to lose weight is figure out to key figures:

- How many calories are you putting into your body each day, and
- How many calories are you burning each day for fuel.

The tools that can help you figure this out are right here on this website.

Give yourself a few moments and work out the math for your typical day's calorie intake. Then ask yourself what kinds of healthier foods you can substitute for what you've been eating, foods that will get your calorie levels lower to make you fitter and more energetic. Foods that can help you lose weight.

When I first started my journey, I brought my approximately 6,000 calorie-per-day diet down to 1,700. I was amazed at how much better I felt and amazed at how quickly and easily I started losing weight.

Make sure you check with your doctor before committing to any program of weight loss. But by all means, do it. Today is your Monday.

Take this journey. You're going to love it, I promise.

Here's to your health, wealth, and happiness.





GOLDEN SOURCE[®]

Cost Estimates and Project Plan for



Executive Summary

After careful examination of the needs and objectives expressed in the Data Management/Hub and Data Warehouse Request for Proposal, GoldenSource Corporation proposes that Aviva Capital Management license and implement the GoldenSource Enterprise EDM Suite, along with the GoldenSource Connection Suites for Bloomberg BackOffice/Per Security, Interactive Data FTS, and Markit Red.

With its three constituent, integrated applications, the EDM Suite is a remarkably close fit with the guiding principles, functionality, and non-functional requirements described in your RFP. The selected GoldenSource Connections will enable ACM to integrate several industry-leading data sources quickly and effectively.

As an established vendor of enterprise-class financial data management solutions, GoldenSource brings more than 20 years of research, development, and staff experience to bear on implementations such as yours every day. We are confident that a careful examination of our data coverage, system functionality, scalable architecture, and best-of-breed support will demonstrate our unique potential for effective and mutually successful partnership with your firm.

As of now, a date for project completion and the total cost for the proposed venture cannot be calculated. This is because such estimates rely on a number of variables that require clarification during our preliminary implementation analysis. Please know that we sincerely look forward to addressing these issues at a more advanced point in your selection process. For now, we have included rough prices and costs for product licensing and implementation in subsequent sections of this document.

Understanding and Background

After carefully reviewing your Data Repository RFP, GoldenSource has identified a number of familiar objectives which we can easily support. These include:

Best-of-class data coverage, including:

- Broad, “out-of-the-box” data universe
- Easy creation of user-defined fields
- Extensibility in support of proprietary entities
- Flexible design in support of complex and as-yet undefined instruments and products

Easy integration with existing source and consuming systems, including:

- “Out-of-the-box” interfaces with external source systems
- Easy creation of interfaces to downstream consuming applications
- Multiple integration points (message-based APIs, FTP, etc.)
- Service-oriented architecture paradigm

Highly-automated data lifecycle management (with “exceptions-only manual intervention”), including:

- Fully-automated data acquisition including “pull” and “push” modes
- Automated and configurable transformation and normalization
- Automated and configurable validation
- Rules-driven and configurable data distribution
- Intuitive user-interface for exception repair, review, and approval
- Workflow integration

Scalable, state-of-the-art architecture, including:

- Standards-based application server
- Dynamic load balancing
- Industry standard security and authentication, messaging, and transaction control
- Distributable, multi-node application environment

GoldenSource Corporation is the industry leader in Enterprise Data Management solutions. Our firm has committed over 20 years and more than \$250 million to developing a proven solution for requirements such as those listed here. Our staff includes 20-year veterans as well as next-generation technology experts. Our high-volume system was designed from the ground up to support high volume, multi-instrument, multi-currency operations, and is currently in production at over 30 major financial firms the world over.

The goals identified by ACM are both familiar to us and achievable in partnership with us. We have provided responses to the questionnaires and checklists in the original document included in this delivery. Additionally, you will find a number of supporting documents which we referenced throughout our RFP responses, a list of which can be found on the first page of the transmittal letter above.

Charges for the Required Products and Services

Section 1 – Vendor Provided

Application Software

Initial costs (Summary)

In the list below, we have provided summary-level information for the license fees associated with the Applications, Connections, and Tools included in our proposal. Several of these fees assume discounts available when a customer licenses an entire suite. In the Detail list, which follows the Summary list, we have included all line-item level fees at full list price.

Product		Discounted License Fees* (USD)
GoldenSource Enterprise Data Management Suite	\$	██████████
GoldenSource Securities & Products		
GoldenSource Customer & Counterparties		
GoldenSource Transaction & Positions		
GoldenSource Connections		
Suite for Bloomberg BackOffice & Per-Security		██████████
Suite for Interactive Data FTS	\$	██████████
Markit Red	\$	██████████
GoldenSource Tools		
Workstation Developer	\$	██████████
Extension Table Developer	\$	██████████
Total	\$	██████████


* Purchase of the full EDM Suite (all three applications) entitles the customer to a ██████ discount on license fees for applications and tools. Purchase of any Connection suite entitles the customer to a discount (varying by product) on the per-data-product fees for the products included in the suite. Purchase of the entire Bloomberg BO Connections Suite entitles the customer to a fee waiver on the associated BO Pricing and CO Corporate Actions add-ons for Bloomberg packages.

Initial costs (Detail)

Product		Line Item License Fees (USD)	Discounted License Fees* (USD)
GoldenSource Enterprise Data Management Suite			\$ [REDACTED]
GoldenSource Securities & Products	\$	[REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]
GoldenSource Customer & Counterparties	\$	[REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]
GoldenSource Transaction & Positions	\$	[REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]
GoldenSource Connections			
Suite for Bloomberg BackOffice & Per-Security			[REDACTED]
Bloomberg BackOffice Infrastructure (file downloads and processing)	\$	[REDACTED]	
Bloomberg Per Security Infrastructure (Request-Reply processing)	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO Global Equity	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO Global Equity Options	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO Global Warrants	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO Global Mutual Funds	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO Global Commodities and Commodity Options	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO Global Corporates	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO Global Governments/Agencies	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO Global Convertibles	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO Global Preferred	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO Mortgage Pools	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO CMO/Whole Loans/CMBS	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO ABS	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO Global Municipals	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO Global Index	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO Currencies	\$	[REDACTED]	
BO Pricing: End of Day Pricing for licensed BO / PS packages [REDACTED] of the associated BO package fee for each selected package)	\$	1 [REDACTED] (minimum)	\$ 0
BO Corporate Actions: CA Announcements for licensed BO / PS packages [REDACTED] of the associated BO package fee for each selected package)	\$	1 [REDACTED] (minimum)	\$ 0
Suite for Interactive Data FTS			\$ [REDACTED]
FTS Descriptive Data	\$	[REDACTED]	
FTS Pricing	\$	[REDACTED]	
Markit Red	\$	[REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]
GoldenSource Tools			
Workstation Developer	\$	[REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]
Extension Table Developer	\$	[REDACTED]	\$ [REDACTED]
Total Fees			\$ [REDACTED]

* Purchase of the full EDM Suite (all three applications) entitles the customer to a [REDACTED] discount on license fees for applications and tools. Purchase of any Connection suite entitles the customer to a discount (varying by product) on the per-data-product fees for the products included in the suite. Purchase of the entire Bloomberg BO Connections Suite entitles the customer to a fee waiver on the associated BO Pricing and CO Corporate Actions add-ons for Bloomberg packages.

On-going costs - schedule-based

GoldenSource base annual maintenance is  of the license price each year, due upon contract execution, (which includes 24/7 support for Severity One errors).

Golden Source has a gold level maintenance offering whereby we allocate dedicated support resources, maintain a mirror of your production site, and bundle other services. This offering is available at an annual cost of 25% of the license fee.

Event based - Major version upgrades

No additional costs are incurred so long as maintenance payments are current.

Event based - Special problem resolution

No charge is incurred so long as the problem is related to the GoldenSource supplied software (covered as part of maintenance support). Additional support for ACM-side issues is available on a time-and-materials basis.

Breakdown by component - Vendor resources

N/A, once in production.

Breakdown by component - ACM resources

The following resources would be required to participate in the implementation process, although they need not be dedicated on a full-time basis. Of the resources listed, some would migrate into becoming the ongoing maintenance team as your system moves into production. Such resources are noted with the word 'Ongoing' in their role description.

Technical Resources

- System Administrator – needs root access at times and help with the file systems
- Oracle DBA – needs to create table spaces, change INIT.ORA settings, and general Database care while handling maintenance
- Nominated GS Technical Expert – (**Ongoing**) this resource becomes your resident GS operational and maintenance expert