

Conversations with Bob

A Timeless, Entertaining Dialogue
for Living an Extraordinary Life

STEVE RIZZO



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The Choices You Make

"I believe that we are solely responsible for our choices, and we have to accept the consequences of every deed, word, and thought throughout our lifetime."

– ELISABETH KUBLER-ROSS

themselves than I could ever come up with. Self-enforcing prisons. Mental and emotional torture they inflict upon themselves, such as guilt, jealousy, anger, self-doubt, fear and a host of other negative emotions. No, my friend, I don't punish and I don't judge. But I do give you countless opportunities to learn from your mistakes, to view them from a healthier perspective and to correct your errors."

"You don't judge people?"

"No, I don't judge. I simply observe, listen to prayers, show the way and guide through countless ways. The rest is pretty much up to the individual. You're not being punished for your mistakes, Bernie. Your life isn't working because of the way you view your mistakes and how you perceive your challenges. You're punishing yourself because you feel hopeless, and you feel hopeless because you don't believe in yourself and in the process of life. And you don't truly believe in me, because you don't know how I operate or how the laws of the universe work."

"I see," says Bernie. "I'm my own worst mental enemy. Anything else?"

"Yeah. You give up too easily."

Bernie throws his hands up. "I can't help it if life keeps throwing me dead ends!"

"Let me reply to that by asking you a question. When you're driving your car and you come to a dead end, what's the next logical choice to make?"

Bernie thinks for a second. "Besides making sure that I'm not being surrounded by zombies? Recalculate my GPS system, choose an alternate route, turn around and move in that direction."

"Exactly! It doesn't make sense to just sit in your car and whine. You simply choose another way to your destination, whatever or wherever that may be – and if that doesn't work, you choose another way. And you keep choosing until you get to where you want to go."

“So, a dead end is life’s way of saying ‘please choose another way?’”

“Absolutely! Unless, of course, you choose to view it as a dead end. Then you’re left with a different set of circumstances.” Bob leans forward suddenly and says, “Bernie, pay close attention here. I want you to get this. Adversity isn’t a punishment. If anything, it’s a blessing.”

“*Adversity is a blessing?* Now we’re in illogical territory again. Millions of people pray for blessings every day, and what I’m hearing is that they’re going to be heaped with even more garbage.”

“When people pray for blessings, they should pray to be helped along the way. In other words, my friend, a prayer for a blessing or for a better life is not asking that a particular situation be different – rather, it’s asking that you *see* it differently as you work your way through it. Are you following me?”

“I’m following you, Bob,” says Bernie.

Bob continues. “Adversity is necessary in order for you to grow. You were put on Earth to experience, learn, grow and become the person you are meant to be. Adversity is necessary for any advancement. Mistakes, defeat, sickness, disasters, divorce, war, death, elevator music, traffic, in-laws, annoying and difficult people and situations. I can go on and on, but I think you get my point. It’s all there to challenge you to realize your capabilities.”

“Well, that explains a lot,” says Bernie.

“It can’t be stressed enough that the filter you view experience through ultimately determines who you become,” Bob says. “In other words, how you choose to experience what happens to you, be it good or bad, will determine what you learn. What you learn determines how you grow, and this continued growth is what shapes who and what you become. Your job, Bernie, *your responsibility*, is to