

My Journey to Spheres

The Story Behind the Story

BY GARRET BISS | GARRETBISS.COM

CAME UP WITH THE CONCEPT for *Spheres* during a workout at the Royal Air Force (RAF) gym at Camp Bastion, Afghanistan. I recall a moment of mental clarity I experienced when this idea, a possible answer to something I had been pondering, occurred to me. Fortunately, I was able to find a pencil to scratch out a rudimentary image of the Spheres on a piece of scrap paper before the idea escaped me.



Over the next months in Afghanistan, I reflected on this concept of Spheres. I was determined to figure out how it was meaningful. I kept a journal of the thoughts and connections I made that fell like puzzle pieces into this Spheres concept. And so, the first draft of this manuscript was born.

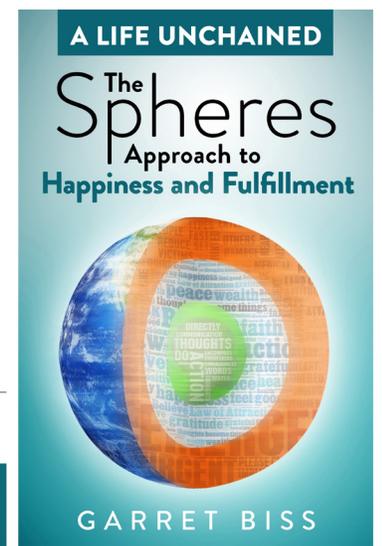
When I first attempted to capture in words what I saw for a moment in my mind, the entirety of my understanding was about the size of a single blog post. For the next three years, I continued to reflect on the Spheres, and the connections and clarity this concept brought to many ideas and lessons I had been exposed to previously.

I spent a lot of time during this deployment in 2013 reading through self-help books and watching seminar videos from Bob Proctor, Jack Canfield, Napoleon Hill, Jim Rohn, and others. I watched TED videos and attended various chapel services with pen and paper in hand. Clearly, I was no stranger to the many philosophies about happiness and life fulfillment, but all of this exposure didn't allow me to cultivate a life experience that felt as happy or fulfilling as I believed it should; there had to be an answer somewhere.

I spent months reflecting on the similarities between the varying life philosophies--the positive mental attitude ideas and techniques they each presented. Each book I read presented various ways to deal with or move beyond the "negative" things that occur in our life. I was armed with some great ideas and techniques. Now I needed a way to apply them in my life to create the effect I desired.

When I tried to reflect on all the happenings of the world in a positive way--the far off things, the near and personal things, the big things, the little things--I felt overwhelmed and became exhausted. While all the advice on finding and living a positive, happy life made sense, I wasn't able to create the feeling of happiness, purpose and satisfaction I desired.

After some great reflection, it dawned on me: I was worrying about too many things that had no relevance to me. I was allowing a flow of negative and irrelevant energy into my life. My





mind was inundated with “all the stuff,” and it made it hard to focus on “the important stuff.” It was then that my Spheres concept began to give me hope—a possible answer by changing the context of how my positive mental attitude was applied.

We didn’t have much access to TV in Afghanistan. In fact, anything we had was either a prerecorded show someone brought with them from home, or one of the few news stations we were able to stream on our computers. One recollection I have that led to this philosophy of Spheres was the news of a chemical factory explosion somewhere in the Midwest during my deployment. I noticed that nearly every office I walked into for a few days had the news streaming on at least one computer. All the reporters talked about was the destruction, devastation, loss of life and sadness that came from this tragic event. In good 24-hour news broadcast fashion, they did not shut up about it for almost a week.

With little else to distract them, I watched many coworkers staring at the news stream in fascination, like moths to a flame. This touching but very tragic story was a constant feed of negative energy into each viewer’s mind; feeding their conscious and unconscious thoughts and taking an apparent toll on everyone’s now somber and deflated moods.

This factory explosion occurred about the same time I was reading and listening to some work by Napoleon Hill. In this material, Hill was discussing the relationship between emotional vibration and the thoughts and ideas we allow into our minds. Our thoughts, Hill taught, whether good or bad, affect our emotions. These emotions, in turn, affect our thoughts, mood, actions and even our health.

I began to piece Hill’s philosophy together with the addictive stream of negative news we were being

bombarded with. I began trying to reconcile it with the ideas I was hearing about maintaining a positive mental attitude.

And that was when I started to realize that the negative stream of news we were being exposed to had absolutely zero relevance on any one of our lives in Afghanistan. With that realization, I determined that I could either expend energy trying to spin these negatives that didn’t actually affect me into positives, or I could simply turn off the TV and stop this source of negative thoughts completely.

I began to see this action of turning off the news as a metaphor for dealing with everything that doesn’t affect me. The news was no different than gossip between others, events going on thousands of miles away, or the seemingly constant stream of thoughts dedicated to a past I could no longer change or affect. Each of these things was a source of negative thoughts, which I now knew were a direct contributor to my emotional state. Instead of using what I knew about the Universal Laws to find positive thoughts and inspiration to combat these negative things on my mind, I realized I should treat them all like the news—just turn them off.

I noticed that I, like many others, was conditioned to take comfort in dwelling on negative things. It sometimes makes us feel better to think we are victims of circumstances and just doing the best we can. When our professional life isn’t going well, it is easy to blame the bad economy. When our finances are out of whack, we blame the tax situation. When we can’t get a loan, we blame the government. But all of these excuses have just one major flaw—they are just excuses. Not reality.

People in every kind of economy, good and bad, are getting rich. It’s not the conditions out there





that affect what we are or who we become; it's the circumstances much closer to home and the actions we take in spite of those conditions, not because of them, that make the difference.

This analogy of the world and its Spheres was born as I pieced these thoughts together. I realized there is only so much of the world around me that I can truly affect or influence. There is only so much of the world that truly affects my life experience. Does an unemployment rate increase affect me if I currently have a job in the military? Nope. Does a falling stock market affect my life if I don't own any stocks? Nope. Can I do something to change what the President is planning to do with foreign policy? Not likely. When I have the opportunity, I can vote for politicians who will address these problems and bring about change, but, other than that, I can't personally bring about change.

So, why live as though all these far-off things affect me? Why allow the negative emotions they inspire into my life?

Why let them steal my attention from something right before me that I can affect and influence, like my relationship with my daughter? Or how hard I work? Or the way I treat others around me?



THE MORE YOU TRY OUT a few of these concepts, the more they will become a part of who you are. Maybe you won't see the world or use these tools in the same way that I do, but you will see things in a way that helps make your life a little better, your experience a little brighter.

What more can we want from life?

That was the image that came to my mind somewhere between the dumbbell rack and the cable machine at the gym in Afghanistan. I ran to the corner and scratched out some notes on a notepad, the vision that would eventually become this book.

What makes my message different from all the other messages about positive thinking out there? Many of the ideas I discuss have been taught by others and shared for centuries. But it can get overwhelming to think of it all on that broad spectrum. To me, it is applying these ideas in the context of Spheres segregation that makes the difference.

Many thoughts and ideas will be shared in this book. Every reader will understand or experience the information and ideas a little differently; each will get something unique from the text. If you think the information is interesting, but nothing really strikes you as something that might help in your circumstances, then I appreciate your interest and your willingness to simply give it a read. If someday you meet someone who may benefit from these ideas, I hope you will share the book with them.

