WHAT ARE YOU WILLING TO RISK?

...a leap of faith across fire

A CONVERSATION WITH ARNOLD BEST · BY GISELLE HUDSON · 2019

Have you ever planned something, visualized exactly how it was going to unfold, and then experienced something totally beyond your control?

That's how it was for me when I met Arnold Best.

We were meeting at half past one at Rituals in St. Ann's. I got there at about quarter past to settle myself and set things up. I had my questions ready, had double-checked that my phone recorder was working, and had a couple of business cards on the table, and my journal.

At about twenty past I decided to grab a coffee. Trust me when I say it took me ten minutes to get my coffee (but that's another story). As I looked towards the door, there was this tall gentleman striding towards me, and I knew that this was Arnold.

A couple of weeks before our meeting, I had read this post on Arnold's Facebook page:

> *"For the past four years I've been working on a program to help people manage and strengthen their relationships with themselves and others. Finally it's done: 83 pages of practical solutions for everyone. I'm really excited about this program, so come next year, look out for it. And the best part about this program: I will be there to guide you through the full process."*

I was intrigued, because we often overlook the relationship we have with ourselves, and here was somebody who clearly realized how important that relationship is. I wanted to meet the man behind these words.

WHEN THE UNIVERSE HAS A GRANDER PLAN

So I'm sitting across from Arnold, explaining that I was going to record our chat, and that I had 11 questions, which I would ask in no particular order.

In our hour and a half together, I asked Arnold only one question from my list!

You see, sometimes you have a plan, but the Universe has an even grander plan. Often we fight tooth and nail to hold onto our plans, not recognizing when to loosen our grip and relax into the flow of what is unfolding in the moment. Thankfully I didn't fight too much, LOL.

To be honest, my logical brain wanted to get back on track with the questions, but in the end the Universe won, and it was all to my benefit.

My goal in chatting with service professionals is to see their gifts in action, and find out how they are living their lives and creating on their terms, so that others are inspired not to give up on themselves or second-guess the gifts they've been given.

Arnold took me on the ride of my life.

A BURNING DESIRE

I experienced his exhilaration when he got his US visa and was able to travel: his curiosity about the world, and his desire to learn something on every single trip he made, whether he attended a seminar or heard someone speak.

It was on one of these trips, in 2009, that he attended a Tony Robbins event, an event that literally broke his world apart and put it back together in a way that made him see and feel with more depth and more understanding than he had ever experienced.

That event cost him everything. He had US$500 at the time, and the event cost US$475. No regrets!

Back home, he made the decision to study and follow Tony. But he hit an obstacle, not unusual for folks like us, and one that keeps most of us stuck. Tony's courses started at US$10,000, roughly TT$70,000.

That's an obstacle that would knock most of us out of the game. But Arnold wanted to learn. He had, I imagine, what Napoleon Hill calls a "burning desire." A year passed, and then another. Nothing. But although it looked like nothing was happening, that first exposure to Tony Robbins had him hooked. He couldn't let go.

He researched coaches, and Tony's name kept popping up as one of the best in the world. He saw other names, like Wayne Dyer and Robin Sharma, but he felt a pull towards Tony. This is what often happens. We can't always explain it, but something draws us to a particular person, or to do a particular thing. We don't know why, yet we follow that clue.

Arnold was prepared to risk it all, to do whatever it took to learn from the man who drew him so magnetically into a future he had never imagined. He put together a list of things he could sell, and even sold his car. He was prepared to go, no matter what.

FIRE AND ICE

I walked over the coals with Arnold, to the backdrop of Hawaiian music with a familiar drumbeat that we know so well as Trinbagonians. I was in the dead of winter with him, in the basement of the hotel. I experienced the vibes that he did... the heat... I saw Tony as he saw Tony, encouraging and beckoning us forward.

> *"You've come from so far. You have to get this done."*

The night was appropriately called Fire & Ice: stepping off the hot coals and onto ice. And once Arnold crossed those six feet of coals, barefoot, his life transformed.

At that point he understood that there was more to him than the little boy from Morvant who didn't have an easy life, but refused to let life dictate who he should be and how he should "do" his life.

By the time Arnold connected with Tony, he had left a comfortable, well-paying job to pursue his goal of becoming a coach.

Tony was using the walk over coals as a metaphor for fear. For Arnold, though, it wasn't about fear. It was his freedom.

My pores raised, and I cried.

Arnold left everything and went because he knew there was more to him. He was searching, and as is oft quoted in books and sermons, he sought and he found.

Coaching was alien to him, but he knew he wanted what Tony was sharing, and he was intent on giving back just as Tony had shared: all the knowledge, all the secrets, all the processes.

THE SPOTLIGHT TURNS

Riveted, I wasn't even sure when it happened, but now the spotlight was on me.

"If you could choose a superhero, who would that be?" he asked.

I immediately thought of Spider-Man, but I just liked Spidey. I wasn't really inspired by his tingly senses or his ability to leap from building to building.

Seeing my difficulty, he asked me if there was someone in my life I admired.

Ahhh, that was easy: my eldest brother Derek, of course, though until that point I hadn't really thought about it. I love his coolness under pressure and how well he has done for himself.

> *"Learn, Giselle... learn... take it apart... look at it... and learn from him."*

LEARNING TO TRUST THE PROCESS

Four days of intense training with ex-Navy SEALs helped Arnold learn to manage his emotions and his energy. He needed it, because after his first Robbins experience he required structure: he was now seeing and feeling things like never before.

Arnold doesn't consider himself special. He just learned a new approach to life. With his ego at bay, he realized that he could teach others and influence lives.

He was never a reader or a writer, but on one occasion he followed a Universal wink into a bookstore, bought a journal and a pen, and wrote for an entire trip from Houston to Trinidad, non-stop. He remembered stories he had forgotten. He saw himself in a way he never had before.

At that point, Arnold started to help his friends and family. The feedback was positive, but he felt they were mamaguying him. It wasn't until a stint at UWI that he realized he was adding value and his process was working.

Over a drink of Alizé with a client, he listened as she told him of a job offer she had received in the USA. This from someone whose marriage had run its course, who never saw herself living anywhere but Trinidad and Tobago, but who, like Arnold did with Tony, gave herself over to Arnold's process. Not always willingly, but she listened and allowed him to guide her, because after all, he showed up the day after she had prayed for help.

Stories like hers help Arnold see that what he is doing is working, in the living, breathing lives of those who get to experience Best.

GETTING "ARNOLDED"

Arnold has had many client success stories. His style combines knowledge sharing and questions that make you dig deep, with a dash of Arnold, who really sees the person in front of him and is not afraid to tell them what he sees.

Sometimes it can be startling, like when he asked me: "Why yuh helping people? Dais how you get paid? To help people?"

I chuckled nervously and repeated the question aloud. "Yuh owe somebody something?" he asked. "Beside the helping part? What business yuh doing now?" Again, a nervous chuckle from me. "Where you making the money?"

Long story short: I was "Arnolded." Question after question, digging deeper and deeper, until we struck gold. My gold. This was my walking-across-the-hot-coals moment:

I am a messenger. I meet people. I tell their stories. Loving, angry, sad, happy... I do this for you. I set up your systems and become your storyteller. I combine systems creation with storytelling.

"How did failure set you up for success later on in life?" I asked, my one and only question from my list of eleven.

> *"There is no failure, only learning," said my new friend.*

THREE TAKEAWAYS FROM ARNOLD'S SPOTLIGHT

1 *Transformation requires risk.* Arnold bet everything on his growth, from selling his car to walking across fire, proving that true transformation demands bold action.

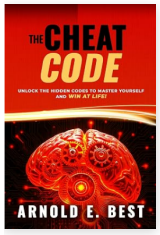
2 *The right path pulls you in.* Despite obstacles, Arnold felt an undeniable pull toward coaching and Tony Robbins' teachings. When something is meant for you, it won't let you go.

3 *Breakthroughs come from discomfort.* Whether it's walking on fire or answering tough questions, growth happens when we push past resistance and step into the unknown.



Arnold Best

Coach, speaker and author. For more than a decade he has coached people across the world to reconnect with the strongest, clearest version of themselves. Trained under Tony Robbins after walking across fire to get there. Born in Morvant, Trinidad.



The Cheat Code

The Hidden Codes to Master Yourself and Win at Life

Arnold's argument is that human change isn't complicated — it's coded. The book sets out the codes he uses with clients, teams and executives: taking ownership, shifting identity, breaking old belief patterns and mastering emotion, so your life lines up with the version of you waiting beneath the surface.

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