

Fate, choice, destiny or divine intervention?

by MARK PAVILONS

People have said that we can control our destiny, but not our fate.

Even Napoleon believed there is no such things as accidents, calling them 'fate misnamed.'

Terry Pratchett once said that most gods throw dice, but 'Fate plays chess, and you don't find out til too late that he's been playing with two queens all along.'

Nice analogy.

Motivational speaker Tony Robbins said we shape our destiny in the moments of decision.

William Shakespeare agreed, noting WE 'hold our own destiny, and not the stars.'

It seems destiny, unlike fate, is a matter of choice, not chance.

Regardless of what you believe, I think it's healthy to look at, and discuss these particularly human aspects of life.

I came across an internet post, labelled 'The Four Laws of a Shaman,' which talked about aspects of our lives.

'The person who comes into our life is the right person,' it espoused, noting no one comes into our life by chance. They are here for a reason, to encourage us to learn and evolve.

It is funny, this realm of relationships. If you think about it, we gravitate toward others and vice versa. There's often no rhyme or reason, just something we're attracted to.

I've had many high school friends that couldn't be more different from one another. And yet each one has a certain 'je ne sais quoi,' a unique sparkle, that drew me to them.

And yes, in some small way, each helped me grow.

Does fate put people in our paths? Some say they actively search out others, but I'm not really sure.

When I met my wife, yes, there were sparks, to be sure. We eased into our relationship, spending days on end talking, enjoying one another's company.

We evolved together.

We created life and those three critters we call offspring are likely the most important things we've done together. Who knows what cosmic waves we've created by sending these young adults into the universe. Only time will tell.

One could conjecture that Lexie, Liam and Kyleigh are exactly who they were meant to be. I'm no biologist, but the mere act of creation is magical, filled with fate, destiny and yes, divine intervention. I'm certain of it.

Another of the Shaman's laws is 'What happens is the only thing that could have happened.'

Nothing, but nothing, absolutely nothing that happens to us in our lives could have been otherwise, not even the most insignificant detail.

This is a juicy one, indeed. If true, does that mean we're helpless, at the whim of fate? Or is there more to it?

We always question ourselves and wonder what would have happened if we said yes instead of no, if we veered left instead of right.

Some contend it would make no difference; what was pre-destined would not have changed one iota.

The "law" contends that what happens is the only thing that could have happened and it had to have been so in order for us to learn that lesson and move on.

Each and every one of the situations that happen to us in our lives are perfect, even if our mind and our ego resist and do not want to accept it.

Wow. That's a lot to digest.

I'm not totally sold on this, but one has to wonder why certain things happened.

My father-in-law was in a serious car accident many years ago. That morning, he left the house, but turned around because he forgot his wallet. Had he not done so, he would have missed the oncoming car entirely. Or so we're led to believe.

My daughter recently received a great career opportunity, through a series of coincidences and interactions. Again, were these meant to happen?

What about lottery winners? What brought them into the store at that exact moment to purchase a winning ticket?

The third "law" states: "Anytime it starts is the right time."

Everything starts at the right time, neither before nor after. When we are ready for something new to start in our lives, that is when it will begin.

Again, I am floored by this assumption. Of course, every adventure starts with that very important first step, and a motivation. We may not know the direction we're headed, but we sure want to go, as affirmed by Seuss's "Oh, the Places You'll Go!"

"You're off to Great Places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, So...get on your way!"

And, as always, the final law attests "when something ends, it ends."

Just like that. If something ended in our lives, it is for our evolution, therefore it is better to leave it, move on and advance, already enriched by that experience.

Seems obvious, and yet we humans often have trouble moving on from relationships, sorrow and grief and loss of any kind.

Humans push boundaries and we're not satisfied when someone says it's the end, or it's over. But some things just end. They just do, often too soon.

Are these things, incidents, occurrences, experiences meant to go on forever? No. What's important is what we take away, what we embrace and learn from everything we encounter, good, bad and ugly.

If we must look back, keep one foot on the gas, I say.

I think these laws or statements are aimed at helping us understand that life is a very amazing thing. It's beautiful, wonderful and also confusing, painful and depressing at times.

If every snowflake falls just where it's intended, then we humans should be assured that all is right in the world.

I'm with Forrest Gump when he noted: 'I don't know if we each have a destiny, or if we're all just floatin' around accidental-like on a breeze. But I, I think maybe it's both.'

Perhaps, everything is just as it should be.