



JAN DESAI'S

COMPASS ROSE

A Weekly Roadmap to an Authentic Life

Get Your Bearings and Stay on Course to the Life of Your Dreams

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The Opposing Power

In this week's Compass Rose, learn how vulnerability – often seen as a weakness – is a strength that will help you achieve an authentic life!

"In the depth of winter, I finally learned that there lay within me an indomitable summer."
-Albert Camus

Strength and weakness: opposites, right?
Wrong!

For most of my life, *I believed I was broken*. I felt like an aged, worn-down, sisal doormat. I saw myself as both passive and weak. I felt pathetic, without any sense of healthy boundaries. To compensate for my perpetual anger and overwhelming sadness, I convinced myself that, because of my inability to take charge of my life, *I was a loser who simply accepted every abusive moment that life delivered*. And so, I adapted. I thought that if being the "good girl" wasn't going to get me the results I wanted, then getting tough and throwing down the gauntlet should **certainly** do the trick.

At the time, I was a successful investment banker used to dealing with high powered CEO's and business owners. For years, I had experienced how these men used balls-out aggressiveness to forge success. After being on the receiving end of this level of calculated fierceness, I knew I could dish it out. I **still remember the day I "changed" like it was yesterday**.

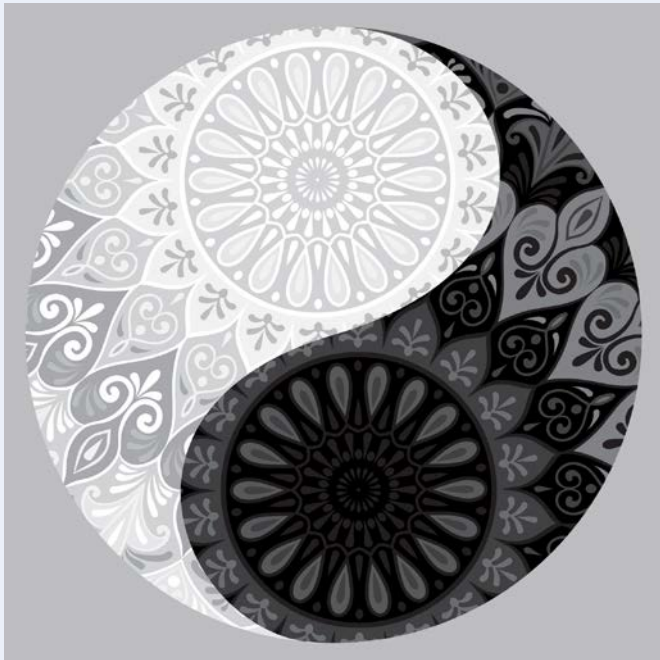
I had just finished an important, high-powered meeting at one of the exclusive

business clubs in downtown Minneapolis, and was on the telephone in my high-rise office, speaking to a young salesman who was trying to broker the sale of a boat for me. He appeared to be inept and wasn't delivering the results I wanted. I was so pissed off that something **snapped**. Testosterone flooded my body and I went 50 shades of crazy on him. I began *screaming at the top of my lungs, belittling him and his business skills*. I was unreasonably cruel...unjustifiably cold and calculating. And the surge of power I felt compared to the years of passive acceptance was *heady*.



Fifteen years later, I had honed a **wickedly sharp tongue** that could take out the best of them and a **bolstered ego** that was formidable. These skills were my armor and my defense. *I was proud of them*. Yet, my life still felt empty. I began to see that neither being a passive doormat or becoming a

patriarchal tyrant was delivering what I longed for most deeply. There had to be something else within me – a state of **equilibrium** that would help me move into what I was desperately searching for. But for a long time, I couldn't figure out what **"it"** was because *I kept looking externally for what paradoxically could only be discovered within.*



Back then, I believed that being **strong** was the key to having it all. Here is what I now know for sure: the word strong is probably one of the most *overused, and least understood*, words in the English language. Strength certainly gets a lot of traction in media and advertising, where strong has become a synonym for good and extra-strength equals better. This means that, in the eyes of the general public, *anything that is weak or denotes weakness is automatically bad.* Yet, as we've discussed in the past, my dear readers,

absolutely **nothing** in this world is black and white. Each and every time that you buy into an either/or mentality, you set yourself up for disappointment and worse.

So, let's look at this supposed pairing of opposites. . . strong and weak. Like everything that we see as opposites, strong and weak sit at either end of a spectrum. There are two major problems with this viewpoint.

Do strong and weak lie on opposite ends of the SAME spectrum?

First, whenever you put anything or anyone on a spectrum, you're making a **value judgment**. This is because when there are two opposites anchoring a line of behavior or a condition, one of them is **always going to be judged better or more preferable**. That's what opposites are supposed to do. They oppose each other.

Second, when we judge **one** of a pair of an **intertwined** opposite as preferable, we **ignore** the fact the **two opposites are inextricably linked**. Not only can one not **exist** without the other, one has *no meaning without the other*. Strength is no more an absolute than

weakness. In fact, neither of those absolutes truly even exists. Instead, each is a **version** of the other. They both define the other. So, in order to truly understand one absolute, you have to experience the other. They are a matrix. Strength depends on weakness. Weakness builds on strength.

Choosing vulnerability is the first step towards living a completely authentic and honest life.

With that in mind, let's look at vulnerability. A strong word, **vulnerability**. This is a word that carries a lot of negative baggage. Vulnerability supposedly means weakness. When you're vulnerable, you're powerless, helpless, and weak. Someone who is vulnerable is exposed, unprotected, they can be hurt. When you look at it this way, vulnerability doesn't seem to be either attractive or desirable. **That's because many people get vulnerability all wrong.** Far from being a place of weakness and helplessness, when you choose to be vulnerable, you come to that state from a place of strength with a wild courage.

That's why **choosing vulnerability** is the first step towards living a completely authentic and honest life. If you want to live the life you

you were born to live, then you must be **willing** to take the ultimate vulnerable step.

You have to **open up your arms wide** as they can be and **expose the places** you have been **guarding and protecting for years**. These are places that *hurt*. They are bruised and raw. These are places where you have been **wounded to the very core of who you are**.

How can you identify a *core wounding*?

When it is activated, your **response** is so far out of alignment – so over the top – that it makes **no sense** in relation to what was said, what was experienced, or what was seen. You blow up in **anger**. You viscerally **attack** with **defensiveness**. You burst into **hysterical tears**. Or you simply turn on your heels and **run** either literally or figuratively – *locking out those who are closest to you*. These core woundings keep you **cemented** in a life that is **out of alignment** with your highest and **greatest vibration** – with your divine purpose. They keep your best life *distanced* from you.



Everyone has these core woundings.

Guarding and hiding the wound become the patterns and behaviors that inform and influence an *entire life*. Some people have been carrying them around for *decades*, afraid to look at the place that was hurt, afraid to admit that there IS a hurt. They all have different causes – *hurt, abuse, neglect, abandonment, and the death of dreams*. The act that caused them could have been intentional or unintentional. It could have occurred in childhood or as an adult. You could have been the victim of the act in question or you could have been the one that caused another to be hurt. The cause is not the point.



What is important is **realizing that you were injured**. Often, shame and guilt can cause you to guard and hide the wound so that no one gets near, *not even you*. You do everything you can to keep it secret and safe. You guard it like a **dark treasure**.

In attempting to keep the wound safe and

hidden, you have condemned yourself to exist in a perpetual loop of **secrecy, denial, and negative, inappropriate responses to the real world**. The unwillingness or inability to examine the wound and its effects, holds you back and keeps you *stuck in a moment that is long gone* and prevents you from *being the person you were born to be*.

This is precisely why there is **great strength in vulnerability**. As destructive as lower frequency emotions and behaviors can be (anger, rage, jealousy, fear, frustration, shame, etc.), they really have no inherent strength. In a real sense, they are **passive**. While they feel powerful on the level of the ego, and as such can be difficult to control, they are, in reality, *reactive and weak*.

This is doubly true when it comes to the *heavy* emotions and behaviors that surround a core wounding. Here, not only are the emotions and behaviors passive and reactive, they are also reactions to events that occurred **years or decades in the past**. They are tied to something that is **already a shadow**, something that doesn't exist in your present-day reality, and something that has nothing to do with **who you really are today and who you are meant to become tomorrow**.

Vulnerability is the
ultimate strength.

Vulnerability, on the other hand, is strong *precisely because* it takes an **active decision** to lay down the defenses of heavy emotions and to reject negative behaviors that do nothing but keep you in a downward feedback loop, trapped in the past like a fly in amber.

In that **moment of vulnerability**, when you feel exposed and naked, an amazing thing happens. The *seed of courage* - real, honest, fierce courage - begins to germinate. You begin to develop the bravery to ask *"Who am I?"* You develop the toughness it takes to be kind, both to yourself and to those around you. Because, believe me, *negativity is the easy way out*. It takes **real strength and real courage** to be open, honest, compassionate, and fully human.

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The time has come to **leave behind everything** that no longer serves you. The time has come to *gently and lovingly* say goodbye to the old habits, limiting behaviors, and destructive belief systems that continually reinforce the **lie** that you don't have what it takes, that perhaps

you're unworthy, unlovable, or that taking a new path at this point in your life is foolish or crazy. Perhaps you keep telling yourself that based on how your life has unfolded up to this point *it's too late*, that maybe you should learn to be **satisfied** with what you've got.

I am here to tell you that this is not the truth. Don't give up. Don't give in. *We are fellow journeyers*. Set a new course. I will travel alongside you! I know that you've got what it takes, because I found that I had **what it takes**. You have the bravery to look honestly at yourself and the stories that you tell yourself. You have the fearlessness to open your arms to vulnerability. You have the nerve to break old habits and set ways and begin to *walk out of the darkness and into the light*.

You have the courage to do things differently.

Until next week,



ANNOUNCEMENTS & INSPIRATION



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