

Featuring

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UNITE

Transform Your Relationship With Life





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CHAPTER 1

Bi-sogno: The Human Need to Dream

HUMANS NEED TO DREAM—to daydream, to night-dream, to worship heroes and heroines, to fantasize, to wish for things, to build castles in the air, to play. Imagine that each of us has an *inner Italian* whose passion fuels these dreams, an *inner American* who focuses our efforts with crystal clarity, and an inspiring soul connected to the world within and around us at every step. Life², a life pulsing with life, is just that. It is a 100% natural state whose only requirement is that we embrace these three facets of our human nature in our own authentic way—organically.

Let us explain.

In this book we will use “inner Italian” and “inner American” metaphors because we have these heritages and cultural backgrounds. Plus, these cultures are well known around the world. We could have just as easily used inner Africans, Asians and North Americans, different regions of Italy (their industrial North versus traditional South), or various neighborhoods of a town. Each place carries a distinct human element in its shell as its pearl.

No one country has it all, but together we all do. In fact, any family, school, workplace or group of people who are together for a long enough period of time will begin to exhibit each human quality that exists.

This is human nature.

Although all humans share some basic instincts and needs, each of our personalities is influenced by our families and cultures. These cultures pull certain human characteristics out, while shunning others. Each culture is different, just as each person is different. Then, as we skip along our particular yellow brick roads, we will

face growth opportunities and obstacles common to all human beings, that will also, paradoxically, pull out our uniqueness.

We can view these obstacles as permanent blocks, frustrations, prison walls and hard limits... or simple tollbooths, juicy challenges and mirrors to help us reflect. Most times, the way we relate to life determines our choices, which determine our future. Our perceptions control our possibilities.

Life² is a life full of possibilities. Life² is a life that has come *alive*. Life is seen as an daily ally when viewed through the Life² lens, not as an enemy. Life² is responsive, inherently viewing our experiences not as “good” or “bad,” but as presenting choices to us to help us grow and develop our inner resources. Life² counts on our inner Italian’s passion to fuel it, our inner American’s vision to focus it, and our ever-deepening Soul Connection to bring life that much more alive. These three forces are in all of us. We will look at these forces, with lots of examples, until each of us recognizes Life²’s organic presence in our daily lives as second nature.

Yes, you caught us—we used the word “organic” in reference to personal growth. Growth does not have to be forced, planned or helped by artificial means. Growth is 100% natural. We can count on it. This book simply helps us perceive the natural rhythms of Life² more clearly, boosting our trust of its organic process.

Have you noticed that when we try to rush a change, like popping diet pills to lose weight, it often backfires? Or when we attend self-help courses, we may feel momentarily lighter until “real life” hits? Are you ready to embrace Life²’s natural undercurrent instead? Does part of you crave to perceive life—*real life*—as a steadfast friend?

In this book, we press the master reset button. We become children again and grow by *playing*. First, we play with the Italian and American stereotypical ways of relating to the world. Through this, we recognize these parts—or *the lack of them*—within ourselves. We also will likely relate to either our inner Italian or inner American

more easily than the other—either because it is in our true nature to do so, or because it was how we were raised.

Our goal is to discover our authentic selves, and awaken some less-used parts of ourselves that feel really natural to us. Finding these aspects we crave for fine-tunes our unique personality. Even small changes greatly enhance our life experiences.

For some readers, the Italian and American stereotypes will be new, but we are hoping that, since these cultures are so widely known, many people will already be familiar with their basics. Please do not limit your view of “Italians” to the Godfather, Jersey Shore or the Sopranos... or “Americans” to Rocky Balboa, Nelson Rockefeller or Norman Rockwell. Thinking about “real” people will help make our discussions more meaningful.

For the purposes of this book, Italians are warm, sensuous, lofty dreamers, and Americans are hard workers that make dreams come true.

So, what is Life²? And how can our lives come alive? By finding our inner Italian, what we are truly passionate about... and going after it with our inner American focus and drive. And, when we get scared, by reaching up as we are buckling down.

* * *

Let’s talk more about the two basic cultures. Not just Americans, but the whole world likes to travel to Italy to make it theirs. Have you ever stopped to wonder why Italy’s food, cars and fashion are so darned seductive to people from so many different cultures? Do you know that over half the restaurants in America are Italian? Conversely, have you ever thought why so many Italians crossed the Atlantic Ocean over a century ago, risking their lives, to embrace the creative freedom of a country like America? Is there some reason why their dreams could not come true on Italian soil?

Perhaps people need each other to feel whole. Our inner American might need a touch more Italian-style audacity, pleasure, sensuality and softness to give it permission to relax (and, paradoxically, to become even more productive). Likewise, our inner

Italian could be searching for a big dose of American-style structure, focus and drive to bring its passion to life.

More passion is what many Americans desire—in the bedroom, the boardroom, filling every cell of their beings. However, with all due respect to Italy, simple passion is not enough. People also need the ability to harness this powerful energy, channeling it with a skilled concentration to turn their dreams into reality. Transformation is an inner American specialty.

Inner Italian passion counts, of course, as human beings' most potent fuel. Then, inner American courage and resilience propels us forward, getting results. Until, of course, our life gets bigger than even our rational minds can comprehend, and we pop up to another level to where "we" matter less. At this point, we enter a flow, where often we willingly sacrifice our personal desires for this bigger picture—following the call of our children, friends, family, workplace, community, country, world and soul—Life².

Are there other fuels we could use other than pure passion? Of course there are. Often people use anger, hate, revenge, envy, jealousy, and cattiness to move forward (or to push others down). Or others use norms, duty, responsibility, routine, and steadfastness to power some (or all) of their days. Righteous rage can be just the right ingredient for growth, at times. Is it at this time, for you, right now? Or is another?

Human nature—and Mother Nature—give us many choices, many of which are more enticing than individual will. Life² will take its proper course—co-ordinating the growth of each of us, for better or worse, individually and collectively, in its authoritative harmony. Our moods will brighten and darken—or suddenly drop or lift. No matter how hard we try to rise up, at times we will feel stuck or caught in a trap. At other times, the wind will fill our sails, inexplicably. Can we... or should we... try to affect life's twists and turns? Or simply hold Life² by the hand and enjoy its ride? Or some combination of the two?

At times, we may be unsure how to move forward—each action and emotion seems to pull us back to the starting line. Can we

resolve this inner tug of war? Is controlling life even a desired goal? Maybe... or maybe not. How can we know for sure?

Even if we feel alone in a crowded room, like we have failed at every significant task, relationship or challenge we have faced, there is hope. We can do it. Working together, we can find every piece we need inside. We can grow, face our fears, and rebuild even the toughest relationships piece by piece.

Trust us. And if you do not trust us (or anyone), pretend that you do, at least for as long as you are reading this book. Simply trust that Mother Nature bears fruit—by its nature. Mother Nature created human nature. And these human co-authors came together, by their nature, to create this book. Which found its way to you, by its nature and your nature.

Italian farmers, *i contadini*, count on Mother Nature. Also, they know not to rush. Who would want to pick a fruit before it is ripe, let alone before it has even formed on a tree's limb? So relax, okay? We have plenty of time. Life and Life² have a lot to share with us, and the insights we will gain from their seeds planted within us will grow over time. Certain wisdom, certain perceptions, require a certain maturity and set of experiences to thrive. We have plenty of time, even when it feels like we don't. Relax—you deserve it.

Relaxation, too, is all natural.

We all know the American dream that Hollywood has made famous. Now, let's look at the Italian interpretation: *Sogno* means "dream" in Italian. The Italian word for "need" is *bisogno*.

Bi-sogno. "Dream" times two.

When we are needy, we dream.

The *bi-sogno*, the human need to dream, sparks us to take action. When we are motivated by a compelling vision of the future, a dream, isn't it simpler to get hard work done? Then, isn't it easier to let our imagination flow and identify the next steps to take? When our needs/dreams are meaningful to others, too, doesn't our power increase exponentially? Of course it does. Mother Nature always plants her seeds with a dream.

Italian	English
<i>Sogno</i>	<i>Dream</i>
<i>Bisogno</i>	<i>Need</i>
<i>“Bi-sogno”</i>	<i>The human need to dream</i>

Humans are social creatures not meant to live, eat or create anything alone—not even our dreams. So each dream we have, each step we take, leads us right into each other—straight into the most important relationships of our lives. Whether it is our relationship with a “significant other,” or our relationship with our family, friends, workmates, classmates or cellmates, what ultimately defines our life is how we relate to its various elements. How we relate to life determines how often we will be able to perceive and to experience Life².

Life comes alive—*la vita prende vita*—the better we know ourselves, act authentically, and connect with others. When two people come together as one, when we work on something we actually care about, and with people we care about, when we attune to the needs of others, moving beyond our own, we align with Life².

As we consciously embrace Life²’s aliveness for the first time, it may seem like an invigorating mountain climb, ascending Mount Everest on an adventure, nervously sweating, straining and striving to gain increasingly powerful energy, intelligence, achievements and wisdom (as well as doubts!). We promise that Life² will eventually become easier and easier—*naturally*.

Human nature is our main tool for Life². [Part 1](#), “Basic Instincts,” forms the book’s technical backbone, describing the inner Italian, inner American and Soul Connection in detail. [Part 2](#), “Quiz Yourself,” allows us to self-reflect. [Part 3](#), “Organic Evolution,” shows examples of how our relationship to life can come alive. Each co-author shares a personal story to help us recognize the innate intelligence of our evolving human nature.

Overall, Life² brings out each individual’s nature, by its nature. Our lives lighten up when we learn to recognize Life²’s behind-the-

scenes role in them. Enjoy!

Welcome to Life²! *Benvenuti!*

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