

**2016: Try It Left-Handed**

Darrell Fusaro (January 25, 2016)



If you're looking to make a dramatic change and you really want to stir things up for the better here's how to begin.



The best thing about taking a trip is that I always end up missing home. By the time my trip comes to an end I have a renewed appreciation for the life and job that I needed a break from. The break in my routine always gives me a refreshing perspective.

But what if you can't get away, then what? When I first heard the following suggestion I was at the beginning of my enlistment in the United States Coast Guard and already feeling disenchanting. "This is it?" I muttered to myself. What's funny is that's exactly what I was thinking at my previous job that motivated me to join the Coast Guard in the first place.

"What was I thinking?" I signed a four-year contract. This was the military; it wasn't like I could do what I've always been able to do in the past and just quit. Those were my thoughts as I walked into a mandatory meeting where I just happened to over hear a senior member making the following suggestion to someone.

"If you're looking to make a dramatic change and you really want to stir things up for the better here's how to begin. Start doing the things you do differently. If, when you put on your pants you do so right leg first, begin putting them on left leg first. Instead of taking the same route to work, take a different one. If you're right-handed, just for fun try doing a few things during your daily routine with your left."

For some strange reason this appealed to me. I have no idea why I wanted to believe what he was suggesting would work, except for the fact that I was desperate and felt trapped. Even before starting, once I made up my mind to follow through with it I began to feel hopeful.

The next day I woke up instead of rolling out of the right side of my bed, I rolled out of the left. Pants the same, instead of right leg: left leg. Shoes too. It felt good. I was on a mission. On my walk to the carpool I began down a different street.

That's when reason tried to raise an argument. "Pants and shoes are OK, but taking a different route is going to take longer. It makes more sense to go to the carpool the same way you've been going. You don't want to get in trouble for being late."

I wasn't swayed. I kept going. Have you ever tried doing something in your routine differently? You must try it. Doing things differently tickled my brain. I could feel my brain sparkling. When I got to the carpool and met the desk sergeant to sign out my vehicle I wasn't my miserable old self. I was enthusiastic to see him and even made some positive comments.

Driving off the base I veered off course and took a new route to my duty station. Everything was new. It was like going to a new job on my first day, but better. I saw my life objectively. Ever spend the day with a friend at work who has a great job and catch yourself thinking, "Man, I wish I had a job like that." That's what this felt like only it was my job I saw as great.

My drab routine job in the Coast Guard became the greatest job the military. No kidding, I had it so good I that at the end of my enlistment I extended for another year. This seemingly ridiculously childish suggestion transformed my life from the inside out. Even now when I want to gain renewed enthusiasm for what I'm doing I'll do it differently. It always breaks the spell and ignites my creativity.

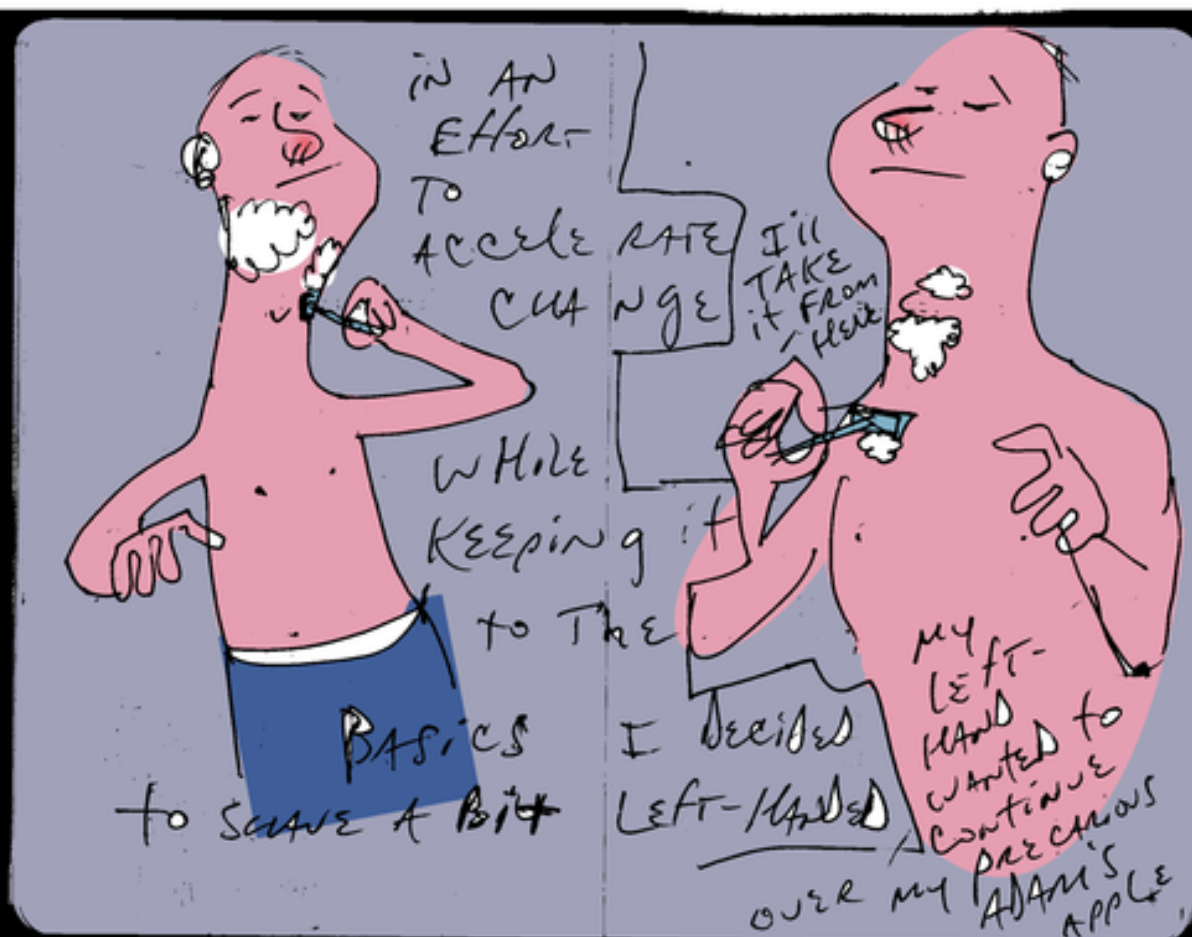
"We don't learn from doing the same things correctly again and again. Let go of your excessive



carefulness. Over control is spiritually deadening.”

The following is the January 10, 2016 four-page entry in my journal that inspired this article.

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In an effort to accelerate change while keeping it to the basics, I decided to shave a bit left-handed. My left hand wanted to continue over my precarious Adam's apple. My right hand said, "I'll take it from here."

Smart decision. I allowed for praise-full progress combined with enough sense to not over do it either! AMAZING.

HEARD: A long long time ago. "If you've always put on your pants right leg first start out tomorrow putting them on left leg first. Try driving a different route to work, a different route home."

### -Darrell Fusaro

Darrell Fusaro is a decorated United States Coast Guard veteran and author of [What If Godzilla Just Wanted a Hug?](#) [2]

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