



## **Personal Statements from Melissa Unger about the inception of Seymour Projects**

Paris, France 2012

My philosophy doesn't purport to break new ground. I am simply weaving together various strands of ideas that I have come across which have particularly resonated with me. I would like to employ Seymour as a vehicle to express and support these notions. They are still difficult for me to synthesize but I will attempt to do so as clearly as possible in the following paragraphs.

I believe that all the world is energy. That energy flows between all things, plants, humans, 'inanimate' objects...everything. I believe everyone and everything is linked by this energy. If one wanted to put a theological emphasis on it I would say: I believe 'God' is that energy and this energy is present in all of us.

Scientifically speaking, I believe that this energy will be accepted as a 'sixth' sense in the future. Not in an esoteric way, but in a concrete scientific manner. An additional law of nature will be discovered. Once this law is discovered and proven, our current way of perceiving the world will seem as antiquated as when we imagined that the world was flat.

This 'law' will show us irrefutably that thoughts are energy and that we can communicate and shape the word via our thoughts. It is well-known that we only employ a small percentage of our brain power. I believe that training one's mind is like training a muscle, with daily practice and exercise its power grows. If we train our minds, not only will we be able to communicate via our thoughts/feelings we will also be able to influence the daily outcomes of our lives, in essence to create the reality we wish to live.

That's where cultivating creativity and imagination come into play. The first step toward controlling one's mind is to become aware of what it can do, to notice its innate power of creation. Exploring one's own imagination is a first step toward becoming aware of something 'other' that goes on beneath 'regular' thinking, a second layer of 'self', one that is not fully mastered or understood. The subconscious, dreams, are also part of this unexplored world. I am always fascinated by how people can go about their daily lives with such apparent certainty when so much of the world (both inner and outer) we live in is as yet unexplained.

I believe that we are at a critical juncture in human history when this 'sixth' sense is finally poised to emerge. Technological advances have laid the foundation for this breakthrough but they must be harnessed correctly in order to properly fulfill their purpose. If the Internet remains a playground for nonsense, the ship of intended progress will pass us by. (How many times have we missed the boat already?)

I firmly believe in Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's concept of the Noosphere. I believe that the energy described above, all of our thoughts, hence all of humanity, are linked. The Internet not only allows us to experience altered temporality and physicality it begins weaving together the web of humanity.

The success of social networking sites are perhaps the most important thing to happen in this millennia in terms of harnessing human potential, yet most people seem focused on the mundane minutiae when discussing their ramifications (both positive and negative.) I am astounded by how few people focus on the more important breakthrough: humanity has literally managed to create a *world wide web*. For the first time in human history most of the global population is in contact with one another. Why are we not discussing the potential of this each and every day? The social network enabled revolutions of the recent 'Arab Spring' showed a taste of the power of social networks and the Internet to shape world happenings...but soon it was back to business as usual- back to the playground. If everyone got together on the power of this thing, if people began to better understand the Internet's precursory role, the world could change overnight.

I think the Internet is like training wheels on a bike. It allows us to 'practice' communicating all together with a form of 'support', a safety net if you will. Once we have advanced sufficiently, the web will melt away and we will communicate without it. Like a circus trapeze artist who, when learning, leaps from swing to swing with the safety of a net beneath him, and who once proficient enough, will perform 'without a net'...so will humanity.

Now let's get back to Seymour. The ideas put forth above are esoteric at best, most of humanity will not be so willing to consider them, therefore I feel we must begin at the beginning by simply encouraging people to become aware of their subconscious thoughts, notice that there is something other than their 'thinking' mind that makes us part of who they are. There are many Buddhist, New Age and other groups who already communicate on similar topics but I find their language exclusionary like all 'special interest' groups. *Creativity* and *imagination* are widely accepted and non-threatening words. They are almost benign, but if the message behind them is powerful enough, I believe they can be effective in beginning to lead people on the path toward bringing about a change in the world.

Humanity has not yet harnessed the power of the mind because we are easily distracted as a species. Technology and exacerbated this. Seymour hopes to encourage people to regularly take a break from the Internet to explore their subconscious mind and express their creativity and imagination. Like the Buddhist concept of Yin and Yang, I believe we need the balance of both to move forward. Technology (created by man) and its opposite: the human mind- which holds within it so many uncharted depths. Love/hate, cold/hot, night/day...life is made of opposing forces and it is only together that they make our world.

Seymour does not wish to demonize technology, we simply wish to lay our small stone down the 'other' side of the scale, a scale which is over weighted by technology these days. In the silence, by taking a step back from the constant 'chatter' people will better be able to notice patterns, create new ideas and fulfill the next step in humanity's destiny.

Seymour has chosen 3 additional subjects to bolster its underlying message, subjects that will further lead people down a path of questioning and discovery.

- the subconscious mind
- global consciousness
- thinking differently about psychedelics

These three topics all serve the same purpose as creativity & imagination but take people a step further toward opening the mind to alternate realities. It is only through starting to consider the world around them in a different manner that people can begin to imagine something else. Seymour seeks to make cracks in the existing hard and 'smooth' shell of the current widely accepted perception of reality.

The secondary message behind Seymour is: authenticity. We encourage everyone to be completely themselves, to be brave. They will need to be, because 'out of the box' thinking is not for wimps. They will face adversity and even ridicule. Humanity's other main flaw its herd mentality and breaking from the herd is often frightening. Seymour therefore supports *outcasts, marginal thinkers and iconoclasts*, we are dedicated to *philosophers, pilgrims and punks*.

Lastly Seymour seeks to blur the lines between disciplines. Just as I believe all of humanity and the cosmos is one living organism, I believe that all disciplines of human thought are part of the same expression. Art, science, philosophy, psychology, physical exercise... should ideally all interact to create an optimal result. (Leonardo Da Vinci had that figured out.)

Yet today everyone largely stays in their own niche, but what would happen if the artist tried to look at patterns in cancer cells, might he see something with his creative eye that the scientist had missed? What is the supermarket clerk had a chance to solve an organizational problem for a multinational petrol company? Might his 'little' eye notice something the 'big' guys had missed?

In conclusion, I believe that future of ideas and human progress begins with the cultivation of creativity and imagination in ALL people, not just those who already consider themselves 'creative'. Authentic creativity is a practice increasingly threatened by the influx of technology and the communication devices that keep us locked perpetually in 'active' thought.

The earth is one organism. We are 'dying' and destroying ourselves because, like a poorly watered plant we are increasingly cut off from our source energy. Seymour is but a tiny initiative, but we want to help, and the only way I know how to start is to tell people: "Close your eyes, surf your mind, express what you see inside. If you do so, in addition to enriching your own life by exploring your creativity & imagination, we think that you are also actually helping to advance human progress in all fields."

It's that simple. Imagine that.

### **How Seymour Began**

After I turned 40, I realized that my goals in life were changing and that the two main urges within me were to somehow 'give back', share what I had learned over the years, and secondly, I felt a profound need to build a project of my own in which I could pull together all the strands of my interests into one initiative rather than always feeling like I was sacrificing a part of my skill set to work on others' projects.

I have always been a passionate and vocal person, I get energized easily and like to share information, so it all began innocently with some posts on my Facebook page about art in Paris, the response and interaction was so enthusiastic that it evolved onto its own Facebook page, before developing into an organization with its own website and online magazine. It began with a blog called Morning Glory in which I highlighted how various creatives started their day. Our focus was more connecting people and showing the value of doing what you love, but that projects felt too restrictive and reductive to me...I needed to dig deeper.

When looking for a name for the project, spontaneously my father's name sprung to mind. I wanted to honor his memory, and I also knew that if I put his name on it, I would never give up, no matter how challenging the road might be, I would never back down for fear of sullyng his name. I didn't realize in that moment the added layer of Seymour = See More, but that notion has proved to be an unspoken guiding thread through the entire project...the interest in seeing more of life, of what's below the surface of all things and ideas.

Seymour is an attempt to create a 'job I never need a vacation from', an attempt to integrate all my many passions into one. My passion for art & creativity, my fascination with psychology, philosophy & the subconscious mind, surfing, skateboarding, science, nature, punks, rebels.

I have worked in a wide variety of creative fields for over 20 years and eventually had a unexpected experience of my own with regards to the power of the subconscious mind in relation to creativity while writing a novel a few years ago. Coming into such direct contact with my 'muse' for lack of a better word, triggered a quest to better understand what I had experienced. I spent 2 years educating myself by reading a panoply of philosophical, scientific, and psychological research, from the esoteric to the mundane. Out of all of this material I found my own personal philosophy begin to emerge. As a result, Seymour is a very personal project.

In building Seymour itself, I try to practice what I preach and allow myself to just be guided creatively by my subconscious, so I approach its evolution in a very organic manner. I try to listen to my 'gut' and just take one step at a time and let it develop naturally instead of laying down a 'business' model or blueprint. So when people ask me what Seymour is, or where we're going, I don't have a 'media ready' sound bite, it's not that kind of project, it's more intangible, harder to categorize, but just because I can't synthesize my step by step plan for Seymour the into a cohesive form yet, doesn't all mean that I don't have a VERY specific vision and innate sense of EXACTLY how I see it evolving and where it is headed.

Seymour is just a year old and basically still in the development stages. But I feel transparency is important which is why all this growing and 'searching' is happening 'publicly.' Lately, it seems as if every one expects instant gratification. New businesses & projects seem to pop up every minute ready for action, but most seem to fizzle out just as quickly. I wanted to take my time building Seymour, and also show the evolution of ideas publicly. I think it's important for people to see mistakes, changes in direction. I think it's important to show that it's okay to try something even you don't have all the answers yet, that it's okay to change course, even fail and try again.

I also, wanted to underline that for me a lot of the joy comes in the doing. A few times at the start, well-meaning people wanted to help me jump start the project financially, but for that it would have to be 'cleaned up' and tightened into something easier to market...I hesitated, but realized that even though I would have make sacrifices in my own life with regards to time and money, that I was too greatly enjoying the act of 'sewing' so to speak and didn't want to be handed a sewing machine to expedite things. The joy for me is largely in the doing, in the trying to figure it out.

I think the best metaphor for where Seymour is at right now, is to say it's like an open studio visit for an artist. We're letting the public have a peek at our work and process and we're looking for patrons; people who believe in what we do and would like to fund us to give us the freedom to fully explore our idea and see where it goes.

**Seymour constant message is: Unplug from technology more often, invite your muse, open yourself up to subconscious exploration, express your own personal creativity & imagination for it is therein that your happiness resides. Authentic exploration such as this also where universal progress in all fields begins. We would like to help create a global Eureka moment.**

As we fall deeper into technological dependence there will be more and more need for initiatives such as Seymour, as well as continued encouragement to find balance in our daily lives.

Balance is always a crucial element in all endeavors, and sure-footed rootedness is also particularly important right before taking a giant leap.

Cheers to the New Frontier!

M.U. 2012