

# Thirteen

She chose the number “thirteen”. Despite a ripened distrust and often palpable fear that this double digit evoked from the masses, she stood defiant of such collective wisdom and chose the number anyways. It was the number that warmed her heart. It was the number that represented hope and fortune. It would be her sign to proceed with confidence when present, and with caution in its absence. This, her chosen lucky number – thirteen – was most importantly her underdog.

In all of the years, thirty of them plus change, that I’ve been blessed with this soul by my side, it has been and still remains the underdog that finds her passion. Those things undiscovered, unnoticed, or misrepresented will often land in the arena of her attention, her compassion, and her care. Expertly cultivating the purest nature of its being, that truth – once only evident to her – soon becomes a railing that others might use to find balance of their own.

I know this at the core of my being. I am a product of her tender guardianship. The woman that I write of, the “chooser” of that evil number thirteen, is my wife.

But really? Thirteen? I mean come on! We ARE talking about perhaps the most feared number in an inventory of infinite choices. That is unless you’re Italian, who also believe the number thirteen is lucky (although instead, they possess a morbid fear of the number seventeen).

In my days of searching, I’ve always tried to avoid the traps that superstitious dogma sets for us along our paths. These warnings that promote altered behavior are deceptive in their simplicity. Breaking mirrors, walking under ladders, black cats, the number 666, all possess the power to create havoc when they occur. Intelligent people respond irrationally whenever confronted with these simplest of circumstances. Even I have to admit that I tend not to halt an effort ending on superstitious intonations. Knowing the complete and utter silliness of it, I will still hover my foot beyond that sidewalk’s crack (or break my mother’s back). After all, why tempt fate?

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Astronauts Lovell, Swigert, and Haise must have been men with better sense than to believe the stigma of superstition. If this were not true, they never would have stepped foot into the capsule of Apollo 13. Yet on April 11<sup>th</sup>, 1970 the crew of Apollo 13 launched on time – at 13:13 hours. Two days later, on Monday April the 13<sup>th</sup>, the lunar landing was aborted after an oxygen tank exploded, crippling the Service Module upon which the Command Module depended.

And the mythical Gods of superstition smiled, knowing that such evidence could never be ignored. The number thirteen was evil! This irrefutable truth was now beyond debate.

Yet within the boundaries of reality we've learned that not even the universe could exist without the number thirteen in its mathematical recipe. Not only would all arithmetic be flawed, but there would not be anyone to calculate the formulas of the heavens as all of existence would be absent. Thirteen, as loving to our being and as necessary as the numbers one, two and three. Still we curse the number with our frightened ignorance and take the path of avoidance. How silly we are.

Why do superstitions seem to work by those who possess them? The energy provided by the owner is the cause. There is nothing that has more power than those things we choose to permit to have power. Whether it is an individual or a collective amplification of our will(s), there can be no debating that what we observe is mandated by personal perspective... and what we believe is a mixture of observation and expectation. No, they don't always...most often DO NOT...complement each other.

The application of energy to things is as automatic as is breathing or blinking your eyelids. Relatively little if any thought is put into it. The automatic processes are created by rules that we've decided upon. Behavior that conflicts with these rules "feels" wrong and prompts us to critically evaluate each situation that bucks our system. But the energy I'm talking about is a little different than this... it is the energy of our disposition that allows success or failure to prevail. This "energy of attitude" permeates every aspect of our lives. It is, always has been, and always will be the reason some things seem to work well for one person but horribly for another, even when all of the circumstances were exactly the same.

All of the circumstances, that is, except for "predisposition".

It is not enough to spell out the importance that our attitudes have towards the outcomes we experience. This message has been pounded time and time again, yet so many folks just nod their heads in agreement and then walk away. Why is it that even though the obvious truth announces her arrival, so many people refuse to acknowledge her presence? I assert that it is because the energy that we export is far more powerful than we know, and that the results of our lives are the direct reflection of that product.

And what of Apollo 13 and its 13:13 launch accompanied by the nearly devastating results of April the 13<sup>th</sup>?

Studies have shown the effects that mass prayer can have over a regional environment.

*Studies of twenty-four U.S. cities with populations over 10,000, in 1972, observed statistically measurable reductions in crime when as little as one percent of the population engaged in some form of meditative practice. This came to be known as the "Maharishi Effect" as many of the participants were engaged in Transcendental Meditation as taught by the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi.*

*A later study during the Israeli-Lebanese War in 1983, placed individuals trained in transcendental meditation in strategic locations within Jerusalem. The purpose of the*

*study was to determine if the reduction of stress in a localized population (those meditating) would be reflected as less violence and aggression in the whole region. Quality of life in the population was measured using incidence of fires, traffic accidents, crime, and stock market fluctuations. The study showed a direct relationship between the number of participants and various measures of the quality of life. When the number of people praying was reduced, the incidents of crime, fires and accidents increased.*

<http://suite101.com/a/the-maharishi-effect-a175034>

There have been numerous (and easy to find) investigations into the idea of projection of positive energy and its effect on our environment. With this in mind, it is reasonable to state with confidence that if the positive projection of energy through mass prayer can have an impact, then the projection of negative energy would also have a dog in this fight.

Regardless of the beliefs, or disbeliefs of the Apollo 13 crew, they may never have had a chance to avoid the inevitable. With so many willing minds collectively assembling the circumstances of this fateful mission, and with so much fear and negative energy surrounding its destined path, what else would one expect to see other than a near tragic event? The masses were in full export mode and the product was almost fatal.

Naturally it will always be an accepted truth that there is strength in numbers. The greater the volume of mental energy, the greater the impact will be. But what if we were to retrain our perceptions to find peace and joy in those things we now consider oppressive symbols of superstitious incarnations? What if, like my lovely wife and the Italians, the number thirteen became as fortunate as the number seven is for others? What if a number were just a number, and our fates were determined by our attitudes, behaviors, and our energy? What if we didn't assign blame for our misfortune on anything other than ourselves?

It seems that if we collectively could do such a thing, the next step would create a global transformation not before seen in this world (at least as far as we've any recorded recollection). Self accountability would become more than just a fancy catchword in some corporate motto - it would become the mantra for all of humanity. The rebirth of positive energy would overwhelm any attempt of darkness to seep into our lives, as darkness would not be able to find a crevice or a mother-back-breaking crack to hide in. Light would be with us all.

And it all begins from within. Positive energy begets positive energy. Attitude lifts spirits, demands a smile, and has us all outperforming our own expectations. It starts with me. It starts with you. It ends with a new world of possibilities for us all.

As for my wife. She has had arguably the most productive year of her entire life. Her relationships have flourished, her outlook on all things has infected everyone who knows her (especially me), she has found her heart within her home and a home within her heart. And in a feat that I never would have believed possible, she got her drivers license. The

fear that she needed to overcome in order to learn to drive was as real and as paralyzing as any other fear you might conceive. Yet she did it!

And why shouldn't she?

After all...it is the year 2013!!

Sean Yeterian