



## TREAT THESE IDEAS AS TOOLS

Human beings constantly filter the things they hear and see and feel. That's understandable. If we paid equal attention to every sight, sound, and sensation we experience, we'd quickly be overwhelmed. Filtering helps keep us sane.

When they enter the world of ideas, many people have long-standing filters, or judgments, already in place. Familiar ideas automatically become "right" or "good." And unfamiliar ideas become "wrong" or "bad."

These filters work well—so well, in fact, that they sometimes choke off *any* new ideas. People get stuck with the same old faded, wrinkled ideas for decades.

Imagine what our world would be like if people had filtered out all new ideas for the last 500 years or so: No electricity. No railroads. No skyscrapers. No notion of equal rights for women or people of color, to name just a few recent ideas. Not much fun.

### **Use the filter of application**

There is another option: Put a new filter in place. Instead of reading this book through the filter of evaluation, read through the filter of application. Instead of asking whether an idea is right or wrong, or good or bad, ask *How can I use this idea? How could I be different? What could I do differently?*

Every concept and invention that we now take for granted was once a new idea. Remembering this, we can greet new ideas with friendly curiosity. Even the most "outlandish" or "dangerous" idea might have an element that we can use.

By the way, you don't have to postpone evaluation forever. Just save it for later—*after* you've experimented with an idea from this book and tested it in daily life.

## See the Success Strategies as options

Some books offer beliefs that people cherish and defend to the death. *Falling Awake* has no such ideas. It only offers tools—ideas to try out and suggestions to apply.

I don't ask you to *believe* anything I write about the Success Strategies. I do ask that you *use* anything you find in these pages, just as you would experiment with a new tool in your workshop at home. Keep the ideas that work for you. Release those that don't work, or put them on the shelf for now and test them again later.

My intention is not to give you advice or final answers but rather to outline new possibilities that you can use to improve the quality of your life. I ask that you read these Success Strategies, test them, and question them. If need be, revise the Success Strategies so that they work for you.

The Success Strategies are not *the* way to live your life. Instead, they are just a set of options. They include ideas that have been around for years—in some cases for thousands of years—all expressed in modern language.

Think of yourself as a gardener. You're about to grow something called the life of your dreams. Your seeds, fertilizer, and groundbreaking tools are this book and your own natural experience. Happy planting.

