

Written by Allan Besselink
Thursday, 08 March 2007 17:55

Isaac Newton - physicist, mathematician, and arguably the greatest scientist the world has known. If you've taken high school science, you've been exposed to the ways of Newton. And if you look back to yesteryear, and revisit those golden memories of pendulums, bunsen burners, and trajectories, you're sure to unearth a thought or two on Newton's Laws of Motion.

Math and science got me through high school. Though I love the process of writing now, in those days writing was something to be done only because it had to be done. It was about writing book reports, or comparing and contrasting protagonists in Shakespeare's plays. No wonder I didn't enjoy putting pen to paper! Math and science - my bread and butter. My meal ticket - or so I thought. At one time, I was going to become a mechanical engineer ... which evolved into an automotive designer ... which then turned into physical therapist (and yes, there are some common threads throughout - best left to another digression here!). But suffice it to say, I was comfortable with Newton's ideas - back in the day.

As I remember, Newton's first law of motion is often stated as:

An object at rest tends to stay at rest and an object in motion tends to stay in motion with the same speed and in the same direction unless acted upon by an unbalanced force.

Why on earth am I inspired to discuss Newton's First Law here? It's simple - I've discovered that Newton was quite the metaphysicist. After a little reading, I found that Newton's passion was religion. After some further reflection, his first law of motion is truly a treatise on life as we know it.

An object ... like a human being ... tends to stay at rest (physically, spiritually, emotionally) ... unless acted upon by an unbalanced force (an event, an experience, a reflection, a transformative thought, a motivator, an adaptation to the demands of the world around him/her).

Or, as I am always saying, "If you do what you've done, you'll get what you've gotten".

So what you're telling me, Sir Isaac, is that I've had these answers all along? If I'd just stopped and put two and two together back in the 11th grade, life would have made perfect sense?

Now there's a thought, isn't it?

Newton the metaphysicist - it has a nice ring to it. As it stands, his first law definitely projects a broad perspective on the physical realm. By taking an intriguing twist on a brilliant mind, you come up with something even larger than the original concept. Perhaps the first law really is "the big picture" in more ways than we might have previously imagined.

I'll ponder it a little more - as I "wait for the next apple to drop".