

# Seven Provocations

by Miles Kierson

Book Review by Gary Tomlinson

“Mike Bukowski’s life is a shambles and not knowing what to do or where to go, he walks aimlessly through the streets of Chicago. In a neighborhood he doesn’t recognize, he goes into a bar. Over a drink he engages in some conversation with the bartender, who asks him what he wanted to do when he was a kid. Mike mentions that when he was very young he wanted to be a magician. The bartender tells him if he wants to find magic, he should talk to Merle, a regular Wednesday night customer.”

“Intrigued, Mike has some purpose now, to talk to Merle, who he finally meets. Merle tells Mike he’ll teach him real magic – that he will give him seven provocations over at least as many weeks, but it would be dangerous to start unless he was committed to go all the way. Preparing to give Mike his first provocation, Merle’s appearance transforms, as does Mike’s life over the weeks that follow. Magic, ease, grace and abundance accompany the provocations. This magical mystery tour takes the reader on a journey that could be life-altering.”

*Seven Provocations* is a wonderful and entertaining read that will make you laugh, cry and certainly question. It’s very thought-provoking and will make you both think and question your life as you know it. Gary Tomlinson (reviewer) recently had the opportunity to interview the author, Mr. Miles Kierson.

## **Reviewer: Was there a tipping point or trigger(s) for you to write this book?**

**Miles Kierson:** I don’t know. I had this idea that I wanted to write a book about a magical/spiritual journey that would appeal to people who both looked for that kind of book and those who didn’t. Not because I was looking for the widest audience, but because I wanted to reach different kinds of people. I had something to say and I wanted to tell a good story at the same time. Also, because I knew that when I write I learn, I felt it would be a good journey for me, especially since I didn’t know what the seven provocations were going to be before I wrote the book. It actually took me two years to write, and I’m a fast writer usually, because I had to absorb each provocation before I moved on to the next one.

## **Reviewer: What key messages would you like the readers to take away from your book?**

**Miles Kierson:** I don’t actually hope they take away anything. It would be nice if they did and when I hear from people who did, it’s very satisfying. My daughter, who is 22, called me after she finished the book crying, because she said it “changes my life” and “I’m so glad you’re my father.” That makes having written the book well worth the effort.

That being said, for me, these are the key messages I'd most like people to get:

- There's more to life than we think. As some teachers say, we are asleep and we need to wake up.
- We actually know very little, but we live life as if we know a lot. Sometimes when I coach people I give them "practical postulations," which are a little like provocations except that I am postulating that something is true, not because I think it is or isn't, not to find out if it is, but because, practically speaking, it would be worth it to assume it's true for at least a while to see what benefit comes from it. The one I give that relates to this bullet point is this: "We actually know less than five things."
- Life can be way easier than we make it. There is a grace that comes from letting go.
- Love is all there is.

### **Reviewer: What's next for you?**

**Miles Kierson:** I am writing a kind of sequel. It is about one of the characters, Wiley, the gym owner. It's done in the third person rather than the first (as *Seven Provocations* was). If it goes the way I planned, it will be more autobiographical than the first one, and it will include a subplot around a real-life story (an old friend's "little" brother, who has been in prison for over 30 years, 18 of which were on death row and with whom I have been in contact with). It's meant to be about forgiveness, redemption, the release from what imprisons all of us, and discovering one's true identity.

Miles Kierson has been consciously on a spiritual path most of his life. He is a management consultant and leadership coach specializing in work with senior executives. His book, *The Transformational Power of Executive Team Alignment* has been a best seller. One might wonder how someone with such a spiritual bent could be so involved in business and maybe *Seven Provocations* answers that question. He has a graduate degree in Spiritual Psychology. You can purchase a copy of *Seven Provocations* at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).

*Gary Tomlinson is a business consultant and motivational speaker. He specializes in strategy-execution management. He works with senior leaders to help them clarify, deploy and achieve their organizational initiatives down to an individual level. Gary uses a unique and dynamic methodology that is part process, part software and part roadmap that enables his clients to close the gap between planning and implementation. You can engage Gary at [gary@gary-tomlinson.com](mailto:gary@gary-tomlinson.com). To read his other book reviews visit his website at [www.gary-tomlinson.com](http://www.gary-tomlinson.com).*