

The Best OF ~POSITIVE PROVOCATIONS~



*Essential Positive, Motivational, Inspirational and Loving Articles for
Happier Living*

By
~Zeenat Merchant Syal~
Counseling Psychologist/Spiritual Counselor
Motivational Speaker/Naturopath
Author of [~Positive Provocations~](#)

What is [~Positive Provocations~](#) ?

~Positive Provocations~ is a personal development/self improvement blog/website.

Its main focus is **“Positive Thinking through Healing the Mind, Body, Heart & Soul. Spreading Positivity, Motivation, Inspiration, Love & Happiness”**



THIS BLOG WILL MAKE YOU THINK FROM YOUR TRUE CONSCIOUS SELF, WILL MAKE YOU FEEL FROM THE HEART & WILL MAKE YOU A SOULFULLY AWARE AND POSITIVELY HAPPY HUMAN BEING!

About the Author



Zeenat Merchant-Syal resides in Hyderabad, India. She is a wife to her best friend and mother to her 3 year old angel. An only daughter and a sometimes overprotective but loving elder sister to her little brothers.

Her aim in life is *“To ease human suffering. In whatever way I possibly can. I want to be remembered as a person who shed light & made a positive impact on the lives of others.”*

A Practicing Counseling Psychologist/Spiritual Counselor/Motivational Speaker/Naturopath by

profession. Holds a degree in Counseling and Motivational Psychology among other Degrees in various fields of Holistic and Naturopathic medicine.

She has also conducted many [motivational seminars](#) for organized groups and multinational companies. Has treated many physical and mental illnesses successfully without the use of any allopathic medication. Some of the modes of treatment she uses are: *Psychotherapy, Positive Thinking, Stress Management, Anger Management, Marriage/Couples Counselling, One on One Counselling, Sujok, Pranic Healing, Juice and Food Therapy, Herbal Cure, Prayer Healing, Distance Healing* etc..

To Know More about [Positive Provocations Blog](#) Please Read [For Your Help](#). If you would like to know how you can avail of [Free Online Counseling](#) for yourself or your loved one please see the details here- [Online counseling](#)

You can connect with Zeenat by:

Email- zeenatsyal@live.com, zeenat.syal@gmail.com OR [Facebook](#) OR [Twitter](#)

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Happy Reading!

Welcome Dear Friend,

Much Gratitude for downloading this ebook. This ebook is a labor of love. As I celebrate the **1st birthday** of my Blog/Website [Positive Provocations](#), I present this compilation of some of my best articles to you as a **thank you**.

As you well know, it is not possible to write and compile a book alone. You always need backing and support of others. These articles contain thoughts that are mine, but I have been truly inspired by many many writers and personalities. Whenever I have loved a quote or thought from someone, I have included that in the article itself. When you read on you will see.

All these articles are part of my Blog/Website [Positive Provocations](#) about which you may have already read about in the introduction.

I also wish to acknowledge the immense and valuable contribution others have made to my life by freely sharing their wisdom. My gratitude especially to the many children including my own daughter who I hold so dear, and who in their innocence and trust taught me the real meaning of truth, love and sincerity. I am also highly indebted to my Father who enriched my life by his unshakable faith in the power of the inner self and his strong belief that **“While times may change, your values must endure.”** And most of all I am eternally grateful to my loving husband, without whose immense support and encouragement I wouldn't be ME! He is my anchor, guide and best friend!

It is my sincere wish that you benefit from the thoughts and ideas in this ebook and pass them on to others you truly love and care for.

Share this book and Gift this book to your friends and family so that they too may benefit from the thoughts of positivity, motivation, inspiration and love.

“Life itself cant give you joy, Unless you really will it...”

Life just gives you time and space, its upto you to fill it.....!!!”

There is no easy way of finding joy and happiness for ourselves. This must begin with the absorbing of good thoughts which in turn starts the self cleansing process. I think we must finally take our own life in our arms and guide our-self towards our self agreed and declared objectives.

The purpose of this book is to aide your own personal refinement. There is often as much good sense required in knowing how to profit from good advice as there is to give it.

This possibly can be your own personal book of thoughts, to absorb and practice, a step at a time. You can mark the thoughts that appeal to you most and which you may consider worth pursuing.

However, **I must emphasize** that this book is not to be read like any other book. It is like enjoying good food. You must chew each morsel well and digest each meal before getting ready for the next. This is infact food for your mind, body, heart and soul.

It is said that good habits make a good product. Let some of the good and positive thoughts in this book lead to forming of good and positive habits and a positively good way of life. May these thoughts help you find your share of positivity, joy and happiness.

You have to give your dreams a concrete shape- so let this be the beginning!!

With Immense Love and Gratitude,

Zeenat Merchant Syal

Counseling Psychologist/Spiritual Counselor

Motivational Speaker/Naturopath

Author~Positive Provocations~



Passion Is...



“Nothing great in the world has ever been accomplished without passion.”~ Hebbel quotes (German Poet and Dramatist, 1813-1863)~

Focusing on passion this month has so intuitively opened doors for my personal growth...doors I never thought really existed. While I explored each and every door and enjoyed what I learned, I also realized how much passion is part of all our lives. More so, how much we all **need** to make passion a part of our life to be happy and successful. So, below I give you my thoughts on what **Passion Is....**

Passion is the Index of life

Whether you are an ordinary person or a celebrity, you can do without passion only if you can do without life because it is passion alone that determines the extent to which you are alive. People say every cigarette reduces your life span by an hour. That could indeed be true. But truer is the fact that an hour spent doing something unwillingly has already subtracted an hour from your life. **Life is not a collection of days you manage to live through, but of ‘todays’ that you live passionately to the hilt.** People who lack passion feel that if they could get this promotion, or that kind of a bank balance or get rid of some health problem, they will be happy. But the fact is that those who do eventually get what they want have forgotten what happiness is and usually end up with more problems than a lifetime of happiness. We human beings, like any piece of iron, can propose to finish ourselves in two ways: we may rust ourselves out or we may simply wear ourselves out. Rust looks ugly; **wearing out brings shine!**

Passion is the Value of life

How valuable would diamonds be, if they were as common as pebbles on the road? Their value is only because they are rare and need the ceaseless effort required to mine and cut them to shape. **Value of your own life, in a similar way, comes not from your achievements, but from the quality of passion with which you are still making ceaseless efforts today to make it shine further.** Painters, scientists, inventors, authors and others who are creatively living their lives are **cut off** from thoughts of any monetary concerns, like “how much will this fetch me?” or “is it worth the royalty I am going to eventually earn?” **The mind is instead focused on**

enjoying the excitement of responding to the challenge at hand. The original deal was, that *James Cameron*, was to receive an \$11.5 million fee for his role as writer, director and producer of the movie, *Titanic*. However, as costs for *Titanic* soared out of control to more than \$200 million—twice its original budget, **not ready to compromise with his passionate vision**, he volunteered to forgo most of his fees and profit-participation except for his \$1.5 million writer's fee. Cameron also agreed to forgo half of his profit-participation on the next movie he would make for Fox. Overjoyed with the success of the movie, the two studios—Viacom Inc.'s Paramount Pictures and News Corp's Twentieth Century Fox that produced the film—later agreed to jointly restore Cameron's original deal. He eventually ended up **earning much more than his original deal!** *Stephen Hawking*, in spite of nature denying him the use of his physical body, the author of the seminal book, *A Brief History of Time*, is considered the most important theoretical physicist since Albert Einstein. So severely handicapped is his body that he takes eight to 15 minutes to compose his answers to audience's questions by using a computer cursor with his crippled right hand, spelling out each word letter by letter. The world is overflowing with examples of people who have kept the flame of passion alive **against all odds**.

Passion is Fuel for fulfillment

Anyone who finds circumstances unfavorable, has in fact only found what he has all along been looking for—even though only subconsciously. Those who find pursuing meaningful goals difficult, settle for the next best—they pursue nice and convincing excuses. And what you look for usually finds you before you can find it. **If you focus on results, you achieve them; if you focus on having explanations for failures, that is precisely what you will find.** However, people pursuing their goals rarely notice any 'unfavorable circumstances' on their way. *The goals that burst forth from your soul, if noticed with intense feelings, pull you towards them the way a rubber band pulls a loose object towards the fixed end on being released.*

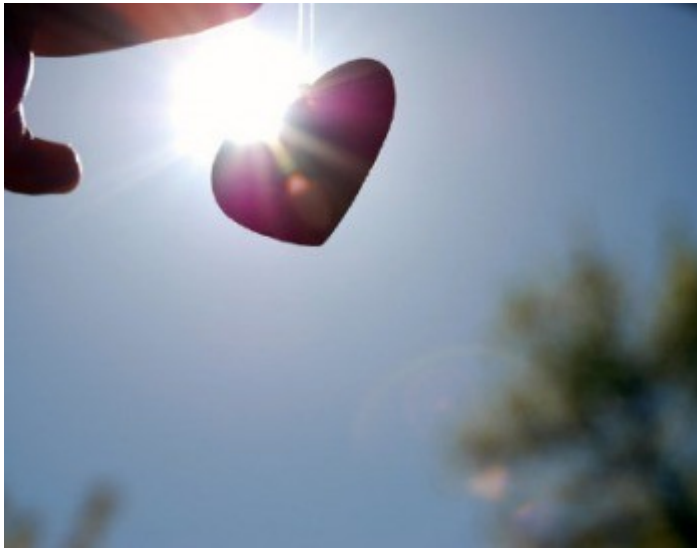
Passion is the Secret of physical and spiritual fitness

The word 'inspiration' means 'to be one with the spirit', and the word 'enthusiasm' composed of the two roots 'en' + 'theos', means 'to be one with God'. Passion both, stems from, and causes spiritual fitness. Lack of passion therefore stems from spiritual poverty and can be overcome by placing everything you do in the wider context of meaning, values and ethics. And passion, in turn, helps you search for the deeper meaning in everything you do. It is a chain reaction that once triggered, feeds on itself and goes on growing bigger and bigger progressively. **With passion**, blood finds new joy in circulation, mind receives more oxygen, alertness level touches a new high, each cell of the body displays happiness and gives rise to a more tolerant and caring attitude. Sleep deepens, helping the body to repair its worn out cells, and diseases suddenly find themselves out of place in any part of the body. **Passion is therefore the most precious and vital tonic that you alone can produce for your body, and that too free of cost!**

Discover and live your passion! This is the only thing you are here for.

*And, what's my passion??? **To help YOU in whatever way I can.** I do hope this article on passion has somewhat reignited your passion or at least has nudged you to look deeper to find and sustain your own passions.*

8 Cues for Developing Passion



While penning down my thoughts last week on what [passion is](#), there was the realization that passion though freely available in our true authentic self, isn't truly tapped by each and every one of us. We go about living lives full of goals, balance sheets and to-do lists, without batting an eye towards our hidden passions. That passion which made you experiment, that passion that made you Unique, that passion that made you YOU!

Here are some cues for cultivating, developing and reigniting that hidden passion that lies within each and every one of us-

8 Cues for developing passion:

1. **Review your dreams:** There are only two emotions: *pain and pleasure*. And passion is an offspring stream that flows between the two. It feeds-forward into pleasure the lessons it learns from the pain. When we fail in either of these two constituent abilities—receiving and rightly interpreting the lessons from the pain, and persistently feeding them forward as an investment in intended pleasures—we fail to strike the fire of passion within. So being ceaselessly awake to the gap between one's potential and intentions (the idea of a dream life complete in all its facets) and one's performance and pains (the reality of one's present life circumstances) is the *key to strike passion*. And striking passion is akin to striking gold. **The only fundamental wealth we have is that of passion.** You can **create anything** with it and also lose anything without it. However, an insecure man feels too secure with his present to allow himself to try any experiments with it.
2. **Learn from sorrows:** The real sorrow in life is not getting sick, old or having to die, for we often come across sick, old and dying people who **are happy**. The real sorrow of life is to lose the ability to feel the sorrows—and hence that of doing the needful. Pain is a message from Nature that you should pay attention to and address. Most humans get roasted in their suffering, having lost their sensitivity to the pain they are going through. You need to develop awareness of the pain, track it down to the learning hidden in its roots and persevere to take appropriate action to leap out of it towards your passions. *“Whenever you lose, at least do not lose the lesson involved,” ~ Dalai Lama.* Sorrow and pain must be accepted with grace but not as a punishment meted out

to us for our past deeds that we cannot even remember. It should be seen as a signal towards the necessity of looking within to discover and correct where we are continuing to flaunt any of the laws of nature.

3. **Examine your subconscious vision:** There is no one among us without a vision; though consciously we may not be aware of it. **You arrive in life where your vision takes you.** And where you are now can help you discover the subconscious vision that you had been carrying all this while. And if this is true, you can easily determine where you would find yourself tomorrow, if you ruthlessly examine your hidden vision.
4. **Identify genuine passion:** A sure sign of genuine passion is the fact that it takes you out of the confines of your narrow personal achievements and inspires you to contribute more to the larger self. This kind of passion fills you with a feeling that you are a humble servant but with a heroic mission. **Your goals are in terms of 'giving', not 'getting', 'grasping' or 'achieving'.** Desires indeed have no end—more so when we do not dare to acknowledge them honestly and do not seek their fulfillment.
5. **Let inner peace prevail:** There are three kinds of people. **One**, who are so deeply satisfied with themselves and sing glories of the virtue of contentment that they stop growing; **two**, who are so discontented that they see no point doing anything; and **three**, who are so obsessed with speedy results that their impatience consumes them. All these three kinds of people immobilize themselves and instead of growing, begin to decay. Contentment or frustration of the kind that makes us stagnate in life can hardly be spiritual. You cannot focus on your work whole-heartedly unless there is peace in your mind and contentment in your heart. You cannot look at frustration and draw the necessary passion to dream and do what is possible if you allow yourself to become it, i.e., allow it to consume you or get consumed by it. Keep distance from it—the way you keep distance from fire—so that you use it without getting burnt.
6. **Be here and now:** The solution of life does not lie in finding a permanent end to it, imaginary or real. **It lies in learning to live it correctly, joyously and ceaselessly with passion.** In order to be happy, you need to **feel** happiness. If you are living in a sea of happiness but don't know how to feel what you are in touch with, I am sure there will be no happiness for you. The road to Happiness, therefore, is an inward journey of progressively deeper awareness of what you already are. It is strewn with carrots of intentions planted within you by Nature, as milestones, in order to inspire and guide you further on the path.
7. **Flow with life mindfully:** One of the greatest spiritual qualities is that of being aware of what and why one is doing what one is doing at any moment. Lack of goals or passion in achieving them is certainly what would not necessitate or help one develop this quality. Most of the time people don't *realize* that flowing with life is not the same as living irresponsibly, absentmindedly, passively and purposelessly. **Life is an exciting journey if it traverses through the progressively meaningful goals that you set for yourself.** The realization that what we were going through so far was 'life' and what all we could have done with it dawns on us just a few minutes before death. How pathetic, painful, and regretful! I wonder, if only we could get to live those last

five minutes of realization somewhere towards the early or even the middle part of life, how much life it could inject in our lives. **I also wonder what possibly would happen, if once introduced to them, you could live every five minutes of life like those last five minutes.**

8. ***Aim high:*** The answer-sheets of the toppers when compared to those of the average or not so good students are not necessary long with extra pages attached. However, a typical topper's answer sheets have more marks per inch of the page. It has almost no paragraph that is without compliments or rich marks. We can make our life like a topper's answer-sheet. Each month, week, day and hour of our life is akin to the page, para and line of our answer-sheet. And each small or big piece of job or project that we undertake is like each answer on our answer-sheet. Our attempt should be to undertake only those jobs/projects that are high-scoring and highly meaningful from Nature's point of view and attempt them in a way that each month, week or day spent carrying them out **secures us rich compliments and marks from God and the universe.**

CONCLUSION-

Conserve your passion:

Some people are passionate while planning their life, if at all they ever do it, but the passion gets dissipated on its own very soon. It fails to percolate down from their filofax into their daily living. **To have moment-to-moment passion in our lives we not only need to ignite passion but conserve it too.** A great day does not begin in the morning; it begins the night before with the chalking out of a plan for it. It is pursued the next day as planned while maintaining the tempo by allowing yourself to contemplate on the desired 'means' and 'ends' pertaining to every new activity before starting it with your **best of attention and intention.**

5 Simple Steps To Enhance Your Happiness

*If you want to be happy, be.
~Leo Tolstoy*

We have all been hearing and reading so much about Happiness. How to find happiness? How to be Happy?

This is not going to be one of those articles where I tell you how to find happiness...

Why? Simply cause I believe happiness is within each and every one of us. We need not look for it elsewhere. We don't need to search for happiness, because it can never be found!



How do you really find something that isnt lost in the first place??

Happiness can be self controlled and enhanced through certain practices. A large portion of being happy comes from our own power to change. **Change** is usually a good thing, especially, if you're in a dormant not-going-anywhere kind of situation.

So today I will give you 5 simple steps/practices that will enhance and improve your happiness quotient:

1. **Be Grateful**
Write letters of [gratitude](#) to people who have helped you in your life. Maybe it was something small or something big...but write that letter. Email or Text the gratitude note or letter. Its my guarantee, you will experience a lasting and increased sense of happiness. But you wont know till you try it!
2. **Be Optimistic:**
Everyday before you go to bed or while you meditate, visualize an ideal future for yourself. For example-living with a loving and supportive partner or finding a job that is fulfilling. You can visualize whatever you want and describe that vivid image in a journal entry. After doing this for a few days: one- the universe will start positively aligning things for you, two- you will have an increased feeling of well being.
3. **Count Your Blessings:**
Practice writing down three great things that have happened to you over the week. You might have met someone nice or might have bought something new.

You being alive and breathing is a blessing too. You living and experiencing this wonderful life is a blessing too. Write it down and see the heightened state of euphoria you feel after you do. You will start noticing blessings you didn't even know you already had!

4. **You have strengths, Use them:**

Take time to think about your [strengths](#). You might be loving, giving, nurturing, helping, a good friend, a good person, a good host/hostess, great at your job, great with kids...the list is endless. Identify your strengths and then make use of these in your daily life. Everyday will become a blessing you will want to write about in your gratitude journal.

5. **Commit acts of kindness:**

Helping others also helps ourselves. Donate some time or money to charity. Better still be [kind](#), help and assist people in need. Watching another person smile because of something you did, is the best feeling in the world! You will miraculously feel your worries vanishing, only to be replaced by a heightened soulful sense of happiness.

Simple, isn't it?

Now go ahead and **gently** introduce these practices in your life. **You deserve every ounce of happiness you can garner from this wonderful life.**

You live but Once!

Learning To Flow With The Universal Plan

“Smile, breathe and go slowly.” – Thich Nhat Hanh

It’s happened to all of us at some point in time.

There is something you really, really want. You want it so badly you can taste it. Whether it’s a relationship, a promotion, a new career, the accomplishment of a lifetime goal, the attainment of a particular lifestyle or the acquisition of a shiny new “toy”, whatever it may be, you know it’s not only *what* you want but what you *need*. You



know it’s right for you and nothing short of exactly *what* you want, the way *you* want it will do. And so you set about making it happen. Perhaps you used the law of attraction, the power of positive thinking, affirmations and visualizations. Or, maybe you took another approach through, prayer, ritual, meditation or ceremony to focus your will and intent. Or, maybe you created a concrete plan of action to help you get what you wanted. You may have tried one or all of the above. You may have done everything “right”. You may have even come very close to getting what you want, but you still didn’t get it. **Sucks doesn’t it?**

So why didn’t it work? What could have possibly gone wrong? Aren’t we supposed to be able to manifest everything and anything we want if we just “go about it right”? Well, that’s the theory anyway. But in real life it doesn’t always work out that way.

Of course there are many reasons why we might not get what we want . . . maybe we are blocking the very thing we want with our own insecurities, beliefs, or lack of clarity about what we want and/or need; maybe we don’t believe we can have what we want; maybe we don’t feel we deserve it; maybe we don’t know how to effectively co-create with the Universe to manifest what we want; maybe . . . fill in the blank with any number of things that interfere with our ability to effectively manifest what we want. But sometimes, no matter how focused, positive and clear you are, or how deeply you believe that you can manifest what you want, and no matter what you do, the Universe just says no! Why? **Because sometimes the Universe just has other plans, and, sometimes, those plans are more wonderful than anything we could possibly imagine or dream of ourselves.**

This happened to me a few years ago with something I really wanted that obviously, I didn't get, or I wouldn't be mentioning it here. And believe me I wanted it **bad**. I did everything I possibly could to manifest the outcome that I wanted. But, it didn't quite work out the way I wanted it to. And boy was I unhappy about that. Now before you think, well, maybe she just doesn't know how to manifest things, it's important that you understand that I'm quite good at manifesting. I have manifested and accomplished some amazing things in my life, often in the face of what some might call insurmountable odds, and with little or no significant emotional, mental or financial support from others, and despite people telling me it couldn't be done, or that I couldn't do it.

But this thing I wanted a few years ago, I just couldn't make it happen, no matter how hard I tried or what I did. And believe me, I used every manifestation tool I knew of, within ethical boundaries of course, but to no avail. I still didn't get what I wanted. And at the time, I was one unhappy camper let me tell you. I simply couldn't understand, how this thing I wanted so much and that I knew was so right for me, this thing that I **knew** was meant to be, just wasn't happening. If you had told me then that I would later be grateful that I **hadn't** gotten what I wanted, I would have told you to go fly a kite. But, that's exactly what happened.

After several years, I one day found myself saying thank you, thank you, thank you to the Universe for saving me from myself. 'Cause sometimes what we want, just isn't good for us. I'm reminded of a saying that is meant as a curse in some cultures, "May you get everything you want." And that's exactly what it would have been for me if I'd gotten what I wanted back then, a curse rather than a blessing. In my case, what I wanted was a particular outcome in a particular relationship, a relationship that I had in fact manifested but that wasn't going exactly the way I expected. Now for those of you who think, aha, that was the problem, she focused on a particular person....well, not quite. I manifested the relationship itself initially as I focused on what I wanted in a relationship, or what I *thought* I wanted at the time, not on a particular person, and let's just say it still didn't quite work out the way I thought it should.

It may have taken a while, but eventually I was able to see that a higher wisdom than my own earthbound personality and ego had intervened and saved me from myself. For given the opportunity, I would have taken that relationship to the "next level", and while I may have been happy for a brief moment, in the long run I would have been *very, very*, unhappy. But I couldn't see that at the time. All I knew then was that I wasn't getting what I wanted. And I was a bit put out to say the very least.

Now, after several years, I have the perspective, clarity and experience to see that situation in a new light. For not only would I *not* have been happy in the long term if things had worked out according to *my* plan, getting what I wanted in that particular instance would have prevented me from exploring some very interesting opportunities that have come my way since then, all of which I have learned from and have enriched my life greatly in one way or the other – opportunities that I wasn't even able to conceive of all those years ago.

While manifesting the life I deserve, I now focus on being open to the opportunities that are aligned with my inner peace, happiness and well-being, rather than a ***specific concrete*** outcome. And that has worked out much better for me. I have learned that sometimes, by focusing too much on the thing we want, or the door that has become closed to us, we can't see all the other wonderful opportunities that are available to us, all the other doors that are wide open just waiting for us to walk through them. I have learned that **sometimes what we want, isn't always right for us**, even though at the time we may think that it is. I have learned that not everything that we *do* manifest should necessarily be followed to its "ultimate" conclusion, that sometimes it's just one of many experiences for us to have in this life, and that *what we perceive to be the goal or objective may simply be a stepping stone to another level of self-awareness and understanding*, merely another step on the journey. **I have learned that the wise person knows how to co-create with the Universe and flow with it, changing course when necessary rather than being fixed on a particular outcome.** And it has become clear to me that sometimes, no matter how much we want it, how hard we may work for it, or "work to manifest it", whatever **it** may be, that sometimes, the Universe has other plans, and those plans are more wonderful and exciting than anything we could possibly have imagined.

"Flow with whatever is happening and let your mind be free. Stay centered by accepting whatever you are doing. This is the ultimate." - Chuang Tzu

True Love or Infatuation-What's the Difference?

“True love comes quietly, without banners or flashing lights. If you hear bells, get your ears checked.” ~Erich Segal



Sometime back when I wrote about [How to Positively handle a break up](#), my inbox was suddenly full of emails seeking relationship advice. While each and every email was different and each and every situation unique, there was one thing that was common in all....**COMPLICATION!**

We all know relationships come with their share of ups and downs. We have all been through these. Some have come out victorious, while some haven't been able to wrap their head around what exactly went wrong. Somehow, we all think we need to work hard at making a relationship work. While in reality that is absolutely NOT the case. Don't look so puzzled...Its true!
True love=An awesome relationship.

So, how do we know its true love? What's the measuring scale for this awesome relationship we DONT have to work hard at?

We live with the misconception about what true love is. We have been fed this magical fairy tale like feeling when we were kids with all the fairy tales and the tall, dark and handsome or the tall, fair and beautiful cliches! Its the way story books and the media are...but then, we forget they are just stories. Meant to amuse and entertain. **When in reality Love is** far more beautiful than any fairy tale or any romantic story. Its a selfless feeling. A feeling towards another...irrespective of reciprocation. If we can only remove the dark glasses of what we **Think** what love should **look like** and **just feel it for once**....all the complications would just melt away. Although there are times when people who are madly in love also part...**its not the love thats at fault..its the situation or circumstance.** Love is *not* going anywhere. Its right there in your heart...feel it!**Each of us is full of immense love** irrespective of our situation or circumstance! We just need to **feel it** enough and **share it** enough to let all our relationships blossom in its beauty.

So, since this is Valentines Week and Love is certainly in the air...I thought of giving you a little list of differences to clear atleast a few complications.

The difference between True Love and Infatuation.

We all need to know this in order to know what part of our loving relationships we need to work on....and Are you truly in love or madly infatuated?? ***“Infatuation is when you think he’s as sexy as Robert Redford, as smart as Henry Kissinger, as noble as Ralph Nader, as funny as Woody Allen, and as athletic as Jimmy Connors. Love is when you realize that he’s as sexy as Woody Allen, as smart as Jimmy Connors, as funny as Ralph Nader, as athletic as Henry Kissinger and nothing like Robert Redford – but you’ll take him anyway.”*** ~Judith Viorst, Redbook, 1975

You are In Infatuation when:

- You see the other person as perfect
- You want to get own needs met; selfish
- You spend all your time with the other person
- You can Quickly “fall” for the other person
- All your Other relationships and friendships deteriorate
- You are solely Dependant (emotionally) on the other person
- You experience Jealousy frequently
- Your relationship lasts for a short period of time
- Distance strains and often puts an end to the relationship
- Your Quarrels are serious and common
- Your Quarrels can seriously damage the relationship

You are Truly in Love when:

- You see the other person’s flaws and still loves them
- You Want to think of your partner first before yourself; selfless
- You still spend time with others-(your partner accepts YOUR personality and YOU)
- You Take the time to build the relationship
- Other relationships and friendships grow stronger
- Trust and understanding results in less severe, less frequent or NO jealousy
- You can encompass a long-term commitment
- Your relationship survives and is strengthened because of distance
- Your Quarrels are less serious and less often
- Your infrequent Quarrels strengthen the relationship

Temptation is the second name of infatuation and its so easy to fall for temptation. But the question is, do you want a lasting, satisfying relationship? If so, infatuation isn’t the answer. Look at your relationships through the differences above. A relationship **cannot** be based on infatuation. **Perhaps, True and Real Love begins with first finding yourself!** Cause only if you’re happy with your self will you be able to embrace the other person just as he/she

is. And surprisingly you WILL find true love more easily (naturally). You wont need to rack your brain as to why a certain relationship went wrong. **If its meant to be it will be!** Without fuss, without hassels, without drama...it WILL happen and you will make your happily ever after....even better than the fairly tales....

You just need to know the difference....

Successful Excellence

Aren't we all craving for success?

In whatever endeavor we take up success is what we are after. Be it a project or a job. Be it as small a task as completing a good book. We always want to be successful at the task in hand and in the broader perspective in life. Success in life.



But, What does Success really mean?

Is it the mere completion of a task at hand or the positive completion of the task at hand?

Whatever your definition of success is, whether its the smaller successes like learning a new language or quitting alcohol OR the bigger successes like landing a major project or finding the love of your life..what happens when you have attained that Success?? What happens when there are no more goals left, when you are where you want to be? If you are a hardworking person success **WILL** come to you. There is **no doubt** about that. But on the road to attaining that success have you been truly losing out on whats most important-**Excellence**.

Now you may wonder What does excellence have anything at all to do with Success?

When you you're working hard to attain these successes you often learn new things along the way. Like a new language, like learning to be more patient, be more persistent, be more focused. You have learned a wealth of information while attaining these successes. But, once these successes have been reached to full completion you tend to forget about all you learned on the way and jump onto the next success you've been eying! Those lessons you learned are adding to Your Excellence.

What is success without excellence? Its like a person having all the riches in the world, but not knowing how to use it. Its like having a beautiful chocolate cake right in front of you and then not knowing what to do of it...Eat it gorge it or savor it or just let it be!

Excellence comes with much the same things as what success comes with—persistence, hard work, focus...

But Successful Excellence comes with Passion. A passion to learn and to retain that knowledge. That adds to your successful excellence. You will have wealth of knowledge and know exactly how to use it and when to use it. But, only if you focus on YOUR EXCELLENCE rather than focus on just success.

Successes will come and go in time, but excellence will remain with you always. Even when you're old and don't have anymore successes to run after, this very Excellence will show you the way to live well.

Rather than focusing on just success why not focus on successful excellence? You have nothing to lose. In fact everything to gain.

Think of it this way- ***With success you don't necessarily get excellence. But, with Excellence Success is INEVITABLE!*** These are changing times. Yet in the middle of all the changes there is one thing that constantly determines success. Some call it leadership. But to my mind, it is the single-minded pursuit of successful excellence.

Successful Excellence endures and sustains. It goes beyond motivation into the realms of inspiration. Successful Excellence can be as strong a uniting force as solid vision. Successful Excellence does not happen in a vacuum. It needs a collective obsession as I have experienced the benefits of excellence in my own life. Successful Excellence is a great starting point for any new venture or new beginning but also an unending journey.

What is Successful excellence?

It is about going a little beyond what we expect from ourselves. The main driver of excellence is internal. I have found that excellence is not so much a battle you fight with others, but a battle you fight with yourself, by constantly raising the bar and stretching yourself. This is the best and the most satisfying and challenging part about successful excellence.

How does one create successful excellence in life?

First, we create an obsession with excellence. We must dream of it not only because it delivers better results but because we truly believe in it and find it intrinsically satisfying to us. We must think of excellence not only with our mind but also with our heart and soul.

Second, we need to build a collective self-confidence. People who pursue successful excellence are self-confident. This is because successful excellence requires tremendous

faith in one's ability to do more and in a better way. Unless, we believe we can do better, we cannot!

Third, we must understand the difference between perfection for its own sake and successful excellence. Time is of essence. This may seem like a paradox: should we aim for excellence or should we aim for speed? Excellence is about doing the best we can and speed lies in doing it quickly. These two concepts are not opposed to each other; in fact, speed and timeliness are important elements of successful excellence. A balance is required.

Fourth, we must realize that we cannot be the best in everything we do. We must define what we are or would like to be best at and what someone else can do better. Successful Excellence is NOT about being the best. It is about being the best in what we are good at. We have to define what our own core competencies are and what we can let others do. Share the responsibility... Headaches shared are headaches divided.

Fifth, invest in successful excellence for the future. Future always seems to be at a distance. But it comes upon you so suddenly that it catches you by surprise, if not shock. What constitutes excellence in the future will be significantly different from what it is today. In these days of severe pressures, there is big temptation to sacrifice the future to look good in the present.

Finally, successful excellence requires **belief and humility**. This is especially needed when we feel we have reached the peak of excellence and there is nothing further we can do. We need an open mind to look at things in a different way and allow new ideas to come in.

Otherwise, there is a real danger of becoming complacent or even downright arrogant. I would like to end this post with a story that illustrates this very well.

Story-A brilliant young professor went to meet a famous Zen master to have a discussion with him on Zen. He found himself in front of a modest house. He rang the doorbell and waited. A while later, he heard shuffling footsteps and the door was opened by the Zen master.

He invited the professor to sit with him on the dining table. The professor was a little disappointed with the shabby appearance of the Zen master. He started quizzing him immediately on comparative philosophies and the Zen master gave some brief answers.

When the professor began to debate with him on those answers, the Zen master stopped speaking and kept smiling at him. Finally, the professor got angry. He said, "I have come from a long distance just to understand the relevance of Zenism. But apparently you have nothing to say. I have not learnt anything from you at all."

At this point, the Zen master asked the professor to have some tea. When the professor held the cup, the Zen master started pouring tea into it. After some time, the tea started spilling and the professor shouted, “Stop! The cup can contain no more.”

The Zen Master stopped and then, once again smiling, he said, “A mind, full of itself can receive nothing. How can I speak to you of Zenism until you empty your mind to learn.” The professor understood and apologized to the Zen master. He parted from him, the Zen master — a wiser man.

This article was a guest article written by Zeenat for [Dragos Roua- Brilliantly Better.](#)

The Gratitude Ritual

“To speak gratitude is courteous and pleasant, to enact gratitude is generous and noble, but to live gratitude is to touch Heaven.” ~Johannes A. Gaertner~



Being in a state of gratitude can completely transform one's disposition. The more we pause to consider the things we have to be grateful for, the more we begin to focus on those things. And the things we focus on, we tend to draw toward ourselves. Therefore, the act of focusing on our blessings tends to bring more blessings into our lives.

I invite you to test this assumption for yourself. You may wish to use the following practice – or create your own gratitude ritual. Continue your practice for at least 21 days, as that's how long it takes to develop a new habit. At the end of the three week time period, sit back and reflect. *Are you feeling more gratitude throughout the course of your days? Are you starting to view your life in a more positive light?*

This works and I am here to vouch for this practice as I did practice it all last month. To be honest, this has been with me for a very long time. I just wasn't regular in my practice. But, since this time the raoka theme was Gratitude, I restarted a regular ritual.

The Gratitude practice: Choose any time of day (more than once a day if you're able) to practice gratitude. This short routine should only take about five minutes of your time. While lying or sitting down, allow your breathing to slow and become steady. Pay attention to at least three full breaths. Now record in your journal at least five things that you are grateful for. As you record the items that you are grateful for, stop after each entry. Allow yourself a moment or two to really feel the gratitude. When we open our hearts to all the good fortune in our lives, negativity (temporarily, at least) will take a back seat. We begin to realize that despite the difficulties life may hand us, we are truly blessed.

My Grandfather was a master of the 'attitude of gratitude,' even though he never participated in a formal gratitude practice. He didn't have to. He was one of those fortunate people born a natural optimist. Most of us have to work at it!

Grandpa had plenty of reasons to complain; especially later in his life, as he lived for years with some rather debilitating medical conditions. But, he didn't spend much time feeling sorry for himself. In fact, he was one of the most optimistic people I've ever met. He always saw the silver lining behind every cloud (both literally and figuratively). Over the years, we made 40 plus vacations as a family, and any time we were cursed with a rain shower while out in the monsoons in Mumbai, grandpa could be seen pointing toward the sky and saying, "Hey! Do you see that bright spot? I believe the sun's trying to come out!"

As you might guess the sun did not always come out during those rainy monsoon days in Mumbai, yet grandpa's optimism was contagious. Because of his 'sunny' disposition, our family would start to see the silver lining in our situation.

"Oh well," My mum would say, "At least we won't be sweating today." "Hey, Grandma and Grandpa!" we would exclaim, "It's still raining so the park won't be too crowded. Do you want to go play?"

Soon grandparents and grandchildren were heading off for a rousing game of throw-ball, and my mum would happily steal away to the local stores while my brothers and I ran off to explore a few of the local shops. The entire gang was enjoying our family vacation – **sun or no sun.**

We live in a world that can bring you down. We're all aware of that. You don't have to look far to find the negatives – just check out the headlines in the local newspaper or glance through any online news source. Not to mention the personal hardships we all face at some point in our lives as well – medical issues, financial concerns, problems with our jobs, our spouses, our children...

Most of us are not natural optimists like Grandpa. But for the rest of us, it's amazing to see how a little spontaneous gratitude can help to lighten a gloomy attitude.

For example, it's quite dismal and overcast this morning as I write these words, and I'm facing a list of 'to do's' that's terribly daunting. Both of my knees are sore from running errands outdoors this past weekend (exercising on pavement is not 'knee-friendly'), and from 100 miles away, my hubby is worriedly awaiting some important interview results.

Now these are all very real concerns, but if I were to stay in this brooding 'head space' I doubt I'd be able to reap much joy from this day or share much joy with others, for that matter. Therefore, instead of spending the entire morning focusing on cares and worries, I'm making a **conscious decision** to spend my next few moments contemplating a few of my many blessings.

Such as...

- *The wonderful phone conversation I had with my dear friend last night.*
- *The coffee in my cup, that seems to be extra dark & rich today.*

- *My Hubby and Daughter, still sleeping comfortably within the home we have the privilege of sharing*
- *The very interesting-looking bird that just came to rest on our back window.*
- *My good fortune in being able to rearrange my schedule so that I'll be able to spend a few days at the end of the week with my family, and...*

Wait! What is that I see peeking out from behind that huge gray cloud up there? Well, what do you know? I do believe the sun is trying to come out!

How to Positively handle a Break-Up

***“Pain is inevitable.
Suffering is optional.”***

Almost always when a relationship ends, one person tends to shed it faster, while the other wades through the pain and grief of parting.

Your response to this parting depends on your personality type and state of dependence on your partner. It can also be impacted by the manner in which the parting happened. Did one unexpectedly walk out of the relationship while the other was unprepared? Or, was it a slow and helpless falling out of love on both sides? Did one cheat or hurt the other in any way? Was there respect in the relationship?



If the break up is for the right reasons it helps. If two partners decide to break off to move on to more positive and fulfilling stuff, the parting is likely to be amicable. However, if one partner walks out seeking to hurt or punish the other, the parting and subsequent interaction is bound to be acrimonious and painful for both.

In order to have a peaceful after, it’s important to weed out the negativity along with the relationship.

For the sake of the relationship and earlier shared love, it is an absolutely necessity on the break-up pair to ensure the impact on the other is minimal. Some people find it helps to have a Transition Relationship around the time of a break up. Almost always in a break up, one person has found someone else to love, while the other is dwelling under disbelief and grief.

Whoever is hurt the most may attract such a temporary relationship. It is commonly looked upon as a “relationship on the rebound.” However, I prefer to look upon a transition affair as a *helpful hand Destiny extends* to get us through a difficult period. And since such help is needed for just a while, these relationships, by their very nature, are short lasting.

In the midst of the grief the most critical thing to remember is that time heals all.

A time will come when the tears dry up, the heartache stops and what remains is a regret for what could have been. Unless of course you have reason not to let go that last link with the relationship.

You will move on and stop grieving, no matter how sharp and unnerving the parting. Knowing this as a reality in the middle of your tragedy helps. And what helps more than anything else is if both partners accord each other due respect and make an effort to help make the parting easier.

You cannot predict or dictate how a relationship ends.

But you can certainly **choose** to let go of it with dignity. For this, it is important to first accept that the relationship has actually ended. The support of friends and family is something that should be actively sought to help tide over the worst of the crisis.

When a relationship is on the breaking point, tempers can be mercurial; try and avoid getting into fights, and make some allowances for the other partner's irrational words and actions; it will help you retain your sanity.

Although you might have moved into a new relationship, try not to flaunt it in front of your ex or mutual friends; it can hurt like nothing else. Try and give your relationship a closure. It is important to talk as well as to listen, to discuss and together try to understand rationally and without emotion what went wrong. Also, inject a positive note by thinking of all the things you can do once you are free. Plan your days in a manner that doesn't allow you time for brooding.

Staying away from reminders of happy times spent with your ex is a good idea, at least for a while. Those memories will bring a smile later, currently they will only make you miserable. Do not try to remain friends at least not at this stage it's unnatural when you are hurting and can perhaps come later.

When handled carefully on both sides, a break-up though still painful, can at least cease to be a lifelong trauma. And perhaps when you look back in the autumn of life, it can just be a sweet sorrow. .

Being Open to the Moments

From the time you open your eyes in the morning to the time you close them back at night, your mind and you are constantly in high gear. There is always something to do, somewhere to be, some chore to complete, something something something... It never really ends, does it?



Most days when you're so tied up in those mundane activities of life, you tend to overlook the moments that make life beautiful and actually worth living. We constantly complain when the week ends or the month ends or the year ends...

Where did it go? It went by so quickly! It's this realization that creeps in just for a minuscule second, and you ask yourself, "What do I have to remember this week, month, or year gone by?"

Do you really truly remember any of those moments that made this day, this week, this month or this year memorable? Or has this mundane life taken over your mind, too?

What are these moments?

These are moments that stop you in your step and make you go WOW! They fill you with amazement and glee. You thank the Lord for these moments. They are the little things we usually overlook or don't pay much attention to, but they are there. Always readily available and for the taking.

We just need to be open to these moments...mind, heart and soul.

I have often wondered if we rule our lives or our lives rule us? I **had** come to a conclusion that I am mindful and aware...so obviously I rule my life. I live in the moment...or so I thought! How completely overconfident and complacent of me!!!

But the truth is completely the opposite and I needed my little girl to teach me that very lesson.

A Story

Last week, when I was totally exhausted from the tasks at hand and was getting irritated and agitated, my little girl came up to me and said, "Mummy, Mummy... how are you? Solly. [That's how she says pronounces 'sorry'] ... I love you." She followed it with a big hug and a bigger kiss.

I had actually been upset with her for throwing her toys around and making a mess, coupled with my own exhaustion, which was pouring out of me by telling my little one to clean everything in a stern voice.

At first, when she said that, I was actually so mentally preoccupied that I didn't even absorb what this little girl had just said. Only after a few seconds, when she kissed me, did it dawn on me: I was having a moment with my little girl!

This moment, this time, this feeling, this situation will never come back. This is, in fact, a once in a lifetime moment. I will remember this moment and tell her how she used to pacify me, when I was upset. In this moment all my exhaustion and agitation just vanished and was replaced by an overwhelming sense of love.

And what was I doing in this very memorable moment? I was being closed up and preoccupied. Silly, silly me!

I, of course, realized this and reciprocated with loving hugs and kisses.

But it got me thinking, **how many of these moments have we already lost to our mundane lives and lack of openness?**

Isn't life a collection of moments?

Much like a string of pearls: each pearl so perfect, so beautiful, but yet coming from so many different oysters, from very different parts of the vast ocean.

Don't we all deserve this beautiful string of pearls to look, wear, admire and experience at the wee end of our lives?

Let's all live a life that is precious and beautiful. Open and inviting to these moments.... So that our string of pearls is endless.

What a great lifetime treasure that would be!

Don't you agree?

*This article was a guest article written by Zeenat for **Its All About Joy!** Life is meant to be enjoyed! This blog explores the many faces of joy, one lesson at a time.*

Footprints In The Sand

In the last post/article the topic of [loneliness and being your own best friend](#) raised some very interesting comments. Many people already know what it is to be their own best friend, while some are still struggling with the idea.

Lets look at loneliness and having a best friend, especially during our worst and most vulnerable moments in a different light.

I do remember my grandfather always being my best friend. I could talk and discuss anything with him, and he always had answers to everything. One of those encounters involved me being upset cause something wasn't going right with some assignment I had taken up in school. When he saw my frustration, he sat with me and asked me what was wrong. I told him in my 15 year old self "Why does this happen to me? Why do I have to take the hardest assignment? No one in my class will help with it cause they are all so busy with their's!!" ..Well, my rant went on. Grandpa heard all of it. Then when I couldn't rant no more he said.."Let me tell you a little story of a man who was much like you. He was also upset and angry about being left alone during a very important assignment" ... Below is that very story-



~FOOTPRINTS~

One night a man had a dream. He dreamed he was walking along the beach with God. Across the sky flashed scenes from his life. For each scene, he noticed two sets of footprints in the sand. One belonged to him and the other to God.

When the last scene of his life flashed before him, he looked back at the footprints in the sand. He noticed that many times along the path of his life there was only one set of footprints. He also noticed that it happened at the very lowest and saddest times in his life.

This really bothered him and he questioned God about it, "You said that once I decided to Follow you, you'd walk with me all the way. But I have noticed that during the most troublesome times in my life, there is only one set of footprints. I don't understand why when I needed you most you would leave me alone."

God replied, "My precious, precious man, I love you and I would never leave you. During your times of trial and suffering, when you see only one set of footprints, it was then that I carried you."

Moral of this story: *Youre never ever alone, especially during your most trying times. God is always with you. Even if you cant be your own best friend as yet, make sure to acknowledge the fact that God is your best friend always!*

Conquering Fear

The enemy is fear. We think it is hate; but, it is fear.~Gandhi~

We are often warned not to push anyone into a corner because that is when they fight their best and most vicious battles.

A cornered creature, man or animal, is dangerous, even vicious. That is the point at which one loses all fear. We

become fearless when we lose that which we value the most. Because, when that happens, the rest doesn't really seem to matter as much. And, we also realize the futility of having lived in fear of losing something that is now beyond reach.

We need to understand that we could possibly have been able to enjoy the finer intricacies of our object of desire much more if we hadn't lived in constant fear of losing it. When we lose it, we see the futility of all the anxiety, the heartburn over it. We start looking for and finding ways of living without it. And the human mind and spirit, amazingly resilient as they are, discover reasons and conviction for why we are better off without that which is now lost.

That is the point at which you start enjoying the positive aspects of fearlessness. For, when you fear nothing, nobody can manipulate you anymore. You would be your own person and not dependent on anyone for your happiness or peace of mind. Your best bouts of courage are reserved for times when you have nothing to lose.

Fear in relationships

In relationships, most manipulations occur because we hand over the weapon of our fear to be used against us to those we love most. A lover is able to manipulate his beloved's emotions by threatening withdrawal of love and care. He will sulk, not talk or withdraw caring gestures — all the things that a loved one values. So you give in, bow to the will of the lover, and make compromises, all for fear of losing that which is cherished.



On the other hand, if the lover overplays his hand and carries on the withdrawal act beyond a point, the beloved may finally get used to the idea of rejection and taking the loss as an accomplished fact, and lose all fear in the relationship.

Fear of losing leaves you impotent not just in relationships but also in everyday situations such as your work life, with friends or relatives and even with strangers. It extends beyond material things to prestige, respect, happiness, peace of mind, etc.

Fear in life

At work, how often we let people get away with delivering shoddy work, doing an injustice to someone or cheating us just because we fear losing our peace of mind over an altercation?? We allow incompetent people to underperform for fear of creating a situation and so losing our calm.

In financial situations, fear of loss makes us lose money! In the '60s, reportedly a couple who invested big time in a single stock, PepsiCo, saw a major portion of their money vanish as the market took a downslide. This scared them so much that they not just dumped Pepsi, but never bought a single share after that. If they had only overcome that fear of loss, the same portion in PepsiCo would have been worth \$3 million by now!

For courage is not just required for doing battle, but also for maintaining a sense of calm, for making money, for living a good life — in short for everything. The 'fight or flight' syndrome kicks in irrespective of the fact whether the thing we fear losing is physical, mental or a financial threat.

Those who can learn the trick of transcending this fear of loss, would find the courage to enjoy that which they love most while they still retain it. What is needed, rather than running away or controlling or suppressing or any other resistance, is understanding fear; that means, watch it, learn about it, come directly into contact with it. We are to learn about fear, not how to escape from it. **Think of the worst that can possibly happen.** Get used to the idea and accept it. From there on, things can only get better... and you can acquire courage even as you retain the object you feared losing, for you fear that no more. You know loss is a possibility and you are moving ahead with that in mind.

You can conquer almost any fear if you will only make up your mind to do so. For remember, fear doesn't exist anywhere except in the mind. ~Dale Carnegie~

This was a guest article written by Zeenat for [Change Your Thoughts](#) Change your life.

Who is YOUR Best friend?



Today's fast-paced world leaves all of us wanting more. By the time your day ends, you are exhausted and crave a certain familiar warmth. If only to just sit and watch TV with or have dinner with. Failing to have this, there are many who have gone into a state of self-prescribed depression. A state of loneliness.

Now who really likes to be lonely?

Loneliness is very very over-rated. The need for companionship is a good thing. It makes you only human. But, what if you are alone? Will you stop living as a result of it?

You cant do that! You have to live and **live very well** at that too! With constant reminders or feelings of loneliness, **your productivity and your sanity both go for a toss.**

So what is the alternative?

Think of your life from birth. The very first time a baby comes into this world. This little baby has come into this world alone. When your life ends it will end alone. Your life is not gonna end with another group who are gonna come with you to keep you company at that journey. This journey from the birth to death to the afterlife...you have to go at it alone. Just you! Only You!

Why not make YOU your own best friend?

What are the things you do with best friends?? Go for movies, share funny stories, go for outings, excursions etc. Do all these things with yourself. Just learn to be with yourself. Slowly the loneliness goes away and is replaced with **Peace!** Yes, peace of mind, peace of heart and total control of your SELF.

At a time when you're totally at peace with yourself....If you do meet someone and decide to have a relationship, that relationship will be more fruitful and enriching. Why? Because you're no more needy. You're no more imbalanced. You're no more unhappy. On the contrary, You have **found your SELF!**

At this point sharing your life with someone means to let that person grow too. You live your lives with a certain calm, where you help each other grow as individuals. You let each other **BE** exactly who you are without the temptation to **change** each other.

But first and foremost, Learn to live with yourself.

Make **peace** with the skeletons in your closet and the scars on your heart. Let them be. Take a lesson from each skeleton, each scar and apply those lessons in your daily life.

Being your own best friend can be the most enriching experience in the world. I know, cause I did the exact same thing when I went through a very bad and painful separation in the far past. At the time, I didn't know how to be by myself. I had somehow lost my identity in the crowded relationship I was in. Slowly but steadily I attempted to be by myself. Found myself. Then when I met the love of my life, I knew I was loved for who I was, not for who someone wanted me to be.

The amazing thing about being your own best friend and finding yourself is that you never ever feel lonely and you almost always know what you want. You don't need to second guess yourself ever again.

Its a process. An awesome process!

Do More...

“Do more than belong:participate. Do more than care:help. Do more than believe:practice. Do more than be fair:be kind. Do more than forgive:forget. Do more that dream:work”. ~William Arthur Ward~



Life presents many many opportunities for us to DO. Do more than we ever thought we were capable of. Most of the time these opportunities pass us by cause we were too preoccupied with trivial things.

Be **aware** of these opportunities. You cant be aware unless you are fully present in every moment.

Once that DOING opportunity is recognized its time to DO! Yes, get off our back sides and do the work.

Its **very very easy** to sit on the side lines and complain and say “so sad” “why doesnt someone help them?” “Why doesnt someone do something?”...and the all time favorite “tsk tsk..poor thing”...Yes, its very easy to say all those things.

Its also easy to feel whether its sympathy, empathy or sadness.

But, It takes **courage** to get up and actually **DO** something.

You can really make a difference in this world and in yourself by doing and going that extra mile.

Now the choice is upto you...

Do you want to be the one who **Only feels on the side lines or the Courageous Doer?** *Whats your choice???*

Recurring Patterns

Notice how we keep falling into the same patterns repeatedly, especially in relationships?

Whether its trusting the wrong person or being too giving or any other pattern that gives you a sense of unease after. Actions, words or events in patterns that your don't entirely understand, as to why they keep happening to you?

We need to start questioning why this is happening to us repeatedly. Why me? Why does this happen to me again and again?

Sounds familiar???

Think about this; all of us go through recurring patterns with something or the other, usually someone or the other. Unrelated incidents manifest themselves as patterns once we recognize their frequency.

Example- *A woman who after an abusive marriage, walked into another wedlock with a guy who not just had an extra-marital affair, but is also mentally abusive. This lady comes from a well off background and is an intelligent and well-sorted person. Are you wondering how such a bright and evolved woman could have chosen wrong both times for herself!*

Such a recurring pattern may be negative, but could also be positive!

However, we are unlikely to note the positive incidents; they get taken for granted. We are convinced that we are essentially good people and so don't question the good things that come our way. It's only when things start going wrong that we start watching out for and questioning patterns! It's then that we start blaming the world around for the chaos we find ourselves in.



Lessons to learn

We get into recurring patterns because there are lessons to be learnt from our past that we haven't imbibed and till such time that we do so, we will find ourselves falling into the same trap again and again. However though we could blame Destiny for some of these recurrences, some could be due to flaws in our own personality too.

A pattern of abuse is like a self-fulfilling prophesy. It's a defense mechanism called projective identification where we pull and attract through behavior or our body vibes, situations or people who inflict similar kind of pain or act in a manner that helps the environment go wrong. And then we say the world is too chaotic for us! The paranoid instinct takes over and the picture that emerges is a tarnished, paranoid image.

Break Destructive Patterns

In order to break such destructive patterns, the first step is **awareness**. First, **an understanding** and **an acceptance** that one is a victim of such a recurrent destructive pattern, then an awareness, that the problem is **within**, not outside us. We have to understand that the chaos we visualize the world to be, is actually a reflection of the chaos within us. We are attracting those people and situations towards us.

So, a certain amount of [soul searching](#) is important. Even if we cannot understand why we are on this self-destructive path, just an awareness that we are on it, is enough to set us on the path of healing. In fact, these negative occurrences or people are not really destructive, but friendly because they help make us aware of the problem within. Emotions that inflict pain help us develop cognitive skills that take us to the next level.

Evolve

Once we become aware, we can **evolve** to a higher plane of consciousness where we take ownership for our own actions and it's from here that the change begins. Why not **pray for those that harm you most** because they do so in order to help you realize problems within.

And, it's when you start thinking positively that your cosmic relationship with that particular person starts changing and there is a break in negative patterns. You then stay away from the people or situations, who though still around, are not getting dragged into nor dragging you into **recurrent patterns**.

Smiles and Laughter



No jewel in the world can match the radiance of joy reflected in a happy smiling face.

Let your smiles and laughter be only a means of merriment, joy and happiness. It must **never** be used as a device to humiliate or ridicule others. That would be selfish and mean. Neither must your smiles and laughter be a means to conceal your shyness or nervousness. That would be stupid. Smile and Laughter are

indeed good for the mind, body, heart and soul.

You can not think negative thoughts for long, while you are smiling or laughing.

Laughter is said to be the **best medicine**. When you are faced with worries and problems, laughter can provide you with the necessary relaxation and diversion you would need at the time, to regroup your mental and physical resources.

A Smile is **infectious** and so is laughter. We feel happier, relaxed and free of tension when we smile or laugh.

There is a lot of wisdom in the following words :-

“Laugh it off and sleep over it” , “Smile and it will wash the wrinkles away”

Try it! It is not always easy to smile in the face of adversity, but it can be done. The real benefits will be seen if we can make smiling and laughing a **habit**. In today's day and age a much needed habit !

If yes, Yay and Joy to YOU!

If no, then no time like the present to start right....SMILE 😊

Love, Kindness and Happiness

Love is splendorous. This feeling of a warm and deep attachment leading to enthusiasm, devotion and admiration continues to exist and grow between many varied personal relationships e.g. Man and God, Parents and Children, Brothers and Sisters, Husband and wife, Teachers and Pupils, Friends both men and women and amongst many other bonds that we human beings develop and nurture of our own free will, in our life's journey from the earlier days of childhood to the later evenings of old age.



It is said that **“love begins at the beginning and goes beyond the end”**. Love is ever giving and can be described in many many ways :-

- A warm tender feeling,
- A deep affection,
- An overwhelming fondness.
- A passionate attachment,
- A profound emotional regard.
- An intensely personal relationship.

Love stands much above endearment, infatuation, attraction or enchantment, need and desire...which can wear off after a certain span of time or change of environment. Love is a many sided sacrifice ; It means Thoughtfulness for the one you love. It means, putting their good before self gratification. *Love is an impulse, no doubt!!!...but true love is an impulse wisely directed and has to stand the test of time.*

To be kind is to show and express gestures of good will, combining sympathy, forbearance, graciousness and humanism. Kindness is a microwave that heats, thaws, heals and mends in many simple ways and manners i.e. a soothing touch; a gentle word, a warm smile, a loving look, a soft expression, a show of genuine concern, giving a helping hand, offering of support and encouragement, and sharing of feelings.

Love and Kindness open the most impossible gates. In the **pursuit of happiness** both **love and kindness are vital inputs**, as they symbolize sharing,

caring and giving of your self and add to its glow. If love is a feeling that is experienced and kindness that is felt, then Happiness is a feeling that radiates from within the heart.

Happiness is a state of mind and comes from counting our blessings and being grateful for what The Maker has given us and being content with what we are able to gain and gather because of our own dedicated and determined endeavors.

Pour some water into a glass and ask yourself the classic question -"Whether the glass is half full or half empty?" It depends how your mind reacts, because it is, in fact, only a *different perspective of the same thing*.

Unhappy is the man who has not loved and he is miserable who has not been touched by kindness. To grasp fully the feelings of Love, Kindness and Happiness You must catch all the murmurs of your heart, which the beholders, your admirers or detractors, can never hope to hear. These murmurs are faint. You have to hold them very close to the mind's ear to capture them. Such a total state may be expressed as -

"A day of such serene feelings spent, Is worth an age of splendid discontent"~James Montgomery~

Positively Change The World

When I was a very young woman, **I wanted to positively change the world.** I found it was difficult to positively change the world, so I tried to positively change my nation. When I found I couldn't positively change the nation, I began to focus on my town/area. I couldn't positively change the town/area, so I tried to positively change my family.

Now, as a grown woman, I realize the only thing I can **change positively is myself**, and suddenly I realize that if long ago I had positively changed myself, I could have made a positive impact on my family. My family and I could have made a positive impact on our town. Their positive impact could have changed the nation and I could indeed have **positively changed the world.** But, its not too late, so, I am trying to positively change the world **NOW.**

Are you trying to positively change the world too ?



The Positive Change Begins With YOU!

Human Experience {Inspiration from Helen Keller}

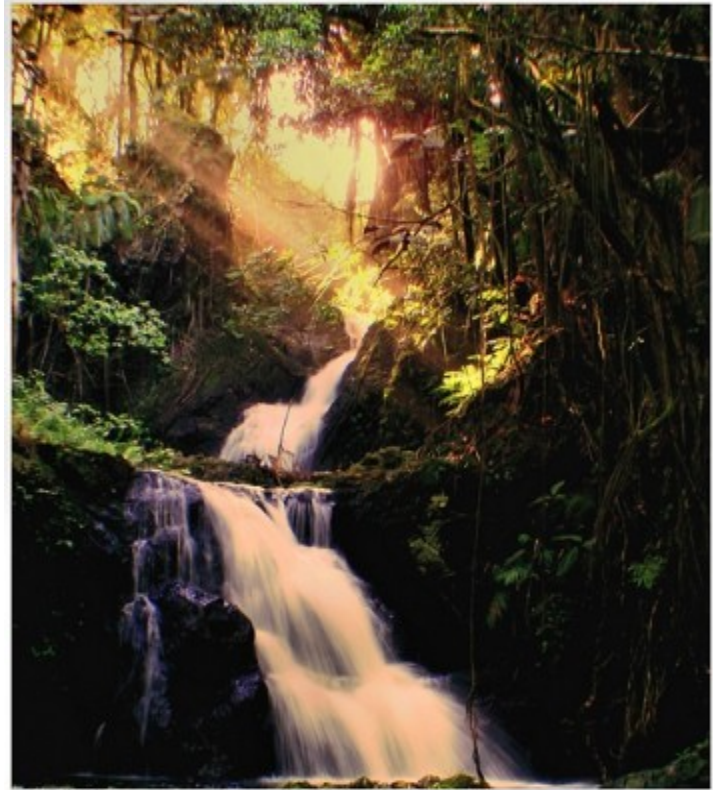
“The marvelous richness of human experience would lose something of rewarding joy if there were no limitations to overcome. The hilltop hour would not be half so wonderful if there were no dark valleys to traverse.”
~Helen Keller~

Your life, the one you're living right NOW, has been and will be full of experiences. Experiences that will sometimes be fun, sometimes sad, sometimes happy...a range of emotions will be attached to any one experience. And there is a lesson to be learned from each and every experience as well.

Whenever you think of your past experiences, you will notice you tend to forget so many details, the details you want to remember. That's because we are not living each moment wholeheartedly.

Experience every moment, one at a time, simply by being in that moment wholeheartedly, with all your five senses deep within that very experience...and see how when you look back to that experience, you will remember every little detail like a movie playing in your head.

How rich you are doesn't depend on the depth of your pocket, it depends on the depth of your experiences, which are like minute globules of warm chocolate, sitting inside of you, and waiting for you to taste their smooth joyful richness whenever YOU want.



The Decision To Be You

“It’s choice – not chance – that determines your destiny.”~Jean Nidetch~

I remember when I was about 8 years old and loved playing with my barbie doll sets, if anyone asked me what I wanted to be when I grew up, I said a Barbie doll. And why? Because my Barbie has such beautiful things. Then when I was 12 yrs old, I was crazy about painting and wanted to be a Painter. At 13 it was an astronaut, at 15 it was a teacher, at 16 it was a doctor and at 18 well I just wanted to be left the hell alone!!



The point to all this is, we are constantly asked by everyone around-**What do you want to be when you grow up???**At that time when we were asked that we were naive, young and inexperienced individuals. We were still searching for answers and trying to figure out life. But, we still **had** an answer. However bizarre it was, the answer was there. We would actually announce it with **full confidence** even!! It was a decision we made with our heart. Something we were passionate about.

Where has that confidence and passion gone Today? Do we still know what we want to be when we grow up, now that we have already grown up?

I have met many individuals who are still in **clue clue land**. I was there too, *clue clue land* isn't a very nice place to be for too long. You lose sight of who you are and cant make any rational decisions. Its like the world has taken over you, and you have let them. I remember being in a state where whatever anybody told me I would blindly agree with. I had so totally lost my own mind, that really finding that mind again seemed like it was never really there. It seemed impossible to me that my life was not my own. It was more like I preferred being in this clue clue land. Yes, and I stayed in that state for nearly two years.

It was a traumatic experience that knocked my head and heart so strongly, that in an instant clarity of thought took over. That instant didnt last very long. The worlds mind and *clue clue land* kept trying to take it over. And that instant was just about to be lost

into oblivion, when I **thought for myself** and caught a hold of that instant. That instant was **my soul realization**. It was a good feeling with dire consequences. Again the world was taking over, with all the society pressures and what everyone will think....

But, the trauma was so strong and the scar of that hurt so deep in my heart, that I **decided** to go with my soul realization. As I looked ahead, the path seemed very bumpy full of mountains and pitfalls. But, I was **taking charge** of my life, and there is no better feeling than that. From the worlds point of view I was a stupid fool, but from my souls point of view **I was Happy**. Imagine that...all that turmoil and I could actually be happy!!! But it was MY decision for once in my adult life it was **My decision**. This was a decision that was taken without any pressures. It was empowering and consoling all at the same time.

Yes, my journey after that wasn't a bed of roses. It wasn't pretty. But it was and it still is my beautiful journey to take and learn from. Its my life today and I am Happy I take my own decisions. The ones that my heart and soul are happy with. The ones that make my world and the people who are attached with me happy.

Whatever or wherever you are now....is it your decision and yours alone??

The world has this nasty way of getting to you and taking over your mind, heart and soul. The irony of it is you won't even know it. You will be so oblivious of it, that even at the age of 60 or 70 when you have grandchildren, you will still be doing what everyone else wants you to do. I have seen individuals who are like that. Who are still so oblivious to their own potential... Who are still living a life that's not even vaguely close to what their hearts desires.

Trauma lead me to make the decision to get out of the clue clue land trap.

When are you going to make the choice, that your heart and soul desires? The decision that will set you free. The decision that will make your spirit fly. The decision to be YOU!!!

The Beautiful Smile Experiment

“DO THE KINDS OF THINGS THAT COME FROM YOUR HEART. When you do, you won’t be dissatisfied, you won’t be envious, you won’t be longing for somebody else’s things. On the contrary, you’ll be overwhelmed with what comes back.”—Morrie Schwarts



We all know that a thing of beauty is a joy forever and that beauty lies in the eye of the beholder. Isn't it interesting how the perception of beauty changes from person to person and heart to heart.

Today I will share with you **an act of Beauty** that also **spreads Beauty** all around us. I noticed and experimented this month (all of November) from my Hearts perspective as to what would spreading beauty really mean and how it feels deep down in my heart. And this is what I came up with:

A Beautiful Smile: Now, smiling isn't such a big deal. We all smile, so many times in the day. Sometimes we smile when we have found something funny, sometimes when something nice happens, sometimes we smile at our own silliness and sometimes we smile as a greeting to another person. And most of the time we smile out of courtesy.

Always always, a smile that's from the heart will have a boomerang effect. If you simply smile, for the sake of smiling, it isn't going to be reciprocated.

So, as my monthly experiment on spreading beauty I started smiling. I mean really smiling from the heart. The kind that makes even your heart swell with happiness.

I started smiling with feeling not out of courtesy- at the grocery store clerk, at the building watchman, at the neighbors, at any living thing I came across. I also started smiling at the pigeons that come to my balcony and the trees, flowers and plants. Think of me as weird, but I actually felt those birds smiling back..!!!

Conclusion to my smiling experiment: Ok, I mustve done this for like just two days and already everything around me was suddenly **becoming beautiful**. Not only that, all those smiles I was giving away were coming back to me in the form of **pure**

beautiful love. That feeling was so indescribable that I continued this experiment all through the month.

Now, I never ever courtesy smile. I truly smile from the heart. Cause I know, maybe my smile isn't picture perfect like those toothpaste commercials, but I feel that simple smile of mine doing its job of **spreading BEAUTY everywhere** it goes.

One good smile will have a domino effect. The person you're smiling at will feel that genuine love with which you're beaming away and will smile back. In turn he/she/it will smile at someone else cause your smile just made them happy. And this will continue...I saw it happen.

At the grocers-the clerk seemed in a mood, or rather no mood. But, when I reached the counter, I smiled at her and so did my little one. Instantly her face beamed up and she started smiling and chatting away. After we finished, she actually greeted the next customer with a beaming smile too!!

Imagine a world full of Happy Smiley People.....How BEAUTIFUL is that??? 😊

A Smile not only makes you beautiful but makes everything and everyone around you beautiful too!

What are you waiting for??? SMILE 😊 Its free. Its easy. Its always available in abundance. You know you love to Smile !!! 😊

Smile and Spread Beauty!!

Our world needs all the BEAUTIFUL positive energy generated from that beautiful Smile of yours 😊

Earning Goodwill while Dealing With People

Some time back, I had written and discussed the importance of our **Good Will Bank**. How important it is to have an account in this bank is and what are the benefits.

Today I give you a list of ways you can **Earn some Goodwill** while dealing with all the people in your life.

Most of us know that dealing with people can sometimes be the hardest thing to do or wrap your head around. But an attempt in the right direction can make you Goodwill Rich.

Just **step inside of yourself** and Try these Tips and you'll know :



1. **Acquire the art of kindness and persuasion.** Kindliness is an attribute of the strong.
2. **Put consideration to human dignity** before anything else.
3. **Get rid of double standards in thoughts and behavior;** one for others and different for yourself.
4. **Start your request always with “PLEASE”.** Words and actions inspire confidence.
5. **Give credit when credit is due.** Praise fearlessly. If you must tell somebody off, never do it in front of others. Most peoples self esteem cant take it.
6. In handling grievances **let others tell their full story without interruption.** A kind word always helps.
7. **Learn to listen.** It inspires trust and confidence. You may be listening...but are you really listening or getting ready to argue?

“Think about how you feel when someone says nice things about you, about your personality, your intelligence and so spotted your virtues. You can make others around you feel nice as well- It does not take much effort. Just a will to do good.”

Multiple Personality By Choice!

Whenever we read or hear the news of a young girls disappearance or rape, we shudder in our souls. Its only normal to feel compassion for this victim and hate for the perpetrator.

We wonder- How can someone be so cruel? How does someone become such a horrific criminal? Is or was he always like this? Is he like this with his family too? What made him this way?



Most of the time these criminals, are very upstanding members of the society we live in. They look perfect , they act perfect. All in all perfect personalities. But when no ones watching, we know what they can become. These people are choosing to be **multiple personalities by choice** not by a predetermined psychological condition. You might think that this person is a criminal with God knows what background...**How does this apply to me? I am not like that....**

OK then, lets take some real world examples of **multiple personalities by choice-**

Example 1- Have you ever witnessed a gentleman with cultivated tones and a sensitive attitude, suddenly turn around, snap viciously at his secretary or peon, before turning back to you and resuming his cultivated persona? In that split second his other personality has come out, you have witnessed him do irreparable damage to the hours of build-up he executed for you.

Example 2- You are taking a ride with a friend. She is sweetness personified, chattering away with you – till her driver takes a wrong turn. Then, grrrr! She screams at the driver, questioning his intelligence and berating him. It takes a moment for her ‘ugly’ face to switch back into the pleasant one you know, but a lifetime for you to forget!

Example 3- Your date makes all the right moves, holds open the door, waits for you to be seated before taking a chair himself and makes light, undemanding conversation. Just as you are slipping into a dreamy state, he snaps his fingers for the waiter’s attention, or worse, shouts at him for lazy service! The dream is over even before it began...

The true touchstone of our character is the way we treat those less fortunate than us, not our equals and superiors. **It is said a person is judged by how he/she treats the less fortunate.** Why is it that we let go of our anger only against those who cannot retaliate? Or, unleash the demons within us when we imagine nobody is looking?

Indeed it is in moments when you feel that nobody who really matters is watching that you emerge in your true colors/personalities. And that is the true test of character – **the crux is to behave well when you know you can get away with bad behavior.**

Why do a lot of people indulge in deviant behaviour on the net, in cyberspace? It's because they feel safe as they are unobserved there. How you work when you are not supervised, how you treat your children who cannot or rather, will not retaliate, **how you hold up in the face of temptation calls for real strength of character.**

Personified Temptation comes in abundance and it is when you still walk the straight and narrow that you truly shine. So, if a woman plays a generous, gracious hostess, but ill-treats her maid and pays disgustingly low wages, what kind of person is she???

How can intentions and character be tested till you have actually been faced with temptation? How can you say you would never ever cheat on your spouse, till the opportunity has presented itself and you have resisted? How can you be really sure that you would never steal till you have been actually left alone with a pot of gold and are totally sure nobody would ever find out if you helped yourself to some of the booty?

If and truly IF you have walked away from temptation once, what's to say you would be able to do so a second time too?

Why are you squirming in your seat right now? Isn't it because all those demons within you are kicking at your insides, waiting to be released? Reminding you of all the times when you didn't act in a manner you would want anybody to know? That is the real you, the one that you let loose when nobody was looking...

The truth is not in the polished hardwood flooring but in the dust that has been swept under the carpet. It's when the other personality takes over that the real individual emerges. Your strength of spirit as a professional lies in the way you treat your peers and subordinates, not the way you kowtow with the boss. Your worth as a friend and companion is in how honest you are with your friends, not behind their backs. All of us have multiple personalities – for each other as well as for ourselves. Nothing wrong with that, **so long as these personalities dont hurt you or others.** There is a good you and a bad you and the struggle between the two is a part of all of us.

The true test of character isn't in the non-existence of the bad you, but in your ability to identify and correct this part of your personality.

Yes, even when nobody is looking... Can you???

Lavish Love

“Greet everyone you meet with a warm smile. No matter how busy you are, don’t rush encounters with co-workers, family and friends. Speak softly. Listen attentively. Act as if every conversation you have is the most important thing on your mind today. Look your children and your partner in the eyes when they talk to you. Stroke the cat, caress the dog. Lavish love on every living being you meet. See how different you feel at the end of the day.”



~ Sarah Ban Breathnach (from ‘Simple Abundance : A Daybook of Comfort and Joy’)

~

We often think that someday we will settle old scores. Someday we will muster the courage to speak to that person. Someday we will go and have a chat with the quite lady at the end of the street. Someday we will ask for that raise we so badly deserve. Someday we will face our fears. Someday.....

With the New Year at the Horizon, we are all in the new year resolution mood. How many of us make them and break them. More so because we make them out of tradition and not love.

Think and decide to do something for the sheer love of it, and see how you follow through with your decisions.

Why must we keep putting off what we can do now for tomorrow or some day?? In the true sense of it, this “someday” never really comes. All we have is **“Today”**. And if we don’t do something today, we will never really get to it tomorrow either. We will still have the same excuse we have today.

I want to take the plunge and do something Today!!!

Today i want to embrace **each and every** person that comes my way with a **Loving Smile** straight from the bottom of my heart!!!

Yes, today!!

Are you with me??? Will you take this small step today in spreading the love???

We are all Beings Of Love, full of Love, just waiting to spread this Divine blessing. Let your heart feel this love, thats coming from the very core of your spiritual being and Lavish this love on all you meet and greet today.



Today is Today...this today will never come back. Make the most of it and SMILE with LOVE.

This is me Smiling at you 😊😊😊😊😊

Do you really Think???

*“I think and that is all that I am.”
~Wayne Dyer~*

Thinking is a form of mental exercise. We think so we act. But ask yourself this question- **How often do you actually think before you act?**

Did you think before you shrugged at someone the last time?

Did you think before you **thought** judgmentally about someone you didnt like?

Did you think before you blatantly lied about some mundane thing?



Have you truly been thinking???

Ok, lets say, you have been thinking before you do everything in your life- *Have you then been thinking positively or negatively?*

Your thinking is who you are. Its what makes or breaks you.

When I was a little girl, my mum often corrected me from using bad language or saying something rude. She often got very cross if I was rude to a guest. I often got upset with her corrections, but today I know those corrections have kept me in check.

But that was then, I was a little naive girl who didn't know anything about the intricacies of life. Today I'm a grown woman, having a child of my own. I am independent, and have so many credentials – Who dares to come to correct me today? If no one is correcting me, does that mean I am perfect?

NO, Far from it. I and no one else is perfect, but we **think** we are. Our thinking makes us feel perfect. We refuse to correct ourselves, cause well ,we are all grown up and know better, isn't it?? We are doing all the things good and responsible adults do. So, why bother??

If we choose to live in oblivion, then where is this life truly taking us? Our purpose of living should not be just to acquire material pleasures at any cost, there has got to be more to life than that.

Whats the cost of *not* thinking or thinking negatively?

If we refuse to truly think, we are not only harming ourselves, but the universal plan as well. Everyone must have read or heard about how when you think positively, everything positive happens and comes back to you ten folds. Its the same for *not thinking or thinking negatively* too. If you choose to be judgmental about another person or choose to hurt another person, just cause you feel like it- youre giving out so much negativity into the universe. Now imagine if that negativity comes back to you ten folds.....Not a pretty sight huh?? Thats the ripple effect of thinking or Karma !!!

Free yourself

Free yourself from the trap of *automatic* negative thinking. Its easy to just let your thoughts go vary, but its far more courageous to tame those thoughts. Try every-time you think, to think consciously. Be aware of your thoughts. When you become habituated to being aware of your thinking, you will stop living and thinking in auto pilot. Thereby controlling the negative thought process.

Dont lie to yourself

Every time you smile at someone, but in your mind cant stand the sight of that person- youre lying to yourself. Dont portray what you dont truly think. *Rather think beautifully, so all you radiate and portray is your true Loving, Humane and Compassionate self.*

Make your thinking a catalyst for positivity and happiness inside yourself and outside in the world too.

Our Life's Shelter

If at times you feel defeated, believe me, it will be a delusion, because no circumstances of man's contriving can be stronger than a personality upheld by faith, trust and hope.~Unknown

All of us are constantly striving to find answers to many questions that keep arising in our minds. Life is too complicated and our life span too short, for all the mysteries to unfold themselves and provide us readily with all the answers that we seek, as we go along.

Eventually we have to make peace with our mind and settle down to Faith, Trust and Hope; in order to find the peace of mind badly needed by us to make our life happy and purposeful. A mixture of all these is the true essence of **Our Life's Shelter**.



“If you have FAITH as much as a grain of mustard seed...Nothing is impossible.”

We go through life trying so hard to change, to fit in and be part of the family, the team, the neighborhood, we try so hard to be popular and lovable, we search out acceptance from the out side when in truth the only way we will ever truly feel **whole** is to search out and find the love and acceptance **within ourselves**.

We need to stop punishing ourselves with thoughts of self-doubt and start thinking more positively, for the truth is **we are worthy of so much**, it doesn't matter what we look like or what sort of a background we come from **we deserve to be loved and respected** “at all times no matter what”, not only by others but first and foremost by **OURSELVES**.

The more we learn to honor and respect ourselves and others, the more we learn to honor and respect our wonderful earth and all creatures upon it and have faith in our own divinity, the closer we come to spirituality and the brighter that spark of light within our souls will become.

Faith may well be the foundation of our life.

“Follow your heart, but be quiet for a while first. Ask questions, then feel the answer. Learn to trust your heart.” ~Unknown

Trust has so many reasons. It is a feeling we develop but do not question, once we are convinced that we shall not be betrayed. Learning to trust your self means **being honest with yourself** about what you are truly feeling deep in your heart and soul about everything that you perceive on the outside and the inside.

Many of us have been so deeply hurt, that our heart has become “crusted” over with heavy wounds that we are afraid to even go there. Well if that is where our inner wisdom lives and we are reluctant to go there then where does that leave us? Well it leaves us vulnerable, confused and liable to get ourself into a mess. So the first step in learning to trust yourself, i.e. your heart, is to begin the process of **releasing it from underneath all of the pain and sorrow** it is buried under. **Just close your eyes, feel that wound deep within you, and let go.** Do this whenever you feel the pain in your heart, from an old wound. Slowly, but steadily, **you will start trusting yourself.**

Trust will provide pillars and walls to the mansion of our life.

“A poor man with Hope lives better than rich man without it.”~Unknown

Hope is a belief in a positive outcome related to events and circumstances in one’s life. Hope is the feeling that what is wanted can be had or that events will turn out **for the best.**

Hope can be passive in the sense of a wish, or as active as a plan or idea. Consider a prisoner of war who never gives up hope for escape and, against the odds, plans and accomplishes this. By contrast, consider another prisoner who simply wishes or prays for freedom, but without genuine hope, or another who gives up all hope of freedom.

Hope reflects on the power and the strength of our Faith and Trust. We must never allow our faith to be shattered. **Hope** Provides the roof, doors and windows of Our Life’s Shelter.

It is the combined forces of Our Faith, Trust and Hope that will provide us with security and keep us afloat, in our moments of crisis and despair. It will motivate us to keep moving ahead in our lives journey with grace, dignity and confidence.

Strength, Courage and Wisdom

“Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be the miracle.”~Phillips Brooks

To be strong is to be powerful. The use of this power, however, can become effective or efficient in a specific direction, only if it is combined with courage and wisdom.

Strength embodies many attributes like :-

- Physical power, derived from muscular vigor.
- Tenacity, meaning power to exert, resist and endure.
- Toughness, implying great firmness and resilience.
- Character i.e. moral, spiritual and intellectual power.



These are inherent human assets and resources (strong points) that can make us striking or superior in a particular way. But, we cannot be strong and powerful all the time and we are usually aware of this fact. So, do ask yourself a simple question: *Now that I have confided in myself about my strong points and I know what is right about my attitude, **Why dont I also confess my biggest short comings?***

I think there is something therapeutic to be gained by being a little more honest about your weaknesses and short-comings. If nothing else at least you will know where there is room for improvement, especially in your moments of crisis and need.

Courage is not overcoming fear, but rather it is standing on ground, inspite of it. It is a disgrace to refuse to rise above fear. No-one ever failed because he was afraid; he only fails in life because he does nothing about his fear and not display courage. Fear arises from lack of knowledge and uncertainty. Knowledge and certainty are important as they help us find courage and determination. But we must add a deep dedication and conviction to knowledge and understanding, to destroy fear and tip the balance in a positive way.

Courage needs to be combined with confidence. A person must be knowledgeable and enthusiastic in order to have courage, but he must accomplish and experience in order to gain confidence. The world makes way for the person who says “I CAN, BECAUSE, I KNOW I CAN”. A person must have the character and self-discipline

and wisdom to withstand success. Our confidence naturally grows with our successful experiences.

When faced with problems you must add a little wisdom and a lot more courage, to your actions in order to achieve your ultimate objective. Remember, that all those people, young and old, who have been rewarded for bravery and recognized for merit in times of battle and crisis situation, were ordinary people like you and me. They were fully conscious of their inherent strengths and their best came out in terms of courage and confidence in their hour of testing and reckoning, which made their timely and forceful actions, so very memorable-for themselves and for others.

Our problems must not be allowed to dampen our resolve and shake our confidence in ourselves.

If we try to analyze, we will find that our problems are normally of three types:

1. **Tragedies-** There are problems which we are confronted with because of the situation which is beyond our or anybody else's control. eg. accidents, environmental calamities. We have to accept it and move on. We can only pray for strength to get over it quickly. We must never forget that God always makes up in the end and has His own strange ways of granting compensations.
2. **Trial and Tribulations-** Often there are problems that are created for us by other people, who might have some kind of petty issue with you eg. jealousy etc. Such problems we have to handle boldly and forcefully. For this we must muster all our courage to resolve the situation more positively to our benefit. Courage knows no bounds.
3. **Self Created Problems-** Most of the time the problems we are faced with are of our own making. These can be handled and solved very effectively and quickly provided we get to the root cause and come to grips with them. Soon we will be surprised how easily everything gets sorted out. We need to use our wisdom, more than anything else to find a solution to our self-created problems. This requires self-discipline.

Know your strength, find your courage and discover your wisdom. These are your powers.

Dreams are realized, not by mere wishful thinking, but by pursuing your ambitions with all the powers that you possess, and can muster.

“Ah, great it is to believe the dream as we stand in youth by the starry stream; but a greater thing is to fight life through and say at the end, the dream is true!” ~Edwin Markham

Explore Dream Discover {Inspirational Quote}

“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn’t do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.”

~Mark Twain



We have but one life to truly LIVE. **Why waste it** in petty negativity, when there is so much wonder and beauty in the world to Explore and Discover.

You don’t need to spend bundles of your hard earned money to travel to exotic locations to explore and discover. You can do this in the comfort of your **Own Being**. Just Look within yourself with **an open mind and a heart full of love** and you will Discover things about **yourself** you never knew existed. Forget all the negativity, and focus on your positive and loving soul; You will find such beauty within that no amount of money can buy that for you in the outside world.

In finding yourself, exploring and discovering your true self, you will SEE your dreams turn into reality. **Your dreams need wings to fly** to the heights of passion through which you have been wanting them. **Finding your true self** through self exploration and self discovery, is truly the wind beneath your dreams wings.

So open your heart and mind. Free yourself from negativity. One life to LIVE One chance to attain your TRUE Dreams. Dont Let it slip away!! Its too precious! None of us would want to live with regrets...would we???

Star Signs OR Beings Of Love???

I remember my first encounter with the so called stars signs was when I really intently started reading the newspaper. I was about 11 years old, and the sole reason I started reading the newspaper was cause my school principal wanted each of us to have an interesting article to share every morning at the assembly. I always ended up being chosen to read out my finds. In one of those so called finds one day i read about the Star Libra. Suddenly it was the talk of the school and It was the most happening thing to talk about. Everybody started talking about the attributes each of us had and kept teasing one another with the negative traits of each of these Star Signs.



As I have grown up, the hold of these star signs on our psyche has grown too. An example- when my little angel was born, the first thing i heard from someone who visited me in the hospital was “oh, she is so cute, but she will be very hot tempered, she’s Pisces na.”

Even while dating or meeting new people, somehow one of the first things we end up asking is “Whats Your Star Sign?”. And if its our very own Star sign..then we get so ecstatic and say “Yeah we will get along well..blah blah.” Romantic or marital compatibility also ends up being the stars specialty not the two people who actually want to get married.

What confuses me is that if all the people in the world can be classified in these 12 star signs!! ***Where is the uniqueness in that?*** As you meet all the different people in your life, and really notice them, you will see that each of them is unique in their own special way. No two people have the same DNA or thumb print either. *Each and every individual has a unique life which is a beautiful story full of ups and downs.*

I am sure star signs have a higher purpose and do really probably help. But for me, nothing is more important than what i feel in my heart. My sixth sense might not be very developed or strong, but i can sense with my heart, a good person and a big heart of love from across the internet too.

When you are on the road to personal development, slowly but steadily you become more and more **aware** of the smallest things going on around you. You can instantly feel the good or bad projected towards you. Your heart and mind are open to new experiences. You are always willing to learn and want to be more and more helpful

giving to everyone around. In doing all these beautiful acts of love to enhance ourselves, our lives and those of others, don't you think it's a kind of compartmentalization to put all the beautiful and loving people in the world into 12 groups??

I personally prefer one group only and that's the group of Love. Love is something each and every one of us has and are **Love is the glue that binds us all together** and is the only emotion that I think is truly divine. God created us out of love. Love is not only human 'romantic' love. It is of a spiritual nature, it is all-encompassing and unconditional. As we are all sparks of the Creator (the Divine), and as the Creator IS LOVE, we are therefore also **"Beings of Love"**. Love is who we really are, yet in our human state and using mostly only our five senses, we have forgotten this and we perceive other people and animals and nature as 'separate' from ourselves. **But we are all made of the same 'Love' and are all therefore ONE and all connected.** full of. Our hearts swell up when we see the birth of a new baby or the blooming of a flower or the many beauties of nature, simply because we are all "beings of love" inside out. We all have so much love inside of us to give and surprisingly love never reduces, in fact the more you give the bigger your heart becomes.



Star signs limit our thinking and approach towards one another, whereas Love is limitless and unconditional.

Now ask your self this simple question: **"Which group do I want to be in? Star Signs or Beings Of Love?"**

Only one of these groups has no disadvantages or limits!!!

"Eventually you will come to understand that love heals everything, and love is all there is."

~Gary Zukav~

Grabbing Opportunities and Moving Ahead

“A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds.”~Sir Francis Bacon~

A man seldom fails in life because he doesn't have the ability to succeed. Most often he fails because he uses too little of the power which lies dormant within him or he does not make use of his powers when the opportunity was ripe. Let us not permit the great sleeping forces within us to remain asleep. It is



a catastrophe that the great opportunities of this world are sometimes not embraced by men and women of vision, insight and ambition.

It is also tragic to let talent go undeveloped-to live with unfulfilled ambitions, unrealized dreams, doors of opportunities that remain unopened, so long as the hinges are actually rusted. The great problem of life is not primarily of acquiring additional qualities; It is of realizing to the fullest extent the wealth of qualities with which we are already endowed.

We must be prepared to grab an opportunity, when we see one. For this we need a positive mental attitude. It means that we must be willing to support our positive thinking with a positive action. We should then continue to expect positive results. Remember thoughts are power, only when put into action.

For achieving success in any field whether personal or professional we must constantly be moving forward. *The speed at which we move forward however is of minor importance. Of major importance is the direction in which we are travelling.* We have to stay right on the main highway and not be led astray into detours and bye-lanes. A successful man once said ***“When I can run, I will run; When I can walk, I will walk; When I can only crawl, I will crawl; I will atleast always be moving forward.”***

The human race is divided into two classes-

1. Those who go ahead and do something, and
2. Those who sit idle and enquire, out of idle curiosity that :- “Why wasn't it done the other way?”

Success in life, be it in any task or field brings happiness and once reached must be won over and over again. Its not easy, but in the difficulty lies the opportunity, its rewards are great, but it belongs only to those brave and courageous souls, who care to have the faith in themselves. Who recognize and opportunity when it comes their way, grab it, make the most of it and continue to move forwards towards success. **The winner says- It may be difficult, but its possible. The loser says- It may be possible, but its difficult.** Now which category do we want to belong to? The Winner or The Loser?

One thing is certain, that if a person is willing to brave the hazards of the road, he will grow strong in the journey. Only the strong , courageous and the determined, find success in their journey. ***Such people dont explode into success; they GROW into it.***

So, What kind of person are you? The go ahead and do something kind or the sit idle and enquire kind?

Lost Souls – A Tribute

(Sept.11,2009) As I looked at the date today, I felt a chill run through me. This date brings back memories of tragedy and an incredible loss of precious innocent human life. You all know what I am talking about- *the attacks on the world trade center in 2001*. Every year on this date I become quite and question the universe for such a huge loss of beautiful souls.



I have often been able to understand, or rather come to terms with loss due to a natural calamity. But, a man made calamity, that too of this proportion, I cant understand. I dont know why one human being would consider another human beings life so cheap and unimportant. In my opinion a ‘true human being’ cannot and would not do something like that. I just cant fathom it.

Even today when I read or hear of the tragedy and the aftermath of that tragedy, I feel so helpless. Helpless cause I couldn’t do anything but watch and listen. I might have been from another country on another side of the world, but i could and still feel the pain of the loss. I keep wondering how it would be had that tragedy not happened? All those people who went there to work and never came back. All those who went there to help and were left critical or damaged for life. All those who were left with incomplete families...

Can we help???

“Prayer is not an old woman’s idle amusement. Properly understood and applied, it is the most potent instrument of action.” -Mohandas Gandhi

Physically, sometimes its not feasible to help, but in spirit YES we can. We can Hope and Pray. We can send them our love and think of them in our prayers. **How many times have we prayed for someone other than ourselves or our loved ones?** Learning to pray for anothers plight makes us selfless.

It makes the universe aware of the positivity going out and maybe just maybe all that positivity will go in the right direction.



Today, as a tribute to those beautiful lost souls, I would request you to say a prayer for them. A prayer that will reach them and make them feel like they mattered and haven't been forgotten. A prayer that will show them the immense love that is still felt for them and that their going has left a huge hole in the universe.

I urge you to also pray for their families. May they have the strength to overcome this loss and live their life as was truly intended for them to be lived.

The Almighty Allah Says in the Holy Quran- "Call On Me, I Answer You."

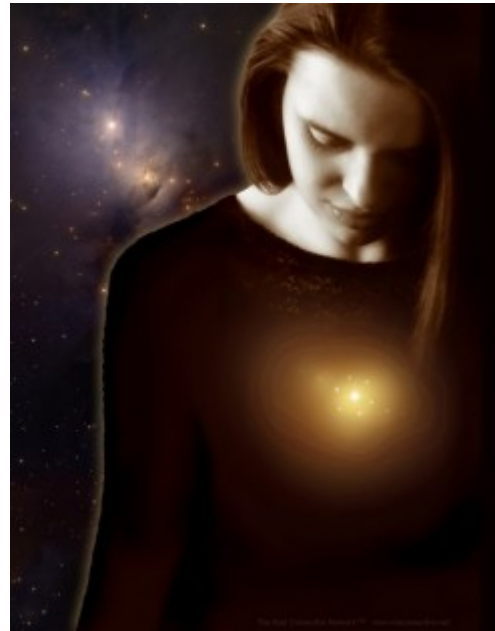
Lets all Call on the Almighty today for Peace and Love to surround this whole universe. Amen.

Self Realization

Self-realization Illuminates the Heart

“Do not consider any vice trivial, and so practice it; do not consider any virtue trivial and so neglect it.”- Chinese Proverb-

Shortly before **George Bernard Shaw** died, someone approached and asked, “You have known all the great men of your time, who have shaped the destiny of the world. Now, if you could be born again and re-live your life, as any one of your choice, who would it be?” Without a moments hesitation he said **“If I could re-live my life in the role of any person I desired, I would want to be the man George Bernard Shaw could have been, but wasn’t”.**



It is only when we can look back and think, that we become aware, how much we have missed over the years, by not waking up to realize our own full potential and for not changing ourselves, while we could, to the highest level of our capabilities.

We cannot accomplish anything, greater than what we are. It is indeed a tragedy to observe people struggling to improve their circumstances without giving a thought to improving themselves. It is elementary, that we should **put ourselves under the microscope** for observation and from time to time engage in self analysis with **complete honesty and humility**, so that we know what we have to do and must do to become better individuals.

Self Realization is the only sure way towards self improvement. This has to become a continuous and self committed process. To be yourself and **to be the best of your own self** is the only sure way to live a happy and spiritually enhanced life. A peacock looks beautiful and charming only when it spreads its wings and walks like a peacock. If it tries to copy the mannerisms of another beautiful bird it will fail miserably and not make any impact of its own graceful personality.

Along with awareness must come flexibility and the burning desire to become a better person. Some people learn from the mistakes and experiences of others. Most learn from their own mistakes and life experiences. Still, there are some who refuse to learn at all. they probably feel that there is no real need for them to improve and become better individuals that what they already are. for them time shall not wait.

Self realization is a game equally won and lost in the mind. **It takes courage to take the hard decision of self improvement.** We must act only when we are prepared in order to get the best of what this universe has to offer.

GOD has given us a world that nothing but our own folly and our refusal to benefit from our experiences, keeps from being a paradise. **The longer we live, the more we realize** the impact of this truth. This small but powerful poem sums up the importance and urgency of acting while there is still time.

Clock Of Life

*” The clock of life is wound but once,
And no man has the power,
To tell just when the hands will stop,
At late or early hour.
Now is the only time you own,
Live, learn, toil with a will,
Place no faith in tomorrow,
For the clock may then be still.”*



Love Will Truly Set You Free

Just outside the bedroom window, there is a huge pole like structure on the far right of the window. In the groove that is between the window and the pole is sitting a grey mother pigeon. She sits on her laid eggs all day and all night without moving an inch. I kept wondering what she was eating, and spilled some grains for her to eat. But no movement. She sits there so still and so at peace. Then one fine evening, as i was looking out of the window at the pitter patter of the rain, another pigeon comes with some thing that looked like food and put it in her beak. And he kept doing that for quite sometime. I guess till she was fully fed. Then that pigeon went away, and this mother still sits on her eggs giving them warmth. With her I also frantically wait for her little babies to hatch.



What amazed me the most about this pigeon and her other pigeon was the level of understanding between the two. One knew she had to sit and warm the eggs while the other knew he had to get the food. And not only get the food, but feed her the food, with the utmost patience. I just sit and watch in awe and wonder that God created Love, and put it in our hearts, but he also put love in the heart of all living creatures.

In my profession i often come across couples who are troubled and need a little help to rediscover their lost love and passion. The biggest problem that we humans have is taking each other for granted. And this doesn't necessarily happen with just spouses, but it also happens in all our other relationships-siblings, friends, co-workers, parents, acquaintances...

As an abstract concept, *love* usually refers to a deep, ineffable feeling of tenderly caring for another person. Even this limited conception of love, however, encompasses a wealth of different feelings, from the passionate desire and intimacy of romantic love to the nonsexual emotional closeness of familial and platonic love to the profound oneness or devotion of religious love. Love in its various forms acts as a major facilitator of interpersonal relationships and, owing to its central psychological importance, is one of the most common themes in the creative arts.

But put all those normal meaning of love aside, and think of what love means to you. Can you truly pin point what it is...or do you have a vague idea of the preconceived notion of love, that has been told to you since you were little?

I personally feel like its a very gentle and soothing feeling that comes over your heart and soul. This feeling brings about an immense sense of belonging and oneness with the person or thing that brought about these feelings. There is a feeling of complete and total amalgamation of souls when youre in love. But then thats my opinion.



In the true sense of it, love or being in love is truly considered one of the most deepest of experiences.

“I love you, not for what you are, but for what I am when I am with you.”
Roy Croft

When we are in love so to say, everything seems perfect. In time when we begin to spend our life with the person we love or persons (parents, children, spouse, friends etc) we come to love their small habits and become acquainted with their needs. But, in time in getting to be so acquainted there is the point when things can go sour. When we feel like its just something you have to do, rather than something you want to do. This usually happens, when the mutual love and respect have been tested over time. In the hustle bustle of life, we stop paying attention to the other persons needs and start focusing only and only on our-self. Focusing on yourself is a good thing, but not at the expense of hurting anothers feelings. We need to learn to find a middle road.

When a love is inhabiting you, or suffocating you, then its not really, love is it. It has changed. In love you dont need to change, you need to be you and be accepted for it. Love is empowering, not disrespectful. Love is gentle, not violent. Love is unconditional, not situation centric.

When you know you can be something, but your love makes you feel like you already are something, thats what true love is to me. Love can make you fly, support your flight and help you when you land face down.

Take the basic example of the pigeon on my window. The calmness with which the mother pigeon sits patiently over her little eggs and waits for her partner to bring her meal and feed it to her, tells me so much more about love than any human interaction i have seen. The purity and simplicity of love is embedded even in birds and other animals, all living things so to say. Then why we as human beings, the so called superior race of evolution cant understand the true essence of it. I think we have a thing or two to learn from our birds and bees and animal counterparts.

***“Kindness in words creates confidence.
Kindness in thinking creates profoundness.
Kindness in giving creates love.”
- Lao Tzu***

At the end of this post i would like to leave you with the lyrics of *The Wind Beneath My Wings* sung by Bette Midler. Just a perfect and realistic example of how love can truly help you fly.

“Wind Beneath My Wings”

It must have been cold there in my shadow, to never have sunlight on your face. You were content to let me shine, that's your way. You always walked a step behind.

So I was the one with all the glory, while you were the one with all the strength. A beautiful face without a name for so long. A beautiful smile to hide the pain.

Did you ever know that you're my hero, and everything I would like to be? I can fly higher than an eagle, 'cause you are the wind beneath my wings.

It might have appeared to go unnoticed, but I've got it all here in my heart. I want you to know I know the truth, of course I know it. I would be nothing without you.

Did you ever know that you're my hero? You're everything I wish I could be. I could fly higher than an eagle, 'cause you are the wind beneath my wings.

Did I ever tell you you're my hero? You're everything, everything I wish I could be. Oh, and I, I could fly higher than an eagle, 'cause you are the wind beneath my wings, 'cause you are the wind beneath my wings.

Oh, the wind beneath my wings. You, you, you, you are the wind beneath my wings. Fly, fly, fly away. You let me fly so high. Oh, you, you, you, the wind beneath my wings. Oh, you, you, you, the wind beneath my wings.

Fly, fly, fly high against the sky, so high I almost touch the sky. Thank you, thank you, thank God for you, the wind beneath my wings.

Good Will Bank

“When you have done something good, you have started ripples which are spreading and you will be surprised how far they will go.”

How often do you do something, for someone, without expecting in return?

How often do we think of creating good will. For most, the joy of giving comes primarily for the acclaim they get; For others, the pleasure is solely in knowing that they made life happier for someone else. One of the mysteries of life is,

that our most valuable possessions are those things that can be shared without lessening them. Least valuable are those things that get diminished by being shared. We must remember that is in only in giving that we receive and in serving that we are remembered. Service is the only rent we can pay for the space we occupy, while we are here in this earth. Silent recognition and remembrance of our services are the dividends we receive for our investments in our “Good Will Bank”.

If we make a habit of doing something nice each day and making someone happy in some way or the other, we will be surprised how quickly it can enrich and change our life. It does not have to be something big. The important thing is that we are doing it for the joy of doing, the pleasure of giving-not for something in return. We are thus building up assets in our “Good Will Bank”. Let us not forget that one of the greatest blessings of life is, that we are called upon to live one day at a time. To be successful in our efforts towards, creating good will, we must harness our heart with love, understanding and kindness and direct out entire effort towards achieving this goal with a sincerity of purpose. There is no preparation, nothing predetermined for starting an account with the Good Will Bank. ***Besides these investments are safe because this Bank never fails.***

As opposed to this outlook on life, there are people who are constantly finding faults in others and always carry grudges and complaints in their hearts. Such people remain unhappy themselves and make others unhappy too. Their deposits go in a “Grudge Bank”, and can only bring them misery, ill-will and loneliness.



There is nothing worse for a mans character that to harbor grievance. It eats in to you and the only person that suffers from a grievance is the one that is fool enough to feel it. Such people, end up growing old without having any real friends and well wishers.

“Think about how you feel when someone says nice things about you, about your personality, your intelligence and so spotted your virtues. You can make others around you feel nice as well- It does not take much effort. Just a will to do good.”

A Happy Home Recipe

Ingredients:

- *5 cups of Love*
- *2 cups of Loyalty*
- *3 cups of Forgiveness*
- *3 cups of Friendship*
- *5 huge spoons of Hope*
- *2 spoons of Tenderness*
- *3 quarts of Faith*
- *1 really really huge barrel of Laughter*

Method:

- *Take all the hearts available in the house and put the following ingredients in them everyday.*
- *Take love and loyalty, mix it thoroughly with faith.*
- *Blend it with tenderness, kindness and understanding.*
- *Add friendship and hope, sprinkle abundantly with laughter.*
- *Bake it with sunshine.*

Serve daily with generous helpings :)



Letting Go of the Past: The Healing Power of Forgiveness & Release

At some point in time, most of us have been in this position. We recognize some pattern of behaviour in ourselves that we would like to change, but often feel powerless to do so. Everything we try seems to lead nowhere. As we probe deeper into the source of this behavior, we can often link the behavior to some past event or experience in our lives. In some cases, it is the result of a single traumatic event, whether that be a betrayal, an injury, an attack or a perceived injustice. In others, it is the result of mental, emotional or physical abuse that has occurred



over and extended period of time. However, understanding the source of the behavior is not always enough to change it. If we are unable to release our anger, pain and fear, all of the baggage that we carry as a result of this past experience, we remain stuck, and continue to allow these past experiences to shape our future in ways that aren't always healthy and often create more pain and suffering in our lives.

So why is it so hard to forgive and move on? For many of us, it is a misconception of what forgiveness really means. A common message in our culture is that you should just “forgive and forget”, implying that to forgive means to forget about it, like it never happened. I personally struggled with this concept for many years. To me, to forget how I had been betrayed, abused or injured by someone or something in the past, didn't exactly seem like a wise idea. To forget that it ever happened, would mean that I hadn't learned anything, that I was likely to repeat the experience again.

Fortunately, I did learn that true forgiveness was something quite different than what I had been led to believe by the messages I had received from the world I lived in. You do not have to forgive *and* forget. Its okay to remember what happened. But you dont want to go around carrying the heavy burden of being angry, bitter and resentful for the rest of your life either. For example once you learn that if you touch a hot stove you can get burned, you are not likely to do it again. You learn something from the experience, to exercise more caution while working around a hot stove. And, you don't blame the stove for being hot. It is what it is. And, you don't go around for years holding onto a grudge

against the stove because you got burned. Well, you can, but its not very productive is it?? Its the same thing with people. Learn from our experience and move on.

To forgive someone does not mean that whatever harm or hurt that they caused you was not inappropriate. It means that you will no longer allow the past to have a hold on your life today; that you are willing to release the hurt and the pain; that you no longer wish to be tied to the experience or the person connected to the experience in a negative way; that you are releasing both yourself and the person you need to forgive from a tie that holds you both back; that you wish to be free. When I finally understood this I was able to begin the process of forgiveness. On a side note, forgiveness does not always equal, “Welcome back into my life”, to the person who has betrayed, harmed or abused you. Sometimes it can, and that can be a good thing. However, there are times when it is neither wise nor prudent to do so. But you can still free yourself from the burden of pain, anger, fear, hate, bitterness and resentment either way.

Forgiveness is about release, releasing ourselves from those self-imposed limitations and self-defeating behavior patterns that tie us to the past in negative ways. Forgiveness is releasing our anger, fear, pain and resentment and opening our hearts to joy, peace and love. Yes, others may have done things that have hurt or harmed us, and *they are* responsible for those action. But these individuals are not responsible for how we live the rest of our lives. We are responsible for that. How we respond to these past events and what we carry into our present and our future is entirely up to us and no one else. If we allow the past to negatively affect how we live the rest of our lives, the choices we make, our relationships and our behavior patterns, that is our choice and responsibility not that of the original offender.



Forgiveness is a gift you give yourself – the gift of freedom.

Enhance Your Life With A Thank You.

Special Note From the Author- This article was written and published on August 13, 2009 while the H1N1 threat was at its high in Pune where I used to reside. I now live in Hyderabad.

“It is not the length of life, but depth of life.”~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

In Pune, India, where I reside there is the growing threat of the H1N1 Virus. Pune seems to have become the epicenter of the outbreak for this particular deadly virus. My daughter and I haven't left the house for nearly 2 weeks now, because children are more prone to contracting the virus. So have kept my little one busy at home and since i have a home office it's OK. But my hubby has to wear the mask to leave the house and in crowded places. The death toll has been rising every day since the outbreak about a week and a half ago.



In the wake of this epidemic and death at such close proximity, I have been forced to reevaluate my life. It's not like I haven't seen death up close; in fact my father passed away early on in life and then my younger brother in a car accident in the peak of his youth. So, death doesn't scare me, in the 'oh God I'm going to die' sense...I have come to terms with Gods plan, and don't question his decisions. I know all those who do pass away go to better place and soon we all have to go there too.

I used to think I was living one day at a time..and making the most of life. But when i sit to reassess my life today; yes, I am living one day at a time, but I am living for myself... and taking all the credit, that life taught me blah blah....But, in reality its not Life that teaches you, its the people you meet in your life that do.

After that reality struck me, I went on a connecting frenzy. I managed to call all my near and dear friends and relatives, just to say hi and catch up. Some, whom I hadn't talked with for months. After the whole 3 day marathon of talking and emailing, I was feeling pretty good with myself. I felt all



these people needed to be acknowledged and thanked for their contribution to making me the way i am and to helping me get here.

And then another conscience call hit me {this conscience has a way of creeping up on you suddenly!!}...**What about all those people who you are not in touch with??** The teacher from 3rd Grade who helped you when that Fat bully Guy was harassing you or the bus driver who took you for an extra round when you were a sobby 10yr old just so that you could find your stop or the nurse who helped you go to the bathroom after your C-section. Also, *What about all those who did genuinely hurt you all through your life?* The rude and nasty people you have come across, in their nastiness i did end up learning as well. I learned the ways of the world. I have to give them that credit isnt it??

Now my dilemma is this, I want to acknowledge these people for being a part of my life and teaching me...but how do i go about doing it?? Thank the Lord for the internet, i found quite a few of them. Yes, even my teacher and even that bully who is now not such a bully. I did connect with them...had a heart to heart and felt good..and surprisingly made a friend out of the bully-turned-good guy.

I am not connecting with these people to tell them things like...' there's an epidemic and I am scared', cause I truly wasn't..... I am connecting with them cause I have realized that these are the people who have enhanced and added depth to the quality of my life and i just needed to thank them for it.

Every person you meet teaches you something about yourself you never knew before. Whether good or bad. This weird scare of an epidemic knocked some sense into me and made me take these steps to enhance my life even further. I also realized that in living one day at a time, if i am not thanking the people i meet today for their contribution to my life, I am surely going to regret it on my death bed or when i am truly Gone to the Lord.

So, from today onwards irrespective of the experience good or bad, irrespective of the person kind or nasty, I am going to be truly thankful to them all. Milkman, postman, cleaning lady, supermarket attendant, watchman, tailor, neighbor, driver, the mean neighbor who play the loudest music at 3a.m. everybody. Just one smile and Thank you. Just say thank you and mean it from the bottom of your heart...you know why you're thanking them. You don't have to give them the explanation.

This is what I have done to enhance my life today.

"I shall journey through this world but once. Any good that I can do, or any kindness that I can show any human being, let me do it now; Let me not neglect or defer it, for I shall not pass this way again."~Jerry Lewis

Looking Inward To Find Your True Self.

If you think something outside of yourself is the cause of your problem, you will look outside of yourself for the answer and never really find it.

The path of looking inward, deep into our mind, can well be compared with the long stillness before day break. There is frequently nothing to mark it, but a quietly increasing light. The gradual dawning of a new world in our consciousness comes silently. It is a secret inner thing we can never fully share with others.

For looking inward we have to completely relax the body and the mind. This increases the capacity to cope with stressful situations and the consciousness has more clarity. The first step is to strip the ego which is totally responsible for our inability to see things more clearly and in their true perspective. One by one, we must try and strip those weak areas of ourselves which the world has taught us to cherish i.e. attitudes, stubbornness, prejudices, fears, revenge and hates. ***These are not really you. You have to look for yourself beyond the ego and the qualities that shape it, and which constantly work against you.***



We do not hear the sunrise, so too the greatest moment in our life comes quietly. In that stillness ALONE is born the knowledge of the self. Therefore, in absolute quietness, free from the presence of other people, noise and distractions we have to try and become one with our self. We start with discovering our conscience and then the sub-conscience and then the true Power of our mind.

The bottom of the lake cannot be seen when the surface is covered with ripples. It is only possible for us to catch a glimpse of the bottom when the ripples have subsided and the water is clean. If the water is muddy or is agitated all the time, the bottom will not be seen. If it is clear and there are no waves, we shall see the bottom. The bottom of the lake is our ***true self.***

Again the mind is in three states:

1. **Darkness-** Found in brutes and idiot; it only acts to injure. No other idea comes in to that state of the mind.
2. **Active-** This state of minds chief motives are power and enjoyment. 'I will be powerful and rule others'.
3. **Serenity-** Finally, there is a state of serenity and calmness, in which the waves cease and the water of the mind-lake becomes clear. That is where the real and strong power of the mind emerges, and it can be within your reach.

I also like to believe that a little bit of God lives within all of us. We shall discover, how fortunate we are, only, when we are at peace with our true selves and are able to communicate with our mind. The powers of the mind are like rays of light dissipated; when they are concentrated, they illumine. This is our only means of truth and knowledge. The world is ready to give up its secrets, if we only know, how to knock, how to give it the necessary blow. The strength and force of the blow come through concentration. There is no limit to the power of the human mind. The more concentrated it is, the more power is brought to bear on one point; that is the secret.

The concentrated mind is a lamp that shows us every corner of our inner-self and the little bit of God that lives within us. Here no speech is needed; silence will carry the truth and you shall accumulate the immense power of your mind, in silence. It will then become a means for developing our own human potential, thus enabling us to devote ourselves with greater totality and clarity to whatever we undertake to do; and to commit ourselves more fully to finding joy and happiness and spreading the same to others whom we associate with.

Expectations or Contentment???

*'Blessed is the man who expects nothing,
for he shall never be disappointed'*

~Alexander Pope

Every morning we wake up and open our front doors to pick up the newspaper and enjoy the fresh news with a nice cup of steaming tea/coffee. Well, that is usually the ritual in my house. Now we have been having this ritual for years and years and i am beginning to think it was passed down from our forefathers...:) When one fine sunday morning (when we await the paper the most..) It doesnt arrive! Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh.....all hell breaks loose. Tempers are lost, phone calls to the paper delivery company are made, moods go sour and finally the first few hours of the glorious sunday are lost. Why?? Cause the newspaper wasn't delivered...NO No NO..Because the news paper wasn't where we expected it to be..in our hands with our morning coffee. Now, why the paper wasn't delivered is secondary, the fact that all that time and effort was unnecessarily lost for something as small as a newspaper is something to think about.....



Now the above newspaper incident was just an example of our little, **unknown** expectations, which when tampered with can have adverse effects on our psyche. Everyday all of us have these little expectations which we don't even think about, like the car will start in the morning when i turn on the ignition, the elevator at the mall will work, the grocery store will have eggs, etc....

Our Expectations can be of two kinds KNOWN and UNKNOWN.

Now unknown seems to be quite clear, but the known, now they are a totally different ball game all together. Lets say you were expecting a raise, you were expecting your daughter/son to get A's, you expected the project you worked on would get you accolades, you expected sending a gift to someone would get you closer to them...etc.

Not getting what you **Knowingly Expected** gives rise to more intense reactions from your end. There could be anger, crying, stress, tension, anxiety. The worst part about known expectations is, the expecting per say can be even more stressing. At least in the unknown you were reacting after, but here your reactions are before and after.

Wow..ever wondered how expectations can engulf your life? Think about it now....

Not only do expectations have a life of their own..but they have an after life as well. *Why oh why then do we have so many of them?*

If you have noticed, there are people who are always smiling. In all the worst possible situations you might see someone always carrying a smile. Who are these people? Do they not have feelings?? How can they smile when something is so horribly wrong? I would like to think they are smiling at themselves rather than at the situation...That they have a certain acceptance of things in and around them that make them feel CONTENT.

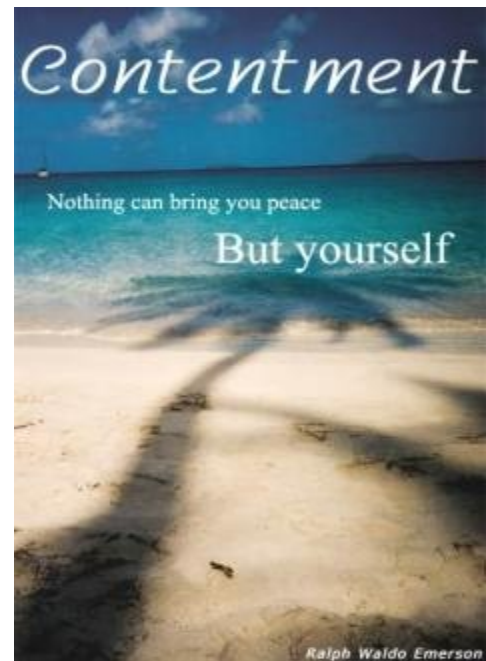
Ask yourself if you're truly content with yourself. Contentment leads to no-expectations. No expectations leads to a certain calm within our self. The fact that we expect not only leads to mental anguish but to physical pain as well. Stress and tension which in turn lead to blood pressure, heart ailments...the list of problems can be endless...but the solution is just one..

No-Expectations=Contentment=No-Expectations=Contentment

What is Contentment? Inner Tranquility. It is the freedom from anxiety, want or need. Contentment is the goal behind all goals because once achieved there is nothing to seek until it is lost.

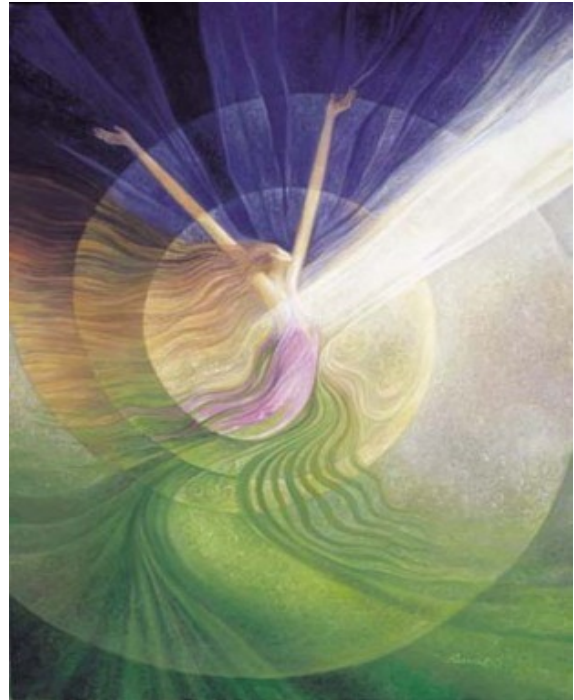
When one can live in the moment with expectations in harmony with experiences one has achieved the greatest mental contentment possible.

The secret of contentment is knowing how to enjoy what you have, and to be able to lose all desire for things beyond your reach. ~ Lin Yu-t'ang



Wants vs. Needs

Just Last Night, my little daughter kept pulling me to the fridge to ask me for Ice cream. Now there is nothing wrong with ice cream is there?? But at 11p.m. (well past bedtime) on a heavily rainy and cold day it's potentially disastrous. Now we grown ups know that don't we? But for a child its still the best thing in the world and not getting what she wanted makes her cranky and irritable. I try hard to distract her attention from it but all in vain. I actually had to drag her to bed... and even then she kept at it...she couldn't stop crying and saying ice cream ice-cream...finally after much ado she did fall asleep. What she needed was to go to sleep, but what she wanted was ice cream!



Wants and needs are a funny thing, All our lives we are battling in our heads between these two facts. How often have we gone to a store and looked at something and thought “ohh I want that, its gorgeous!”? And, How often have we gone to a store and thought “Ohh I need that!”? Sometimes it's a wonder, we have actually grown up..cause our thinking patterns are still mostly childish when it comes to the fine things we want. If you must've noticed your thinking pattern, you will realize that your mind first always tricks you into thinking about your Wants and then your Needs. Whereas, your needs are more important than your wants.

You need water, but you want coke instead.

You need food, but you want fries instead.

You need air, but you want air conditioning instead.

There is nothing wrong with wants, cause to some extent they are the driving force for which we might be working so hard. But here I am talking about **unnecessary, unhealthy, and self indulgent wants**.

The internal conflict between our needs and wants is a never ending process. So, how do we think above it? Is there a way? Ofcourse there is. There is always a way if we choose

to find it. Below are three steps I have found work like a charm. These steps have been tried on a group of individuals, and all came out with flying colors. But of course, **practice is the key.**

Small steps towards self improvement with huge benefits.

3 Steps to overcoming your unnecessary wants:

- 1. Consciously know what it is that you truly need.*
- 2. Think twice (maybe more) before you act on your wants.*
- 3. After making your choice in your mind-Think again by weighing your pros and cons*

MOST IMPORTANTLY-

Always remember-

Your Needs Acted Upon Will NOT Give You A Guilty Conscience! But your wants on the other hand...might just creep up on you...

Attaining selflessness and rising above trivial wants is never easy, but its the **need** to do so that makes it so attainable. We **need** to be able to look within ourselves and put ON the light of the heart for the right path.

The Power Of NO!

There was a time when my favorite word used to be YES. Why? Cause i love being there for everyone around me. Whether it was a birthday party to be organized, an event to be taken care of, helping someone pack for their shifting, going with someone to the lawyers for emotional support, getting groceries for a friend cause they are too busy, picking and dropping at all hours.....etc etc etc...the list is endless. I felt good to be able to be there for all the people around me. I still do. I enjoy it immensely. i love the fact that many people think of me as their go to person.



But, one fine day between all my chores and work I was asked to do a little helping. I wont mention what it was right now, but i was too occupied to do the task as urgently as it was required(it wasn't life or death though...). **Being the YES person that i was, i DIDN'T refuse** i just said i will try and do it as soon as possible. And thats exactly what i did. I got to it but a little later, as soon as i got the chance. For the next few weeks, whenever i came across this friend there was a certain harshness in their tone and a very cold vibe was given to me. I kept wondering what must've happened. Not being able to put a finger on it, i gathered the courage to ask them directly. The answer changed me for the better i can say that now.

They said "You're so self involved that you couldn't do one thing we asked you to do! Now you expect us to be normal with you? How selfish can you be? Please don't pretend to care when you cant even help when we needed it."

The task- Picking up a book from the bookstore. And not just any book...the harry potter book for their daughter. I seriously don't even remember which one it was.

Now, my questions to myself were-Was this so important that they needed to change their attitude so drastically? Why was this, such a big issue for them? Or am i getting ahead of myself? Am I not a good friend?

I literally went into a state of self pity and couldn't fathom the reasons. I was doing my best. I wanted to be there for them..and i was. Then why wasn't it enough?

After thinking about this for so long and talking about it with my other colleagues and analyzing my behavior(i often forget amidst analyzing my patients to analyze myself) i

realised I never say NO. That word kind of didnt exist in my vocabulary. And the reason was i never wanted to hurt anyone. But, now in the bargain of not hurting anybody, i was being taken for granted and was the one being hurt. It was from this point that i realised that saying NO was not only important for ME but also for the other person. For ME because I am not pushing myself to the brink and for the other cause there is no false hope in their mind either.

Saying NO(politely) for things or requests which i don't consider appropriate somehow made me feel empowered. I started having more time for the other important things in my life and the most important lesson i have learned is that your true friends aren't the ones who will hold you responsible for receiving a fictional book a little late.

I still love being there for everyone in my life, but i have set my priorities right by learning to say NO to things that are inappropriate. I have started seeing things in a more positive perspective. Not being afraid to say NO has made me a better friend and a more honest human being. See, I am now one step closer to attaining my personal goal "Humanely Human".

NOTE- Whenever the situation arises to say NO, please do it carefully. so as not to hurt the opposite person. And, always make it a point to make the other person feel comfortable, not uncomfortable by your NO.

Finding Your Happy Endings

When it comes to happy endings, we can all think of the ultimately romantic stories when after all the persuasion and troubles a couple finally come together in matrimony and live happily ever after.

Let me tell you a little true story about a woman found her story's true happy ending:

This is the story of a friend of mine who is very successful when it comes to her career. She in her business world is a force of nature. You dare not mess with her. And, personally she is a real darling at heart. So caring, compassionate, giving and a lovely human being. She has a lovely eight year old daughter who is her world. The arrangement with her Ex is such that the daughter goes and visits him on weekends and holidays.



For many years she never wanted to get into another relationship, because she didn't want her daughter to feel left out and of course in her heart of hearts she expected her ex to change for the better. She knew it was never going to be possible for him to change so she just immersed herself in work. They separated nearly five years back.

Recently about a few months(10 months) back she met this nice guy. She kept refusing to date him but he was persistent and claimed he was in love with her and that she was THE ONE for him. Slowly but steadily the relationship grew and she said she was also in love with him. She said he loved her daughter and was good to her etc.. There was no interference from her ex either so things were going smoothly till *he proposed and she accepted*.

As soon as she accepted the proposal and started planning for her wedding, the fights between them grew. They disagreed on everything. They both kept putting it off as pre-wedding jitters.

Just a few days back when she was trying on her wedding dress, her ex was dropping off their daughter to the store where she was trying it on. When her ex husband saw her in

the dress, he just broke down, and told her how much he loved her and that separating was the biggest mistake he made in his life. She told him it was too late and she was already moving on now and walked away from him. But all the way, when she came to me all she could do was cry. She kept saying “why now? Why couldn’t he have realized this 5 years back? Why is he doing this to me?” I couldn’t do much accept comfort her at that point. I only asked her one question: “Are you still in love with your ex husband?” To which she just stared at me in shock. She couldn’t even react to the question..let alone answer it. She just hurried out and told me she would call later.

The next day she called and told me her wedding was off and that she was getting back with her ex husband. I was pleasantly surprised but not shocked. They were the kind of couple who were meant to be together forever but, ego clashes made that impossible to happen earlier. I guess the time and distance made them both realize that. And when faced with the ultimatum of losing the other to another man triggered off the actual feelings that were buried deep inside.

You know what she told me amid her tears of joy, she said “Zeenat, ***I found my perfect happy ending!*** *We are a family again. It took me so long to realize this, but I am so happy I realized that now. Its not too late for us as yet. We can see our daughter grow together. We can have our lives back.*”

I was obviously happy for her. But it got me wondering about what she said: *My Happy Ending.*

I always presumed happy endings to be more fairy tale like. But we can make our own tales and bring magic in them as well. We can find our own paths that lead to happiness. I know life is long and has so many experiences that enrich us. I think there is a happy ending after every experience that ends favorably and even if it doesnt end favorably we can strive that much harder to make it a happy ending.. isnt it..the journey can be enriching as well.

I would like to think of our lives as a **collection of happy endings** just waiting to happen. Now its up to us whether we choose to make them happen or sit on the sidelines and just dream of them happening.

Lets all get out there and find and collect our truly happy endings! I think we owe it to ourselves.Don’t you??

Note: *The other guy, whom she was supposed to marry, threw a very huge party in honor of her and her husbands reunion. He is truly happy for her. All he could say was “she is lucky to have found her way now rather that later. A family always deserves to be together.”*

How NOT to Panic-The Wallet Incident

Last night My Hubby came home from an out of town trip. Ok so what's the not to panic part about this?? I'll tell you what...this morning when we were unpacking, his wallet wasn't to be seen anywhere! I actually started freaking out, considering all the worst possible scenarios. Firstly, what was in that wallet?? Credit cards, Debit cards, Identity card, Pan card among other paper work. No money thank god..Cause during the trip he kept the money in another pocket.



Irrespective of that..I started telling him...what's wrong with you..why cant you be more careful? What if whoever found it uses your credit cards..oh god oh god...etc etc...you know us nagging wives!!! To which he gave an explanation (poor thing), that it probably got

snipped during his journey..Cause he was sure he had it on him. *But I couldn't stop freaking out but, well he was surprisingly calm. Hmm..I wonder why???*



After I finished my panicking (nearly 10 minutes) ..I started thinking..we can always handle this situation. There has got to be a solution to this...and then I panic again...seeing which my darling hubby says, "don't worry! I will handle it. I needed new cards anyway..the other ones were getting too old. And I will make a stay on them as well so no one can use them. The paper work wasn't that necessary. I will have it replaced." ...and he went on

about how it was all ok. All the time he was explaining I was getting calmer and calmer and finally I was totally fine.

When I was sitting and thinking about the whole situation, I realized that my hubby was just reinforcing what I keep saying to myself and to others...to **think positively in all situations** or rather to [see the positives in all situations](#). And the best part was that before I could start thinking positively he already had the solution to the problem. Smarty Pants Hubby!! This in turn made me stop panicking. Hmm...now I know why he was so calm? ***He already had a solution to the problem.***

Bottom line- *Before you start panicking about any given situation, first think of a solution to the problem and then well, you won't even need to panic!*

Stress Less

The six fundamental steps to improved health

More than two-thirds of visits to doctors' surgeries are for stress-related illnesses. Stress has been linked to headaches, backaches, insomnia, anger, cramps, elevated blood pressure, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia and lowered resistance to infection. For women, stress is a key factor in hormonal imbalances resulting in menstrual irregularities, PMS, fibroids, endometriosis and fertility problems. Stress can also be a factor in the development of almost all disease states, including cancer and heart disease; the leading cause of death in men & women. In most cases stress is a result of letting life get out of balance. This happens when we put all our energy into only one or two areas of our life (usually work) and ignore the rest.



We take on too much, over-promise, don't delegate and push our own wants and needs into the background by always looking after others needs first. We overload ourselves to the point where we are forced to stop attending to what is important to us, such as time for our interests and time to spend with our families. If stress is a major issue for you there are steps you can take to restore balance to your life – so you can stress less and smile more.

Step One: *Develop extreme self-care*

Most people suffering stress have become good at practicing extreme self-neglect! They don't eat well, rarely exercise or take time out and probably can't remember the last time they had a holiday. If you are one of these people you need to take your self-care to new heights, above and beyond your normal limit. When you take care of your own needs first you are building a reserve of energy and resources that will enable you to sustain extreme self-care with enough left over to care for others. Creating 10 delightful daily habits that give you enjoyment is a great place to start. Here are some suggestions.

- Stretch for 2 minutes.
- Laugh for 5 minutes
- Floss your teeth
- Read to a child
- Hug a loved one

- Go for a 10-minute walk in the park
- Watch your favorite television serial.
- Write in a journal
- Eat 3 fruit and 5 veg
- Read a chapter of your favourite book
- Drink 2 litres of water
- Go to bed early

The key to gaining accumulated benefits from your daily habits and practicing extreme self-care is to do them each day. Start with one habit and commit to practicing it for seven days, then add another, practicing both for another seven days. Continue adding your habits until you are practicing all 10 items on your list daily.

Step Two: Eliminate tolerations

Tolerations are situations and conditions you put up with that drain you physically, mentally, emotionally or spiritually. They include crossed boundaries, unfinished business or projects, others' bad behaviour, frustrations, unwanted commitments, clutter, messy surroundings, broken items, being over weight, weeds in the garden and debt. List five tolerations that drive you nuts about your job, life, and health and home and then devise a plan to get rid of the first 'intolerable' toleration on your list this week. Notice how this makes you feel, how it lifts a weight off your shoulders. Now think about how much better you will feel when you get rid of the other four tolerations on your list! When you've completed the elimination of the first five tolerations you've listed, start a new one and keep working until you have zero tolerations in your life.

Step Three: Having your needs met!

Unmet needs cause us to become upset, angry, stressed and depressed. The key to satisfying our personal needs is to identify them. Identify needs that feel authentic, not ones that may look good to others or are superficial. Be aware that what you consider to be a need (such as to be loved) may be covering a real need (self-esteem). Ideas of personal needs are:

- Calmness
- Freedom
- Being listened to
- Independence
- Feeling valued
- Stability
- Respect
- A life purpose
- Satisfying work
- Honesty
- Loyalty
- Being busy
- Security
- Being loved

- Balance
- Responsibility
- A career
- Children It may be necessary for you to tell others what your needs are and learn to ask for support.

Step Four: Smile often and laugh more!

Scientists have found that laughter stimulates the release of beneficial brain neurotransmitters and hormones, which can reduce stress, improve our immune system and give us a general sense of wellbeing. Some doctors are using laughter therapy to replace anti-depressants and to reduce the use of painkillers. According to researchers faking laughter will also produce the same health and wellbeing results as real laughter. Do you need to improve your ability to laugh more? I recommend that upon waking we should sit upright in bed or in a chair and smile vigorously and ridiculously. This muscular action induces the release of endorphins and within minutes we actually feel happy! “Positive self-talk can be very empowering, so let’s begin our days with loud statements such as I love laughing! People love hearing me laugh! Laughing makes me happy and healthy! I have a beautiful smile! Lets express not suppress, lets laugh and live longer!”

Step Five: Set Goals

Without goals we have no direction in life. We are lost! When we are lost we become stressed and overwhelmed. Goals help us navigate our lives with greater ease and reaching goals fulfils us, making us happier. One way to find out what your real goals are is to write a list of 100 things you’d like to accomplish before you die and then start working on your list today! When you set a goal it tells your subconscious mind what is important to you and to be on the lookout for things, people, opportunities or situations that will enable you to move towards your goal. Establishing goals is a tool we can use to have what we want and need in our personal and professional lives.

Step Six: Create a supportive environment

Our surroundings can be supportive and give us energy or drag us down and leave us stressed and tired. An inspiring, enjoyable environment filled with positive things and people energises us and we feel happier. We all need good support structures to help our lives flow with less effort and to remain balanced. Five important life support structures are:

- *People:* family, friends, life coach or counsellor, accountant, doctor, housekeeper
- *Places:* your office, desk, car, home
- *Things:* your phone, computer, home decor
- *Processes:* filing system, record keeping, time management program
- *Inner Environment:* your outlook on life, self-esteem level, thought processes Examine these five categories and look at who or what you use to support you in each area. Are you truly being supported? What do you need to change to feel more supported in all

areas of your life? Start making the easiest changes first. Just as it can take time to end up stressed, overwhelmed and out of balance, it also takes time to make positive changes in your life. Sometimes trying to implement change (even for the better) can itself cause stress and prevent a person remaining motivated. Making changes in your life can be stressful, even if the changes are aimed at reducing stress. For this reason it is important to work on each of the steps one at a time, mastering each before moving on to the next.

If you discover you can't make the changes on your own, get support from a counselor, doctor, friend, peer or life coach who specializes in stress issues. Above all, ***keep in mind the benefits you will enjoy when you've mastered the steps to stress less and smile more!***

Invest For Eternity

What follows us beyond the grave?

Only character and relationships!!
Why *don't we invest* in these???

Read this, Hear this, repeat this:

Death is inevitable. We are going to die. Every moment that we live draws us closer to death. Possibly, this is the most unwelcome and frightening truth we will ever hear. But on the other hand, it is the most shocking reality check we could have. This thought will constantly make us evaluate our priorities, goals and objectives in life. All the wants and desires that we spend a lifetime chasing such as money, fame, power, possessions, are **impermanent(short lived)**. No matter how much we may love our expensive Cars, holiday homes in the country or bank balance, we must one day leave them and let go.



When people discern this, they try and compensate by leaving behind legacies – children, lasting achievements, immortal works of art. All these are marvelous, but they are based on the belief that we will live only once and therefore achievements are our only shot at immortality.

However, we know better today. We know that we are immortal where it really matters. At the soul level. The body decays and disintegrates, but the soul lives on.

As immortal souls how do we live? What should be our goals? Our conduct?

To begin with, we need to see what we take with us. According to all the spiritual texts, all faiths and near-death experiences, there are only two things that survive death. One is our character, the sum total of our experiences on earth. The other is our relationships. At the end of our life, who we become, is the raw material for the journey beyond death.

If we have lived angry, cynical and negative lives, if we have lived a life of reactivity and negativity, we take all of these with us. But, if we have used this lifetime to grow in every conceivable way, if we have sought to be gentle, loving, considerate, efficient, able and giving, then all that too will go with us.

Since others are also immortal, we also take our relationships onward into the next soul journey. This means that we need to prioritize growth and relationships. **We need to see life as a vast school where we take birth in order to grow in perfection until we attain enlightenment.** Every experience must be used as a growth opportunity, something to help us grow in whatever quality we lack. Every conflict, problem, shortfall is to be seen only as indication that we have not got there as yet. Even the tiniest of resistance to the weather, or the tardy progress of the traffic or to one's scratchy new clothes are signs that we have still some way to grow.

Finally, we need to truly **work on our relationships**, especially with those closest to us – our primary family and the one we marry into, close relatives and friends. Many of us have issues with our family and quite often get estranged, **but from the point of view of your soul, alienation is not an option.** All it means is that we are doomed to spend a few more years with them until we finally resolve our differences and strike harmony. So, we might as well start working on them today itself. If we can view each relationship as an opportunity for growth, instead of a source of misery, we will have the motivation to do so. **Relationships teach us more about ourselves than almost any aspect of life.** We become aware of the many games we play in order to get people to do what we want. And to discover our own manipulative ways can be an eye-opener. It is only while relating to others that we discover our blind or soft spots. We discover that we like to dominate, we do not know how to safeguard our space, we are not really comfortable around people, find it hard to open up to the opposite sex, have an authority issue, are impatient with slow learners, judge and criticize everything that we disagree with and so on. Only through ongoing introspection and interaction can we change the way we relate.

The decision is now upto you. You decide where you would like to invest your time, energy and money – **the joys that last a lifetime or the joys that are for eternity.**

What will your decision be? Decide carefully, or you will spend you lifetime wasted for eternity.
