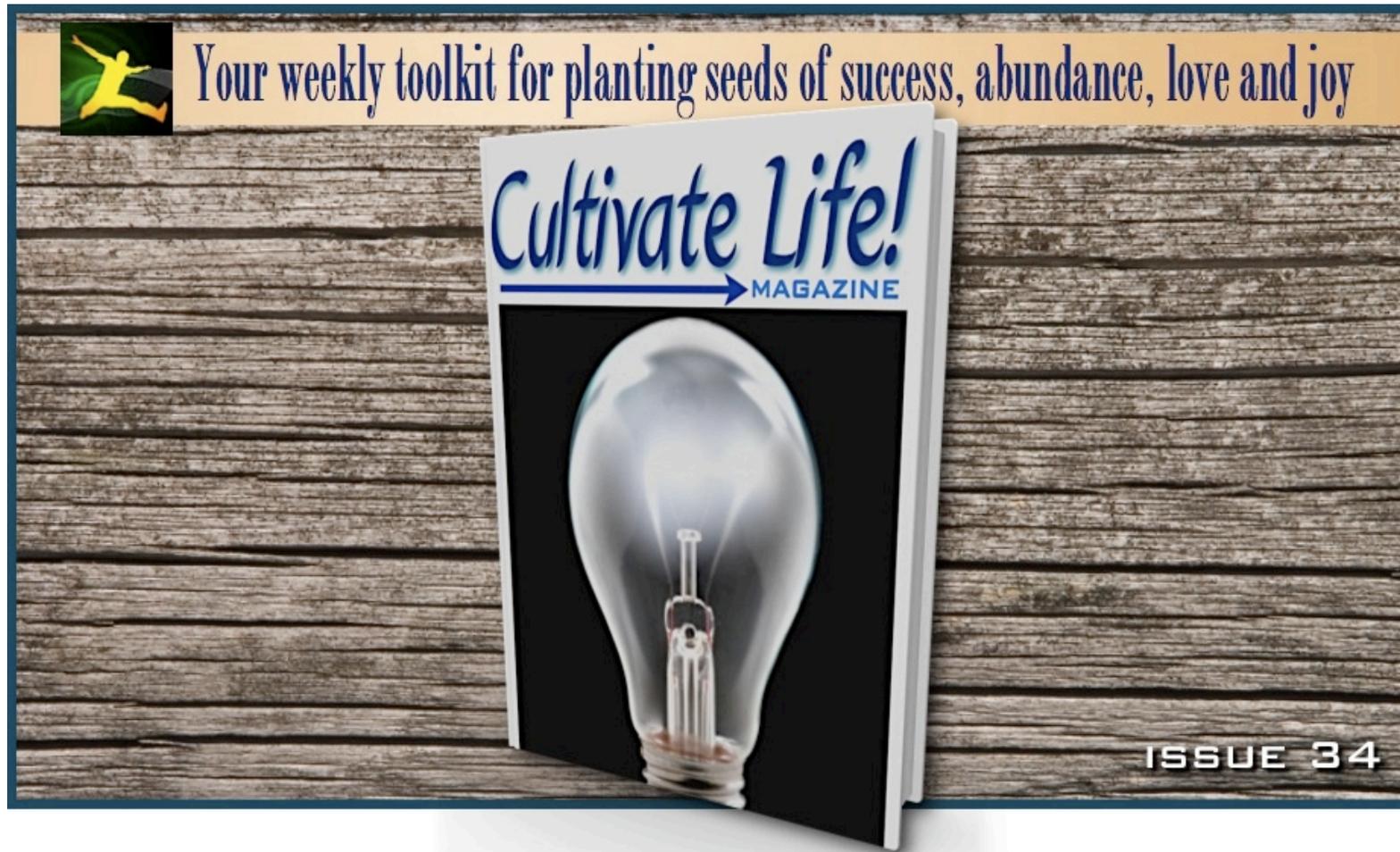


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Cultivate Life! magazine

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Heart to Heart Coaching

I have been depressed and confused for many years and need guidance to move forward with clarity and confidence.

About the Questioner

Philosophy: My philosophy in life is to live with joy without hurting others and helping others in the most possible ways available. I am a Christian but I do not stick to its orthodox principles like Jesus is the only God and all other religions are satanic, so I feel I am an atheist as I never felt the presence of God as demonstrated in churches. But I do not stick to the assertion that I am an atheist.

Hopes and aspirations: I aspire to find a career that gives satisfaction (with ample amount of money which comes next), clear the mental clutter about god, religion, existence of god, be confident in what I am and be a good woman I wish for professionally, socially and financially so that I can be an example to others.

Question

I am 25 year old female suffering from depression and OCD [obsessive-compulsive disorder] from the age of 15. Nevertheless I managed to complete my studies with highest scores, and pursued my hobbies like dance and reading books, landed in a good paying job, all while I am under treatment for 8 years using antidepressants. I am content with my family as I live with my mom, dad and siblings in India and they are very supportive. I am brought up in a strict Christian environment, which made me believe utmost in God when I was suffering from unmanageable depression and OCD. But I did not get answers or healing from God. But still I continue to pray (as my mom and church say your prayers will be answered) while working on my issues with a therapist here in India. I want to stop antidepressants that I have been using for 8 years, as I aim to have good physical health and my body is suffering as a result of pills for 8 years. I am very much in control of myself and I look happy and sleep well and look good. But I am not feeling like attending neither office nor feeling like getting married nor feeling like having children (I feel guilty as a result of these thoughts that why I am not like my gal pals of my age).

I want to clear clutter out of mind related to 1. God, 2. Religion, 3. Existence of God, 4. Recognizing my satisfying career not just working

for money, 5. Assertiveness, 6. Want to stop medicines and have a healthy body and mind, 6. Sex.

I feel, why I am thinking so much when every other human being is just working to get some money and just praying for their reasons? And why am I contemplating so much on vast issues instead of dealing with my life? But still I could not pull out myself from these conflict areas. I also feel sex is something you do with your loved one after marriage and when I see my friends in immoral physical life, I again think on that and feel guilty. I feel I have issues on this sex before marriage and after marriage. Please clear this confusion.

Reply by Coach Doris Jeanette

Depression and OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder) are unpleasant behaviors. And the medication is even more unpleasant. However, give yourself lots of credit. What you have accomplished is quite remarkable. You are a perfect example of how a person can control herself and still perform day-to-day duties in the world! Therefore, never doubt the inner strength you possess. All you have to do is to learn to use your strength to be yourself instead of to control yourself!

As a holistic psychologist I do not use or recommend that you use psychological labels as your identity. You can read more about my viewpoint in the article archived [here at Trans4mind](#).

As far as I am concerned everyone has obsessive-compulsive behaviors and everyone has some degree of depression. If you don't think that you do, pay attention to your energy.

Any behavior that you need to "do" in order to feel safe is an obsessive-compulsive behavior. It could be washing the dishes or sitting down to read. If you need to "do" it more than once and "do" it in order to feel more comfortable then it is OC. And if you don't think you depress your energy, pay attention to how spontaneous and emotionally expressive you are with others. How freely can you share your body, heart and soul without inhibition?

Let's Tackle the Legal Drug Problem

The USA is world famous for giving drugs to our children. Has India caught this overmedication disease from USA? It is extremely upsetting that medication, which does not have a great track record for depression or OCD, could be the treatment of choice for adults or children in any country. A British study, a few years ago, found children on anti-depressant medication committed suicide more often than those not on the medication. The government agency recommended taking children off anti-depressant drugs.

The drug companies themselves cannot advertise or tell you that their drug cures depression because it DOES NOT. The very best that an anti-depressant drug can do is make you forget the fact that you are depressed by numbing you even more. The reality is that when the drug is removed from your body, whatever problem existed before is still there in bold Technicolor. And to boot, its energy is stronger, because you have done nothing to solve your problem!

How to Handle Your Current Medication

In terms of getting off your medication, the MD who put you on the drug needs to be the one to help you get off the drug in a slow and healthy fashion. Do not eliminate any drug until you are prepared to deal with the psychological problems I will be mentioning below.

It is extremely important for you to be in ongoing therapy or coaching with someone who is a skillful psychologist as you get off your meds. I suggest you pick a professional who is qualified to help you with your mental health problems and bypass the intermediaries.

Treatment of Choice for Obsessive-compulsive Disorder in Traditional Psychology

The treatment of choice in traditional psychology for OCD is Behavior Therapy. One of the leading researchers in this area, Dr. Edna Foa, was one my colleagues when I was a staff member at Temple Medical School from 1976-1979. Her current treatment is the same as she was doing when I helped her with her research. She exposes you to whatever makes you anxious until you are no longer anxious. Edna is now at the University of Penn and TIME magazine recently **recognized her** as one of 100 most influence people in the world. Read a definition of the New Psychology **at my site**.

As a holistic psychologist, I am not satisfied with stopping your OCD behaviors. This is a bandage job at best. As a matter of fact, I would not even attempt to stop you from performing obsessive-compulsive behaviors. Why not? You need those behaviors for the moment. They are serving a function and fulfilling a need.

Why do you need your obsessive-compulsive behaviors? You are using them to feel safe. I would never take anything away that you use to feel safe. I want you to feel safe.

As a holistic psychologist my goal is to empower you. My goal is not to "fix" you or make you fit into a crazy, dysfunctional world. Together, we look at your whole mind-body to see what you are doing to stop the flow of your healthy human energy.

If you are depressed, this means you are depressing your energy. You cannot become more alive until you stop depressing your healthy energy. So this means you need to learn to let your energy flow without inhibiting it in order to become healthier in mind and body.

Your obsessive-compulsive behaviors tell me that you are extremely anxious and using your obsessive-compulsive behaviors to "bind" your anxiety. Everyone "binds" his or her anxiety, so do not judge yourself or think that you are so different. You are in good company; many famous people, such as Lucille Ball, Albert Einstein and Charles Darwin were OCD.

Even though none of your obsessive-compulsive behaviors successfully keep you safe, you think they do. Your belief and comfort is extremely important in terms of a positive outcome. If you want to successfully transform your depressed energy into healthy flowing energy you need to feel safe and be master of thyself.

Let's look deeper into the energy dynamics. Depression and anxiety have a fascinating relationship. It took me many years to untangle their intricate and intimate dance. After repeated observations, I uncovered their physical relationship. For psychological success, it is extremely important to know what is happening in physical reality.

When you stop depressing your energy, you immediately become aware of your anxiety and experience its full force in your body and nervous system. When you experience your high anxiety, your response is to go back into depression. "Being still" which is depressed, feels safer to you than the chaos and static of your anxiety.

So I would imagine that you feel like you are in a catch 22, because that is exactly what you are in! You are flip flopping back and forth between depression and anxiety without the proper skills to deal with either of them. Therefore, I would teach you how to replace your unpleasant behaviors with more effective behaviors. You need behaviors that actually keep you physically safe and emotionally secure.

Your depression and OCD are not bad or wrong. They are simply not productive. You need to become skillful in regulating your own human energy so that you can allow your healthy energy to flow without resorting to unpleasant behaviors.

Therefore, I would teach you more forceful and powerful behaviors. For example, you mention assertiveness. You seem to know you need to take an Assertiveness Training course. And indeed you do. You will feel much safer when you have the ability to say, "No" and "Yes" when needed.

If I had to pick one skill set that everyone in the world needed, it would be hard to choose between learning how to relax and learning how to be assertive. But I would pick being assertive! Children are trained not to be assertive. Yet, every adult needs to be assertive in order to be effective and powerful in the world. So when you grow up you must get the education you need by taking an Assertiveness Training course.

Once you know how to handle your anxiety, you will have the tools you need to successfully move out of your depression. Then you will be able to stay out of the depressed state. I do not have the space to address all your concerns. Most of them are real fears that you will face as you learn to handle the anxiety of the sexist, classist world you live in.

As a matter of fact, the outside world is so anxious; you will need to continue to improve your anxiety coping skills for the rest of your life. Dealing with anxiety is like dealing with the dirty dishes. Once you clean them up, they get dirty again.

However, if you use your inner strength to be yourself, instead of to control yourself, you will learn to enjoy washing the dishes. You will also enjoy the process of reducing your anxiety.

Action Steps to Move Forward

1. **Get to know your depressed state.** How are you depressing your energy flow? Notice your patterns and see what triggers your inhibition. Remember, you are not your depression. Stop identifying with this state and discover how you learned to be depressed. For information about how you learned to be depressed and tools to help you, listen to "**Depression: Discover How You Learned and Can Unlearn Helplessness.**"
2. **Work with a holistic psychologist or coach.** Prepare yourself for getting off medication. Learn the skills you need so you can begin to reduce your medication. You need to be assertive and you need to handle anxiety.
3. **Learn the truth about legal drugs** and get ready for a lower dose. Use this book to help you successfully get off drugs: **Your Drug May Be Your Problem: How and Why to Stop Taking Psychiatric Medications** by Peter R. Breggin, M. D. and David Cohen, Ph.D.
4. **Take an Assertiveness Training Course.** Check with your local community mental health center or colleges for classes and courses. Or sign up for the course on the phone that begins Jan. 18th, "**Stop the World From Pushing You Around: Six Weeks to Solid Self-Confidence,**" an Assertiveness Training Telecourse.

Note: Readers can still get the special discount offered last week of 30.00 off the 97.00 audio "**Opening the Heart**" until December 20. There was a problem with the shopping cart last week so the special is still available. Put LIFE! in the coupon box to get \$30.00 discount. If you experience problems [email me](#) or call 215-732-6197.

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Doris Jeanette is a licensed psychologist with 34 years of clinical experience helping people use their inner strengths, natural talents and innate abilities. She is available for phone consultations because she has the ability to sense energy on the phone. In addition, her self help products give you the information and skills you need to be successful no matter where you live. Sign up for her free newsletter and check out her new telecourse, "[Stop the World From Pushing You Around: Six Weeks to Solid Self-Confidence.](#)"

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[Go to BEGIN HERE - the Resources page for this life challenge](#)

Bad-luck fortune-cookie collectors

Eldon Taylor

There are those who cling to their "right" to blame. I have a friend in South Africa who is a lie detection examiner. He has a model I like. He calls it something else, but we'll call it the "bad-luck fortune cookies" game. So, this is the story of these special cookie collectors. They go through life collecting all the cookies they can. Riding on the escalator of life, they will even jump high in the air to catch one, just so they can put it in their backpack of life experience and share it later. And share they do. Each evening, whether at home or in the pub, on the telephone or via e-mail, they tell their friends all about the cookies of the day. These sharings go like this:

First Person: "Do you know what happened to me today? The clerk in the gas and grocery would not take my credit card because I left my purse at work with my identification in it; and she knows me. Heck, she sees me nearly every day--but she is a real grouch anyway." Second Person: "That sucks, but do you know what my boss said to me today? He informed me that I was always late from lunch and told me in no uncertain terms that I would either be on time or lose my job. He knows that the traffic is horrible at lunch, and he's always gone more than an hour. I should just tell him to stuff it!" Third Person: "Your day was nearly as bad as mine. I had a damn cop stop me for nearly nothing. Everyone in traffic was changing lanes, and just because I cut in front of him, he gave me a ticket. That's my third one this year, and my insurance costs are going to go through the roof as a result. These damn cops should be out catching criminals, not honest tax-paying citizens." First Person: "Life sucks. Is your husband still being a jerk? Oh, but you know, speaking of insurance rates, my insurance company canceled my insurance just because I was late with their payment. Then the idiot that ran into me--well that led to a fine for my not having insurance. And on top of that, they blamed me for the accident, and it wasn't my fault!"

By now you get the idea. These people gather to share their cookie stories, and that is largely what their social life is all about. If you want to have some fun, step up to the cookie keepers and point out how wonderful life is. You might even explain the blame game and cookie keeper philosophy, but make sure you have a plan for a quick retreat.

Cookie keepers choose, whether or not they want to admit it, to hold tightly to the blame game. An otherwise productive and joyful life is thrown away in exchange for the "Don't you feel sorry for me?" exchanges. That is another part of the cookie keeper game. To belong to their group, you must be willing to be understanding and sympathetic. It's okay to top the cookie of another with a more unpleasant cookie of your own but not if you fail to recognize the poor, picked-on nature of the other cookie keeper.

A dear friend of mine grew up in a codependent family relationship, one of those Melody Beattie so aptly defines in her books such as *Codependent No More*. It's the relationship most of us know something about, for we have heard many of those conditional statements growing up. They are ones that go like this: "If you loved me, you would _____. If you had any respect for me, you would not _____. I did this for you, is it too much to expect _____ from you? I think if you cared about me, you would _____." And so forth. You fill in the blanks. Beattie sets out several criteria for recognizing codependence. In her words, "Codependents are the people who consistently, and with a great deal of effort and energy, try to force things to happen:"

"We control in the name of love. We do it because we're 'only trying to help.' We do it because we know best how things should go and how people should behave. We do it because we're right and they're wrong. We control because we're afraid not to do it. We do it because we don't know what else to do. We do it to stop the pain. We control because we think we have to. We control because we don't think. We control because controlling is all we can think about. Ultimately we may control because that's the way we've always done things. Tyrannical and dominating, some rule with an iron hand. . . . Others do their duty behind a costume of sweetness and niceties, secretly going about their business--other people's business."

Two of the keystone elements in all of this codependency is, according to Beattie, "Suffering people's consequences for them" and "Solving people's problems for them." In other words, there is a real quid pro quo in cookie sharing, and it too is at least somewhat based on codependent patterns.

My friend gave up her codependent behavior and threw all of her cookies away. She chose to become self-empowered and has made wonderful strides in the process. If you asked her, she would tell you life is a miracle, and she is very happy today. Still, her sister, with whom she has always been very close, has not budged. Her sister carries all the cookies she can and spends nearly every moment sharing them. Despite soft approaches at trying to turn on a light in the sister's head, my friend now finds herself in that place where many who refuse to play these games eventually arrive. It is hard to change when those you love the most are fixed in ways that steal your power. My friend has decided that the next time her sister plays the blame game, she will say something to end this behavior. You see, when you stop saving your cookies and get on with taking responsibility for everything in your life, your life improves. When that happens, you lose any and all desire to be a cookie keeper. ###

(Taken in part from *Choices and Illusions*)

Eldon Taylor has made a lifelong study of the human mind and has earned doctoral degrees in clinical psychology and pastoral psychology. He is the CEO of Progressive Awareness Research, an organization dedicated to researching techniques for accessing the immense powers of the mind, and is the author of the New York Times best seller, *Choices and Illusions*.

"It is my philosophy that we are blessed with the ability to think. It is therefore incumbent upon all of us to do just that. To begin we must ask the first question, "Who am I?" The answer to this question is personal for each and every one of us, but at the same time it calls upon us to accept the miracle that we are. Life is indeed a miracle and so are you! I believe that the way we give back to the Giver of this miracle is by being all that we can be, by doing our best at everything we do and by recognizing the miracle in all life. It is from this perspective that I truly wish for you the dignity, bounty and blessings that are yours by birthright as part of the miracle."

Thank you,
Eldon

Visit the website: www.eldontaylor.com

Soul Angels (excerpt)
Jenny Smedley

Why Are We Here?

We are here to take part in the evolution of angels by allowing our souls, which are a part of them, to experience that which can only be experienced in a physical body. We are here to take steps in the journey towards divinity, and each lifetime is one step. It's up to us to make sure that step takes us in the right direction.

Why Is the Earth Here?

The Earth was created by turning energy into light to provide us with a stage to live out our dramas on, and a school of learning. There may be other planets where the same thing is happening.

Who Created It and Us ?

The entire universe has intelligence within every molecule, and they are capable of making a collective decision to take these steps. This is confirmed by the fact that although science has proven that on a quantum (microscopic) level all matter is fluid, it chooses to retain its apparently solid form in order to make a functioning world. This collective intelligence can be manifested as a single, thinking entity – hence the belief in a God who cannot be seen.

What Happens When Our Soul Is Balanced?

If we return over and over to balance our souls, then what happens when they don't need to return here any more? Our souls return to their source, which by then will be an evolved form of angel.

Having said all of that, now I realize how powerful the 'director' of our play is, being part of a divine being. I can also see why spiritual gurus tell us that we can change the script of our lives to make things easier for ourselves, once we have accomplished the lessons we came here to learn.

We can do this simply by acknowledging the lessons and, as director, rewriting the script. This is where our past lives come into the picture,

because by understanding what went before, we can grasp what lessons we have come here again to learn.

And also, past-life recall will help us to discover our Master Plan by enabling us to reunite mind, body and spirit, thus becoming closer to our angelic base. From there, every tiny step taken on the path to that plan will bring us happiness that comes from deep within us, through knowing we're fulfilling that plan.

One other thing I'd like to comment on is that, judging by the portraits I'm guided to produce of these angels, they comprise almost always, predominantly, female energy.

This is because female energy is the energy of Home. In this instance, 'home' is the Primal Source, the power behind the universe. ###

Excerpt from *Soul Angels*, published by [Hay House](#)

Do you ever wonder if you might have had a past life, and how it might affect you today?

Do you ever dream that your connections to angels might be even closer than you thought?

This book brings these two concepts together in a dramatic revelation that will forever change the way you see yourself. Take a journey with Jenny Smedley as she explores and explains your past lives and how they contribute to any problems you might have today.

Discover the real you, and be prepared to be surprised and amazed at the wondrous being you'll find. *Soul Angels* delves into angelic realms that you never dreamed existed, and shows you the path to true inner happiness.

An expert on past lives and pets, **Jenny Smedley** is also a renowned spiritual healer, advisor and therapist, appearing in many magazines and TV programmes including GMTV and in Chat's popular past-life column, Dear Madeleine. She lives with her reincarnated dog, KC.

Visit Jenny's website: www.jennysmedley.com/

The Great Balancing Act: Living In and Between Two Worlds

By Guy Finley

I receive many questions concerning how to achieve a proper balance between physical and spiritual longings; how much time should be spent working on one's higher, interior life, versus running around and doing what life demands as a result of being in this world. For those of you who want to learn a little more from a different perspective on this question, here are some thoughts to ponder.

Life, in the broadest sense of it, both spiritually and materially, is an expression of an eternal descending and ascending set of forces: "in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"--the principle of expansion and contraction, light and darkness, ascending and descending archetype ideas then brought into physical creation. The descending forces are what give rise to creation as it "falls" from one level into another, constantly dividing. This is the force of manifestation, and it moves from within to without. It is what essentially "does" in the man, with him just identifying with its movement and--in a matter speaking--choosing what this energy will manifest itself into through whatever his immediate environment and conditioning dictate. This force (in conjunction with unconscious imagination) promises completion through whatever is subjectively created. Of course such "completion" is impossible because the force itself is a divisive one, providing only temporary satisfaction, at best. What this means is that, as a rule, sleeping man is always identified with this exteriorized sense of himself, and has virtually no awareness of his interior life and, accordingly, the ascending force within it. (Think of the prodigal son as an expression of these two forces acting within and upon one being.)

The task of the individual who would awaken is to be present to both of these forces at once; he needs to be aware of his interior life, and its native longing to ascend, to return home; as Whitman would say, "the central urge of every atom to return to its source."

In order to be present in this way -- to this eternal presence that expresses itself through these twin forces -- one's attention must be properly divided between the world of a descending will that always

wants to go--do--pursue, manifest in some way -- and the world within him that is capable of being aware of this movement, and that remains present to itself within itself rather than becoming caught up in the sensation of being identified with some new creation.

So you see it's not a question of doing or not doing, but of placing one's attention and awareness within that presence that doesn't "try" to balance one's life according to some idealized spiritual state; it (this presence) is perfect creative balance itself.

One must work. We are created to create; but when we create for the sake of producing any sense of self-formulated identity, we create in vain and suffer the inevitable consequences of seeing the truth of it.
###

From a Guy Finley blog on www.guyfinleynow.org, 2010

Guy Finley is the best-selling author of *The Secret of Letting Go*, *The Essential Laws of Fearless Living*, and 35 other works that have sold over a million copies in 18 languages worldwide. His work has been featured on hundreds of radio and TV networks including NBC, CBS, ABC, CNN, NPR, and PBS. Guy has spent the last 30 years showing individuals the authentic path to a higher life filled with happiness, success, and true love. Finley lives and teaches in Merlin, Oregon where he is Director of non-profit Life of Learning Foundation.
[Visit the website](#)

It is not in the stars to hold our destiny but in ourselves

Chuck Gallozzi

A 34-year-old Indian man, married and the father of two sons has a couple of questions. Rather than use his real name, I will call him *Bali*, which is an Indian name meaning *Powerful* or *Brave*. He asks about destiny. But before I introduce his question and my answer, let me first define what I mean by destiny and fate.

Both words are commonly used to mean what is unavoidable and predetermined. But my use of the word *destiny* implies the final outcome of our lives, which is not predetermined, but created by us. And by fate, I mean circumstances and events that are beyond our control. For example, even the best of plans can be interrupted by hurricanes, typhoons, earthquakes, raging fires, mud slides, drought, floods, epidemics, war, and other unpredictable events. But what determines our destiny are not those events, but how we choose to act when we face them. Now, let's get to Bali's question:

"I am confused about the relationship between astrology and destiny. Whenever I look at my chart and it predicts a problem, I grow fearful. I don't know how reliable astrology is, but I know sometimes my reading seems to be an accurate description of my circumstances at that time. If there is something I wish to do and my horoscope says I should wait, I become depressed. What should I do?"

Well, Bali, you are afraid that your horoscope *may* be correct, which also means that you suspect it *may* be incorrect. Caught between these two ideas, you are seeking some clarification. Let me start by saying you have good reason to suspect astrology is a poor way to plan your life.

You see, astrology is not a science; it is a business. Daily horoscopes are deliberately worded so they can be interpreted in many ways and apply to most people. So, it is not surprising that, at times, they seemed to apply to your circumstances. Consider this: does a tiger need to check its horoscope before it can become a mighty creature? If it doesn't but you do, that makes the tiger, and every other animal, more powerful than you! Does that make sense?

"But don't the stars exert some influence on us?"

Well, Bali, we are part of the universe and all parts are interconnected. Each part exerts some influence over other parts. But the question shouldn't be, "Do the stars and planets affect our lives?" Rather, the question should be, "How strong an affect do they have?" To answer that question, let me offer an analogy.

Imagine standing at the seashore where endless rows of waves come crashing on the sand and rocks. Imagine also that you throw pebbles into the approaching waves. Will your pebbles impact the waves in any way? Yes, once they strike the surface of a wave they will cause tiny ripples. But those ripples will instantly be washed away and lost by the power of the wave. Can you drive back the waves with your pebbles? Never. Their influence on the waves is imperceptible. Now, the endless row of waves represents your destiny, each row of waves represents your choices and actions, and the pebbles represent the influence of the stars and planets. Enough said?

"Is it good to believe in Astrology?"

It is good to believe in whatever helps us reach our potential and not good to believe in whatever limits our growth. Your question shows that you suspect that our beliefs are choices we make. And your suspicion is correct. We are free to believe that our fate lies in the stars, but such a belief enslaves us. Or we are free to believe that we already have the power to do anything we make up our minds to do. That belief sets us free. No, Bali, it is not the stars that determine our fate, but our beliefs.

You see, Bali, we need not check our horoscope to see if it is the right time to proceed. Rather, we need to rely on our inner resources (planning, resolve, determination, patience, perseverance, trust, and faith). When we do this, we reveal the glory of mankind, which is its ability to create its own destiny. Keep in mind the words of Catherine Booth [1] "We are made for larger ends than Earth can encompass. Oh, let us be true to our exalted destiny."

I am happy to say, Bali is well on his way to becoming a master of his destiny. You see, he was working in the Persian Gulf when an opportunity in India came up and he was debating whether he should take the job or consult his horoscope. After some anguish, he decided to follow his intuition and is now back in India. In this instance, he quit following the stars and became his own star, illuminating his path or destiny. Congratulations, Bali!

Some are in search of their destiny and meet with astrologers. But as they do so, they fail to hear the soft voice of destiny in search of them. That's what intuition is. It is the call of destiny, beckoning you. The only way to find your destiny is to stop searching. Be still and listen for its quiet voice and let it guide you. And that's what Bali did without any help from others. Of course, there is nothing wrong with asking others for advice, but remember, no guru, swami, or leader is wise enough to follow, unless they teach us to rely on our own inner wisdom.

Don't be afraid to listen to your intuition, which is also known as your inner wisdom, or the call of destiny. Rather, heed the suggestion of Elisabeth Kubler-Ross [2], "How do geese know when to fly to the sun? Who tells them the seasons? How do we, humans know when it is time to move on? As with the migrant birds, so surely with us, there is a voice within if only we would listen to it, that tells us certainly when to go forth into the unknown."

What is the role of intuition or destiny's call? It is simply alerting us to choices we can make. For it is the choices we make that are the signposts along the path of our destiny. Read this wonderful description of what we face by Ortega y Gasset [3], " We are not launched into existence like a shot from a gun, with its trajectory absolutely predetermined. The destiny under which we fall when we come into this world ... consists in the exact contrary. Instead of imposing on us one trajectory, it imposes several, and consequently forces us to choose. . . . To live is to feel ourselves fatally obliged to exercise our liberty, to decide what we are going to be in this world. Not for a single moment is our activity of decision allowed to rest. Even when in desperation we abandon ourselves to whatever may happen, we have decided not to decide."

We do not have unlimited freedom to act as we would like to, for life imposes restrictions, or as Dag Hammarskjöld [4] said, "We are not permitted to choose the frame of our destiny. But what we put into it is ours." For example, I am not an Indian, but a Canadian; not a woman, but a man; not young, but old. I have to work within the framework which life imposes on me. But within that framework are innumerable choices that I can make, and my destiny depends on which ones I choose to follow. The same is true for Bali and our readers.

Destiny's Barrier

Even with a complete understanding of the above principles and a good plan, we may find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to fulfill our destiny. For besides the limitations imposed on us by life, there are

any book written by Patrick Fanning or Matthew McKay is worth reading.)

Morty Lefkoe has also developed a powerful method for changing core beliefs. You can learn about it [here](#).

Here is my personal method for changing core beliefs. I like it because it works relatively quickly.

1. Make a list of five changes you wish to make. For example:

- a) I wish to be more confident
- b) I want to boost my self-esteem
- c) I wish to grow more self-reliant
- d) I wish to become more competent
- e) I wish to be proud of myself

2. Prioritize your list, rearranging the five items so that the most important is listed first and the least important, last.

3. Starting with the first item on your list, indicate what steps you can take to reach your goal. For example, there may be books to study or courses to take.

4. Break down the steps you listed into smaller, manageable steps. For example, if you planned to read *Prisoners of Belief: Exposing & Changing Beliefs that Control Your Life*, add 30 minutes a day to your schedule to read the work and digest the material. Another approach would be to read 10 pages a day. As the book has 145 pages, you will be able to finish it in two weeks.

5. While you're doing this, maintain positive expectations. To learn how, [see here](#). Remember, the best way to cultivate H.O.P.E. is by Having Only Positive Expectations.

6. Each day that you work on your project and do your daily tasks, you will be proving to yourself that you have the self-discipline and power to change. This will not go unnoticed by your subconscious. After a couple

of weeks, your old self-limiting belief will start to dissipate and be replaced by a new belief, such as, "Yes, I can!"

7. After completing item #1 on your list, add another item to keep the list at five projects, and follow all seven steps again.

Caveats

1. Consider what James Allen [5] has to say about the power of *action*. "Sow an act, and you reap a habit. Sow a habit and you reap a character. Sow a character and you reap a destiny." Mr. Allen probably borrowed his idea from Tryon Edwards [6] who earlier wrote, "Thoughts lead on to purposes; purposes go forth in action; actions form habits; habits decide character; and character fixes our destiny." Madame Chiang Kai-Shek [7] also spoke about the importance of action: "We write our own destiny; we become what we do."

2. Destiny is not the cause of repeated failures, neglecting to correct our mistakes is. "Our problems are man-made, therefore they may be solved by man. No problem of human destiny is beyond human beings." (John F. Kennedy [8])

3. Don't make the mistake of Aleister Crowley [9] who wrote, "Destiny is an absolutely definite and inexorable ruler. Physical ability and moral determination count for nothing. It is impossible to perform the simplest act when the gods say 'no.' I have no idea how they bring pressure to bear on such occasions; I only know that it is irresistible." Crowley was mistaken because it is not the gods that say no but the subconscious, and as we have learned, we can change our (subconscious) core beliefs.

4. "Ideals are like stars; you will not succeed in touching them with your hands, but like the seafaring man on the desert of waters, you choose them as your guides, and following them you reach your destiny." (Carl Schurz [10])

5. Ignite in your heart the invincible power of commitment and resolve, for as Ella Wheeler Wilcox [11] wrote, "There is no chance, no destiny, no fate, that can circumvent or hinder or control the firm resolve of a determined soul."

In conclusion, Bali, it is not in the stars to hold our destiny but in ourselves. Don't you agree? Thank you for your question and I wish you great success in all your endeavors.

Footnotes (mainly taken from Wikipedia)

[1] Catherine Booth (1829~1890, wife of the founder of The Salvation Army, William Booth and because of her influence, known as the 'Army Mother')

[2] Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, M.D. (1926~2004, Swiss-born psychiatrist, pioneer in Near-death studies, author, and creator of the now famous [Five Stages of Grief](#))

[3] Jose Ortega y Gasset (1883~1955, Spanish philosopher who advocated leadership by an intellectual elite)

[4] Dag Hammarskjöld (1905~1961, Swedish diplomat who greatly extended the influence of the United Nations in peacekeeping matters)

[5] James Allen (1864~1912, British-born American essayist, author, "[As A Man Thinketh](#)")

[6] Tryon Edwards (1809~1894, American theologian)

[7] Madame Chiang Kai-Shek (1898~2003, Wife of Chinese revolutionary leader Chiang Kai-Shek)

[8] John F. Kennedy (1917~1963, 35th American President)

[9] Aleister Crowley (1875~1947, British occultist)

[10] Carl Schurz (1829~1906, German-born American senator)

[11] Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850~1919, American author and poet)

###

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<http://www.personal-development.com/chuck-gallozzi-articles.htm>

Unsolvable Illusions

Beca Lewis

Once in a while it hits me. Life is simple, we make it complicated, and then I forget, and make it complicated again.

But in those brief shining moments it is brilliantly evident that what we know and experience is all perception and that the answer to everything lies in this premise. The problem, of course, is not only do we forget this simple fact, but also that there are those whose desire is to manipulate or confuse us, and we forget that too.

My sister sent me a math riddle that appeared freaky and impossible. I couldn't figure it out until I did what I remind myself to always do, "Shift your perception, and begin with a different premise." When I did that, the answer was obvious. The intention of the riddle was to confuse. It started with a perfectly logical premise and one that was easy to accept. But in that premise there was no answer - ever - because the premise began with an error.

When I shifted my premise, the answer was immediately evident.

The worldview is exactly like that. It begins with a premise that appears perfectly logical. It's a premise that we easily accept. In fact, our five senses tell us that it's true. Within that premise we search and search for answers. We read books, talk to friends, get counseling, let it go, have faith – but none of these methods provide an answer that works for long because they begin with a premise that is an illusion. There will never, ever, be a correct answer to an illusion.

When we begin with the correct premise, the answer is easy.

I was working on some writing that required me to copy what I had written on one piece of paper to another. I copied and pasted and saw nothing. In the past I would have assumed that I didn't copy and paste correctly. I would have spent some time being confused and probably irritated at the problem.

This time I paused. I started with the premise that I had copied and pasted correctly. I highlighted the area on the page that I had pasted into and chose black for the text. “Magically” it appeared. It was always there. It was simply that I had pasted white to white so it was invisible to my eyes.

During a rescue attempt in the first Star Trek Episode, “The Menagerie,” the crew tries to blast through a mountain with their phasers. Nothing happens, so they attempt many other means of rescue without success. Finally, Spock and Captain Kirk realize that the Talosians, the inhabitants of the planet, are masters at creating illusions. Kirk and Spock begin again with the correct premise that their phasers DO work. Without additional effort, the illusion of the untouched mountain dissolves revealing the hole in the mountain that had been there all along.

It's that simple really. The premise determines what we perceive as the outcome. What premise do we begin with when attempting to discover an answer or dissolve a problem? If we begin with the premise that the worldview is correct, and that our senses report the truth, we will never see the Truth and what is already present.

It is a lot less work to begin with the correct premise and let it reveal the answer than it is to try and make something work inside of an illusion.

The great teacher Christ Jesus has told us all, “Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free.” Hum. Doesn't that sound like the idea if we begin with the Truth – the correct premise – that it dissolves the prison of the worldview, without effort?

The effort belongs to the shift of perception. The effort belongs to the letting go of false premises. The effort belongs to giving up personal preferences and ego. Once that is done, the work is over and what already is in abundance is ours to be and enjoy.

Let's celebrate together that the illusion has been revealed and all that is asked of us is to let it go and live in Truth. ###

Sign up for **Beca's** free Shift Ezine and Ecourses here: <http://budurl.com/lwyr>

Succeeding and Surviving in a Stupid World

Steve Wickham

I have a notion that the real advice I could give to a young journalist is simply this: to write an article for the Sporting Times and one for the Church Times and put them in the wrong envelopes... What is really the matter with almost every paper, is that it is much too full of the things suitable to the paper.

~**G.K. Chesterton**, *Autobiography*.

Don't expect to succeed in this life by the conventional way. Don't even expect to succeed in this life by the unconventional way. Success in this life is often more about chance, luck and circumstance than anything else - this is because our worlds are so very often ruled by 'wise' men and women.

That may sound skeptical, but it's often so true.

There is, of course, a purpose served in all this. It's the 'modern' economy. It's how the world goes around - no, not the actual earth, but the interactive nature of life we know now.

Countering Insanity

There is no point actually to countering the popular fashion of the world - the world's way. It is best countered in acceptance, and by acceptance we gain an advantage over those who cannot or will not accept what is quite bleedinly obvious.

Going further in, then, we can establish that this world wants us unstuck and that our only way of overcoming the world - John 16:33-style - is to see this and constantly prepare for it. In this we give ourselves the self-served grace of patient wisdom.

It Comes Down to Motive

Where we want to get to and what we want to do should dictate how we'll 'use' our world for our purposes, for it takes patient cunning and the approaching opportunity to establish ourselves in certain worldly settings.

But do we really want it? Or are we already 'over' that way of influencing our world?

Surrendered to the world or to God - what's it to be?

Motive is important because it demonstrates, at least to ourselves, that our want-of-desire cannot be swayed by the world; that we are not tricked or trapped into thought of coveting anything. We're bought to God and the things of virtue, which are against the stupid world.

Succeeding in this stupid world, then, is as much about re-setting our expectations and living apart from the world as anything. It is certainly also accepting the world for what it is - an enigma.

That it is an enigma is perfectly okay. ###

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Exercise and Learning

By Vreni Gurd

CBC news (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) put out a very interesting story about City Park High School in Saskatoon, that put treadmills and exercise bikes into a math classroom, and before doing any math, the kids strapped on their heart-rate monitors and did 20 minutes of moderate intensity cardiovascular exercise. This is an alternative school for those with learning difficulties, and over half the students have ADHD. They couldn't sit still, many had behavioural problems, and they couldn't learn. Well, the cardio equipment went in the classroom in February, and by June, pretty much all the kids had jumped a full grade in reading, writing and math. After doing the exercise the kids were suddenly able to sit still and focus on what they were learning, and they were able to understand what they were being taught. The exercise altered their brain chemistry enough to make learning possible, AND it greatly improved their behaviour.

With physical education frequently being cut out of curriculums to make time for academics, this should give pause for thought. Taking 20 to 40 minutes a day for sustained physical activity improves learning and grades in academic subjects more than actually using that time for the academic subjects themselves. Sustained aerobic exercise of between 65 to 75% of one's max heart rate wakes up the frontal cortex of the brain, the part that is needed for behavioural control. (To figure out your child's correct heart-rate zone, subtract his/her age from 220, and take 65 to 75% of that to get the target heart beats per minute.) Exercise causes the brain to create more nerve cells (neurogenesis), makes those nerves stronger, and helps them withstand stress, and improves neurotransmitter function, which helps the brain work better. Dr. Ratey, one of the key researchers in this area, noted not only improvements in those with ADHD, but also in those with bipolar disorder and schizophrenia as well.

Alison Cameron, the grade 8 teacher at City Park School, noted that between February and June, the attention span of her students increased from 10 minutes to 3 hours. Many of the kids got off ritalin, and the kids were coming to school every day so she had the opportunity to actually teach them, which also improved learning. The

students reported feeling happier, less angry, and definitely smarter, which improved their confidence levels, and made them realize that they would be capable of succeeding in life if they applied themselves.

In this day and age where we are moving less and less, sitting at the computer more and more, and children are less frequently allowed outside to play on their own, we need to ensure that kids get daily physical education, and beyond that, we need to make sure that every child and teen is actually moving enough during PE. In most PE classes, 80% of the kids are standing around waiting for their turn, or simply trying to avoid participating. It takes at least 20 minutes of sustained activity three times a week to make the difference in behavioural and academic performance, and that should be an important focus of school PE class in my opinion.

We are meant to move, and if we don't we are not as resilient and we can't use our brains maximally. So parents, if you want your kids to be smarter and better behaved and your school does not provide adequate movement time for your kids, perhaps family-based physical activity should become a priority. Creating the exercise habit young will also help them maintain a healthy body weight, and set them up for a life of good health.

If you want to see the original CBC documentary, click here <http://www.cbc.ca/thenational/indepthanalysis/story/2009/10/06/national-braingains.html> . I think it is an amazing, hopeful story.

Vreni Gurd writes the [Wellness Tips](#) blog - your guide to optimal health. Maximize your health and wellbeing through your daily choices by reading these weekly wellness tips. In order to be sure you do not miss any tips, subscribe for free, and get the tips delivered to your e-mail inbox. The easiest way to navigate find specific information is to go to the [Wellness Tips](#) site where the tip titles are listed by category in the left sidebar. Also, most tips have related tips listed at the bottom if you want to learn more about a particular topic.

Energy and Essence

An excerpt from *Restoring the Flow A Primer in Logosynthesis*

By Dr. Willem Lammers & Andrea Fredi

We're a Body

We are a body, a physical body with the needs of the physical world... eating, drinking, belonging, avoiding danger, and desiring to reproduce. Through our senses, we collect information from the environment and react to it. Our body is dedicated to biological survival.

We're a Mind

We also exist as a mind. We can adapt to the environment. We can handle rain and dryness, heat and cold, within limits. We can alter our environment actively. We can define personal and collective goals and devote our energy to achieving them in time and space.

We're More

We are more than body and mind. A soul, a higher self, a true self, an Essence, has always been part of our human experience. We are beings beyond time and space, in a continuous process of development, actively giving form to our world with the help of a creative intention. Essence confers meaning to our life.

Our body and mind are tools to manifest ourselves on this planet. We tend to identify with these instruments, and thus we lose a conscious connection with our Essence. We believe we are our emotions, our suffering, our thoughts, our needs. We get convinced that there is nothing more. Finally, we lose contact with the real and only reason for our existence.

Essence and Flow

When we are in contact with this Essence, our life energy is in flow. Our life becomes a dance. Flow leads to adequate perceptions of the here and now and therewith to adequate reactions of the person.

Disturbances in the Flow Lead to Suffering

The access to the source of our life energy can be interrupted, blocked or limited. When the flow diminishes, life loses meaning and people

suffer. In Logosynthesis, we assume that our life energy can be in flow or stored in energy structures.

Energy Structures

If energy is not in flow, it's still, waiting to be activated. We need a balance between flowing and still energy to be able to orient ourselves in the 3D world. If too much of our life energy is in flow, we're overwhelmed. If too much of our energy is frozen, we cannot act and react adequately in the current environment. Persons and events on our life path can influence this balance.

This way, energy structures can be supportive or limiting. Supportive structures offer a frame of reference, which helps us to cope with daily life on earth. They act as beacons in the sea of impressions and events in daily life. Limiting structures create problems. They don't offer orientation: they generate inadequate reactions.

Structures in Space

In Logosynthesis, we assume that energy structures exist in 3D space, in the same way tables and chairs have a place in a room. We can perceive these subtle energy structures in the same way we perceive a chair or a table with our senses. We can see, hear, sense, smell or even taste these energy structures.

Every person, object or event of our life experience can lead to the creation of an energy structure. The combination of all these structures offers a map to find our way in life. This can be a map with blank areas and wrong routes, or it can be an exact, finely detailed representation of the outside world.

In our experience, energy structures are most influential if they exist in our immediate vicinity, in our personal space.

How Does Logosynthesis Work?

Logosynthesis aims at resolving inadequate energy structures and restoring the flow of life energy, in the following sequence:

- We find blocks in the flow of life energy in the form of disturbing emotions, physical symptoms and limiting thoughts and the behavior resulting from them.
- We identify energy structures in space, which trigger these reactions.
- We apply the power of words to this disturbing frozen world.

The three sentences address:

1. the retrieval of the person's own energy locked in the representation
2. the removal of the energy of other people and objects, which contributed to the construct
3. the energy of the person locked in the reactions to the construct.

If the triggering structures change, the reactions to the structures also change, and the process moves into a next stage. If the distress as a result of the frozen world has been sufficiently reduced, the person can react directly to the present and the Logosynthesis procedure is terminated. Usually, energy blocks consist of very many aspects, in the triggering constructs and in the reactions to them. Resolving them opens options, creates opportunities for change. Continued application of Logosynthesis increases our awareness of Essence and our life purpose - lightly and elegantly. ###

Freely download the eBook: [Restoring the Flow A Primer in Logosynthesis](#)

[Visit the website](#)

Motivation is an Inside Job

By Dr. Alan Zimmerman

"One's dignity may be assaulted, vandalized and cruelly mocked, but it cannot be taken away unless it is surrendered." ~Michael J. Fox, actor

No one is 100% motivated 100% of the time. We all need to be re-inspired and re-motivated once in a while. And there are two ways to get that extra dose of motivation:

One, depend on other people. Other people can certainly help you get the motivation you need. You know from experience that an amazing partner, a supportive family, or an encouraging manager can make you feel better and do more.

Unfortunately, the "other" people in your life will NEVER be able to feed you all the motivation you need. So whether you like it or not, to some extent, motivation is an inside job. YOU have to DO something to get yourself and keep yourself fully motivated.

Here are a few tips to pump up your self-motivation.

1. Read for inspiration.

Read things that will make you a better person and a better professional. And sorry, newspapers and novels don't count in the self-motivation category. Oh you may learn something from a newspaper and you should enjoy a good fiction read once in a while, but they will seldom give you an extra dose of motivation.

Over the years, I've noticed an amazing phenomenon. The most motivated people don't depend on yesterday's motivation for today's challenges. They spend at least 15 minutes a day putting positive, inspiring information into their minds ... because they know what you think about you bring about.

2. Read for education.

Over the years, I've also noticed that leaders are readers. In fact, you can often judge a person's success by the size of his/her library. So spend another 15 minutes a day acquiring new knowledge because it

will make a substantial difference in the results you get. You must never get too busy to get smart.

If you're not already reading for education, start by buying and reading one book a month. Read a book that is related to your professional field or the goals you want to achieve.

And one of the beautiful things about books is you don't have to read the non-fiction book from cover to cover. Simply browse through the "Table of Contents" and select the chapters you're most interested in. Read selectively. Read the best stuff. Read the stuff that will get your mind thinking and your motivational juices flowing.

Just remember: Formal education will help you make you a living, but self-education will help you make you a fortune.

3. Keep a motivation journal.

Note ... journal, not diary. In your journal, record great ideas, inspiring quotes, key insights, important learning's, key phrases, what worked and didn't work, and all kinds of daily observations that are worth remembering. Too often I've had to learn the hard way. I got a great insight, thought I would remember, didn't write it down, and forget it. Then it took me 2 weeks or 2 months or 2 years to come upon that insight once again.

As I tell my audiences, the shortest pencil is better than the longest memory. Write down the good stuff or you may be forced to learn it all over again ... the hard way.

In fact, have some fun with your journal. Write down the humorous lines you hear or read. They'll give you a laugh, and the laugh will add to your overall motivational energy. Here are a few funny lines I came across and put in my journal ... just for the fun of it.

- *I asked God for a bike, but I know God doesn't work that way. So I stole a bike and asked for forgiveness.*
- *I want to die peacefully in my sleep, like my grandfather, not screaming and yelling like the passengers in his car.*

- *Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.*
- *Knowledge is knowing a tomato is a fruit; wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad.*
- *The evening news is where they begin by saying "Good evening" and then proceed to tell you why it isn't.*
- *A bus station is where a bus stops. A train station is where a train stops. On my desk, I have a work station.*
- *How is it one careless match can start a forest fire, but it takes a whole box to start a campfire?*
- *Dolphins are so smart that within a few weeks of captivity, they can train people to stand on the edge of the pool and throw them fish.*
- *I thought I wanted a career ... turns out I just wanted pay checks.*
- *Whenever I fill out an application, in the part that says "In case of an emergency, notify ..." I put "Doctor".*
- *Why does someone believe you when you say there are four billion stars ... but check when you say the paint is wet?*
- *Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street with a bald head and a beer gut and still think they are sexy.*
- *You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.*
- *The voices in my head may not be real, but they have some good ideas!*
- *Always borrow money from a pessimist. He won't expect it back.*
- *Hospitality: making your guests feel like they're at home, even if you wish they were.*
- *Money can't buy happiness, but it sure makes misery easier to live with.*
- *I used to be indecisive; now I'm not sure.*
- *When tempted to fight fire with fire, remember that the Fire Department usually uses water.*
- *To be sure of hitting the target, shoot first and call whatever you hit the target.*
- *Nostalgia isn't what it used to be.*

- *A bus is a vehicle that travels twice as fast when you run after it as it does when you are in it.*

You get the idea. Keep a journal. Put all the good stuff you find in there. And go back and read what you wrote once in a while. You'll be amazed at the wisdom you accumulate and the high it will give you.

4. Compartmentalize your problems.

I've got problems. You've got problems. Everybody's got problems. The difference between the winners and the losers is how they handle those problems.

The losers tend to be consumed by their problems. They think about their financial shortages, their rocky marriage, their friend's illness, their ballistic boss, and all their other problems ... almost constantly. And they often use those problems as an excuse for their lack of motivation or performance.

Not the winners, however. They suck it up. For example, if you were flying to Rome on a Boeing 767, you would expect the pilot to suck it up and do the job he was trained to do ... even if he was going through a rough patch in life. You wouldn't want him to be consumed in worry ... forgetting about his flying responsibilities. Oh sure, he can go back and think about his problems and work on his problems later ... but not when he's on the job. It's what self-directed, self-motivated winners do. They compartmentalize.

Self-motivated winners also know how to tuck their problems away ... temporarily. They put them on hold until they can deal with them efficiently and effectively ... rather than have their problems color every part of every waking moment. They know they can hang their problems on an imaginary "Trouble Tree" and come back to them at a more convenient time.

To become more self-motivated, don't sweat the small stuff. And a lot of it is small stuff. As poet Maya Angelou says, "I've learned that you can tell a lot about a person by the way he/she handles these three things: a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights."

And if it's not small stuff, learn from them. As one wise person observed, "The difficulties in life are put on our path - not to OBSTRUCT - but to INSTRUCT." When you look at that way, you will stay motivated.

5. Let go of what's not working.

Back in the days of Columbus, most everybody thought the world was flat. So the sailors hugged the coastlines so they wouldn't accidentally fall off the edge of the Earth. Of course, their thinking simply kept them scared and demotivated. And they never discovered anything new.

Unfortunately, too many people still act like Columbus' contemporaries. They won't let go of some old system that no longer works or let go of some friendship that is no longer healthy. It just seems easier to keep on with the same old same old ... losing their energy, enthusiasm, and motivation in the process.

Listen to Beryl Pfizer, the filmographer, who says, "You have to be careful about being too careful."

6. Remove negative words from your vocabulary.

What you talk about you tend to bring about. As author Florence Shinn wrote, "The game of life is the game of boomerangs. Our thoughts, deeds and words return to us sooner or later, with astounding accuracy." So be very careful about your choice of words.

Avoid the use of such words as impossible, can't, won't, hopeless, and so forth. As the original Henry Ford put it, "Whether you think you can or think you can't, you're right."

So you're responsible for your own motivation. Sure others can help motivate you. But you're still responsible for your own motivation. It's an inside job, and here are six ways to get the motivation inside you.

Action:

Take the 24-hour word challenge. Try to go 24 hours without uttering a single negative word. It will be difficult, but with practice, you will turn your thinking and your motivation around.

As a best-selling author and Hall of Fame professional speaker, **Dr. Alan Zimmerman** has taught more than one million people in 48 states and 22 countries how to keep a positive attitude on and off the job. In his book, ***PIVOT: How One Turn In Attitude Can Lead To Success***, Dr. Zimmerman outlines the exact steps you must take to get the results you want in any situation. Go to Alan's site for a [Free Sneak Preview](#) .

How to Stay Motivated, All the Time!

By Philip Humbert

The most common problem people talk about when they request coaching is staying motivated. Sometimes they talk about losing focus, being discouraged, having too much to do, or procrastination, but what it boils down to is that they aren't achieving as much as they would like.

We all have things that are important to us. We have goals, a dream, or maybe some obligations we are duty-bound to complete, but we aren't making the progress we would like. Some people work hard for a while, then slack off. Others procrastinate and never get to it. Some don't know how to get started or are too tired.

The central issue is motivation.

The fact is that we do the things we are motivated to do. Ask any teenager how hard they'll work to make the team or get their driver's license. Ask yourself how many all-nighters you put in to complete an important paper in college. Ask yourself about the times you've worked hard to achieve something that simply, absolutely had to get done!

There's a wonderful story about a young man who travelled the world to meet a wise and famous teacher. When they met, the young man pleaded, "Will you teach me how to find wisdom?" Without a word, the guru led the young man to a nearby lake and suddenly pushed his head under water. At first the young man thought it was a joke, but after a few seconds, he began thrashing and fighting desperately for a breath of air. Finally, the guru let him up and calmly said, "When you desire wisdom as badly as you wanted that next breath of air, you will find it."

When we are motivated, nothing can stand in our way!

So, how do we stay motivated? Here are a few keys:

1. Be clear! You can hit almost any target if you define it precisely enough. It's hard to stay motivated for a vague or distant goal. Be

specific. Be precise and concrete. You will be far more motivated to increase sales by 6% than by "trying to sell more."

2. Have an action plan. If you have a map and know the next step, you are much more motivated to do it. "Baby-steps" are easier and safer than "giant leaps." It's relatively hard to stay motivated through the years to put a million dollars in the bank, but it's easy to start by saving \$300 this month. Have a clear, do-able and action-able plan. Then, take steps one after another.

3. Surround yourself with positives. Zig Ziglar made a wonderful observation that "people complain motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does a shower. That's why I recommend both every day." Read and listen to audio programs, talk with exciting people and surround yourself with things that energize you! We live in a bad-news world. It wears everyone down! To counter this, surround yourself (every day!) with things that energize, challenge and excite you. (One more reason I recommend participating in trainings and coaching groups!)

4. The "Breakfast of Champions." With apologies to Wheaties, I encourage you to re-read and re-commit to your most important priorities, goals and plans every single day. Personally, I begin every morning by focusing on my major projects and goals for about 20 minutes. If I don't, the day gets away from me. In the rush of the day, minor distractions will beat strategic action every time. Start every day by reviewing and re-affirming your most important objectives.

5. Have plenty of cheerleaders! I think this may be the most important, easiest, and most-often over-looked. Recruit friends and family to hold you accountable. Teach them how to support and encourage you. Pick their brains for good ideas, and report back to them regularly. Form and use a MasterMind team! With a good team of cheerleaders, you can accomplish anything!

There really is a science--a proven set of principles and reliable steps--to keep yourself motivated and achieve your dreams! To achieve your most important goals, hard work and even self-discipline are not enough! Master the tools that let some people achieve one goal after

another for a lifetime of success, while others work just as hard but get minimal results. Get the info and join us at:

TheNewScienceofSuccess.com

Dr Humbert is a Success Strategist, author and popular speaker. Imagine what's possible! To inquire about having him speak to your group or organization, or to schedule an initial consultation, contact him or visit his site at <http://www.philiphumbert.com/>

The Importance of Motivation

by Kevin Ngo

What is the importance of motivation when it comes to your personal life as well as the workplace? Well, unless if you don't have goals go work on and tasks to complete, motivation is quite worthless. Of course, you and I both know that there are always things to do in life. The biggest challenge that many people have is being able to have enough motivation to do the things they know they should be doing. One fact of life is that most of the things that will give us what we want are the things that we want to do the least. That's probably why most people will never really experience the life that they have always wanted. Let's look at what motivation is and its importance in different situations.

Motivation is basically a feeling of movement. When you are motivated, you want to go from doing one thing to another thing. Most of the time, you are going from doing nothing to doing something. This is the main problem when it comes to achieving your goals. You know you need to take a certain action in order to produce a certain result but what you are currently doing is more pleasurable than taking that action. Let's look at different situations and how a lack of action can lead to negative consequences.

Importance of Motivation in the Workplace

When you don't have the motivation to do your work, you will either eventually get fired or you will not likely get promoted and will stay where you are for a long time. If you are the supervisor or the owner, a lack of motivation throughout your company can create a rather unproductive workplace. This will lead to loss of sales, profits, and market share. In this case, it's important to do what it takes to create an environment where people naturally want to do their work. The importance of employee motivation shouldn't be taken lightly here. The company's survival depends on it.

Importance of Motivation in Business

If hate working for someone else and want to start your own business, that is great. However, as most business owners will find, having your own business will depend way more from you. This can be great if you're highly motivated but if you're not, that can be a bad combination.

Without anyone on your back telling you to do your work and threatening to fire you if you don't, it's easy to just put things off until later. The worse thing that can happen is that you go out of business and if you have invested a lot of money into the business, it can be a tough situation to go through. Business owners normally work 12 to 16 hour days so unless you really hate working for someone else or you really love the business, you may want to think twice about this option. It's not for everyone.

Importance of Motivation in the Classroom

When you have no motivation to study, it can be hard to get the grades you need to accomplish your educational goals. Most students, believe it or not, are capable of doing very well in school despite what their current grades are showing. Most of the time, it's not the lack of ability to learn the material but the lack of interest and motivation to put in the effort to actually do well. If you are the teacher, it's important that you do what you can to teach the material in a way that will interest the students. Even something as boring as history can be taught in a stimulating way.

There's no question about the importance of motivation and how it plays a part in all areas of our lives. We all have dreams and goals that we want to see become a reality. If you had a never-ending stream of motivation, you can literally do anything. The problem is that most people will never put in the effort that is needed to live an extraordinary life. Why? Because it's easier to do nothing than to do something. Go do something!

Visit the website: www.motivational-well-being.com

True Confessions of a Reformed White Knuckler

By Stefanie Miller

These are the true confessions of a reformed white knuckler. I've had to pry my clammy little fingers off of the control I'm trying to maintain over issues that I just basically can do nothing about in the present moment. I have to come clean and take responsibility for it. Though I have been on the spiritual path for many, many years I find it much easier to stay peaceful, trusting, and balanced when things are going smoothly. In recent times things have gotten challenging and I lost faith. I realized in the knick of time that I was allowing my fear, frustration, and lack of faith to frazzle me. I am very grateful that my health scare wound up being just a scare. Seems like everything else dulls in comparison when our health is in question. I was jolted back into the present moment and became really aware of what I was creating. We sure are powerful creators!!

We really do need to surrender to this process. We are undergoing some difficult times and it is forcing us to take stock of what is really important and put things in their proper perspective. We are taking a major inventory of our lives. It is an excellent opportunity to review our priorities and choose what really matters and what is just plain baggage that is weighing us down.

I have my mediation for my loan modification coming up soon. I have gone through this process for over a year now and I have replayed in my mind all the different scenarios, what I will say, what they will say and the outcome. I am worn out and exhausted from thinking about it so much. I have finally taken my white knuckles off of the situation, handed it over to the Universe and am focusing on other things until the day and time arrives for me to resolve it once and for all. Thinking about it is only taking up precious space in my brain and filling it with worry. I've got better things to do with my time!

Occupying our time with things we enjoy shifts the focus from our issues. Now that the weather has changed I am thrilled to be able to take my peaceful evening moonlit strolls with my dogs. It gives me a chance to clear my mind, enjoy the gentle breeze and savor the quiet. Such divine pleasures life offers us!!

We have unconditional, unlimited support from the Universe. I have a strong connection with the angelic realm, especially Archangel Michael. I effortlessly receive guidance and intuition when I want or need it, however when I am overwrought it does not easily come. When we preoccupy ourselves with negative emotions we block our channels. Ironically the guidance we are looking for cannot arrive due to our harried state of being.

Letting go of whatever it is we are desperately trying to hold onto is the first step in achieving a peaceful, balanced, happy disposition. All outcomes occur in divine timing, not necessarily our timing. We are not seeing the big picture! By prying our fingertips off of the obsessive thoughts, compulsive worrying, and fluctuating emotions we can return to a more harmonious state of be-ing.

The ascension process we are undergoing is intense. No doubt about it. Ultimately, we are the creators of our own destiny. What we want to achieve in the future is really about what we are creating now! If I wait to be peaceful when (and I won't say if) my loan modification comes through I will be a bent out of shape mess of a woman and I won't be able to appreciate what I have anyway! There will always be something lurking in the corner needing to be resolved. If we are always focused on the problems we are missing out on the opportunities to enjoy what we have. There is nothing outside of ourselves that can waiver our serenity. We are most certainly in control of that (if nothing else!!)

At one time or another each one of us is faced with a challenge. It is not imposed upon us to weaken us, but in actuality to strengthen our core and show us how brave and fearless we actually are. We are warriors of the light because we bring light to the darkest of situations. We raise our torch and those who are in darkness follow the light of our way. We are the way-show-ers because we have the capacity to face whatever problems come our way and not sacrifice our unwavering spirit.

In the new earth energy by white knuckling it, we are preventing ourselves from being in the divine flow from which all things manifest. The energy is shifting and changing so rapidly that we cannot get so caught up in outcomes. Circumstances and situations that seem

concrete are so fluid that the only thing we can rely on is keeping our thoughts positive and knowing with certainty that what is meant for our highest and greatest good will prevail.

So, I reformed my ways. I have truly let go and breathe through any fears or worries that may arise. I know, with certainty in my heart, that all is as it is meant to be. I have relinquished control and follow the flow of energy.

Prayer

Dear God,

I release the control I thought I had over the current issues I am facing. I hand over to you both the problem and the solution. I ask that you pave the way for me. I choose peace over worry; happiness over sorrow; faith over fear. I do not allow things outside of myself to waiver my serenity. I am a sovereign being that is alignment with my divine plan. I place my trust in You. I place my thoughts and emotions on my many blessings. Thank you for your unconditional support and guidance. ###

Stefanie Miller is a teacher, energy healer, spiritual counselor and an intuitive, channeled writer. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Education and has taught elementary school for over 16 years. Stefanie has been assisting individuals on their spiritual path since 1998. Facilitating private healing sessions, workshops and through her channeled writing, Stefanie guides individuals toward achieving self mastery by connecting with their Higher Self and Source through a heart centered focus. Visit her site, <http://www.amagicalworld.com>

Do You Focus on the Opposite of What You Desire?

By Joyce Shafer

Focusing on the opposite of what you desire is like aiming at a tree rather than at the target then feeling frustrated that you did not hit the bulls-eye. You know, we all do this at times.

How often we say we desire something then put a great many of our thoughts on what is opposite of what will help us achieve, attain, accomplish, allow, or open to receive it more effortlessly.

I wrote receive it more effortlessly because we create quite a struggle for ourselves when our repetitive thoughts and feelings are aimed at what we do not want rather than on what we desire. Ultimately, what we desire (I know this is repetition) is the feeling we expect to have when we have what we desire. We must aim at and hit the desired feeling first so that everything that comes after the feeling connects us with our desired outcome. Understand that as your ultimate desire is a specific feeling, you want to allow leeway in how what you say you want shows up because it may not be exactly what you imagined, but something even better.

Mother Teresa understood this concept (truth) when she said she would not march against war, but would march FOR peace. Esther Hicks said that when you say NO! to something, it is important that you realize this is the same as saying yes to more of it because it is where your attention is more strongly placed. So, what can you or should you do about all those negative, opposite thoughts that enter your mind?

You would make yourself crazy trying to control the tens of thousands of thoughts that pop into your mind each day. Thoughts happen . . . because you are always processing a lot of information, old and new. It is what you choose to do with or about any unsupportive thoughts after they happen that is important. And, how you start your day contributes to how you manage yourself the rest of the day.

A while back I noticed an odd habit each morning once I got moving: my first thoughts of the day were not positive; they were complaints,

concerns, fears, and mostly focused on what I did not like or want any more of, often some of the same old stuff morning after morning. All such thoughts were opposite of what I desired. Of course, this got my attention.

I understand how Law of Attraction works, and that what I think leads to what I feel, and what I feel influences my choice of words and actions or non-actions, which influence my results. Understanding these truths is one thing; putting them into practice is another.

Allowing negative thoughts to continue means I choose to focus on the opposite of what I desire: good feelings (feeling enthused about my day and my life) and more positive experiences during the day. Also, best if we are realistic and recognize that you and I are not required to always be in Super Positive Land in order to move forward on desired outcomes. We will enjoy ourselves more if we are, but it is not required in every moment, in order to take action that will lead us to our goals.

Focus on what gets us to our goals IS required (aim at the bulls-eye instead of something to the left or behind you). Part of what leads to negativity and frustration is that we are not hitting our desired goals or hitting them as easily as we would like. Increase your odds of their attainment, move closer to them, and you start to feel lighter and more enthusiastic to go for more.

So, what did I do about my morning tendency toward negativity? I decided to choose my thoughts before I get out of bed each morning. The thoughts I have chosen are ones of appreciation, genuine thankfulness for a new day, new opportunities, new things to learn, and the blessings that I have in my life and those on their way to me. And if a negative thought tries to wiggle its way in, I remind myself of what I truly desire and move into that feeling space (as many times as this takes). Opposing thoughts cannot occupy the same space. One of them has to win. I CHOOSE which one I want to win.

Nor do I try to fool myself into believing I will never have negative thoughts (fears, concerns, criticisms) because I know that is unrealistic, and believing I have to be that way all the time will set me up to self-

criticize. Knowing I can shift such thoughts if I choose to is empowering. Actually doing it is personal power in action.

What are some of the ways we focus on the opposite of what is desired?

- This is too difficult vs. How can I make this more effortless?
- I am not happy with my bank balance vs. How can I deeply feel and appreciate the true abundance in my life so I stand in that vibrational frequency, which will open me to ways to improve this and to receive even more abundance?
- I lack what it takes to succeed vs. What can I do to start from where I am and learn and grow?
- I am fearful about (XYZ) vs. What can I do to allow and expand trust in myself and especially in Source?

Do you desire more abundance but constantly go over a mental list of what you feel is lacking in your life, or criticize or envy those who have what you desire?

Do you want a better relationship but consistently focus on what you think is wrong with your partner rather than what you appreciate about him or her?

Do you wish your relationship with your children (or anyone) was better, but more often than not you focus on catching them doing something wrong rather than doing something right?

Do the majority of your thoughts (and actions) lead you to what will help you attain or accomplish your desired outcomes?

Keep in mind that it is not about never having negative thoughts . . . you will; it is about making the choice to refocus yourself when they happen. Do this often enough and it becomes a natural part of you.

You are what you practice. ###
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Shift self-sabotaging behaviors & discover your authentic self through Your Personality Blueprint with Joyce Shafer

(jls1422@yahoo.com), You Are More! Empowerment Coach, author of **I Don't Want to be Your Guru, but I Have Something to Say** & other books/ebooks. Articles & Extras in her free weekly newsletter; more about **Your Personality Blueprint** profiles & coaching; get **How to Have What You REALLY Want** free when you subscribe at <http://stateofappreciation.webs.com>

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Are Your Habits Helping or Hindering?

By Margie Worrell

First we make our habits, and then our habits make us.

Every morning I start my day with a big cup of Earl Grey tea, milk and two sugars. It's become a well-worn ritual that dates back to my days in high school. And while it may not be the most ideal kick-start to my day, it works for me.

So too does my habit of pouring myself a glass of wine most evenings around dinner time. It may not be the most ideal wind-down routine to my day but again, it works for me.

There's nothing really wrong or right about either of these habits. They are, after all, just habits.

But it's amazing how our habits can sneak up on us. And unsettling how easily we can fall victim to habits that we would never consciously choose to have. Like my other habit of checking my Blackberry too often. Yes, even at traffic lights. Only red ones. These default patterns of behavior, repeated again and again, form a well-worn groove. And by the time we've realized they have taken residence in our lives, they can be like a squatter in an abandoned building. Obstinate about moving on out.

While it's one of life's cruelties that bad habits are easier to acquire and harder to ditch than good ones, it's fallacy to think that you can't change your habits. Of course it might be really difficult to quit smoking, running habitually late, pressing your foot too hard on the accelerator, drinking too much caffeine, pressing the snooze button until the last possible moment or finishing other people's sentences, but that doesn't mean you can't. Research tells us that our brains are pliable and that we can develop new ways of thinking and behaving right up to the end of our lives. This innate neuro-plasticity means that you are never too old to change old habits. Believing that you can do that is the first, and most crucial, step in the process. (For more on neural-plasticity I highly recommend *The Brain That Changes Itself: Stories of Personal Triumph*

from the *Frontiers of Brain Science* (James H. Silberman Books) by Dr. Norman Doidge)

Watch your thoughts, *for they become words.*

Watch your words, *for they become actions.*

Watch your actions, *for they become habits.*

Watch your habits, *for they become character.*

Watch your character, *for it becomes your destiny.*

Think about the most successful people around you and you will find they are generally very intentional about what they do (and don't do) and very thoughtful about why they do it. They know that who they are is what they repeatedly do. Of course, that's not to say they mightn't have acquired some 'not-so-good' habits but that they have even more great ones. To quote Benjamin Franklin: "Your net worth to the world is usually determined by what remains after your bad habits are subtracted from your good ones." Certainly those people I admire most have well-entrenched habits (practices and rituals) that help keep them mentally focused, emotionally resilient, physically fit and spiritually centered.

My parents have a daily ritual of a morning cup of tea in bed (hmmm... maybe it's genetic?) followed by reading from a prayer book and then praying together which includes naming each of their children and grandchildren. They've done it for years and every time I go home to stay with them (as I recently did), I find the familiarity of this morning ritual inspiring. I also love knowing that over 10,000 miles away on the other side of the world on a small farm in Australia my mum and dad are praying for me, my husband and four children. Who wouldn't, right? (Here's a picture of me with my parents toasting marshmallows around a bonfire taken while back in Australia in August.)

Of course not all habits and rituals are about outward action (or lack thereof in the case of habitual procrastinators.) We can also develop habitual ways of thinking and processing our experiences in life that have a huge impact on our sense of well-being, relationships and experience of being alive. Some people have a habit of judging everyone around them very negatively. Others have habits of telling themselves that they are worthless, stupid or doomed to fail. Just

yesterday I met a beautiful young woman who told me that she feels very unattractive and has developed a habit of assuming that people will think she is overweight. Having had an eating disorder in my teens and early 20s I know how rapidly adolescent self-consciousness can spiral into self-destructive habits of thought and eating behavior.

So I invite you to ask yourself these two questions. Honestly. And reflect on whether the habits they identify are one's that could do with a little (or lot) attention...

1. What do you repeatedly do, or fail to do, that doesn't enhance your quality of life or does you an outright disservice?
2. What do you repeatedly tell yourself that may be keeping you stuck, undermining your efforts to change those aspects of your life that aren't as you'd like?

As I wrote in *Find Your Courage: 12 Acts for Becoming Fearless at Work and in Life*, people who often find themselves in a rut in any area of their life, who keep failing to achieve the result they'd like (whether in their relationships, fitness or finances) have developed habits in mind and behavior that are contributing to their circumstances. The quality of your experience of life is determined by the quality of your thinking.

In his book *Learned Optimism: How to Change Your Mind and Your Life*, Martin Seligman tells us that we can actually develop the habit of seeing the world through a more positive and optimistic lens. Because our thoughts determine our behavior, doing so leads us to taking actions that create new opportunities, forge new relationships and produce new (and improved!) results. The good news for you (and me!) is that while our bad habits may have shaped our lives in ways we don't always like, we can, with courage and commitment, reshape our thinking and the behavior it directs in profound and positive ways.

Below are ten steps you can take to changing a habit from one that hinders to one that helps. But don't just read it online, consider printing out a hard copy of these 10 tips so that you can refer to it again and

again as you move forward in reshaping your habits and, with them, your life.

Ten Keys to Changing a Habit

1. Start small. Changing habits can be hard. Trying to change more than one habit at once or make too big a change at once sets you up to fail. Not good. So do it one step, one habit, at a time. For instance, if you want to get fit, start with a 15 minute walk three days a week. Make it doable and then ramp up as you go along.

2. Don't just think it, *INK IT!* Simply saying to yourself that you are going to change a habit is not sufficient. You must write it down, on paper (with a non-erasable pen!). Make sure you include a) what specific habit you're going to change, b) your reason for making the change (it needs to be compelling), and c) your plan for making the change (more to follow below).

3. Set a 30-day challenge. How long it takes to change a habit depends on what the habit is and who you are. It takes a solid 30 days to develop a new habit (and lose an old one), longer again to have it become second nature. But start with 30 days and put a chart somewhere highly visible to track your progress. New habits take time to grow from cobwebs to cables.

4. Don't start right away. In your plan, write down a start date. Maybe a week or two from the date you start writing your plan. When you start right away (like the moment you finish reading this list), you are not giving the plan the seriousness it deserves. That said, don't delay too long. Habits are harder to dislodge the longer they're left.

5. Identify your triggers. What situations trigger your current habit? Most habits have multiple triggers (from going to a bar to attending a stressful meeting) so you must prepare for them in advance. Write down how you plan to handle them including a positive habit you're going to do instead. These could be going for a walk when you feel the urge to open the pantry door, meditating, deep breathing, de-cluttering, drinking a glass of water as you walk in the door at night (rather than reach for a beer), and the list goes on and on.

Likewise, try to avoid situations where you normally do your old habit, at least for awhile, to make it a bit easier on yourself. If going out to a bar is a trigger to smoke, avoid bars for a while.

6. Design your environment. When you surround yourself with people who believe in you, it makes success easier to achieve. Who will you turn to when you have a strong urge to return to the habitual behavior? Write these people into your plan and then ask for their support. Beyond those you already know, consider joining a support group or online forum. The more people who know about what you are doing, the more who can encourage you and hold you accountable. Likewise, be wary of those people around you who may feel threatened by you wanting to change your habit and take control of your life. Let them know that you need their support, not their cynicism. Tell them if they can't support you then you would prefer not to spend time with them. Be deliberate about the people you spend time with and know that sometimes you need to let go of old friends in order to grow.

7. Tune in to your self talk. You talk to yourself, in your head, all the time -- but you may not be aware of these thoughts. Time to tune in! Thoughts like "I can't do this. It's too difficult. This habit's really not that bad" have the potential to derail your efforts. So it's crucial to notice when you're having them, and then remind yourself that they don't represent the part of you that yearns for change. When you catch yourself midstream in a negative thought, consciously replace it with a positive empowering one. "I can do this. My persistence will pay off. I am replacing this habit that hurts me with one that helps me." Just as walking once along the earth doesn't create a path, neither will once replacing a negative thought with a positive one permanently change your thinking. You have to stick at it and repeat those new thoughts again and again and again until a new path is forged and a new habit created.

8. Harness the power of vision. Yes, it may seem new age-y but visualization is powerful. I invite you to let go any habitual cynicism and experiment with it with an open mind. In your mind's eye create a vivid picture of yourself living with the new habits you are creating. Visualize doing your new habit after each trigger, overcoming urges, and what it

will look like when you're done. How are you feeling? How are you looking? How is life working better for you because of it? Utilize all of your senses to really embody that new you.

9. Reward yourself. Regularly. You might see these as bribes, but they are actually what cognitive psychologists would call 'positive reinforcers.' Incorporate them into your plan, along with the milestones at which you'll receive them.

10. Cut yourself slack. You are not perfect. No one is. So it's very possible that there will be times when you don't keep your resolve and you slip back into old ways of thinking and doing. Don't beat yourself up when this happens. Rather forgive yourself for being human, figure out what went amiss, plan for it in the future and then get back on your horse! Don't give feelings of failure and guilt the power to stop you. Sometimes two steps forward, one step back. Such is life. Every step - even backward ones - provides an opportunity to learn more about yourself, to dig deeper into yourself and to step closer toward the full quota of the person you aspire to be. What matters most is not how fast you are moving, but the direction you are moving in... toward a happier and healthier you.

Margie Warrell is an internationally Certified Professional & Life Coach, acclaimed Speaker and Best Selling Author who helps people Think Bigger & Live Bolder to achieve outstanding success in all areas of their life. To learn more about her award winning book *Find Your Courage* (McGraw-Hill), a range of powerful programs, and to receive her free monthly eNewsletter please visit [Margie Warrell.com](http://MargieWarrell.com)

100 Words, David Roth

Who Is David Roth?

Singer, songwriter, recording artist, and community builder, David Roth strikes many chords, hearts, and minds with his unique songs, moving stories, offbeat observations, and powerful singing and subject matter. David has taken his music, experience, and expertise to a wide variety of venues in this and other countries over the last two decades, and his work has found its way to Carnegie Hall; the United Nations; several Chicken Soup for the Soul books; Peter, Paul and Mary concerts; NASA's Goddard Space Center; and ten recordings on the Wind River and Stockfish labels. Lately David has been teaching singing, songwriting, and performance at music camps across North America, helping people of all ages and levels meaningfully reconnect with music in their lives.

www.davidrothmusic.com

Five books that David still enjoys reading:

Autobiography of a Yogi, Paramahansa Yogananda
Three Cups of Tea, Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin
A Soprano on Her Head, Eloise Ristad
Talking on the Water, Jonathan White
Songwriters on Songwriting, Paul Zollo

Insight by David Roth

Reuse bags everywhere you go. Eat less meat. Grow something edible in your yard. Buy organic. Buy local. Walk, hike, jog, bike, skate, ski, roll, float, carpool, use public transportation, and less car whenever possible. Recycle everything you can, even things you never thought of recycling before. Support small businesses. Sing every day, especially if you think you can't. Exercise. Get enough sleep. Drink lots of water. Less TV. Read. Know your neighbors. When you disagree with someone, entertain their point of view for a few moments. Use words carefully. Listen to your body. Be kind. Volunteer. Encourage. Give thanks.

From the Shelf

Peace from Broken Pieces

How to Get Through What You're Going Through

By Iyanla Vanzant

New York Times best-selling author Iyanla Vanzant recounts the last decade of her life and the spiritual lessons learned—from the price of success during her meteoric rise as a TV celebrity on Oprah, the *Iyanla* TV show (produced by Barbara Walters), to the dissolution of her marriage and her daughter's 15 months of illness and death on Christmas day. Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, Iyanla shares why everything we need to learn is reflected in our relationships and the strength and wisdom she has gained by supporting others in their journeys to make sense out of the puzzle pieces of their lives.

Iyanla Vanzant is the founder and executive director of Inner Visions International and the Inner Visions Institute for Spiritual Development. The author of five *New York Times* bestsellers and the Inner Visions CD Series—and the former host of the television series *Iyanla* and co-host of the NBC daytime reality show *Starting Over*.

Get Your Copy

Part 9. Using Inner Guidance to Set and Reach Your Goals!

Pam Garcy

It is time to set some goals using your inner guidance!

How can you set effective goals?

First, identify what you want using your inner guidance. Take some slow deep breaths and approach this playfully.

Now, without pausing to think too much, simply fill in the following sentence stems with the first thoughts that come to mind:

I want _____

Now, you know what you want or what is lacking! That's a pretty important place to start, isn't it?

What do you think you would need to do in order to get what you want?
Ask yourself the following question: What do I need to do to get
_____?

Once you know what you would need to do, then take the following steps

Make sure the goal is about YOU. Don't make a goal for someone else-- just because the word "I" is in your sentence doesn't mean that you're focusing on what is in your control. So, be careful with this part. For example, sometimes people say, "I'm going to make him/her love me." Other people are not in your control, though you may sometimes influence them. Instead, pick a goal that is ABOUT YOU such as, "I'm going to take college classes and get my degree," "I'm going to lose 5 pounds," or "I'm going to make 3 new friends this year."

Write the rough draft of your goal here: _____

The more specific your goal is, the easier it is to tell whether or not you've reached it. Being able to tell that you've reached a goal will give you more momentum. So, get specific! Rather than saying, "I want more money," revise it to say, "I want to earn \$9,000 more by December of this year." Remember to specify a timeframe and an amount. Though the timeframe isn't mandatory, it might help you to focus more intently upon your goal.

Re-write your goal so it is even more specific: _____

It is very helpful to COMMIT 100% to reaching your goal. If you are not 100% committed to taking the needed actions, then you are likely to waffle back and forth. This wavering might lead you to give up too early in the process. Approaching your goal without commitment can lead you to feel uncertain, anxious and confused. Once you make the decision to simply do it, it is usually much easier to face the road-bumps. Can you recall something that you committed yourself to? Somehow, you found the way to take the action, because you simply made a firm, unshakeable decision to do your best.

Let me be clear about something here. You are committing to TAKING THE ACTIONS toward the outcome. This is the part that is in your control. There are obviously factors that are beyond your control. Because of this, it is a given that you will likely learn lessons and modify your plans. For example, someone might commit to getting their college degree from a specific school. This would involve committing to taking the needed classes from that school. However, if the school is washed away in a flood, then the person would probably revise the plan as needed. Hopefully, the goal could continue elsewhere as circumstances permit. So, I'm asking you to commit to the required behaviors, even as this requires you to become flexible. In easy language, "Do your best and forgive yourself for taking however long you take."

Now it is time to use your inner guidance to give you even greater momentum. Relax and, in your mind's eye, simply allow any images of yourself reaching your goal to come to you. Perhaps you'll notice who will be there or how your face will look. Perhaps you'll notice your body posture or your joy. Observe what you be look like upon reaching your goal, as though you are watching the dramatic ending of a great film. Ask yourself, "How will I feel when I reach my goal?" Note any feelings that emerge.

Now, write a time-line. At the end of the line (on the far right) write your goal. Like this:

Me now

Me reaching my goal

You are going to fill in each step toward your goal--but here's a cool trick, you're going to fill it in going backward. Ask yourself, "What behaviors might I have done right before I met my goal?" Write these down. Then ask again, "What would I have done right before that?" Continue to ask yourself this question, working backwards until you get to the point where you are now. At each point, write down the behaviors you "took" to get to the goal, as though the goal were already met.

You've essentially broken down the goal into small, manageable steps. This is called chunking. It is easier to reach mini-goals than big giant goals. Remember, if the mini-goals all point toward the endpoint of you reaching the big giant goal, you'll probably be more likely to reach the giant goal!

If you notice that your plan isn't working, talk with others and revise your plan. You can add newly acquired behaviors into your timeline as needed.

Concentrate on taking a step every day--when you feel uncertain, turn inward and ask yourself questions beginning with how or what (How can I enjoy this more? What is the most important step for me to take today?)

Reward yourself along the way--figure out what would be enough a reward to help you to desire to take action

Keep a positive attitude by noting all that you are learning and becoming along the way. Some of my buddies keep a Journal of Successes. Basically this will help you to keep taking action daily.

Take off one day a week to relax. This is sometimes a good day to read through your successes. Turn toward your inner guidance when you are very relaxed. Ask yourself, "What can I learn from this past week?" Another good question to ask is, "How can I improve during the upcoming week?" Write down your answers in your journal.

Keep going until you meet the goal! Now it is time to celebrate and share the joy of your success with others!

Remember this: The process is as important as the outcome. You will learn valuable lessons on the way to reaching your goal. These lessons can and will probably stretch you to become more of yourself. So, welcome growth, stretching and challenge....they lead to mastery!

Let me know what goals you reach using your inner guidance!

REMEMBER: *This is a process. Keep going to see ongoing results!*

Next issue: Part 10

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A Course In Miracles

Lesson 25

I do not know what anything is for.

Purpose is meaning. Today's idea explains why nothing you see means anything. You do not know what it is for. Therefore, it is meaningless to you. Everything is for your own best interests. That is what it is for; that is its purpose; that is what it means. It is in recognizing this that your goals become unified. It is in recognizing this that what you see is given meaning.

You perceive the world and everything in it as meaningful in terms of ego goals. These goals have nothing to do with your own best interests, because the ego is not you. This false identification makes you incapable of understanding what anything is for. As a result, you are bound to misuse it. When you believe this, you will try to withdraw the goals you have assigned to the world, instead of attempting to reinforce them.

Another way of describing the goals you now perceive is to say that they are all concerned with "personal" interests. Since you have no personal interests, your goals are really concerned with nothing. In cherishing them, therefore, you have no goals at all. And thus you do not know what anything is for.

Before you can make any sense out of the exercises for today, one more thought is necessary. At the most superficial levels, you do recognize purpose. Yet purpose cannot be understood at these levels. For example, you do understand that a telephone is for the purpose of talking to someone who is not physically in your immediate vicinity. What you do not understand is what you want to reach him for. And it is this that makes your contact with him meaningful or not.

It is crucial to your learning to be willing to give up the goals you have established for everything. The recognition that they are meaningless, rather than "good" or "bad," is the only way to accomplish this. The idea for today is a step in this direction.

Six practice periods, each of two-minutes duration, are required. Each practice period should begin with a slow repetition of the idea for today, followed by looking about you and letting your glance rest on whatever happens to catch your eye, near or far, "important" or "unimportant," "human" or "nonhuman." With your eyes resting on each subject you so select, say, for example:

*I do not know what this chair is for.
I do not know what this pencil is for.
I do not know what this hand is for.*

Say this quite slowly, without shifting your eyes from the subject until you have completed the statement about it. Then move on to the next subject, and apply today's idea as before.

Commentary By Allen Watson

Have you noticed how the pace of recommended practice is accelerating? Yesterday we moved from five one-minute periods to five two-minute periods; today we increase to six two-minute periods. How many of us are making a serious effort to follow these instructions? Remember how the introduction said that we aren't asked to believe the ideas, accept them, or welcome them; even active resistance is okay. All that is asked is that we "use them", to "apply the ideas as you are directed to do". Nothing but that is required to make them effective. But applying them as directed *is* required, if we want them to have effect in our lives.

We don't know what anything is for. The obvious question is: "What is it for?" This lesson answers the question. "Everything is for your own best interests". Obviously that relates to yesterday's lesson, "I do not perceive my own best interests." What is for my best interests? Everything.

We don't know that and we certainly don't believe it. We evaluate everything "in terms of ego goals", and since "the ego is not you", that cannot give us any idea of what our best interests are. We are picking

and choosing the things that support our ego, which is not our Self, and therefore, clearly, we are actually undermining our true Self. (The statement that "the ego is not you" is particularly important; it isn't something we would realize without being told.)

We look at the world from the ego perspective and we literally "assign" purposes to things, purposes that will support our ego. When things don't live up to our expectations, we get upset. All our goals involve "personal" interests. Yet, "Since you have no personal interests, your goals are really concerned with nothing". We don't really have personal interests because the "person" we think of when we say those words isn't real. We have no real goals that we do not share in common with all living things, because all living things are connected, and the sharing is what makes the goals real. Shared goals recognize the reality of who we are. Ego goals do not. This is why we are extremely confused about what things are for.

The lesson points out that, on a superficial level, we do know what things are for; we know a telephone is for talking to someone not physically present. "Yet purpose cannot be understood at these levels". For instance, we don't understand why we want to reach someone by phone.

We may think we understand. You might be calling the store to order a book. But why do you want the book? Why call now, at precisely this moment? There is a deeper purpose in everything that we do not understand, nor can we understand it as long as we think our conscious goals are the real ones. We have "to be willing to give up the goals [we] have established for everything".

The entire foundation of our judgment is rotten because it rests on the idea that there are "things" outside of us that differ from us. There is nothing outside of us; everything is part of us. As long as we are coming from that false premise, our goals will be skewed and our judgments will be faulty.

I find it very helpful to remember that I don't know what anything means and I don't know what it is for. A phone call may bring "bad news," but I

can say, "I do not know what this phone call is for; I do not know what this situation is for, and therefore I cannot judge it."

The Course insists on our total ignorance. "The confusion between your real creation and what you have made of yourself is so profound that it has become literally impossible for you to know anything". That's pretty definite, isn't it? "Literally impossible." This isn't any figure of speech. Obviously, if you literally know nothing, judgment is impossible.

Because we've confused ourselves with our egos, we can't know anything. Our belief in our identity as separate beings, located in bodies, has become an unquestioned core belief behind our every thought. We evaluate everything in terms of ego goals. Before we even begin to evaluate what anything means we have presupposed that, whatever it is and whatever it means, it is not us; it is *other*. From that premise it is literally impossible to know or understand anything because it is not *other*. It is part of us.

A very young baby in its crib goes through a process of learning that its foot or hand is part of itself. To begin with, the baby does not know that. You can watch the baby, sometimes, treating the foot as if it were a foreign object.

We are all still infants in this sense because we don't recognize parts of ourselves when we see them; we think they are something else. Because we think they are something else, we are unable to form judgments that make any sense. Our judgments are not simply exaggerated or inaccurate, they are so wide of the mark they're ludicrous.

Let us remember not our own ideas of what the world is for. We do not know.

If we don't know what anything is for, we can't judge it! We can't evaluate whether or not it is fulfilling its purpose because we don't know what its purpose is.

We aren't being asked to acquire all this knowledge we lack; we are asked to become still and to remember how much we don't know. The Text tells us that there is no statement that the world is more afraid to hear than this:

I do not know the thing I am, and therefore do not know what I am doing, where I am, or how to look upon the world or on myself.

It goes on to say that learning this is the birth of salvation. This is where learning starts: admitting how incapable of judging we are. All of these things we don't know! Recognizing our ignorance is the birth of salvation because, until we admit we don't know, we won't ask for help. As long as we think we know, we block true knowing.

Little children recognize that they do not understand what they perceive, and so they ask what it means. Do not make the mistake of believing that you understand what you perceive, for its meaning is lost to you....Yet while you think you know its meaning, you will see no need to ask it of Him.

You do not know the meaning of anything you perceive. Not one thought you hold is wholly true. The recognition of this is your firm beginning.