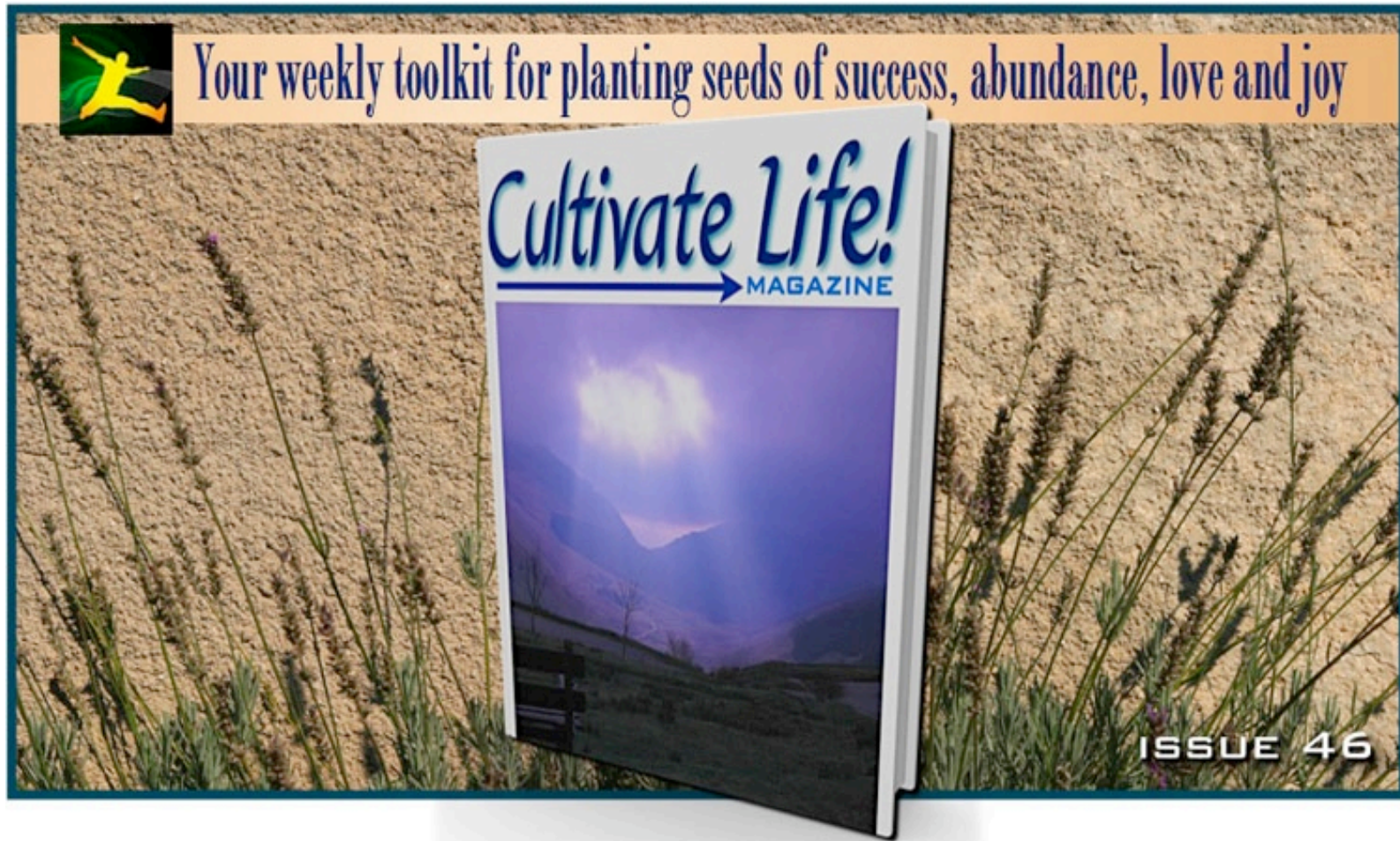


This is a 'text only' version of *Cultivate Life! Magazine*
For the full *Cultivate Life! Magazine* experience in html format go to www.trans4mind.com



Cultivate Life! magazine

The opinions expressed in any articles in this publication are those of the individual authors and may not necessarily be shared by the publishers of *Cultivate Life! magazine*.

Any financial or health advice given in *Cultivate Life! Magazine* may not be right for your particular case and you should seek your own profession opinion before acting on said advice.

Copyright © — The publisher, authors and contributors reserve full copyright of their work as featured in *Cultivate Life! magazine*.

No part of this publication may be copied or otherwise reproduced in any form or by any means without the written permission of the publisher.



Cultivate Life! magazine
is published every week

www.trans4mind.com

Trans4mind

Editors: Greg Willson of No Limits for Me and Peter Shepherd of Trans4mind

CONTENTS:

Heart to Heart Coaching:

Coach Doris Jeanette, replies to the question: How can I deal with being hurt constantly by my girlfriend? How do I get out of this emotional roller coaster ride?

Features:

Ewa Schwarz, Evaluation: How Do You Pass The Test of Self Love?

Dominik Lipinski, Love Yourself First

Cultivate Life Weekly Writers:

Guy Finley, Shatter the Suffering Born of Judging Others

Chuck Gallozzi, A Man Can Stand a Lot as Long as He Can Stand Himself

Beca Lewis, It Only Takes One

Steve Wickham, Why Age Has Nothing To Do With Respect

Cultivate Health:

Bruce Kimball, Newsflash: Starving Won't Work!

Elizabeth Rose, What Is Your Purpose? Use Meditation To Find Out Who You Are

Cultivate Meaning:

Maurine Patten, Create A Meaningful Life

Sushil Baboo, Our Purpose, Our Ideals – A Look at Life's Meanings

Cultivate Life Extras:

from, **Management**, How to Build Team Spirit

Debbie Pincus, Adult Children Living at Home? 9 Rules to Help You Maintain Sanity

Alan Zimmerman, Unleash the Power of Positive Recognition

Steven Burns, The Myth of Perfection

Cultivate Life Partworks:

Pam Garcy, Part 21— The Hidden Benefits of Gratitude

A Course In Miracles, Lesson 37 plus Commentary by **Allen Watson**

Heart to Heart Coaching:

Coach Doris Jeanette, replies to the question: How can I deal with being hurt constantly by my girlfriend? How do I get out of this emotional roller coaster ride?

This week I am going to answer two people's questions at once. I am going to address the common thread - emotions...

Questioner 1

Philosophy: deeply religious - Indian - Hindu.

Hopes and aspirations: To be the best in whatever I do-be it a simple household task or work related.

Question: I have been married for 7 years. Until now I was a very happy go lucky character - pleased with my job, house, my fitness. All of a sudden I see around me everyone has a family, kids, life - while mine seems so empty. My spouse and I never had much of physical relation. Now I feel something terribly amiss in my life. Why didn't I feel like nesting before? Am I abnormal? Women after marriage think of kids, family, etc. I never felt that way. Why now? Will having a family settle me? Also I suffer from deep emotional bruises - whatever anyone says stays in my mind, replaying it constantly and hurting me. How do I get out of this emotional roller coaster ride?

Questioner 2

Philosophy: For me life is like a journey, where you don't know what will be next? having lots of different types of feelings and thoughts with different types of situations. But it depends on us that how we handle all these. Hindu.

Hopes and aspirations: "Believe"... Believe in God, Devine souls, that they will help me. And some where deep in me, my heart. They all are my hopes or aspirations.

Question: My girlfriend usually talks to me about her ex-boyfriend. Shares her all feelings that she had and somewhere inside her, still having some a parts of it. But it didn't affect me; instead I used to tell her that she must share her sorrow, pain, etc to me. And she did so, she frankly tells me about their past time and I never interrupt or ignore when she praises or admires him. But now when she told me that she is

having a simple conversation with him since a few days ago, and yet she admires him like she did before. She feels very happy and all like that, she even told me that she too doesn't know why, but whenever she hears his name, a sudden smile appears on her face. I don't know why but it "hurts" me. I can't say anything to her, not even my friends, because it was me who forced her to share her all feelings to me so that she may get relaxed. And now I am getting possessive. After all, a first love is the first love, especially in case of an Indian girl from a small town. Please tell me what should I do? I really love her, would do anything for her, for her happiness, but their conversations hurt me a lot.

Answer:

The common thread of emotions will be addressed so that both of you get specific answers which can improve your emotional health. You will also get information about your thoughts, feelings, energy and defensiveness. Thank you for your questions.

First, let me remind you of the huge difference between your thoughts and your feelings. If you are not aware of the difference between the energy of a thought and the energy of a feeling, you can easily become confused. Therefore, you need to learn to tell the difference so you can be absolutely clear about what is transpiring within you, and outside of you.

It will come as a shock to many people that being "hurt" is often a defensive response. "Defensive hurt" has nothing to do with authentic emotions and feelings. So it is extremely important to discover what you are really feeling. You could be confusing your thoughts with your feelings and you may be reacting defensively instead of being open and emotional.

There is also a huge difference between being closed and being open. When you are closed, your charkas are closed and you are in what psychologists call a defensive state. In the closed, defensive position you are weak and unhealthy.

The reason you are weak is because you are not allowing your natural energy to flow through you. Without healthy energy in your mind and body you cannot be strong and vital. In contrast, when you are open,

your chakras are open. You are strong and healthy because your natural energy is flowing throughout your body and mind. Your energy is what gives your cells the nourishment they need to be healthy.

I was so happy when I began to notice and use energy as the basis of the New Psychology. Check out the definition of the New Psychology if you have not done so: <http://www.drjeanette.com/newpsychology.html>

The reason I was so excited was because energy is the only way to know the truth about psychological dynamics. If you don't use energy, you can easily talk yourself into circles. You can deny serious emotional problems, think you have mental problems that you don't really have, and even boost up your ego so much you become more defended and closed.

Psychobabble can keep both you and your therapist stuck in unhealthy relationship dynamics for the rest of your lives. In which case both of you would continue to repeat the same unhealthy learning's from your past over and over again in your relationships.

For instance, you and your therapist could talk each other into a complete denial of reality. Both of you could believe, "You are wonderful and your husband is not wonderful. Conclusion: "You need to leave your husband and find a better one."

Your therapist and you could believe, "You are sensitive and your girlfriend is not sensitive." Conclusion: "You need to forget about your insensitive girlfriend and find one that does not "hurt" you so much."

Your ego is so clever and determined that it can fool your therapist because your therapist may also be controlled by his ego! Many people do not make progress in therapy for this every reason. It is also possible that your therapist does not know the difference between her thoughts and feelings. If your therapist is perfect and has all the answers, he is in a controlled mental, ego state.

Therefore, it is extremely important for you to move beyond talk and talk therapy in order to get to the truth about your emotional and relationship

interactions. You need a physical sense of what a real hurt is as opposed to a "defensive hurt."

You need to learn to feel your human energy as real energy that is palpable. Then you will know if you are being defensive and closed or if you are being open and healthy. Otherwise, psychobabble will keep you stuck in unhealthy situations and you will repeat your original emotional wound throughout your life.

"...a sudden smile appears on her face. I don't know why but it "hurts" me."

Now, let's look at your "hurt." You experience "hurt" when your girlfriend talks loving of an ex-boyfriend. Are you feeling hurt or something else? Where do you experience the "hurt"? What is the source of the "hurt?"

There is a huge difference between your emotional self-being hurt and your ego being "hurt." I suspect that you are thinking thoughts such as, "Does she love me as much as him? I don't think she does love me as much as him. I could never be as important to her as he was," and so on.

These are your thoughts. You also have emotional feelings and physical feelings. What are they? To know what you feel, you must look inward. You need to experience the energy that is in your heart and solar plexus. What do you feel in your body?

I suspect that the emotion you really feel in your body and solar plexus is fear. You feel scared that your girlfriend does not and will not love you as much as she loved her ex-boyfriend. This means you feel insecure and unsure of yourself. You do not trust that she loves you. As a result you tighten up your body and close your heart and solar plexus.

You may also close other chakras. In this closed state love cannot penetrate you. You hold your truths back and do not relate to your girlfriend so that energy can flow back and forth between you. You are not being open and honest, you are inhibited. As a result, you are possessive and controlling.

What you call "hurt" is based on your thoughts about what you are afraid of. You feel upset when she talks about her ex-boyfriend and interpret her affection for him to mean that she does not love you. It is your ego that thinks it is "hurt."

If you were my client I would suggest a different point of view. Reality may be very different from what you think. I would help you get in touch with your feelings and emotions so you can feel your vulnerabilities. I would teach you to take responsibility for your insecurities and stop projecting your fears and thoughts on your girlfriend.

Your girlfriend has proven she is capable of love. This means you need to open the door to your heart and solar plexus so her love can come in. How she talks about her ex-boyfriend is how she will talk about you if you let her love you. When anyone talks about a past relationship lovingly this is an excellent sign for a future lover or partner.

The women you need to worry about are the ones who talk about their ex in unloving ways. These women did not love their ex and will talk about you in the same way when they have finished with you! Past behavior is the best predictor of future behavior so use this bit of psychological research often.

"I suffer from deep emotional bruises-whatever anyone says stays in my mind replaying it constantly and hurting me."

If I were working with you, I would help you become aware of your thoughts. Whenever you are playing events over and over again in your brain you are engaged in obsessive thinking. You are probably blaming and finding fault with others and with yourself. You are hurting yourself because this energy is defensive. Defensive energy is unhealthy and has nothing to do with emotional energy.

When you are repeating these thoughts in your head, your charkas are closed. You are probably holding on to resentment and bitterness. These mental states become unhealthy energy constellations in your body and energy field. Overtime, they can begin to create physical disease. You definitely need to take actions to begin to remove this dense energy from your energy field and body.

Therefore, I would help you get in touch with your authentic emotions. They are hiding underneath your defensive thoughts. What do you feel in your heart and body? When you directly experience your real emotions, you immediately increase your healthy energy flow. This vital energy is what removes the denser energy in your body and energy field.

My professional knowledge tells me that underneath your thoughts, you feel hurt. Your heart has been deeply wounded. Your inner little girl, who is your emotional self, is in profound pain. She needs you to pay attention to your emotional wounds so you can heal them.

You need to learn how to feel your feelings and stay with yourself in the emotional state instead of becoming defensive and finding fault with those who hurt you. The goal is to become a loving, caring person toward yourself first, and then others.

Once you know how you feel, you can learn assertive relationship skills. Then you will effectively express your honest feelings to your husband and meet your needs. You will return to your happy go lucky self because you are healing your emotional wounds. My prediction is your husband will be delighted to have the happy you back and his heart will open up to you again.

My hope, for the two people who asked these questions, is that you will be true to yourself and your feelings. Then you will be genuinely happy, scared and sad as life happens. There will be many ups and downs, as you grow wiser and expand your awareness of your feelings and emotions.

Saying goodbye to your defensive energy will create much more joy in your life. This I can promise you.

Action Steps to Move Forward:

1. Get to know your defensive energy. This is very hard to do on your own. We all resist so much; it takes a good knock on the head to get us to notice! The best way to learn is with a master teacher, emotional

health coach or holistic psychologist. Also, listen to any feedback you get from others.

2. Stop thinking and start feeling your body. The best way to learn is by experience. Get to know the difference between being in your head and being in your body. Take body focused workshops and practice sensing the difference. Read more about the difference between thoughts and feelings in the free library at drjeanette.com: <http://www.drjeanette.com/body.html> Check out the Nature Workshop, April 30 in Cape May, NJ, it will give you practice in feeling your body and allowing more energy to flow through it. <http://www.drjeanette.com/natureworkshops.html>

3. Learn to sense and feel your emotions. You must let go of control in order to feel this vital energy inside of you. Anything that helps you relax is helpful. Take courses and classes with good emotional health teachers who know how to feel and sense their own emotions. A safe starting point is to use the "Opening the Heart" audio and eBook to ease yourself into your emotions so you begin to feel comfortable with them. They teach you how to feel the difference between a thought and a feeling and guide you into finding, accepting and healing your emotional wounds. <http://www.drjeanette.com/heartanswers.html>

Dr. Doris Jeanette is a licensed psychologist with 35 years of experience teaching men and woman how to feel their feelings. It is fun, exciting and healthy for her. She is available for phone sessions, mentoring and training in holistic psychology. Check out her programs and sign up for her free newsletter, "The Vibrant Moment" at <http://www.drjeanette.com/holisticpsychologyschools.html>

Evaluation: How Do You Pass The Test of Self Love? by Ewa Schwarz, of OnlineCounseling.org

Self love, schmelf love, who cares about loving yourself. We all want answers and we want them now. Solve the problem, give me the solutions, I want the answer. We actually demand without even realizing it. Our expectations are set at the level where we want this immediate gratification, that we deserve to have it.

Yet this is an approach of child that does not yet understand their own needs. And we all are children when it comes to our minds. The fact that we consciously use so little of our brains is all the evidence we need to understand how little we really know about ourselves. We are still children in terms of human evolution.

Yet how arrogant we are as a human race, as a conscious species. But being only 5% conscious on average does not say much for what we think we know. Our evolution into further consciousness requires that we delve inwards, or there will be no evolution, but devolution.

On the surface, people would argue that the human race has evolved exponentially, looking at scientific advancements, the use of technology, that in general people are supposedly healthier, happier, live longer etc. But this is a very timely topic as we watch the world crumbling apart for so many people.

Look at the sheer number and breadth of health issues, both physical and mental. We live longer, but very few are happier. All these material and technical advancements and achievements have not helped people in this regard.

Even social networking can isolate some people from true relationships, distracting them from the path of self understanding. This too will on

some level contribute to even more people reaching a crisis point in their lives. Because the bottom line is that far too many people in general are unhealthy and unhappy. But most of the extent of this is hidden from one another.

So with this introduction we move to why it is so important for each and every human being to take the test of self love. Without self love, you cannot find the balance of health and happiness. Something will always feel lacking in your life. You will be unhappy and/or unhealthy in some way.

So, what is self love, how is it defined? Self love is determined by the state of mind that you are in, that you tend to be in, that you see yourself go in and out of even. What I mean by this is if you get angry, if you get upset, if you emotionally react, get anxious, etc., then you are not in a state of self love.

Self love is a consistent state of being. It is a peaceful state of mind that is undisturbed by events around you. Undisturbed by the challenges around you. Many out there claim to feel self love, but blame their emotional reactions on others. How does this make sense? When you emotionally react, is that love that you are feeling? Didn't think so. Emotions pull you right out of yourself.

When you love yourself, you stay balanced within your sense of self. You are your own place of safety. Any storm can rage around you but you remain safe within this calm, inner harbor...as long as you stay within yourself. As soon as you move out of this space, then you are at the mercy of the winds around you.

But if you doubt yourself in any way, shape, or form, you are not going to spend much time within yourself, but looking for reassurance and safety externally. If you judge yourself in any way, if you have negative

thoughts, then you will also not feel safe enough to stay in that internal space. Who would want to be in a space where you are doubted and attacked, especially if this happens from within you.

A very curious aspect is when we judge others we also cannot be within ourselves. The impact that that has on our psyches goes far deeper than you would imagine. As soon as you have a judgment or a negative thought about another person, it is also an attack on yourself because no matter how justified you feel in your thoughts, there will be a small residue of guilt that is left within you.

What guilt does is it causes a subconscious need to atone for that guilt. It says that you have been "bad", that you must then be "punished". Yet as you go through this cycle, your mind then becomes resentful, because you never really intended to hurt anyone, so in response you attack outwardly yet again, because this is the cycle of low self value. Where this cycle exists, there cannot be self love.

So how do you get, find, achieve, locate, discover self love? By removing all obstacles that stand in the way of it of course. By being willing to examine every feeling and trace it back to the thought that was its author. Every feeling is a result of one of your thoughts. Remove just one thought and you get that little bit closer to self love.

This is the direction of true human evolution. Especially as the world exists now it can be very hard work, to undo all those old beliefs, to have to consciously choose over and over the new ones. To learn how to create that sense of safety within yourself as you deal with others. To remove all fear and judgments even when the world and the people around you are filled with them.

To step forward and become the role models for the rest of the world. As more and more people learn how to consciously evolve themselves,

they become the role models for others to learn from. The group consciousness slowly rises as a result.

As you consciously, willingly, diligently work at changing yourself, you really are greatly rewarded for this type of work. The peace of mind is in itself an amazing reward, but as you see how you also affect others, you really do see the miracle of this kind of work, of travelling along this path.

Find who you really are through finding your self love.

Ewa Schwarz helps clients from all over the world to grow emotionally and spiritually. We all feel lost, uncertain, scattered, and even frightened at times. We talk to friends, family, clergy or even strangers, yet no one seems to have a real answer. As a counselor, life coach and teacher with over 20 years of experience, Ewa can help you solve whatever is hindering your growth or burdening your spirit. Visit OnlineCounseling.org

Love Yourself First **by Dominik Lipinski**

Very often I have a feeling, that one thing is completely neglected by so many people. Also by those people who are involved with personal development. Very often I can see people seeking some 'self-growth magic pills', or hyper-modern coaching methods, when they don't even have the healthy base for personal rise. Love is such a base. By 'love' I mean state of unconditional, total 'YES' for something or someone. Love to ourselves is like an environment inside ourselves, that make it possible for our inner self to grow and reach maturity. Quite frankly, I think a lot of people wouldn't need any sort of therapeutic or coaching techniques any more, if they only had truly gave love to themselves. If we were given enough of love as a child, we usually have a healthy base, that will support us on building good relationships. If that wasn't the case however, there is important work to do - and some people don't do that work. What are results of that neglect? We could mark many of them, appearing in different areas of life. Below I'll only mark two most obvious.

In personal development - some methods can bring more harm, than benefits, if we're not prepared for using them. There was a time I studied regressive therapy, and I was attending group therapy sessions. This method was rather brutal - it was all about very direct confrontation with most difficult memories of the client. Sometimes it was like throwing a man into the centre of his darkest problems, of his most traumatic, bashful, unresolved events from the past. For those who are emotionally stable, feel self-secured and who attained already some successes in life, this sort of catharsis can be a truly healing experience.

But imagine young girl, who is completely not dealing with her life, who has huge inferiority complex, and who in her personal life is surrounded with toxic people. And such girl comes to this sort of workshops. I saw

that instead of building solid base that would let her move away from emotional morass, she was only getting bogged down in it more and more. It was the last place she should come to. I told her she should do some work on her self-esteem, and self-love first, and only after some time maybe consider regressing therapy. And here goes one important thing - it was me who did it, not the trainer who was running the whole workshop. My conclusion - if you're lacking healthy self-esteem, there will be people who will not only give you 'a medication' that in fact will be harmful to you, but they will even charge you for that.

In relationships - lack of self-love may bring you to the state I call "emotional beggar". You're (relatively) lucky if 'this person' really loves you and is able to express that. In that case you're like a beggar who was taken to someone's house, fed, and given a chance to take bath. But you're still like beggar. Still if this person will leave, you'll be empty like before. There is much worse scenario possible however. You can build relationship with another 'emotional beggar', with person who can't give love because he or she just hasn't got it. This person has to ask for it outside. It's so called co-dependent relationship, 'catch 22' situation when one wants to get from other what none of them has. There are even worse scenarios, when because of lack of love people accept very bad treatment...but I don't want explore that here.

Of course relationships is a complicated area, and there is a chance that person who started relation like that, will awake love from the within, and the nature of the relation will change over time. Still in most cases it's just not going to happen. If we haven't got feeling inside, we can not create something good outside.

This is how situation often looks like. People don't have the love within, and when searching it outside, they sometimes even make things worse. What then? What should we do, if we realised that we have a

room for improvement in that area? Of course there is no quick fix. These are incredibly subtle things, and it's hard to even talk about them using words. Everyone has to find his or her own way. But I think I can give you two tips that may help.

If we have some stroke of what love is, we can amplify it by meditation. If we'll do it regularly, it can become solid, unconditional state. The essence of that practice is to effortlessly focus on the feeling we want to make stronger. Then we shall keep that focus for some period of time (at the beginning about 20 minutes, then longer and longer, up to one hour). To attain permanent results you need to practice on a regular basis - you won't be able to heal years of bad experiences with one session of meditation. We can also enchase our practice with such popular techniques as:

*Affirmations - repeating words that are awaking feeling within us (for example "I love you" when looking into the mirror - but you should find your own words).

*Visualizations - envisioning love as energy flowing through our body, and filling every cell of it.

*Or the technique of seeing ourselves through the eyes of someone who loves us (maybe God).

Yet inner life is not everything. If we want to build healthy environment in our inner-self, we also need to take care of outer environment. I don't mean creating a social cycle contained of so called "nice guys" only. What I do mean, is to eliminate toxic people from your life. How can anyone think that it's possible to build one's personality around the best feelings, and to express the best version of self, if one spends most of the time with people throwing their emotional garbage at him or her every day? It's impossible to go to the left and to the right at the same time. You go to the left, or you go to the right. Decide and set clear

borders. If those people will not be respecting them, just look for other people to spend time with.

These are two main things I would call the most basic. Love to ourselves is something we can work out, and every moment we'll spent on it will be a moment well spend.

Dominic Lipinski runs practical communication workshops on topics like sales, customer service, relaxation&meditation and public speaking. You can visit his public speaking site advices on presentation delivery and tips for people suffering stage fright - click Public Speaking Anxiety. <http://publicspeakinganxietyhq.net/>

Shatter the Suffering Born of Judging Others by Guy Finley

Key Lesson: The cruelty or harshness with which we judge others is inseparable from how easily we forget that hidden within us also lives that which is being judged.

Q. It seems to me that we are always looking for faults and weaknesses in others... are we just covering up inferior feelings within ourselves?

A. By and large, everything we condemn in others is just a way of hiding a similar character within ourselves.

Q. I know that when I look at people, I end up judging them on superficial things. I also know that this hurts my relationships as well as myself. I want to stop. How do I turn this judgmental nature off whenever I see something in someone that doesn't meet my approval?

A. The idea is not to try to turn off this nature, but to come awake to the actual experience of yourself that you have in these moments. Resisting thought does nothing. Learning to "taste" what judgmental thoughts bring to your inner table will teach you to leave the establishment called yourself.

Q. It seems that all I am seeing of late are the negative things in people and how much suffering this causes. I am not very comfortable with this development in myself, as I usually like to stress the positive. Will I get past this stage, or do I just have the wrong point of view?

A. One of the wonders of true spiritual work is in our awakening to the actual nature of the people around us. Don't avoid this development, or think that something has gone wrong within you for all the wrongness you now see around you. Gradually, as you become more inwardly sensitive to the manifestations of people -- and realize that you recognize what you do about them because of what you can see in yourself as being true -- then real compassion is born. This same higher inner awareness grants you patience and new forms of consideration, because now you realize just how much pain everyone is really in. Keep going.

Q. **The more I think I know about true spirituality, the more I become easily aggravated by the seemingly false or inconsistent behavior of others. I can sense that part of my anger is seeing the inconsistency and false behavior in myself. What is the right way for me to handle these moments?**

A. Stay with yourself. Don't put yourself into what you observe. It doesn't matter what anyone anywhere is doing or saying relative to your potential for inner development. The expression "The buck stops here" is valuable as long as we understand it to mean that these recurring blasts of unconscious energy we experience in moments such as these are to remain conscious within ourselves. We must not attribute their cause to someone or anything else outside of us. When we work with this truth and its instruction, then we begin to die to the blame-casting nature. ###

About Guy Finley

Best-selling "Letting Go" author Guy Finley's encouraging and accessible message is one of the true bright lights in our world today. His ideas cut straight to the heart of our most important personal and

social issues – relationships, success, addiction, stress, peace, happiness, freedom – and lead the way to a higher life.

Guy is the acclaimed author of [*The Secret of Letting Go*](#) and more than 37 other books and audio programs that have sold over a million copies in 16 languages worldwide.

For more information about Guy Finley and his life-changing work, visit www.guyfinley.org.

A Man Can Stand a Lot as Long as He Can Stand Himself by Chuck Gallozzi

“A man can stand a lot as long as he can stand himself.”
—Axel Munthe, (1857~1949)

Frank is a 23-year-old European. He has graduated the university and started his studies for teaching credentials. Yet, rather than feeling joyful because of his achievements and a fairly comfortable life, Frank is troubled.

“Why can't I be as confident as others? Why am I so sensitive? What can I do to become accepted and admired by others? Why do I feel so weak? Why do I fumble through relationships rather than feel comfortable in the presence of others? Why do I look down on myself?” These are examples of the types of questions running through Frank's mind, which is causing him much pain.

Self Acceptance

Frank needs to learn how to live with himself and become his own best friend. For as Axel Munthe (1857~1949) wrote, “A man can stand a lot as long as he can stand himself.” But before he can do that he needs to understand a few things.

1. No matter where we are in life, there are and always will be people who are more confident, more successful, and more powerful, so we have to accept that. Once we do, our burden grows lighter.

2. Appearances are deceiving. Some of the people Frank compares himself with feel just as inadequate and insecure as him. It is not that they are bastions of confidence, but that they are good at hiding their feelings. It is important to understand this and realize that Frank is not

alone and is troubled by an affliction as common as the common cold. And like the common cold, it will pass.

3. Life is dynamic. That is, life is always changing. We mustn't confuse what we are and how we feel today with what we will be and how we will feel tomorrow. That would be like comparing caterpillars with butterflies.

4. Imagine trying to convince a 13-year-old that her life isn't destroyed simply because she has pimples all over her face or because her boyfriend dumped her. She will find it difficult to believe that all her present 'problems' will pass and later be something to laugh about. This is the position Frank is in. He's just 23, and most men don't mature until they're 26~30, so he has a long way to go and some patience is called for.

5. Be kind to yourself. After all, “If one is cruel to himself, how can we expect him to be compassionate with others?” (Hasdai Ibn Shaprut, born about 915, died 970 or 990)

6. Be careful to balance self-acceptance with self-improvement, for as James A. Pike (1913~1969) wrote, “A man needs self-acceptance or he can't live with himself; he needs self-criticism or others can't live with him.”

7. “It doesn't matter what we do until we accept ourselves. Once we accept ourselves, it doesn't matter what we do.” (Charly Heavenrich, <http://www.charlyheavenrich.com/about.html>).

Gaining Control over Our Lives

Although Frank may need to be patient, there are things he can do. It will, however, take more than a few words to explain, so bear with me.

What holds us back, more than anything else, is a conflict between what we **want** to do versus what we **feel like** doing. For example, students may **want** to do well in school, but **feel like** partying with their friends. If it's a choice between studying and partying, which do you think most students will choose?

That's right, the answer is partying. But that's self-defeating behavior. It is in conflict with their goal to succeed. And once they neglect their studies, they will have to work twice as hard trying to catch up. This creates stress, making them feel bad. Since they feel bad, they try to numb the pain by seeking pleasure, such as more partying! So, you see how easy it is to dig oneself into a hole so deep there's almost no escape.

Given that self-defeating behavior is so harmful, when faced with a choice between what we **want** and what we **feel like**, why do we usually follow our feelings instead of following our dreams? Well, what we **want** to do flows from our rational (or conscious) mind, and what we **feel like** doing is emotional, flowing from our subconscious. Our rational mind has the **will**, but our subconscious has the **power**; it can stop us from doing what we want.

How does it do this? It does so by creating **resistance**. For example, let's say that a student looks at the calendar and sees that an important test is approaching. He tells himself that he had better study tonight. But as soon as he has this thought, fear is triggered in the subconscious because it associates studying hard with pain. The subconscious abhors pain. So to protect itself, it prevents the conscious mind from acting by erecting the barrier of **resistance**, which is nothing more than the subconscious balking or digging in its feet and saying NO!

The trick, then, is, how do we defeat this pernicious **resistance**, which destroys so many of our dreams? The secret to overcoming resistance is to start on whatever needs to be done by taking a baby step, a step so small that the subconscious doesn't detect a threat; it's a matter of flying under the radar, so to speak.

Okay, it's time to look at an example. Let's stick to the case of a student that needs to study for an exam. We're going to assume he knows how the subconscious works, so he will start by taking innocuous baby steps, such as the following:

1. Check the calendar and count the number of days before the test.
2. Quickly review his notes to count the number of points that he has to master.
3. Estimate how much time he will need to study each point.

Note that up to this point he hasn't actually started studying, so his subconscious doesn't feel threatened and it isn't creating any resistance. Yet, these simple steps have primed the pump; that is, prepared him for study. So now that there isn't any resistance, he immediately begins. And once he starts, some remarkable things happen:

1. Since we cannot think of two things at the same time, once we immerse ourselves in a task, that's all we can think about. All thoughts about whether it is pleasant or not fade from our consciousness. And as we get involved in the task, it grows increasingly interesting. So, the 'pain' associated with doing something we don't want to do is short-lived.

2. We discover that the task was not as hard nor did it take as long to do as we had imagined. Remembering this will make it easier to start the next task.

3. We learn that we have the power to do what we don't feel like doing. Understanding this unleashes the power of our potential, for the key to success is self-discipline. But knowing what we do about the subconscious and its fear of pain, we shouldn't use the word "self-discipline" because it is apt to trigger resistance. Instead, we should call it what it really is, SELF-LEADERSHIP, which is nothing less than the freedom to create the lives we wish to have.

4. After finishing an important task that we didn't feel like doing, there is a feeling of exhilaration. We feel proud of our accomplishment and are delighted to learn we have the self-leadership to take charge of our life. Therefore, what we thought would be painful turns out to be highly pleasurable.

5. What's more, as we experience this truth, we come to embrace discomfort because of the pleasure and power conquering it will bring. And as we experience victory after victory, we will grow in confidence, feel exuberant, and know what it truly means to be free.

6. To avoid missing out on success, we mustn't be tricked into running from responsibility to indulge in some fleeting pleasure. After all, if we were to do so, we would find the 'pleasure' (such as watching TV) is pleasure in name only. For as we waste valuable time, we will be racked with guilt, greatly diminishing our 'pleasure.' And whatever momentary pleasure we were to experience, it would later be followed by stress and regret.

7. When we consider these facts, we will discover that what we usually interpret as pleasure ends up being painful, and what we first interpret

as painful, turns out to be pleasurable. The lesson, then, is we have to think before we act, for the price of living irresponsibly and neglecting our duties is loss of happiness. On the other hand, the result of mastering self-leadership and living up to our responsibilities is a life of accomplishments and joy.

Being Significant

Frank writes, "I would like to feel more significant in my own circles, but I tend to go with the flow, keep the peace, and avoid confrontation. I am cheating myself out of the growth I need and the respect that would go with it."

Don't make the mistake of thinking that you need to be aggressive or even assertive to be significant. The weak man seeks power while the strong man seeks to do good by serving others. Your goal should not be to **feel** more significant, but to **be** more significant; that is, to matter. When you spread cheer, give encouragement, and offer kindness whenever you go, you matter. You will then be significant, for you will be contributing to a world that is in desperate need of people like you.

Also, please understand you already are significant. After all, you are unique. There is only one of you in the world, and you cannot be replaced. Yet, if you follow the above advice, you can make yourself even more significant.

You are also concerned about others who belittle you and wish to have the 'strength' to defend yourself. Here's something to keep in mind. When someone puts you down, say, "When you say that, it reveals more about you than it does about me."

And when they ask what you mean, say, "Well, when we put down others, we are screaming to the world, 'I am insecure and unhappy. I don't feel good about myself, so I put down others to feel better.'" **But**

say this in your mind, not aloud. For if you were to say this aloud, even though it is true, you would be guilty of doing the same thing! That is, you would be putting them down to feel better!

So, what should you do? Accept them, forgive them, be compassionate, for like you, they are imperfect. One of your other friends may come to your defense and chide someone for putting you down. Should that happen, **defend the person who was putting you down**, by saying something like, "Oh don't be so hard on him; he didn't mean to say anything nasty. Besides, no one is perfect. Even among the best of friends, some friction is bound to occasionally arise, so let's just accept it and move on."

In other words, don't make defending yourself your goal. Rather make defending others your goal. That is the path of the hero, the warrior. When you live in this way, you make the world a better place. Your constant companion is peace, not discord. And when you see the good you do, you will feel significant for good reason.

When someone belittles us, we are apt to **react**. That is, act without thinking, act emotionally. This is the poorest way to act because we will lose friends that way. Rather than reacting, we could stand up for ourselves by acting assertively. This is the path that Frank wishes to follow. You can learn more about **assertive** behavior here: <http://www.personal-development.com/chuck/manipulation.htm>.

But there is a third way to act, and that is to act **spiritually**, or in accord with our higher self. This is our most powerful option, and it is what brings us and the world the most benefits. This is the path I am suggesting for Frank, the path of the hero and warrior; for I believe Frank is destined to play a very important role in the lives of others. Spiritual people are completely at home with themselves and immune to the attack of others. If someone were to claim that I have blue eyes

when I know they are brown, or that I am a woman when I know I am a man, or that I am stupid when I know that I am otherwise, if they were to say such things, how could I be harmed? So, those who are comfortable with themselves have no need to defend themselves. Since they don't feel a need to be assertive, they are free to be accepting, understanding, and compassionate. And because of their strength of character they are especially suited to helping others.

Being Worthy

Frank writes, "I'm eager to grow myself into someone who is worthy of having loving and supportive friends. But in order to do that, I know I have to work on myself becoming better and more positive."

You're mistaken, Frank; you don't have to grow yourself or work on making yourself worthy. That makes as much sense as saying that you want to work on becoming a man. You are already a man. And you are worthy of respect by the fact that you exist. Does a cat or dog have to earn love or are they deserving of it merely by the fact they exist? You are no different. But in your dealings with others, be sure to remember that the same applies to them. That is, everyone you deal with is worthy of respect.

Don't worry about how to help yourself; focus on helping others. The truth is, there is no better way to help you than by helping others. But never allow the benefits of helping others become your motive for doing so. Let your only reason for helping others be, they need it. This, by the way, is the path of love. It is impossible to be in love and be unhappy at the same, so love is synonymous with happiness.

You are lucky to be going through the pain of self-doubt, inadequacy, and insecurity because it is revealing how many, if not most, of your future students feel. Use your pain to feel theirs, and make it your role, not only to fill them with knowledge, but to fill them with confidence. Give

them the acceptance you long for, inspire them, encourage them and watch yourself become the person you never dared dream of becoming.

Frank, life is very easy, All we have to do is give away what we wish to receive. Here's something else to consider, "Tis better to be known as a good man than a great one, for greatness is an assessment of mortals; goodness a gift of God." (Spark Masayuki Matsunaga, 1916~1990). If you wish to aspire to becoming a good man, make this prayer of St. Francis of Assisi (1181~1226) your personal code:

Lord, make me an
instrument of thy peace.
Where there is hatred,
let me sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon;
Where there is doubt, faith;
Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light;
and Where there is sadness, joy.
O divine Master,
grant that I may not
so much Seek to be consoled
as to console;
To be understood
as to understand;
To be loved as to love;
For it is in giving
that we receive;
It is in pardoning
that we are pardoned;
and It is in dying
that we are born to
eternal life.

Relationships

Frank and his girlfriend recently broke up. This contributes to his feelings of inadequacy. But the broken relationship would be less painful if Frank realized that at his young age, he should be looking for experience, not love. If he were looking for love and lost it, he would feel like a failure, but if he were looking for experience, he got it, so he is successful. And I suggest he get as much experience as possible, for each relationship will better prepare him for eventual marriage.

The **reactive** approach is to jump into a relationship with the first person that expresses interest in us. The **rational** approach is to be more thoughtful and seek someone who would make a wonderful spouse. The **spiritual** approach would be to make ourselves a wonderful person for our future mate. So, Frank, rather than worrying about whether your girlfriend is right for you, you should be concerned about whether you are right for her.

Remember, we get what we give away. So, if you're just concerned about what's best for YOU, you are selfish, and that will be detected by others and you drive them away. But when your concern is what is best for others, you attract them to you. The more people you attract, the better off you will be, for you need people to learn from. No experience can be called bad because we can learn from each one.

And if you suffer a broken heart or two along the way, so what? You see, we experience life through our feelings, and broken hearts, disappointments, and tragedies add poignancy to life. Pathos is part of the beauty of life and is an essential ingredient to a rich and fulfilling one. The more pain we experience, the greater our capacity to experience joy.

The appreciation of poignancy varies from culture to culture. In Japan, it is called *mono no aware* and is held in high regard. Here is an example.

Imagine sitting alone in a park. Suddenly a beautiful Mayfly flutters by. At the moment you see it, you are overwhelmed by its magical beauty... “Ahh. How beautiful.” Yet, almost at the same time, you are overcome by another feeling... “Ahh. This beautiful creature will be dead by tomorrow.”

Poignancy encapsulates life... “Ahh. Life is beautiful!” “Ahh. Life is short.” It is the brevity of life that gives it its value. And it is pathos that enriches our lives, so don't run from pain, but embrace it. To get the most from life, it helps to cultivate poignancy, awe, surprise, pathos, or the *ahh-ness* of life.

Returning full circle to relationships, Frank, the message is the more rough spots you encounter, the greater your joy will be when you find your life partner, so don't let broken relationships get you down; they are just steps on the path to your perfect one.

If you need more help, Frank, here are a couple of good books you can read for free on the Internet:

<http://www.howto.co.uk/wellbeing/low-esteem/>

<http://www.howto.co.uk/wellbeing/become-life-coach/>

Well, Frank, imagine how excited adventurers must feel when they conquer a treacherous mountain peak. Conquering oneself is equally exciting, so embrace your 'problems' and be thankful for the adventure you are experiencing. Mountaineers don't grovel when they have to hunker down in a raging storm, neither should you, brace yourself and look forward to the victory that awaits you.

I'll give the final word to Charles C West, “We turn to God for help when our foundations are shaking, only to learn it is God who is shaking them.” ###

Chuck Gallozzi lived, studied, and worked in Japan for 15 years, immersing himself in the wisdom of the Far East and graduating with B.A. and M.A. degrees in Asian Studies. He is a Canadian writer, Certified NLP Practitioner, Founder and Leader of the Positive Thinkers Group in Toronto, speaker, seminar leader, and coach. Chuck is a catalyst for change, dedicated to bringing out the best in others, and he can be found on the web at:

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

It Only Takes One

by Beca Lewis

Checking the bird feeder hanging off our third floor window I noticed that the seed had not yet been touched, and I said to myself, “It only takes one.”

I knew this to be true because a few years before, in another house, we had two bird feeders. One was very visible in the middle of our yard. Within hours birds (and squirrels) had found it and we had to fill it every day. The other feeder was a small plastic one sitting on a window where I could see the birds while working on the computer.

Weeks went by and then one day I saw a bird fly by and notice the feeder in its peripheral vision.

It stopped, turned around, looked again and flew off. I believe I heard her say, “Hello, what’s this, food without the frenzy!” Within minutes it was back with a few friends. From that day on we had a group of birds at both feeders.

I have noticed that people are like birds. We flock. Sometimes we dress alike. Have you noticed the flocks of people in their wetsuits riding the waves (surf birds), or in bike gear riding the road (bike birds), or dressed up and dancing together (dance birds), or school uniforms and learning together (school birds) or business dress and working together (work birds)?

Once Sunday morning I forgot something at my office so I went back to get it.

In the predawn light the glass walls of the office building reflected perfectly the surroundings of trees and sky. A variety of birds were sitting on the ground near the entrance. Periodically one would fly directly at the building, bump into the wall and try again. It was painful to watch. I said, “Stop!” They didn’t hear me and continued to take turns bumping into the walls.

The next morning the birds were gone, but now in the post dawn light a variety of humans were entering the building. Some dallied, some strode, some kissed loved ones good-bye, some were burdened with bags and brief cases, and some walked with a cell phone in their hand or at their ear. Some looked happy, some looked sad, and some appeared apathetic or bored. We were flocking.

And I wondered if the birds were better off failing to enter the building. We all enter buildings every day, whether it is a solid structure or a thought building. We enter without thinking because everyone is eating there. It is easy to enter a worldview building and forget there is another source of food.

But it only takes one; one person to remember that Love is not condensed in how “it is supposed to be.” One person to remember that Infinite Mind is all and that the rest is simply a dreamer dreaming and not Reality. Just one.

We can continue to enter those buildings, continue to do the work in them that serves others and expresses the One, but not enter the worldview building.

We could stop taking the easy way of eating at the open feeder where everyone else is eating.

We could remember who we are. We could hear that still small voice and see the symbols of Truth, even if it is only out of our peripheral vision. And then we could go to that Truth and eat there instead.

The bird took the time to tell her friends what she had discovered. Although obviously I wasn't with her when she told her bird friends, but I bet that she told many more birds than believed her. I also noticed that she was not behind them chirping and pushing them along. She led. And if they followed great, if they didn't, that was okay too.

I know each of us is that one. I know that we could flock together in this awareness and gently remind each other when we forget and become memorized by the worldview, that there is a Truth that shines impartially and fully.

We could flock together in the Truth of One that is lighting the way instantly banishing any darkness in any life. We could stop taking sides in the worldview and stay in the Truth that there is only One and it is Love. We could be the one leading thought to the One.

It's only takes one, and that One is you. ###

About Beca Lewis

As an author and guide **Beca Lewis** is dedicated to bringing Universal Spiritual Principles and Laws into clear focus, to shift material perception to spiritual perception, which following the law "what you perceive to be reality magnifies™", adjusts lives with practical and measurable results.

Beca developed an easy system to do this called The Shift® and has been sharing how to use this system to expand lives, and bring people back to the Truth of themselves for over 40 years.

Beca and her husband Del Piper are constantly working to develop new ways to support and reach out to others. Much of what they have been developed can be found for free at their membership site [Perception U.com](http://PerceptionU.com). They also founded The Women's Council with the intent of "strengthening the connection to yourself, to others, and to the Divine."

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

Why Age Has Nothing To Do With Respect

by Steve Wickham

Do not lord it over those in your charge, but be examples to the flock... In the same way, you who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you must clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another.

~1 **Peter 5:3, 5a** (NRSV).

How does it occur that an octogenarian can genuinely call a fourteen-year-old their friend - that they have such mutual respect for one another, in the fundamentals of love, they consider themselves equals?

It can occur because it does occur. It's the Apostle Peter's point that this should not only be possible, but preferable.

Does it mean that the younger person doesn't need to offer the respect-of-office to the elder one? Not at all - age carries with it a natural esteem; for the acquisition of experience.

Does it mean that the elder can take advantage of this esteem? Well, the fact is he or she doesn't. That's the point.

AGE IS NOT THE ISSUE

Life presents us with the choice to think small or to think big.

Peter's thought range - a biblical escarpment - is naturally God-broad. This thinking is subsumed for us in the mode of godly "humility," which is such equality with all humankind, regardless of difference, that heart-love propels it.

If we again considered the above 80-something with the 14-year-old we'd find an inordinate maturity in each of them as individuals. (I've known fourteen-year-olds with more overall maturity than some sixty-

year-olds. So, not all older people are mature and not all young people are immature.)

These two have reached the nexus of God's design for unequal yoking of age. Rare, but it happens, and to the glory of God.

There are, of course, sadly, many more examples of the older person lording it over younger ones and the young showing scant respect for their elders. Both have issues with pride.

So, this is not an age issue, it's a *pride* issue.

HARMONY WITH ALL HUMANKIND - BUT ONLY IN HUMILITY

This will go against the grain for many believers, but there is a grand test for humility in the motioning of life. It surrounds one word.

Tolerance.

There are still too many of us flagrantly intolerant of other people, moods, normal and abnormal situations, minority groups, complexity, simplicity - the list goes on.

God's grace is most wondrously known in the realm of tolerance, and our acceptance of things beyond our control is the magnification of love to the glory of God.

Harmony can only be broached in a sweeping dialogue of tolerance which characterises hearts at home to humility.

This is our godly test. ###

Steve Wickham is a Registered Safety Practitioner (BSc, FSIA, RSP[Australia]) and a qualified, unordained Christian minister (GradDipBib&Min). His blogs are at: <http://epitemnein-epitomic.blogspot.com/> and <http://tribework.blogspot.com/>

Newsflash: Starving Wont Work!

by: Bruce Kimball

With fad diets out there telling us over and over again that to lose weight we need to deprive ourselves, it's no wonder that so many people think that starvation is the best diet tool of all. I mean, we're taught that food is the enemy, so it makes sense that if we cut food out of our lives then we'll gain diet perfection, right? WRONG!

Starvation Myth 1: Cutting out calories will make us thin.

While this is true to a certain degree, it's important not to take this message too far. What happens when you deprive yourself of food, is that your body starts to worry that it may not ever get enough food again and it begins to keep whatever calories it does get as storage. So by cutting cals, you may actually put on weight.

Starvation Myth 2: Skipping Meals will help you lose weight.

Want to know how sumo wrestlers gain weight? They skip breakfast and then eat a huge lunch and dinner. Because they've starved themselves all morning, they're bodies go into starvation mode and hold on to all food it gets after not eating for all those hours. Do you want to end up like a sumo wrestler? I think not...

Starvation Myth 3: Juice fasts will detox your body and help you stay thin.

Here's a tip: Any diet that forces you to go without food isn't a good idea in the long run. Human beings have teeth because they are supposed to eat food. Acts of chewing and digesting will help increase your metabolism—and THAT will ensure proper cleansing of the body. Drinking liquids all day, especially not sugary drinks, is just not enough to keep you going.

Starvation Myth 4: Eliminate fat and you'll eliminate pounds.

Again, WRONG! While overloading your body with unnecessary fat is a bad idea, ingesting some healthy fat is important to keep your metabolism and digestive track running smoothly. If you deprive your body of fat altogether, then your body may shift into starvation mode once again and hold on for dear life to whatever you do give it. ###

Trying to lose weight? There's so many diets out there it's hard to know which one to choose. That's why I've taken the work out of it for you, by reviewing them all here. Find out which diet is right for you by visiting www.dreamalean.com.

What Is Your Purpose? Use Meditation To Find Out Who You Are by Elizabeth Rose

Have you tried meditation? It's a great way to discover who you are.

In an attempt to achieve a level of clarity, I have tried a few different meditation techniques. Several have been concentrative, where I would focus on one item or thought. Another has been non-concentrative, where I simply worked to empty my mind of any thought. Most of the time, I meditate just before falling asleep at night. However, be careful that your meditation practice doesn't train yourself to fall asleep.

Concentrative Technique: Come up with a repetitive mantra that makes you feel wonderful or outlines a goal you wish to achieve and say it silently in your mind in the present tense. For example, one mantra to make you feel good might be: "I am love, joy and harmony in action". If you wish to create an ideal life full of abundance, you could compose an affirmation that rhymes and say it silently to yourself with feeling, "I am happy and healthy, happily married and wealthy". Repeating a mantra while visualizing the images in the mantra seems to keep the brain busy and preoccupied so that the mind can become peaceful and still.

Non-Concentrative Technique: Make it your intention to clear your mind of thought. Each time a new thought pops into your head, acknowledge the thought ('that's a thought'), then imagine it contained in a bubble and burst it. Repeat the process and eventually the thoughts will subside.

In doing some reading, I discovered that there are five categories of brainwaves, ranging from the least active to the most active. These brain waves are categorized as beta, alpha, theta, delta and gamma. My goal has always been to achieve a gamma state which results in brainwaves moving at a rate of 40 cycles per second or above. The reason for this goal is because research has shown that flashes of

insight, intuition and understanding are associated with gamma brainwave activity. Experiments with Tibetan Buddhist meditation practitioners indicated that monks who meditated for thousands of hours over many decades show a dramatic increase in their brain's gamma wave activity.

Dr. Herbert Benson of the Harvard Medical School studied the effects of meditation on the metabolism of Tibetan Buddhist Monks. With respect to oxygen consumption, he reported that the monks decreased their metabolism upwards of 64%. This was the largest decrease of consumption of oxygen ever recorded. Benson developed something called the "relaxation response," which he described as "a physiological state opposite to stress." His work showed how meditation decreased a body's metabolism, breathing rate, heart rate, and blood pressure. Benson used meditation to treat patients with anxiety, depression, high blood pressure, heartbeat irregularities, excessive anger, insomnia, and even infertility.

Other research that was conducted by neuroscientist Richard Davidson of the University of Wisconsin, showed how Tibetan Buddhist Monks who had meditated for many years experienced extremely large increases of gamma waves. In 2004, the Wall Street Journal reported that "Davidson's work demonstrated that activity in the left prefrontal cortex (the seat of positive emotions) swamped activity in the right prefrontal (site of negative emotions and anxiety). This was something never before seen from purely mental activity."

There is more to meditation than calming peace or manifestation. Think of your thoughts as a gateway to the divine light or source of all creation. When your mind is busy thinking, the gateway is shut. When your mind is still, the gateway opens and peace, love, healing and rejuvenation come pouring in. The same thing happens when we enter a deep sleep. That is why we need sleep. Without sleep, we quickly run out of energy -

source energy. Our thoughts block the source. With sufficient concentration, however, humans can keep the gate open and stay connected to the source over long periods. Meditation can completely reshape our brains processes and thought patterns. With extended practice, meditation can also result in flashes of insight, prophetic visions or even the occasional enlightened master appearing before you. Some people meditate because they have found this is a way to access all the knowledge floating in the universe. Meditation takes practice, but a disciplined mind could be one of the greatest achievements of your life!

“A quiet mind cureth all.” Robert Burton ###

Elizabeth Rose is a author on a quest to understand what is going on with herself, with others and with Planet Earth. Her current series of books "The Diamond Lantern" is a story of Elizabeth's quest to find answers.

To get a free copy of this first book, visit Elizabeth at <http://www.diamondlantern.com> where you can also learn more about Elizabeth Rose's story, meditation, her quest and other fascinating topics.

Create A Meaningful Life by Maurine Patten

Most people want their [life](#) to be meaningful. Sometimes they are successful; things just seem to fall into place. Other times they may struggle finding what will give them that special feeling of meaning.

Adolescence is a time of life when you first begin to ponder where you are going and why. Times of transition and change can be an opportunity for creating a new sense of meaning in your life. As you get older, you may wonder why some people live lives full of zest, commitment and meaning while others drift along feeling life is meaningless.

First consider the conditions that are necessary to give meaning "within" life. How would you answer the following two questions?

How do I want to live?

What choices do I need to make to have a happy, fulfilling, and meaningful life?

How you answer these two questions indicates whether you will live passionately or withdraw from life and its challenges. After much research and study, Jonathan Haidt describes three conditions needed for feelings of meaning and fulfillment to exist (The Happiness Hypothesis, 2006).

Haidt found that one of the most important conditions necessary for you to flourish is love. It begins in the early stages of life in the form of parental love. Love is necessary so that you will form attachments that help you feel secure and brave enough to explore life during childhood and adolescence.

In addition, everyone needs to belong. A sense of belonging is necessary for healthy self-esteem. As adults, experiencing passionate and compassionate love can lead to "true" love in marriages and relationships. "True" love is defined as compassionate love between two people who are committed to each other with some passion added.

Some of the benefits of healthy relationships are a stronger immune system, a speedy recovery after surgery, and a lower risk of depression and anxiety problems. As a single person, compassionate love is shown to others with similar benefits, being healthier and happier.

The second important condition is having and pursuing goals that allow you to use your strengths to create states of flow (Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi) or engagement (Martin Seligman). This is often referred to as a need for competence or mastery. Pursuing goals allow you to become competent by interacting with or controlling your environment. It is why you get more pleasure from making progress toward a goal rather than achieving it.

Choices you make while you are pursuing your goals can help you experience more meaning in your life when they engage your strengths. For example, Ann realized that she could use her strengths of creativity and love of beauty to take flowers from her garden to a shut-in during the summer. Recently retired, Mike was not using his strengths of fairness and leadership. He joined a committee to create a handbook for new residents at his retirement facility. These choices have helped both of them experience more meaning in their lives because they are engaging their strengths.

It is possible to experience meaning in your "work" or what you do. How you view your work will determine how meaningful it will be to you. If you feel your work is a calling rather than a job or career, you will feel more fulfilled. It might be having a career, volunteering, being a student, or a full-time parent. Whatever you call "work" gives you the opportunity to meet the basic drive of "making things happen" or achieving your goals.

If it allows you to use some of your strengths, it will make your life even more meaningful.

The third condition is to know that you are making a contribution to something greater than yourself. This might be a political or faith issue or a cause that is important to you. It is something that allows you to use your strengths as you strive to make the world a better place.

By establishing the following three conditions, life becomes more meaningful:

Connect with others showing compassion.

Use your strengths in your "work" and /or personal life.

Make choices that contribute to something greater than yourself.

Committing to getting the right relationship between yourself and others, yourself and your work or environment, and yourself and something larger than yourself brings a sense of fulfillment and meaning in your life. Happiness will follow. It is a by-product of the choices you are making.

What steps will you take now to establish these conditions to make your life more meaningful? ###

About the Author:

Maurine Patten, Ed.D., CMC, Maximize Your Possibilities

<http://www.PattenCoaching.com>

[Mailto:mdpcoach@pattencoaching.com](mailto:mdpcoach@pattencoaching.com)

More free information, EI and pre-retirement assessment, and ezine subscription at <http://www.PattenCoaching.com>

Our Purpose, Our Ideals – A Look at Life's Meanings **by Sushil Baboo**

Many of us are vexed with the very thought about what we should do, to make our life more meaningful and establish a more concrete relationship with the society we live in.

Strange but true, what seemed so very promising in our younger days, bears no value as we grow older and educated. What we felt will be the dreams of achievement in our later years, as we grow older, suddenly have no takers and we are helplessly left searching our own options, for a more concrete offer to the society we live in.

It is true, by trail and error, about 30 per cent of us do manage, to make our visions clear by the time we pass high school, but the larger percentage of the population is still unprepared to offer their contribution to their own lives and society.

What is missing, one may ask? Have we not been through the rigmarole of getting educated? Then why have we not found our place in the sun? Why don't we be just as good as the few on other side of the road?

We seem to be surrounded by questions all around. Are there any answers, to our lives being made more productive?

Yes, there are answers out there, if only one will stop engaging oneself in pursuit of being the Superman and being more practical in our goal setting. Everyone cannot be the best, for there is but one, which will be the best. The odds against the best, in any vocation are very high. Can't I be that one? Sure, you can be, but what if you cannot reach it

because someone else just beat you to it. Will you lose your bearings or will you settle down to be the next best?

The Best, a very comparative word, is like Black or White, totally singular. Look at life this way. Watch a black and white photograph. Between the absolute black and the absolute white the image come up in various shades of gray. That is the reality of life. The whole society is very much in the shades of gray and not in the absolute black or white. If absolute black and white suggests the opposite ends of the spectrum, you can surely make it to the image of the society that forms in the shades of gray.

Why then, are we not prepared to seek our success in the gray areas of life? Is there life in the gray areas of society?

Let me illustrate the shades of society. The society requires each one of us to be a contributory member. This is not a spoken word or legislation but an expectation. Don't we expect our neighbor to be a good citizen and keep the normalcy we believe that should exist between us? It is an unwritten law. So are our endeavors in life. Life expects each one of us to contribute our mite in the larger area of our society. We have to find the niche that makes us visible to society and its limitless growth. By niche, I mean an area where your enterprise will make the society operate smoothly. Just as the smallest nut and bolt in the automobile is important in the proper functioning of the automobile; make your contribution gel to the society.

The size of your contribution is not important, you are important, my friend. Only you can, with your effort make the society a seamless wonder. Your determined enterprise will bring with it glories that makes your society, your city and your country an example for other to emulate. The society includes all types of enterprise. There is no enterprise that

is not suitable to the society. Something that is not suitable will not be a part of the society anywhere in the world. You have to make up your mind where you want to be and then give it your best effort. Yes, it is true, you may be not visible directly, but the sums of your collective action with the members of your enterprise will surely reflect on you, your family and your society.

For a true growth of a society, there is the need for an honest output by the members of the society. Be honest in your thought, your deeds and your relationship and you will definitely find your place in the sun. An honest day's work, spells success in so many wondrous ways, that the gleam of your enterprise will still be there long after you are gone.

The pioneers did not build the cities or the society, they just gave the impetus for the members of their society to build and sprout. But it is these very many who formed the society that made the cities to what they are today. The large corporations surely were built by visionaries, but they were given shape and destiny by the very many who worked in them and brought them to glorious heights.

Search the meaning for your life in the society, in the gray areas of the enterprise and you will surely find your face in the picture. But do so in all honesty, not only will there be meaning in your life, but your enterprise will be well rewarded and you will surely feel the wanting of your presence by your employers, your friends and your society.

I am sure you will aptly appreciate these words of wisdom, whilst searching for the true meaning of your life.

Hitch your wagon to a star. Let us not fag in paltry works, which serve our pot and bag alone. Let us not lie and steal. No god will help. We shall find all his or her teams going the other way, every god, will leave us. Work rather for those interests which the divinities honor and

promote, –justice, love, freedom, knowledge, and utility. -Ralph Waldo Emerson, Society and Solitude “Civilization”

Good Luck my friend.

sushil.baboo@yahoo.com

How to Build Team Spirit

from, **Management—Getting the Best Out of Others**

Without a team spirit, organizations can suffer. No matter how well-organized and planned a venture may be, without the commitment of the team behind it, the objectives will not be as effectively or as quickly met.

Building team spirit is about engaging the *emotions* of the team members. It is more than a cerebral idea that a team is more than the sum of its parts; it is truly feeling that you are a part of something worthwhile, and that everyone is working together to make a success of things. There should be a sense of enjoyment at being amongst your colleagues, and so much the better if that happy relationship extends beyond the workplace to recreational activities.

Having a team spirit means that problems do not escalate due to the impact of conflicting personalities. Even if there are personality clashes, a team spirit will serve to reduce their negative effects because the individuals concerned should have as their overriding concern the wellbeing and emotional health of the team. Differences can be put to one side for the greater good.

These are some of the areas managers may want to look to when considering how they can build their team spirit:

1. Co-operation amongst team members should be encouraged, and forming smaller groups that work together on tasks and projects can help to promote closer working relationships. In this way, team members are directly involved with each other's work, and fully aware of how all the parts contribute to the whole.

2. Clear the decks of unnecessary clutter. This means identifying all the extra bureaucracy and paperwork and tasks that detract from the job at hand and thus reduce motivation.

A team spirit cannot be engendered in individuals whose focus is on petty matters. This may not be easy in this age of double and triple checking, but if such matters are unavoidable, try and find ways for employees outside the team to cover them, or attend to them yourself.

3. Build a strong relationship between the organization and its customers, and encourage customer feedback so that your team can appreciate the positive effects they are having. Try to involve customers in company events for face-to-face feedback opportunities. Make sure that upper management does not remain aloof, but make sure they are also involved in passing on positive feedback wherever possible.

4. Allow your team some autonomy. As much as you are the manager of the team, your team may not regard you as being a part of their operation. Just as in sports, there is a separation between the team and their manager; the team is primed by the manager and then allowed to work their magic. This is a useful lesson for the business world.

This should clearly not reach the point where your word lacks authority, but your team should certainly be allowed to carry on with minimal interference if they are on target for their given objectives. In the same way, do not impose too many rules and regulations just for the sake of having them in place to prove your authority. The confident manager can easily step back and know their influence remains intact.

5. Make the workplace an enjoyable place to be. Managers should not be reluctant to inject humor into the situation for fear of creating a flippant atmosphere. Trust that your team is mature enough to know when enough is enough. A sure fire way to damage team spirits is by

trying to enforce a dour mood, thinking that this is the only way to keep your team focused on important matters. This is insulting to your team. It is quite possible to have a sense of humor *and* a serious attitude towards work.

In fact, the former positively encourages the latter, as it provides an essential counterbalance. It is unreasonable to expect that your team should be deadpan the whole day. Humor helps to release the tensions that can build from hard work, and it can help free a little creativity into the bargain. Just make sure that the humor is healthy, and does not, in certain cases, shift into personal put-downs.

6. Open up about yourself. This does not mean wheeling in a couch and recounting your whole life story, but your team will be encouraged to know that you understand their feelings because you were perhaps once in their shoes, and they will also appreciate the trust you have placed in them by not keeping a professional distance. Showing your human side can encourage your team members to lower their own barriers, and the more affinity they feel for each other on a human level, the better they will work with each other.

7. Strive to avoid disagreements. This can be dealt with by maintaining and encouraging communication. There will always be times when even the best of teams suffers a little internal misunderstanding, but this should not be a problem if all parties are able to freely talk about how they perceive the problem arose and offer suggestions on how it may be resolved. Managers must be realistic in this respect, and not think that there should be perfect peace and harmony within their team. If this appears to be the case, team members may feel reluctant to speak out and any grievances will continue to simmer.

8. Recognize and celebrate when objectives are achieved. Team spirits can be lifted when their work results in the attainment of their

objectives. Managers should not let these moments pass unannounced. It may be possible to organize from the budget some team rewards that mark such achievements. However, even daily triumphs should be congratulated. Remember that a little praise goes along way. ###

Adult Children Living at Home? 9 Rules to Help You Maintain Sanity

by Debbie Pincus

More and more adult kids are coming back home--or never leaving in the first place. In fact, if you are in this situation, you are not alone. A recent study says that nearly 53 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds in the U.S. reside with their parents. Whether your child is contributing his fair share or driving you up the wall with irresponsibility and attitude, you're bound to lock horns from time to time. Find out how you can manage your adult children at home effectively--and how you'll know when it's time for them to leave.

Older children end up at home with their parents for many different reasons. Sometimes they want to get their nest built financially, so they come home to save money and secure their future. Other kids are coming home--or have never left in the first place--because they really can't make it out there on their own. For one reason or another, they haven't developed the maturity to launch successfully.

If your adult child lives at home with you and has made no move to save up for a place of his own, you've probably asked yourself, "Is he planning to stay here forever?' And the truth is, sometimes older kids do get comfortable back home. It takes a lot of pressure off their shoulders because Mom and Dad are there to cook and clean and pay the bills. So when is it appropriate to ask your child to leave? Should you wait until they get a job or get married? Is there a plan, or are you just moving forward blindly, hoping they'll get up on their feet and find their way eventually?

Are You an "Over - Functioner"?

Some adult children are slower to mature than others. Developmentally, they're just not "there' yet--they're not ready to take care of themselves, so they end up at home. When this happens, many times I find the parents have been over - functioning for their kids.

There's an important difference between helping and over - functioning. Helping your older child means doing something for him he can't do himself, such as driving him somewhere when he has a broken leg. Over - functioning means you're taking responsibility for things he can do for himself, like doing his laundry and cleaning up his messes after he's had friends over. Perhaps that pattern started years ago or maybe it began when he moved back home. The bad news is that when you over - function you're allowing the negative behaviors to continue; the good news is that it's in your control to change the situation.

What I recommend is to have a plan of action with your child. The message can be, "You're not just here for good. We're going to help you, but the goal is for you to get on your feet." Having a goal in mind is important because it will ensure that your child's stay back home doesn't drag on forever.

What happens when there isn't a plan? Frustration and resentment build when you hear your child says things like, "I'm looking for a job, but I can't find anything'--but you've seen him sleeping late every day and staying out partying at night. This resentment only adds to the stress of living together.

Kids Who Fail to Launch

Ever hear yourself repeatedly make excuses like, "He's really a good kid, he's just a little lost right now;" or "He's going through a hard time--if

I don't help him who will?' The truth is, when your kid can't launch, you are enabling him.

I know that many parents out there have kids who never launch. Perhaps they've been living with their parents ever since high school and now as adults they are controlling the house. Let me be clear: if your child is controlling your house, then you are allowing yourself to be controlled. And if your kids have never left, it's because you have allowed them to stay.

I've worked with many clients over the years with adult kids living at home. Typically, the more the parents feel controlled by their children, the more they will try to control them. But the more they do that, the more their child stays, digs in his heels and fights to get his own way. Now they have a huge power struggle on their hands, which is a dynamic you never want to get into if you can help it.

When you're feeling controlled, you have a few choices. You can get "reactive to your child's reactivity," and watch things escalate, or you can try to be objective and thoughtful about how you want to handle the situation. Saying things like, "You've been here for three years! When are you going to get a job?" is reactive and will result in a battle of will and control. Instead, speak in more direct terms: "What's your plan for getting a job? Please think about it and let's talk after dinner tomorrow night."

Kids with Disabilities

There are many, many kids out there with mental issues and disorders who have a very tough time out on their own. Launching can be a very difficult process for kids with ADD, ADHD or other issues. Some kids really need help cooking and taking care of an apartment and doing housework. No matter what, I believe the goal is for your child to be as

autonomous as possible. I think the answer is to have a plan of action to help motivate your child toward independence.

Over-functioning gets played out even more when there's a disability. Sometimes this is used as an excuse, where the disability gets more exaggerated. It's also the reason why some kids can never leave their parents' house or why they can't make it on their own.

Many of us manage our own anxiety with our kids by over - functioning for them. And when a child has a disability, whether it's ADD or another type of learning disorder, it gives parents all the more reason to "overdo" for their kids. On the other hand, you often see young people with severe disabilities who are extremely functional and independent. I believe they were taught from a young age to be responsible and do things for themselves.

I understand how hard it is to know where to draw these lines as a parent. I think the key is to stop focusing on what's wrong with your child. Stop asking, "How do I get my child to be a certain way?" and start thinking about what he can do on his own. I also think it's important to think about what you need. Just turn it around.

When Your Anger and Frustration Start to Build

When your adult child is living in the house with you, you may feel infringed upon while he feels like he's being treated like a kid. Everyone has different preferences, needs and values and there can be lots of annoyances when you are living together as adults. But don't get caught up in who is right and who is wrong. Work to get along and don't keep assigning blame. Instead, take responsibility for your behavior and how you manage your own anger and irritation.

It's normal to lose it from time to time and have a fight. But your children, no matter how old, can be very sensitive to your anger. So don't interact impulsively when you're frustrated. Instead, be kind, firm and remember your own parenting principles. Here are some things you can do:

1. Be direct: Insist on dealing directly and straightly. The way to deal with anger is to use clear "statements of self." Make yourself clear and put it out there. You're not blaming, but you're telling your child where you're coming from.

Some examples of that are:

* "When you use the car without asking, I really don't like it."

* "When you make a mess and expect me to clean up after you, I feel like you don't appreciate being here. That doesn't work for me."

2. Apologize when you make a mistake: Be willing to take responsibility. You can say, "I lost it today and I really want to apologize for that." Or "I'm just tense myself and I'm feeling frustrated. I'm really sorry."

3. Soothe yourself: Often times the battles you have with your kids are really about, "I need you to behave a certain way to help me get calm." When you get into that, you are inherently trying to control someone else. This will naturally cause the other person to resist being controlled. Remember, you can't control your adult child; you can only let him know where you stand and try to be an influence.

4. Take care of yourself: I also think you need to take good care of yourself so that you have resilience. If your adult child moves into your house with a family and little kids, you'd better make sure that you're not overly-stretched. You can't afford to get worn down because you're over-functioning for everybody. So take care of yourself always.

5.

Parental Roles: Manager vs. Consultant

When your child is young, you can think of yourself as a manager. You are involved in his day-to-day life in a very "hands - on" kind of way. But as your child grows and becomes an adult, you're really more of a consultant. That means you talk to him about what's going on like a consultant for a business might. You need to step back more and more as time goes by because now you're talking about an adult. So you can be helpful and check in, but you're not looking to give unsolicited advice.

I believe it's a good idea to ask your adult kids if they would like your advice - otherwise you'll end up in a situation where you're too much in their "box" and not enough in your own. When you're staying in your box, you're saying, "This is what I expect of you living here. This is what belongs to me. Here are the things you are free to use." You don't need to get in your child's box and tell him how to live his life. Instead, as your child gets older, you want to come across a bit more like an adult acquaintance. So you're saying, "How are things going; what's up? Can I be helpful to you?" This doesn't mean that you don't hold your child accountable; to the contrary, you define boundaries very clearly and let him know that you intend to stick to them. But you're also giving him some degree of respect and autonomy.

What Are You Ultimately Responsible for?

If your adult child lives at home with you and you're feeling overwhelmed or out of control, I think you have to ask yourself this question: "What am I ultimately responsible for?" Above all, you are not responsible for your child's choices in life or his behavior. If you think you are responsible for those things, then you're not going to be able to hold onto a clear sense of what your own limits are. Instead, you're going to try to get your child to be how you want them to be. That's going to create a dynamic where he's not going to be motivated and or function for himself.

So always go back to the self. Stop trying to figure out how you can get your child to do "_____ " and just go back to "What can I do for myself?" When you try to control somebody else, no matter what their age, it is simply going to backfire and hurt your relationship.

The goal is to recognize that you don't need your child to be different in order to have what you need. You can learn to establish your own bottom lines and make them clear; you can state what is important and the relationship will still work--in fact, it will be better. Remember, the only person you have to be in control of is yourself.

The Golden Rule

What's the golden rule of living with an adult child in the home? Clarify your expectations. This requires honest communication. Represent yourself honestly and openly as a parent. Do you expect your child to do housework, contribute to groceries and bills, and pay rent while he stays with you? How long are you willing to let him live in your home? Will he have access to your car? And what do you need to see him do in terms of job hunting, if he's unemployed? Really think through what you want and what you're willing to put up with, and then talk it through. If your child is to have the gift of living back home, so to speak, he also has a responsibility in the areas of courtesy, housework and possibly finances. Those are things that need to be discussed openly and honestly with your child.

In turn, it's important to listen to your child openly and respectfully. You have the final word as the parent but you should try to be open to your adult kid's input. Again, your role as the parent of older kids is to be a consultant, not a manager of their lives. Listen to your child's expectations as well. Most likely, he will feel a bit guilty or inadequate in some way. He may also feel like he's still being treated like a child.

There are all sorts of things that come up for your kids that make living with their parents uncomfortable for them.

Here are 9 rules that can guide you through this time with your adult child:

1. Before your child moves back in: If your child is about to move back in with you, I think you need to sit down and hammer out some guidelines. Having a plan ahead of time is always good because everyone will know what to expect. Part of the conversation you'll have with your child is, "Let's talk about what each of us needs. What's going to make this work the best?" Make sure everything is clear, because the living situation is all new now. Remember, your adult kids are not coming back in as children. In a sense, they are coming home as guests. And don't go in with the assumption that it won't work; you're ideally working towards collaboration. You want to be very respectful of your adult child as a participant in making decisions, but ultimately, you are the head of the house. In *The Total Transformation*, James Lehman talks about the four questions you should ask your child when you are anticipating some kind of change.

The questions to ask (with some examples of answers you might give) are:

*How will we know this is working?

"We'll know because everyone will be doing their fair share. We'll be respectful of each other."

*How will we know it isn't working?

"We'll know if someone isn't pulling their weight or starts overstepping boundaries."

*What will we do if it's not working?

"You will make plans to leave within a month."

*What will we do if it is working?

"We'll continue with our original plan of six months."

You might also ask, "What's the goal?" Is the goal just to make a certain amount of money so your child has a cushion before he goes out on his own? Or is the goal to help him learn how to live on his own? These are all important things to establish before your child moves in. If he's already living with you, you can still use these questions and "start fresh." Sit down with your child and say, "Things haven't been working out quite the way we planned. Let's start over."

Don't forget to keep revisiting those conversations. From time to time, sit down and talk it through. Be sure to listen to what your child has to say and also tell him how you think things are going. You might have all the best intentions when your older child first moves in and then realize that it's not working out the way you thought it would. Some kids don't feel like they're guests in their parents' home, and that's often where the problems start. They may have a sense of entitlement about what you should do for them and what they deserve. I think having those little conversations can be helpful. Just be clear and tell your child what your expectations are.

2. Set limits: Be sure to set time limits and parameters on your adult child's stay. These can be readdressed or changed around; there can be some flexibility, but be clear about the plan. And that plan might be, "You'll stay until you get a job," or "You're going to stay until you get your first paycheck." If your child is going to stay until he makes a certain amount of money, be clear and in agreement about that.

Basically what you're helping to do is create motivation. If there's no guide and no set time limit, there's no motivation. You might say, "What we expect is that after six months, you're going to have your own place." You're not telling them what to do; you're making clear what you're going to live with.

3. Have a plan of action: Understand that helping your child get on his feet financially doesn't mean providing everything that he needs and wants. Rather, it's having a plan that in three months, six months, or a year, you'll help him get an apartment, for example. You might even start out by paying a portion of his rent, but let him know that after a certain amount of time you're going to reduce the amount you put in. That way, his responsibility grows while yours diminishes. He is working towards a goal with your help, but not relying on you completely. This is a gradual way of helping someone get on their feet. You might also tell your child that he needs to pay rent at your home. James Lehman suggests that you could consider keeping this money in a special account and then use it to help your child pay his deposit on an apartment.

Questions around finances can get complicated. Your child needs money, but how much are you willing to give? Are you giving it as a loan and expecting them to pay it back? How long do they have to do that? I don't think there's one right answer; I just think it has to be right for you. Consider what your finances are and what's going to stress you too much. I think people have to figure what's really okay with them and what's not.

Overall, the message has to be, "To live in this house, you need to show us that you are working towards independence. We need to see that--and you need to help yourself make that happen."

4. Consider your own needs: Always come from a clear sense of yourself. How will you consider your needs as the adult parent who didn't expect to have somebody back home? How can you make it work, and what are you willing to put up with? State your needs clearly and firmly to your child. As a parent, really think about what you can and can't live with. What are your bottom lines? What are your values? What do you expect your child to adhere to if they're living under your roof? Do you need them to pick up after themselves? Are you willing to let them have friends over and drink in your home, or not? Make sure your child knows those things and respects your rules. If he doesn't, there's too much room for resentments to build. You can say, "We're going to keep open and honest communication where we both listen to each other and hear each other. There are certain responsibilities that come with the opportunity of getting to live here. I expect the house to be kept in a certain order and that if you're coming home late you have the courtesy to call because otherwise I'll stay up all night worrying."

5. Don't get pulled into guilt: If you've always done everything for your child and now you're asking him to be responsible and contribute to the household, understand that you are changing a system. You will likely get resistance and what's called "pushback." Your child might get very angry and say things like, "I can't believe my own parents are doing this to me!" Don't get pulled back in and start to feel guilty. As long as you've thought it through and considered your own needs and principles, you'll be able to hold onto yourself through that anger as you insist that your child gets on his own feet.

Anytime you start to feel resentment, you have a responsibility to ask yourself, "How am I not addressing this issue and how am I stepping over my own boundaries here?" In honoring your relationships, you want to make sure that you take responsibility for what you need and what you are asking for. Otherwise you're going to be saying "yes" to

something you really want to be saying "no" to--and that's not good for any relationship.

6. Try not to react to your child's anger: Try to be kind but firm and work toward being thoughtful. So rather than responding when your child says something you disagree with or that pushes your buttons, say, "You know what, let me think about what you're saying and let's talk later." Don't get pulled into that struggle. You can also say something like, "I hear you're not happy with this and you feel like you can't find work. I hear you saying that you don't want to leave. Mom and Dad need some time to think about this. We're going to discuss this and sit down and talk about this with you later." This is one way of not getting into a battle with your child--because often times, that's what it becomes.

I know some parents who are afraid to talk frankly with their adult kids because they don't want to upset them or make them angry. But remember, if you're afraid of someone's anger, you're never going to be willing to do what it takes. If you're too careful because you don't want anybody to be upset, then you won't come across strongly enough. On the other hand, when you stop being afraid of your child's anger, you'll be able to stand up for yourself and let them know you mean business.

7. When you're feeling controlled by your child: When an older child is living at home, the situation is usually emotionally charged for everyone. Again, if you're letting somebody control you, you'd better look at how you're letting that happen. Ask yourself, "Am I not making clear enough boundaries? Am I not making my expectations known? Am I not making clear how long my child is allowed to stay here or how much money I'm going to give him?" If the answer to any of these questions is "no," you need to address those issues with your child right away.

8. When the relationship becomes abusive: I've worked with parents who have been verbally or even physically abused by their adult kids. When that happens, the question you need to ask yourself is, "What am I willing to live with?" Remember, as James Lehman says, "There is no excuse for abuse"--and this includes abuse from an adult child living in your home. If you feel like you're in a dangerous situation and the abuse is scaring you in some way, seriously ask yourself, "Is it time for my child to leave altogether?" Another thing to ask is this: "If somebody's being abusive to me, in what way am I allowing them to do that? Where am I being too passive?" You may need to say to your child, "If I'm feeling endangered here, I will need to call the police. I don't want to do it, but I may have to."

Again, keep your own needs--including those for respect and safety--in mind. If the verbal abuse is continuous, the discussion with your child might be, "You need to make other arrangements because it's no longer working here. What I expect in my own home is peace and calm. If you can respect that, you're welcome to stay. Otherwise, this is no longer going to work."

A word of caution: don't contribute to the problem by reacting to your child's reactivity--this will only make things escalate. If every time you respond to your child's anger by getting angry yourself, tuning them out, having shouting matches or getting physically abusive yourself, then you are contributing to the problem. It's not only about what your child is doing to you--it's also about how you're reacting that may be adding to what's going on. But if things have devolved into a dangerous or intolerable situation, you might decide to say, "No more. You're out the door and you've got to figure it out."

9. When it's time for your adult child to leave the nest: I think there are many reasons why you might decide it's time for your child to leave. You

might feel that it's just not working or that you can't take it anymore. Maybe your health or finances are too stressed by the situation, or perhaps you just want to be with your spouse and have that time in your life. I think it's up to you; there's no right answer. But the bottom line is this: When you feel that you've done your part responsibly, or that your child is not living up to his part of the bargain and is taking advantage of you, it may be time for him to move out.

Sit down and talk with your son or daughter if you feel things are not working out. You can say, "If you are going to stay here, I expect certain respectful behavior; otherwise you're not welcome here. There are certain respectful ways that you live in a house with others and if that's not possible for you, then maybe it's time for you to leave."

Before you ask them to leave, I think it's very important to think about how you as the parent might be contributing to the escalation of frustration or arguments. If your child says something that makes you angry, how do you handle that anger? Do you handle it in a way that makes things worse, or better? Remember, you're the parent. No matter how immature your child is being, you need to stay grounded; don't go to that place. Instead, stay connected to the principles that you want to live by as a parent. And that may be to simply come back later in a mature way and say, "Look, you're having some problems here and this is what your dad and I think."

A final word: If your adult child is living with you or planning to move home, it might not necessarily be a bad thing. For some families, it can be a time where the relationship grows and deepens between parent and child, because you're getting some extra time with your kids. You might be able to work out some of the difficulties that have plagued your relationships for years. So it's not always a bad thing for adult kids to live at home. I believe the key is for everybody to understand

expectations and try to work together in a cooperative, collaborative way. Be cognizant of what's realistic on both ends. Remember, you're not there to indulge your adult children and over-function for them. Rather, you're helping them move towards independence and maturity. And even if there are difficulties, there is still an opportunity for the relationship to grow. ###

For more than 25 years, **Debbie Pincus MS LMHC** has offered compassionate and effective therapy and coaching, helping individuals, couples and parents to heal themselves and their relationships. Debbie also facilitates parenting groups and is the author of numerous books for young people on interpersonal relations.

Dealing with Your Child's Temper Tantrums is reprinted with permission from [Empowering Parents](#) magazine. Need more support? If you are a [The Total Transformation Program](#) customer, you can access the Parental Support Line for help with these and other challenges you're experiencing with your child. Support Line specialists have helped hundreds of parents develop effective consequences and privileges, and we can help you, too.

[The Total Transformation Program](#) offers practical, real world solutions for the most challenging problems parents face: defiance, disrespect, back talk, lying, cursing, lack of motivation, acting out in school and more. In this step-by-step program you'll learn the techniques James has used in his private practice to help children take responsibility for their behavior and help parents get back in control of their homes.

Unleash the Power of Positive Recognition **by Dr. Alan Zimmerman**

Some 20 years ago, I heard Mary Kay Ash speak at a convention that I was also addressing. At the end of her speech, an audience member asked her, "What is the key to success in business?" Without hesitation, Ash responded, "Make your people feel important."

She was right, and despite her passing at the age of 83, she's still right today. She understood the fact that everyone—without exception—craves some sort of recognition.

Her point is so simple, but more often than not, her point is ignored. I can attest to that. I've delivered more than 2000 keynotes and seminars in hundreds of organizations around the world, and in almost every organization, the number one job complaint is the same. People complain, "You can do a hundred things right and not hear a darn thing about it. You do one thing wrong, and they're right on your back."

In some presentations, I've even asked my audience, "How many of you know you're doing a great job but your boss never tells you?" Almost always, way too many hands go up.

So I ask myself the "why question." If we know that making people feel important is one of the keys to business success, then why don't managers do more of it? Why don't they give more recognition? I think there are two reasons. The first one is ...

IGNORANCE.

Some managers run their departments on the "no news is good news" philosophy. They tell their people, "If I don't say anything, you can presume everything's OK."

But that's insane. In every other part of our lives, if people don't give us feedback, if people ignore us or give us the silent treatment, we presume things are NOT OK.

It's like the wife who told her husband, "You never give me any feedback. You never tell me you love me." To which her ignorant husband responded, "I told I loved you on the day we got married. If I change my mind, I'll let you know."

Simply put, the "no news is good news" philosophy does not work. The manager might mean well, but employees do not interpret a lack of feedback as a positive. They interpret the lack of news to mean "they're gathering evidence to use against me."

The second reason people do not give enough recognition is ...

INCONVENIENCE.

In other words, some managers think the recognition would cost too much time, money, or energy. So they end up giving quick recognition, if they give any at all. They throw out comments such as "good job" or "keep up the good work," but such comments do very little to motivate someone or make him/her feel important.

Recognition of this sort is cheap ... and gets the same kind of results the cheap farmer got. He balked at the cost of oats he had to feed his mule. So one day the farmer came up with a plan to reduce the cost of feeding the mule. Little by little he replaced the oats with sawdust.

Day by day, the animal was fed less oats and more sawdust ... until, finally, it was all sawdust. Everything went well for a while ... until the mule died of malnutrition.

The good news is ... you don't have to have a team or staff dying of malnutrition ... or malrecognition ... if you follow a few simple guidelines.

1. Look for performance that is worthy of praise.

Most managers are tuned into fire fighting. They're either putting out fires or trying to prevent them. But let me humbly suggest that you might get better results by spending more time looking for things to praise. Look for things that are working. Look for things being done right, and recognize them. Spend more time bringing attention to correct behavior.

It pays off. As physician Deepak Chopra puts it, "The expression of gratitude is a powerful force that generates even more of what we have already received." In other words, effective recognition motivates even better behavior in others.

2. Praise the performance, not the performer.

Praising the performer, saying "You're wonderful ... intelligent ... and ... so capable" may make the recipient feel good, but it may not recognize any particular behavior. If you want to reinforce certain behaviors, if you want to ensure more of those behaviors in the future, then focus your comments on those behaviors. Praise the performance, not the performer.

3. Be specific.

Vague praise, such as "You're doing a great job," is less meaningful than precise descriptions, such as "You added five new accounts last week. That's great."

If you specify exactly what the other person did right, he knows that you know what you're talking about. He knows that you're not just saying something "nice," without any particular thought or meaning.

4. Be sincere.

As the old adage goes, you can't fake sincerity. So if you don't mean it, don't say it. The only recognition worth giving is the recognition that comes from your heart.

And one way to do that is to occasionally add a feeling to the recognition you verbalize. Tell the other person how good it makes you feel to see her accomplish certain things.

You see, if people don't hear enough sincere praise, they may forget how good they are and their performance begins to wane. As consultant Barbara Sher puts it, "Down deep we really know our worth, but we don't have easy access to that knowledge. We need to hear praise coming from outside ourselves or we won't remember that we deserve it."

5. Do it immediately and do it often.

If you wait too long to recognize good or great performance, the recipient begins to wonder if you even noticed or bothered to care about his accomplishments. He begins to wonder if his efforts made any difference whatsoever, and in the process of wondering his motivation goes down the tubes.

To prevent that from happening, I recommend a simple recognition strategy. And that is ... if you see it, say it. If you see behavior that is worthy of recognition, make a comment right then and there, whenever feasible.

6. Vary your recognition.

If you give the same kind of recognition all the time, if you make the same positive remark for every good behavior you observe, your recognition loses some of its motivational power. Even though your

intentions may be good, the recipient may begin to see it as "the same old same old."

Look for new behaviors to recognize and look for fresh words to use. When it comes to the motivational power of recognition, there's some truth in the old saying, that "Variety is the spice of life."

7. Keep it pure.

Don't use your praise to soften your criticism. Don't use the old sandwich technique ... where you give a person two slices of praise with a filling of criticism in between. Your praise rarely sounds sincere and will seldom be remembered. Your colleague is more likely to remember the criticism and assume the praise was only said to soften the blow.

8. Add an element of encouragement.

In addition to noticing the good work a fellow employee is doing now, encourage her to keep up the good work in the future.

You can even take it a step farther. Predict a bright and successful future for that individual. As Susanne Biro says so well, "Notice all the good work people are doing ... and voice your genuine appreciative predictions about what is possible for them." After all, people tend to live up to your expectations.

9. Use occasional non-cash forms of recognition.

You could, for example, turn memories into a present. When an employee's hiring anniversary, birthday, departure, or retirement comes around, give a gift that commemorates the special bond he/she has with other people at work. Make up a memory book. Gather pictures of coworkers and ask them to write individual messages. Or have a group picture taken and signed. You can also include passages from your organization's newsletters, ads, manuals, and customer testimonials.

In their book "Lean & Meaningful: A New Culture for Corporate America," Roger Herman and Joyce Gioia give the example of Dolphin Data, a 35-person database management and mailing firm, that set up an incentive program where employees earned points they could turn in for prizes.

For example, referring a new hire who successfully completes 30 days on the job earns 500 point for the referring employee. The program also rewards an error-free month with 75 points for every employee. Members of error-free departments or teams get 50 points each. And anyone not absent for a month also earns 50 points. Employees redeem the points for goods and services such as restaurant meals, groceries, books, home improvements, and gasoline.

You can even get creative with your non-cash forms of recognition. Dolphin Data, for example, gives out "The Golden Dolphin Award." Employees nominate and vote on the winners of this highest award, a plaque, a \$100 dinner certificate, and 1000 incentive points. The winner's actions must exceed expectations and significantly benefit Dolphin Data.

Then there's "The Crack the Whip Award." 500 points and a plaque with a removable riding crop goes to employees who devise a faster, cheaper, or better way to do a job.

Or how about "The Spark Plug Award?" A spark plug on a plaque goes to those with a "winning attitude" who "make things happen." Award winners must receive votes from at least half of all employees as well as that person's manager.

There's even "The Brilliant Idea Award" that encourages employee suggestions. Every idea that is used earns 250 points for the person who submitted it.

Everyone has some untapped power and potential inside him or her. And you have the power to unlock that potential ... if you make the other person feel important, using some of these techniques.

Action:

Your assignment this week ... should you choose to accept it ... is to apply 3 of the recognition techniques listed above. ###

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](#)

The Myth of Perfection

by Steven Burns

There is often the misconception that to be effective in the social world you have to appear like some slick, good looking, fast talking salesperson. You'll be pleased to know (unless of course you are some slick, fast talking salesperson) that this is absolutely not true. In fact striving to be perfect in the way you look, what you say and the way you say it can sometimes have a detrimental effect on your level of social influence.

More often than not if you appear too perfect to people then they will struggle to relate to you and you will lose connection. Now by this I do not mean that you should not make an effort to iron out the rough edges and work towards being as articulate as you can.

What I do mean is that it is useful to recognise that by presenting yourself as a normal human being, faults included, you can actually relate better to people and connect with them at a level that is both natural and honest.

Also, never be under the notion that you have to be like someone else in order to be accepted. You just have to be yourself, flaws included.

A few years ago I was on a public speaking course in London with roughly another 100 people. After a brief training session we were put into groups and asked to deliver a 3 minute presentation about ourselves...

The first person up was this tall, muscular, dark haired gentleman. In a previous conversation he had told me that he was an avid fan of the American motivational speaker Tony Robbins and that he had recently attended one of his courses for the 9th time!

The more the conversation went on the more I was beginning to get the impression that he modelled nearly every part of his appearance, voice, lifestyle and even personality on Tony Robbins...

As he strode up to the stage he held his head up high, shoulders back with a huge smile from ear to ear. He turned to face the audience, punched his fist into the air and yelled in the most motivational voice he could muster, "Raise your hands in the air if you want to be happy?"

Not one single person out of a room of 20 put their hands up... Not wanting to appear dispirited he continued his presentation in incredibly dynamic and clinical fashion. By the end of it, even though every word and gesture was perfect, he got very little response, if any, from the audience.

Now there is nothing inherently wrong with wanting to be someone else. It does, however, often have a negative effect when it comes to social interaction. No matter how hard this guy wanted to be Tony Robbins he was never going to be as good as being Tony Robbins as Tony Robbins is.

To conclude the story, the next person up was a shy looking, short, rather shabbily presented gentleman. He pre-ceded in telling one of the most heartfelt, humorous and engaging stories I had heard for a long time. He stumbled through it, made mistakes and his gestures were all over the place but he connected with the audience at a deep level and walked off the stage leaving them wanting more.

My point is that, while being able to present your message clearly and dynamically is important, it's far more important to speak about what comes naturally from within and talk from your heart. Let the person know that, while you are a skilled communicator, you have flaws just like everyone else...

But you can still learn from other people. Of course I don't mean that you shouldn't practice becoming clearer, more concise and dynamic. What I do mean is focus first on who you are, what is important to you and what your unique message is and then, from that point, look to improve the way you deliver it.

I've got to also point out that it is still incredibly useful to watch and learn from other people. In fact, I would recommend it as one of the most time effective ways to learn a new skill. Just don't copy them completely!

As the wonderful Personal Development speaker Jim Rohn so elegantly said, "Become a student of style but don't just copy someone's style. Rather pick out bits here and there that work and you like and integrate them into your own personal style in as natural way as you possibly can." ###

Steven Burns is an NLP Trainer from Scotland, well known as "The People's Coach," and has recently started specializing in helping people let go of social fears and become more socially confident. Check out his latest work at <http://www.trans4mind.com/recommended/?social> Guide to Social Confidence.com

This new program will help you turbo-charge your social confidence, improve your skills when dealing with others, and raise your overall level of attractiveness - so that you can be more persuasive and get more of what you want from life. If you would like to have any of the following:

- Become supremely confident
- Become comfortable with yourself irrespective of your flaws
- Attract the right people into your life (personally and professionally)
- Become a lot more attractive to people in general
- Re-ignite the attraction in your current relationship
- Become even more attractive to your current partner

- Let go of social fears, anxieties and shyness
- Boost your sense of self worth
- Meet new people effortlessly
- Expand your social circle
- Rapidly improve your social skills
- Be able to talk to anyone
- Exude value and self-worth from the inside out
- Connect with people at a deep level that is honest and natural
- Be more persuasive before you say a word.
- Leave a powerful, positive impression on people.

...then you'll love <http://www.trans4mind.com/recommended/?social> The People's Coach Guide to Social Confidence.

Pam Garcy

Part 21. The Hidden Benefits of Gratitude

In psychology, you might hear the term "cognitive activation model" or "spreading activation model" mentioned. What is a cognitive activation model? It is basically a model of the thinking that explains how one thought leads to the next. When someone says the word dog, you might first think of your dog Rover, then think of a dog bone, a dog bowl, dog food, a dog house, a dog playing fetch, etc. Eventually, your thinking will spread to other things that are associated with the concept of a dog. For example, you'll start to think of a pet store, cats, guinea pigs, kids playing with a hamster, etc.

Why would I bring up such an odd model when the topic d'jour is gratitude? Well, sometimes when you're in a crummy place, you're activating the parts of your brain that are associated with being in a crummy place. So, you're basically strengthening the routine of thinking of things as crummy, depressing, sad, difficult, or not worthwhile. The practice of focusing upon what you're appreciative about, or what you're grateful for, can help you to activate an entirely different set of associations. When you activate this different set of associations, it improves your outlook. Your mood improves, your perspective is more optimistic and you will be more likely to take positive and helpful actions.

The practice of gratitude creates a setting in which your inner guidance can bubble up to the surface. In other words, you will be more receptive to your inner wisdom because you are making it safe for this wisdom to surface. You'll be less likely to get falsely discouraging or pessimistic understandings of your situation. Instead, you will be approaching things from a place of wisdom, therefore you will receive more wisdom.

How can you nurture gratitude?

Here are some tips for nurturing gratitude:

Intend a state of gratitude. What this means is that you envision yourself already feeling grateful. Seal this through an affirmation such as, "I am happily noticing my gratitude for all that is."

Take what I call a gratitude walk (or ride). During a gratitude walk, you say the words thank you, over and over again, as you step. Thank you becomes a mantra, and it can become a walking meditation if you allow yourself to focus upon the words, your experience of the words and your associations to the words. It is good to do this for several minutes, becoming aware of all that you have--especially that which you normally take for granted.

Sit in gratitude. What this means is that you simply sit and begin to look around you. Notice all that you have, inside and outside of you. That which you can see is readily apparent--it will be what you might notice first. Then begin to think about what is not as apparent. What is not as obvious, that you can still notice and appreciate?

Express appreciation. Think of several friends, family members, acquaintances, or people who serve your life. Who can you appreciate today? You don't have to do anything more than express this--you can express it verbally through words or nonverbally through kind actions.

Celebrate—anything! This is just plain fun. Find one of the many reasons to celebrate & create a celebration! When was the last time you hosted a party? It doesn't have to cost a lot--it is the idea of having the people you want around you, sharing in the happiness of any reason you decide! You can just ask each friend to bring a different food item to share, for example, and by the end of it you'll have a delicious feast!

When you get into the act of creating a celebration, your reasons for gratitude will become even more apparent!

As you practice any of these, or all of these exercises, notice how you begin to feel inside. You might enjoy paying attention to your shifts in mood, energy, perspective, insight and/or awareness.

The positive effect of gratitude on receiving inner guidance

Have you ever attempted to look at a 2-D holographic drawing? You stare into it in a different way in order to see what is truly there. You cannot just look at it like you look at everything else. Instead, you must first get very close to it, relax yourself and then slowly back away--keeping your eyes positioned the same way as you would when you were close to the drawing. If you are able to retain this stance, the real image will soon emerge for you. It will be a 3-D image, rather than a 2-D image. Oddly, once you're able to see this 3-D image, you can then move your eyes and notice all of the various aspects of it. But, not until you position your vision just so.

What I have noticed is that it is often the same with our inner guidance. When you get very close to what is, accepting that you might not see all of what is before you, you can then adjust your vision. When you adjust your vision toward gratitude, you can then back up and see the larger picture. When you are able to recognize what is good, what is automatically in your favor, what is working, what is helpful, what is healthy, what is right, what is beautiful, what is available, what is amazing, what is self-renewing and what is magnificent about life, it is as though you're seeing a painting from a new and mind-opening angle. (By the way, check out <http://www.lifeisincredible.com> to get into this way of life even more!)

When you are able to position yourself to look at your life from such an angle, your vision begins to include more--you are also able to explore

within--and finally, you are positioning yourself to receive more. This includes being able to ask yourself questions and receive the answers which are waiting to avail themselves to you--your inner guidance.

Gratitude Upon Receiving Guidance

It is also a good practice to be grateful after you've tapped into your inner guidance! Be grateful for the fact that you have created this experience for yourself, and for the wisdom that you've allowed yourself to tap into! The gratitude will feed the process, allowing it to grow and become even more abundant! Like a gardener with a hose, what you water grows!

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

Pam Garcy, PhD is a Psychologist and Coach in Dallas, Texas. If you'd like a partner in reaching your goals and overcoming the obstacles that seem to stand in your way, please contact Dr. Pam for coaching at drgarcy@aol.com. Dr. Garcy offers a special 10% coaching discount to all valued subscribers of *Cultivate Life* and to customers of Trans4mind.com. Dr. Pam's best-selling books - including the bestsellers [*The Power of Inner Guidance: Seven Steps to Tune In and Turn On*](#) and [*Wake Up Moments of Inspiration*](#) <http://www.myinnerguide.com>

A Course in Miracles, Lesson 37

My holiness blesses the world.

This idea contains the first glimmerings of your true function in the world, or why you are here. Your purpose is to see the world through your own holiness. Thus are you and the world blessed together. No one loses; nothing is taken away from anyone; everyone gains through your holy vision. It signifies the end of sacrifice because it offers everyone his full due. And he is entitled to everything because it is his birthright as a Son of God.

There is no other way in which the idea of sacrifice can be removed from the world's thinking. Any other way of seeing will inevitably demand payment of someone or something. As a result, the perceiver will lose. Nor will he have any idea why he is losing. Yet is his wholeness restored to his awareness through your vision. Your holiness blesses him by asking nothing of him. Those who see themselves as whole make no demands.

Your holiness is the salvation of the world. It lets you teach the world that it is one with you, not by preaching to it, not by telling it anything, but merely by your quiet recognition that in your holiness are all things blessed along with you.

Today's four longer exercise periods, each to involve three to five minutes of practice, begin with the repetition of the idea for today, followed by a minute or so of looking about you as you apply the idea to whatever you see:

My holiness blesses this chair

My holiness blesses that window

My holiness blesses this body.

Then close your eyes and apply the idea to any person who occurs to you, using his name and saying *My holiness blesses you, [name]*.

You may continue the practice period with your eyes closed; you may open your eyes again and apply the idea for today to your outer world if you so desire; you may alternate between applying the idea to what you see around you and to those who are in your thoughts; or you may use any combination of these two phases of application that you prefer. The practice period should conclude with a repetition of the idea with your eyes closed, and another, following immediately, with your eyes open.

The shorter exercises consist of repeating the idea as often as you can. It is particularly helpful to apply it silently to anyone you meet, using his name as you do so. It is essential to use the idea if anyone seems to cause an adverse reaction in you. Offer him the blessing of your holiness immediately, that you may learn to keep it in your own awareness.

Commentary by Allen Watson

There is a principle stated in Chapter 13 of the Text that applies to this lesson: "To perceive truly is to be aware of all reality through the awareness of your own". Or, in terms a bit closer to our lesson for today:

Since you and your neighbor are equal members of one family, as you perceive both so you will do to both. You should look out from the perception of your own holiness to the holiness of others.

Unless we recognize our own holiness we will not see the holiness of all of God's creations. What we perceive is, after all, merely the reflection of

how we see ourselves. Conversely, how we perceive others *shows* us how we must be seeing ourselves.

In this lesson we are told that we see "the first glimmerings of your true function in the world, or why you are here" (1:1). Our job is stated simply but with great profundity: "Your purpose is to see the world through your own holiness".

Have you ever met someone you would consider very holy? I have. The most remarkable thing about them is that they seem to see everyone as holy. When you are around them, you even feel holy yourself! They seem to be seeing something in you that normally you cannot see; their seeing it draws it out of you. And just exactly that is why we are in the world; just exactly that is what all of us are here to do. We are here to see the world through our own holiness, to draw out of everyone around us their native holiness, to perceive them in such a way that the power of our perception lifts them up out of self-doubt and self-loathing into an awareness of their own magnificence.

We have this power!

As you share my unwillingness to accept error in yourself and others, you must join the great crusade to correct it; listen to my voice, learn to undo error and act to correct it. The power to work miracles belongs to you.

"Those who are released must join in releasing their brothers, for this is the plan of the Atonement". This is the plan by which we, empowered by God's Spirit within us, can save the world. We release one another by perceiving each other through our own holiness, creating a resonance within them as their own holy nature, long suppressed, responds to our perception of them.

Thus are you and the world blessed together. No one loses; nothing is taken away from anyone; everyone gains through your holy vision.

"My holiness blesses the world"; that is what I am here for. I am here to bring blessing to the world, and the message I bring is: *so are you*. No one loses; everyone gains. What an incredible outlook this is!

This undoes the entire idea of sacrifice because it is a message of total equality. We are here to acknowledge each other, and when we do we have achieved our glorious purpose. Any other way of looking at things winds up demanding sacrifice; somebody, somewhere, has to lose. But with the vision of Christ we can look out at all the world and proclaim, "They are all the same; all beautiful and equal in their holiness".

"Your holiness blesses him by asking nothing of him. Those who see themselves as whole make no demands". Oh, that we might learn the lesson of asking nothing, making no demands! Have you ever, even perhaps if only for a brief time, been with someone who was so complete they made no demands on you? They had no need they were, overtly or covertly, asking you to fill. They loved you just as you were; they accepted you without expecting anything from you. Isn't that what we all want in our relationships? Isn't that what unconditional love is?

Well, the way to have what you want is to give it away. This is what all of us are destined to do, and will do eventually, even if it seems beyond us now. Aware of your holiness and your own completion, you will stand and bless the world.

Your holiness is the salvation of the world. It lets you teach the world that it is one with you, not by preaching to it, not by telling it anything, but merely by your quiet recognition that in your holiness are all things blessed along with you. ###