

Cultivate Life!

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Cultivate Life! magazine

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To be new and live in the Now I must learn to see my life from the part of me that knows my True Nature is not created to be a captive of anything!

—*Guy Finley*

The Power of Positive Self-Talk

by Brian Tracy

Perhaps the most powerful influence on your attitude and personality is what you say to yourself, and believe. It is not what happens to you, but how you respond internally to what happens to you, that determines your thoughts and feeling and, ultimately, your actions. By controlling your inner dialogue, or self-talk, you can begin to assert control over every other dimension of your life.

Your self-talk, the words that you use to describe what is happening to you, and to discuss how you feel about external events, determines the quality and tone of your emotional life. When you see things positively and constructively and look for the good in each situation and each person, you have a tendency to remain naturally positive and optimistic. Since the quality of your life is determined by how you feel, moment to moment, one of your most important goals should be to use every psychological technique available to keep yourself thinking about what you want and to keep your mind off of what you don't want, or what you fear.

Arnold Toynbee, the historian, developed what he called the challenge-response theory of history. In studying the rise and fall of 20 major world civilizations, Toynbee concluded that each civilization started out as a small group of people - as a village, as a tribe or in the case of the Mongol empire, as just three people who had survived the destruction of their small community. Toynbee concluded that each of these small groups faced external challenges, such as hostile tribes. In order to survive, much less thrive, these small groups had to reorganize themselves to deal positively and constructively with these challenges.

By meeting each of these challenges successfully, the village or tribe would grow. Even greater challenges would be triggered as a result. And if this group of people continued to meet each challenge by drawing upon its resources and winning out, it would continue to grow until ultimately it became a nation-state and then a civilization covering a large geographical area.

Toynbee looked at the 21 great civilizations of human history, ending with the American civilization, and concluded that these civilizations began to decline and fall apart when their citizens and leaders lost the will or ability to rise to the inevitable external challenges occasioned by their very size and power.

Toynbee's theory of civilizations can be applicable to our life as well.

You are continually faced with challenges and difficulties, with problems and disappointments, with temporary setbacks and defeats. They are an unavoidable and inevitable part of being human. But, as you draw upon your resources to respond effectively to each challenge, you grow and become a stronger and better person. In fact, without those setbacks, you could not have learned what you needed to know and developed the qualities of your character to where they are today.

Much of your ability to succeed comes from the way you deal with life. One of the characteristics of superior men and women is that they recognize the inevitability of temporary disappointments and defeats, and they accept them as a normal and natural part of life. They do everything possible to avoid problems, but when problems come, superior people learn from them, rise above them, and continue onward in the direction of their dreams.

Dr. Martin Seligman of the University of Pennsylvania has written a fascinating book based on his 25 years of research into this subject. It's titled *Learned Optimism*. In this book, Dr. Seligman explains the basic response patterns of both positive and negative people. As a result of his many years of work in cognitive therapy, and the use of exhaustive testing, he finds, quite simply, that optimistic people tend to interpret events in such a way that they keep their minds positive and their emotions under control.

Optimists develop the habit of talking to themselves in constructive ways. Whenever they experience an adversity, they immediately describe it to themselves in such a way that it loses its ability to trigger negative emotions and feelings of helplessness.

Dr. Seligman says that there are three basic differences in the reactions of optimists and pessimists. The first difference is that the optimist sees a setback as temporary, while the pessimist sees it as permanent. The optimist sees an unfortunate event, such as an order that falls through or a sales call that fails, as a temporary event, something that is limited in time and that has no real impact on the future. The pessimist, on the other hand, sees negative events as permanent, as part of life and destiny.

For example, let's say that the optimistic salesperson makes 10 calls on likely prospects, and every one of those calls is unsuccessful. The optimist simply interprets this as a temporary event and a matter of averages or probabilities. The optimist concludes that, with every temporary failure, he is moving closer to the prospect who will turn into a sale. The optimist dismisses the event and goes on cheerfully to the 11th and 12th prospects.

The pessimist sees the same situation differently. The pessimist has a tendency to conclude that 10 unsuccessful sales calls is an indication that the economy is terrible and that there is no market for his product. The pessimist generalizes and begins to see the situation and his career as hopeless. While the optimist just shrugs it off and gets on with the next call, the pessimist becomes discouraged and loses heart and enthusiasm for the hard work of prospecting.

The second difference between the optimist and the pessimist is that the optimist sees difficulties as specific, while the pessimist sees them as pervasive. This means that when things go wrong for the optimist, he looks at the event as an isolated incident largely disconnected from other things that are going on in his life.

For example, if something you were counting on failed to materialize and you interpreted it to yourself as being an unfortunate event, but something that happens in the course of life and business, you would be reacting like an optimist. The pessimist, on the other hand, sees disappointments as being pervasive. That is, to him they are indications of a problem or shortcoming that pervades every area of life.

If a pessimist worked hard to put together a business deal and it collapsed, he would tend to assume that the deal did not work out was because the product or the company or the economy was in poor shape and the whole business was hopeless. The pessimist would tend to feel helpless, unable to make a difference and out of control of his destiny.

The third difference between optimists and pessimists is that optimists see events as external, while pessimists interpret events as personal. When things go wrong, the optimist will tend to see the setback as result from external factors over which one has little control.

If the optimist is cut off in traffic, for example, instead of getting angry or upset, he will simply downgrade the importance of the event by saying something like, oh, well, I guess that person is just having a bad day.

The pessimist has a tendency to take everything personally. If the pessimist is cut off in traffic, he will react as though the other driver has deliberately acted to upset and frustrate him. The pessimist will become angry and negative and want to strike out and get even. Often, he will honk his horn or yell at the other driver. There is a natural tendency in all of us to react emotionally when our expectations are frustrated in any way. When something we wanted and hoped for fails to materialize, we feel a temporary sense of disappointment and unhappiness. We feel disillusioned. We react as though we have been punched in the emotional solar plexus.

The optimistic person, however, soon moves beyond this disappointment. He responds quickly to the adverse event and interprets it as being temporary, specific and external to himself. The optimist takes full control of his inner dialogue and counters the negative feelings by immediately reframing the event so that it appear positive in some way.

Napoleon Hill, who, prior to writing his best-selling books on success, interviewed 500 of the most successful people in America, concluded that Contained within a setback or disappointment is the seed of an equal or greater advantage or benefit. And this is one of the great secrets of success.

Since your conscious mind can hold only one thought at a time, either positive or negative, if you deliberately choose a positive thought to dwell upon, you keep your mind optimistic and your emotions positive. Since your thoughts and feelings determine your actions, you will tend to be a more constructive person, and you will move much more rapidly toward the goals that you have chosen.

It all comes down to the way you talk to yourself on a regular basis. In our courses of problem solving and decisions making, we encourage people to respond to problems by changing their language from negative to positive. Instead of using the word problem, we encourage people to use the word situation. You see, a problem is something that you deal with. The event is the same. It's the way you interpret the event to yourself that makes it sound and appear completely different.

Even better than situation is the word challenge. Whenever you have a difficulty, immediately reframe it and choose to view it as a challenge. Rather than saying, I have a problem, say, I have an interesting challenge facing me. The word challenge is inherently

positive. It is something that you rise to that makes you stronger and better. It is the same situation, only the word that you are using to describe it is different.

The best of all possible words is the word opportunity. When you are faced with a difficulty of any kind, instead of saying, I have a problem, you can say, I am faced with an unexpected opportunity. And if you concentrate your powers on finding out what that opportunity is-even if it is only a valuable lesson-you will certainly find it. As the parable says, Seek and ye shall find, for all who seek find it.

One of my favorite affirmative statements, which I use to deal with any unexpected difficulty, is this: Every situation is a positive situation if viewed as an opportunity for growth and self-mastery. Whenever something goes wrong, immediately neutralize its negative power by quickly reciting this statement.

If you are in sales, and your method of prospecting is not generating the results that you desire, you can view it as an opportunity for growth and self-mastery. The adversity you are facing may be meant to indicate to you that there is a better way to approach this task. Perhaps you should be prospecting in a different place, or with different people, or using a different script or a different method. Perhaps your difficulty is simply part of the process of developing the persistence and tenacity that you need to become successful in any kind of market. The difference between the winner and the loser is that the winner faces and deals with the adversity constructively, while the loser allows the adversity to overwhelm him.

The hallmark of the fully mature, fully functioning, self-actualizing personality is the ability to be objective and unemotional when caught up in the inevitable storms of daily life. The superior person has the ability to continue talking to himself in a positive and optimistic way, keeping his mind calm, clear and completely under control. The mature personality is more relaxed and aware and capable of interpreting events more realistically and less emotionally than is the immature personality. As a result, the mature person exerts a far greater sense of control and influence over his environment, and is far less likely to be angry, upset, or distracted.

The starting point in the process of becoming a highly effective person is to monitor and control your self-talk every minute of the day. Keep your thoughts and your words positive and consistent with your goals, and keep your mind focused on what you want to do and the person you want to be.

Here are five ideas you can use to help you to be a more positive and optimistic person:

First, resolve in advance that no matter what happens, you will not allow it to get you down. You will respond in a constructive way. You will take a deep breath, relax and look for whatever good the situation may contain. When you make this decision in advance, you mentally prepare yourself so that you are not knocked off balance when things go wrong, as they inevitably will.

Second, neutralize any negative thoughts or emotions by speaking to yourself positively all the time. Say things like, I feel healthy! I feel happy! I feel terrific! As you go about your job, say to yourself, I like myself, and I love my work! Say things like, Today is a great day; it's wonderful to be alive! According to the law of expression, whatever is

expressed is impressed. Whatever you say to yourself or others is impressed deeply into your subconscious mind and is likely to become a permanent part of your personality.

Third, look upon the inevitable setbacks that you face as being temporary, specific and external. View the negative situations as a single event that is not connected to other potential events and that is caused largely by external factors over which you can have little control. Simply refuse to see the event as being in any way permanent, pervasive or indicative of personal incompetence or inability.

Fourth, remember that it is impossible to learn and grow and become a successful person without adversity and difficulties. You must contend with and rise above them in order to become a better person. Welcome each difficulty by saying, That's good! and then look into the situation to find the good in it.

Finally, keep your thoughts on your goals and dreams, on the person you are working toward becoming. When things go wrong temporarily, respond by saying to yourself, I believe in the perfect outcome of every situation in my life. Resolve to be cheerful and pleasant, and resist every temptation toward negativity and disappointment. View a disappointment as an opportunity to grow stronger, and about it to yourself and others in a positive and optimistic way. ###

Brian Tracy is a leading authority on personal and business success. As Chairman and CEO of Brian Tracy International, he is the best-selling author of 17 books and over 300 audio and video learning programs. Copyright 2001 Brian Tracy International. All Rights Reserved. <http://www.briantracy.com>

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How Trans4mind can help you become master of your life...

To be a master in the art of living, does not mean your life is free of problems or challenges. It means that you always carry an unshakable inner peace as your way of being into every situation. It is this inner state of calm that then enables you to face your life challenges with creativity, clear communication and discernment. As a result you are able to progress effortlessly and powerfully to achieve the result you desire.

Life Mastery

Meet the challenge of living

www.trans4mind.com/inner-peace.html

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Harness the Power That Defeats Defeat

by Guy Finley

You possess a potential power that is superior to any difficulty that life may ever present. This immense inner capability enables anyone who will claim it to instantly rise above his challenger. It makes no difference what form the challenge may assume or how huge it looms. This latent power of yours can render it harmless and ultimately make it disappear.

This friendly force that can turn your life into a series of victories is the power to question defeat. Now, before you start insisting that you already question your stresses and strains, allow me to show you the difference between right intention and right direction. A little story will help illustrate this higher idea.

A happy traveler noticed a tired-looking man seated off to the side of a small but pleasant country road. It appeared that even the cool shade of the tree seemed to weigh upon him. The traveler asked if he might sit for a while and refresh himself. It wasn't long after they had shared some bread, an apple, and sparse, polite conversation that the obviously unhappy man spoke up. He begged his new companion's forgiveness and went on to ask if the traveler could help him.

It seemed he had been wandering for weeks, going through all kinds of difficulties; but for all his intense effort, he could tell he wasn't getting any closer to his destination. He wanted to return to the home of his childhood. The traveler understood his plight and asked where was this home. The man, showing his first smile, called out the name of the small town where he had been born. The traveler looked at him gently and then spoke. "I know how it feels to want to go home; but along with your right intention, you've got to have the right direction. You've been headed the wrong way, friend."

The kind traveler then pointed him in the right direction and the wandering man soon made it back to the home of his youth.

Let's look at this story through the eyes of a new understanding. In that way we too can make it back to our authentic inner home, our True Self. First we must realize that our stressful, pain-filled experiences are not caused by people or events, but by our reactions to them.

And yet, if we will honestly examine the way we presently question our defeats, here's what we see: we are still desperately seeking answers that serve only to correct the surface or exterior conditions. We are still blaming circumstances for crushing us. The direction of our questions proves that we are still thinking incorrectly toward our problems. This is supremely important to grasp if we wish to change our inner and outer world.

By their very nature our old questions tend to make and then keep us victims. They imply that someone or something outside of ourselves is punishing us. No human being is a victim of any punishment outside of his own undeveloped life-level from which his inner reactions are seen as outer attacks. This is why we must learn to turn our questions into tools for developing self-wholeness instead of letting them lead us off in the wrong direction. As a matter of fact, there should be a new question forming in your mind just

about now. If you will, let me help you formulate it, because this question is pointed in the right direction. It goes something like this:

“Where in the world did I get all of those wrong questions that have kept me the victim and at odds with the world?”

“I’ll let you answer this right question for yourself. Based on what we’ve discovered so far, who stands to gain the most from keeping you fighting with shadows and grasping at straws?”

“The false self!”

“That’s right. This false nature always divides in order to conquer. From this moment forward, we are going to learn to ask our own questions — questions that address and illuminate what it is within us that always feels as though it is being punished.”

These new questions are the power that defeats defeat. They alone insure total victory. Each time you ask the right question about an inner ache, you receive the new and right result of being released from the dark deceptions of the false self that wants you to fight with life. Here are ten new questions that lead to self-wholeness. Use them to see the difference between how you used to think and how you will question defeat from now on. You will win!

Questions for Self-Wholeness

- 1) Instead of always asking yourself why things always happen to you, learn to ask What is it inside of me that attracts these painful situations?
- 2) Instead of always asking yourself why things had to go this way or that way, learn to ask Why is the way I feel always determined by external conditions?
- 3) Instead of always asking yourself how to protect yourself in challenging situations, learn to ask What is it in me that always needs to be defended?
- 4) Instead of always asking yourself how to clear up your mental fog, learn to ask Can confusion know anything about clarity?
- 5) Instead of always asking yourself what to do about tomorrow (or the next minute, learn to ask Can there ever be intelligence in anxiety or worry?
- 6) Instead of always asking yourself why does so-and-so act this or that way, learn to ask What’s inside of me that wants to hurt itself over how anyone acts?
- 7) Instead of always crying out, “Why me?” learn to ask Who is this “me” that always feels this way?
- 8) Instead of always asking yourself if you’ve made the right choice, learn to ask Can fear ever make a safe decision?
- 9) Instead of always asking yourself why doesn’t so-and-so see how wrong they are, learn to ask Is what I’m feeling about that person right now good for me? Or them?
- 10) Instead of always asking yourself how to get others to approve you, learn to ask What do I really want, the applause of the crowds or to quietly have my own life?

(Excerpted from [Let Go and Live in the Now](#), Red Wheel/Weiser)

Guy Finley is the bestselling author of *The Secret of Letting Go*, *The Courage to Be Free*, and 40 other works that have sold over a million copies in 20 languages worldwide. His newest book, *The Seeker, The Search, The Sacred* (2011, Weiser Books) reveals the common thread that runs through every human heart: the wish to unite with the Divine. The book is part of a larger project to share this healing message with the world. Visit www.onejourney.net to learn how you can help change the world.

OneJourney.net

We are proud to introduce a brand new website with one of the most amazing messages ever! It's all about who we really are – at our core – and our true purpose in life. Just spend a few relaxing moments there, and not only will you understand yourself better – and feel better about yourself – but you'll have more understanding and compassion for everyone else.

We urge you to visit www.onejourney.net and see for yourself. There's a breathtaking, deeply moving 3-minute video montage on the homepage that stirs, We think that when you see it, you'll want to share it with everyone you know.

About the OneJourney Project

Human beings must find a common ground if our battles are ever to end. Remarkably, that common ground lies at the very heart of the spiritual traditions that currently divide us. By observing the testimonies of individuals across time, distance, and religious tradition, we see that we are all on the same journey to awaken the soul. The essence of this journey has been described the same way time and again over millennia, revealing there is just one seeker and just one search leading to the discovery of just one sacred. The evidence is presented in self-realization author Guy Finley's book, [*The Seeker, The Search, The Sacred*](#).

The clearer the truth of our common spiritual bond, the greater the possibility of a new understanding that can help heal our planet. The OneJourney Project aims to spread this important message worldwide. Other interfaith and peace organizations are joining this effort, and a portion of the author and publisher proceeds from this book are being donated to a wide range of nonprofit groups.

We are all one. If we all knew it, we could not hurt one another. By sharing this message, perhaps we can change the world.

Special Offer:

As part of the worldwide release of Guy Finley's new book *The Seeker, The Search, The Sacred: Journey to the Greatness Within*, we've made special arrangements for you to receive over 108 free gifts from leading authors and experts. There is one overwhelming desire that lies at the heart of every human being. Now you can know it and fulfill it. Start the search that leads not only to the fulfillment you seek, but ultimately can help heal our world at the same time!

Click for details: <http://www.onejourneybook.org/special/CD1352/>

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Cancer is a Word, Not a Sentence

by Chuck Gallozzi

Cancer runs in Linda's family (not her real name) and she tested positive for the [BRCA \(BReast CAncer\) 2 gene](#), indicating that she is at higher risk for cancer than the general population. Moreover, she has already had cancer twice. Understandably, she is troubled, and has written asking for general advice and answers to questions. After introductory remarks, I will answer some of her questions and follow that with some suggestions that I hope will prove helpful.

The most important thing for you to do, Linda, is maintain a positive attitude. That is, you must train yourself to always focus on what's right, not what's wrong. I will repeat this message later, offering an example or two for your reference. But first, let's find out why a positive outlook is so important, not only for Linda, but for all of us.

Our body is bombarded daily with pollutants, harmful bacteria, viruses, and disease producing agents. Fortunately, however, we are protected by a miraculous arrangement called the immune system, which detects threats to our health and annihilates them. Yet, despite this protection, we still become ill. Why is that? The major cause of all disease is stress. Though it is the major cause, it is not a direct cause, but a secondary one. Here's what I mean. Cancer cells that are circulating in a body will be destroyed by a healthy immune system. But stress weakens the immune system so that it can no longer offer protection. So, in my example of cancer, the direct cause of disease is cancer while the secondary cause is stress. What makes stress so horrible is that by weakening the immune system it makes us vulnerable to *all* illnesses. Can you now see why it is so important to remain positive? Positive, cheerful people have little or no stress, so they enjoy physical and mental health.

Cancer also runs in Larry's family, making him fearful. Ironically, after learning how stress weakens the immune system, Larry is worrying more than ever. After all, his fear of getting cancer is very stressful, so his immune system is being compromised, increasing the likelihood of getting what he fears.

Earlier, Linda, I wrote that I would be stressing how important it is to train your mind to always see things in a positive light. I also wrote that I would be giving examples, the purpose of which is to illustrate how to apply positive thinking in everything you do. So, here is the first example. Larry is an example of negative thinking. Larry became *more* stressful after learning how stress weakens the immune system. So, let's see how you could look at these facts differently. Here's an example.

“Stress increases the likelihood of getting cancer? Wow! That's great to know because that means the more I eliminate stress from my life, the more I *decrease* the chances of getting cancer. Knowing this empowers me because I can immediately think of things for me to do to reduce stress. Let's see now, there are yoga classes, mindfulness meditation,

long walks, workouts in the gym, recreation. Why there are dozens of things I can do. I don't have to do all of them. I'll just choose to do what works best for me. And while I'm at it, I'll check the library, bookstore, or Internet for stress reducing techniques."

I will now move on to some of Linda's comments or questions, following that with some suggestions.

Linda: "I am facing fear and I just can't seem to think about my situation in a way that I can get a grip, so to speak."

Chuck: We all experience fear at one time or another, and the most common type is *fear of the unknown*. The more you learn and understand about your situation the less fearful and stressful you will become. Although you already know a great deal about cancer, far more than the average person, I'm afraid it's too narrowly focused. Most of what you have studied strikes fear in your heart and you find little reason to be hopeful, which indicates you need to study more. I will try to point you in the right direction and introduce you to the big picture. But that comes a little later in the article.

You don't want to die. You want to live. But where is it that we live? It is in the present moment. When you allow yourself to be gripped by fear you are focusing on what might be instead of what is. When you leave the present moment, you are choosing a dream over reality, choosing a fantasy over life. Mindfulness meditation can be a big help in learning how to experience a life without fear. Here's what [Michael Neill](#) has to say about the subject, "To be fully present with what is, is to be content, and to be content, is to be blessed by everything that happens in life."

L: "I have your articles: *Conquer the Fear of Death, Fear of Dying, Fear of Death, The Fear of Death is Worse than Death, Preparing for Death, Fear of Dying in Pain* and plan to start rereading them."

C: You don't need to reread the articles as all you are thinking about is death. Consumed by it you are allowing the pleasures and joys of life to slip by unnoticed. It is time to think about life. Yes, life is short, or as [Michael Althsuler](#) said, "The bad news is...time flies. The good news is...you're the pilot." But don't live in autopilot mode. Remain conscious. Remain present and allow life to tickle you with its many surprises. Be grateful for the opportunity to experience the mystery of life.

Teddy and May were having a conversation:

"Congratulations, Teddy, on winning that dream vacation to Bali at the company's Christmas party."

"How can I enjoy it, May? You know I have a terminal illness."

"We all do, Teddy; it's called *life*. None of us know when we will die. Terminal illness or not, I can die before you. I could die tomorrow. And this ice cream sundae that I'm eating could be my very last one. But does that make it any less delicious?"

The above conversation is another example of the right and wrong way to view life. And if it isn't clear enough, listen to the voice of Anne Frank, "I don't think of all the misery but of the beauty that still remains."

L: “How would you think about carrying a cancer gene? I feel like I’ve been handed a death sentence. I don’t feel empowered with the knowledge, I feel terrorized. I have PTSD, and these medical issues trigger it.

C: For clarity, let me answer your questions one at a time.

1. *What would I think about carrying a cancer gene?* I would want to learn as much as possible about LIVING with cancer, not about DYING of it. I would want to learn how others are successfully coping and all the available options. I would look for reasons for hope, not things to fear.

2. *I feel like I’ve been handed a death sentence. I don’t feel empowered with the knowledge; I feel terrorized.* Most people repress all thoughts of death, acting as if they would live forever. So what if their relationships are in shambles, dreams shattered, goals laid by the wayside? After all, they can always fix their problems ‘tomorrow.’ If, Linda, you use your awareness of death (awareness, not fear) to mend relationships, rebuild your dreams and achieve your goals, imagine how exhilarating life will be! Choose to allow your awareness of death empower and motivate you to lead a fulfilling life.

3. *I have PTSD, and these medical issues trigger it.* Is it true that you have PTSD and your medical issues trigger it? Yes it is true as long as you continue to say so and as long as you believe so. But here’s the point, watch what you say! You are programming your mind by what you say and believe. And you can choose what to say and believe. For example, instead of saying, “I have PTSD,” you can choose to say “I have the inner resources to change my attitude and beliefs. I can cheerfully cope with every obstacle and will do so from this moment on.” That’s a big change isn’t it? And that change is only one commitment away.

Whether you choose to say the first (PSTD) or second statement (“I can cope.”), both are equally true because we are what we say and believe we are. I will say more about beliefs in just a moment, but first your final comment.

L: “I am currently reading [*The Sedona Method*](#) and I like it.”

C: *The Sedona Method* is a very simple, but profound, technique to release fear and other negative emotions, freeing us to experience life in all its glory. But, Linda, stop *reading* about the method and start *practicing* it. If you were practicing it, you wouldn’t be writing to me. Reading about it is interesting, but practicing it is life transformative.

The Magical World of Beliefs

To be truly empowered, it is essential that we understand the nature of beliefs and utilize their potential. Beliefs and experiences feed off each other. Our experiences lead us to make conclusions and form beliefs. Once we accept a belief, we find it impossible to act in a manner incompatible with it. For instance, if we believe we cannot speak before large groups, it becomes impossible to do so. Impossible, that is, until we change our belief, which will then create a new experience. Thus, our experiences are the causes of our beliefs and our beliefs are the causes of our experiences.

But what do I do if I want to learn more and how do I change the beliefs that are holding me back? Glad you asked because at this time Alan Tutt is offering an outstanding

downloadable bundle for \$49. This is an exceptional value for what you receive. Here's what the bundle contains: His great book, *Choose to Believe: A Practical Guide to Living Your Dreams* (eBook version), his 2008 Workshop on beliefs (7 CDs, audio program), his 2011 workshop (over four hours of audio), thirty-six 26-minute audio files to program your subconscious with positive beliefs, three more bonus audio files, and two more eBooks.

You can learn more here: <http://www.powerkeyspub.com/catalog/choose-to-believe>

However, the purchase page doesn't show many of the bonuses that I've indicated above. They come as a surprise.

You can learn more about his well-crafted system for reprogramming the subconscious here:

<http://www.powerkeyspub.com/catalog/belief-entrainment>

Living with Cancer: The Big Picture

Linda, your view of your situation is lopsided. You need to get a more balanced view and become aware of all of the possibilities. To help you do so, here are some books that can become your friends and offer you new coping tools and valuable information. With each title, I've included a book review done by an actual reader (taken from Amazon.com).

There's No Place Like Hope: A Guide to Beating Cancer in Mind-sized Bites by Vickie Girard

"I bought this book to give to my sister, who is dealing with her third diagnosis of Cancer. I read it first to make sure it would be something I felt would be helpful to her, and not just another book on dealing with Cancer. It was all I hoped for and more! Both my sister, and I, felt this book was a very realistic, and uplifting book. It was also a very practical approach to dealing with cancer, whether it is the first diagnosis, or a second or third. I would recommend this book to both Cancer patients, and their caregivers and friends."

Cancer is a Word, Not a Sentence: A Practical Guide to Help You Through the First Few Weeks by Dr. Robert Buckman MD (1948~2011, as of this writing, his website hasn't been updated to show his death)

"Even as a word it is one of the most terrifying to hear if it is your diagnosis. This book gives people receiving the news (and their friends and family) a comprehensive map not only about types of cancer, treatments, anti-nauseants plus pertinent organizations and web sites, but equally important, chapters on: 'How to Get Back on Track,' 'Do I always Have to Have a Positive Attitude?' and 'What Can I Do to Help Myself?'... Even if you don't read this book here is one thing you have to know. As he says, it might be the most ignored and under-publicized medical statistic in the known world: 'Of all the people diagnosed with one of the cancers this year just over half will survive it and will not be troubled by it for the rest of their life.' In either case, this book is essential." John F. Lehman (Amazon.com Book Reviewer)

The title of my article was used as the title of two different books, including the one above. However, the expression apparently was first used by John Diamond, whose book appears below.

Facets of a Diamond: Reflections of a Healer by John Diamond

“Facets of a Diamond is an incredible book that looks honestly, intelligently and profoundly at the roles of healer and patient, and more importantly, at the underlying motivation of man. Diamond looks at every aspect of an illness or life problem: spiritual, societal, motivational, dietary, energetic, psychological, environmental, hereditary...”

Cancer: 50 Essential Things to Do by Greg Anderson

“I never wrote a review before, but this book has had a huge impact. I was diagnosed with stage 4 kidney renal cancer. After hearing “to get my affairs in order” and going through the nightmare of emotions and feeling, I found this book. I felt hope and chose to not give up and fight. I am applying what I have learned, and the rewards far exceed expectations. I am surprising my doctors, and doing well. This book is so uplifting and full of hope. If you apply the principles in this book, you can make a difference in your cancer outcome.” (Out of 35 Amazon.com readers, 27 gave this book a 5-star rating.)

Healing Cancer From Inside Out by Mike Anderson

“The information this book provides is nothing short of shocking. Two months ago I was diagnosed with colon cancer. As an unapologetic research nerd, I read everything I could get my hands on to learn more about what was wrong with me and how best to battle it. Mike Anderson’s book is far and away the most informative resource I’ve come across. Highly recommended!”

You will find a wealth of resources on Mike’s website [here](#). And [the book and DVD bundle](#) are reasonably priced at \$19.95. The [book alone](#) is \$15.95, and the DVD alone is \$12.95.

I’m glad to learn, Linda, that you participated in an online support group, but if at all possible, I would urge you to join a live support group in your area. You have a lot to cope with and it can be very stressful if you try handling it alone. More than therapists and doctors, you need the support, friendship, and ideas that can come from men and women in the same position as you.

We all wish Linda a happy and exceptional life. ###

Chuck Gallozzi, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada

Chuck lived in Japan for 15 years, immersing himself in the wisdom of the Far East. He is the author of the book, *The 3 Thieves and 4 Pillars of Happiness, 7 Steps to a Life of Boundless Joy*. He is also a Certified NLP Practitioner, speaker, and seminar leader. Among his additional accomplishments, he is also the Grand Prix Winner of a Ricoh International Photo Competition, the Canadian National Champion in a Toastmasters International Humorous Speech Contest, and the Founder and Head of the Positive Thinkers Group that has been meeting at St. Michael’s Hospital, Toronto since 1999. He was interviewed on CBC’s *Steven and Chris Show*, appearing nationally on Canadian TV. Chuck is a catalyst for change, dedicated to bringing out the best in others and his main home on the web is at: www.personal-development.com.

A Paris Perception

by Beca Lewis

I spent a week in Paris once. It was a perfect week.

After a divorce, I realized I didn't need a car because I could walk to work and shop in the small grocery store in an adjacent apartment building by carrying home what I needed every few days.

Each month I saved the money the car had cost and decided to travel instead. Up until that time, I thought I was too important at work to ever take time off. Then another grand daughter was born and I felt impelled to spend one weekend a month with her, which was a short train trip down the Southern California coast.

That was the beginning.

Probably I was worried all along that if I started traveling, I would love it so much that work would come second instead of first and that is exactly what happened. I discovered that I was not too important, that things went on without me, and that life had been waiting for me to discover it.

After a few months of saving, I had money enough to visit Paris, my life long dream. I asked both my daughters if they would like to go with me, I would pay the travel cost. However, they were both caught up with husbands and babies so I went on my own.

I can remember every detail as if it happened yesterday when really it was over 10 years ago. The plane ride from CA to Paris was long but delightful because I was so grateful to be going.

I had packed light knowing that I would be lugging my bags around on my own. I took a taxi from the airport to a bus stop and a bus to my hotel in the middle of the night, all with the help of strangers who spoke my language even though I didn't speak theirs.

I spent every day without a clock or any contact with the outside world other than the city of Paris. I got up when I felt like it, I ate when I felt like it, I went to bed when I felt like it. I stayed at a little family run hotel near the arc de l'triumpe so I walked through it every day on my way out and on my way back in and felt the history of the city within its stones.

I made no plans about what I would do. I simply walked. I got on the subway and rode places knowing I could get on another one to get back. Heading back to my tiny hotel room at night I bought baguettes from the bakery and grapes from the subway vendor. I had packed one book that I read when I couldn't sleep while I waited for it to be light enough to start walking again.

I had two pairs of shoes so I could wear alternate ones each day. I called home once after figuring out how to buy a phone card and use the public phone so the girls would know I

was ok; otherwise, I rarely spoke to anyone other than ordering food, or occasionally asking directions.

I was at home in Paris. I would sit in the café's for hours or stroll by the Seine. Churches did not lock their doors so any time I needed to rest I could stop in and absorb their silent beauty,

Most people thought I was from Paris, and I reveled in the fact I looked like I belonged there. The few Americans I spoke to were shocked that I had traveled alone. I was shocked that they could only travel in packs.

I bought a pass that allowed me to walk directly into any museum anywhere, so I would walk into one and out again, take a short walk down the road, find another and walk in and out as slowly or as quickly as I wanted.

I noticed everything. I saw that some days I would see the same people over and over again even though I never knew where I was going to go. The order and symmetry of it all was wonderful.

I loved that they cleaned the sidewalks with big sprays of water every morning. I loved the coffee and the croissants. I loved the light, the gardens, and even the brisk air. There was nothing I didn't love about Paris.

I had told myself that if I wanted to I could go live in Paris. After spending a week there, I knew that I didn't, not because I didn't love it or that it didn't feel like home, but because I realized that I could never get away from the fact that I wanted to be near my family. This was surprisingly a wonderful freeing realization,

It was beyond delightful to visit to Paris alone that year. I became grateful there was no one to travel with me at that time because I didn't have to bend my desires to anyone. It was a moment in time that I will never forget.

Now, I am grateful I have someone to travel with me who travels the same as I do, and that I have found home where I live, and my traveling bug has been fulfilled - for now.

However, I realize that the lessons of that trip to Paris are important to remember. Life is waiting for us to discover it. Work will be fine without us. Take some time to see the world, beginning in your own back yard. Don't wait for someone else to do it with you, begin within, and enjoy the journey. ###

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>

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~ **Daring To Be Yourself** ~
by Peter Shephard

You can create a new life. A life revised in small but crucial ways—or perhaps you will totally change the way things have been up to now. You choose, of course. But first you need to know just who you really are and to shed the conditioning imposed on you by decades of conforming to other people's expectations and other people's interpretations.

This book—a blueprint to the life you really desire—has been developed by Peter Shepherd, author of *Transforming the Mind*. A step by step approach is followed throughout to help you uncover and remove the barriers to self-knowledge and freedom of expression and action.

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There's Something Wrong With My Thinking

by Steve Wickham

I am, by nature, selfish. I think most about me. That's why humility is a daily struggle, a lesson I must relearn over and over.

~*Rick Warren*.

The true colour of my character is assessed by others who like me least, by the mode of judgment - a common human act to attribute justice for what is seen. What I do with that is up to me, and my rapport with, and level of surrender to, God. I am the one with work to do, not them.

Yet, I do not often enough think like this, i.e. to think truthfully.

A recent diary entry:

The last two days' studies have put into proper context the challenge, single-most, before me. As I have fought through this most recent rut by drawing close to the Lord, he has patiently shown me the error in my ways. I have fallen, for too long, to the subtleties of pride. My daily mantra needs to be centred in humility and, specifically, servanthood. That is, true sacrifice to the moment's defined needs - others', not mine.

BY NATURE, SELFISH

This is an annoyingly common predilection, as I consider it personally. Interestingly, it's when I most notice my annoyance about others' selfishness that I'm closest to pride.

No matter how much we make a study of humility we will always need to deal with the propensity towards selfishness - our agenda over God's; a fault at the level of our thinking and the heart beneath. Something is wrong with my thinking that only God, in his mercy, and due my surrender, can fix.

As I've reflected on the truth, as God has revealed it, I have started to notice just how much of me is reflected in the things I've been doing. Too easily I have veiled service toward my own ends.

The root issue in pride, which is the actual manifestation of selfishness, is insidious; it creeps up and deceives us. Day by day it slinks its way into our minds, burrowing deeply into the fine crevices and seeming fissures of our psyches. We are robbed a cent or two at a time; quickly and deceptively the dollars mount up, however.

The key, therefore, is keeping front of mind the daily struggle.

A DAILY STRUGGLE TURNED INTO AN OPPORTUNITY

Too easily we are overwhelmed by the comprehensiveness of such a task: to address our thinking. We can only do it one day at a time. Turning the problem into an opportunity is easy. We can manage this thing day by day as we rely on God and learn and relearn, with studious tenacity, the character trait of humility.

We must always be quick to reconcile the truth: we are naturally selfish and unnaturally humble. We have the capacity to be humble, but only when we give up our agendas for God's agenda, and only a day at a time. Only one day at a time can we 'fix' our thinking - and only through God's grace.

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/>

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Divine Intentions

by Douglas E. Holzmeier

“Great Intentions begin with Great Comprehensions.”

We all have intentions. It's the *comprehensions* that trip us up. Those born into wealthy families can *comprehend* what wealth is, what it looks like, what it feels like, even what it smells like. No wonder we have the term *old money*. A person who knows *abundance* can easily *see* themselves remaining abundant.

The reverse is true as well. If you *know* poor, poor *knows* you. This is why it is imperative that you get to know some wealth, if being wealthy is your intention. Get to know the wealth and abundance that flows from the *divinity* that is within. Abundance flows from *within* just as Mozart's music flowed from within. Elton John writes the melodies of his hit songs, but the music lover is the one who buys the records and the music company is the entity that writes the royalty checks. Elton is expressing his *divinity*, and that is what we connect with and embrace.

God's good is everywhere. Open your eyes and your heart. Everything good you see started as a *divine* idea before it became a reality. Appearances are the major hang-up to progress. For all the talk about people living in the past and worrying about the future, the problem of only seeing what is, instead of imagining what could be, can be just as paralyzing. When I was having great success with my weight reduction a few years ago, one of the things I did was plan and prepare my meals several days in advance.

I didn't waste time and energy contemplating every meal. When you plan in advance you prepare the way. My friend, Meg Chaffin, uses the term *riding the brake*. Without a vision we are hunting and pecking our way through life.

“Without clear intentions you will receive mixed signals, like trying to listen to several radio stations at once.”

Do you ever listen to an AM radio station and hear more than one station at a time? It usually happens if you are trying to tune in a distant station, mixed signals, hard to enjoy. Sounds fuzzy if the antenna is broken or there's a storm, and all you hear is static. Are you experiencing *static cling*? Do you have *clear* intentions? If answering a simple question like *What do you want* gives you chills instead of *thrills*, then you are going to have a problem

attracting and manifesting your goals and intentions because you are not clear. The trivial matters of life are clinging to the important matters; while you're attending to the trivial you neglect the consequential.

There is a way to attend to all things that is productive and *divine*. It is to simply look at everything as *sacred*. This is a powerful way of living. I admit it has been a problem for me. If the mundane things in life that must be done are frowned upon as meaningless and

time wasting, then that will be the vibration you are in while doing them. Remaining in a higher vibration of gratitude is essential to realizing objectives. Getting upset about minor annoyances lowers your vibration and detracts from life's peace and joy and slows the manifesting process. Proverbs 17:22 reads, "A cheerful heart is good medicine but, a crushed spirit dries up the bones." How many of our hearts become as brittle as bones because of a lack of gratitude? The Bible suggests that the heart withers before the body. Life is sacred. Work and play with reverence for life and *Life* responds in kind.

"You externalize what you internalize."

Try this little exercise. Pretend you are an interviewer on television and you are interviewing the richer, more abundant and happy you. Let the fully realized and sacred you tell all about how you became so successful and happy. You will be surprised just how clear and direct this already successful and sacred you is in telling your story. You become the story you tell yourself. Tell yourself a beautiful story! You are a beautiful story. *You Are God's Best Idea!*

What's coming out is already within. If your intentions, as well as comprehensions, are fully focused and the picture clearly imagined in Mind, you are well on your way.

Book of Love

The realization of this book has been my dominant thought and intention for nearly two years. Every time the question has been posed, regarding what I am going to do, the answer is always, "Write a book with my original epigrams in order to help people see and realize their inner and inherent divinity." No hesitation whatsoever. This is something I wanted to give to my son on his high school graduation day. You allow time for what you love. I wanted to write this book. I knew it was going to take real time and attention. The Universe gave me what I needed, time in the form of my lay off from my radio position .

"As people move through life they choose to get better or be bitter."

You don't want to be the bitter person nearing the end of life wondering *if you could have*. Of course you *could* have. We all can! The thing that keeps people from following through on intentions is they fear they will fail. **Who cares!** Seriously, I'm writing the very best book I can, having never written one before. I know that my son will enjoy it and have it for evermore. I know that this is my way of expressing God's *Divinity* within me. Any *success* beyond this realization is a bonus. Just writing the book *is* an exercise in success. I like that.

Become a practitioner of success. This book is not about encouraging you to spend more time wishing and hoping. I'm here to tell you that you are inherently *divine* and worthy of all that you can conceive. But your conception must be followed by intention and action in order for the blueprint to take form.

"The ways and means are as unlimited as God. Intend and begin."

Whatever good you intend, know that the ways and means will be revealed once the clear intention is expressed. That means taking steps toward the ultimate finish line. If man can send a probe to *Pluto*, you can get a new job, lose a few pounds, and start a new career or

Life. Intend and Begin! I have two additional thoughts about the *ultimate finish line*. You probably will find that the journey and the process toward the goal will be what you cherish. Also, if you accept the idea of *Eternity* and *Infinity*, finish lines are really going to be launching points to new and greater adventures and enlightenment.

“Things have never been better, but they can be.”

Don't look at what's *now* as bad. *Bad* is a poor jumping off point. Things just are. Think, instead, *we're getting even better!* You need to *appreciate* where you are and the *power* that went into creating it. You'll need this same appreciation and power to intend something new.

At this point I want to pause and reflect. As I write these words, Spirit is suggesting that I make sure I am reaching all the different readers who have picked up this book. For some, this is a book to reinforce what you already know, a book to set alongside other books on success and inspiration. For others, it is far more personal and immediate. You are hurting, confused, and in pain. So I will repeat: I wrote this book to tell those who did not know and to remind those who do know, you are *Divine!* You are beautiful and necessary. *You Are God's Best Idea!* You matter--*right here and right now*—just as you are! It doesn't matter what you ultimately acquire or achieve. Your *divinity* is assured. You are not obligated to do anything other than love God and your neighbor as yourself. All the rest is a bonus. If you want to give yourself a bigger bonus while uplifting the world, great--but it won't make you anymore *divine*.

“Life is a dance to progress or a chance to regress. One leads to discovery and the other to another's history.”

It's Possible

This chapter began with one of the last epigrams I wrote for the book: *“I would rather set sail upon the uncharted seas of possibility than row across a pond of probability.”* I was inspired to write this while reading a book by author Raymond Charles Barker titled, *You Are Invisible*. In chapter eight, he writes about *possibility* and *probability*. There is a huge difference between the two. Ironically, we inadvertently encourage our children to pursue the probable instead of the possible. It seems that the path of least resistance is a pursuit of the probable. It seems more probable that one will land the \$50,000-a-year job instead of the \$100,000-a-year position. That is the conventional thinking. You believe you are *over* qualified for the lower paying position and *under*-qualified for the higher paying position so you apply for the probable instead of the possible. What is missed in this equation, however, is that since most people think this way, the lower paying jobs receive the highest number of applicants while the higher paying jobs receive the lowest number of applications. The odds are in your *favor* if you go for the biggest prize: *The Possible*.

The biggest prize, whether it is a job or some great new scientific discovery, isn't found on the other side of the easy-to-cross pond. It awaits the bold, the adventurer, the person who believes they are great enough to sail the uncharted seas of possibility to receive the treasure sought. You don't need to *look* the part of hero to play the part of hero. Great looks matter most in high school and the modeling industry. High school is in the past and most fashion models have short careers. The person who has recognized and accepted

their inner *divinity*, their inner *beauty*, is just this kind of being, the one who believes all things are possible with God, instead of the one who settles for the mediocrity of probability. As Raymond Charles Barker suggested, possibility is of the spirit, probability is of the human mind.

Your intentions become your reality when you express and accept your *divinity* and live *the Undeniable Life*.

“Life is a correspondence course where success is determined by your correspondence with God.” ###

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Doug Daniels Media is Douglas Holzmeier's multimedia company. Doug is available as a Life Coach; Motivational Speaker; Voice Over talent and programming consultant. The audio version of ***You Are God's Best Idea! Divine Acceptations and Living the Undeniable Life*** is sold through Doug Daniels Media at www.YouAreGodsBestIdea.com

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Believe

by Becky (Ruff) Reed

“Man has gone long enough, or even too long, without being man enough to face the simple truth that the trouble with man is man.”

~James Thurber

I have to admit that a sense of humor – either during or sometime after events – kept my life moving forward many times, one step at a time. I could easily be the quintessential poster child for failed romances and the last one with a narcissist surely took me into the realm of eerily uncanny expeditions to the dark side. I believe that I understand something of the phenomenon of New Thinking as shown by Eckhart Tolle and his premise (as with so many others in this particular path of thought) that there is only the Now. Because living entails an emotional response, that Now is a point in time where we not only observe ourselves in dramas and settings, but where we feel the emotional flows of energy emanating from our views in that scenario.

Anyone who exists within time frames also looks at the future, responsibility, cause and effect, choices of the past, and the precipitate of fallout from any specific action taken in response to a stimuli of some sort. But, what I have come to see for myself is that our emotional responses to “something” will not alter the occurrence...it does, however, make being in that present time more acceptable or frightening/upsetting, depending on the point of introspection.

With utter despair and excruciating distress, I discovered myself discarded by a spouse and his family when my funds had run dry and anything I offered of myself produced no useful end for them. I began searching desperately to find a way to cope with MY NOW. The pain of loss was almost unbearable – much more so than any other relationship breakup in my personal experience. I feel that my discovery of the term with its ideas, narcissism, answered my driving need to label this phenomenon.

In the midst of horrific anguish while freshly used, devalued, and discarded with the precision of a surgeon's scalpel in my marital relationship, I voraciously devoured reading material searching for answers to my trek through the bowels of the Twilight Zone. I was lost, alone, and terrified by the turn my life had taken, leaving me emotionally devastated and financially decimated. I stumbled onto a site with Lisa E. Scott's book, [It's All About Him](#), and this became the turning point for my own self-redemption and healing. I found well researched data on narcissism peppered with stories of others falling into the dark abyss with this chameleon of a manipulator and in this information, an introduction to Sam Vaknin and his work, [Malignant Self Love, Narcissism Revisited](#). There is a path of comprehension that I needed to find. Just as in the movie, “I, Robot,” where we discover that even these beings of other-than-flesh-and-blood presence tend to group together when stored away from activity, I, too, needed to *know* that I wasn't alone. What I sought was some kind of understanding of what had occurred, a sense of camaraderie to counteract the

responses of friends and family, and most importantly, the amazingly awe-inspiring feeling that we – specifically, me - might not be damaged goods who sought this painful excursion into an alien realm.

Thomas Sheridan in his Perplexing People, relates that many feel they have come in contact with an alien force. A total absence of empathy in the narcissist shocks those associated with the individual. Although the narcissist has learned by social conditioning to observe and mimic emotions to fit into social structure, there usually exists continual drama and chaos in his realm.

The “sensitive” as coined by Scott, which I so much prefer to “codependent,” strives to fathom the uncharted experience when compared to past relationships and teachings about communication offering an avenue for connection. Eventually - and the time frame for healing may continue for about two years – each of us rummaging through our beliefs following this excursion into total confusion, will change her/his personal vision of desolation into one of strength, integrity, and the ability to reclaim her life.

I detested the idea that seemed to predominate within the ranks of therapists that codependency was *only* bad and indicative of my own deep rooted “illness.” In a period of my life when just emerging from continual chaos and turmoil, this itself, seemed like a conspiracy to eradicate any validation of my own experiences. It seemed much too simplistic in fostering the idea that low self-esteem was the problem in all instances, to be “cured” in the victim. Even if the intentions of counselors were good, they certainly created sustained roadblocks for a willingness to communicate freely for fear of being chastised with labels. This, indeed, was my own movie played in the midst of a strangely entangled family with my marriage to a man I believe to be a narcissist. What I found tremendously distasteful was the thought that my response to a genuinely horrific experience was pathological itself.

Through reading books and joining blog sites, I found it to be true that I had begun to effectively climb a course of purposely essential steps of gradational movement into recovery. It's a most individualized journey to dropping the shackles of fear and self-doubt as I painstakingly incorporated mental and emotional purging and growth. Being tested in a very unique way, I, too, have found my own nodding acquaintance with intellect, warmth, and heartfelt compassion. I discovered that I needed to change my perceptions and ideas on past teachings regarding other people and even the hallmarks of communication. My track of development included rethinking my own conduct in this dark territory and with some difficulty, offered me a lifeline away from unaware therapists and unknowledgable friends and family whose judgments left me drowning in uncertainty. Learning to trust my choices and again to live consciously has been a most enlightening procedure.

My life has been altered. I am finally no longer afraid and although not the same innocent I once was, I have the courage to stand for my convictions and to be fully myself, warts and all. Whether or not romance enters my future, I am OK and look toward tomorrows with fresh discernment and even an eagerness. There is nothing to hide and no attempts necessary to fit the vision of someone else for me in a particular blueprint. I have now transformed my vision of myself as being a desolate “sensitive” into one of personal

strength and integrity, one step at a time. My gratitude to energies in this universe and all who shared their testimonials with me is immeasurable.

The above is an excerpt from *IT IS WHAT IT IS ...AND WHAT IT IS, IS* by Becky (Ruff) Reed an ebook free to all readers of *Cultivate Life! magazine*.

To download the full ebook go to <http://www.trans4mind.com/cultivate-life-magazine/ebooks/Feature-ebooks.html>

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Do You Practice Scarcity Thinking?

by Joyce Shafer

Scarcity . . . sounds like what it creates—Scare City—because this kind of thinking keeps you living in fear. Would you like to shift your thoughts about this?

Problem: You lose something you rely on (like steady income from a job, or a relationship). They're important but are each only one funnel of money or love coming into your life. You're always connected to Source, which is an infinite funnel of resources, not scarcity—it can create anything. Yes or no? Saying you believe this but not putting it into practice, not allowing it in your life, doesn't bring you the results you want, does it? Labeling events as “problems” is directly related to scarcity thinking.

Joseph Sugarman said: "Each problem has hidden in it an opportunity so powerful that it literally dwarfs the problem. The greatest success stories were created by people who recognized a problem and turned it into an opportunity."

Do you see only the “problem” or do you allow there may be and look for and act on opportunities available through the “problem”?

Do more of your thoughts and words support scarcity and lack, or abundance and prosperity—harmony or discord, stress or serenity?

Are you a news addict? Does what you listen to or read lift you into a positive state of mind (creativity, enthusiasm, appreciation, or even relaxation) or drag you down (affirms what's “awful” in life)? How and what you feed your mind is what you “nurture” and grow in your life.

Scarcity thinking is rampant. Just notice how often scarcity, in its many forms, comes up in conversations. There is no scarcity—not really, just scarcity thinking.

I understand the challenge if you're having a tough time, but it Can Be Temporary if you look for and move forward on opportunities, and get your thinking straight. Scarcity, lack, and problems may appear but are more often states of mind, and definitely have to be your states of mind before they continue to behave as your reality past when they happen. Instead of “I don't have,” try “How might I attain”? Think of someone you know who has an abundant life. Is their state of mind scarcity or acting on opportunities?

You can try different strategies, but it's your thinking that must change first in order to create real and lasting transformation, for any and every area of your life. Old thoughts do not create new results.

You may get caught up in worry, fear, and thoughts of lack—all forms of negative thinking. Even if you don't pull to you all the experiences that match these thoughts (fortunately!), you manage to experience the emotions as though the experiences were real. That is just NOT fun or healthy. Kurt Wright was correct when he said commitment is a magnet. Scarcity thinking acts as a commitment to have less—and you get it. Choose the thoughts you would want to become your reality the same day you think them, and

know that you fuel attainment of your desired results with your Determination to have them.

This kind of thinking takes commitment. Will this be easy to do? Perhaps not at first, if you've practiced scarcity thinking for a long time; but it will get easier with practice. Then it will feel more logical to do this than not. Your desired results may or may not be instant, but your right results will be yours if you stay with this. If scarcity thinking hasn't improved your life so far, maybe it's time to shift this.

You are what you practice. ###

About Joyce Shafer

I help women 45+ get their Awesome back! **Love Who You Are, Go for What You Really Want**—a life-changing online coaching course with **Joyce Shafer**, life coach; author; and publisher of **State of Appreciation**, a free weekly online newsletter that blends practical & spiritual approaches to life for personal development & self-realization. Terrific empowering gifts available when you subscribe free at <http://stateofappreciation.webs.com>

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Five Dating Sins and How to Overcome Them

by Steven Burns

1. Attaching too much Meaning...

So as each day passes you're getting older, your friends are settling down and having kids and you start thinking... "Well if it doesn't happen soon, it's never going to happen... If I mess up this one then I'll be left on the shelf and no-one will want me... this is my last shot at love and happiness!!!"

Attaching too much meaning to a date is a huge mistake and virtually always an inaccurate assessment of our own life situation and opportunities.

When we attach too much meaning to something that we want we often buy into the notion that, if we don't get it, then it means we are in some way not okay. This, in turn, creates a tension that hinders us from being relaxed and in the moment.

For some reason we can often lock into the thinking that this is a 'boom or bust' opportunity and if we don't take advantage of it another one might never come along. This is hardly ever the case and the truth of the matter is there are lots of opportunities to meet people in this day and age... who knows... something much better may be just round the corner.

Rather than attaching a ton of meaning to a date try releasing and letting go of all your expectations. Still have an idea of what you would like to happen and keep your standards high but let go of all your expectations and what you feel you need to have happen. When you have little or no expectations you have nothing to lose and you will feel a lot more relaxed about the whole thing. If you keep your standards high and do your best at the same time, then you will go into that blissful place where the pressure is off, you're at your best and it all starts to feel rather effortless.

2. Premature Future Projection...

So you think you've found 'the one' or at least one you really like and are interested in getting to know a lot better. You start imagining taking them home to meet your parents, going on holiday together, settling down, perhaps even kids???

Whoa... slow down there. By prematurely projecting into the future like this you've just bought into an illusion (albeit a nice one) that will actually seriously affect your chances of ever making it a reality... In truth women probably do this more than men but men still do it frequently.

Projecting into the future like this, before you know that they feel the same, creates unnecessary pressure and will more than likely cause you to blow the full thing by coming across needy and too full on too early. Instead, no matter how much you like them, enjoy the moment and keep your options open until they start to show signs that they would like to stay with you long term... Then by all means start to reciprocate.

3. Buying into the Myth of Lower Value...

You've met that man or woman that quite simply takes your breath away. There gorgeous, sexy, smart, cool, intelligent and successful... You fancy them like crazy but every time you try to talk to them your mouth goes dry, your knees start to quiver and your stomach churns like you're some love crazed, infatuated teenager... When you do manage to talk to them you come across all needy and pathetic and, as a result, totally blow it.

You can relate to this right? We have all done this at some stage in our life. We see someone and start attaching all kinds of value to them, sometimes even qualities that they don't have...and this then results in us buying into 'The Myth of Lower Value'.

The Myth of lower value is where you start to believe that you are of significantly lower value than the person you fancy and, as such, get ridiculously nervous and start to act like a total idiot every time you are around them.

Of course there will be instances where they do possess way more value than you do but the truth of the matter is that what a person values varies greatly from person to person. Some value power, confidence, honesty, humour, looks, a caring attitude...So it makes no sense what so ever and it's usually not even accurate to decide ahead of time what they value...

Also it's very difficult to be objective about the amount of value that you possess so it's almost always the case that you actually possess a lot more than you realise...

So instead of buying into the myth that you don't possess enough value for them to be interested let them make their own decision. Also, start to look at yourself through the eyes of someone who loves you. Maybe it's your best friend, parents or children. That way you'll start to see the qualities you possess that are sometimes difficult to see.

4. Not Positioning yourself as 'The Catch'...

It's maybe an analogy that some people don't like but dating is actually in some way a bit like selling... except you are the product. If a product isn't perceived to be something that is high value and worth getting inevitably it won't be bought.

If your date doesn't see the value and worth in you then there's not much chance they will decide to be part of your life...Harsh but true...On a lighter note it is only the value 'they perceive' you to have over the course of the date so if they decide not to see you again then it's most likely because they haven't yet seen what you really have to offer or they value different things to you.

One of the biggest mistakes people make when dating is to not believe that they are 'the catch' or at the very least believe that they are 'a catch'. If you don't believe you are a catch then why would they want to get to know you anyway?

Rather than adding value to their life you will be leeching value from it and no-one is attracted to a leach... However, when you know on the inside how much you would enrich and enhance their life by being with them you give off a completely different vibe. One that is attractive and makes them want to be around you. The really good thing is that virtually everyone is a catch in some way. All it takes is a bit of objective self appreciation. A good place to start is ask yourself the following question:

"In what ways am I already valuable to this person. Such that, just by being with me, their life would be significantly enhanced and enriched?"

By honestly answering this question you will generate a whole list of genuine reasons why you are a catch to this person and you will start feeling and behaving in a completely different way... one that will cause them to start chasing you rather than the other way around...

5. Pretending to be someone you are not...

You're out on a date with someone you like... If you are a guy you start being more macho than you normally would, hiding the aspects of yourself you think they won't like and grossly exaggerating your achievements. If you a woman maybe you start being more polite than you normally would. More prim and proper... You don't take any conversational risks just in case you say the wrong thing and portray the kind of image that you think he wants to see.

Most people have fallen into this trap at some stage of their lives as well... When we are dating someone we like we can often start to present our self as someone that we are not.

We buy into the notion that there are things about us that they might not like or that we have to act in a certain way for them to like us so we put on a hugely distorted and inaccurate social face in the hope that we will be accepted.

This is a really bad idea that has two inevitable pit falls. Firstly, if your date has any reasonable level of social intelligence they will see through the act and start to wonder what inadequacies you are trying to cover up.

Secondly, if they do fall for it, they have fallen for someone you are not and, unless you keep the act up, will eventually find out the truth...

So rather than radically change your personality and compromise your opinions and beliefs just be yourself. There will obviously be certain aspects of yourself that you will not always reveal straight away and you will occasionally have to put on a social face to navigate the many games of life, that's okay... Just don't forget it's a game and realize you don't have to do it to not feel ugly... That way you will start to attract the kind of people in your life that fit and compliment with your personality and lifestyle. ###

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 Guide to Social Confidence.com.

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When they think of you, what will they remember?

by Jahiel Yasha Kamhi

Are you disgusted with yourself because you believe people should have a better opinion of you? Yes, sometimes we are afraid of judgment. We are afraid of failure, and sometimes of success, but most often we're afraid of our own depressing thoughts.

To make you feel better, I have a proposal for you: Sit down and write what you would like people to say about you when they think of you.

Do not be afraid. I am not asking you to write your eulogy. No, imagine at this moment you are an "important person" and someone is giving a speech in your honour. What do you expect to hear?

This could be **very good therapy** for anyone who depends on other people's approval.

I asked a couple of friends of mine to write about their friends.

Read what they have to say.

Friend 1 *Despite your constant fear and anxiety, you were brave enough to do what your family expected you to do for them. I know you haven't achieved your goal, what you wanted, and because of that, you suffered. But, you didn't ask for another relationship or better circumstances. You received what you requested and you were satisfied, more or less, with your role. I believe you are a great person for one reason: You never ask what you can get, but what you can give, and I have liked you since day one.*

Friend 2 *When I met you the first time, I was so stupid as to say, "Everything I have heard about you is so good." You were so honest as to answer, "If everything is so good about me, why do I feel so bad?"*

Since our first encounter I have felt that the more I know about you, the better I feel. You are still my best friend and I am so proud of you and lucky to know you. In an inexplicable way, your spiritual search made you feel bad, and I still do not have any reasonable explanation for your feelings. Maybe, in your search for yourself, you just paradoxically wanted to help me. Thank you, Helen.

Friend 3 *You always taught me about the human mind, which is the best gift I have received from you. You taught me that what the mind focuses on will expand into life, for good or bad. I chose love. And because I chose love, not just personal love, but love for people, I am here today to say, "Thank you." I know, I sound like an idealist, and I have paid the price, but I still believe in the power of love and the power of the mind, as you have mentioned many times, my friend.*

Friend 4 (the shortest story) *When I was totally down, Chuck, you told me, "Nothing in the world created your misery. Your response and state of mind created it." Now, I understand life differently and better.*

What is your story? ###

Jahiel Yasha Kamhi holds a degree in Medical Biochemistry and a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry. Jahiel writes regularly for www.personal-development.com and other magazines. He also delivers presentations that inspire others to find more meaning and balance in their lives. He is passionate about writing, and conveying positive ideas that help people live life with more passion and purpose.

Jahiel's mission is to promote a good mental and physical health.

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~ 7 Words to Turn Painful States Into Healing Powers ~

by Guy Finley

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Movement and the Family

by Annie Burnside, M.Ed.

When I first contemplated the theme MOVEMENT for this issue, I felt certain that I would focus on the importance of physical movement as a portal for direct divine connection. Physical movement can be of great assistance in releasing mental and emotional blocks that leave us stymied and resistant to our own inner knowing. When my children feel anxious or confused as to their next life choice, I often prescribe physical movement such as dancing, walking, or raking as an antidote to clear the head and hear the voice of the soul.

While physical movement is a gateway to introspection and expanded spiritual connection, it is also important to recognize it as a reflection of the energetic movement that is occurring behind the scenes at all times. I am speaking about the movement that creates physical reality. This is the movement that manifests intentions. This is the movement that shapes thoughts, words, and choices into future life experience. I believe that if you offer your children insight into energetic movement, they may begin to understand and utilize the unseen, yet deeply felt divine presence that runs through all things.

In describing energetic movement to your children, water can be a very useful analogy. The ocean is a large body of water that flows at all times and cannot be stopped by anything or anyone. Each wave with its unique subtleties is an integral part of the ocean, but must ebb and flow with the larger aspect of itself just the same. We are also individual aspects of a divine essence that is continually moving and flowing in one direction. We can either be the wave, and crest and wane in unison with the whole, or we can attempt to resist the current and defy natural movement with great effort and manipulation. No matter which course we choose— one of allowing or resistance— just like the water the natural movement cannot ever be completely stopped. The same is true of the energy used to shape physical reality. We can indeed move against the current by refusing to follow deep inner sensings that keep us aligned with divine flow or we can begin to make conscious life choices that mirror our authenticity and move unencumbered by external voices toward a desired future.

In order to harness the ebb and flow of universal energies, I have found that you must become more intimate with your own interior. The energy that you are in is what you offer the world, and ultimately determines your physical reality. It is of utmost importance to be consistently aware of your own state of being. What lies beneath the surface of your exterior persona? A vibration of true joy, appreciation, love, empowerment and freedom feels light, peaceful, fluid, and clear within your body. It is a feeling of well-being, non-resistance, and quickened energetic movement. A heightened state of being signals a time for action. Your vibration reflects alignment with universal energies, and synchronicities should be acted upon at this time with enthusiasm. In other words, you can teach your

children to strike while the iron is hot as they quite literally surge with the flow of universal energetic movement and harness the power to create sustainable energy around a desired physical outcome.

On the other hand, when you are moving against divine direction offered as intuition and deep inner knowing, your vibration feels blocked, dense, uneasy, and heavy. The actual cellular movement deep within the body feels slowed down and almost stagnant. At this time, taking a pause and moving into a phase of non-action is the preferable choice. Soul work becomes imperative here; quiet downtime allows for reflection and excavation of underlying beliefs, perceptions, habitual patterns, and overall paradigms that may be creating blocked energy within the whole system. These times of slower movement provide rejuvenation for the soul and are to be viewed as an important part of the process. At this time, children must be encouraged to allow themselves the necessary time for inner work. Alone time coupled with physical movement may be ideal for this leg of the journey; something that they can consistently rely on to tap into inner knowing.

By simply paying closer attention to your own interior rather than outside sources, you create an intimacy with yourself that will permeate and direct life choices. Over time, you will effortlessly feel in your deepest space the divine flow of energy of which you are a multi-faceted part. An inner knowing as to your state of being in relation to universal energetic movement is a hallmark of conscious living that can become the basis for creating the physical reality of choice. It is important to speak openly and consciously to your children of the energetic movement occurring at all times right below the surface of reality. Through your support, sharing, modeling, and daily discussions, your children will gain an expanded perspective of life experiences. Include your family as you uncover the gems hidden in the inner linings of your soul. Share with your family your capacity to determine times of action and non-action. Most importantly, assist your children in making life choices that are in alignment with all that they know to be true for them. ###

Annie Burnside, M.Ed., is a soul nurturer, author, public speaker and teacher specializing in conscious relationships and spiritual development. Her book *Soul to Soul Parenting: A Guide to Raising a Spiritually Conscious Family* (Wyatt-MacKenzie, June 2010) offers everyday mediums and universal, life-affirming themes to those families seeking to expand spiritual awareness. Annie resides in Chicago, IL with her husband and three children. www.annieburnside.com

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**My Religion is Kindness:
The Charter of Compassion and a New Global Ethic**
by Miles Murphy

"My religion is very simple. My religion is kindness."
—Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama

It seems inconceivable that in the 21st Century the world is still plagued by greed, selfishness, sectarian hatred and violence... but it is! The President of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad denies the reality of the holocaust and calls for the destruction of Israel. Some Christian fundamentalists equate Islam with the Anti-Christ. Militant Islamic groups call for a "Jihad" or "holy war" to destroy infidel America. Extremists pit religion against religion: Protestants vs. Catholics, Muslims against Jews, Buddhists contra Hindus...

In 2008 Karen Armstrong, a former nun and author of a number of books on the world's great religions and religious leaders (including biographies of Buddha and Muhammad), won the prestigious TED prize and a chance to fulfill her dream for a better, more compassionate world. TED is a small non-profit organization dedicated to "Ideas Worth Spreading". The two annual TED conferences bring together some of the world's most interesting minds and give them an opportunity to speak about their ideas and convictions. TED then makes these video conferences available, free of charge. TED, each year, also selects an exceptional individual who receives \$100,000 and, much more importantly, "One Wish to Change the World."

You can find out more information on TED, the fascinating work that they do and you can also enjoy the talks of past conference speakers here:

<http://www.ted.com/>

What Ms. Armstrong intended, and indeed accomplished, was to spend her prize money to launch the "Charter of Compassion". She articulated her wish to TED as follows:

"I wish that you would help with the creation, launch and propagation of a Charter for Compassion, crafted by a group of leading inspirational thinkers from the three Abrahamic traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam and based on the fundamental principles of universal justice and respect."

You can find a copy of the Charter, here, download a .pdf in any of more than 30 languages and you can even add your name to it.

<http://charterforcompassion.org/share/the-charter/>

For your convenience, I've copied the Charter in its entirety below:

The Charter of Compassion

The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honour the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect.

It is also necessary in both public and private life to refrain consistently and empathically from inflicting pain. To act or speak violently out of spite, chauvinism, or self-interest, to impoverish, exploit or deny basic rights to anybody, and to incite hatred by denigrating others--even our enemies--is a denial of our common humanity. We acknowledge that we have failed to live compassionately and that some have even increased the sum of human misery in the name of religion.

We therefore call upon all men and women ~ to restore compassion to the centre of morality and religion ~ to return to the ancient principle that any interpretation of scripture that breeds violence, hatred or disdain is illegitimate ~ to ensure that youth are given accurate and respectful information about other traditions, religions and cultures ~ to encourage a positive appreciation of cultural and religious diversity ~ to cultivate an informed empathy with the suffering of all human beings--even those regarded as enemies.

We urgently need to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. Born of our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity. It is the path to enlightenment, and indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community.

The Charter of Compassion has been endorsed by the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu and has been affirmed by such diverse individuals as Queen Noor of Jordan, the Grand Mufti of Egypt Sheikh Ali Gomaa, author Deepak Chopra, actress Goldie Hawn and musician Paul Simon.

At the heart of the Charter is a maxim that has been associated with all of the world's principal religions and philosophies: The Golden Rule.

"Do unto others as you would have others do unto you" or alternatively,
"Do not do unto others as you would not have others do unto you."

The Golden Rule embodies the principal of reciprocity and embodies a genuine respect for self and for the rights of others.

Ms. Armstrong says:

Every single one of the world faiths has developed its own version of the Golden Rule... and insists that this -- not orthodox belief or ritual devotion -- is the test of true spirituality and that it is this that brings us into relation with what we call God, Nirvana, Brahman or Dao. The only way we can create a just and viable world is to apply the Golden Rule

globally, so that we treat all nations, all peoples, as we would wish to be treated ourselves and create a global democracy, where all voices are heard and taken as seriously as those of the rich and powerful.

Why do we need the Charter for Compassion? Again, in the words of Karen Armstrong:

One of the chief tasks of our generation is to build a global society where peoples of all persuasions can live together in peace and mutual respect. And the faith traditions, which are often seen as part of the problem, should be making a major contribution to this endeavor... But all too often the voices of religious extremists drown those that speak of compassion, the disciplined effort to put oneself in somebody else's shoes and 'experience with' the other. All the faith traditions insist that you cannot confine your benevolence to your own group. You must have "concern for everybody," honor the stranger and love even those we regard as enemies. We need to make the compassionate voice of religion a potent force in our troubled world, develop a religious and moral discourse to counter those that speak of hatred and disdain.

Lao Tzu, the founder of Taoism went beyond mere reciprocity in his teaching and reached right into the heart of compassion when he said:

The sage has no interest of his own, but takes the interests of the people as his own. He is kind to the kind; he is also kind to the unkind: for Virtue is kind. He is faithful to the faithful; he is also faithful to the unfaithful: for Virtue is faithful.

Tao Te Ching, Chapter 49

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus answers a lawyer's questions about how to inherit eternal life and defines who is our "neighbour":

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

He answered: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

"You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

Luke, Chapter 10, verses 25-37

One of the principal and substantive differences between Theravada Buddhism and later Mahayana Buddhism is the Bodhisattva way, or a commitment not only to the enlightenment of the self, but a dedication to the welfare and enlightenment of all sentient beings: The recognition of the Buddha Nature within all of us, not just the historical Buddha.

The Buddha himself said:

Teach this triple truth to all: A generous heart, kind speech, and a life of service and compassion are the things which renew humanity.

An earlier document similar to the Charter of Compassion, "Towards a Global Ethic: An Initial Declaration", an interfaith declaration, was drafted initially by the prominent theologian and religious thinker, Dr. Hans Küng, in cooperation with the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions staff and Trustees and experts.

"Drawing on many of the world's religious and spiritual traditions, the declaration identifies four essential affirmations as shared principles essential to a global ethic.

1. Commitment to a culture of non-violence and respect for life
2. Commitment to a culture of solidarity and a just economic order
3. Commitment to a culture of tolerance and a life of truthfulness
4. Commitment to a culture of equal rights and partnership between men and women

This Declaration was signed at the Parliament of the World's Religions gathering in 1993 by more than 200 leaders from over 40 different faith traditions and spiritual communities. Since 1993 it has been signed by thousands more leaders and individuals around the world. As such, it established a common ground for people of faith to agree and to cooperate for the good of all."

A further elucidation of the Declaration is to be found here:

<http://www.religioustolerance.org/parliame.htm>

At the basis of compassion is the understanding and belief in the interdependence of all living beings. Thomas Merton said:

"The whole idea of compassion is based on a keen awareness of the interdependence of all these living beings, which are all part of one another, and all involved in one another."

Karen Armstrong believes that we stand at an important crossroads; one in which compassion provides the basis for the kind of future we all hope and dream of:

At this moment of history, we have a choice: we can either emphasize those aspects of our traditions, be they religious or secular, which breed hatred, chauvinism and exclusion, or

we can bring to the fore those that stress the importance of compassion and the Golden Rule.

Finally, compassion is not optional, it is a necessary, if not *the* necessary ingredient for our survival. The Dalai Lama said:

"Compassion is not religious business, it is human business, it is not luxury, it is essential for our own peace and mental stability, it is essential for human survival." ###

Miles Murphy works in the field of learning and professional development. An independent scholar, he has a wide range of interests including the humanities of East and West. He is a devotee of Buddhism and a t'ai chi ch'uan enthusiast. His poetry and other writings endeavour to poke about in the rich soil and empty sky of the human condition.

See more Miles Murphy articles at Personal-Development.com

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~ The Essential Laws of Fearless Living ~

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by Guy Finley

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Personal Transformation

by Dr. Tim Ong

All successful people succeed in life by improving themselves constantly. However, for the majority of them, their goal for personal transformation is for mundane successes, such as the accumulation of wealth (bigger house, better cars, more things to possess), power and influence. For the spiritual seekers, personal transformation is not about mundane success. The ultimate goal of transformation for a genuine spiritual seeker is liberation from the root cause of our sufferings. Only in this way is it possible to be totally free from recurrent sufferings.

While it is worthy and wise to start with the end in mind, meaning we transform ourselves with the ultimate goal of final liberation, for most people this is not the case and it is alright. Many people put in great effort to transform themselves initially for mundane success but as they progressed, they realized that mundane success alone cannot guarantee them the happiness they seek. Eventually the wise will realize that peace and lasting contentment can only be achieved through the taming of our mind, the ending of desires and anger, and the ultimate realization of reality as it truly is.

The Root Cause of Sufferings

The root cause of all our sufferings in this mundane life is the delusional way we view the world. We see things not as they are but as what we thought they are. An enlightened mind sees and understands that everything that we experienced is devoid of any intrinsic values or qualities, and therefore make light of them. There is no attachment or aversion to the experience.

On the other hand, our deluded mind cannot see things as they really are. Instead, we experience things through the projection of our mind. We project our values onto these things and then erroneously believe that the values we projected onto them are their true values or qualities. Then we foolishly react to them, ruffling our tranquil mind and causing the tranquil mind to become agitated and disturbed. In this way, we suffer.

Befriending the Original Mind

We are spiritual beings. We have an original mind that is tranquil. This original mind is what some called the mind of God. If we are not deluded, we are able to experience everything in this mundane world through this peaceful mind without being ruffled by the experience itself. So as spiritual seekers, our goal in personal transformation is to get to know our original mind once again and to familiarize ourselves with its undisturbed nature. This is called befriending the original mind.

There are two ways to befriend our original mind.

One way is to visualize it as it is - peaceful, pristine and perfect - and then centered ourselves in this state of peace. Everything we do, say and think then comes from this

centered peace. In this way, we live and function from the absolute, beyond our immediate self-serving ego. To befriend our original mind in this way, we need to constantly check the state of our mind. Is our mind centered in this primordial peace or is it being ruffled by our delusions? Any time we are in a negative state of mind, we know that we are off our mark. Constant practice in this way will familiarize ourselves with the nature of this original mind.

The second way is to recognize that the reason we are not able to live and function from the absolute is because of our deluded thinking. Each time we are able to recognize this error in thinking, we take away its power to ruffle our original mind. In this way, we weaken our erroneous mental habits and replace it with a healthier one. We do this by catching our attachment, aversion and judgment. For example, each time we eat we are aware of our desire for good tasting food. When we meet someone, we either feel a like or dislike for that person because we see that person in a particular way. Being able to be aware of our attachment, aversion and judgment in this way weaken their influence over us. Eventually you will find that a particular person that irritates us can no longer irritate us and a certain situation that disturbs us no longer has that similar effect on us. We are able to see things as they really are, without projecting our own fears, likes and dislikes on them.! In this way, we gradually remove the veil of deluded thinking from our original mind and move a step closer to knowing the original mind.

Living and Functioning from the Absolute

What is meant by living and functioning from the absolute? We now know that this mundane world we live in is a relative universe. Everything in it is interdependent. Nothing has an absolute value. Everything changes. They are impermanent. We also know that there is an absolute reality that does not change. Its nature is equanimity. It is beyond time and space, and is therefore eternal and omnipresent. This is also the true nature of our original mind. They are one and the same. From this pristine equanimity springs unconditional love and compassion toward all beings. Living and functioning from the absolute means we live our lives from this absolute perspective.

We recognize that different perspective gives rise to different experience in life. One good example of this is the simile of the six blind men and the elephant. Each of them, from a different perspective, perceives and experiences the elephant differently. We also recognize that the "higher" our perspective, the more all-inclusive we experience life. From the perspective of the absolute, we live beyond our self-serving ego, resulting in a more harmonious, contented and peaceful existence for all. ###

Dr. Tim Ong is a medical doctor and hospice volunteer. He is also the author of "[From Fear to Love: A Spiritual Journey](#)" — a book that explores our hidden fears and how we can overcome them. Dr. Ong shares his personal experience as well as relates stories and lessons from his patients. You can get a copy of his ebook here: [From Fear to Love](#)

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A Course in Miracles

Lesson 56

Our review for today covers the following:

(26) My attack thoughts are attacking my invulnerability.

How can I know who I am when I see myself as under constant attack? Pain, illness, loss, age and death seem to threaten me. All my hopes and wishes and plans appear to be at the mercy of a world I cannot control. Yet perfect security and complete fulfillment are my inheritance. I have tried to give my inheritance away in exchange for the world I see. But God has kept my inheritance safe for me. My own real thoughts will teach me what it is.

(27) Above all else I want to see.

Recognizing that what I see reflects what I think I am, I realize that vision is my greatest need. The world I see attests to the fearful nature of the self-image I have made. If I would remember who I am, it is essential that I let this image of myself go. As it is replaced by truth, vision will surely be given me. And with this vision, I will look upon the world and on myself with charity and love.

(28) Above all else I want to see differently.

The world I see holds my fearful self-image in place, and guarantees its continuance. While I see the world as I see it now, truth cannot enter my awareness. I would let the door behind this world be opened for me, that I may look past it to the world that reflects the Love of God.

(29) God is in everything I see.

Behind every image I have made, the truth remains unchanged. Behind every veil I have drawn across the face of love, its light remains undimmed. Beyond all my insane wishes is my will, united with the Will of my Father. God is still everywhere and in everything forever. And we who are part of Him will yet look past all appearances, and recognize the truth beyond them all.

(30) God is in everything I see because God is in my mind.

In my own mind, behind all my insane thoughts of separation and attack, is the knowledge that all is one forever. I have not lost the knowledge of Who I am because I have forgotten it. It has been kept for me in the Mind of God, Who has not left His Thoughts. And I, who am among them, am one with them and one with Him.

Commentary by Allen Watson

The Door behind the World

There is a door behind this world which, if opened, will allow me to see past this world to a world that reflects the Love of God. It is a door in my mind, a door to vision.

This world, full of "pain, illness, loss, age and death" simply reflects what I think I am. It is a hallucination superimposed over reality, hiding it and seemingly replacing it.

The opening line of the review asks: "How can I know who I am when I see myself as under constant attack?". Think about that. If I am truly under constant attack, beset by illness, loss, age and death, how can I be a perfect creation of God? How can God even be real? I believe in a self-image that is constantly threatened. If I am threatened, how could I be an eternal, spiritual being? If the picture I see in this world is true, then I am nothing, worth nothing, and destined for destruction. I may as well say, "Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die!" I may as well take what I can get because nothing will last, including myself.

Something in all of us, however, tells us that we are more than this. Something in us resonates when we read, in the Course, that nothing real can be threatened. If that is true, and I am real, then the world I see must be false. The picture it is showing me, reinforcing my image of myself as vulnerable, must be a lie. Either I am real and the world is not, or the world is real and I am not. "For I am real because the world is not, and I would know my own reality".

Therefore my greatest need is vision. I need to open that door in my mind, "look past all appearances", and see a world that reflects God's Love, and by so doing remember who I really am. "Behind every image I have made, the truth remains unchanged". "In my own mind, behind all my insane thoughts of separation and attack, is the knowledge that all is one forever. I have not lost the knowledge of Who I am because I have forgotten it".

I want to open that door behind the world and see the truth again. I want to remember.
###

~ The Journey Home ~
(Course in Miracles)
by Allen Watson

A Course in Miracles teaches that the whole spiritual journey is a journey home, home to God whom we have never really left. Allen Watson describes this spiritual journey, as seen in the Course, identifying the stages we pass through as we move from fear to love, escaping from darkness and emerging into the light. Watson presents a map that we can look at as we set out, giving us an idea of the spiritual destination the Course is taking us to, and what we must go through to get there. This map helps us be aware of and prepared for the pitfalls and detours that occur along the way. "The Journey Home" also offers Course guidelines and instructions for dealing with some of the difficult passages on this journey.

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