

CHOICES

WINTER 2014

THE RELATIONSHIP ISSUE

BUILDING STRONGER
RELATIONSHIPS AND
WHERE TO FIND LOVE

AN INTERVIEW WITH ED KLEIN

GALLERY DIRECTOR
AND ARTIST

FINDING LOVE

HOW TO FIND LOVE
AND WHEN TO GIVE IT



SOCIAL NETWORKING

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS
FOR MAINTAINING AN ONLINE
PROFILE



WHY YOU NEED TO JOURNAL

CHART A COURSE TO BECOME
WHAT YOU'VE ALWAYS
KNOWN YOU COULD BE



WAKE UP WITH INTENTION

HOW YOU WAKE UP EACH
MORNING COULD CHANGE
YOUR LIFE

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FROM THE EDITOR

Change happens...every day. Our hair grows, we gain or lose weight, people come into our lives and others leave us. We experience new things and new relationships which change our perception of how things are. We live in a constant state of change.

S

o why is it that we go immediately into panic mode when we notice the winds of change blowing in our

lives? Most of us cope reasonably well with the gentle breeze that is normal day to day growth, but when the winds kick up and there are major changes on the horizon, we find ourselves looking for shelter and clinging to the solid anchor of "the way we've always done it."

We all know people who face into the change, plant their feet firmly and

refuse to be moved. Like standing in the wind, this position can be difficult to maintain. Change will reshape our lives as surely as mountains and deserts are reshaped by the constant pressure of blowing wind.

How we handle change is a conscious choice. We can fight it, or go with it to see where it takes us. We can use the energy of change to create a better environment.

Like harnessing the wind to provide electrical power, change can be used as a source of power in our lives.

Change is a constant and renewable resource.

If life isn't working the way we want... if the changes coming our way aren't taking us in the direction we want to go, we have the power to choose the change we desire. We can live our lives being buffeted by the wind or harness its power. The choices are endless. Where will the winds of change take you this year?

Judi

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MAKE THE CHOICE TO SUCCEED

BY JUDI MOREO

“If you always do what you always did...
You’ll always get what you always got.”

- Dr. Kimberly-Ventus Darks

Think about that! If you want something that you’ve never had; if you want to be someone that you don’t feel you are; if you want to go somewhere that you’ve never been; if you want to do something that you’ve never done...you have to do something differently.

As we start a new year, we have an opportunity to do just that. If we want some changes in our lives; If we want it to be more than it ever has been, then, we are going to have to make some choices that we’ve never made before!

Here is my 5 step plan for succeeding this year at whatever it is you choose... whether it’s an organization, a career or a relationship.

Step #1 DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT

What would you like the end result to be? What is the dream? If money

were not an object, and the world were perfect....how would it look to you?

You are the architect and the builder of your life.... And there aren’t architects or builders that would go out and just start throwing up a building or a home without knowing what it will look like when it’s finished.

Step #2 MAKE A PLAN

Look at where you want to go and where you are now. The space between the two is called “The Gap”. How will you fill that gap? You need to make a plan of exactly what you will do.

These plans are called goals and the

“ There is an old saying that “None of us plan to fail, we just fail to plan”.

beginning of a new year is the perfect time to set some. Many people call it Strategic Planning. You call it whatever you want. Just do it.

There is an old saying that “*None of us plan to fail, we just fail to plan*”.

Be sure that your goals are SMART meaning that they are:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Agreed Upon (by the people who have to help you carry them out)
- Realistic
- Time Framed

When we achieve our goals...our self-esteem goes up...and when our self-esteem goes up...our success goes up!!!

Step #3 IDENTIFY THE PITFALLS

Now this may sound negative, but we must look at what might go wrong so we can have a contingency plan.

We have to be willing to cope with and create change when needed.

Change is not a maybe. Change is the only constant we have. Everything is changing.

Think of change as a vehicle that is out of control and coming down the road. You are standing in that road and the vehicle is coming right at you.

You have three choices about what you can do:

1. You can just stand there and let the change run over you and leave you in a worse condition than you were before you started.

2. You can jump out of the way and let the change go past you. It's a good possibility that if you let it pass you by, it might be headed where you want to go.

3. You can start to run along beside the change, jump in the driver's seat, take control of that change and drive it right where you want it to go.

If we want people to follow us through change, then we must be the change that we want to see happen.

I was fortunate enough to be working for a chain of newspapers in South Africa during the end of apartheid and I had the opportunity to see Nelson Mandela released from prison. I also heard his State of the Union address. And I watched as this great man demonstrated what he wanted his followers to do, which was "to forgive and put the hatred aside in order to move forward in peace." He then demonstrated the change he wanted a nation to follow and the rest is history.

Step #4 TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOURSELF

What you get out of life is what you put into it!

Do you have knowledge that you can share? Are you good at decorating? Can you write a press release? Do you have a beautiful handwriting? When you use any skill or talent that you have for the benefit of others, you will also benefit. Use your skills. Use your talents.

Surround yourself with positive people. In the average workplace we hear an average of 5 negative statements every hour. It takes between 14 and 20 positive statements to overcome one negative statement. If you hear people being negative... get away from them.



Or just say “Thank you for sharing.” But don’t participate. And remember this, about seventy per cent (70%) of the negativity we hear comes out of our own mouths. We say things like, “Ain’t it awful! No one cares about us. They planned another awful program. The speaker was terrible. It’s a wonder I even came...the traffic was so bad getting here. At one point, I just wanted to turn around and go home, but you know what’s at home. I just didn’t feel like I could deal with that tonight...etc., etc., etc.”

Your thoughts create your feelings. Your feelings create your behavior. When you are acting or talking negative... it tells the world that you are not feeling good about yourself and the reason you aren’t is because you aren’t thinking correctly.

Change your thoughts. Practice affirmations. Practice empowering self talk. Practice saying nice things to other people. When you say it, you are putting positives in your own atmosphere as well as in the atmosphere of others.

Step #5 BE THANKFUL

We need to be grateful for what we have. We have been so spoiled for so long. Some of us get upset if we don’t have an Anne Kline watch, a Ralph Lauren blazer, or a Mercedes to drive. “It’s just not fair. Other people get those things. What about me?”

Start being thankful for what you do have and give yourself some gold stars. When I was 16 years old, my dad taught me to give myself gold stars when I have a good day. It feels really good when you stick that star in your daily planner each day. If you have more than one success that day, give yourself more than one gold star.

Sometimes where we get to is not where or what we imagined. Be thankful anyway. There are people all over the world that would like to be in your shoes, would like to have your job, would even like to have your problems...instead of their own.

As Dr. Robert Schuller once said, *“Today’s responsibilities are tomorrow’s possibilities.”*

So I ask “Have you set your goals for this year? Have you made your plan? Are you prepared for the changes which will take place in your life?” If not, remember Dr. Kim’s words, “If you always do what you’ve always done... you’ll always get what you’ve always got. If you want something that you’ve never had...You have to do something that you’ve never done.”



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Judi Moreo is the author of the award-winning book, “You Are More Than Enough: Every Woman’s Guide to Purpose, Passion, and Power” as well as its companion, Achievement Journal. She is a Certified Speaking Professional who has spoken in 28 countries around the world. Less than 10 percent of the speakers in the world hold this highly respected earned designation. To contact Judi or book her for a speaking engagement, contact Turning Point International, (702) 896-2228 or judi@judimoreo.com.



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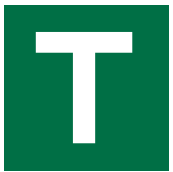
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THIS YEAR I RESOLVE



his year will be a different kind of year.
This year my resolutions will have purpose.
This year I will pursue them with passion
This year will be a different kind of year.
This year I will make a difference.

This year I will be fully present.
I will listen to the same old stories with new ears.
I will give the gift of my time and heart to older family and friends.
This year, I will make a difference in their lives.
This year, I will volunteer.
I will serve dinner at my local shelter.
I will sit with someone in a retirement home whose family is far away.
This year, I will make a difference.

This year, I will not judge.
I will be open to new ideas.
I will accept others as they are and as they are becoming.
I will try new things.
This year, I will make a difference.

This year, I will get rid of clutter.
I will clean my closets, cabinets, and shelves.
And give the things I never use to someone who needs a helping hand.
This year, I will make a difference.

This year, I will hold a vision
Of a world without war,
I will pray for peace.
I will give a smile to everyone I meet.
I will give thanks for all that I have.
I will give my energy, my time, my love to the betterment of my community.
This year I will give a different kind of gift.

This year, I will give the gift of understanding
I will give the gift of forgiveness
I will give the gift of love
I will give the gift of myself.
This year, I will give a different kind of gift
This year, I will be the difference.





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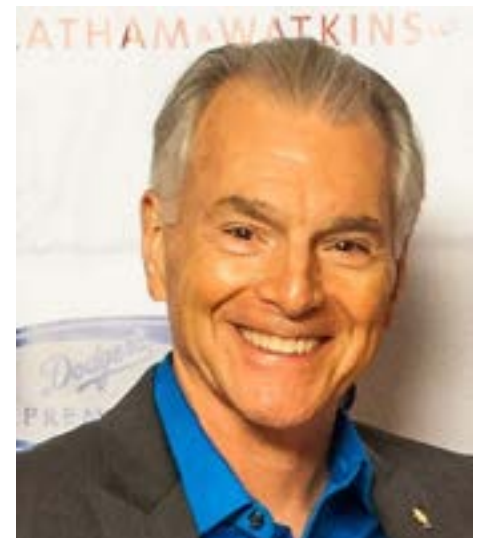
WHAT IS A RELATIONSHIP?

BY JIM CATHCART, CSP, CPAE



Isolate the top 100, then the top 50, and finally the top 20 across all categories. Find the 20 people who represent the most important connections in your life at this point in time. Put them on a separate list. Now ask yourself, “What would happen if I were to concentrate one hour a day over the next several weeks just looking for ways to bring more value to these 20 people? By bringing value I mean what THEY consider valuable, not what you think it is. Find out what they care about and look for ways to get it for them. In doing this, I can assure you that they will notice your efforts and they will appreciate them. What’s that worth to you, among these 20 VIPs in your world?”

Give this a try and get back to me as you do so. Let me know what further directions I could give you and what kind of results you’re getting. This may be the most valuable activity you’ve done in years.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jim Cathcart is a Hall of Fame professional speaker, author of 16 books and past president of the National Speakers Association.

Contact him at www.cathcart.com

A relationship is: A direct connection between people in which value is exchanged.

Now, that may not be what Webster says, but it is the best definition I’ve been able to come up with on my own after 38 years of studying business relationships.

When I wrote the book *Relationship Selling* in 1985 and again in 2002 and 2009, my goal was to position a Relationship as an asset (or liability) so that people would see it as something substantial, and about which they should be intentional.

So how does one become more Relationship Intelligent®?

To be more intelligent about relationships the first step is to Notice More. Create A Relationships Inventory: Make a list of all the relationships in

your life. Not all the people you know, but all of those with whom you have some ongoing connection. Divide them into groups that make sense for you: immediate family, extended family, current clients, past customers, coworkers, social friends, close friends, etc. You get it. Seriously, take the time to list them all. Just start writing and note every name you can think of. Don’t worry about the categories yet, just do a name dump. Write them down.

Get your pocket calendar and checkbook (digital or otherwise) and dump all of the names into your master inventory. Once they are in there and you’ve allowed yourself a few days to add to the list, then you can go back and use a color code to sort them into the right groups. When you have a somewhat complete Relationships Inventory you will be in a position to make the key relationships worth more to you...and them.



ARE YOU AN “ASK-ABLE” PERSON?

BY LOU SOWERS, PHD

W

hy won't they talk to me?

The “they” in this case often refers to a spouse, child, parent, valued employee or even a close friend. Over the course of more than 30 years of working with people and complicated relationship issues, I am frequently asked that question.

My response is: Are you an ask-able person?

My experience over and over again is most people have not considered what they can do to be more ask-able, approachable, and easy-to-talk to. When concerned and caring people realize they have some control over this dynamic, they are empowered to modify their attitudes and behaviors in a way that allows loved ones, co-workers and others to disclose

important and often emotionally charged issues.

In some cases, the emotionally charged issue might even relate to thoughts about suicide. Opening up the door to communicate about difficult, even life threatening issues, might actually be life-saving. Often, seemingly insurmountable relationship challenges could be solved by developing strategies to talk more openly and honestly with each other.

There are three steps to becoming a more ask-able person:

The first step is to simply consider this possibility. Ask yourself if you seriously want to be an ask-able person. Many people initially respond to this question with an enthusiastic “YES!”

Others, those of you reading this article because you care about relationships,

might respond with a somewhat “ambivalent yes.” You realize once you become an ask-able person, you also accept some responsibility to roll up your shirt sleeves and get your hands dirty.

Typically, we are not aware or mindful of our ambivalence to be an ask-able person. We inadvertently say and do things that limit or even halt communication. We send covert, and sometimes not so covert, messages that we'd prefer not to deal with another person's issues right now.

Sometimes, our ambivalence is caused by our own sense of being overwhelmed with life. Other times, we simply are afraid we won't know what to say or how to help. We all have our reasons both conscious and unconscious for setting up barriers that prevent real communication from happening.

Assuming you make the choice to become a more ask-able person, you'll need to be mindful you want to do this. When you identify communication-stopping thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, take a moment to write them down.

Please notice up above I did not write three “easy” steps to becoming a more ask-able person. This isn't easy work. In fact, it may be the hardest thing you have ever done because looking inside and making change happen is arduous work. The good news – there is nothing in life more rewarding than a deep and meaningful relationship with another person.

The second step to becoming a more ask-able person requires you to consider those people in your life you

know you can count on no matter what. You can talk to them about anything no matter how scary or distressing the issue might seem.

What attributes, qualities, character traits best describe these ask-able individuals?

My hunch is they are best described as (I'll start the list and you finish it):

- Calm, patient, and relaxed... especially when stress is high
- Attentive and active listeners who understand the importance of confidentiality
- Honest and valuing of high trust relationships
- Quietly confident
- Kind and compassionate
- Knowing their values and living their values

Once you've constructed your list, consider your own personal strengths and weaknesses. Think about areas where you might be able to improve.

Step three involves implementing a plan to become an ask-able person. Choose to modify one behavior at a time.

Making a choice to become an ask-able person is much like completing a triathlon. When you haven't tried to swim, bike and run in the same race, it can seem overwhelming. It takes time to train and to adjust to all the different obstacles you have to face in one day. You have to learn to swim with hundreds of people in cold water, ride your bike on a difficult course in windy conditions, and run races when you are tired and your body hurts all over.

One strategy to become a successful triathlete is to break the entire race

apart, focus on one action step at a time, and when you are ready, begin to put the pieces together. With a sensible plan and a good coach, many non-athletic older individuals have literally transformed themselves mentally, physically and spiritually. Learning to become an ask-able person is no different and, in many respects, it is just as hard.

Always remember what we 'do' is more important than what we 'say.' Showing up every day and trying to become a more ask-able person communicates an important message. Making this kind of change is hard and fraught with lots of mistakes. Please don't try to be perfect or you'll set yourself up to fail. The people we care about most already know we aren't perfect.

When facing a personal crisis, others could care less about you being perfect. What they care about is that you value them, you want the relationship to be more authentic, and you are willing to do the difficult work to make change happen.



As you begin to implement your new strategy, people will notice. Some will notice faster than others and where trust has been an issue in the past, it will take more time and more consistency to establish a higher level of trust.

Remember, trust is everything. It takes a long time to develop trust, but it only takes one misstep to lose your trust. When trust becomes an issue, don't run away from the problem. Own your mistake, ask for forgiveness, and be willing to change what you've done to break the trust.

Don't act like you really want to be an ask-able person if you aren't willing to do the hard work. People can see that and it's a turn-off – a communication stopper.

We all have the choice to become ask-able people. Make this choice because we have a lot of people in our world who are suffering in isolation and could use someone to talk to.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lou has spent over 30 years in a variety of educational, clinical and administrative positions helping others. He earned psychology degrees from Indiana University and the University of Southern California and practices clinical psychology in Eastern Washington. Lou has been happily married for more than 20 years and finds his joy in life by spending time with his two teenagers in the great outdoors. He is an avid Ironman triathlete and volunteers much of his time to suicide prevention efforts.



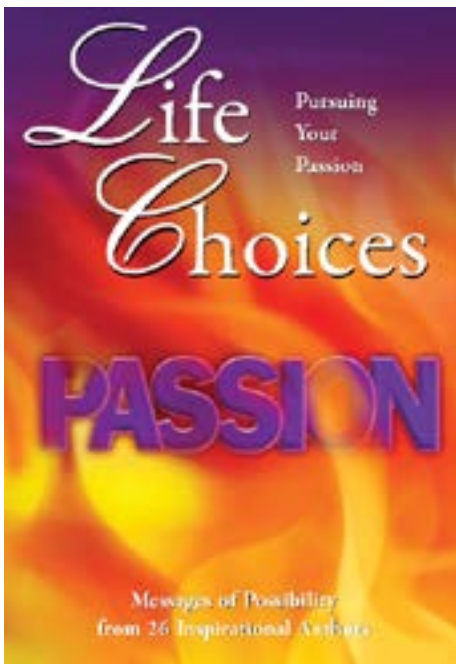
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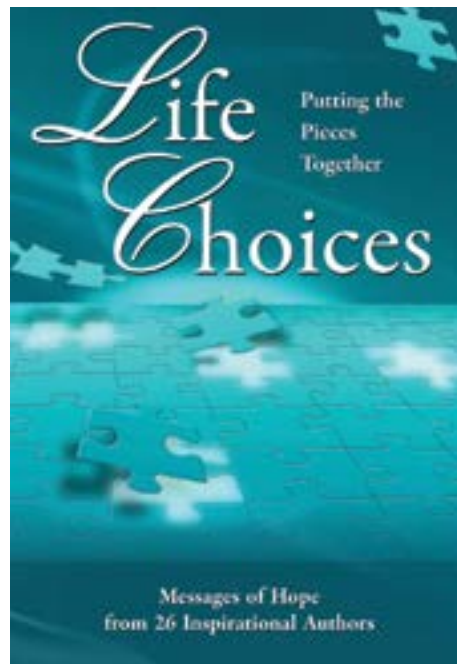
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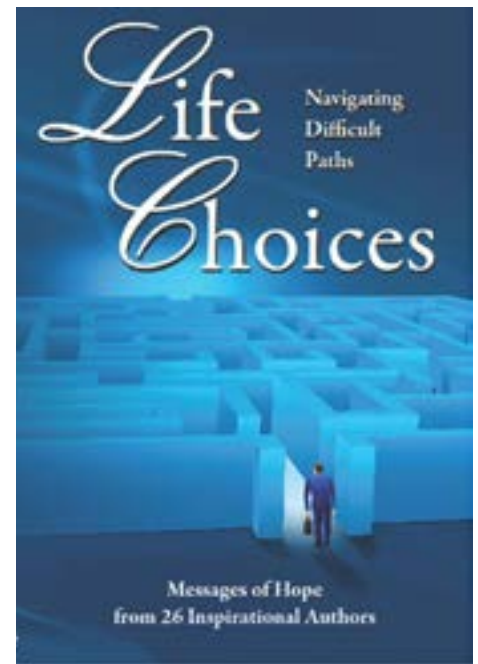
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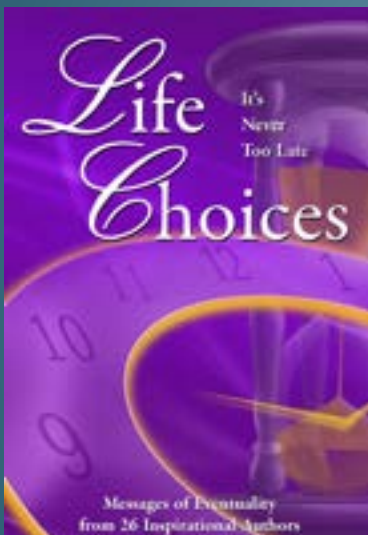
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Should you find yourself in circumstances that require the making of difficult choices, the stories in this book can offer you courage and inspiration. Each author has addressed hurdles they have faced in order to reach their current level of success. It is a collection of powerful true stories written by real people who have overcome the obstacles in their paths.



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SOCIAL NETWORKING IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

BY ALISA WEIS

Whether you're hoping to reconnect with a long-lost friend, send out one set of directions to a party or exchange a favorite recipe with someone who lives miles away, your efforts are made easier through the benefit of social networking.

Though it's likely you've been using facebook, Instagram, Twitter or LinkedIn for years, it's not too late to create a list of personal "guidelines" before you plug in so as not to lose your initial focus.

Keeping it Positive:

As you well know, news-both local and international, doesn't tend to take a positive spin. Our eyes are drawn to headlines that detail crisis and chaos. While it's important to note what tsunamis are sweeping through a region and which investors are tampering with others' resources, we can try our best not to add unnecessary "news" to the mix.

Let me give you a personal example that taught me a lesson to reconsider what I write. Since somewhere in the neighborhood of 25-30 "friends" regularly post on my facebook page, I often forget that I have over 500 contacts. Though I tend to consider my words carefully, I found myself in a conflict with a family member who was not on facebook three years ago.



Feeling aggravated over the situation, I took my woes online and through the use of general language-no names involved-wrote a status update about not agreeing with how this individual was acting. Lo and behold, another family member, who happened to be an online "friend," saw the post and having heard of the conflict, decoded my underlying message. Needless to say, my online vent got back to the original person.

Though unintentional, I, unfortunately, hurt a family member's feelings through this incident. In retrospect, after sending her an apology, removing the post, and making amends with the other family member, I told myself to keep my posts positive, whenever possible.

Keep it Professional:

Though you might decide to keep your personal and professional lives separate, it almost goes without saying that a prospective employer may decide to "google" you before giving you the job. When your facebook or twitter account comes up, what image will pop up? Despite countless warnings about the permanence of online material, many don't seem to give their online image a second thought.

If you think your friend might "tag" you in a series of photos after you'd consumed too many lemon drops on a Friday night out, you can get ahead of the game and change the settings to determine what lands on your "wall." Rather than try to clean up a situation after the fact, you can consider your

audience and make decisions that will enhance your career rather than hinder your advancement.

Keeping it Real:

Even though proper grooming is not required when corresponding with someone behind a screen, it can be easy to forget that the person to whom you are connecting probably doesn't "have it all together" either. Since it's only natural to report on our endeavors and accomplishments, we tend to forget about all that goes unsaid: that Ms. Domestic doesn't have polished bathroom floors every day, that Ms. Sophisticated actually lost a job before becoming Account Executive, and that Mr. Sportsman endured hours of training to get in tip-top shape.

Since many of us only post "our bests," it's no wonder to learn "a study just published by the Public Library of Science, conducted by Ethan Kross of the University of Michigan and

Philippe Verduyn of Leuven University in Belgium, has shown that the more someone uses Facebook, the less satisfied he is with life" (The Economist).

"Keeping it real" doesn't mean you must aspire to the reverse: announcing all of life's pitfalls in efforts to maintain honesty. It just means that for your sake and for others, you can strive for more accurate representation. Some of the material might include the use of inspiring quotes or shared information about favorite books and movies.

Since countless people use the online programs available to us, it's tempting to think our faces are lost in the crowd. But share a quote that rejuvenates, discuss a goal you might have for 2014, or share the name of your favorite author, and you'll realize you have more influence than you thought. You and I have the ability to make our public interactions professional and positive.

"Love and kindness are never wasted. They always make a difference. They bless the one who receives them, and they bless you, the giver."

- Barbara De Angelis



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Alisa Weis holds a Masters in Secondary Education and is a freelance writer for several newspapers in Washington State. When she isn't consumed with a writing project, she can be found taking care of her two young children, running, or attending professional development conferences.



WHY JOURNAL?

BY JUDI MOREO



A new year has just begun. Now is the perfect time to establish, renew or continue the habit of stating your dreams and goals, chronicling your life's events, recording your great accomplishments and collecting ideas – yours and other peoples.

More than just a history or memoir, a journal can be the single greatest tool we have for finding the answers within ourselves. Journals help us discover what we really want, think and believe, and also the wisdom we already possess.

Your next great solution or creative idea may be as close as your nearest pen and journal. A notebook for ideas

and memories, your journal can also be a great place to chronicle your life's journey.

As you become more and more comfortable with the process of journaling, you will find it an amazing tool for easing worry and obsession, identifying hopes and fears and charting a course to becoming the you that you've always known you could be. As you allow your creative mind to expand, you increase your level of energy and confidence, your inner voice becomes stronger and you find yourself living in a whole new way.

Whether you are a first time journaler or have journaled for years, there are a few general guidelines to remember that will help keep you on track.

There are NO Rules!

A journal is a very personal undertaking. There is no right or wrong way to do it. Journaling is a way to spend time with yourself, writing freely about anything and everything.

Make Time

While journaling can and should be done any time you have something to write, when getting started, try to set aside a specific time when you can be free of interruptions or distractions.

Mark The Date

Though many who journal write daily, it is not a requirement. Whenever you write, always record the date and time. When reviewing your journal you will notice patterns and trends as well as have a history of the events of your life and how you felt.

Keep It Safe!

Journaling is a very personal and private practice. It is important that you create a safe environment in which to express yourself. Make sure that your journal is kept in a place where no one else can read it and that the people around you know not to read it.

Be Open and Honest

Be honest about your feelings, hopes and dreams. This is for your eyes only, so there is no one to criticize or tell you it can't be done and there is no one to impress.

Write Quickly and Naturally

It doesn't matter what you write or how well constructed your sentences are. What matters is that you write what comes naturally. Don't think about it, just write it. The words that come quickly to mind are usually the most honest and true and you will be more likely to continue developing the habit of writing if you don't feel confined to a specific structure or style of writing.

What Journalers Are Saying

"Writing goals in my journal and updating them regularly helps me stay on track. It's about time someone published a convenient, well organized journal that people would really use. I should have known that person would be you – Judi."

Bob Walker
Speaker/Author

"Judi Moreo first introduced me to her Goal Achievement Method of

setting goals over 15 years ago and I have been using it ever since. It helps me clarify my intentions so that my goals are what I truly want instead of what I think I should do based on family/societal influences. I've given copies of her journal to all my friends and as a college career advisor, I use the principles it contains to help my students."

Sue Bracksieck
Eastern New Mexico University

"I've set powerful goals with my Achievement Journal and achieved my dream of becoming a best selling author."

Greg Kompes

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

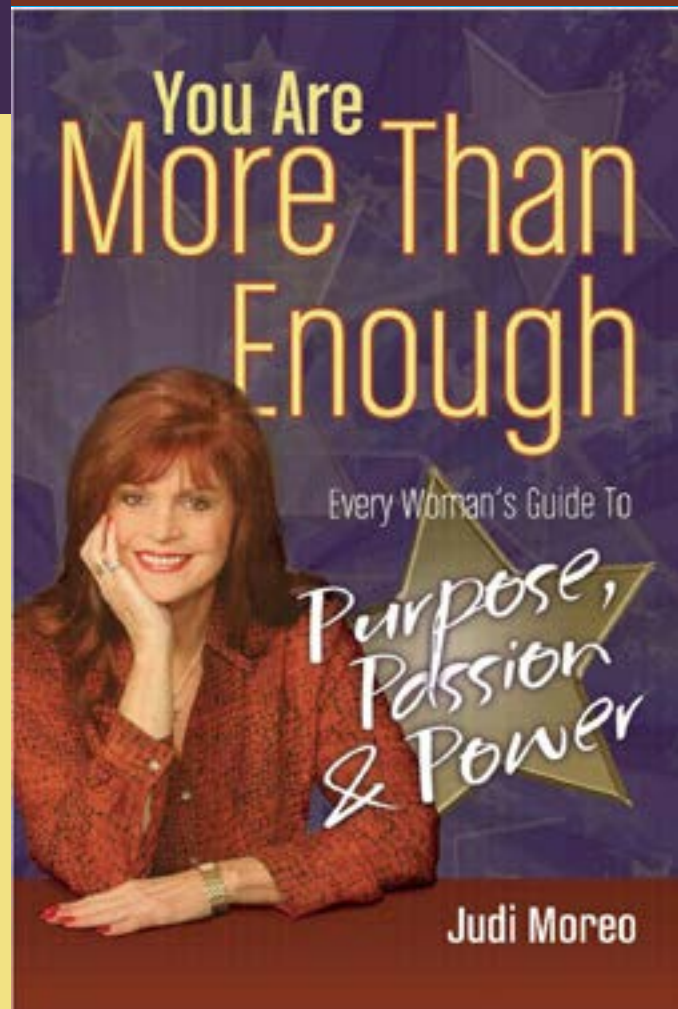
Judi Moreo is the author of the award-winning book, "You Are More Than Enough: Every Woman's Guide to Purpose, Passion, and Power" as well as its companion, Achievement Journal. She is a Certified Speaking Professional who has spoken in 28 countries around the world. Less than 10 percent of the speakers in the world hold this highly respected earned designation. To contact Judi or book her for a speaking engagement, contact Turning Point International, (702) 896-2228 or judi@judimoreo.com.



YOU ARE MORE THAN ENOUGH

EVERY WOMAN'S GUIDE TO
PURPOSE, PASSION & POWER

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- listen to your inner voice
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- set boundaries
- make conscious choices about relationships, responsibilities and rewards
- communicate for understanding
- use the power of your subconscious mind to create the future you desire
- recognize your strengths and make things happen
- and much, much more!!!

This heartwarming, myth-shattering book is filled with

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ACHIEVEMENT JOURNAL

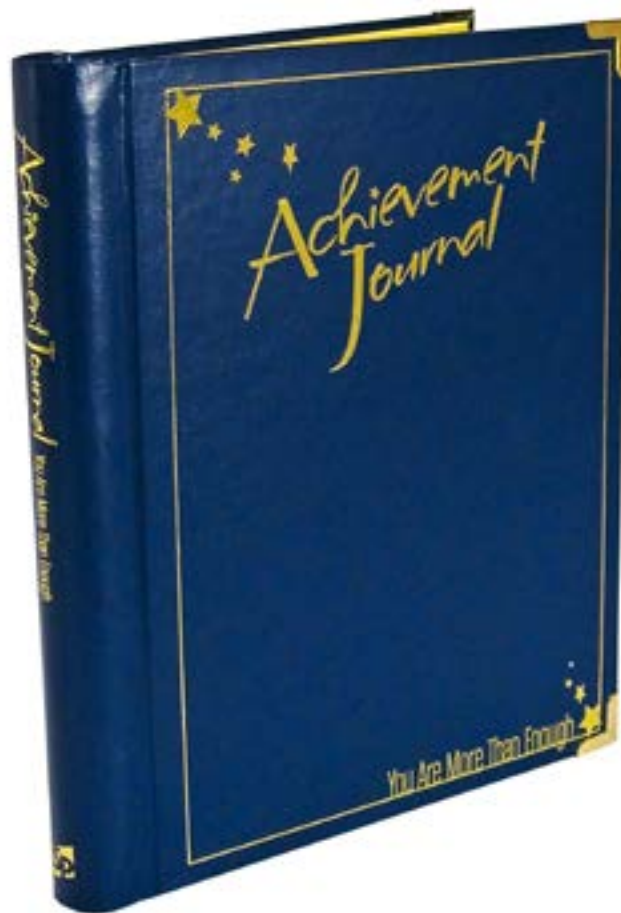
COMPANION TO: "YOU ARE MORE THAN ENOUGH: EVERY WOMAN'S GUIDE TO PURPOSE, PASSION & POWER"

If you have ever felt as though you were created for "something more," but just didn't know where to start, this is the journal for you. It's actually much more than a journal! It is a step-by-step process of achieving your goals and making your hopes, dreams and desires come true. It gives you ways to make your life work as well as a proven technique for setting and achieving goals in the eight major areas of your life:

- Career
- Relationships
- Financial
- Health
- Spiritual
- Education
- Community Involvement
- Recreation

In addition to a place for daily writing, there is a measurement tool for you to stay aware of how you are doing in each of these areas of your life.

If you apply yourself and take the steps laid out for you in this journal, you can't help but be successful! And you might know, Judi has included two pages of peel-and-stick gold stars in order for you to easily reward yourself!



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"Judi is a living example that it is possible to find your life's purpose and passion. In this book, she shares the tools she used to achieve success and happiness. I recommend it for everyone trying to create the lives they desire."

**- Montel Williams, TV Host
The Montel Williams Show**

ED KLEIN

AN INTERVIEW

BY JUDI MOREO

Located in the outskirts of Las Vegas, Nevada is the small, quaint downtown of Henderson, Nevada, which is rapidly becoming known as a mecca for artists. Water Street District, as the art district is affectionately called by locals, is home to several galleries including Professional Design Associates Art Space, Elayne LaPorta Fine Arts, Mickel's Fine Art Photography Portrait Studio, Pinnacle Art Gallery, Mind Body Spirit Art Space and my favorite, City Lights Art Gallery.

City Lights Art Gallery is a co-op of approximately 60 local artists who display their paintings, cards, pottery, metal sculptures, and ceramics for sale in the gallery, hold art shows, and offer classes in watercolor and acrylics for adults, from beginners to very advanced students.

The works of many of these artist members are in private collections throughout the world. In addition, the gallery is also supportive to the youth artists in the area and has set aside a place for art displays by local high school students.

If you are visiting Las Vegas and are interested in art or looking to make an art purchase, it is certainly worth the short drive to Henderson to look at the phenomenal offerings this gallery has to offer.

According to Ed Klein, Gallery Director of the City Lights Gallery, "Much of the artwork in commercial galleries is

priced out-of-reach. It's too high-end for many people who want to collect art. We change that equation. We feature outstanding art by great local artists, who are especially committed to Henderson. We are open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am – 5 pm."

It's a really fun experience to walk along Water Street, view the art in the



galleries, indulge yourself with a pastry or the bread pudding at the incredible European Bakery or have coffee in one of the eclectic coffee houses that have recently sprung up and be sure to go around the corner to 3 E. Army Street to visit City Lights.

As an art student and a collector of art, this is one of my favorite local things to do, and I recently had the opportunity to interview Ed Klein about his art.

ED KLEIN

Did you always want to be an artist?

No, I knew I had some talent, but not enough to make a living at. I saw so many artists with more talent than I had.

When did you know you had talent?

Probably the first time I picked up a pencil. All my friends and relatives assured me that I had talent.

Did you get a formal education in art?

I studied art at a technical high school. We had to complete our general curriculum plus our art studies. Needless to say, we were in school all day. I, later, was a fine arts major at Wayne University in Detroit, Michigan.

Why did you select the medium of watercolor?

During my art studies, I explored all of the various media and found that my favorite was realistic drawing in pencil as well as pen and ink. When I retired, I found that my eyes were no longer up to the task of drawing intricate detail, so I chose watercolor and grew to love it.



What inspires you?

Color! The beautiful colors hidden in dark shadows. The gradual transitions from warm to cool on a sunlit wall!

FAR LEFT

"This Old House" by Ed Klein

ABOVE

Self-portrait by Ed Klein



What makes a painting great?

It has to portray the artist's agility with the medium and at the same time display his passion!

Of all your paintings, do you have a favorite? If so, why?

Red umbrellas. It is the first of my watercolors that won first place in a juried show and has attracted more good feelings from its viewers than any of my other works.

Where can someone view your work?

City Lights Art Gallery, Boulder City Artist Guild, CityLightsArtGallery.com, Fine Art America

How can someone contact you if they would like to buy one of your paintings or prints or take an art class with you?

City Lights Art Gallery
3 Army Street
Henderson, Nevada

Tel: (702) 260-0300

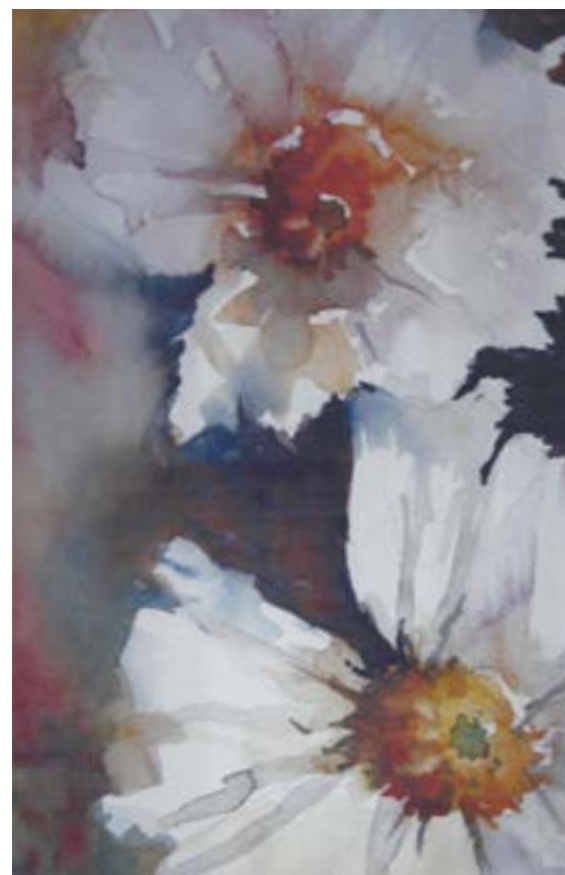
As you know, I love your paintings, and I am so proud that I have added the original of your painting, Red Umbrellas, to my personal collection.

ABOVE

"Venice" by Ed Klein

RIGHT

"Spanish Poppies" by Ed Klein





LEFT
"Red Umbrellas"
by Ed Klein

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TRICKY RELATIONSHIPS

BY JOAN PECK

Relationships can be very tricky. They never remain the same. They are constantly changing like a free flowing river, and it depends how many times you put your toe into that river by way of a thought, word or action to the degree it changes.

Relationships can be fleeting like the flash of a smile or they can be enduring like a 60 year plus marriage. They can be loving like the greeting of a baby at birth or as destructive as a rape. But each counts. Each is powerful because that experience becomes a part of who we are, no matter its significance.

Until recently, I thought of the term “relationship” much in the same way most of us think of it- as primarily the relationship or link we have with our significant other or others in our lives: our love connection, our family, our friends and so forth. But I have grown to realize that relationships and connections are much more extensive. We just need to be aware of them. They are often the synchronicities of life and we unwittingly play a part in them.

For example, many of us go through periods in our lives, particularly when we are seeking a mate, where we try on relationships like a piece of clothing

to see if that person suits us and if that relationship is a “fit.” There is something about being in that state of mind where it seems easier for us to discard what doesn’t work without much thought. And yet, it is then we can most easily affect another in a negative, hurtful way.

Who is to say that may not be part of the larger plan? Maybe being the one rejected is to get us to become emotionally stronger in the belief of our own goodness in spite of any external judgment of us. After all, the most powerful relationship anyone can have is the relationship one has with our “self.” *(cont. on next page)*





It is only when we can accept and love our self that we can experience the greatest relationship of all – with the Oneness of All That Is. And therein lies the reason for our journey here on earth – the opportunity to experience ALL of life and to be able to connect (be in a relationship) with others. At the end of our journey lies our purpose in life and what really matters most: how much we have loved and are loved.

And that means including the love of all beyond humans. How does that work? Most of us can appreciate the relationship and love we have for our pets, particularly in our own culture where we tend to humanize our pets by allowing them to ride next to us in the car, accompany us on vacation trips, and wear clothes and accessories fashioned after humans. What beyond that?

Because everything is energy, we can have a relationship with anything! It can be as simple as how we treat an individual plant or Mother Nature as a whole. I overheard a woman telling her friend that she had a very “good relationship” with food. At the time, I thought her comment was very odd.

Until that point, I hadn’t given much thought to my having a relationship with food at all...even though I love fine food. But what did she mean? The more I thought about it, the more it made sense to me.

If we can love something, and even more so appreciate it, we can have a “good relationship” with it. In thinking about this case, if we can recognize and honor the animals, fish, vegetables, grains and fruit that provide for us, it allows us to connect with them, thereby establishing a relationship with them.

That is the way all “good relationships” work – it is when we love, honor and respect those that we come in contact with even in a small way without expecting or demanding anything in return. We simply allow it to grow.

As we become more aware of those around us, human or not, the number of potential good relationships is without limit and our world can become filled with the joy of living in ways beyond what we could have imagined.



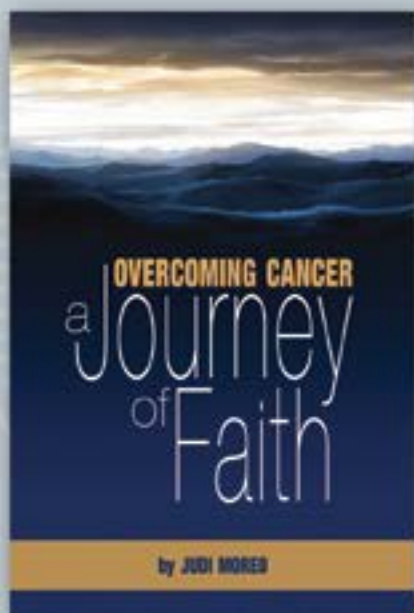
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joan S. Peck is the author of several spiritual books and a contributing author to two of the Life Choice books. She has a new book coming out this fall – “Prime Threat- Finding Your Way Out of Addiction”, a book written with her son from the other side.

Joan may be reached at:
(702) 423-4342
joanpeck39@gmail.com
www.bejeweled7.com

Award-winning author Judi Moreo knows what it is to travel the journey of cancer and shares that experience in this book.

Overcoming Cancer: A Journey of Faith



Through her personal story, inspiring quotes and practical suggestions, Judi shows us that cancer and fear are messages to us to make lifestyle changes. This supportive book can help the newly diagnosed cancer patient ask better questions, understand there are alternative and integrated treatments that can work and, most of all, maintain hope.

Even though traveling the cancer road was a rocky and difficult journey, it was also rewarding. The path through cancer requires enormous discipline, work, and change; yet it is filled with excitement, experiences and discoveries that can bring us to a new and better place if we are open to possibilities and focus forward.

"This book may help save your life or that of a loved one. Judi Moreo "gets it." She understands that the question is not "what kind of treatment do I undergo?" but rather "how do I heal myself?" Her personal experience with cancer taught her to recognize that recovery from chronic illness is often a recovery from an unhealthy life in many respects. With humor, grace and courage, she addresses the physical as well as the mental, emotional, psychological and spiritual needs for recovery in an easily accessible, practical way. Whether you are looking for help to reclaim your health from cancer or any other illness, let Judi be your guide."

- James Sensnig, N.D., Founding President, American Association of Naturopathic Physicians; Former Dean, National College of Naturopathic Medicine; Founding Dean, College of Naturopathic Medicine, University of Bridgeport, Connecticut; cancer survivor

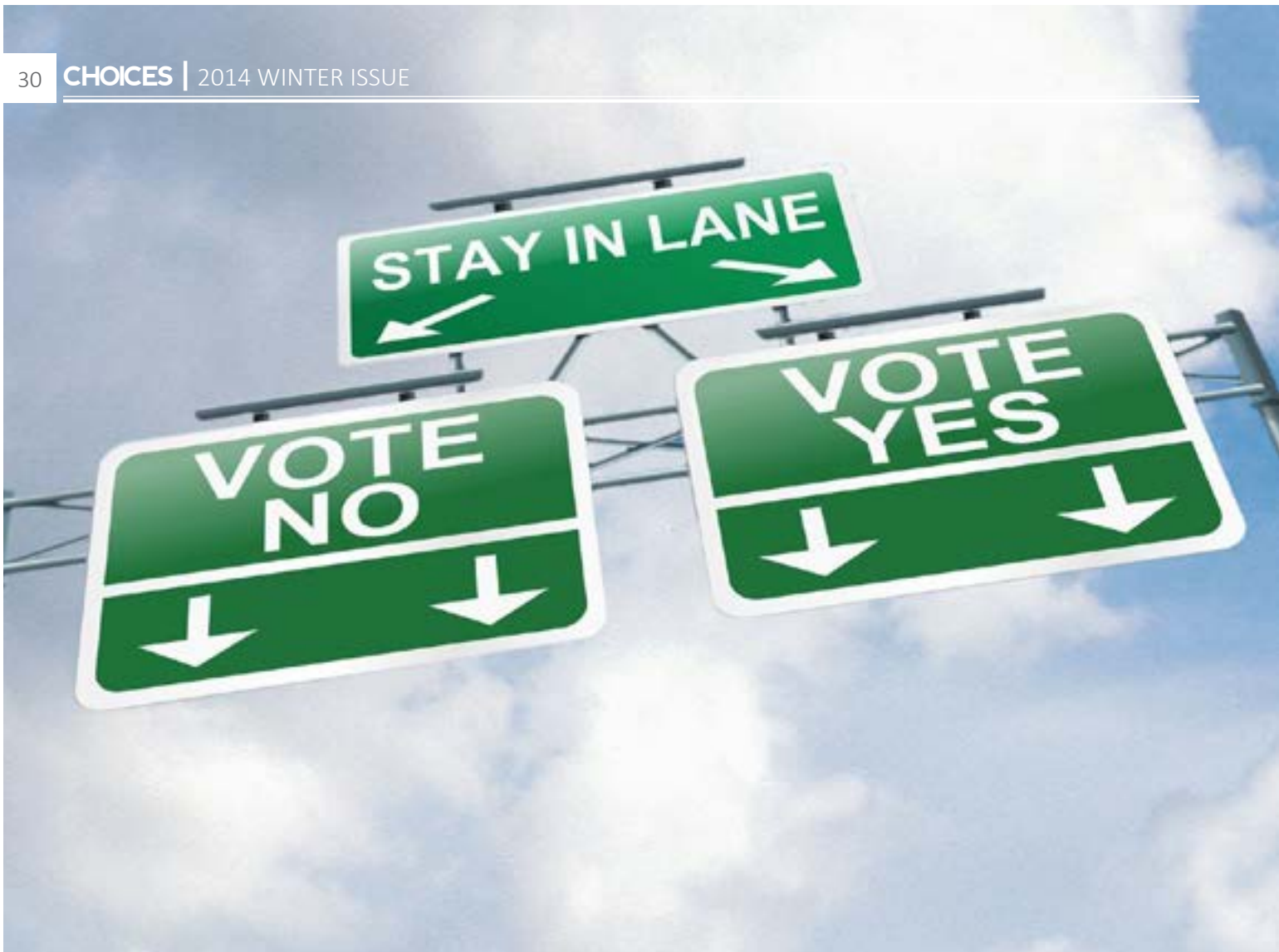
"This book is a must for those facing cancer and for those who have loved ones facing this fear-filled disease. Judi writes from the heart -- telling her story with truth and emotion. She highlights her course of action, not forcing her opinions on anyone but truly providing options to conventional cancer care that are sound and doable. Her recommendations for nutrition therapy and exercise are quite impressive and fact-based."

- Julie Freeman, MA, RD, LD, Licensed Nutritionist, Integrative Medicine

This Book and Others Now Available Online!

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LIVING LIFE IN A
MAYBE?

BY GINA GELDBACH-HALL



Are you living life in a “Maybe?” “Maybe” is a situation where you aren’t quite sure what is going on. Mostly, we see them in relationships and the worse thing about them is they make us question our sanity.

Think about it, there is nothing worse than wondering if your thinking is right or wrong, on target or off, or if they are as committed to you as you are to them. Life in a “Maybe” is no fun and it doesn’t make us feel empowered!

What would happen, *really happen*, if you asked them directly about what was going on? Sometimes our fear of what they *might* say is much worse than actually knowing.

The old saying, “It’s better to dance with the devil you know than the one you don’t,” applies here. A lot of energy is expended on wondering. I say, “Ask!” Usually our minds are much better at making up worse case scenarios than accepting a simple truth.

Ask yourself, “Do you want to stay in your relationship/marriage/partnership?” With no thinking about it beforehand, answer in less than three seconds, “yes” or “no.”

If you answer yes, you aren’t done yet! It will require more work, soul searching, and coaching but you still are committed and there is hope.

If you answered “no,” you need to do some internal soul searching. Are you giving it your all? Are you willing to do what it takes? Are you just

doing time because you are scared/financially ‘stuck’/alone? It’s never really about time or money.

It’s about commitment. If you aren’t in it with your heart, it’s not fair to you or the other person for you to stay. You have a big decision to make.

Facing a “maybe” can be some of the hardest work we do. It is a point in our life when we need to get very clear on who we are, what we want, and figure out what road we really want to follow. If we don’t get clear,

our health suffers, our stress levels increase, and eventually, we start doubting the one person we rely on most, our self. Get out of life’s “maybe” - it is better to know, no matter how much we might think it will hurt.

Freeing yourself and your relationships from the bondage of a “maybe” allows new perspective, purpose, and passion to enter and is the only way to ignite your own flame and keep you empowered!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Gina Geldbach-Hall is an inspirational keynote speaker, author, life coach, and facilitator with 25-years of emergency services experience from EMT and firefighter to battalion chief. Her book, *Firegal... Rising from the Ashes*, is available on Amazon.com.

She continues to inspire leadership and service and helps others to ignite the flame of empowerment within their lives and work. She is available for coaching and speaking engagements, visit her website at FiregalWisdom.com for more information.

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LOVE IS A CHOICE

BY JUDI MOREO



T

o love and be loved is one of humanities deepest desires. Too often it remains an unsatisfied hunger, burning inside. Feeling unloved over a long period of time can cause us to feel unlovable. We retreat into ourselves, locking away our feelings and desires because we feel we are not good enough, pretty enough or smart enough to be loved by the people around us. Depression, frustration and anger often result.

We push people away because it is easier than feeling the disappointment of not feeling loved. Most of us have experienced these feelings at one time or another in our lives. If and when

this should happen to you, there are some simple choices you can make which will help you feel better about yourself and regain some of your joy in living.

Keep on keeping on.

Sometimes the only thing we feel like doing is crawling in a cave, pulling a rock over the entrance and crying. The loss of a loved one, whether through death, divorce or change of circumstances, can trigger a wide range of negative emotions. If we continually express these negative feelings, we find ourselves stuck in our misery.

At times like these, the choice we must make is to keep putting one foot in front of the other. Keep

getting up, getting dressed, going to work or school. The comfort of routine and the stimulation of outside events help, over time, to lessen the power pain can have over our lives.

Do something for someone else.

Volunteer to help at a soup kitchen. Drive a senior to the doctor. Get involved with Habitat for Humanity or a community action group. Clean up graffiti or join a community clean up project.

Whether you make the choice to help someone you know or step out of your comfort zone to work with people you've never met, you will not only accomplish good in your community, you will feel



better about yourself. It is much easier to love and be loved when we feel that our lives have value.

Do something for yourself.

Make the choice to do something for yourself. You deserve it. Read a good book, take yourself out for a special lunch, take a nap or go for a walk.

We live in a hectic, stress filled world. If we don't stop and remember to care for ourselves, we can begin to resent everything else we do and that leads to feelings of being unloved and unappreciated. The little voice starts screaming inside, "What's in it for me?" Give yourself a mini vacation from everything you "should" do and do

something just because you want to.

Do it with love.

Whatever you do, whether it's your job, a favor for a friend or treating yourself to a day at the spa, choose to do it with love. Entering into any



situation with feelings of dread, resentment or frustration will only make the task more difficult. Find something to love about what you are doing. If you feel there is nothing in the situation that you can love, then it's time to love yourself enough to make some different choices.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Judi Moreo is the author of the award-winning book, "You Are More Than Enough: Every Woman's Guide to Purpose, Passion, and Power" as well as its companion, Achievement Journal. She is a Certified Speaking Professional who has spoken in 28 countries around the world. Less than 10 percent of the speakers in the world hold this highly respected earned designation. To contact Judi or book her for a speaking engagement, contact Turning Point International, (702) 896-2228 or judi@judimoreo.com.

EL SALVADOR

A LOVE AFFAIR

BY D'ARCY BURKE

Hospitality is relational and if done correctly, you can change someone's life, or they can change yours. My husband and I enjoy entertaining, and do so on a regular basis.

On one fateful night, hospitality changed my life and my principle livelihood. During a dinner party, a guest said, "I'm only back in the United States to sell everything I own. I'm moving to El Salvador!" Intrigued by this, I researched Centro America. The more I learned, the more captivated I became. My husband and I had always wanted a beachfront home and we saw an affordable opportunity to make our dream come true.

We considered ourselves adventurous, booked our flights and soon afterwards, fear set in. Suddenly everyone had a negative report in efforts to persuade us not to go. "Don't drink the poisonous waters," one said. "There is civil unrest," said a host of misinformed friends and family, but the worst statement of all: "I hope you don't come back in a body bag." This didn't set the stage for a well anticipated trip.

I arrived in Latin America guarded and with a negative perspective of what I thought a third world country would be like. I had misjudged. Instead, I found a thriving, peaceful culture of hard working conscientious people who enjoy the simple pleasures of life. They are an interactive people who put relationships above all else.

Looking back, I realize I had fallen in love with the people first, and then the place. They have good highway infrastructure, the largest international airport in Centro America, advanced medical skills, qualified doctors, sustainable agriculture as the largest producers of sugar and coffee and their textile industry is on the boom, surpassing China. Their middle class is



growing and they have access to things even larger cities are without: I was surprised to find a “Ruth Chris Steak House,” Metro Malls, and “Maserati” car dealerships. Most appealing of all, El Salvador uses US currency. We seemed to find many reasons to invest in El Salvador, but I’m jumping ahead of myself.

The warm waters of the Pacific Ocean against the backdrop of coconut palm trees, rugged mountains and volcanoes had us at hello; but the tropical year round 85 degree temperatures with low humidity and very few insects caused us to stay.

The typical cuisine is, literally, the fresh catch of the day, with plentiful seafood, organic fruits and vegetables, rice, beans and, of course, their native food, pupusas, which is meat, cheese and bean stuffed tortillas grilled on an open flame. We eat better and feel healthier when we are there.

El Salvadorans have good work ethics and they know how to play hard, too. They love social festivities with 27 holidays annually. Actually, any reason is a good reason to head to the beaches for salsa, bachata and merengue music with good food and friends. When in El Salvador, do as the Salvadorenos do!

Surfing is their number one sport, ranked in the top ten best places in the world to surf with consistent right and left hand breaks. Other favorite activities include boogie boarding, diving, boat and spear fishing, paddle boarding and, of course, soccer.

The juxtaposition from life in the fast lanes to leisure coastal lifestyle living takes some getting used to- you have to dial down and learn how to relax.



Most people find the Bohemian pace desirable, the way life is supposed to be! During our maiden voyage and as a result of not wanting to leave our newly found paradise, we acted impulsively and purchased a quaint beachfront property. It was, the same piece of land that we had visited a number of times to watch the sunrise or sunset over the ocean. We affectionately and

FAR LEFT

The sun sets over the coast of El Salvador

ABOVE

Fresh fruits are bountiful in this tropical climate

providentially called it “Our Place,” before it was officially, our place! With the help of a construction crew, nine months later, we gave birth to our second home.

Hospitality has become my life’s work. It is my passion and purpose now with six beachfront rental properties on the coast of El Salvador. I get the privilege of making a difference in the lives of other people from all over the world.

I expose new friends to the beauty and splendor of the Jewel of Centro America.

There is a lot of unnecessary fear attached to misconceptions about this country so I help people feel safe and secure. To say that I adore El Salvador feels less than an adequate expression; I embrace these people, this culture, the climate, cuisine, and their Spanish language and have made it my own.

I share what I have found with the curious and the serious who come to be our guests. Some have come and gone, some return annually, and some, have enlisted our help and are living out their dreams as our neighbors.

When are you coming to visit us in Paradise?

BOTTOM RIGHT
The Burke’s Guest House pool



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

D’Arcy Burke is an entrepreneur and says she wouldn’t have it any other way. She has done many things: nutrition, owned a commercial design firm and even built and ran an amusement park. She presently lives six months of the year in the beautiful northwestern United States and six months in El Salvador, where she has five beautiful beachfront rental homes and a luxurious bed, breakfast and spa. Trip advisor awarded her premier property, Beach Bella Vista, the prestigious award “Property of the Year” along with Excellence recognition. D’Arcy can be contacted at info@dulcevilla.com or in the U.S. at 509-662-4253. On the web: www.dulcevilla.com & www.beachbellavista.com



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WAKING UP WITH INTENTION

BY PAM BURKE TYLER



W

hat is the first thing you do in the morning when you wake up?

Do you take a few minutes to think

about your day and determine you are going to have an awesome day? Or do you roll over, growl at the alarm and force yourself to get out of bed?

One of the most important steps you can take to create positive change in your life is to change your approach to your day.

Something that produces consistent results for me is to take a few moments to face my day with gratitude, joy and expectation. Before my feet even hit the floor, I take time to be thankful for all of the blessings in my life, and for the great things that will occur in

the coming day. When I begin the day in this frame of mind, I find more opportunities appear. Also, I have seen the difference in how I approach adversity during the day, so small setbacks don't seem as important or have the impact on the overall day that they used to before I faced the day with good intention.

You are probably thinking this sounds a little too unbelievable to work. One of the key ingredients is belief. When you think about what a great day you are going to have, and then look for the good in it as it appears, it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. You attract into your life what you focus on. So be sure to focus on the positive and all you are thankful for, and more of that will appear in your life.

This is much more difficult than it sounds. Unless someone has taken the time to explain the benefits of doing this mental exercise in the morning, you probably never have thought about it. You may just roll out of bed focusing on all that you feel you need to accomplish and between that and tasks before you head out the door to work, your morning is gone. Your day has begun and you haven't had the opportunity to think about how it will unfold.

Try this for thirty days. Take a few minutes every morning when you wake up, before your feet hit the floor, to think about the day ahead. Think about the current blessings in your life and be thankful for them. Remind yourself that your challenges are all going to work out perfectly today. Feel the joy

and peace flowing into your heart and mind, and be thankful for it. Believe you are going to have a great day, and face it with intention. Now, you can get out of bed and begin your day.

Remember to do this on the weekends, as well. It takes time to develop a habit, and even a short break can keep the habit from forming, especially at the beginning. I have started and stopped this several times, because I didn't see I was breaking the habit. I would return to it once I noticed my life was not flowing as smoothly as before.

You have the opportunity to learn from my experience. Once you start, and begin to see the positive results in your own life, don't stop. It doesn't matter where you are starting from, the benefits will be there and you will see improvements in your life.

One of the times this worked for me was just after I had started a new job, my finances were in disarray, my marriage was disintegrating and every day felt like a struggle. I was having difficulty convincing myself every morning that all of this effort was worthwhile.

I had been listening to Tony Robbins CDs in the morning on my drive into work. I believe it was in part due to that, and to many of the concepts I had read about in books like "The Secret" that the idea began to form in my mind that I could change my approach and it would help change my situation. I started forming a mental image of my day in the morning before I got out of bed. I would see that day as amazing and productive and look forward with anticipation to the wonderful day ahead. Then, I would get out of bed, go for a short run, get ready, and leave for work.

Two weeks later, I noticed positive changes beginning to occur. I started feeling better about my relationship with the general manager at work.

The marriage was not salvageable at that time, but I moved forward and finalized a divorce. I kept working on my finances and started to feel that I was beginning to get my head above water. I kept thinking positive thoughts about my day every morning before I got out of bed.

After a few months, a company reached out to recruit me. It was an amazing feeling to have someone reach out to me, and want to hire me. I had never been recruited before. It was a very difficult decision to leave the store where I was in charge of maintenance and go back into maintenance and facility management for a casino/resort.

The main reason I was hesitant to make the move is that I had come to really enjoy the atmosphere and the people

with whom I worked and wasn't sure I could repeat that somewhere else. I left on good terms, however, and still go back to visit from time to time.

Then an odd thing occurred. I somehow got off track and stopped thinking about my day before I started it. I noticed my work days weren't going as smoothly. Little things began to bother me more. At first, I chalked all of this up to the change in my work environment.

Finally, I realized what had changed. I remembered how happy I had felt and how empowered when I began my day with intention. Since it cost me nothing to try it again, I decided to re-focus my attention every morning. I once again began to start my day with gratitude, joy and expectation. I reminded myself to do that every morning when I awoke.

My days began to flow in more positive ways and I began enjoying myself more at work and afterwards. I began

30 DAYS

I was feeling inspired and amazing almost every day. It was a wonderful feeling.

attending Bikram Yoga around this time, and learned two phrases that have been helpful. “If it does not serve you, let it go,” and “Do this with your happy, smiling face.” Remember those phrases. I will explain later how they are important and helpful.

I was feeling inspired and amazing almost every day. It was such a wonderful feeling. Then my boss decided to quit. All of a sudden I had more responsibility every day and just when it became even more critical for me to think about my day with intention, I abruptly stopped. I allowed myself to become distracted, and then my days were filled with turmoil. I had been told all along that when my boss left, I would assume his position and title. I had worked toward that goal, and despite promises from the president, someone else was chosen for that role. I was terribly hurt and disappointed.

In an effort to shake those negative feelings, I returned to the practice of thinking about my day, feeling grateful, and anticipating a positive day. Before long, I heard from a recruiter. I told him I wasn’t sure how interested I was at the time, but forwarded him my resume so that he could keep me in mind. I then promptly forgot about it.

Months went by, and I focused on other areas of my life and worked on developing a series of seminars that would teach people how to do their own simple home repairs. That gave me something new to focus on and a way to help and empower other people. I kept waking up thinking about my day and being grateful for the

blessings that were showing up in my life

Then I heard from the recruiter again. He wanted permission to forward my resume to a national gaming company. I gave him my permission and didn’t give it too much more thought, until he called and said they wanted to schedule an interview. I interviewed multiple times with the company, even traveling out of state for a series of interviews. Finally, it was down to one other applicant and me. They chose the other applicant.

Later that same day, another recruiter from a completely different company reached out to me requesting a copy of my resume and permission to forward it to another casino. I promptly sent them a copy along with permission, but changed nothing about my approach to my current position or to any of the projects in which I was involved.

The interview process started again. I found myself getting ready to board a plane for an interview out of state. I missed the flight because I was caught up in traffic. It was very rare for both freeways to be shut down because of accidents, but it happened that day. I could have cancelled, since I felt that I had already lost out on any chance to be hired, but I chose to reschedule and flew out later that day. I interviewed the next day and then had to hurry off to the airport to make my return flight.

I was hired by that casino.

All of this occurred in a little over four years. Each step was a move forward and brought even more positive results

into my life. Each time, I can reflect back on the little exercise I used to begin my day and see how it coincided with the blessings that showed up in my life.

So, what do you think? Isn’t it worth trying something different for 30 days, just to see if it will bring you some positive results? The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. If it is time for a different result, try changing your approach.

Do something different. This approach has worked well for me and I believe it will work well for you. Try it!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Pam Burke Tyler is a long time resident of Las Vegas. She is a graduate of the Operating Engineers apprenticeship program, where she learned many of her “hands-on” skills. She later taught at the apprenticeship for several years. She is the Director of Facilities at the Muckleshoot Casino in Auburn, Washington. Formerly, she was the Assistant Director of Facilities at the Silverton Casino in Las Vegas.

HAVE YOU EVER FELT STUCK?

Have you ever been stuck? Felt like no matter what you do, you just can't get ahead? Do you ever think you should be more successful by now? Are you struggling with finding your life purpose? Are you disappointed and discouraged with where you are or where you seem to be headed? Do you feel like you were created for something more, but don't know what?

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For more information, call Turning Point International at (702) 896-2228 and speak with Judi personally about the possibilities for you.



As an international business leader, Judi knows firsthand what it takes to be successful. She has owned and operated businesses in both the United States and South Africa. In addition, she has spoken, consulted and presented both keynote speeches and training programs in 28 countries on four continents.

Judi is an accomplished author with 10 books to her credit, several of them award-winning best sellers. She has been a journalist, model, finishing school and model agency owner, a professional speaker, a corporate executive, an entrepreneur, a consultant and a cancer survivor.

Around the globe there are many men and women whose lives are a testimony to Judi's personal and professional success. It is no wonder that she has a collection of awards, but to her "life is not about awards. It is about the reward of making a difference in another person's life." And that she has done over and over and over again.



RUNNING AWAY FROM SCARED - HEALING ME

BY BECKY GRAVA DAVIS

Running propelled me to this point in my life some fifty-plus years and counting, but my feet never touch the ground. You see, my running takes place in my head and my heart. I am on a life quest running away from being scared and feeling unworthy. I am on a marathon run to heal my relationship with myself so I can enjoy healthy relationships with others.

My state of “scaredness” and unworthiness took shape at age five, the day my father died. He was my protector. With three young girls to parent on her own, Mother’s stressful situation evolved into verbal and physical abuse. I thought I deserved the abuse and hated my mother for hurting my sisters and me.

At eighteen, I left home and honed the art of manipulation. When I told my story, people listened and the attention felt good. But, my relationships were shallow and I never allowed myself to connect. I was always smiling and pretending to have a good time, but I felt worthless inside.

Several years ago, a wise counselor confronted me and said, “It’s time you stopped wearing your past like a badge.”



The words stung. It's what I needed to hear and I had a choice – continue wearing the badge and simply exist or remove the badge and start living. I chose the latter and the healing began.

I became a runner that day – running away from being scared and running toward healing myself.



Forgive Yourself

Forgiving my mother was essential. The hatred was poisoning my spirit, my health and my other relationships. First, I had to forgive myself for the mistakes I made while living in fear. I had hurt my dear friend by marrying him for the wrong reasons. I had hurt my children by being too overprotective. I had hurt my friends and family by being distant.

I am inspired by the words of Maya Angelou, "It is very important for every human being to forgive herself or himself because if you live, you will make mistakes – it is inevitable."

Take Responsibility

It was easier to play the blame game and I was a master player. Everyone else was responsible for my woes. As a child I was a victim; as an adult I had options.

Before we can have a healthy relationship with anyone else, we must first heal ourselves. Spiritual guide and author Gary Zukav says, "We realize we need to change ourselves instead of the world in order to liberate ourselves once and for always from the tormenting experiences of unworthiness."

I started taking responsibility for my health and my actions. Today, I'm sixty pounds lighter, healthier, and more content with myself and my relationships.

Know Yourself

At a very young age, I married a wonderful man. The marriage did not last. Why? I was looking for someone

to rescue me and provide me with a life, an identity and self-worth.

It is impossible to establish a mature relationship with someone else until you have a life of your own and know who you are. Discover your passion in life. Ask yourself if you would do the work even if you were not paid for it. You may not be able to quit your regular job right away, but you can pursue your passion part-time.

Keep Running

I will keep running away from being scared and running toward healthy relationships as long as I have breath and a clear mind. I am a work in progress!

Join me on the run?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Becky Grava Davis is a full-time college professor and pursues her passion for holistic healing by practicing part-time as a certified integrative health coach and yoga instructor. She is a published author of several health articles for both print and online publications.

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HELPING OLDER PARENTS

BY KEVIN B. PARSONS

Dad is ninety-three and has lived in his house for over thirty years. He enjoys his independence, and still manages to keep his yard well maintained and pretty. He's been a snowbird for decades too, and spends winters in Arizona, a nice escape from the Seattle rains and gloom.

He drives as well ('well' is probably the wrong word to be used here), but for the past few years his road trips to or from the south take place with one of us kids driving him. He did not like that change, but we kids love it. One-on-one time with Dad, what could be better? Yet, age marches onward and keeps taking away precious freedoms from him.

Sometimes, we kids don't notice our parents growing older, and a phone call woke me up to that reality.

His house features a sunken living room with two small steps. During a phone conversation, he admitted he'd fallen while going down those steps. He seems so capable, how could we not notice

the trouble he has going downstairs, even a few? Several phone calls later, he mentioned he'd fallen into the living room a number of times before. What? We missed seeing the old man that he'd become. We needed to do something. Soon afterwards, I flew up for unrelated reasons, but stopped at the hardware store for some materials.

Investing a few hours, I installed a short wooden handrail to help his ascents and descents. Dad seemed pleased as could be, but couldn't try it, as the stain needed to dry. The next day, he called me.

"I can't tell you how happy I am with this handrail. I can get down those steps safely now." He's thanked me a few other times, too. My purpose isn't to magnify the good deed, but what we need to do as children of older parents.

1. Ask Difficult Questions

Can Mom get into and out of the shower safely? Is the house becoming an overwhelming chore? Would it be better to move into a house without steps? Closer to relatives? Or perhaps she should move in with relatives- a particularly troublesome option.

Somewhere during the aging process,

the younger generation morphs into the caretakers and the transition can be quite difficult. Clarification; they may not like the options, which brings us to:

2. Offer To Help

It can be as easy as installing a handrail, or as difficult as taking away driving 'privileges' or moving him into some type of assisted living. If Mom's been in the same house for decades, this can be huge source of conflict.

3. Give Love

First, express love. "Dad, we really want you to be around for many more years. You mean so much to us. Please let us help you." If possible, have siblings pull together for uncomfortable meetings. Secondly, give love. Nothing shows love like time. Assist with cleaning out closets, negotiate with healthcare issues, and manage the moving.

And finally, say love. Do you tell your parents you love them? I never told my father I loved him until my mother passed away. Don't wait until it's too late. Time is ticking.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kevin B. Parsons has written numerous books, anthologies and blogs twice a week on www.kevinbparsons.blogspot.com and posts on *Author Culture* (www.authorculture.blogspot.com) and *Geezer Guys and Gals* (www.geezerguysandgals.blogspot.com).

Kevin has owned numerous businesses in the construction, motorcycle and real estate industries, in Nevada, California, Washington, Oregon and Arizona. He currently enjoys life at 9,500 feet in Brian Head, Utah with his patient wife, Sherri. And he's getting pretty good at shoveling snow.



ITS IN THE GIVING

BY REV. CHARLOTTE FOUST



From the Bible to contemporary music, from Shakespeare to Hollywood, we find love defined, explained, characterized clarified and commanded, but few of us could give a complete, concise description of what love is.

Like in the old story of the five blind men and the elephant, where each man feels a different part of the elephant and then describes it differently, love is different things to different people. Love has as much to do with your background, experience, and perspective as it does with a definition you can simply look up in a

dictionary. Your personal perception of love changes as you grow and change. There is a kernel of truth in all the sappy love songs and chick flick movies. That's what makes them resonate with so many people. We get into sticky situations when we take one idea as the single, absolute definition of love.

To children, love is getting what they want, having someone to kiss their skinned knees, cheer their successes, comfort and console them in failure, encourage them to try again.

To young adults, love is the fluttering of the heart, the catch of breath when the object of their affection enters the room or speaks to them; the glow that

To have love, we must give love.

comes the first time they feel the baby move or hear it gurgle and giggle. Love is a reason to work, to provide, to achieve. It is what drives them to succeed and the comfort they come home to at night.

To a mature adult, love is a child or spouse or friend that is by their side through illness, and adversity. Someone who sits silently nearby, asks what they need, and delivers to the best of their ability without question or judgment and without giving unasked for advice.




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Maturity tells us love isn't always getting everything we want, sometimes the greatest love is NOT getting everything you thought you wanted. It isn't all hearts and flowers, songs and sweet nothings. Love is our passion, our guide, our strength and, at times, our greatest weakness.

Wisdom teaches us that love is not about us...it is about them. To have love, we must give love. When we give peace, joy, understanding, comfort and compassion to others, we receive more than we could ever have dreamed. If we want to be loved, we must be love. We need not look for love in order to find it. We need to give it and it will find its own path back to us!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rev. Charlotte Foust is senior minister of Community Spiritual Center in Las Vegas, NV. Her messages and meditations inspire thoughtful reflection and positive actions. Rev. Charlotte's essays and affirmations can be found at www.communityspiritualcenter.com and www.whispersfrommyheart.com



THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

BY SELENA TORRES

I always knew I was lucky to have the opportunity to celebrate Christmas. It felt magnificent to be surrounded with people who loved me, and receive presents that I had dreamed about and asked for.

Of course, my parents taught me to be charitable and we often participated in Christmas charity events like Angel Tree and Toys-for-Tots. However, those experiences were nothing like the Adopt-a-Family event I participated in this year with the help of the Community Spiritual Center and the College of Southern Nevada Hispanic Student Union.

Two families were adopted with the program. Both families struggle daily to make ends meet and both sets of parents are without documentation to get a stable job. In the case of the Martinez family, medical expenses made living on a low-income even harder. Both families wanted to celebrate the holiday but realized that it was not possible.

Only one day before Christmas Eve, we arranged the drop-off of the Christmas gifts. Meeting at a friend's house, we sorted through the donations we had collected and were able to decide which family would receive which items.

Food, clothing, decorations, money, gift cards, toys, and games were among the



many items donated. Over twenty-five students from the College of Southern Nevada participated in the event.

Though many students donated what they could, most students, struggling to pay for school, were not able to donate much.

With the help of Community Spiritual Center each family received an abundance of gifts that would make any family's Christmas special. The group of students, carpooling in six

cars, delivered the presents and got to experience the joy of the children in their humble homes.

Each student was impacted by the event and more motivated to give in the future. Watching families that prior to our visit were without a single Christmas decoration or present wrapped in the room as they received these wrapped packages and gifts, brought tears to the eyes of the college kids who were proud to be a part of each family's memories forever.



Charity can be taught in the walls of the church and school, but experiencing the gratitude of the children and parents alike and seeing tears in their eyes left a mark this Christmas on the students who experienced the value of giving. It was so rewarding to see families who were accustomed to going without get the opportunity to go with. This Christmas I was proud to be one of those students from the college as we learned the true meaning of Christmas.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Selena Torres is a Las Vegas native and is currently a full-time student at the College of Southern Nevada. When Selena is not working or studying, she is helping others. Selena is passionate about helping her community and is currently working with the CSN Hispanic Student Union to celebrate Cesar Chavez Day in North Las Vegas. After college, Selena would like to become an educator for students in at-risk areas encouraging all students to pursue a higher education.

*“The love we give away is
the only love we keep.”*

- Elbert Hubbard



THE PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATOR

(An excerpt from *You Are More Than Enough: Every Woman's Guide to Purpose, Passion, and Power* by Judi Moreo)

Would you tell your best friend that he or she is stupid, ugly, or dumb? Then why do you talk to yourself in this manner? The very first thing we need to do to become persuasive communicators is to communicate with ourselves in a positive manner. It is our responsibility to create a place for ourselves to feel self-acceptance. It is not okay to talk negatively to ourselves.

It is not okay to demand perfection of ourselves. We must be honest with ourselves about our feelings, keeping in mind that any feelings of inadequacy are usually triggered by something, someone, or some situation from the past. You are not dealing with the past now. Remain in the moment. You are only dealing with the situation you are in at this time. It is important to learn to cope with situations, rather than feeling like you have to defend yourself or your position. Cool heads prevail.

Your responsibility is to act in a way that makes you feel better, not worse. When we feel good about ourselves, it becomes easier to show respect for and be pleasant to other people. In demonstrating respect for them, we show them we value them. We all want to feel valued.

In communicating with others, remember to consider the relationship,

your responsibility to the relationship, and the role you play within it. Every interaction with another person has an effect on the relationship, whether it is with family members, co-workers, subordinates, bosses, friends, or associates.

Consider how much this relationship means to you. How much could it mean? It is important for all parties involved in any relationship to feel like it is a win-win. It is important for everyone to keep his or her self-esteem intact. What is more important to you... the relationship, or being right about a particular point?

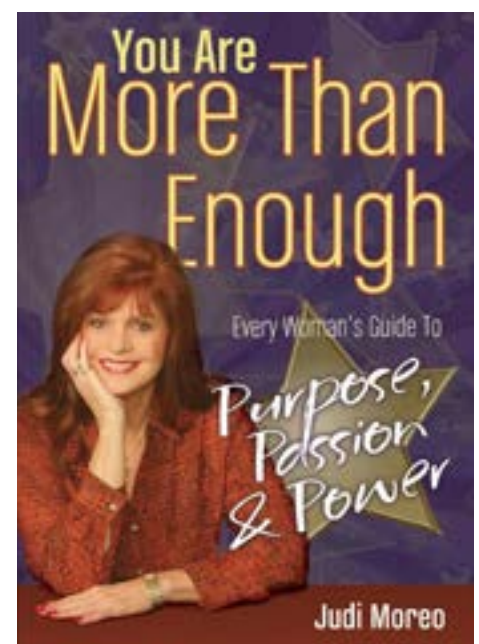
You need to be clear about your communication objectives and your desired outcomes before you enter into any discussion or interaction. Also, be clear about how you want the other person to feel about you.

What is your responsibility? When growing up I would sometimes get in disagreements with other family members and my mother would say, "You are bigger than the way you are acting." I would think, "Well, I don't want to be bigger. I want to win." What I had to learn was "behaving bigger" meant behaving in a way that showed respect to others in the relationship or situation- and myself as well. If I made the choice to give respect, I would fulfill my responsibility and come out a

winner. To show respect, I had to learn to take 100 percent responsibility for the communication process.

What is your role? When speaking, are you clear and concise. Are you saying things in a way that the other person understands and feels valued. When you are listening, are you really hearing what the other person is saying and what he or she means? Are you asking questions to be sure what is said and what is meant is what you heard. If we don't understand something, we should ask the speaker to clarify the meaning for us. Then stick with the process and continue to question until we are sure we understand.

Make the choice to be the one to take the first step toward satisfactory communication and create a more cohesive relationship or environment. After all, what is your objective? It is to communicate effectively. You can only be a persuasive communicator when you are aware of and care about the other person's wants, needs, and expectations.





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Marlene Livingston Curry is available for lectures and workshops based on her book *Resilient Survivor*.

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CHOICES MAGAZINE WINTER ISSUE 2014

A FINAL NOTE FROM JUDI MOREO

Our thoughts determine what we want. Our actions determine what we get. Think what you want and then take action. Your first action is to make your desires specific and visual. The second is to make a conscious choice and a plan to get what you want. Don't let fear or negative self-talk hold you back.

When you want something better, you have to do something different than what you are doing now. Make the decision that you will be successful and know that you have the power to create whatever success you want in your life. Then, start to take steps in the direction you want to go.

On the days when you are feeling as though nothing is happening in your life and that you are going nowhere, remember, discipline is the key to success. We must discipline our minds to focus forward toward where we want to go and not dwell on where we are at the moment; we must discipline ourselves to talk positively and successfully and not complain about what's not happening and who's not doing what. Discipline is self-control.

Think of anyone you know who has achieved their goals. They have had to discipline themselves. Liberace had to practice every day to become

a great pianist. Marie Osborne had to discipline herself to lose weight. Nelson Mandela had to stay focused on his vision of a future for 27 years of imprisonment in order to bring a nation to freedom. He had to discipline his thoughts throughout that time.

If you want to be a success at anything, you must discipline yourself to focus on your goal and work toward it every day. You can achieve whatever you want to achieve. You are more than enough!

Judi