

A deep space photograph of a star with a bright blue lens flare against a dark blue starry background. The star is the central focus, emitting a strong blue light that creates a vertical and horizontal cross-like pattern. The background is filled with numerous smaller stars and some faint nebulae.

A Place Where We Love To Be

Jeff Sadowski

What if there was a way that you could see life again – as if for the first time?

As the pace of the world spins faster, more and more people are losing their sense of joy...

But what if there was a very simple way – to bring it back?

We live our lives in real-time from one encounter to the next, and this is how our happiness is being created:

In One Positive Encounter at a Time.

Did you know that we spend more time with others than we do alone? When we share an enjoyable moment with someone, we both take those positive feelings with us. From here our next moment is about to begin. Since we're already in a happier place, we build our next moment – from there.

String a few of these positive moments together, and not only will you become happier and healthier, but those fantastic dreams and plans you have for the future will become clearer and begin to take shape, as you go along in this way...

Eventually, being happy doesn't just happen once in a while. It becomes something you'll find wherever you are most of the time.

If you know how to make just one encounter with someone enjoyable for both of you, then everything in your life will begin to improve – just from doing this!

If it sounds too good to be true, then all you need to do is keep on reading... This book will show you how happiness works – everywhere – from a complete standstill.

When we bring just a hint of this energy into our life's moments – starting right where we are now, it's literally only a matter of time before we all end up in:

A PLACE WHERE WE LOVE TO BE.

Author's Note:

*If I could ask anyone in the world – if they would like to be happier...
The answer would be: YES!*

So, how can we make that possible?

If you've smiled before, even just once – you can do it, again. If you're reading these words, you have the capacity to make it happen...

Recent research in the scientific community has stated that at least 75% of the world would like to be happier. That's why I'm sharing this E-book on how to create happiness – for free. (Currently, the print version is available for purchase on Amazon.)

There are no strings or catches to this promotion. Since I'm the author of the book, which took 30 years of research and 13 years to complete it, you can share this version with as many people as you'd like. My only request is that you give the book a chance. See if it works to make you a little happier, wherever you are, right now. If you find that it helps and you decide to share it...Please leave it in its original form; as this free E-book version it not for sale.

All proceeds from the print version will be supporting my mission to make sure as many people as possible, can find a way to greater happiness – in their own lives, and in their relationships. My goal is to have this reach a Billion people. To me, the best part about happiness is: You get to be exactly who you are, right now. Nothing about you has to change; except maybe for keeping that smile around for a bit longer. Whatever positive changes that you would like to make, besides this – are up to you. If you have questions or comments, you can reach me at: jsadowski321@gmail.com. I'll do my best to respond, and to keep this cause going. Just by reading and sharing this – you're helping to make life a place where we love to be, too...Good for you!

Sincerely, Jeff

*A Place
Where We Love
To Be*

Jeff Sadowski

Disclaimer:

The material presented in this book is for general information purposes only; and its intent is to encourage you on your journey towards emotional and spiritual well-being. It is not to be used to diagnose or treat an emotional, physical or medical condition of any kind. If you have a medical condition or have questions about one, please seek the guidance of a physician or a medical professional trained in your area of concern. The author and publisher assume no legal, financial liability or obligations for use of the information contained here.

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Preface:

In-spire (verb)

- (1) To awaken a particular feeling in someone, especially to do something creative.
- (2) To breathe in (air); inhale.

This book was written to inspire and enhance all of your relationships. While the material will work wonders reading it alone, why not read it with your spouse, a significant other, or a friend?

Since the suggestions are going directly into your relationships, you'll be able to create the positive results you were looking for as soon as possible together; and that's exactly what this book was designed to do...

To heighten your experience even more, you can read the words in the same way, as they were written down. This book was crafted with the company of two very special musical pieces. The outline and rough draft were written listening to "*Pure Essence*" by Maneesh De Moor. The editing process was completed with "*Ambient Study Music to Concentrate – 4 Hours of Music for Studying, Concentration and Memory*" by Quiet Quest – Study Music. Both can be found on YouTube. And with that, I hope you enjoy the music and the book!

Acknowledgements:

Everyone who has come into my life so far – even for a brief moment, has helped me understand how positive relationships can be, when we work together to accomplish that goal. So, there literally isn't enough room to thank everyone by name!

The Creator of All Life for giving me the inspiration to follow this path; and to all of my family and friends for the support over the years, and a place to bring these ideas to life.

Leo Buscaglia for introducing me to the world of how “we” become happier together...

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Joe and Pam MacSweeney at Eames Drums for sharing a local piece of history with me.

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Bonnie Hurd Smith and Brett Coty of the Ipswich Writer's Group; Andrew DeFrancesco, Jay Hobson and Alison Sabean for the encouragement to get started on this path.

All of the self-help writers who have put their energy and their lives into

making sure other people could find a way to happiness. Without you, I wouldn't have been able to do this!

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My wife Robyn for the suggestion to, "Just write the book already," and for giving me the inspiration and freedom I needed to be myself. Chris Sadowski for his computer graphics wizardry and the book's perfect cover design. John Paynter for all of your wise care-full thoughts, a great deal of time spent exploring my ideas throughout the years, and the "About the Author" page. Eddie Festa for his friendship and support that has spanned over 33 years. James Merchant and Harrison Beckman for allowing me to take a much deeper look at some very serious topics, but always with a smile. Mike Mangini for his lessons, encouragement and showing me how almost anything that we set our minds to is possible. All of my lifelong friends who have hung in there, even when the skies were dark and stormy: Jamie Blair, Dawn Thorogood, Donna Beckman, Pete and Jan Hodge, and Michael Collins.

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Nancy Medige for the beautiful view in Florida (The Villages) to write my first draft. Thanks so much for the endless pot of coffee... We miss you!

And, finally to my grandmother Rachel Rogers, who lived 103 years and 7 months. This book is dedicated to you. Thanks for staying with us for so long! The memory of your generosity and your easy smile will never be forgotten.

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Introduction:

There is only one reason why you came here. You would like to be as happy, healthy and successful as possible in life, and you are looking for more ways to accomplish that. If so, you've come to the right place...Now is literally the only time we have to make that happen!

So, let's explore the mystery of how that works...

There are thousands of ways to become happy, healthy and successful. Today, we have more knowledge about this, than we ever did before. But somehow, quite a few people are still unhappy. So, what's missing?

The very first and last piece of life's puzzle.

So, what is it?

Did you know that we spend more time with others, than we do alone?

To begin walking steadily on the road of happiness, health and fulfillment, all you'll need to remember is that the person right next to you – seeks the same happiness that you do, in how they feel about life, too. Since our present location is the only time and place we have to work with, if we desire to become happier, then we'll need to start – right where we are now. There is literally no other time or place to begin making happiness, possible.

Wow. So, what happens next?

In the next moment you share with someone, since you're both seeking to be happy, you already have the exact same goal – in common. And, you're both standing right in the middle of the same energy that's surrounding you. So, since the time, place and a common goal are already set, the only thing left "to do" is to simply make that moment a little more enjoyable for both of you. That's all you need to do! A smile, a kind gesture, a few positive words, and maybe even a laugh or two...

In fact, we've all done this so many times before...

But in order to do this – without worrying about it, there is one thing that we needed to know, so that we could continue to do this happily and successfully, with ease.

And, that is...

Nothing changes in that moment about either one of us, except – how good we feel about being there. That's all that's happening! But the joy and the positive energy that's put into motion here, begins to enhance every part of our lives – on the spot.

That's *the* only missing piece of life's puzzle that *we* needed to put into place together to make happiness, health and success possible, right now...

Everything that we're trying to do to obtain happiness in life is built first – from here. It's literally ground zero. We've been trying to get there – without doing this together. That's the only reason why we've had such a difficult time. It would be like trying to complete ourselves and the biggest puzzle in life – without putting the very first and last piece, into place! These seemingly common moments affect everything that's happening to us. Does that make sense now?

You mean that's all we needed to do to become happier, about life?

Our positive interactions are where everything that we're doing – begins, ends, and begins again...

We've only been avoiding this step – because we “thought” we had to change everything about ourselves or each other to make happiness possible together...When it's the step itself, and the enjoyment we find here – that begins to put everything else that's good for us, into place. How? This simple exchange turns the universal wheel of life into a positive direction, and everything else that follows it – is only following that first domino.

To understand this, let me explain a bit more about how positive energy

works – for us...

Since we live our lives in one experience or encounter at a time, and we feel emotions in real-time, making our moments more enjoyable together right now is the foundation that all of our life's plans – are built upon. When we understand that we are just activating the positive energy that's inside of us and all around us in our moments together, our lives will begin to take shape and develop in the positive ways, we've been dreaming that they could. In this experience, not only do we become happier and healthier, but we both get closer to becoming who we truly are, and desire to be. And, there is room for everyone to live to their fullest potential, regardless of what anyone else chooses to do. For every person there is a place and a role. There are no missing pieces here. This allows everyone to take their happy positions. And, all of our preferences and personal beliefs that define who we feel we are – will still remain, with us...

In essence, we are only changing the way we feel about being in our moments together – and that's it. However, this very simple positive action regularly gives us the energy, faith, and the motivation we need to make our future dreams and plans possible. This enjoyable experience allows us to think much more clearly, and it moves us along with ease, so that we can see what our next step might be. And, it even allows us to take a step into that direction – without *any* obstacles in the way.

That sounds fantastic! What happens, then?

You'll just continue on with whatever you were going to do, and this positive energy will stay with you and grow, as you move along in this happier state. Whatever you do from here, will not only become more enjoyable, but this energy will begin to transform everything you set out to do in the future, so that you'll have even more success in your plans ahead.

When you're in a positive place emotionally, you're already where you need to be, so that the interactions you have with other people can be

enjoyable and productive. In work, there will be much less confusion, mistakes or conflicts, as everything will begin to “work together,” so that the positive results everyone was looking for will be made possible, easily. If we notice something that makes the process of working together easier, it will only add to the happiness and success of what we’re a part of...

Here, in a place where things are working, energy naturally begins to build on itself, as the laws of momentum, attraction, and accumulation keep moving your combined positive energy to even greater heights. This is literally where – everything starts coming together. According to Einstein, “Energy can’t be created or destroyed, only transformed.” In these moments we are simply activating the energy that’s already here. Our more enjoyable moments not only affect us in a positive way, but *everything* we are a part of, as well. Financial profits and growth will also happen easily here, because there will be almost nothing in the way – of the energy that’s creating them.

What happens if someone doesn’t want to participate in a positive interaction, with us?

Happiness is a choice and a direction that we can always choose to become a part of. Sometimes, it just takes a little while for someone to realize this, depending on how they feel. You can extend your energy for a moment by listening, or by simply sending a smile their way. There will be so many more opportunities to make happiness possible, again. In fact, your smile will remind them that this is an option that they have available to them. There’s no need to worry about it! It’s simply another moment in time. And, as time goes on, people will eventually want to be in this happier place too; and it will take much less time to get back there.

If something feels good and the opportunity for happiness is here, it only makes sense to become a part of it, as soon as possible! Especially if we’re feeling down, a positive experience or encounter will always make us feel better. And, that’s what we were looking for. When we realize

that this is one of the major ways that we turn our feelings around, we'll want to do our part in helping to make this possible for each other, during our moments together...

How do positive emotions strengthen our overall health and well-being?

Your overall health and energy levels will improve dramatically (without stress or conflict) because positive energy or your emotions are the cells in your body saying, "You are on the right track. This is working!"

Positive emotions are the body's way of letting you know that you're doing something beneficial. From here, you'll make better decisions and healthier choices easily, because your mind and body will be working together – now that they feel good!

When we feel any positive emotion, both sides of our brain are working together. In fact, all of the cells in our body from here begin to cooperate with each other – just like we are. This only increases the happiness, health and success of what we're doing, so that life becomes what it could have been from the very beginning...***A Place Where We Love To Be!***

In the pages that follow, from a complete standstill, you'll see how everything we have was only made, so that it could assist us – in feeling happier to be here. You'll take this inspiration into the second part of the book – as you move throughout your day. Then, you'll see what positive energy does for all of your activities, as well...

When we remember why we are here – to be happy, and how we get "there," we can get right back to it – immediately. A positive thought, word or action, alone and together (an encounter contains all of these for both of us), will put us exactly where we've always wanted to be! When we're alone, it's a continuation of our positive moments and we'll create more energy there, too. Then, we'll bring it back into the moments we have together. See the full circle here? From there, this positive energy cycle just keeps on repeating...From one experience to the next.

So, no matter where you've been, or what life has been like lately,

happiness or positive energy is something that you can get happy about, right now...Because it goes to work – the moment that it’s put into motion. How about that?

Very soon, you’ll know exactly how this works and why, and you’ll be able to begin creating happiness wherever you go from now on – for yourself, and the people around you. You’ll see that this very simple process was always 100% for both of us, individually and collectively. So, there was never a need to change who we are, what we desire, or to have to compete for our “own” happiness. We are all a part of the same energy – that’s creating it.

We are always standing right in the middle of it, and we can’t create or experience joy here – without each other. Even what we’re doing alone to become happy is only half of the complete puzzle...And, that’s why we are all here together. Everyone brings something unique and special into the picture of the world; and this is helping all of us to create the much happier world that we wanted to become a part of...

And, since now is the only time we have to make happiness, health and success possible...

Let’s take a step into that – right now!

C1: You Can Be Happy That You're – Right Here!

The Premise:

Everyone's deepest desire is to be happy – right now. Everything we do and long for is centered on this goal. It's the reason behind every choice we make. We hope that whatever we are doing now will turn out well, so that a positive feeling is present in the journey, and in our final results.

The key to creating true and lasting happiness is not how to do it; because we've all been successful at it many times in our lives, before...

The real mystery is not how to create it momentarily, but how to keep on creating it, so that this becomes our natural state of being most of the time. By the end of this chapter, you'll have three guaranteed ways to keep positive energy moving within you and out into what you're doing, so that it can continue to work its magic!

In time and with a little practice, you'll come back to this idea if you lose your happy place; and you'll know how to get right back to it. Like anything we learn, we just need a little patience and an understanding of the process, until our repetitions become automatic.

So, how does it work?

The good news is that these actions don't require lots of money or possessions to make happiness possible. If you have a specific goal in mind, there might be some things you'll need to acquire. And, that's perfectly fine. We live in a material world, where spirit helps to bring all of the things that we need and desire to life. That was a part of the plan from the very beginning; which is why the world is filled with so many different things!

As far as happiness is concerned, this comes down to having a balance of learning how to be happy with what's here (or on its way), and how to create positive feelings, within us. Believe it or not, regardless of how much we have, everyone needs to be doing the same things in their own

unique way to become happy. Why? Because happiness is an emotional state that's created on the inside, first. It's nothing more or less than positive energy flowing through your body, recognizing it, and appreciating that it's there. That's really all there is to it. So, how do we bring these two places, inside and out – together? Everything that we look at, listen to, think about, act upon, or that we are a part of in some way is having an effect on our entire being¹.

When these things are healthy and pleasurable, they are stimulating a release of positive chemical emotions called endorphins that make us feel the way we do, when we're enjoying something. Positive emotions affect our cells in a very beneficial way, and that's why we feel good! Now that we have more energy, we can use it to maintain, improve or expand the conditions in our lives on the outside. So, this is where our inner and our outer lives come together. It's important to remind you that pressure, rushing or stress to create more positive energy, isn't helpful. That would defeat the whole purpose. Once you understand the cycle, it's just a matter of repeating the steps until you realize how good this energy feels, and what it brings into what we are doing.

A complete positive energy cycle looks like this: When we put our attention on something that we appreciate about life (this could be a thought, a person, or something outside of us), we feel good, and we can use that energy to move ourselves forward in a positive way. The leap forward inside that springs us into a positive action on the outside is where the ideas of inspiration and motivation come from. As our positive feelings grow, energy re-cycles itself throughout our body. This is where cellular memory takes place. You've often heard that "laughter" is the best medicine, right? Well, it isn't really the "laughter" that's doing all of the work! Any positive emotion will work on us in the same beneficial way. Since all of the systems in our body function together as a whole, when we experience any healthy pleasure or positive emotion this allows everything on the inside of us to function, as well as it possibly can.

¹ Ernest Holmes, *This Thing Called You* (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher / Penguin, 2004), 60.

This is why a consistent state of pleasantness feels so good to us. Our biology is always naturally trying to maintain this balanced state of being; and positive energy is putting that into motion on the inside of us. When we enjoy our moments together more often, it becomes easier for our bodies to stay energized, focused, feeling good and at ease. In biology, this entire process is known as Homeostasis².

The order of this cycle can be reversed, too. When we have an experience that's beneficial or enjoyable, it puts us in a positive emotional state. From here, we can just appreciate how we feel for a little while. Then, we can move ourselves into an action or another experience that helps to keep our positive energy stable and growing, with us. Energy travels from the inside of us, out – into what we are doing, and then it comes back around to how we feel. (Also known as feedback, or karma.) That's the complete circle or cycle of how energy moves right along, with us.

As we become better at creating happier emotions regularly, we're naturally building up our energy, so that it eventually takes less of it to achieve our goals. This framework was built into the idea of Homeostasis. Our body wants to use the least amount of energy needed to reach its happy, healthy and successful destination. So, efficiency is actually biology's idea. It's just a way not to waste the energy that's here. However, efficiency is not a goal to strive for, in and of itself, as it's more of a healthy by-product of something that we are doing, successfully. (In future chapters, we'll explore how this idea works in more detail.)

So, with that understanding how can we easily create this energy in our lives, right now?

I'll give you three simple things that you can do immediately, and it will only take a few minutes to complete them. It's wonderful to have some

² Eldon D. Enger, Frederick C. Ross, and David B. Bailey, *Concepts in Biology* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2005), 12.

“feel good” ideas to think about, but this book was only written, so that you could put these ideas into your life – where you are! This is where you will directly see, feel and understand why these ideas work.

In essence, an actual experience will prove to you if a given idea is true; which naturally builds up your faith and confidence, too. So, at the end of a few simple exercises, you’ll see for yourself exactly how happiness is being created! Your role from now on is to use what you’ve learned to duplicate this process, in whatever way you choose. Although we are all headed to the same happier place on the inside, life has given us so many different opportunities and ways to make this possible...

That’s why each and every one of us is unique. No one has ever been, or will ever be exactly like you; or travel down the same path that your life has, in store. We might share some universal similarities, but your journey – is truly one of a kind! This means you were already given the ability to enjoy life, in a way that suits you best. That’s another reason why you can feel good about yourself! And, it’s the same way for others, too. In our moments together, we are literally two miracles of creation – looking directly at each other...How about that?

To zoom in a little closer on the process of creating happiness, positive emotions are created through all of our thoughts, words and actions in real-time. Everything in life creates an emotional response, within us. And, feelings let us know if what we're doing is working. They let us know if we are headed in the right direction for what we wanted to do, and how we wanted to feel. A positive feeling is something that we create, and it’s also a destination at the same time.

For your first exercise into how this works *think* of anything that makes you happy...See that smile? That’s it! You’ve just successfully completed your first happy step. A happy thought = a happy emotion. Are you ready for the next one?

Say one thing that you like about life or yourself – out loud...
Don’t worry...No one is listening here, but you.

How did it feel to express – your positive emotions?

Since “*talking*” is the second part of where happiness comes from, speaking is something that you’ll have to get more comfortable doing! Our thoughts are the first part, and the words we share together are how we take our thoughts, and bring them out into the world – where we are. This helps us to create the experiences we are a part of. Just like the feelings we have, our words were created first to express, create and share joy³. And, we can also use them to learn how to get back to a more positive place, too. So, choosing words that reflect a more positive attitude changes our feelings, our chemistry, and our life’s moments for the better. This is something to remember when you’re talking with someone. We all affect each other and how we feel; by what we say, and do together. If you think about it, you’ve had plenty of positive moments with other people. And, your words and actions were half of what made those moments possible; for you and for them, too. So, are you beginning to see how the pieces of *our* happiness are coming together?

Our thoughts, words and actions fit together, so that we can create and experience a positive moment. And, every happy memory was created this way. As you already know, those experiences leave a lasting impression on us. That impression becomes how we feel about ourselves, other people and the world we live in. And, this just leads us to the positive choices and decisions we make because of how good we feel; which takes us to our third “happy” exercise...

Right now, it’s time to choose *a brief action* that will make you feel good. The best part about the last step is – you’re already doing it!

Since reading is an action (even though it doesn’t require much energy), you’ve just proved to yourself that you can successfully complete all three of the steps necessary to make yourself happy! *Thoughts, words and actions are extensions of the same energy*⁴. They are the ways that

³ Neale Donald Walsch, *Conversations with God: an uncommon dialogue*, Book 1 (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1996), 15.

⁴ Walsch, *Conversations with God*, Book 1, 74.

we move energy from one place to another within ourselves, and between us. Anything that you decide to do from now on that's positive, will only build up your emotions.

Life is a series of moves that we make to feel good, and to experience life in a positive way. Every step that we take now is only leading us there! So, don't worry about it. This was supposed to be a happy journey of discovery and creation, remember? Take it easy, and just be yourself. Put these ideas into motion a little more each day, and your happy emotions will be created, as you go along. If you land a little bit off from what you desired to do (without guilt, blame or shame), see what you can do next time to make that particular experience a positive one. Just be curious about it. In fact, you'll get the chance to do this all over again, very soon. Life has given us plenty of room to learn, grow and even make mistakes. That's all part of the process. We're all just learning more about how this works, as we go along... That's life!

So, now that you have a good idea of how happier moments are created, you can always come back to these three easy steps. Practice making your next set of thoughts, words and actions a little closer to where you wanted them to be – happily, and that's all there is to it.

I hope these exercises have helped you to remember that creating a happier “feeling” is easy. The challenge is to learn a little more each day, about how to keep those feelings with you. So, take it easy as you go along, and be a bit more forgiving of others, as they are learning how to do this, too. If anything, your kind words or your positive attitude can be a reminder to others of what's possible for them. Our moments together can be beautiful and fun, even as we're learning more about how happiness is created. And, the journey never really ends; as there is always more for us to see and do, together...

During the course of this book, you will come to appreciate everything that you have on you, within you, and all around you. Everything was put here, so that you could be happy with it, and so it could help you to change other people's lives in a positive and meaningful way, too. That's

the goal of life, and everything you see around you. Even if we're complete strangers, we all have the exact same goal in common...

We *all* want to feel good about where we are – right now!

So, the possibility of creating happiness is always with us. It's just a matter of a few actions, words or thoughts that activate these feelings more often⁵. You'll see that since we're all unique, so are the things that help us get "here." Making time for sharing what we like to do together, and learning more about what makes someone else happy is still bringing us to the same happy place. Our differences on the outside just give us even more options to enjoy our life's journey. So, with a little practice, patience and some repetition, alone and together... With our positive thoughts, words and actions combined, this is how *we* become – Happy!

The Experiment:

This one is easy, but it will greatly expand your awareness. It will show you how the past, present and future are linked. To do this, remember a time when you were looking forward to a positive experience you've had. As we look forward to something, these are our future goals. When that moment arrives and you enjoy it, you've brought your goal to the present. And, you've also made a happy memory that will become a part of your past. And, since you have at least a few positive memories to think about, it means that you will be able to make happiness possible again, both now and in the future.

In time, this will become our natural state of being, and the way we choose to live. And, this only happens through one positive experience, or encounter at a time. If you keep that in mind, it will be much easier to accomplish anything that you would like to do. One positive step, just leads us to the next one...

So, whatever you're going to do now, or in the future follows the same simple pattern. Your experiences might look a little different when you

⁵ Holmes, *This Thing Called You*, 96-97.

arrive, but if the results are positive, you've successfully achieved your goal. Now, it's just a matter of stringing a few of these positive moments together more often, and well – there you go!

A Final Thought:

Everything that we're doing is to become happy. Our positive moments are only filled by a series of very small and manageable steps. They are built by what we think, say and do – together. This is how we create a happy present moment, and a stable future that we can build our lives upon. Eventually, these moments move into our past, and they become an enjoyable memory. Now we can appreciate where we've been, and we'll be able to see where we would like to go next. And, this simple three step process is how our lives unfold, no matter who or where we are...

If you know how to take one positive step where you are right now, that's all you'll need to remember. The pages ahead will map-out every major activity that you'll be involved with, so you'll know exactly what to do – to create happiness when you're there, too...

So, are you ready to make happiness a much larger part of your life from now on?

Well, what are we waiting for – let's go!

C2: Wait a Minute!

The Premise:

Since we all develop individually and collectively together, up until a very short time ago most of us didn't understand that the positive moments we have with each other are helping to shape how we feel about ourselves, and our lives in every possible way – including, what we are actually doing – right now!

Just as I had you go through a positive thought, word and action that made you feel a certain way in the last chapter, this is exactly what we are doing in our moments together, as well. We are bringing these three things “together” to not only achieve a logistical outcome, but to feel good during the time we have to spend. Since we are using the same energy to feel good and to complete our tasks, then the idea of being kind or getting along, isn't just an old-fashioned notion or value. It's literally something that's contributing to how our moments will turn out! The reason for this is because our bodies are always biologically responding to what we are doing with them, and how. So, a value isn't just an idea of something that's good for us. On the ground where we are, they are a combination of an emotion and a series of steps that we take to make a positive outcome, happen. Values give us energy, and they help us to coordinate and shape our efforts to make what we're working on, possible. To me, the best part is that they help to make us feel good, about the entire process of working together. You could say that they are what we add into the circle of energy that we have to work with; and this changes how we feel, and what happens because of that.

Today, we have a much greater intellectual understanding of how we work together, and how we can have a positive influence on our current situations. What hasn't changed very much is how we bring those beneficial ideas into our moments together. You could say that this is the last step, before we start applying what we've learned, so far. The good news is that you will be participating in making this possible! Just by being a little more positive in the moments you have – alone and with

other people, not only are you making yourself happy, but in a very substantial way, you are changing the entire world's energy for the better. In a positive moment we are affecting ourselves where we are, as well as the energy that's surrounding all of us at the same time. (Wow. It's pretty cool to know that, right?)

Since the energy that makes up our planet is always moving and shifting, it's also being affected by what we are doing together, in it. It's very important to understand that these points are not here to put too much pressure on you "to be positive," as it is an invitation into a fantastic opportunity that we all have to make life enjoyable again, right now. In a way you could say that these positive effects combined with the opportunity we have is the gateway to freedom that we've all been searching for. (It would be interesting to find out someday that the "Holy Grail" was on the inside of us, and not the outside. Perhaps, it's the same with the "Fountain of Youth," too.) Regardless of that, since the goal of life is to enjoy it, you can be much happier about the positive steps – you are about to take!

When we decide that we would like to become happier, we just need an incentive to get started. So, understanding all of these immediate positive benefits, will remove any obstacles in the way of the joy that we wanted to become a part of. No matter where we are right now, our next positive encounter is a chance for us to become happier, to greatly affect other people, and the entire world around us at the same time. (If that's not a good enough reason for us to get started, what would be?)

Collectively, we might not think that our positive moments are having this much of an impact on us. If that's the case, we can do a little reverse engineering. Remember the last moment you had with someone or something that didn't turn out well? How did that feel? Not such a nice place to visit, right? Well, our positive moments feel the exact opposite way. And, being positive is not something that we have to compulsively think about in every single moment. (That would be exhausting!) As energy builds and centers us a little more with every positive interaction,

we can coast along with that boost in energy. To make this idea easier to grasp, think of pushing a swing. Once it's moving, we just need to give it a little push every now and then, so that momentum is kept "up." Just as I had you go through a few exercises to show you how your body responds in real-time to positive energy, you'll see that this idea works in the same way when we're together, too...

For the longest time, we've had some difficulty in relating to each other in a way that makes us *both* feel good. So, it might be hard to believe that this is all we really need to do to become happier. In fact, seeing each other in a state of happiness only multiplies and enhances those feelings, and the benefits of them. We'll be exploring this in much greater detail, as we go along. However, to simplify the process for now, when we're happy or we see someone who's happy, the same places in our brain become activated⁶. If we're present in any moment and someone smiles at us, it causes us to do the same thing, in return. There have been many interdisciplinary studies about this, but to me, this is where "the observer effect" in physics is linked to the mirror neurons that we have in our brain. What we are witnessing is having a direct effect on our biology. So, we're already wired to share and create happiness together⁷. You could say that the mirror neurons we have, not only help us to create happiness easier, but they also work as an internal reminder of what we can do together, or – get back to doing!

All of the positive effects that are created in a positive experience or encounter are not something that you have to manage. You are the "cause," and the positive results of that energy being sent out are the effects. And, those effects happen automatically, once positive energy is put into motion between us. We are always standing right in the middle of the energy we've created together! And, that's why the results directly affect "us" in the positive ways that they do.

⁶ Daniel Goleman, *Social Intelligence: The New Science of Human Relationships* (New York: Bantam Dell, 2006), 18.

⁷ Gerard Cheshire, "Evolution" in *Scientia* (New York: Walker, 2011), 214.

Understanding how beneficial this experience is puts you in the right place internally, so that you're ready to take a step on the outside. Knowing that you can make happiness possible right now, allows you to be happy about it – before you take a step!

I'm sure you can think of a few examples when you said or did something positive, and those actions seemed spontaneous. They didn't require that much effort at all, but they produced a very favorable outcome. That was your intuition directing you. And, it's not something that you have to keep trying to get in touch with! When we're positive with each other more often, our intuition is activated and our choices will happen with a lot less effort, or struggle. Again, this connection is not a direct aim, as it is a by-product of what we're doing that's good for us. If we're in a positive place emotionally, the next step in what we're doing will make itself known to us, or it will happen as we're in motion. This flow allows us to keep energy going between us, and out into what we're doing. (That was the whole idea.) Some of our goals might require a lot of time or steps to complete them. However, since we're enjoying the process together, we'll have more confidence in the final outcome, as well.

The positive energy that we share with each other regularly does three very specific things for us. It allows our bodies to relax, which helps us to concentrate and become more effective in our movements, and this builds up more energy within us, too. From here, everything on the inside of us is working together, so that our actions become healthy for us, and what we're working on...

As positive energy travels from the inside of us – out into what we're doing, it comes back to us again, in how we feel. This entire process is known as a bio-feedback loop⁸. It's our biology letting us know that what we're doing is working! This is initially why we have feelings. They are here to let us know when something is going great, or if we need to do something in a different way, so that our situation works out.

⁸ Moff Betts, "The Human Body" in *Scientia* (New York: Walker, 2011), 310.

Of course, there are many reasons why we have feelings, but basically, that's what they're for. The same goes for our senses, as they are directly connected to our feelings, as well. Our feelings, our senses, our brain, and our bodies are how we relate in a positive way – with the outside world. And, that effects how we feel, on the inside!

So, if you would like to experience more positive feelings in your life, you'll have to spend a little of the energy you have to create, and keep those feelings going. A very little bit of energy goes a long way, since we are activating and pushing atoms around. And, as you know, they contain a lot of energy! Atoms make up everything that's here, including us. So, how we relate to the world is influencing the energy that's inside and outside of us. It's that simple. If we are in a positive state, the energy surrounding us is also in the same place. If we're in a negative place emotionally, then eventually our situations will mirror that image back to us, as well. Like our emotions, what we see on the outside, might be telling us to try something different, so that we can get back to a more positive or productive place with what's there...

Once you begin to put positive energy into motion, just like the feedback loop I spoke of earlier, you'll be able to see and feel those results. This is first place where "faith" is born. In time as you go along, you'll be able to feel positive energy coming back to you more often, as you're taking your steps forward. In time, you won't need to worry so much about where your energy is going. This is where the two parts of "faith" meet. The more positive results we have with something now, even if it's small and simple, will give us more faith in the larger things that we would like to do in the future; even when the outcome isn't fully known yet. We just want to feel good before, during, and after any experience we have. And, putting our positive attitude into the place where we are now – is how we get started on the road to happiness!

So, regardless of how your life has been, we can all change the way we feel for the better, by simply having a more positive moment together, right now. That's all you'll need to do. By bringing this energy into your

own experiences and into your moments with others, life will begin to unfold naturally, without having to worry, micro-manage, or overthink everything we're doing. And, remember that "flow" I spoke of? Once positive energy is in motion, much larger goals will begin to emerge out of that energy, as well. An enjoyable experience now, will give you the energy that's needed to begin taking steps towards a specific direction in the future. But, we'll get into that idea later on, too. For now, just spend a little time with this next experiment...And, enjoy it!

The Experiment:

This exercise "mirrors" the ones found in the first chapter, so it will be very easy to do. However, it requires two people. The next time you're sharing a moment with someone, put a little bit of your positive energy (thoughts, words or actions) into that encounter, and see what happens. You could see some amazing results – immediately! For some, it might take a little time to realize that the energy you're sharing is there to help them feel better, too. So, have a little patience. Sometimes when we aren't feeling well, it takes a little while for this energy to sink in. Eventually, it will. For now, it's time to get that positive ball of energy rolling, so that you can see more of what it does, for you.

A Final Thought:

Eventually, we will all come to realize that we can feel better – instantly, in the moments where we are using our energy in a positive way. For now, enjoy the positive moments that you can create by yourself, and with the people around you who are open to it. Simply get started, by putting it out there! In time, other people will understand what's happening. You'll soon see quite a difference in how you feel about life, yourself, other people, and even your plans for the future. Besides our own feelings of enjoyment, that's what these moments are for. They help "us" get along now, so that we can create even more happiness – later on!

C3: Fond Memories of the Past...

The Premise:

When we desire to become happier, one of the ways to do that is by taking a positive step into the past. In our memory-bank of positive experiences, everyone has at least one happy picture that they can stop to take a look at...

In order to become happier, we need to realize that we can make this happen – right now, but that we’ve also experienced this in the past. If you made happiness possible even once, you can certainly do it now, too. If you weren’t capable, those moments wouldn’t have happened! Creating happier experiences will make us feel good now, but those moments are also building our futures, as well. A single positive step right now is setting up another one to follow it. So, after we’ve remembered a few ideas that made us happy, the next step is to think about how we would like to spend our time in the near future...

Even if we aren’t sure of what to do yet, we can search through our past experiences to find some ideas that were enjoyable to us. Although we change a little over time, the things that we love the most are very close to us. It’s just a matter of remembering what those things are, and making time for them, so that we can create those emotions, again! Since our moments can never be exactly the same, we still have an opportunity to create some new positive memories, right now. Sometimes we can do the same things we’ve done before (with the same people), and other times, the location might be different. Beneath those memories, it’s the positive emotions that we shared and created together that made those experiences worthwhile. Once we understand that, we can start making plans that we can get excited about now!

Besides examining our past, we can also put a bit more positive spirit into the very simple things that we already like to do. This could be: sipping on our favorite drink, enjoying a meal, going for a walk, listening to our favorite song, watching the clouds roll by, or even

reading a good book, perhaps...

Our plans don't always need to be grandiose, expensive, or complicated to make the most of them. Although every once in a while, it's a good idea to make some larger goals and plans to look forward to. Even if we feel pretty comfortable with our routine, we still need to do something different every once in a while. This might take a little more energy at first, but it's usually more than worth the effort it takes to get going... Besides, following the same old familiar routine can sometimes make us feel bored, too. So, we might need something new or different to give us the boost we were looking for. And, variety is a natural and needed part of life. So, embrace a few new ideas with enthusiasm, even if they're small and simple, and they'll easily refresh how you feel.

Once you've had a new experience and you see that this gives you a lift, it will be much easier to get excited about some different things to do. Like anything else, it always takes a bit more energy to get something started. It takes a little energy to make more of it! So, when you're getting used to a new activity, more energy will naturally be found there, as you get more comfortable with it.

If for some reason, you haven't found anything from your past that excites you, this means – the sky's the limit! Anything that's not harmful to you can be an opportunity to land on a few new ideas. Like looking for a good book or a movie that catches your attention, keep your eyes open for anything that makes you curious. Everywhere you are can reveal some clues, as to what makes you happy. If you feel a smile coming on, or an eyebrow raise, there you go! Keep track of those things. Sometimes, like a great mystery that's unfolding, one thing can easily lead you into another direction where you'll find something you like. Think of the last time you wandered around in a new bookstore, or antique shop. You're not exactly sure of what you're going to find, but you'll know it when you see it! In getting to explore some new sights, regardless of what's there, you'll be boosting your excitement and energy levels about what's possible...

Another way to get inspired is to become interested in what the people around you are excited about. Regardless if you end up liking what they do, this serves as an example of what's possible for you. Are they taking a little more time to spend on something that's important to them? Even if the subject matter is totally unrelated, that's the only example you need! By becoming involved, you even might meet someone who has the same interests, as you. Or, they might be interested in something that you do, if it's new to them. See? If you consider it, there are plenty of ways to give yourself a boost, again. The most important thing isn't so much about what you find. But, being open to positive energy or other opportunities is the key that unlocks the door to something that you'll enjoy!

If these suggestions haven't done that much for you (yet) don't worry. I have a very unique assignment for you. Consider it a secret mission that only you can accomplish. Did my suggestion hit your "like" button? That's a good sign. Keep reading, and by the end of this experiment you'll know exactly (well, almost) what you need to do...

This one was inspired by the fearless enthusiasm of Cheryl Richardson. She's a very wise life-coach (in fact, she literally put life-coaching on the map), and she has more suggestions on how to make yourself happy, than any author I've read. So, if you're looking for some new ideas, check out her amazing book called, "*Take Time for Your Life*⁹."

The Experiment:

For this one, you'll need a few simple things: About \$20, and a few hours' time. If you have a method of transportation (even if it's walking), then you're going on a little adventure. To where? You'll find out when you get there! Take yourself out, and let your imagination guide you, as to where you'll arrive. Without knowing it, you might find yourself in someplace familiar, or somewhere completely brand new. The best part is – you'll always end up in the right place...

⁹ Cheryl Richardson, *Take Time for Your Life* (New York: Broadway Books, 1999).

Since there's no end goal besides enjoying yourself, you have a blank, creative canvas to work with. At the end of the trip, you'll see how stepping out into the unknown every once in a while, will give you more confidence. I've done this countless times with varied results, but it's the journey that's most important. It's a good way to put some excitement back into your life; especially when the final, positive outcome isn't exactly known.

If you had a great time, this can become your new hobby. Take a few days a month, just to go out and explore something new. Regardless of what happens, this simple exercise will help you out in a variety of different ways; and you'll understand why after completing your first mission. (If \$20 is a bit steep, take with you what you can afford to spend.) So, there you have it. Once you take a few positive steps into something new, all kinds of possibilities will begin to open up. And, that's the inspiration you were looking for. Now, you've got a few ideas to choose from when you need something special to do, that's just right – for you.

A Final Thought:

In order to feel something positive or even better than we do right now, we're going to have to do something to take us there. It doesn't matter if it's something from our past, an activity that our friends enjoy, or if it's something completely different. The idea behind any one of these suggestions isn't so much about the activity; as it is to the positive feelings they inspire. Once you remember that you've had these positive feelings before, you can create them again now with something from your past that worked out great, or from discovering something brand new. Anything you enjoy can become a "spark of inspiration" for your emotions. It's just a matter of following your curiosity to see where it takes you. And, that's how we move our emotions and ourselves, from here – to there!

C4: The Magic of Your Next Good Idea...

The Premise:

About ten years ago an idea in the self-help world became quite popular. In fact, you might even know where I'm about to go with my train of thought: Positive Thinking. Well, technically, this is the smallest and very first step that we can take on the inside to change our life's direction, and how we feel. So, it's no accident that this idea has had so much publicity. It's definitely needed but the message in and of itself is a little out of context. Let me explain! We have thousands of thoughts in a day. Most of them we are unaware of. And, that's actually, ok. If we were 100% aware of every thought behind the scenes, it would be very difficult to balance what's in our heads, and what's happening in front of us. Our thoughts are primarily made up of conscious and unconscious experiences that we've had recently, and over our entire lifetime. So, I'm all for the "idea" of having the power and freedom to change our thoughts. However, our lives are deeply intertwined. Since everything is connected, and we spend more time with others than we do alone (most of the time), my take on this is to expand the idea a little closer to how our lives and our thoughts are actually unfolding...

A thought eventually leads to a few words shared, which leads to a few actions, which becomes our experience, and how we feel about it. Then, all of this data goes into the back of our minds, long-term. From here, the process repeats itself. This is the usual pattern of how our thoughts and memories are made. And, of course, we can stop at any point along the way to change our direction. But remember, we are also interacting with other people. In a perfect world, we would simply greet each other on a more positive note and easily continue on, from there. But my personal experience over many years has shown to me that all of the positive thinking in the world from a single person isn't enough to influence another person's baseline of thoughts... Unless that person is in a similar emotional place, is receptive to our energy, or if they know that a more positive path is the way that our moments can unfold, and lead us

to happiness. So, for this idea to stick around and actually work, so that we're both left with positive thoughts and emotions, let's take it from where we are, right now...

Before we create our next experience, we have a little time to understand that how we begin and go through our next moment together, will be – what we have to think about, and feel. And, that's most likely where we'll begin our next moment from, too! So...Through the positive moments we create with others and those we have alone, we are literally building the thoughts that are inside of us most of the time; especially the ones – we like to think about! When we make our relationships and our situations a more positive place to be involved with, we realize that the majority of our thoughts are only following – us. When we make a positive moment happen together, we are turning our entire selves – and not just our thoughts, into a positive direction. This will continue to make us feel happy about ourselves, our lives, and what we're doing together in them! So, before we move ahead, let's get back to our current state of mind to see what kind of thoughts we can entertain here...

When we are looking for something to make us feel good, we have many more options than we think. Most of the time, our thoughts usually follow the same familiar paths. And, since our thoughts are also influencing our actions, we often find ourselves traveling inside and out, up or down the same roads. If you feel good about where you are most of the time, you're free to stay here for as long as you'd like! However, if you're looking for something different or more positive, then starting out with a subject or an activity that you enjoy, can be the easiest way to build on what's there. By examining your past, you have an opportunity to do some of the things that made you happy, and you have a chance to try something new.

Give yourself a little quiet time to take it easy. This will allow your mind to travel to a few different places without stress, or the need to rush into action. When you slow down for a bit, you have a chance to take another look at what's already present, with you. Sometimes in the “thick” of

being busy, we can overlook the positive things that are right next to us to become a part of. So, finding something to be happy about can easily happen, if we take a little time to look at what's here. Then, we can make a decision to become involved with those things, if we choose.

Just before we make up our minds about what to do, we might think that we have to pick the most exciting activity that we can imagine to change the way we feel. And, sometimes that's necessary. But, it's the step into action that's important. We are moving ourselves closer to the enjoyment we were looking for. You might rekindle your love for something familiar, or you might find a way to take what's there, and make it more exciting. Regardless, you're moving forward in your thoughts and in your initiative to make happiness a real part of your life now – and that's what counts!

As for trying something new, the last experiment had you do something different to see how you would feel about it. It was a chance to see if you need to spend more time with what you already like, or if you need to try something else. Either way, if one of those places made you feel good, there you go! Unless it's unhealthy for you long-term, there's no right or wrong answer, as to what makes you happy. A happy choice – is always the right one! When we experiment a little more, we get closer to figuring out *exactly* what's most important to us and why. When we're in a positive state of mind or place, what's even better for us is only a step away. So, from here, our minds and our eyes are open to what's possible – or could be! The idea is to simply start stirring the soup of your thoughts with something that's enjoyable to you. As your feelings change for the better, your thoughts will also go in the same direction, and visa-versa.

Once we give ourselves a little push to get involved in how we think, and what we would like to do, other options will appear. Sometimes, what we've always wanted to do has been right there, all along! Like sleeping beauty, those ideas just needed a little bit of attention to wake us up to what's possible. So, spend as much time here, as you'd like. Then, a little

more each week put some time aside to become a part of those things. As you do, more positive thoughts and ideas will naturally start to gather momentum, and you'll feel much better, too.

From here, you'll probably be spending time with other people. By feeling a little better yourself, you'll have some positive energy to add to what you're doing together. You'll have a few interesting things to talk about. And, you can contribute by asking more questions about what's important to them, too. Tell them that you'd like to be happier, so you're starting to spend more time on what's enjoyable to you. Once our "train of thoughts" are headed in that direction, our conversations can start coming from a more inspired and positive place. Your time here won't be perfect, or even positive all of the time. However, little by little, you can begin to make your time together very well spent! As you do, you'll take this energy and those ideas back into your own lives, and you'll keep building happiness "up," from there. Then, the energy you build here, goes right back into the time you have to spend together. So, can you see how this cycle of energy, your feelings, and your "thoughts" are all being made up by what you're doing alone, and with each other? With our combined thoughts, words and actions, we're making the happier moments that we wanted to become a part of – our reality. It's as simple, as that.

It just takes a little time to realize how our life's moments are unfolding. And, from there, it means that we can always give ourselves something to smile about! That's how we become happy again, and begin to build the dreams and plans that will become our happier futures. And, it all starts from what we choose to think about and involve ourselves in more often; especially if those ideas make us feel good. From here, everything in our lives can begin to change for the better!

Once you see how this process works, you can reach out further with your ideas. As your feelings grow and you feel more confident, it will be natural to start thinking "bigger." Remember, everything that's here got started with just a thought, right? So, as you go along, you'll imagine

even more possibilities. And, believe it or not, our thoughts are sometimes the place where we can enjoy ourselves the most, because – we’re already there! No fuss, no added steps, no schedules, nothing but our own imagination to explore. So, I’m encouraging you to dream a little, explore what’s there, and add a few new ideas into the mix. Your mind is like a notebook or a chalkboard, and you can write whatever you’d like on it. If the ideas are healthy and they are making you happy, stick with them. When you’re with your friends, if you’re on a positive path, you can imagine even more things to do together. This will inspire you as a group and individually, as well.

As you continue along, you’ll notice that some of you might grow a little sooner with whatever you’re doing. This is natural, as we have our own patterns for growth in what we choose to do. The idea is to be equally happy for yourself, and whatever shows up in your friends’ lives, too. All of your energy is combining here, so that each one of you can become happier, alone and together with each other. Besides, it’s much more enjoyable to see people develop at slightly different times. That way, you get to see the whole process – unfold. For now, besides growing your happiness in general, it’s healthy to stretch the ideas you have. And, talking about them together is like dreaming out loud! So, some of your ideas might take hold, and others are just for entertainment...

In time, you’re just getting better at making happiness possible in one way, or another. And, you never really know what can happen for real, until you start to have fun and enjoy all that’s possible for you to think about. From where you are, this is the easiest and smallest step that you can take. When you’ve landed on a good idea, if you can take a step into that now, there’s no time like the present to make happiness and success possible. If you need a little time to work out the details, of course, you can do that, too. Either way, it will feel really good to follow through, on the positive ideas that you’d like to make – come true!

The Experiment:

Once we've figured out something that we would like to do, it's time to become a part of that, or to make a time for it, as soon as possible. Since we all desire to be happier, the only two choices we have are to talk about those things more often, or to take a step into them, right now...

Like our thoughts, the idea behind this is to show ourselves that we can move into a place of happiness. And, if that's true, why would we want to wait any longer for it? Once you see that there's nothing in the way of making a simple good idea possible, you'll want to move into that – as soon as you can!

As you may have heard, a magician is never supposed to reveal his tricks. That would “take away” the magic of them, right? Well, I absolutely love magic, because it does the same thing that these ideas do. They put us in touch with the wonderful feelings we can have, about life. The only difference between stage magic and real magic is the more I show you what's happening here...The more amazed you'll be. So, let me reveal a little more of how “positive thinking” was supposed to work...

Once you choose an idea that makes you happy, you can stay with those thoughts for a while. But, if you don't act on them, like anything else, they begin to fade away and disappear. However, once you see that you can act on a good idea – right now...You'll see that you're free to move yourself into whatever you choose to do. When that happens, your thoughts will become more positive, because you'll be the one who's directing them. Once you successfully make a move on what you wanted to do, you'll be in charge of what you think about and do, more often. As long as the activity is healthy and enjoyable for you, there you go. If the idea is good for someone else too, it only multiplies those benefits. However, both places (alone and together) will work to change how you feel, as well as what you think about, more often. And, now that you understand how this process works...Isn't there something that you would like to do? The next chapter will be here when you return. We've still got a lot of magical ground to cover...So, get right to it!

A Final Thought:

When you give yourself the gift of doing something that you really enjoy now, you'll see how easy it can be to fulfill the larger goals you have. Even if you haven't figured those out yet, spending time thinking about your next good idea, will build up energy and enthusiasm, about what your future could look like. One positive step always leads to another one, and it's the same way with our thoughts, too. This will help you to realize that even your biggest dreams can be broken down into very small and simple steps...

And, if you found yourself desiring to take a step into those ideas now... Like magic, our thoughts, feelings, and our experience of life can change for the better, in the moment we realize that what we wanted to become a part of happily, was here and waiting for us – all along. Once we begin to take a step in that direction, it means that we can start doing this everywhere else in our lives, too.

Author's Note:

This entire chapter was inspired by the phrase, "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step"¹⁰. And, how can we get ourselves to take a step? By knowing that, "Taking a single step right now is how that enjoyable journey begins." And, once we take a step, we're already in motion, and on our way forward. In that pivotal, defining moment of choice and movement – happiness takes its place, within us. Once we understand what's happening here, the journey ahead immediately transforms itself into something that we can enjoy now. So, if we think about it, we can always expand on what's here to get us even closer to what's good for us, and the vision we desire to bring to life...

Before we move ahead into our next series of thoughts, I have to give a kind wand-wave to Penn and Teller and Christopher Hannibal for many years of inspiration. I consider them to be the "three wise-men" of

¹⁰ Dr. Wayne W. Dyer, *Change Your Thoughts, Change Your Life: Living the Wisdom of the Tao* (New York: Hay House, 2007), 303.

magic. Ever since I was young, magic has always been very important to me. I just happen to try to do this with ideas that make people happier. A different medium, but hopefully the same positive feelings in the end. So, thank you very much guys...No one does it quite like you: Bravo!

C5: Building Up Our Positive Energy.

The Premise:

When we would like to feel happier about our lives together, our positive emotions can only come from a few different places. We can be excited about our short-term plans, our distant future goals, the material things we have, and the environment in which we live. But the thing that reaches us the most is how we interact with each other, and how we weave all of these areas together in our relationships. These combined elements ultimately make our lives what they are and what they can be, so that we can truly enjoy them!

I had you go through a few different experiments before this chapter, so you had an opportunity to think about and see what stirs up your energy. And, when I say energy, I mean any emotion that you feel good about. This could be inspired, excited, content, grateful – you name it! These emotions are pivotal to your happiness and the success of your relationships. Before we can enjoy ourselves more often together, having an idea of how we're going to do that is the first step or decision that leads us into all of the other choices we can make.

Who we feel we are individually, and what we would really like to do together is what our relationships are based on. These would be the things we have in common to share. While a few hobbies or interests are needed so that we have something to work with, underneath of those it's the full enjoyment of being alive that's helping us to make those decisions! And, the emotions we long to feel more of, and the activities that take us there might change a bit over time. But, that doesn't have to stop or limit our relationships in any way...

As we travel along life's path together, we always meet at a common point. From there, our relationships grow as we do into something that's based on what we truly desire to experience, or become. So, as we're enjoying our time together, this provides a secure place for us to expand who we are. We're always in the process of growth and making better

choices for ourselves, as our lives develop. The only difference is that in the best relationships, we encourage each other to become who we desire to be most of all, and we support those ideas. And, it doesn't matter if our goals are different. Enjoying each other's company, and seeing ourselves develop into greater levels of happiness is what makes our relationships thrive! Underneath of our specific actions and ideas, we're simply talking about expanding how good we feel about life. We all desire for our positive emotions to keep on growing, so that life is heading towards something that's more enjoyable for us, as time goes on. So, how are we going create that experience together? What would we use for subjects or ideas? Where do they come from? What we are most interested in, and what we would like to see in our future...

Relationships are a combination of our shared positive emotions and interests, but we are also helping each other to define what we would like to do in the world, as well. The most enjoyable, closest and most meaningful relationships that we can possibly have contain all of these aspects; even if we are still in the process of figuring that out! Little by little as we go along, the picture of what we enjoy, how we would like to spend our time, and where we feel that's taking us becomes much clearer. And, this is why our positive relationships are so important to every aspect of our lives.

In the simple, enjoyable moments we have together, we are literally showing each other that we have value, and that life is worthwhile! The positive experiences we have together are building up self-esteem for both of us. Because of how good we feel, this helps us to clarify what we would *really* like to be involved with. So eventually, our life's purpose begins to reveal itself to us. And, all of the positive results that happen from creating more enjoyable moments together are not something that we need to worry about. We're creating those moments to feel better, right? When we're creating positive moments together, everything that we would like to see, feel or discover begins to unfold on its own! The development of our lives, our health, and who we are becoming will happen naturally, when we make our relationships a positive place to be

involved with. And, that's where our focus should be to see those results. And, this should feel much more natural for us to do, once we understand "why" these moments are so important. We're simply there to feel good – about being there! (Our purpose can't be broken down any simpler than that.) Then, this allows us to feel more confident, so that we can start exploring the larger goals we have for ourselves, and our relationship...

When we're involved in an enjoyable moment together, we are showing ourselves that we have what it takes to make our goals and dreams possible. How? Here, like the smallest lines on a ruler, we "inch" our way forward towards the happier lives we would like to have. Since our life's moments are leading us there, as we build our lives with one positive encounter at a time, we can see where that enjoyment is taking us! Does that make sense now in how this progression is unfolding? How we feel about the time we spend together is directly influencing how we see ourselves, each other, and the world around us. If the view looks good, we move ahead a little more each day into who we would like to become. And, it doesn't really matter how big or small our desires are. Any dream or goal, if accomplished, will make us feel more complete and fulfilled. Even if our goals are completely different, it's how we feel about making them possible that's important. Since our goals and our relationships are the two most influential parts of our lives, this is why putting them together more often, will have the biggest impact on how we feel.

So, what we put into our moments – as far as words, thoughts and actions – is how we will feel about them, and each other. And, this process doesn't have to be rigid, limited, and it isn't a race or a competition! Little by little, simply share and learn more about what's important to both of you, and make time for that; alone and together. This will go a long way towards the happiness that you desired to create. If you think about it, this is the only reason why we have relationships to begin with. We all desire to experience joy in whatever we would like to do, and in each other's company. So, with a little planning and

communication, we can easily combine those two ideas. Then, we gain the most from each other's company, and what we decide to do together. And, our plans don't need to be complicated, over the top, or a hassle. They just need to be – enjoyable! (That's what we're looking for more of, correct?)

In the past, before we realized how connected everything is in the world, we thought that the energy we had was separate. So, we tried to hold onto that, individually. In case you didn't know, the energy we put out into our relationships always travels through each person equally; as long as we are both open to sharing it. So, it's not something that you'll need to measure or keep track of. Positive energy is like passing the same dollar bill back and forth between us, and it doesn't really matter where the energy begins! It just matters that we're putting this energy into motion together. And, as we put it between us regularly, it gets multiplied and grows in the process of sharing it. For now, let's call that – emotional “interest.”

Like magic, this energy literally goes into all of the parts of us that need it, and it lifts those areas up. As we spend more quality time together, you'll see some very positive changes develop in what you would like to do. This will strengthen your relationship as well, because we literally couldn't be ourselves – without each other. Half of who we are is expressed and created in our exchanges. So, as we're enjoying our time alone and together, this is how we grow “up” into something more, than we are right now...It's all just a single line or thread of development.

Since life's energy is always in a state of fluctuation, working just to increase your energy in every moment isn't necessary. Realizing this will allow you to relax into enjoying yourself, instead of being self-conscious about every move you make! The more positive experiences you have (or should I say help to create), your energy levels will rise naturally, in time. So, if you notice something is beneficial between you, make sure to share it. This way, as your relationship develops, you'll have more ways to make your time together, well spent.

The idea behind anything I've discussed is just to keep on enjoying your time together, and to share what's working, so that you can both feel good about what you're doing. If you desire to change something, you can discuss this without worrying or being critical. It's only so you'll be on the same page with what you're doing together, and that's it!

Everything you decide to do from now on (in any relationship) is only to keep your enjoyment moving along, with you. So, let's make it easy to do that! If we start to see what we're doing through the lens of making our time "enjoyable," everything else will fall into place; because we'll understand what our goal is. And, from there, our actions will happen much more naturally...

In the future, as your goals and plans develop, you'll both have things that you like to do that are specifically, yours. So, it's healthy to give each other some space and time to pursue those interests. Even some of the ways that we manage ourselves and our goals might look a little different, as well. The idea isn't to change our individual beliefs to be closer to each other. If we allow for those differences knowing that our current ideas are a part of our development, then what works to keep our relationship going, will still be present. At the end of the day, it's not so much about what we did or shared, but how *we* felt about it. And, the same goes for what we're doing alone, too. If it's enjoyable to us, we are always on the right path. In time, we'll get a little closer to figuring out what makes us feel our best, and why. As we develop, we'll find ourselves making the decision to spend time in those areas, more often.

So, in your life and in the life of your relationships, let each person become who they really wish to be, and you'll always have a nice place to visit! You can always decide on what types of experiences that you both wanted to have, as you go along. And, you'll have plenty of opportunities for alone time to develop yourselves, as well. If one of you succeeds in a certain activity – make sure to celebrate! It's only proof of what's possible in whatever you choose to do. For now, it's all about enjoying yourselves together, and making time for that. Where you'll go from here, and what you'll become individually and together is life's

greatest adventure...So, look forward to seeing where it takes you!

The Experiment:

For this one, you'll get to work together and choose how to complete this experiment. Remember, the key is just having a good time together, and noticing how you *both* made that possible. I'll give you a few different options to choose from, so you can be on your way...

You can pick something that you both enjoy doing, or you can go somewhere that each one of you happens to like. The goal is to share with each other what's important, or what makes you feel inspired. With a little planning, you might be able to do this on the same day. Grab a bite to eat or a cup of coffee later on, so you can talk more about what makes those places exciting...

Adding a new activity or area of interest into your routine is good for your relationship, and you might discover a new hobby, or a place to visit on your own. This will enhance what you already have in common, as well. If you enjoyed the experience together, that's really what this experiment was for...

As a sneak peak, we'll be diving into some things that you can do alone to create happiness. To accomplish this, we'll need something positive to look forward to. And, you'll be amazed, because the upcoming suggestions will be something that you can do, no matter where you are. And, it won't cost anything, except paying a little closer attention to how your senses are directly connected to your positive feelings...That's what's coming up. So, stay tuned-in!

A Final Thought:

Enjoying life as much as possible is everyone's primary goal. Since we spend more time with others than we do alone, how we relate to each other in a positive way, not only creates our enjoyment of life, but this helps us to grow individually, as well. The energy we're building up, gives us the faith, belief and the inspiration we need to take a step

forward in our lives. How does it feel to know that these simple enjoyable moments, are changing our entire lives for the better? Knowing that we have the ability to make our moments enjoyable, though the thoughts, words and actions that we use together every day – is the master key – that unlocks all of the other doors we wish to open in our lives. And, we can enjoy the whole process in real-time. In fact, taking a step into that enjoyment is the only reason why we're here together...How does this make you feel about what's possible – right now?

Author's Note:

Even if I never read a single self-help book, everything I learned about this chapter came from my grandmother, Rachel Rogers. Never did I hear a discouraging word in the 45 years that I got to spend with her. And, because of that, we grew to be the very best of friends. This gave me the courage, hope and the inspiration I needed to become who I am, more than any other path I've traveled on. I might have picked up a few developmental ideas along the way in my education. However, I would have felt the same about what positive relationships can do for us, either way. So, she's my real-life example and reference for this chapter; and it's dedicated to her...Thank you, Nana!

C6: Looking Forward To...

The Premise:

When we think that our current situations can't improve, there's still a way for us to look forward to something. We might not be able to change our circumstances on the spot, but how we feel in the short-term can change instantly. A lift in our emotions only requires a single positive step. This could come from: something that we appreciate looking at, changing our point of view, listening to something enjoyable, telling a joke, or even a kind gesture that we extend outwards. Understanding our options and following through with something positive, will transform our present feelings into something that feels – so much better!

Just about any circumstance or feeling that you could possibly imagine can change for the better in the moment that you remember how a positive feeling is being created. When life becomes stressful or a difficult situation arises, it might appear difficult to know what to do to change the way we feel.

Hopefully from reading so far, you've been able to gain a few different ways of looking at some things that have always been a part of your life. This is important because a new perspective changes how *you feel*, which changes how *you view* your current situation. While I'm applying this to a negative situation, a lift in our emotions can come from the ordinary things we have around us, and from looking at something we love in a new way, too.

Norman Vincent Peale, who wrote the infamous book, "*The Power of Positive Thinking*" was one of the pioneers who helped bring this idea into the mainstream¹¹. The idea behind the thought movement is to think about something in a way where we can find something more positive about it, or about ourselves. With a slight change in our point of view, we are brought up to a place where we can manage it now, or even be

¹¹ Norman Vincent Peale, *The Power of Positive Thinking* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1952).

happier about what's happening. This works in two ways. When we change our thoughts about something, this changes the way we see it. And, when we see something in a different light, our thoughts and feelings about it change, too. See how those two ends are connected? Like anything else, it takes a little practice. But once you get good at shifting what you're observing, you'll start to see more possibilities wherever you go. And, that's what begins to change your life, and how you feel about it! From here, because your positive outlook and attitude directly influences your actions, this transforms those situations for the better.

In our moments, we would all like to feel good about who we are, where we are, and what we're doing. And, we only have two places to go to create more positive emotions – on the inside, and on the outside. So, anything we're doing can be viewed in a more positive way, just like Norman suggested. And, this can happen immediately when we remember that we can create a more positive moment together, right now. In a way, you could say that we're changing each other's minds for the better, but we're doing it together! This might not change what we're currently doing, but it does change how *we* feel. When we do this more often, without changing anything about our physical location, we emotionally see what's around us in a whole new light. And, this little space is where opportunities are born; which leads us into another way to directly change how we feel...

This comes from stopping to look at our current environment – as if, for the first time. A more positive way of looking at something is the first step we take on the inside, and that changes how we feel. This shift will allow us to collect our thoughts, so we're able to take a more positive step ahead in our given situation. From here, we widen our view a bit more, so that our current location can be seen as somewhere to create joy, as well. Our feelings and seeing those possibilities have completely changed what we're looking at. And, this clears the way, so that together we can make the place we're in, the way we've always wanted it to be! So, from just a change in our perspective, we've changed the way we

feel, the way we relate to each other, how we move through our situation, and we've seen our environment in a way where there are even more possibilities now. That's quite a leap from where we were! Now the goal is to remember to keep this attitude going with each other, so that we can continue to make our situation an enjoyable place for us to be involved with. Underneath everything we're doing that's always the goal. So, we can easily make this a part of the process in what we're doing together, with a slight shift in how we think about it...

Besides making our relationships a more pleasant place to be in, another way of looking at something to change the way we feel can come from looking at a part of nature. When we slow down, our thoughts and what's present comes into greater focus, so that we can connect to what we're looking at. Since nature is perfect just the way she is, you can gain a boost in energy just from witnessing the beauty of it¹². And, this idea works for anything that we find pleasant to look at. Once our eyes see something that's enjoyable, a new (happier) signal is sent to our brain, and this re-sets where we're coming from emotionally, on the inside. I'm sure you've heard that we have different locations in our brain for happiness. So, in an instant, we can positively affect what our biology is doing, which causes a change in how we feel. And, that's where we establish a positive relationship to what we're looking at, even if it's only for a short period of time. That's where the "bond" happens. We associate a person, place or thing (or even a thought!) with feelings of happiness, and this is how a positive relationship is created.

In fact, you've had this positive connection with many different things in your life, so far. This is how *all* of your positive relationships got started. It's how you picked up this book. It's also how you acquired the things you have, right now. In a way, all of those things grabbed your attention. You noticed the beauty in them. And, that's what formed your relationship. They simply left a positive impression on you! So, do you

¹² James Redfield, *The Celestine Prophecy: An Adventure* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 1997), 43-44.

have a sharper image of how some of our positive thoughts and feelings are being created?

Some situations in life are difficult; and there's no need to downplay or deny that. However, between ourselves and the energy we can create alone, by taking a fresh look at what's present, there's almost always a way to make a situation and how we feel about it, much better than it is now. We just have to be willing to step back for a moment, and take a look – at what's possible! This is exactly what we are doing in our positive moments together, as well. We are refreshing ourselves, our energy, and our relationship to each other at the same time. How do you think the world around you, will look – from here?

So, now that you understand how positive feelings are created, what other types of emotions would you like to have? And, where would you like to go to find or create them? Answering these inspiring questions is your next assignment...

The Experiment:

Now that you understand how to change most of your feelings into something better, the goals for your future will begin to develop. You know that you're looking to feel good, in general. And, since you're starting to make this possible, your future plans are just ways for you to experience that enjoyment. And, how you choose to do this is up to you.

So, for this experiment, spend a little time getting acquainted with a notebook to write down a few thoughts and ideas. Once you understand that happiness in some way is your only goal, it's up to you to decide what happens next! What are you in the mood for? An idea that includes any emotion is already right here, with us. When we're looking for something to do, we might not be able to pick out something yet, because we're not too sure of what we're in the mood for. (Almost like wondering what to eat!) But, if we can pick out what we wanted to feel like during an activity, a few options will magically appear. When you've spent some time there, you'll have more energy, and it will be

traveling along with you. Hmmmm. I wonder what other places in your life could use a little bit of this energy, too?

A Final Thought:

Since you have a good idea of what you need to do to feel better, where would you like to begin? Where would you like to go? How would you like to explore a few ideas that you've read about? These are some of the questions that we need to ask ourselves to make our time worthwhile. In this experiment you get to choose the time, place, and how often you'd like to visit. Maybe once is enough for a certain idea, or it might become your favorite place to go. Either way, you'll have something good to look forward to about you, your plans, and the brighter future that's just ahead of you!

C7: The Eyes of Appreciation.

The Premise:

Our mood not only affects our feelings but how we see ourselves, each other, and the entire world around us. The reverse is also true. How we view something in a more positive light, also changes how we feel. Once again, that perpetual “loop of energy” is always with us. It’s what we put into the circle of energy that’s surrounding us, which creates the positive feelings we were hoping to find about life, and what we are doing in it.

When we’re awake, we actively use our “vision” more than any other physical sense we have. So, it’s no wonder that how we view the world around us, directly effects how we feel. Besides the moments when we’re asleep, our eyes are always working, and sensory input from what we see is constantly being transmitted to our brain, which affects our metabolism and our mood. In fact, it’s not just our eyes that are responsible for this. All of our senses have a direct effect on how we function, and the way we feel.

It’s amazing to understand that our “feelings” are not just something that we can feel; as the feelings we perceive on the inside are actually our body’s chemistry behaving in a certain way; either positively or negatively. Since everything is connected this is a perfect example to show how our feelings are not just something “floating” somewhere inside. When our body is operating well we have an abundance of energy; and most of the time, we “feel” good. So, over time our emotions have a substantial effect on our overall health and well-being, since our energy and our cells are directly being affected in our moments of joy, or stress. This is only one of the reasons why being more positive with each other is so beneficial to us. Not only does it allow us to “feel” good, but those feelings are an indicator of what’s happening to our bodies, as well. To me, this adds another incentive to put positive energy into motion within ourselves, and especially, between us.

If we are in a somewhat neutral mood, then a positive thought or memory can help us change how we feel; which in turn, colors how we see what's around us. (Who ordered the rose colored glasses?) Any positive gesture or action that we take, witness, or that we are a part of, can instantly change how we feel for the better. So, changing our mood is not that difficult to do, it literally only takes a few seconds to do that. It's just a matter of being able to keep our energy "up" that's sometimes difficult; because there's a lot going on in our day-to-day lives lately, especially with the pandemic...

So, if we could take each experience we have one-by-one, and learn to put our attention and focus "there," by the end of the day, we would all feel quite different. Those positive moments and encounters are giving us – something back. If we're always rushing through the day, it becomes much more difficult to do a job well-done, and to notice or even feel the benefits of our actions. The stress from rushing is also very detrimental to our health, as well. So, in both personal and business settings, taking it a little easier with our pace and placing more of our positive attention on the present moment will bring some amazing results into our lives.

When we slow down a bit, we're able to notice more of the positive details of what we're working on. Not only will this allow you to appreciate what's in front of you, but it will peak your curiosity about how amazing the everyday things we often overlook, really are. You'll be able to see that wonder – in real-time – as you're working! When we slow down, we can observe more fully what we're doing, and we can see how each successful step is linked together. This is how we gain more energy from what we're doing. In this case, energy is going out, but it's also coming right back to us. This is very effective, especially when we need to be very close to perfection in our accuracy, at work.

So, if we would like to feel better about our lives, another way comes from appreciating the natural and man-made structures that are always around us. Although most of us notice our surroundings, feeling more

connected to them is something that usually gets lost in the shuffle. This is why slowing down is so important. Besides helping us directly in our moments of work or pleasure, we'll have time to realize how our outer environment is supporting us, and even, what we're currently doing in it...

For an instant boost at work, take a few moments to look around at your surroundings to take-in all that's happening there. When you take a closer look to see how what you're doing fits into the larger scope of operations, your energy, focus and enthusiasm will be greatly enhanced. Just try it, and see what this does for how you feel. In realizing the specific importance of your role, you'll be very surprised by what you discover!

Feeling more of a real part of your surroundings and the life you're living with other people, grounds you and makes you feel much more connected to life. By taking a good look at all of the things around you (both near and far away), you're able to see so much more of what you're a part of. I've been studying relationship connections for almost 35 years, and I'm still amazed at how much more there is to learn and discover about what's here.

From a bird's eye view, our natural outer environment is also here to keep us company, just like we do for each other. Our environment isn't just a nice looking "back-ground" for what we're doing. Everything around us is biologically and physically woven together, as one living entity. All of our man-made structures come directly from nature, as well. So, remembering this allows us to be able to see our smaller circle, and the entire environment as a whole, in a much grander way. There's majesty present, and if you look for it – it will be right there with you!

To come full circle with these insightful ideas, since what we're looking at can make us feel a certain way, when we make our moments positive together, this is what we'll have – to see! The happier world that we wanted to become a part of (besides appreciating nature a bit more), comes directly from what we are putting into – our life's moments. We

are both the creators and the witnesses of what we're doing here. To me, that's exactly where the magic is. We're literally giving ourselves something to be happy about, when we put a little positive energy into our experiences together. And, that's *really* what the smile is for... We did it! We made a happy moment for ourselves and each other, possible. (That's another pretty big reveal, so you might want to stop here for moment, and give this idea a second thought.)

Of course, we can also raise our spirits by choosing to spend time on something that really matters to us alone, as well. In life, we need a good blend of appreciation near and far away from us to be as healthy and fulfilled, as we possibly can...

As you use your eyes to take in life's beauty more often, you'll notice that your other senses will become sharper, too. Each one of our senses is like a muscle, and they all have an effect on each other. (There's that "relationship" again.) In essence, when we do anything that's good for us, we're also activating the other parts of us, as well. This is just another reason for us to start using our senses in a way that makes us appreciate having them. From now on, wherever you happen to be, use your eyes for what they were created for... So, that *you could see and appreciate* what's already a part of your life!

The Experiment:

For this chapter, I tried to put bigger spaces between the ideas, so that you could fill them in with your own insights! Once you open your eyes to what's possible – that's where your vision and your enjoyment, begins. To take a deeper dive into what's here, this next exercise has two parts. The first is for you to notice as many details as you can, about two "things" that are important to you. Noticing the colors, the way it was made, and remembering the item's purpose will give you a boost, so that you can feel excited again, about what you have...

The second part comes from doing this on a much larger scale. When I need to reconnect to the "wonder" of the world, all that I have to

remember is two simple things. Everything around me was created for all of us by a powerful life giving energy that we are just beginning to understand. From this “one great big creation miracle,” we created everything else that’s here. So, everything points to the first miracle of creation, in both big and small ways. The reflection is there. So, try to see what’s all around you from this perspective, and then see how you feel about what’s always been – right in front of you!

A Final Thought:

We all have the ability to change the way we feel by taking a moment to appreciate, and look at a few simple things that we have, around us. To do this, you can remember how something makes your life easier, or more enjoyable. When we start to see what’s here through this lens, it won’t take very long to start feeling good again about where you are, what you’re doing, and what you have! 95% of everything that we can see, was made possible by people we will never know or meet. And, we contribute to the world and the people in it, in the same way, too. How does this make you feel, about all of the effort and hard work that it took to make what’s here, possible? It’s pretty amazing what we’ve been able to do. So, how can you take these insights into where you are, so that you can feel better about the world you’re a part of?

It won’t take that long once your eyes and your mind are connected to what’s right in front of you to start feeling better, about life! And, to think that we can always notice something new, or see the things we sometimes take for granted in a whole new way – every day, for as long as our eyes are open. Wow – is right!

Author’s Note:

I would like to dedicate this chapter to Neale Donald Walsch. His “Conversations with God” books have done more for me, and my eyes of appreciation – than any other self-help writer in the past 30 years. I didn’t use any references to write this chapter, but I think this should cover any coincidental similarities to his ideas. Without opening my eyes

up to this much larger “window” of opportunity, we might not actually be reading these words, right now...Thank you so much, Neale!

For a little extra credit using your eyes, take a little time to look into how they work. (And, you can do this for all of your senses, too.) You Tube will certainly have a few videos on the subject, however I can think of no better book than Dr. Roizen and Dr. Oz’s, “You: The Owner’s Manual” for learning more about how your body works, from top to bottom¹³. The more you take a closer look at what you have – your body, and how it works, the more amazed you’ll be with the wonderful mystery – that is you.

And, while we’re on the subject of mysteries to sharpen your skills of observation even more, check out, “How to Think Like Sherlock” by Daniel Smith¹⁴. I’ve yet to dive into this book deeper, because I’ve been busy finishing this one, but so far – wow – is all I can say! Most people don’t know this, but even though he’s a fictional character, Sherlock Holmes is my favorite mind of all time; thanks to Sir Conan Doyle, of course. To me, no one makes it more exciting to be brilliantly aware of everything that’s going on around you. Love will certainly take you there, but a little practice wouldn’t hurt!

¹³ Michael F. Roizen, MD and Mehmet C. Oz, MD, *You: The Owner’s Manual* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008).

¹⁴ Daniel Smith, *How to Think Like Sherlock* (New York: MJF Books, 2012).

C8: Did You Hear That?!

The Premise:

With the stress we're all living under lately, sometimes it can be difficult to hear, pay attention, and even enjoy what we're listening to – or who! But we're going to change that equation for the better in one encounter at a time. Rather than becoming a statistic, if we make our conversations more enjoyable together right now, we might find ourselves listening much more closely to what we have to say. In doing so, we both gain something valuable from our exchanges. Just like any other experience, we always desire to feel good about what we're doing. That's always our first goal. So, we can accomplish this easily by putting our focus on making our moments more enjoyable, together. Once this happens, everything in our lives will begin to start working again; which will naturally make us better listeners and speakers, as well!

When is the last time you heard some really good news, or something that made you sincerely, happy?

We always desire the least amount of pain, and the most amount of pleasure in everything we do. So, listening fits right into that model. To get the most out of what we're listening to, we need to pay closer attention to what we are saying to each other, so that our words can be heard and understood. When we selectively hear what we're saying or listening to, we miss the positive reasons “why” we're talking to each other to begin with! (And by that, I mean how good we feel about it.) How does that *sound* to you? We all long to feel good, but sometimes we're just going through the motions of whatever we happen to be doing. This can happen from being tired, from not paying that much attention, or because the subject matter we're choosing isn't giving us the “lift” we were looking for. So, rather than get stuck here, let's explore a few ideas about how listening works, and then we can get back into making our conversations worthwhile! Now, how does *that* sound? I'm glad you were paying attention to where we were going. To have a better

experience on both sides of this activity, knowing where we're going (even in general) is the very first step into enjoying ourselves, again...

Like any other moment that's coming up, we have a little time and space to choose what goes into our next moment together. So, rather than starting out from where we are now in our heads and continuing that conversation out loud with the next person we meet, we can redirect where we're going – especially if we want to feel better than we do, right now!

Even if the last few experiences we've had were positive (or not so good), we all have an opportunity to continue from where we left off, or to move to an even better place...

No matter where we are right now logistically or emotionally speaking, we all desire to keep positive emotions moving along, with us. And, more than any other activity together, we accomplish this with *our* words. Our thoughts and emotions are always with us, but it's what we choose to talk about that's making our moments – what they are. So, our real-life experiences are following what we say, do – and why. Our words are just like a pen. We're writing each other a letter – out loud! When we have a blank sheet of paper to write on, we can draw anything that comes to mind on it, or we can choose what we would like to see. Of course, there will be times when we need to specifically discuss something serious or important. But even then, we can choose the tone of expressing and discussing those ideas. For example, do we need to be upset by the situation? Or, even if it's serious and we need to make some decisions, can we simply explore those options? I completely understand that when we're under a lot of stress, it's much more difficult to get through certain things, easily. However, there is no one here – but us – creating the moments we're a part of. So, if we desire to breathe easy, we have to be the ones who are making that happen. We have to bring what we desire to hear – to life. And, in working together to fix some of those situations, that's what we'll be talking about – instead of listening to how bad they make us feel!

If we desire to have more positive memories (the ones we'll want to keep talking or thinking about), now is our only time to make them happen... And, there's no need to panic about what to say, or talk about! We just wanted a more enjoyable moment, remember? So, besides having a positive attitude and being kind, we can choose a subject matter that we're both interested in for now... That way, we set a pleasant tone, and the positive direction we're headed in, as we're "talking." From here, we can go wherever we want. Our conversations at work might need to be a little more focused on what we're doing, but they can be just as enjoyable. Even in a moment that seems routine, if the tone is positive, we'll both feel much better about what we're sharing together.

When a listener hears that the words and the emotions behind them are pleasant, automatically, they pay closer attention. This also works when there might be a hint of danger, but that's not as enjoyable! (And, enjoyment is just as big of a part of our safety, too.) So, as long as there's nothing that needs our immediate attention, we can put into our moments *anything* that we would like to discuss... How's that for – creative freedom?

So, are you beginning to understand how the words and the topics that we choose to talk about are only helping us to *like* our discussions? If we all carried "like-buttons" I'm sure we'd be more selective about what we talk about! And, it's not even so that other people will "like" us. This is for making "our time" enjoyable for both of us. And, we'll naturally grow to like each other because of how we feel – there. See how this works?

Like anything else, it takes a little practice before we're up on our feet. And, every word doesn't need to be counted, measured or calculated, so you can relax! The idea is just to set the tone, so that you can have fun and enjoy what you're sharing. Our attitude is important because it sets the direction that our conversations will actually go in. We can always change our direction or the subject matter at any time. But if our attitude is positive, we can at least start our journey – from there. Then, we're not

far away from any other positive ideas or topics that we wanted to explore. We're putting ourselves – right in front of those things. Make sense?

During and after any conversation, hopefully we're left with some positive emotions, a few laughs or smiles, and maybe even a good idea to consider. Besides an enjoyable subject matter, what we're currently doing or would like to do, isn't this what makes our conversations sweet? If you can think of a few other elements that make listening and talking fun, please – include them in your next conversation. (If you're not sure of what those might be, let your eyes pick-up on a few enjoyable things that are there...)

When we choose a positive tone, we're already starting to create the positive emotions we wanted to feel good about. And, that's the reason why it's so important. The ease we feel here gives us much more room to relax and be ourselves, so that the entire experience feels natural and easy. From there, since we both feel good, it won't take much effort to keep this energy going! We'll just follow each other along, and we'll be able to take turns without very much work involved. A good conversation is just like dancing. We take a minute to see where we are, and then we move together, back and forth. Eventually, our rhythm becomes smooth and we glide along, with it. Here, we are both passengers and drivers. And, we can go wherever we choose, as long as we make it enjoyable for both of us. In time, if we do this together more often, it will be so much easier to enjoy each other's company. And, since we usually follow up right where we left off in our last conversation, a positive path will already be set, so that we can continue to enjoy the trip!

Once we establish a good relationship with communicating, and we make our time well spent more often, when we do have something important to share, it will be much easier to do. Since trust is there, it will be easy to share those concerns. And, what we explore will actually be beneficial to *our* situation. From here, we improve on what's there,

which – makes us feel even better! (See that circle, again?)

So, the whole idea behind this is to get more enjoyment out of what we're doing. When we follow some of the guidelines suggested here, everything we need to do to become better listeners is already, in place. You'll notice as you go along, since you're enjoying what you hear more often, you'll naturally give another person the room they need to express themselves. And, they'll do the same for you. This "openness" will carry over into everything else you're doing, too. At work, with the music you listen to, a movie you're watching, or if you're somewhere in nature, hearing the sounds all around you. Listening means that you'll get to take in even more of the life that's around you, because you're present in those moments. So, being open allows positive energy to be extended out into what you're doing, and it also means that you'll be receiving some, as well. I'm sure you can remember something recently that you really enjoyed looking at. Did you notice how this didn't require much effort to pay "attention," because you were enjoying what you were seeing? That's the same feeling and approach you're going for when someone is in front of you. You're just "there."

And, when we become more interested in what's happening in front of us, our eyes, ears, our mouth, and all of our senses begin to work better on their own. We're simply present with them. When we're enjoying what's happening between us, our focus is already established. So, we're able to take that energy and enjoyment straight into ourselves – without much interference, as we go along. For now, rather than trying to piece every part of this process together, just remember what something "interesting" feels and sounds like. From there, you'll be able to listen better, and you will also realize what it feels like to be on the receiving end of what you're saying. Now that you're present, and you understand that what we talk about, creates the positive emotions we both wanted to have... You'll realize that having a conversation is one of the easiest and most enjoyable things we can do! In fact, we've all been a part of those so many times before. If you want to enhance your listening skills without having a conversation at all, this next exercise is perfect for you.

Most of the time, our ears are physically working just fine. However, in his very profound and interesting, *“The Listening Book: Discovering Your Own Music”* W.A. Mathieu, highlights the opportunity we have to fall in love again with being able to hear. And, to learn to make “music” out of whatever we are listening to; as the sounds around us can be heard in many different ways¹⁵. So, for a little while, we’ll be listening closely to what’s all around us, so that we can *enjoy* another ability we have. We might not be able to hear exactly what we want all of the time; but we can choose to hear those sounds in a slightly different way – just like we did with seeing something in a new light. And, that’s what this next experiment is for...

The Experiment:

This one will be fun for sure, but it requires your full attention. If you’re doing something important, serious or even dangerous, please wait until the appropriate time to begin.

A few times this week, stop for just a few moments to listen to the sounds that are all around you. At first, try to “separate” as many sounds as you can. Then, try to hear them “together” just like listening to a piece of music. For a little extra credit, you can try this in a few different places, or even with your eyes closed. With a little practice, you can actually hear sounds – as if for the first time, or very close to it!

Without looking directly at where the sound is coming from (especially if you’re outside), try to imagine and picture each sound and activity that you hear. Not only is this good for insight and connecting your senses, but it’s like eaves dropping on a very important conversation that the entire world is having – around you! By taking the time to do this once in a while, we fine-tune our sense of hearing, our awareness, and the enjoyment of what we are a part of. That was the goal, all along. The more attention you give to listening, the more it gives you something

¹⁵ W. A. Mathieu, *The Listening Book: Discovering Your Own Music* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1991).

interesting, meaningful and exciting – back. Now, how does *that* sound to you?

A Final Thought:

Listening is the other side of speaking. And, talking is a way for us to transmit a message, so that we can enjoy our time together, and learn more about each other. When we set the tone and our topics for enjoyment first, our conversations will be a very, very nice place to visit!

When we're alone, we can take some time to listen to all of the activity around us, and on the inside of us, too. If we listen closely to what our feelings say, in one way or another, they're just asking us the same question, "How can we make our time together more enjoyable?"

It's amazing to discover, over and over again, when we ask each other the questions we would really like the answers to – sincerely, that love won't be very far, behind them.

Author's Note:

This chapter is dedicated to the memory of my very good friend, Jamie Blair...

I really enjoyed our time spent listening to our favorite songs and each other for so many years. I hope the music is even sweeter up there, than it was down here!

(For another option to delve much deeper into how listening works between us, and just how important that is from a certified speech and language pathologist's perspective, I highly recommend, "The Zen of Listening" by Rebecca Z. Shafir, MA, CCC¹⁶.)

¹⁶ Rebecca Z. Shafir, MA, CCC, *The Zen of Listening* (Illinois: Quest Books, 2003).

C9: Even As We Speak...

The Premise:

If we thought a little bit more before we spoke to each other, our moments would turn out so much closer to what we would like them to be. Here, we are using our thoughts, words and emotions to share a message; and to increase our understanding, so that we can have a more pleasant experience while we're spending time together. Everything we say is to accomplish this goal, or to get right back to it – and that's it!

In one way or another, we've all had moments that we would like to experience, again. This goes for the great ones, and even the ones we hoped would turn out better. Luckily, that's exactly what our next moment is for! It's another time for us to be happy again, and to enjoy each other's company. And, if we can do that – even once, we can keep on doing it. One single step – proves what's possible for us to do; even if it takes a few or many of them to reach our destination...

If we look at our next moment together like this, what an opportunity we have. And, we can get there much easier this time, because we'll know exactly what we wanted to do, or feel like! Since we're both looking for a positive moment to be a part of, communicating with each other will be so much easier to do. We've been "waiting" for these wonderful moments to show up, not realizing that we're making those experiences happen – together. So, *we* have a lot more control over how *our* moments will turn-out, than we imagined. You could say this entire book is the little "pause" we have before our next experience begins; so we remember that we wanted to be happy, and how to make that possible. And, experiencing happiness or joy is literally something everyone can learn how to do. Like anything else, it simply contains a few key elements to put into place where you are, and – there you go!

Because of the world's fast pace, we can sometimes forget what we're trying to accomplish in the moments we have. We might have a logistical outcome that we would like to see, but the world is slowly

starting to realize that this is only half of what makes happiness possible. It's how we get there joyfully, that's just as important for keeping everything together. And, we can always have it both ways. Joy in the process, and joy in the final outcome. So, at its root – happiness only contains two parts. It's just a matter of time we're talking about. Now that we're here – how long will happiness last in the way we're creating it? (If we keep this up – will that allow it to continue?) We can call this sustainability, but sometimes that idea gets lost in the details. The truth is that it's possible, and we've experienced it so many times before. Now we just have to consider that we're doing this together. And, knowing this doesn't have to make it complicated. Once we make enjoyment the first priority in what we're doing together, everything inside and out will begin to go in that direction, and it's just a matter of keeping that going... That's what sustain-ability is. We're enjoying the process now, because it's working, and like this – it will continue to work. So, there's no complex math here. It's just a matter of paying attention to the process in the moment – to see where it's going. And, that's it!

To review the emotional and logistical process again before we move on, we all desire to become happy in the moments we're in. When we realize that the positive energy we extend is felt equally by each person, once we put it into motion, it goes right back into us – and those positive feelings are there! When we see just a glimpse of this happening, our entire body starts to cooperate on the inside to keep that energy and enjoyment going. Then, with our actions, we're keeping this energy “up,” as well. So, see the cycle and how we're simply making energy move through us, and out into what we're doing? That energy isn't just making us feel good. It's literally *changing* what we can do. At the end of the experience, we feel happy for three reasons: we made happiness possible for ourselves, for the other people involved, and we either achieved our goal successfully, or we're much closer to it. Now how do you think we will feel after a few experiences like this? Just like our body desires to contribute to this cause, I would imagine because it feels so good to be “there” together, we'd probably want to stay there a little longer, too! Now, imagine this dynamic happening wherever you go

most of the time, from now on...

If we know how to make just one experience together a joyful and successful one – we can literally keep on doing that – for as long as we’re here. And, I can assure you from quite a few years of experience doing this, since we’re actually making more energy than we’re using, not only does the process become easy, but we keep on getting so much more back, than we’re putting out. (Even with our occasional mistakes!) So, our conversations overall will be a much more positive and pleasant experience. Since we are an equal part of the situations that we create together, we both deserve to get the most out of them, with the time and energy we have to spend. And luckily, the positive moments and interactions that we have together, are only multiplying the energy that’s present. And, this also helps us to logistically organize what’s there, as well. (In my business and relationships consulting practice these areas are my specialty, and it’s what I teach. It actually only takes about 15-20 minutes to summarize this entire process on how this idea works on every single part of us, and what we’re working on.)

Together, regardless of how challenging it seems sometimes, we’ve already established a world-wide community of people sharing themselves with each other. Not just on the web, but for all of the daily tasks that we need to complete to make the world and our lives what they are, right now. What’s missing isn’t that we can’t get things done, but that we’re enjoying the process together. Imagine that we’ve come this far, with so many things – but this? It’s almost shocking to realize this after all of the hard work we’ve accomplished...I’m only adding that we can actually enjoy the experience of working together, instead of having it be “hard” or difficult.

We can easily make all of our interactions with each other, so much more enjoyable for both of us. It just comes down to realizing that we’re both standing in the middle of the energy and the feelings that are being created – *by the words: We use*. Not from choosing the perfect verb or adjective, but by the emotions and the intentions behind those words.

When we're coming from a sincere place, not only are we speaking honestly, but mutual respect is already included in what we're saying. And, this is exactly why "here" we can relax, and feel more at ease. Our conversation will feel like it's moving us along, instead of having to "work" at it. If everyone knew and used this approach and felt the difference it makes, while realizing that we can still be ourselves and get things done, the *entire world* would be much happier – in only a few days' time. And, many people who study energy, our emotions, and how our relationships work have come to the same conclusion. (So, that's how far away we really are collectively, from being happier here!) Yes, positive emotions, cooperation and working together to make a positive outcome happen, produces results that work *this* fast. Modern science has stated that most of our emotions can be felt within $\frac{1}{4}$ of a second. And, that's not surprising considering how important emotions are to our survival *and* our enjoyment of life...

So, when we're open and present in our moments together, this is how long it takes for positive emotions to start having an effect on us. (When you see someone smile, think of how long it takes you to smile back.) In my hospitality experience, I've seen this work almost immediately thousands and thousands of times with many different people. So, I've already seen positive emotions work between us, countless times – and that's why I'm writing an entire book, about it!

All communication comes down to feeling good, understanding each other, and being able to accomplish something that's important to us. All of these elements are a part of each other. Those three circles overlap. Just by becoming a bit more positive with each other, we're able to complete the first two parts of this circle, easily. Before we put ourselves into motion, we can confirm our goals, and why they are important to us. Then, we can take a positive step forward. This is where we spend most of our time when we are speaking *with* and not to each other. Can you feel the difference between those two places? (It sounds like someone is talking to you from a pedestal. And, that's the whole problem right there; when our feet are actually standing on the same level of ground.) When

we talk “with” each other, positive energy is balancing and calming both of us, so that our words can come out without much interference. And, since where we are coming from emotionally also influences where others are coming from, now you can see why this is so important for the positive results “we” wanted to have.

So, heading in a more positive direction with talking, or a not so positive place are the only two options we have. We can try to mask our intentions, but energy is read by our bodies first; and then by the words we’re using. This happens because we have an energy field around our entire body, and we’ve known about this for a very, very long time. If we’re expressing positive words or gestures, why not mean to make those results happen, if they’re directly happening – to both of us? When we share our honest reasons for wanting to accomplish something good, we strengthen the bonds to each other, and what we wanted to do. So, there’s really no loss here. The part of us that we identify as the “self,” didn’t really understand what’s on the other side of this equation – for itself. And, that’s the primary cause behind the misunderstandings we have. It comes down to nothing more or less, than that. So, let’s explore this misunderstanding a bit, before we move on.

The only hang-up that we have comes down to realizing that happiness can be created for both of us; even if we desire to choose a different path, or if we want to do something different. A mix of both positive and negative emotions, or the fear of them – usually causes us to lie, because we don’t want to experience pain. Pain within ourselves, or between us. So, if we choose to lie about our positive emotions or intentions, in the process we’re cancelling out “our own energy,” because the positive and negative places we’re coming from on the inside – are still there. And, those can only get worked out – through understanding.

Of course, if we have some real concerns we can share them. *It means we want to clear up anything that might get in the way of our success.* So, lead with that motivation – as your primary reason for sharing, and your conversation will already be headed into a positive direction. And,

that's a very good thing! If there are a few things that we would like to improve on, isn't that good for us? So, making things positive was our goal, all along. It's the sincerity and the tone that always counts here. Lead with what's positive first, because that's what we're trying to create. Then, we can work our way forward with our concerns – from there. Yes, it's good to make sure that we're headed in the right direction! As long as we know that the direction we're headed in – is taking us to a positive place, we can share all of our concerns – without worry. And, the more we do that together, mutual trust is established for both of us...

If you've noticed from your own conversations, it's not about making sure everything's "ok" that's the problem. It's the negative emotions behind our concerns that make us worry. And, the reassurance we give to each other is only worked out through the process of honest communication. So, we can be a little more mindful when we need to talk about those details. We can make that part of our conversation enjoyable, too! Important, doesn't always mean that it has to be serious, or painful. It means that something is important to us; because we want to be happy! So, let's treat our concerns that way. If something is important to you, isn't that a part of your happiness, if those concerns are taken care of? So, we need to make what's truly important enjoyable for us, as well. This way, we'll have the energy we need to direct what's there to a better place. And, we'll enjoy our time spent working those details out! Here, we're just happily taking care of both ends – what's working and our concerns, so that our results will go in a positive direction. And, what's so bad, about that? In essence, we were more "worried" about where the conversation would go, and not actually, if we could find a solution. See the difference? If we talk about and share both sides openly, then – a more positive solution can always be found.

If we're not feeling that great, we also have an opportunity to begin our next moment with someone from a more positive place, too. And, that changes how we feel. Going through all of our previous ups and downs in glorious detail, delays the actual boost we were looking for. (Unless

we need to share *all* of those details for a much better understanding of what's there.) Usually, we know exactly what happened or what went wrong. So, bringing that into the present might help us understand it, but doing that alone won't always "fix" what happened! (We're just reporting here; and we're not in the "solving" stage yet.) So, extending the drama of the first part only brings us to where we are, right now... However, a new positive moment with someone (or even by yourself), sets life's universal clock (and us) back – closer to its original happy position. So, now is always the perfect time to begin getting back there! Not only will this give us more energy to use to fix what's necessary, but it will allow us to accomplish those steps in a much more enjoyable way, with less stress. (Whew.) So, did you notice that it takes much more energy and information to understand how to get "back" to happiness and why, than it does – to actually create it? (An ounce of prevention is worth...) So, let this be another big reveal on how much energy we're losing, when we imagine that cooperation will make us lose more energy, than it gives back to us.

In every moment that we're cooperating, we're putting more positive energy directly into the circle of where we are. As we give ourselves a lift, the circle of energy around us grows larger, and we're both a part of that. So, trying to be "just for you," means you're a bit low in energy, and you think that putting more focus on yourself, will take care of that space. When we're coming from a place that's just for us, other people can feel this, and it puts them into the same selfish or defensive place, too! (That's usually where our conflicts begin.) Again, the mirror neurons in our brain are activated here, and we're both put into the same position, from the inside out. When this happens, the energy you're both looking for stops moving between you; and no one – gets what they wanted. That's why more tension, stress and arguments will happen, from here. Then, all of that negative energy goes right back into both of us. (Ouch!) So, since everything is connected, we're meant to grow more energy for both of us in how we relate; and this method works so much better, than any selfish "idea" we have. Selfish, just means you forgot that we were creating this energy together, all along. And, as you've seen

the results of forgetting this often produces far less enjoyment, than we were looking for! Cooperation understands that we're both looking for something to be happy about during our encounters together. So, this idea builds even more energy for each person, and the relationship at the same time.

In my research, a positive encounter with another person (or anything that's alive) is the only place where energy is traveling through every single part of us, equally. In other words, energy is filling up the "in and out sides" of our hearts at the same time. (And, this happens quite a bit when we're talking to each other.) As positive emotions are being transferred back and forth, it's interesting to notice how our mouth and our ears have been set up – to connect us to each other. If you've ever studied biology, almost every single part of who we are was designed or created for this exchange.

In speaking, energy and sound coming from the inside of us travels outward, and that's directly absorbed by the listener. Then, they send some of that, right back to us. That's exactly what's happening during our conversations. If it helps to get a visual, think of a circle of infinity (sideways) between us. That's literally the pattern of how we speak and exchange energy, because energy is traveling back and forth, through and between each one of us. We're built this way, because energy itself also mirrors this polar pattern, too. That's why the idea of "exchanging positive energy" works better than any other method to activate what's here. We are using what we have in the way it was intended, along with the energy outside of us...So that we can feel *good* about what we're doing!

With this new understanding of how energy is activated, you can gain a lot more than you originally thought, without having to worry about your part of it. All that you need to remember is the most gains on energy are multiplied when it's moving between people, and you are always an equal part of the positive energy that's being created. So, there was never a reason to try to hold onto happiness or energy just for yourself; because

energy is always in motion. And, it's what we put into motion that stays with us. As we release it, our body responds directly to that because it comes through us first – and then, it travels out to someone else. Then, they return more of the same, back to us.

You might have heard the phrase, “What we do to others, we do to ourselves.” The intentions we have to produce something positive for us and someone else, *raises our own energy even more*. Think of your body and how you feel now, as your base line of energy. When we come from a certain emotional place on the inside, we extend that energy, those intentions and those feelings outward. And again, those have to pass through us first, before they reach someone else. When we express ourselves, we're also reinforcing where we are internally at the same time. If it's from a negative place (unless we're looking to mend that space), we're strengthening the same feelings. However, if we share the desire to heal a situation or to be in a better place, then we're headed in a *positive* direction. (We'll explore this more in another chapter.)

Remember this idea works just as much for your own energy levels, as it does for your receiver. When those intentions are good for both of you, the feelings and the benefits are only multiplied. So, the term “sharing” something together, by definition, implies less. When, from an energetic perspective, what's there is being multiplied. With that incentive, there's literally nothing to “lose” in exchanging or sharing positive energy with each other...

Once this energy is in motion between us, it does most of the “work” to create the results we would like to see, with our actions that follow this direction. As long as we remember that both of us would like to reach our goals and feel good about what we're doing together, that's often how things will turn out. And, we can always make the process easier or more productive, as we go along. Once a healthy foundation is established between us, there's almost nothing in the way of what we can do together. Positive energy is always paving the way for us, inside and out. And, we don't always have to know everything before we take a step forward! With a few successful steps, we'll literally see more of

what's ahead. That's how our path unfolds in whatever we would like to do, so that we can keep up with what's here, successfully. The more we travel on a positive path – the steps, and the understanding we need to continue, will become that much clearer.

And, while we're on the subject of paths, having similar and different goals gives us some room, so that we can be ourselves and together at the same time. In business and in our personal lives, there's always room for each of us to develop and grow. Sometimes, even with the same goals in mind, we get there by following different routes. Variety is here, so that we have plenty of positive options to choose from. Realizing that we all have something to contribute in different ways will allow us to be together easily, without an issue. If we look around, we'll see people in many different stages of growth. And, that's so we can get a chance to see even more of where we are, where we're going, and where we've come from. If we were all in the same places developmentally, we would only have one side of life to see. So, no matter how old or young we are or what talents we have, there will always be more for us to discover! And, you're just as much of a part of developing life's story, as everything you see around you. Without a slight difference in who we are, we would lose our unique value. It's these subtle differences that help us define who we are, and who we wish to become in the world of all that's possible.

For another quick example, imagine if every car was the same make, model, and all the same color. I used to park cars, and I can tell you that this would get old, really quick! Out of all of this variety, you get to choose exactly what you're about. Besides, the fear of anything being "different" comes from the very old primitive parts – of who we were. This was an assumption made when we had no other information, knowledge, or possibilities to go on. And, rather than saving us from danger, since everything around us is literally different (no matter how similar we are), that judgment only acts as a wall that separates us from the happier emotions we were looking for together. A negative, repeated emotion towards something outside of you in time, will not only change

how you feel on the inside, but it will also change what's coming your way, as the energy you're putting out – is also effecting what's coming back. (Cause and effect.) And, that's not good – for you, either!

So, there was never any fight or struggle needed to be who you are; you're already here, and have been the whole time. Does this make sense to you now? The two biggest assumptions that break down our energy and our communication skills were based on a false premise. One, that something different might be a threat, when everything around us is literally different... And, the second, if we want more energy for ourselves we have to hold it in, or hold it back from others. We are a container of energy, but it's only completely filled through the "back and forth" of our positive relationships. That exchange *is* our relationship.

In understanding that we're already here to become who we are and desire to be, we get the chance to enjoy our lives with each other, without having to worry about losing ourselves! Knowing this now, maybe we can all finally breathe a huge sigh of relief?! Energy will then be free to travel through us to make our life's journey worthwhile, and to help us create exactly what we wanted to see for ourselves, and even others, too. And, with nothing in the way of your understanding of how we can "relate" to each other in a positive way now, wasn't there someone that you wanted to talk to?

The Experiment:

This one requires two people. If you have a significant other, you should do this with them. Since you're spending your lives together, this will have the greatest impact on both of you, over time. However, we need to learn how to do this with everyone in our lives. So, you'll be able to see the benefits, regardless of the title of your relationship! Energy and how we feel together is always traveling with us. So, the joy we experience in every part of our lives is what we'll have to bring home to the most significant person in our lives, as well...

This experiment is very easy and enjoyable to do. For three minutes, have one person talk about a positive subject or goal that's important to them. If you're on the "listening" side, all you have to do is listen. After they're finished, ask a few questions about what they were sharing with you. Take a little break, and it's your turn to speak.

There are two simple goals here. The first is to see how easy it is to express yourselves in a positive way, so that you can take your conversations to a place that makes you *both* feel good! When each person understands a little more about how it feels to be on both sides of this equation, getting better at talking *with each other* will happen, naturally. So, for those who talk more and listen less, and for the people who listen more and talk less, you'll both amazingly discover that positive energy can be found and created equally – from both sides. When you realize this you'll become more "in-tune" with each other, and your conversations will be much more enjoyable and productive for both of you!

Sometimes it just takes a little practice to remember that we've enjoyed so many of our conversations before, and that's exactly what this exercise is for. If we remember "how" to make a single conversation enjoyable together, we can repeat the same winning recipe for the rest of our lives, too. Simply start by putting something positive and meaningful in there for both of you. And, just keep on doing this, for as long as you want to enjoy each other's company...Now, how about that?

A Final Thought:

Whatever we say together not only makes us "feel" a certain way, but that feeling takes us closer to the goals we have for ourselves and our relationship. Since our emotions work in real-time, we can establish a better place for ourselves emotionally, as soon as those positive words are spoken. That's why this chapter is called, "Even As We Speak..."

Since a positive word shared, equals a positive emotion felt and most likely returned, that's how we get back to enjoying the time we have to

spend. Our bodies listen very closely to what we have to say; as our “own” ears are relaying this message back to our nervous system. So, that’s why having more positive conversations and moments together, will only build up the amount of energy we have. And, to think that we’ve always had the ability to increase our enjoyment of being here...Because what we say and how, together right now – is the positive change in our emotions that everyone’s been looking for...Enough said!

Author’s Note:

For those of you who are married or in a serious committed relationship, and you’d like to improve the quality of your conversations, and how you can relate to each other in a much deeper and meaningful way, look into Mort Fertel and his “Marriage Fitness” program¹⁷. Rather than focusing on problems and how to solve them, he specifically covers what makes our most significant relationships work, and why. Just like we’ve explored why our positive conversations work, his program makes it very enjoyable to learn much more about how we can be, as close as possible – to the one we love, the most!

¹⁷ Mort Fertel, *Marriage Fitness*, <https://marriagemax.com>.

C10: Follow Your Nose.

The Premise:

You may have heard in some spiritual circles that we are all “one.” This means we are all a part of the same energy system that surrounds us and gives us life. So, we have a very profound impact on each other, and on the environment in which we live. To me, the example that highlights this physical connection the most is our sense of smell. When we inhale a scent that we find enjoyable, we are actually breathing in molecules that are a part of that object, and this is where that “scent” comes from¹⁸! This shows us how we are an actual physical part of our environment, and how our energies are always being exchanged, so that we can have a positive influence and effect on one another.

We all have specific things that we like being around because they make us feel good! Our sense of smell is another way for us to become a part of what’s here. By spending time in the kitchen, in a garden or anywhere outdoors, we are being led “by our noses” into a positive moment. Since our food is fragrant, edible and beautiful, we can see from this example alone how our sense of smell, sight, touch, and even taste are all being used, so that we can have a pleasant experience. How often do you put your senses to work, so that you can be a part of what’s in front of you? If you could use a little practice in this department, you’ve come to the right place. That’s exactly what our senses were made to do! Everything that’s present with us – including our senses, our environment, and each other are only here for our enjoyment, health and longevity.

From this point of view, we can use our senses to their fullest potential, so that we can get into our experiences more often! Linking the idea of health and “pleasure” will put us right in the center of why our senses matter so much. They’re with us, so that we can be happy here for as long as possible. So, use this fact as a springboard to see what you can

¹⁸ *Charlie Brown’s Cyclopedia, Your Amazing Body: From Your Nose to Your Toes*, Vol. 1 (New Jersey: Funk & Wagnalls, 1990), 34.

do a little more each day to put your healthier actions, and your enjoyment of life together. Hopefully you can see now, our senses, our health and our happiness go together, hand-in-hand.

When we're "following our noses," we're being led into something that's not only interesting and exciting, but good for us. All of our senses are here to complete this mission, but there's nothing quite like something that smells fantastic! For me: coffee, seafood, an apple-pie, or a lilac always does the trick. So, what does it – for you?

As far as our nose and health is concerned, there's no doubt that Aromatherapy works to make us feel better; but how about doing a bit of that while we're involved with our daily routine? Engaging in any form of therapy is a very good thing; but we can expand those benefits much closer to where we are, right now. Anything that's "good for us" increases our health, and is considered therapeutic. Something that's therapeutic helps us to get back to using ourselves and our senses, so that we can live in a much fuller, healthier and enjoyable way. So, why "wait" for a certain time or day to perform a specific "healthy" activity, when we have every waking hour available to us? The goal with any one of our senses is to begin using them, so that a positive connection is made to the life – that's right in front of us. So, let's see what's happening there...

When you feel any positive emotion, you're strengthening what's inside of you, or your biology. Positive experiences do the exact opposite of what stressful ones do. In essence, the increase of energy literally takes the stress "off" of how our cells function and communicate with each other. Some of you may have realized that this is also happening, when we relate to each other in a positive way, too. Just like the cells in our body, from a happier or pleasant state, we are able to work and communicate better together, as well! Since our biology and our emotions combined is our metabolism (or how our body is currently operating), maybe you can see that our emotions, how we relate to what's outside of us, and our internal health are all just different parts of

the same process. Energy is always moving through us, out into what we're doing, and then it comes back to us, again. Remember the image of the infinity symbol with you on one side, and what's there with you on the other? Energy is simply moving back and forth between you in this pattern. That's – *our* relationship! (And, this pattern goes for any relationship that we can possibly have here; because the same energy is underneath – all of them.)

The bond you experience with something enjoyable on the outside, allows your body to cooperate on the inside; which gives you more energy. But when what's outside of you is alive – your energy is combined, so that positive energy is flowing through you, from the inside and outside at the same time. That's exactly why we feel the way we do about a moment we're having in a positive way! (Energy is being multiplied for both of us at the same time; and this is also known as Synergy.) This is the core of where healing takes place; because that's where our lives are. It's the positive relationship to what we are already a part of that makes us happy. And, there are so many opportunities for positive interactions to be happening here more often, every day. What does this have to do with our noses? All of our senses connect “us” to the outside world; and our senses are here to make the relationship that we have with it – possible! So, getting back to using and appreciating them will only enhance our experience of being alive...

As far as happiness is concerned, when we have a more positive relationship with life and each other, we are able to “follow our noses” into even more experiences that will be good for us. As we get closer to happiness, even more possibilities for it will naturally open up to us. So, in a way, we're not just “following” our noses, we're also following the energy we've put into motion. When it's positive, it creates movement, flow and momentum. And, when that energy is negative or stagnant between us, we often feel – the same way, too!

Just like it's physically difficult to breathe when we have a stuffy nose, when our energy is a bit low or confused, we can often lose the focus of

what we're doing. When we relate to each other each other in a positive way, energy is able to flow through us without "blocks." This naturally raises our energy and intuition, so that we can move around with ease, joy, an increase in focus, and a sense of purpose.

This energy "block" happened to me, when I was finishing this chapter. While I was on my last round of edits late one night, I couldn't write anything more down that made sense. The next morning, it occurred to me that this needed to happen, so that you could have a real-life example of how positive interactions will help keep us clear and energized, so that we can move ahead with what we wanted to do. In my case, my energy was low due to a very long and stressful week. So, this goes to show you how our energy is always being affected by what we're doing, and how. To me, stress in one form or another takes more energy away from us than almost anything else, because we're often very active and under some form of pressure most of the time. So, knowing when it's time to rest also helps us to build up more energy, so that we can move ahead successfully. The more time we spend in a positive emotional state regularly, we can actually hear the messages our body is trying to send us. Sometimes, we might not need to take a long break or a nap. We just might need a little boost in our energy to be able to focus more on what we're doing. And, our positive interactions will certainly help with that, but there are also a few other specific things that we can do, as well.

For starters, taking the time to breathe a little slower and deeper once in a while, will expand the energy you have. When we breathe in, we are breathing in the ability to relax, energize and focus our attention at the same time. This happens for two reasons. The first is because we are increasing oxygen for every part of our body. Then, our body relaxes, which releases energy and sharpens our attention. After our bodies are relaxed, they start producing more energy for us. This only helps to make a successful moment or outcome happen. Then, we're happy about that, which increases our energy even more, as well as our overall health. (That's another feedback loop.) From here, we can keep that positive cycle of energy moving with us throughout the day. And, our situations

don't need to be perfect in order for this to take place! Once we start to put positive energy between us more often, energy will be moving right along, with us.

So, what we have on us, what we are doing with it, and how we feel are all part of the same process. Using our senses even though the movements may be small and simple (like breathing) can relax us, so that we can take in more of the enjoyment that's right in front of us. Our senses directly connect us to it. That's why I had you get in touch with each one of them. When we're "here" we can see what our next step might be, so that we can continue to keep those positive feelings going. Anything that's enjoyable or good for you, will only increase happiness and decrease stress naturally, without any effort, at all. That's just a healthy by-product of what we're doing – that's good for us...

With a few slow, deep, conscious breaths, we come right back to where we are now, and what we're doing. If it's an enjoyable activity, we put ourselves back in touch with our positive emotions. So, appreciation and joy can instantly be found here, regardless of where we are. And, isn't that really "where" we wanted to be? Now you have one more easy way to get right back to where happiness resides.

The Experiment:

Like all of the experiments we've gone through, your next mission if you choose to accept it is to take these ideas into where you are, right now. So, how can we use our nose to grow our connection to the outside world, so that we'll feel a more positive emotion on the inside? If you replace the word "nose" with any other sense (since they're all "doing" the same thing inside) it will still work to increase your happiness...As a sneak peak, you can try this with a few different senses put together, in whatever way you wish. But for your nose, we'll do a very simple exercise. You can do this at home, or you can even take a trip to somewhere special...

If you're choosing to stay at home, have someone (you trust!) blindfold

you. Take about six or eight different items that you need to identify, using only your sense of smell. To make this exciting, have the person choose a few items that you might not recognize, as well as a few simple ones. This will be fun, but it will also show you just how important and enjoyable this particular sense is. When you're done, switch roles!

Or, take yourselves somewhere where you can use your nose in the most pleasant way that you can think of. This could be a: flower shop, bakery, grocery store, garden or just somewhere outside in nature. When you're there, get close to something that appeals to you. Close your eyes and take three slow, deep breaths. This will sharpen your senses, raise your energy levels, release endorphins and connect you even more to what's there. If you have the opportunity, try this with a few different things. (Especially if you have allergies, make sure that what you're taking a good whiff of isn't harmful, or toxic to you!) And, like using your sense of taste, you'll notice the subtle differences in what you like...

By completing this experiment you'll be able to appreciate what's there with you – because you're right there with it, too! The positive moment you're sharing is what all of your relationships in life are for, in a variety of different ways. I hope you're beginning to realize just how enjoyable life can be, when you're “present” with what's presenting itself to you. This is exactly what our senses are here to help us do... They happily connect us – to life!

A Final Thought:

Our noses show us how we are directly connected to our environment. By taking a few, slow deep breaths, this gives us a boost of energy and it helps us to settle into what we're doing. Now that we're present, we can feel the enjoyment of what we're doing and where we are, and we can even see where our inspiration would like to take us. Sometimes, this can be just as easy – as following your nose.

Author's Note:

Before we move into using our other senses, I would like to thank

Charlene Campbell and the entire Nursing department at Salem State University, for giving me a solid foundation into how our bodies work. After four and a half years of nursing (way) back in 1996, I realized that I wanted to go into another direction. And, that's how I became what I refer to as a Holistic Health Sociologist. For those who are unfamiliar with the term (the discipline didn't exist back then), my role is to tie together how all of our positive relationships are affecting our happiness, our overall health, our life's direction, and our success. So, that's why you'll hear so many references to our body. Since our body is "home," everything is affecting our Homeostasis or how we function at optimal levels, and happiness is a huge part of that. While I'm not a medical professional, and I'm unable to give advice on how to diagnose or treat a medical, physical or emotional condition of any kind, I can at least explore with you how happiness works from my perspective, through my own experience, and how this touches every part of our lives in a positive way... That's what I know, and it's what I'm here to share with you. So, just in case you were wondering – there you go!

C11: Our Ability to Touch.

The Premise:

Without being able to physically touch something it would be quite difficult to have a full and complete relationship with it. Although we can admire many things from afar, the relationships that have the most impact on us are the ones that touch us, emotionally and physically. This is just one of the reasons why our senses and our emotions are directly connected to each other; and why those things mean the most to us.

To be touched by something emotionally, means that it has an impact on us. And, there are only six different ways that we can feel about something. We can love something, like it, feel neutral about it, dislike it, or hate it. And, we can even have a mixture of these emotions depending on the situation. The physical components to touch also fit into these categories, as well. The highest influence is when these two areas combine. Here, we have a very positive emotional connection to something, as well as the physical sensations involved with it.

A few examples could be touching something soft, or deeply enjoying something because of the meaning it has. Or, we might end up liking something when we touch it for the first time, because that's how some of our most positive connections are made. So, as you can see there are a few different ways for us to be "stimulated" by something, emotionally and physically. With this little refresher on how we feel is there something in your life that makes you feel good? And, why does it do that?

One of the reasons that most people feel fulfilled has to do with how much positive energy they have or feel. This primarily comes from our positive bonds to other people, and from how we are spending our time. If you would like to increase the amount of enjoyment in your life, thinking more about what you like (or who!) and spending more time there, will only change the way you feel about yourself, and the world around you. Even if you have an extremely busy schedule, you can

always afford small blocks of time for what's important to you, regularly. You can set aside a day or a few hours a week to concentrate on a task or goal that you would like to reach. When we take a look at our lives through one experience at a time, we'll begin to see that we have more space in our time than we think. If you're busy most of the time, it might sound strange at first, but set aside a little time to make sure taking it easy is included in your routine. You'd be surprised to know what a solid hour of joy and relaxation can do!

So, maybe you've taken a little time to get in touch with what's important to you again, and that's great! From here, taking small positive steps regularly in whatever direction that's important to you will help to keep your energy "up." To follow through with the goals you have there are also a few things to consider. Being realistic about how much you can advance in a short period of time is one of them. It's much better to take smaller steps while keeping the long-term goal, in sight. As long as you know that you're making progress, there aren't too many reasons to be worried about the outcome. With every step you take, you're getting closer to where you would really like to be. But, don't rush it! The key here is to get as much as you can out of the step you're on. That's where joy will be found. This way, you can enjoy where you are, where you're headed, and the completion of your goal. Remember, each step will take care of itself successfully, as you move along in this way. Since you're right there – you'll be successful and enjoy the trip! The next thing to remember is the "why" behind what you're doing. A lot of general reasons for doing something are helpful to get going, but the reasons that are closest to you, will help you follow through with them.

As you grow and develop, your plans might become more specific in a certain area of your life. Just a few reasons that are closest to your heart will help you to stay active and motivated. However, once you establish that, the more reasons you can see for doing something important, the more motivation you'll have to keep up with it. And, any goal you have in mind for someone close to you is just as much for you, too. When we nurture other people's goals, we get a chance to see how important ours

are, as well. (Can you begin to see how taking a little time to think of others, benefits us, too? Give this a thought before we move ahead.) Since our heart has two sides to it, the desire we have about someone else experiencing success, goes directly into how good we feel. Seeing the journey of success on the outside, makes us feel more comfortable and inspired about our own path. So, either way, the success we see in our own lives and in those around us, benefits everyone. Eventually, this is the energy that we'll have to share with each other, which keeps "our" cycle of energy growing and moving forward. The progress we see in other's lives shows us what's possible; and it encourages us to keep going in whatever is meaningful to us. So, see how energy is working for us – from both directions now?

Knowing the emotional and logistical parts of your goal will help you to measure progress. How do I feel? And, what did I accomplish? These two questions will keep you motivated if your desires have changed, or if you can't see results yet. You – and how you feel in a positive way is always your first reason for doing something. If you notice, even with the goals you're helping others to accomplish, this still comes back around to how you feel. And, everything you achieve on the outside will eventually make its way inside, with how you feel about yourself. That's the circle.

If you find yourself getting off track with what you had in mind, there's no reason to be hard on yourself. That won't help. Simply noticing where you really wanted to be is more than enough to get back there! We always have a little time and space to make our next decision; and in that space, you'll see where you wanted to go. And, this works for where we wanted to be in our relationships, too. In them, we can always make time for what's important to both of us. When we adopt this philosophy, we strengthen the bonds to everything that matters and each other, without having to give up on some other things that we enjoy. So, how can we put those things together? Like a puzzle, seeing the connections in how one thing relates to another part of your life, will help you connect the dots, so everything you're a part of can give you a boost of energy, and

touch your life in a meaningful way.

And again, to keep “in-touch” with life, our happiness and each other, stay on a more positive path during our daily encounters. (Yes, I’m repeating this for a reason...) Since our energy is always in flux, by doing this more often, not only will we feel better, but we’ll have the energy we need to complete our other meaningful activities, too. Our lives have many facets to them, and they are all special for many different reasons. However, being able to keep our encounters and tasks infused with a bit of positive energy, will *always* be the foundation where everything we desire to do, begins and ends. That’s why you’ll hear more about this idea, than any other in the book...

Our shared positive moments are literally the cornerstone – from where we see every other part of our lives in a positive light. (It’s the most powerful lens that we can see our lives – through.) The fact that we can make our moments more positive together, and actually feel something good from them – is almost all that we need to know to feel better! For me, understanding this point alone was the most profound, simple, and all-encompassing fact I have learned about life, so far. And, this isn’t from an educational perspective. This is from real-world experience. Since we spend more time with others than we do alone most of the time, can you see just how much of an impact we have on how we feel – about being here?

A positive shared moment repeatedly goes further than any other activity that we can do here, as far as energy goes. And, everything else comes in a close second. Once you start having moments like this, you’ll see exactly why. This is something that you’ll have to experience, firsthand. Words about it, will only take you so far. Then, once you understand them – it’s up to you. The greatest teachers in the world on any subject can only take you right up to the point... Where the next positive action is yours to make – to see where it goes, and what it does for you.

So, whatever motions we make – without love mixed into them, won’t amount to very much emotionally, no matter how many material or

financial “gains” we have. This is the reason why so many people don’t feel as happy as they would like to be; even with every “material thing” they could ever want. The materials we might have – are inorganic, most of the time; and they’re usually not *that* close to us. That’s another reason why a heavier focus on just materials will leave you wanting more. The initial rush of them is great – but love’s projection, only goes one way. The only energy that reaches our entire body, mind and spirit comes from the heart of what we’re doing – alone and together. This is what truly makes us happy. If by chance, you have a lot of love and lots of money, as long as you keep those things in the right order (besides your health of course), then – you’re living the greatest dream you can possibly have. The best thing you can do is to keep appreciating that opportunity and take good care of it! Not from fear’s perspective – but from a nurturing one...

Also keep in mind that since success and love are not isolated events, it’s good for you to be generous with your energy, and the things you have. In doing so, you mirror and reflect exactly what life did – for you. Then, *you* get the chance to see what sharing abundance *really* feels like. To become whole-hearted, we need to know what giving *and* receiving looks and feels like from both sides. Now, you’ll be able to see much deeper into the true blessing that’s been given to you. You’ll witness the complete circle of love’s creation – from here to there, and back again. And, besides making others feel good, that’s why this is so important – to you!

By remembering why something will benefit you *and* someone else, it will put you back in touch with the energy that’s needed, so your actions will become positive, again. As I’ve said before, any positive action outward is giving you and someone else energy at the same time. So, when you’re together, this doesn’t need to be complicated or over the top. Just knowing that it’s helpful to you and someone else is more than enough to make a big difference! Those emotional rewards are compounded. And, it doesn’t matter what you’re doing. As long as we put some love or joy into it, our hearts will stay open and able to keep on

circulating this energy. In time, it will make a very noticeable difference in what's there with us for results, too.

Underneath everything that we do and share – having our hearts filled with positive energy is always the first and last goal. And, there's so much more happening “here” than we currently know. In everything we could possibly dream of doing, there's a feeling we seek, from it. For every person and activity on earth, there's a little bit of difference in how this energy touches us. And, isn't it amazing to know that our best conversations come out of sharing a very enjoyable experience? We might have mirror neurons in our brain, but we also have them in our hearts, too. (Not neurons per se, but our hearts mirror the feelings that we are sharing with each other.) And, if this isn't a hard, medical science yet – it should be. It's the genesis of where everything we desire, seek to feel, and create – takes place. Love is the most powerful, creative energy. It creates new life, it gives us life, it sustains us, and our happiness here. (If it's able to do all of this...What else can it do?)

Any place that we like to visit emotionally and physically, will always bring these feelings to us. It's just a matter of making some time for them. Remember, you don't have to stress about always keeping your energy “up!” Like anything else, the more time you spend in a positive emotional place, the less energy it takes from you – to be able to build, and ride on that fabulous wave of feelings. From here, because you're in a happier place, you'll naturally be creating much more of it. And, even in the most desirable places, there will always be some normal fluctuations in how we feel. So, get more comfortable in the energy that's always right there, with you. You're the one (with other's help), putting it – into motion.

At the end of any experience, if you feel a little “lift” being there, you're doing what you need to do – to be touched, and to touch other's lives in a positive way. Simply do what you can to keep this energy going a little more often, and – enjoy it. That's exactly what it's here for.

The Experiment:

For this one, I would like you to do something positive for yourself. All that you'll need is an hour to take time with something that you *really, truly enjoy*. You get to choose what it is. It could be some time to relax and appreciate what's around you. Or, it could be to dive into something important that you've wanted to do. See where this time takes you in how you feel. That's all you need to do. In the words of Joseph Campbell, "Wherever you are – if you are following your bliss, you are enjoying that refreshment, that life within you, all the time.¹⁹" Once you feel the benefits of doing this, it will be much easier to get back to this very special place, more often...

A Final Thought:

There are many ways to get back to feeling good. When we remember some of the reasons why we enjoy the things we do, or we take an enthusiastic step into any task we have, the energy in our hearts is activated. This is something that we can do alone or together with someone. And, we can always get more specific or choose something different, as we go along. Either way, the goal is just to be a part of something that makes us feel good, more often. And, with a single step, being touched emotionally and physically can happen – just like that!

¹⁹ Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth with Bill Moyers* (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 121.

C12: Your Senses – Combined.

The Premise:

All of our senses connect our physical outer environment to the emotional world that we have on the inside of us. Since we all desire to feel good, putting our attention on them during our moments will help us to have the most enjoyable types of experiences. In doing so, we put ourselves right in the middle – of the positive energy that we’re creating, exchanging and feeling with the world around us, and each other.

Every moment or experience that we have is just another opportunity for us to enjoy life, and each other’s company in a certain way. And, that’s why we have so many different kinds of activities to choose from! Some of them we need to do to continue to live, and others we do just for pleasure. Either way, all of these activities are only adding to our quality of life, and our enjoyment of it. However, it’s our senses that are making the majority of our happy emotions possible, during any experience we have. We can certainly think of things that make us happy; but that’s only going to go so far. In life, we are living in an organic environment; and we are meant to be a direct part of that larger space. If not, we will become withdrawn and depressed, because half of the energy that sustains us – comes from the outside world.

When we feel depressed, we shut ourselves down and away from what might be hurting us; but we also close ourselves off from what could be helping us feel better, too. So, here is where we open ourselves up to even more of what’s in store for us – to enjoy! It’s important to note that if we’re depressed, or even if we would like to feel as good as possible the exact same message applies. If we desire to create more positive emotions, we’re going to have “to do” something to make them possible. To begin with, we can always try to change our point of view. But the fastest way to create a positive emotion or to change our outlook is to become a part of something that’s enjoyable...Here, we’re changing our emotions into something else – something that makes us feel better. Between here – and there, that’s all that’s happening.

And, if we're feeling depressed, it's going to take a little time for our feelings to change. (If this is something you're going through and have been for quite some time without improvement, please seek professional guidance. It's healthy for you, and it can make a world of difference in how you feel.) Even then, we still have to start somewhere. If feeling better is really that important, why wait any longer to begin? And, our senses are a direct route to making this happen. After all, it's through the body that our spirit is felt, expressed and experienced. If not, there wouldn't be a need for us, or the world, at all. So, feeling better comes down to what we're doing, or the attitude we have while we're doing something. This activates our positive emotions. So, if a love of life is what you're after, your senses combined with everything else that you have on you, and around you – will take you there!

In the enjoyable moments we have together, we're using our senses and our body to express and bring forth spirit, or positive energy. Our senses are the routes we use to recognize if a loving thought, feeling or action has happened, and it's also how we create them. Again, the enjoyment of everything that's here with us is our prime reason for having them. So, when we're enjoying something or creating a moment that we can be grateful for, we're using ourselves, our senses, and our environment in just the way they were intended.

Morality, or what's "good for you," simply means to use what you have in any way that's beneficial. I happen to be a Christian in case you were wondering, but this observation isn't really about religion, at all. When we desire to feel better, celebrating that we have an opportunity to make a positive choice, and knowing what it will do for us – is how we get there. So, it doesn't matter what specific name you put on these values. When you show someone how good something is for you, or how much it changes your life in a positive way, you're simply trying to lead them into something that's beneficial. So, regardless of what the subject matter is – feeling good was the point, all along! If you've found a specific religion, or a way of living that causes you to be in harmony or in-joy with what's around you, then – you've found your place to be.

Through a modern understanding of morals, a loving action creates a positive feeling, and it also avoids harm or danger. This is the fastest and most enjoyable way to take care of both of those concerns, at once. So, when we create a positive moment for each other, not only does this feel good because we're following our core instincts, but we're also avoiding pain and sorrow at the same time. That's why it feels so good to be "here!" We're enjoying ourselves now and we're also creating a way, so that even more possibilities will be there for us in the future, as well.

In these moments, we're taking the energy or "spirit" we have, and we're using it to create a positive outcome. Once we put something good for us into place, this energy touches every part of us. To expand those benefits, energy is spreading out through all of the different parts of us, and our lives. To me, that's all the incentive I need to stay close to love; besides the feelings that are found here. And, using your senses is what makes any enjoyable moment possible. So, spirit gives life to the body, and our senses are a direct way to connect with each other, and the outer world that we are all a part of...

The next time you're involved with something, notice how any one of your senses is helping you to create and enjoy the experience you're having. When you take a moment to notice this, a much greater appreciation of life and what you already have, will be found. Your senses allow you to focus and extend energy outward, and then – take it, back in. Through this rhythm, you create and observe what's happening at the same time. We are spectators and participants in life, simultaneously. Almost like magicians, we get to see and experience the wonder of what we're doing, and what's happening here. As far out as the idea might seem – it's pretty down to earth!

The more you think about this when you're involved in a positive moment, you'll begin to see more of what's happening. This "first-person" point of view will help you to see much deeper into the beauty of life, and yourself. This is one of the ways that self-esteem is shaped. It's simply how you feel within and about yourself, most of the time.

And, you have the ability to make yourself feel good about being here. That's the whole point of being alive! So, you can start by becoming a more positive part of your moments, and you have five "senses" to help you begin doing that... Which leads us to our sixth sense. This is a combination of them, or the wisdom that comes through using them with a positive intent; which results in having a deeper insight into what's here, and how we relate to it.

In some circles, you might hear about wisdom that comes to you beyond your senses. In my experience, they are talking about an inward feeling, or a knowing about something in particular. There are places within us where spirit resides, and some insights are subtle or a bit difficult to detect. There's no need to worry about this, at all! Sometimes, certain images, thoughts, or feelings may find their way to you about something important. The reason why people might say that these are beyond your "senses" is because the idea that's coming through might be new, or it doesn't have to do with anything that's currently happening outside of you. If it relates to something that's already here, the impulse to pay closer attention to that will come directly through your senses. That "insight" is just showing you a possibility. That's all it really is. If you're in a negative mood, it could just be your present thoughts and feelings building on what's there. And, if that's the case, just observe those thoughts without judgement for now.

If you're in a positive mood, you might want to entertain or think more about a particular idea. If it's interesting, it might lead you into following up on it. At this point, one of your senses and your feelings will become more focused, so that you can take an appropriate step at the time. Any "insightful" thought or message will either contain something to avoid or something to do, so that a positive outcome can occur. That's all that's really happening there...

If our minds are open, a good idea will eventually find its way to us. Insight could be telling us to lock the door, take our keys, to call someone, or to grab an item before we leave. Or, it could nudge us to go

somewhere specific. It might even inspire you to create something that isn't here yet! These are simply thoughts with a little more feeling attached to them. So, when you're spending time in an enjoyable way, other possibilities and ideas will naturally arise.

In time, you'll learn how to recognize if it's just your imagination, or if it's a direct message that's important for you to follow. Often, the same message will come back to us more than once, if we put it away for a little while. And, that's usually how I test the ideas and insights I have. Sometimes, it's the next logical conclusion coming from how I already feel. And, not all of our thoughts need to be acted on. So, for now, recognize your thoughts and ideas from a more neutral or curious place. If one comes with a very positive, negative, or strong feeling attached to it, listen to those feelings. Explore them in your mind, act on them if you can, and see what happens...

For example, when I get an idea or a feeling that I follow up on, it usually comes from my stomach area. Meaning, the energy surge, along with the idea, starts somewhere – from there. It doesn't always happen this way, but when it does, 99% of the time – I listen. As long as the idea is not directly harmful to me or anyone else – I act on those ideas. Does it always lead me to something wonderful? Sometimes it does, and sometimes it doesn't! So, as you learn to follow your senses, your feelings, and your insights – you'll get better at it. Besides, working life out and enjoying our results is a life-long process. Trying to specifically tap heavily into your intuition isn't always going to take you to the perfect place. Why? Your everyday thoughts and feelings are also a direct part of your spirit, too. For now – look at “intuition” as very fine tuning, once you're in tune with yourself, and how you feel. So, see what thoughts and ideas come to you in the way that you would normally follow any idea, or impulse you have. Experiment a little bit. Being “right” all of the time is not a requirement to enjoy life, or to make things work. The goal is to grow in our understanding of how positive emotions and situations are created, so we can become a part of them more often. It all comes down to coming back to joy. So, can you see how all of our

senses and the ideas we're exploring are just ways that lead you into a positive experience?

There are so many positive things that we can do here. And, one choice is not going to make or break our lives, unless it's very harmful to us or someone else. Staying close to what makes us happy was the goal, all along. From there, other possibilities will develop. Once we're back on the path to enjoyment or safety, our free-will to make many different kinds of choices will come back to us. There is much more room here than we think...

However, if you're still really interested in intuition, my first recommendation is to check out a fascinating book called, "*Trust Your Vibes: Secret Tools for Six-Sensory Living*" by Sonia Choquette²⁰. Another good place to visit would be anything by Doreen Virtue or Shakti Gawain. Their writing and focus is intuition based, as well. They're all fantastic authors with a great message to share on this subject. Since these concepts are a little difficult to understand for the uninitiated, I've included a few different options to choose from. Simply choose the one – that speaks to you. (That's a great way to start using your intuitive capabilities.) In the meantime, if you have a dream or an impulse to do something positive – you should follow that, or at least look into it. This is showing you something that's possible for you to do!

During meditation, in dreams, or even in the spaces between our thoughts, something beneficial, new or exciting will make itself known. In cartoons, remember when a light bulb would appear over someone's head? Ahhah! (Wouldn't it be exciting if we had one of those appear every time a divine idea was inspired? Or, to tell exactly what kind of mood we were in?) We would probably pay much closer attention to those lights, right? Usually, the messages to pay attention to something come without bells, flashing lights, or loud whistles...However, a great inspiration will almost always follow with a feeling of joy, or certainty.

²⁰ Sonia Choquette, *Trust Your Vibes: Secret Tools for Six-Sensory Living* (California: Hay House, 2004).

Those positive feelings are telling you something that you can have faith and confidence in. And, that's why – you have them! When we're in a state of joy, we can uncover new ideas and information that we never thought of, before. When we're feeling good, we're already "in" spirit. (That's the spirit!) So, remember that "spirit" is already a part of everything that's here, including you. Having good ideas on how you can enjoy life is a part of the bigger picture that you're already in. And, when we're happy, we can see a little bit further ahead on the road to what's possible...

And, the ideas you have don't always need to be grand, complicated or expensive. Most of the progress we've made throughout history has been from small, beneficial changes to what's here. However, if you think you've got an incredible idea, by all means follow and develop it! You never know how much something you've discovered will do, until you put it into motion, or find a place for it. Just like the "idea" of enjoying our moments more often. Sometimes, it's the simplest ideas that can be the most life changing, if we use them. And remember, when you have an idea like this (especially if it's a big one), since it's coming through you, others might not be able to see or understand it, like you do. Everyone has their own insights on what works for them. Once you see that an idea is working for you, share it with those who might be interested. If not, if you see value in it, keep developing it on your own. Besides, I'm sure you have at least one person who's open to your wild ideas. And, make sure to be a good listener for theirs, too. Even if they're different, you'll both end up with ones that work – for you!

So, from now on, make enjoying your life's moments your first priority. Anything positive that's going to happen in the future, will most likely come out of what we're doing now, because that's where we are. And, if it's enjoyable, you'll want to stay there. Something different or unexpected could always come along in the future; but that's a surprise! Life always has some positive twists and turns for you to take and discover. However, to me, the best ideas are the ones we can begin to put into place, right now. And, that's why your senses are so close to you!

If you look a bit more closely at what's here or could be, you'll realize that the answers on how to enjoy life more often were with you, all along! Being "in-touch," or in a positive emotional place is the journey of our entire lives. So, let life guide you to the rest of your story, as you go along. The insights that you *really* need to discover will be there, when you need them most of all...

Since you've been using your eyes and your sense of touch to read this, why not choose another one, two or three to explore? Thinking about this will not only sharpen your senses, but it will remind you of what you love to do. Using our senses is the first step that we can take to bring positive energy back into our lives. Choosing how to do this is up to you. Right now, you have the choice to do more of what you enjoy, or to look deeper into the wide-world of possibilities that are here for you. It's time to experience your "senses" in a way that allows you to notice and feel good about them, as much as possible. So, pick something where you can single them out, and then – put them all together!

The Experiment:

Choose an activity where you can use all of your senses in some way. While you're there, take a few minutes to put your focus on each one. Can you see from doing this for a few minutes, just how important they are? That's why I had you go through these exercises, before. It was so that you could get re-acquainted with what's right there, with you. Now that you're friends again, why not use them actively and joyfully? From the moments that we can create together, to enjoying something alone, to appreciating what's all around us, this is how happiness and everything that we would like to become a part of – happens!

A Final Thought:

Hopefully, you can see just how important your senses are. You couldn't experience joy, without them. And, it's directly through using them that will make us realize their true value. So, how can you use them a little more each day to see life – in a whole new way?

C13: A New Lease on Life!

The Premise:

Now that you've experienced some of the positive emotions you were looking for, it's time to decide where to take the energy you've found! When we reconnect to our senses the next step is to look out into the world that's right in front of us. Now that your eyes and your feelings are connected, what do you see? What would you like to become a part of, more often? If you haven't made a decision yet, keep your eyes open, because something good is on its way to you!

In this part of your journey, your senses will fully come to life. From here, not only will you be able to see and experience your environment in a much more positive way, but everything will appear much crisper and clearer. Lines will be sharper, colors will be brighter, and even the sounds around you will become more defined. Even the simple things that you've seen many times before can become a whole new world; because you're seeing them now, as if for the first time. From this point of view, everything that you're a part of – with a little enthusiasm, can become quite a magical place for you to be in!

So, do you have any ideas about some things that you would like to see, do, or accomplish?

Once we start to feel better, the next decision will be to choose what we're going to do, with the time and energy we have. Even if you haven't figured out any long-term plans yet, thinking more about this will allow you to begin making plans for your next step, ahead. It's not important if your goals or choices are big or small; because even the little steps are leading you to some bigger ones. So, start – there!

Just like the conversations we have, we get more specific about something as we go along, and we do this everywhere else in our lives, too. Remembering this will give you more faith to look towards the future, as some new options will appear, with this change in your attitude. Keeping your spirits up more often, and getting more specific

about what you would like to see in your life, will bring those possibilities together...

And, whatever you choose to do from here (at least for now) is just for you. It could be something very simple. Since your attitude and your mind are open, those things will take on a greater significance. So, it doesn't really matter what those choices are, as long as you feel that they'll make you happy, and they are healthy for you. Your focus should just be on your positive emotions, and how you experience them – within yourself.

Any activity that you feel motivated about is a great place to start. This could be a new movie that's playing, eating a meal you enjoy, taking time to read a book, listening to your favorite song, or just having a cup of coffee or tea in a comfortable place. Or, you could just let your inspiration lead the way. It's your decision on what to do with your time. Another way to get closer to something that's even better for you is to make a decision, and then choose something even more specific for what you would like to do. Like the famous chef Emeril Lagasse always says, "Let's kick it up a notch!" Experiment, and see how close you can get to the perfect idea for you at the time. This is how we turn a good choice into a fantastic one. When you practice doing this more often, you'll start seeing even more opportunities everywhere you look. And, that's a big part of what makes life exciting, again. Now, that you're actually looking for even more possibilities to become happy...I'm going to keep this chapter short and sweet, so you'll have more time to think about what you would like to do, or to get prepared for a choice that you already know – will be a good one!

The Experiment:

For this experiment, you only have to answer one simple question. "What would I do right now, if I could?" When you're alone and you have a little time, start asking yourself this question. Look into how many things that you could actually do, if you wanted to. That's it. Making it easier to be happy is very good habit to get into. And, thinking

more about those possibilities will put you – right next to them...

If you feel your inspiration is calling you into a certain direction or activity – follow those messages. It could be something that you already enjoy, or it could be something unknown. It's the attitude you bring into these places, that changes how you feel for the better. And, for now, that's what counts. So, follow that tug of inspiration inside, and see – just where it takes you.

A Final Thought:

Being open to what's around us, allows us to feel more connected to our positive feelings, about life. When we combine this energy with something that we like to do, or look forward to doing, we'll naturally increase our energy levels. Once the "lift" happens, we can choose to think about even more ways to make ourselves happy, whenever we want. From here, we get to enjoy more of where we are now, and what's coming up – next!

C14: So...What's Next?

The Premise:

We make hundreds and even thousands of choices during the day. Some of these, we do out of habit. We can choose something that will make us happy, without thinking much about it, too. However, it's the choices that we spend a little more time on that make us feel our best. This is because we can actually feel good about the choice, before we take a step into it. This "little space" between where we are now, and where we could be – is where our greatest dreams are born.

You've been thinking for a little while about what you could actually be doing, if you wanted to do so. So, what's next? Hopefully, just thinking about this, allowed you to realize a few important things. That you always have the ability to see and imagine a little further beyond, what's there. One of the best ways to gain more energy, besides appreciating what's in front of us is to spend more time thinking about what our future could look like. Regardless of how near or far away those ideas are or how big, this is one of the greatest gifts we have: Our imagination. Every object, activity and man-made structure that we are now a part of, literally got here through this one gift. Everything you've ever seen, or will in the future came from a place inside of someone's mind. And, in that little space between their usual thoughts a new idea made itself, known...

Almost like a clean slate, we get to draw up plans for the future in as many different ways, as we can imagine. And, we all need something positive to think about, do, or plan on doing in the future. This allows happiness to keep moving along with us, just past where we are now. It's like paving a road, as we're walking on it. We move from one enjoyable activity to the next. And, our schedule doesn't need to be full. It just needs to be filled with enough things for us to enjoy, so that happiness can grow. Even if we're only adding-in one enjoyable thing to do, we can always find more ideas as we go along. When we follow through

with that, the cycle repeats. This might sound simple on the surface, but this is how our entire lives are built.

When our ideas are ones that make us happy and we choose to act on them, not only are we creating the life we wanted, but we're also becoming happier in the process. That's why we have ideas in the first place! In life, we imagine experiencing or being a part of something, and little by little, we make it possible. Eventually, that path becomes a road of increased joy that we can travel on. If you're thinking about getting involved with jewelry making perhaps, why not make a memory bracelet that includes a specific bead for every special experience you've had? My wife and I enjoyed making jewelry for many years, and it really brings back the wonder of being a kid, and putting new things together. And, speaking of being "young-at-heart," children are very good at doing two things that most adults struggle with. The first is seeing a possibility that they find interesting and exciting, and moving towards that, as soon as possible. (My cat Apollo must be a kid; he never waits – to go after anything he wants!)

As adults, we sometimes take what's here for granted. Not that we don't appreciate what's here, it's just already understood to us. Intellectually, we "think" we already know what something will do for us, emotionally. We've been down so many familiar paths that we often overlook what's right there – for us to do. So, our imagination – is a combination of three very simple things. The first is having our minds open; then our eyes. And, when an open mind meets the visible eye, those two points of possibility come together. That "flash" is us seeing what could possibly be here... Then, our motivation gets going, and we spring into action. As adults, it usually takes a lot more than something simple or familiar to make us see those possibilities. However, as kids, everything is new and exciting. So, try seeing what's already here – from this point-of-view. Or, you could also take two very common things and put them together. That's what creativity is all about! Just let your enthusiasm lead the way to even more options for you to enjoy!

When we go looking into what might be possible, we're often amazed by what was waiting for us. With this frame of mind, some surprising things can happen! And, that's how anything we find unbelievable was made. The greatest things that we see around us, started out with someone – just imagining a possibility. So, we all have an opportunity to take a step into the land of creativity, no matter who or where we are...

Looking at something marvelous or huge in stature can almost seem impossible. However, when we give ourselves permission to expand our insight, that's when we discover a new possibility! A new thought is just a step past where we are now, internally. And, it's literally the shortest distance for us to travel. We can even do this, while we're standing still! (Would you believe for some people that taking a step outside of what they know – even in their minds, can be just as frightening, as taking an actual step into the unknown?) Once we understand that it's only an "idea," we can begin to branch out to some different places, as well. And, for people who "invent" new products or business ideas, those people "live" on the edge of what's known, and they find what might be coming up next – thrilling! So, that's how this part of our thought process unfolds. Eventually, as we take more steps (inside or out), our ideas will develop, as we go along. Regardless of what those are, what's most important is how meaningful they are to us...

At this stage, happiness comes from understanding that we have a few options, and that we can follow through with them. For a lot of people, getting started or taking the first step is the hardest part. But, once you start thinking about your ideas, you'll want to become a part of them! That's why "thinking" more about what's here or could be is the most important step, of all. Without doing this, what would we have to choose from? So, put your focus on thoughts about something positive, even if it's not possible, right now. In time, you'll find yourself taking your first step. A thought eventually leads to a feeling and an action; so that's what's happening here, too...

If you're stuck on a few experiences that didn't turn out well, you've had

many more successes than failures, since you've started walking! As we get older, we sometimes forget how far we've come; and we get too comfortable with what's here. So, it's really not a matter of what's possible, as it is to entertaining some new ideas to think about. Your successful memories are also there in your mind, if you're looking for a little "reassurance" that you can venture out. And, you can always start off small with the ideas you have. However, once you've taken the first step in your mind, and then outside – you'll see that there's almost nothing to it!

And, this doesn't always mean that we need to be thinking about something even better to do. It just means that we were meant to have something good to look forward to. Even if we're just happy about being in the moment and seeing what happens, eventually we'll want to do something specific. That's why I had you spend time thinking about some simple things that you could look forward to doing. As I've said before, it's not important how "big" those plans are. What's important is how they make you feel. Since life is filled with so many moments and encounters, it's making the most of them that make us feel better. So, if you want to feel good, find something that interests you – and get started! Here, it's not really about success or failure. Those end results are still far away from you. This is about reaching for something a little past where you are, so you can feel a little more excited, than you were before...See the difference?

Now that you've made a few decisions on what you would like to do, have you set a time for it? It's important for your happiness, confidence and self-esteem to see your plans through. Even if you need to scale a great idea down a bit, do it! The confidence you'll find in the smaller steps will be there, when some bigger ideas arise. One small, positive step just leads to something better, remember?

The last part is being grateful about the experience you've had, as well as the people who helped you create it. Everyone who is working "there" made the experience happen. I hope this helps you to see whoever is in

front of you in a different light. We all make the world – what it is, and what it could be. And, that includes you, too! Now it’s up to you to see if you would like to do something familiar, or if you would like to try something different...

We always have the option to make whatever we’re doing, tailor-made for us. If a particular experience was positive, maybe you’ve found a new hobby, or even a new habit to get into. If that experience needed a little more of something, how can you bring that into it? Or, how can you season it a little better? Regardless of how you make something work better for you, you’re still closer to what you were looking for.

No matter what you decide to do, happiness comes from: making an enjoyable moment happen, realizing it’s good for you, and appreciating that you, and others made it possible. To give yourself another “lift,” look at some of the routine activities that you do to see how they’re bringing something good into your life. Creating a happier moment can come from our biggest ideas to the familiar things we do, every day. Once we realize this, we can appreciate what we’re already a part of, even more. Even if we’re dealing with some uncertain or stressful situations, the things that we enjoy are there to help us feel better. So, there’s always a worthwhile place to go – in times of stress, or when life is really looking up.

The Experiment:

For now, be happy that you’re giving yourself another chance to enjoy what’s here, as you’re starting to imagine where you would like to be in the future. This goes a long way towards building the happiness that you wanted to experience. And, considering those possibilities was actually your experiment. So, now that you’ve done your homework, you can relax and enjoy – thinking about them!

A Final Thought:

Once we’ve made the decision that we would like to be happier, and we’ve experimented a little by following through with our plans, it’s time

to reflect and enjoy what we've accomplished! A real step in any positive direction is sometimes the hardest thing to do. (It's not, but we've conditioned ourselves to "think" that it is...) So, by putting yourself in motion and seeing what this does for how you feel, you've traveled past those imaginary barriers. These little steps regularly, are all that it takes to make some of your biggest plans come true. As you go along, some new ideas will be there to meet you. They're just happier possibilities to imagine, until your future plans arrive. And, it's a fantastic way to spend your time!

Author's Note:

When I was very young, my mom always had music on in the house. It wasn't quite what I was into, but she really enjoyed it; and she was a very good dancer. I saw the joy that this gave her, and it really had an influence on me. When I got older, she told me that she always wanted to be a singer in a band...I had no idea! My dad also liked music, and she told me that he could clear out a dance floor in his younger years... Apparently, splits were no problem for him, at all. Needless to say, I was just as impressed by this, as I was the music.

As I grew, I started buying records of my own. Kiss was my biggest influence back then, and I played along on a little plastic "Kiss" guitar with their records. Many years later, I started playing drums and singing; and this is still something I really enjoy doing...

When I was around 15, I built a little tree house in my backyard. It was a small perch, just high up enough for me to get lost, and be alone with my Walkman. That was my "Sacred Space." I didn't like to read back then, but I took a few books up to finish summer reading for school. Well, thank you Mr. Bradbury. It wasn't until I read "Fahrenheit 451" that my life changed²¹. This began my lifelong love affair with reading. Like anything else, it only takes one good experience with something – and

²¹ Ray Bradbury, *Fahrenheit 451*, 60th Anniversary ed. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2013).

that's it! To get myself going at around age 20, Peter McWilliams' "Do It! Let's Get Off Our Buts" was my first, real big step into the self-help world²². To this day, I've yet to find a better book to get motivated. In my opinion, he is the most simple and straightforward self-help writer of all time. Every page is literally packed with "get up and go." So, if you feel you need a push with something specific, beyond what's here – look no further...

Now, I spend much more time writing than I do reading; but with a little persistence, you can add something beneficial to the world's biggest bookshelf. Even if you're the only one who sees it, what a pleasure this is. If you need some guidance with writing, I've included two books that have helped me the most, below...^{23 24} Although, just like anything else, the best way to begin – is to begin.

I hope my backstory on discovering things that I enjoy most of all, will inspire you to think more about something that's worthwhile to you. Especially, if you haven't discovered what that is, just yet. Like me, it could be a few different things. As Joseph Campbell said, and it's something he learned from Swiss psychiatrist Carl Jung, "Look to what you enjoyed when you were young²⁵." It might not be the path that you want to walk on full-time, but there will be some very important clues there, for sure. As children, we were interested in something without thinking about it; we simply let our curiosity lead the way. It's never too late to start – having a healthy curiosity, again. Like turning over a rock in our minds to see what's there, at the very least, there will be nothing under there that's real or alive to bug you...As adults, only magic – will be found here!

²² Peter McWilliams, *Do It! Let's Get Off Our Buts* (California: Prelude Press, 1991).

²³ Steven Taylor Goldsberry, *The Writer's Book of Wisdom: 101 Rules for Mastering Your Craft* (Cincinnati: Writer's Digest Books, 2005).

²⁴ Arielle Eckstut and David Henry Sterry, *The Essential Guide to Getting Your Book Published* (New York: Workman Publishing, 2010).

²⁵ Campbell, *The Power of Myth*, 154-155.

C15: How, What, When, Where, and Why: Do You Think?

The Premise:

Although the majority of our thoughts follow patterns based on our history – what we like, our habits, and our plans for the future... We all have the ability to choose what we're going to think about and focus on. In a way, you could say that our mind works just like our eyes. We can choose to look at whatever we want that's around us. So, our eyes and our mind can go wherever we want them to go. When we decide to think in a more positive way, not only do we begin to feel better (since our biology follows our thoughts and emotions), but we are also re-wiring our brain to be able to stay on this enjoyable path, more often. Just like the physical steps we take, a good thought leads to many more of them; and our actions become more productive here, as well. When we see that what we are involved with is working, the thought-emotion-action loop comes full circle, and we're back to square one, but in a more positive place. That's the upward spiral we often hear about. This refers to the direction our energy is traveling in. And, since we're directly connected to our energy, that's where we're headed, too. As we continue upwards more often on a happier path, that's how we make our life's moments and our feelings, so much closer to what we would like them to be!

When we were young, our minds were open to whatever was surrounding us, and we responded directly to that, emotionally. As we grow and develop an awareness of ourselves and our ability to “think,” our brain is following our actions and whatever we are thinking about. In time, this forms how we think about ourselves, other people, and the world around us. If most of the experiences we've had were positive, that's how we “think” the next ones will be, too. Why? Because the last experience we've had, puts our mind and body into a certain position. In other words, we're left with exactly what happened there. Like a camera records the image that's in front of it, our experiences are doing the same thing in our minds. That's where the word impression comes from. Our moments are literally shaping who we are, how we feel, and the direction

we're traveling in. It's really all the same step! And, from here, we view what's coming up, from our last point of view. Of course, we can work to re-shape how we're thinking, but this takes more work and energy from us – than it does to simply create a positive moment for ourselves, right now.

And, it doesn't have to be perfect. We're simply making an experience turn out well, so that we feel good about it. That's it! And, this gives us a little more breathing room, too. When some situations turn out in an unexpected way, we'll have more energy to deal with those moments, successfully. Besides, we all get closer to the idea of relative perfection in everything, as we go along. If our moments turn out good regularly, we just keep growing "up" from there. And, this is really where faith and confidence come from. The more we notice that what we're doing is working, our emotions and our thoughts will begin to follow *our* lead. And, that's where the unseen part of faith comes into the picture. In my experience, when what we're involved with is manageable most of the time, this actually gives us more faith in what's yet to be seen. The visible and invisible parts of our faith are also connected. So, what's known gives us the ability to directly work with what's there. And, when we do, we'll have more faith that we'll be able to keep on enjoying what's ahead of us, too.

Just like the feedback loop pattern that we have between our mind and our eyes, faith was always supposed to come more from what we're doing, right now – than anywhere else. This is because when we're engaged in a moment that's working, what we see on the outside, and what we feel on the inside – are the same. There is a real, biological, tangible harmony – present. And again, this doesn't require or need perfection for us to have some. Faith means that we can see progress in what we're doing. Ironically, when we take more steps in a positive way, we're also setting up our body to produce even more favorable results in the future, too. This is a progression. So, see how those two ends connect? In my view, faith comes from preparing ourselves from a standstill. From here, we're able to understand "why" our actions are

important, what the desired outcome is, and then we put ourselves into action to create that outcome. Or, at least, close to where we wanted to be. (In this case, it might be easier to imagine that our body, our feelings and our goal are all connected, and we're just steering ourselves in that direction.)

So, making our next experience a positive one can happen quite easily, especially in the simple moves we make every day. When we understand how that's happening, if we need to do something more complicated, the pathways in our mind that lead to our successful steps are already set, in place. In essence, we're always programming ourselves for health, happiness and success in everything we do. And, this all starts from thinking about what we're going to do now in a positive way. Luckily, taking it one step or experience at a time is the smallest measure to put our attention on. So, that's where our focus should be. Then, we can put more of our steps together! Does it help you to know more about how our thoughts, words, actions and our moments are connected and unfolding?

The last time you had a great moment with someone, what was happening? What were you talking about, what were you doing, and what was the overall mood of your emotions? The subject matter and how you related to each other probably made it an enjoyable experience. So, if you think about this example, you'll see that it wasn't so much about you, them, or even where you were. It was about the qualities of the energy or the emotions that you were sharing together. It was simply an enjoyable moment, and both of you made it that way. So, if we know how that's happening, we can make at least 80% of our experiences together, turn out the same way. We just need to put those positive ingredients – in there! And, that energy is felt by both of us: 100%.

If we've had a lot of negative experiences, sometimes we can think that our future ones will turn out the same way. Every experience is new; so we have a little room to do something different. To create something better, we can start-off on a more positive note, or if it's with the same

person perhaps, we can see what that past experience needed to turn out in a more positive way. If it's a work project, think of what that could have used to turn out a bit better. So, these are our two main areas of focus, but they cover almost all of our situations. And, that's all you'll need to remember for now...Our emotions, and what we're logistically trying to do. Now, put those two main positive ingredients into your next experience together! Go back to the beginning – one step, or one experience at a time. That's how we get back on track to creating happiness, again. When we've been in a negative place for a while, it takes more than a few positive experiences to completely change the way we feel. That's why it's important for all of us to do our best to begin the next moment we have – alone and with each other, on a positive note. Not only do we begin to feel better, but the little space between our experiences allows us to get ready for the next one; so we can see what that might need to turn out well!

So, what we choose to put into our next experience together will be shaping how we feel, and what we think about. And, that's why you've heard so much about positive thinking. It's why "*Think and Grow Rich*" by Napoleon Hill, has been relevant for so long. It's the very first important step that leads to our life's moments turning out well; and from there, it yields much success in what we're working on, too²⁶. Then, that makes us feel even better, and so on. I think you can begin to see where all of this is going now. And, we're all looking for this result in one way or another, so that we can feel good about it. (One step at a time, remember?)

Besides making us feel good, thoughts help us to choose our words; which like thoughts, also carry emotions. The words we use (or the emotions behind them), are helping us to shape what our experiences are made of. Our thoughts and words are creating what's happening there, in the same way that we watch a movie scene develop. But, we're the actors and the directors of what's going on. And, we're also the

²⁶ Napoleon Hill, *Think and Grow Rich* (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher / Penguin, 2005), 232-233.

audience, too! (Amazing, right?) So, understanding that we all have an impact on how we feel together in “our” scene, allows us to see more of how our positive moments happen. A thought leads to a few words, which leads to an emotion, followed by an action we take, and this all rolls together to make our moments turn out in a certain way. And, this comes back to how we feel. (See the loop, again?) Then, we just keep going from there. So, if you’d like to feel better and be involved with more positive situations in your life, beginning to build happier moments together – is where it all begins. And, it’s very easy to do, once we understand that we *both* wanted to feel good – here!

Sometimes when we want to feel better, we think that improving different parts of our lives will work to bring us “up.” While this can help us feel good individually, it’s the positive moments we have together regularly that make the biggest impact. And, when we feel better, we naturally make better choices, too. So, eventually, this changes not just one part of our lives for the better, but all of them. See how energy is just moving through us into those places? Since we spend so much time with others, this is directly effecting what we can do in other parts of our lives, too. When our energy is “up,” all of the other steps that we would like to make become easier; because we have more energy to spare. And, in our positive moments together, that’s what the “boost” is for. Not just for feeling good then, but so that we can take this energy into the other parts of our lives, too. It makes our time enjoyable now, which brings us even closer to everything else that we wanted to do, happily. See that? (Get – along.) It’s a very accurate description of what’s happening or not, in our moments. One positive experience now, moves us into – a happier future. And, feeling good naturally motivates us to improve the quality of our lives in many other ways, too. So, I hope following this “train of thought” makes perfect sense now! As our life’s moments become more enjoyable, they change everything – the way we see ourselves, other people, and the entire world all around us... Which keeps energy moving right along, with us. (There are a lot of other beneficial connections happening inside us below the surface, when we’re enjoying our time, too.)

Of course, we can put our focus on some specific things that we would like to do for enjoyment, as well as reaching our goals. But, if we're looking for individual motivation, we can find it in the moments we have together, as well. That's what our meaningful conversations do! Our positive moments together are the easiest way to begin increasing our energy and how we feel, because we have so many encounters during the day. Our positive moments are literally free to create, and it's where we feel emotions in very close to real-time. (In a ¼ of a second remember?) So, no matter what we're involved with, to feel better, *we* can always start right where we are now. This works if we want to fix something, improve a situation, or if we just want to keep on being happy. An enjoyable moment, literally works – for everything!

Understanding what our thoughts and words do for us emotionally and physically is quite a new idea. Long before we had tests to measure what's happening there, values were almost always spoken about. Those ideas go back thousands of years. Imagine that? So, to understand them a little closer to home, a “value” equals what a moment will become, and how we'll feel about it. Morals have no other purpose or function, other than to create a positive outcome. They are 100% applicable to what we're doing – even though we love to philosophize, about them! Since where we are now is the setting, that's where those values were meant to take place, so that a positive outcome could keep on happening. And, although we've discussed these ideas many times before...

It has taken us thousands of years and a lot of pain to figure out, how our words and our thoughts combined (our emotions expressed), create the moments we have. But as you've noticed, it doesn't take that long to see what they're doing; as we have many positive and negative moments during the day. Regardless of what our past looks like, in the moment that we begin thinking and speaking to each other in a more positive way – all of our past history is being re-written, into a present happier form. (This goes for everything.) We're actually re-wiring ourselves, like before our hurts – took place. We are restoring ourselves back – closer to our original, healthier position. (Wow, right?!) It's been hard to believe

this, because we think it takes so much longer to “change” our lives. When everything we’re a physical part of now, came from one repeated experience that’s been added together, over a certain period of time. So, we only need to take a single, positive step forward right now to begin changing our current circumstances, and how we feel about them.

Maybe you’re starting to realize that the messages of the most important people in history, we’re telling us the *exact* same thing, about how we relate to each other. And, that wasn’t to stop any individual from succeeding, at all. They were only trying to steer us away from pain and misery, so that we could be happier. Even if that only means taking a very small step in a positive direction. And, once we do, the results of those morals – are directly for us. I believe this certainly puts those much older messages to good use, right where we are. Once we understand the present day context for them, we’ll be able to see the value – in those “values!”

So, now that you have plenty of ways of looking at “how, what, when, where, and why” we think...What would you like to think about, more often? If you find a thought or a subject matter that you enjoy, could you think about it for a few minutes?

Getting into the habit of putting your focus on where you want it to go, allows you to enjoy your moments, more often. Our thoughts and words are always taking us into a certain direction emotionally, either up or down²⁷. And, it’s where our thoughts and words are taking us emotionally, that logistically changes “how” our moments will turn out. It’s a silly example, but you might have heard someone say, “Don’t go there!” Instead, why not say, “Let’s go here!” in our conversations? We are the ones choosing where to go. So, let’s go to a place where it feels good to be “there.” (“Wherever you go; that’s where you are!”) Consider a direction, and see what happens with how you feel. Since it has taken a long time to figure this out (from start-to-finish), that’s why it’s been

²⁷ Walter M. Germain, *The Magic Power of Your Mind* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1956), 132.

difficult to have happier moments, or to change our thoughts, too. Now, we're putting our thoughts, words and actions "together" in the moments we have. And, those literally are – the moments of our lives. (No added pressure or stress with understanding this; it's just for a little positive reinforcement – and that's all!)

To make it easier, think of your thoughts as what you have to choose from to make your next experience possible. However, it's what we say and do – that creates our moments, and how we feel about them. So, trying to change our thoughts is just a part of this. Let me explain how this works...It's our actual physical, real moments and encounters together that make up what we think about, most often. When we make our moments a little more positive for each other, not only will we feel better, but that's what we'll have to think and talk about, more often. This links our moments together. See how one experience is leading us to another one? It's all the same step, we're just repeating it over and over, again. Now, how would our lives look if most of our experiences together were positive? We'd be talking about those more, which only causes more of them to happen! See the wheel, again? When we take care of the moment we're in, everything that happens is just following our lead, since energy is always moving with us. By doing this, we're breaking the chains from our unhappy past, and we're jumping into the positive energy that's always been here. And with it, we're causing a happier moment to take its place. Since we spend more time with others, that's where the majority of our thoughts and ideas are coming from. And, we're making those happen...That's all there is to it!

Even though we share most of our moments together, we all have our own plans and experiences that we would like to have. As long as we're taking our thoughts, words and actions to a more positive place together, this is also strengthening who we are as individuals. This allows us to live happily together, while having our own ideas at the same time. I believe this is the emotional freedom we've been looking for; instead of having to "fight" to agree on everything! We have plenty of positive things to share about life, even though we might see certain things in a

different way. So, being a bit different and the same is already a part of life's plan. But, since being happy is something that we're all looking for – there you go! Sometimes this might be all that we have in common. But, it also means, we'll have a common place to start from...

Once you have a positive moment with someone, you'll see that all you're left with is a positive feeling about the experience. That's really all we were looking for. Everything we specifically desire to do in our own lives, usually happens outside of the daily moments that we share. Knowing this might help you to make those positive moments happen, a lot easier! Wasn't it the positive attitude you had together that made the difference between – an enjoyable experience, or not? Now you *know why* having a positive attitude is so important for building happiness, and the positive emotions we were looking for. We're putting positive energy into our encounters, so that we're both left with a happy experience. And, that's it. (Imagine that?) So, what's all of the "fuss" about? Everything about us individually, stays the same. We're just in a happier place now. However, from here – both of our lives will begin to grow.

If you're in a conversation and something comes up that's different from how you feel, if you understand what that emotion feels like, it will be much easier to listen. People don't always want you to agree with everything they say... They just want to be heard and understood. That's compassion. It works for creating a good moment, and being there sometimes, when one isn't. So, it isn't the end of the world when our moments take a turn; it's only a few moments... Then, you can take the conversation to a much better place together. After an interaction like this, for an instant "boost," always try to end it – on a positive note. That way, you can be there for each other, and get back to joy at the same time. Once people understand that we can get right to the good stuff – and stay there more often, it won't take long before everyone – jumps in!

Besides, having a different opinion about something specific doesn't change what you're doing together in the moment. Once we make enjoyment our first priority, whatever differences we have will become

secondary; since we're focused on the same positive goal. Some people think that we have to be the "same" to get along. When, that's putting the cart before the horse; and that's why this approach won't work. We're not the same, but we all – want to feel good. So, there's no sense in trying to change each other's mind about anything, except what you're doing together, happily. That's always the goal. And, agreeing on everything to do this isn't required! If you need a good example to show both sides of what I'm talking about here, have you ever had an outing – like this?

Imagine if everyone argued before they sat down in a restaurant about what "they" were going to eat. While the arguing is getting louder, the waiter or waitress comes over and says, "Excuse me, but I couldn't help overhearing...What's all the fighting about?" "Well, we can't all agree on what we want to have." And they reply, "Why don't you order what you want, and let everyone else choose – what they like? We have about 15 specials on the menu. Besides, you don't have to eat – the same thing! That's why we have individual menus. It's so everyone can choose something that they enjoy; but you can still enjoy eating what you like – together!" I come from an Italian family on both sides (I know, I know), so I have many, many years of experience having this conversation... However, this new and improved "eat and let eat" approach works for everything, so that we can enjoy our time together – regardless of what we like! Maybe that's something we can all, agree on? (Thanks to Neale Donald Walsch for the perfect example that highlights how most of my family dinners have been!)

So, you can create harmony between you by trying to change everyone's mind to match yours, or you can have the thoughts you want, by letting people have theirs, too. It's that simple and easy. Which one takes more work? When you know how to make your time together a little more enjoyable for both of you, you can always put your ideas together to create – an even better one! That's why chemistry works in the way it does. It puts two separate things together to become an even greater whole. And, that's another reason why we're all here together. We each

have a viewpoint on how we can make life more interesting and enjoyable. When we look at it this way, it's just like putting a great recipe together. A little bit of this, and some of that: Viola – there we have it! And, by the way, the chemistry example only works, because each one of those elements were open (receptive) to the idea of putting themselves together to create something, even better. In doing so, they achieve a fully balanced level of energy²⁸. That's the idea behind any “bond” we have in our relationships. And, since everything is made of chemistry... I'm sure you can see where the idea of sharing, joining or combining happily, comes from!

As you go along with some of these suggestions, it will be much easier to see what you want to be involved with. Too much stress, conflict and friction puts our energy into a negative and clouded state. And, we can't see very much of what's enjoyable – from there! So, how we choose to spend our time will help us to create the kind of positive moments we wanted to have. Since what we're doing influences what we think about, I hope you're beginning to see why our thoughts, actions and feelings are connected to each other. That's why I had you think more about what's important to you. If you know more about that, you can talk about it more often, which will make you happy. Learning more and asking questions about what's important to others, will give you both something good to talk about! And, if you enjoy those things, you can spend more time there, too. When we put all of this together, it simply means that we'll be happier much more often! And, that was the goal all along, no matter what we decide to do or eat, now and in the future...

Regardless of our future plans, our environment is the largest “part” of what we have to work with to make our happier moments, possible. When we understand that the environment is giving all of us the opportunity to experience life in a positive way, we can see it in the way it was intended...Splendid!

²⁸ John T. Moore, EdD, *Chemistry for dummies*, 2nd ed. (New Jersey: Wiley Publishing, 2011), 216.

When we take a moment to realize all that it does to make us happy, we'll feel so much better about ourselves, our plans, other people, and what we can accomplish together to make life an enjoyable place to live! That's why our thoughts, words, actions, our positive moments together, and our environment are so important...In them – is where happiness, begins and ends. So, we all have a way and a place to build happiness easily, no matter where we are, right now.

The Experiment:

For this one, set aside ten minutes to discuss some of your brand new plans and ideas with a good friend, your significant other, or your spouse. Take turns. I had you do a similar experiment before, but practice makes perfect. Besides, seeing how much of a difference our positive conversations and plans can mean to us is always something we'll want to remember, think about, and even talk about, too...

Our thoughts, expressed and shared as words, take our feelings and our ideas out into our moments. They let us know what's important, so that we can make those ideas a part of our lives. That's why I had you combine them again in this experiment. Not only will we enjoy more of the moments we're involved with, but what we talk about most of the time, becomes the life we're living. That's why our thoughts and words are so important to our happiness. If they're positive, they give us the motivation and the clarity we need to take our next step forward. And, with that, I wish you as many positive thoughts, ideas and plans as you can imagine. Have fun with them...That's exactly what they're for.

A Final Thought:

When we realize that we can choose the thoughts and words that will make us feel happier about being together, and we share them, we'll feel better – immediately. Our emotions only take about a 1/4 of a second to be felt in our body, so there's no time like the present to begin making ourselves – happy to be here!

How Our Hearts Work – Together:

Before we move on, I would like to explain a little more about how our hearts work – together. Since we’re getting to the “heart of the matter” with how we relate, I thought it would be very important to consider this, before our happier moments begin. This should clear up any misunderstandings of how we share and exchange positive energy, and why...As there is certainly something missing – from the “idea” of getting along here, easily. If not, the world would probably be in a much different place, right now. I happen to think that just one particular solution will put us exactly where we wanted to be; as far as happiness is concerned. But, in order for us to bridge what seems like a very large “gap” between us, we have to understand where the disconnection came from, and why this will work to fill in that space. And, once we take the step together, joy will be found – right where we are.

Humanity has always been one step away – from where it really wants to be. This goes for us collectively, and individually. We’re all seeking to be happy in our own way. And, most of us have been able to do this to some extent. So, how do we keep that going, more often? The solution has literally been here for thousands of years. Actually – billions. (I’ll get to that later in another chapter.) It’s *our* final step to make before joy sets in here, long-term. And, the space between here and there is only filled with one of our biggest concerns. We’re individuals, but how do we successfully relate to each other without losing: Our joy, our individuality, our preferences, our beliefs – you name it?!

Collectively, we’re not exactly sure where that line is – that defines us, and who we are, individually. We initially thought that since we’re separate in our physical bodies, then, “our” joy must be separate, too. And, we’re still clinging to that outdated idea, so that we can maintain what we “think” is – just ours. When, everything that we have individually – was made possible, by all of us together. So, how do we get to have both? How do we stay true to who we are, while getting along with each other? That’s the only question we don’t know how to fully answer – yet. But, if our biggest concern is taken care of, then – there will be nothing in the way of the happiness that we wanted to have

for ourselves, while also being together. It all comes down to this. So, let's take a look at this concern to realize that what we were afraid of losing – wasn't something that we really needed to “worry” about losing, at all! Figuring this out was the only problem that we needed solve, so that happiness – could take its place.

As far as feeling good about something, we feel positive emotions primarily through our heart. Our heart is literally the center – where all of our biological computing takes place. Our nervous system and our brain are involved, of course; but we're discovering that our hearts have even more electrical activity, than our brains do ²⁹. If we think about it, that makes sense, right? Isn't our heart the most important organ we have? Since we're dealing with energy (in it) that can't be seen, let's think about it, like this...The energy that's passing through there, isn't just a charge. It also contains information. It includes every piece of data as far as *our* interactions are concerned. When this energy and information gets processed, it travels to the conscious side of our brain, so that we can interpret those signals in both feelings and thoughts, about what's happening. Our senses are also helping out with this task, too. Since energy contains information regarding our safety *and* our enjoyment long-term, that's why we have many more means of interpreting and processing information, than just one avenue! Our heart physically has four chambers; but emotionally, it's only made-up of two sides: What's coming in – and what's going out. As far as our hearts and our feelings are concerned to feel as complete as we possibly can, energy has to pass back and forth between both sides of it (like circulation), for anything lasting to be remembered or felt.

Trying to be selfish, means you're only concerned about what's coming – in. (One-sided.) And, when you're really only concerned about you – there's simply not enough energy, so that you have “enough” to take care of someone else, too. That's what the whole “selfish” idea means. (If you have plenty of something that's needed or wanted, wouldn't there be

²⁹ Gregg Braden, “Heart and Brain Coherence,” *You Tube*, May 27, 2020, <https://youtu.be/D-wSi8eryPQ>.

enough, for more than just you?) While only focusing on yourself appears to look good from your perspective, it's really only filling-up about a third of what's possible for you to have, as far as positive energy goes.

When something is coming in – in order for us to get the most out of that for ourselves, we have to recognize what it is, and who sent it. Like a present that's wrapped up nicely, to gain something from what's coming in, it's not enough just to “have it.” Understanding what it is, what effort was put into that by another person, and appreciating that gesture towards you – makes you feel as good as you possibly can – on the “in” side. (Think of getting a birthday present from someone. Everything that's there, including how you feel about what's between you, goes into what that means and how it feels...That's – the whole package!)

When you “receive” a positive message, your mind and body naturally want to move your energy “out” side to express – what it means. In essence, the recognition of it – turns and nudges energy, back out. And, that's what the “thanks” is for. It recognized, what just happened – for you! When you show others that you received something from them, your energy moved from the “in” side” to the “out” side of your heart. Rather than losing energy for yourself here, it means that both sides of your heart have been filled-up. When another person notices that something they did had a positive effect, the “in and out” sides of their heart have been filled-up, too! (See – what we made happen together?) That's where *our* joy is coming from. We did it. We can do this. And, joy is possible to have here. See how our emotions, and the “proof” of what we achieved successfully; has restored our faith, and our faith in each other? And, you only have to experience *this once* to see what's happening from both sides. Once a positive connection is established, we just keep on making “that” happen. From here, enjoyment won't take much effort or anything away from us, because the positive energy we're creating is coming right back – to both of us. It's also growing between us at the same time, too. It's getting multiplied in the process of feeling, exchanging, and creating it. We're simply putting the energy that we

have together – to make *even more* of it. So, even though we're dealing with energy, the misunderstanding of what's happening here – was a simple math problem. We didn't realize that energy was being “multiplied” in the process of putting it together – for both of us. And, this happens during the most important things that could ever happen between us, down to the smallest of gestures. Even a shared smile – does the same thing!

So, if you're trying to grow your energy to its highest peak, only looking at what's coming “in” is only about a third of what could actually be created. People have been trying to only look at “their side” for thousands of years; when the ability for us to have even more – without a conflict, fight, or even worrying about our part of it, has always been here. We simply didn't realize that seeing both sides of how happiness is being created between us, expands and grows what's there: *For both of us*. In the “need” for just seeing our side of it – eventually, this leads us into having even less. Why? Because joy is something that's being created – from more than just “one” side. And, cutting out half of the process, gives “us” even less to be happy about. One side of this positive equation couldn't possibly be full enough to make-up for what's missing – on the other side. That's why we all need and desire love; which is energy that's coming in from the outside, and the inside.

The two sides of our heart (in and out) have always made us – whole. And, as far as energy goes, it was always responsible for taking care of – both of us. So, how we're dividing energy up and who that goes to (in our mind) is where the real issue between us, comes from. Energy doesn't just stay here, or – over there! It's always moving, but it gets multiplied on the inside of us, when we put it into motion in a positive way when we're alone, and between us. We're always standing on both sides of the same happiness coin. And, since we're always in the vicinity of other people, and we have so many interactions together, *life had to make a way* – to make *our* equation work. Not just for one side or the other (because that would defeat the purpose), but so that we could both be happy! So, it came up with a plan. Let's make it, so that in order for

us to be and stay happy – individually and together, we’re both going to have to add something in to make that happen. This way, not only will more joy be created, but there will be no missing pieces of the puzzle. Everyone has a very important role to play in making this happen. In a way, you could call that job or role – security!

No matter how long we’re here, and no matter what we’re doing, we always have something meaningful for us – to do... Which is to create joy for ourselves, *and* those around us. Those are the only two positions here to fill, and ironically, it happens to and for both of us, when we’re together at the same time. What a perfect equation and solution. And, every possible job description or task only fills that empty space in – with something that’s needed for you, and everyone else. Underneath of those particular roles, we’re also putting joy into the space of where we are now. Happiness is already included here – no matter how we “divide” our definitions up. So, did you notice after reading a few chapters on your senses, that everything we have on us, including how our hearts work, were created to make this pleasant exchange between us – possible?

The other side of misunderstanding how energy works – comes from “only” focusing on what you’re putting out for other people. It feels wonderful to be kind and generous to others, but love doesn’t completely work in just this direction, either! From this point of view, we’re neglecting the part of love that we need to give to ourselves. So, do as much as you would like for other people; but you also need to include yourself in those loving gestures, too. Part of your heart fills-up when you experience what this does for others. And, it’s the same way when others do something nice for you. It feels fabulous to be totally unselfish, and to do something great for someone else. But, for happiness to occur from every possible angle long-term, you have to include yourself, too. That means, when you’re alone – you give the same consideration and love to yourself, that you would you extend to another person. This way, you’re refreshing both sides of your heart – when you’re with someone, and when you’re by yourself. And, what we do together that’s enjoyable

for both of us...Completes two sides of the same circle. Two people, but three points to our story. Yours, mine, and what's between us. That mid-point where we intersect is "our" relationship...Not just to other people – but to everything that's here, with us. And, if we look close enough, everything outside of us is adding to what we have – for ourselves, as well.

If you notice, during any positive interaction we're both givers and receivers of energy; and it gives both of us, exactly what we were looking to feel good about. The positive memory we take with us, also changes: our thoughts, how we feel, and what we do because of that. We're literally changing what's happening everywhere – for the better, in our enjoyable moments. Energy stretches out far beyond us, and it mixes with all of the other energy waves, around it. That's our collective energy. Then, we begin at the top of the circle again where we are, but we have more energy this time around, after a positive experience has taken place. And, that's really where our incentive is...We're giving ourselves and each other – something to feel good about!

This "together" method of producing energy or enjoyment works the same way long-term with everything else we're involved with, too. Sometimes, we put that energy into motion, and other times, someone else gets it going. (Think of how our conversations work, back and forth.) But, once it's in motion, it's there for both of us. So, energy follows the exact same patterns, as we do. And, since we've been having positive moments all along, thousands of times (and more), we just didn't realize all of this was happening – during them! And, there's no need to worry about all of the connections that energy makes. Just – ours. Energy takes it from there to affect everything else in a positive way. We just didn't understand before how easy this process is, how much it's doing for us, and how much we gain from this simple, joyful "back and forth" exchange of energy, between us. And, that's the only real issue, we've ever had. One big problem, and one bigger solution. In actuality, it's only a thought away from our present, collective state of mind...Imagine that?!

When we're having a positive moment together – the energy around our individual bodies are forming a larger circle of energy that's surrounding both of us. (I actually learned about our energy field in nursing school. That's how Reiki and other forms of energy work came about.) Energy was here, long before we got here, of course. However, it's what we put into the circle of energy that's here (positive or negative), that's changing the energy, around us. And, if it's positive, that's how “we” feel about it on the inside. It's just feedback: Cause and effect. If you look carefully, everything in our environment has been placed to support our inner happiness, too. So, eventually, no one has to go without what they needed or wanted to be completely happy here, including you. But how does this much abundance work?

There's literally more energy here – than all of us put together, no matter how many of us are here. Our physical bodies are only so big. Even if every single cell was completely full of as much energy as possible, there is still way more energy and space – all around us. That's why we never had to worry about it being here just for ourselves, or someone else...Loving or positive energy activates the inside and outside of us completely; once we put it into motion. And, it replenishes and holds everything that's here with us together, too. We just have to do our part with enjoying and respecting what's physically here, with us. This keeps the collective cycle of energy moving in a positive direction. And, just like us, every piece of individual energy has a direct connection to everything else that's around it. That's “our” relationship; and it will always feel good to be happy here: *Together*.

So, we never had to be selfish, just for others, or to be destructive to anything outside of us – to have what we *really wanted* for ourselves. There you have it. Love leaves nothing good out of the equation for both of us...It's always been a complete, literally “good for everything” source of life, and our happiness in it. And, like radio host Paul Harvey used to say, “And, now you know – the rest of the story!”

Author's Note:

Before we move on, I just wanted to say that this entire chapter and the ideas expressed here, especially the piece about how our hearts can work “together,” has essentially been written by every writer – since the dawn of humankind. Every tale that has ever been told, showcases only one of two possibilities. We’re either getting along to create something beneficial, or we’re at “odds” with each other; eventually diminishing our own possibilities for happiness. So, although the concepts might sound or seem “fresh and new” to you, it’s the same story; being repeated over and over again, throughout history...

The only saving grace however, is that we’re all slowly beginning to understand “how much” there is for all of us to lose, if we leave those two universal pieces of the puzzle (our hearts) disconnected from each other. Just maybe now that science is catching up to those very old stories and what they’ve been trying to tell us... We might actually have a chance to be happy here; now that we know it’s possible, and how to go about making it happen...

And, now that you know what’s been at the “heart” of everything here – about how life works, and how we can continue to make it work for us together... It’s about time to take a much closer look at our environment – where our lives and our relationships, take place. The same philosophy applies here, too. Everything on this planet is here for our enjoyment and our pleasure; but – it’s also here for its own survival and enjoyment, as well. There’s no conflict of interest – in these two ideas. As long as we keep both sides in mind – at the pivot point where “our” relationship comes together, everything on this planet will continue to thrive – and give life to itself, and to us, as well. And, there’s no personal “loss” of energy and happiness in taking care of what’s all around us, and between us. Those enjoyable feelings are only being multiplied in the process... We were meant – to be together here, happily.

C16: Our Environment: The World – Around Us.

The Premise:

Everything that we can do, want or need for our entire lifetime – has already been given to us on this planet. Like anything else we have, to enjoy it fully we need to appreciate it, and take care of it. And, to do that, we need to take a very good look at what it's giving to us. When we do this even in small ways, not only do we become happier, but we're keeping it here, so that it can continue to give life to everything we see around us – including us! A positive or kind gesture affects us, just as much as everything else that's here. Energy is always circulating in, around, and through us all. Underneath of the physical world that we see, energy is helping to keep everything we have in its place. When we take a positive step, the same reaction or affect is happening directly to the energy that we are all a part of. Almost in the same way that a chain reaction occurs in our body, the same thing is happening on the outside of us, too. So, any positive step that we take, benefits us: emotionally, physically, psychologically, socially and environmentally, simultaneously. That's how powerful positive energy is. And, that's how much of an influence we have on it to create the positive conditions we desired to become a part of, together!

Right now there are at least 1 trillion living organisms that surround us at all times. Each one of these is living out their lives, in just the same way you are. As we have our own personal view of life that we see from behind our eyes, it's the same for them, too. Can you imagine how much thought, care, energy and attention went into the putting “all” of these living pieces together, successfully? Not only are they put together, but they're put together in a way, where each one – helps the other one to live. And, it's the same for us, too. Everything that's here on this planet is giving life – to itself, and something else at the same time³⁰. So, can you see from just a few examples, how important we are to each other's

³⁰ Sadhguru, “Our Environment is Our Life,” *You Tube*, June 5, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6DTJ5h3vx6o>.

lives? Anything that you could ever have and see was provided for you, by the entire world around you. Everything we dream about doing happens here on this planet. So, like we did with our thoughts, our eyes and our conversations, when we get more involved with what's around us, only then can we see the relevance of the earth, and the many individual parts of it that are constantly helping us to live, and enjoy ourselves here!

When we take a step outside to begin our day, life everywhere is doing the same thing. Almost every situation that you can imagine is happening somewhere in the world. However, we all live our lives in just about the same way. We all want to thrive here, and live our lives to the fullest, as much as we possibly can... That's what we all have – in common.

While the Sun provides all of the energy and light we'll need to keep life going from far away, we're also using energy to sustain ourselves, too. If you want to look further into how much the Sun really does help everything to live, look into a book called, "*The Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight*" by Thom Hartmann. It's a serious book, but a very much needed one, especially during these times. It deeply explores, just how much the earth is helping us to live here in so many ways; and what we can do to maintain and take care of our relationship with it³¹. If we had a collective effort to work together world-wide, some very positive dramatic changes could happen very quickly. And besides, if we desire to become happier, what better way to see how much our positive relationships affect our own levels of happiness, when we take a little time to appreciate what's here? We hear so much these days about trying to save everything; but if we're not in a positive "relationship" with what's here, how are we going to accomplish that? When it's our positive relationship to the life that's already here – that saves it, and everything else...

Like any good relationship, before we can change something about it, we

³¹ Thom Hartmann, *The Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight* 3rd ed. (New York: Harmony Books, 2018).

have to take a good look into it – to see what it’s doing *for us*. When we finally realize this emotionally, we’ll want to take those steps – because then, the earth *will mean something to us*. Our actions won’t just be “saving” what’s out there. We’ll be saving a very large part of our own personal joy, too. And, that was the point. It’s a win-win for all of us.

A positive relationship always works both ways. It’s ok to take a look at what something is giving to you. That’s half of the reason why – it’s there! So, our quest to save the planet isn’t one-sided. It’s just as much for us, as for what we can see all around us. When we realize the relationship that we really have to it – that’s when our lives become magical, again...Everything’s here – so we can be happy, about it!

Being thankful or appreciative about something, gives us as much energy, as it does for what we’re looking at. That’s the observer effect, in action. So, this alone might be the incentive we need to start looking at what’s around us in a new light. Not only will that help to save the planet, but our lives, and our enjoyment of them, too. Regardless of the reasons that we would like to be involved with what’s here, there will always be something wonder-ful to see, if we’re looking for those emotions. For example...

When we were young most of us were explorers, and we wanted to know everything that was happening above ground and below it. And, how about that stew we made in a cup of water with: some dirt, a few berries, leaves, sticks, and whatever else we could find? I can’t tell you how many times I’ve done this! Think about how far back this idea alone goes, and what it did to sustain us. (After the hunters and gatherers got back, in comes the chef to mix it all up!) Even as kids, the desire to be connected to what’s here is present, long before they realize how important it is. Besides trying to become more of a part of what’s here for enjoyment, children are also showing us something that’s possible for us to feel in our own lives, too. For a world that could really use a “boost,” we simply have to start looking at what’s here through the eyes of wonder, again. And, just like that – the whole world, will begin to

open up to us...

Do you remember when you were young, that the littlest things made you wide-eyed with amazement? What was it that made you very excited to be a part of? Well, get back to it! Who said, being an adult and being responsible, meant that we were supposed to give up – what’s making us happy? Now, you’re capable of surviving, being mature, and enjoying life, instead of just going through the motions. Being happy – for everything that’s here, means you’ll feel as good as you possibly can about what you’re doing, and all that’s present with you. Rather than trying to single everything out to establish a positive relationship with “it,” we can simply do that by looking at what’s here – for what it is, and what it’s doing for us! That’s all it really takes to appreciate something. And, when we look, not only do we increase the value of what’s here, but that directly goes into how we feel, as well.

It works this way with all of the positive relationships we have. From this point of view, you can see what all of your relationships are doing for you. Then, the steps to take care of what’s here will become enjoyable, again. That’s the difference between obligation, and a joyful participation. Rather than taking energy away from you – it’s giving you something back at the same time. And, that’s exactly how it was, when we were young. So, being involved with something now, doesn’t necessarily take work. Our curiosity is motivating us to move closer towards what’s there. And, we can keep that healthy curiosity with us, for as long as we are here.

If you have cats, you already have a glimpse into this. My Siberian cat Apollo (who you met earlier in a previous chapter) is literally into everything he can get himself into! He’s quite a handful, but he’s always showing me how to be curious about everything around me. He reminds me that there are so many examples of how we can keep our lives exciting and interesting. But, like him – you have to look for it. And, head towards it, as soon as possible! When you do, in one way or another, you’re going to find the “magic” in what’s right there, with you.

To tie together two of our most important outside relationships, so far... By making our moments enjoyable together, not only do we become happier individually, but this also strengthens the relationship we have to each other. And, the positive emotions we find here are awakening our other senses, too. From here, we can see the world around us in the same way that we did, when we were young. From the inside out, we can start to see the world now as our lifelong companion, friend and provider, because that's exactly what it is! Every building and structure, both natural and man-made, all came from the same place...Right here.

And, that's a direct way to appreciate all that we've accomplished together over thousands of years. Everything is a reminder of where we've been, how far we've come, and what's possible for us to do. And, the life we've built will be here thousands of years from now, if we simply give that relationship what it needs³². Once we start enjoying it again, we'll appreciate it even more, than we did before. The earth is always giving us everything we could *ever* dream about having. So, why would we want to destroy our opportunity to enjoy it, when – it's always been here for us?

The Experiment:

For a few minutes, go outside and take a look at one or two things in your yard. It could be a: flower, tree, rock, an insect or just a blade of grass. When you find something, ask yourself one of five questions that help us to understand our relationships: What – is this? Why – is it here? How long – has it been here? What does it do – for me? And, what can I do – for it?

When you do this for a few things, you'll start to see everything around you in this way, too. Not only is this a great way for you to enjoy your surroundings, but it's a way to keep yourself company, wherever you go. ...Did you ever look at what's in your environment – like this? It's a

³² Neale Donald Walsch, *Conversations with God: an uncommon dialogue*, Book 3 (Virginia: Hampton Roads, 1998), 288-291.

fantastic way to turn-around any feelings of being alone.

From this “first-person” perspective, everything that we need to do to respect our environment will happen, when we realize we’re a direct part – of it. A painting, a movie, or a video game can be exciting, but what about the “world” you’re already in? Seeing the world with and through your own eyes joyfully, will allow you to appreciate it a lot more than you do, right now...And, what an opportunity – this is!

Through the eyes of appreciation, we can finally see both sides of what we’re giving to each other. Just like the positive moments we have together, we can relate the same way to what’s outside of us, too. And, those positive feelings will only be coming back to us. So, instead of destroying what’s here to feel powerful (step one), we can also embrace the power we have – to keep it here³³. And, when we take the second step, we finally meet the world halfway; where everything around us, begins to open up, and reveal itself to us. It’s the positive relationship we have to what’s here that allows us to witness the world – as it always has been. Little by little every day, our positive combined actions to mend our relationship with what’s here, can do so much more than we thought was possible to help restore it...

Having a healthy, positive relationship with what’s inside and outside of us isn’t a dream, or a fairy tale. It’s simply how all of our relationships were made to work. Feeling energy from both sides of giving and receiving – produces more energy, than anything else on earth. And, isn’t it about time that we enjoyed our exchanges for a change? If someday, we knew beyond a doubt that this really is “The Garden of Eden,” how would that change the way you see life, and everything in it?

Try viewing the world from this point of view, and see what “magic” happens – before your eyes. Sometimes, we do have to see something to believe in it. And, once again, our opportunity – is right there.

³³ Sadhguru, “Our Amazing Earth,” *You Tube*, April 22, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TD37CH3Dc-w>.

A Final Thought:

When we realize that what we are doing to make ourselves happy is also positively affecting and helping other people around us, as well as the earth at the same time, we're giving ourselves an opportunity to feel as good as we possibly can – wherever we happen to be!

Author's Note:

This chapter is dedicated to two very special beings: The Earth, and Sadhguru. He understands as well as anyone ever could, the relationship we have to the earth, ourselves, and each other. And, the earth put all of this wonder into motion. So, thank you very much to life, and his very important message. In one way or another, all of the greatest teachers have had the exact same message about life, the earth, and how to live here joyfully together. And, that message can be summed up nicely with Sadhguru's wise words of wisdom, "The respect we give to what's in front of us – always comes right back to us in how we feel." I'm not sure what more anyone could say about all of our relationships; but everything wonderful just keeps on growing – from there...

Before we take a little break, besides admiring nature to see what's there and waiting for us, while we're on the subject...The dreams you have for the future – your highest vision, is also a little seed at this point. So, as you're increasing joy by becoming closer to everything around you again, make sure to use that energy and clarity to see a little more in yourself, too. Like anything that grows, this is a process that takes time, patience and care. Now that you've explored more of what's inside and outside, as you travel along, insights about what's possible will be growing "up" with you. So, after a little rest, before you take any steps ahead, embrace the future with an open and enjoyable mind-set; so that all of the new ideas about you can take root. If you haven't quite made the connection yet – all of the ideas about "appreciating" what's in front of you, are also nurturing the dreams you have on the inside. That point – is where joy comes together; inside and out.

In the meantime, a wonderful short poem about this part of your journey, written by my wife Robyn (who's been a florist for over 30 years), should inspire you to look forward to what's coming up soon...

The Wildflower:

*Every moment that you are alive,
you are creating the world
you wish to see.*

*Every thought, word and action
make up who you believe yourself to be.*

*So, think wisely and be creative –
we all have that power.*

*Remember that you are beautiful,
just like the wildflower.*

*We all start from tiny seeds,
hidden underneath the ground.*

*These seeds are our thoughts,
where our dreams can be found.*

*When the dream is nurtured enough,
it will push itself up through.*

*It then becomes the beautiful wildflower:
The creation of all that is YOU.*

– By Robyn Sadowski

Intermission: Part – 1: Moving With a Spring in Your Step!

The Premise:

Besides taking us to our favorite places and supporting our body for our entire lives, here are some quick, interesting facts about our feet...Did you know that they have 8,000 nerves? Did you know that a quarter of our bones are located here? Did you know that walking is the best exercise for them? How about that the first pair of shoes were made out of animal skins about 5 million years ago? In a single day, an adult can take about 6,000 to 10,000 steps; which adds up to hundreds of tons of pressure. Over our lifespan, we'll take about 115,000 miles worth of steps...And, that's enough to circle the world – four times³⁴!

Before you take your first, real steps into the exciting plans you've made, you might want to look down at a few things that are going to help you accomplish those goals! While it's important to have a positive mind-set and the motivation to move forward, our feet are actually going to be taking us – where we want to go!

Not only do our feet support us for our entire lives, they also connect us (without our shoes on) directly to the earth, and internally to our entire body. Every major part of our body can be traced energetically through the soles of our feet. Not only is this fact amazing to think about, but it reminds us of how everything here is connected in some way. So, before you move ahead, take a look at what's allowing your body to move itself around. How do these two objects hold us up for so long, without getting much of a break? For me, the most astonishing example of these two wonders has to do with birds, specifically...

Not so long ago (he recently flew to a much higher place), I had a parakeet named “Wizzy” and he stood on a perch upright, for his entire life. Even though that was only about 12 years or so, how is *this* possible? How does that really work, beyond the simple layout of his anatomy? I'm not sure how long you can stand-up, but after about 10-12

³⁴ “Foot Facts,” *Foot.com*, Aetrex Worldwide, 2021, <https://www.foot.com/foot-facts/>.

hours, my feet are ready to take a vacation! So, thinking about these facts, as well as taking a little time to put your feet up more often, will help you pay closer attention to them.

Besides cleaning and trimming, letting them breathe, putting lotion on them, getting your nails done, or even getting a massage once in a while, our feet really don't ask for much considering all the work they do. So, it might be nice every now and then to pamper them in a method of your choice. As for covering them, since every "body" is different, there's no "best" comfortable shoe or sneaker for everyone. And, this gives you the freedom to choose your own style, and what feels best to you. (For a little behind the scenes shoe buying tip from experience, if the store has floors that are more "solid," walk on those for a bit to see how they feel. Not long ago, I actually installed floors, and some shoes or sneakers might feel different on a harder surface; especially if you're standing up all day...Just like Wizzy!)

So, when you're choosing a new pair of kickers (besides the looks), it's important to remember what you need the shoes for. Picking out a pair that are made for the activities you spend most of your time on, will help you to stay comfortable, and provide the right support for your body's needs. Getting some reviews for your specific task will save you time, as well. It's cool to "fit-in," but you want to make sure your feet are going to like you, at the end of the day...

To make your shoes last a little longer, try rotating them every few days or so. In my experience, I wear a sneaker for work and a different pair, after. If you like a certain brand or type that fits you for comfort and stability, stick with them. Like the muscle memory we have in other parts of our body, our posture and the tension in our muscles get used to having a pair they can count on. That's why we feel so good in a broken-in pair of shoes! It's not just our feet that are happy, as our whole body is being aligned and supported, as well. If you're on a budget, inexpensive shoes with good insoles will give you a few more miles. But, if you're on your feet for a long time, spend a little extra...They deserve it!

In the end, your feet are helping you to be as comfortable as you can be, while you're moving towards what matters to you. So, take an extra moment to make sure you're going in the right direction, and be grateful that you have the ability to go to so many different places. Your relationship will last a lifetime; so check-in every once in a while to make sure they're doing, ok. And – the three of you, will be so happy together...

The Experiment:

Today, there is a pair of shoes for just about every activity you can imagine. So, for this experiment, take a step out of your comfort zone. Have fun trying on a few different pairs that you normally wouldn't wear. Besides discovering a few new options, you might find the perfect pair for the specific goals you have. If you're going to be spending so much time in them, you deserve to look *and* feel great. And, now that you've found a great pair, what else could you do to make them *feel right* – where they are?

A Final Thought:

Our feet are responsible for taking us wherever we would like to go. So, they deserve a little more appreciation and attention. Consider them, just before you're about to take a step ahead into the important plans you've made. Smile. And, see what happens – to the spring in your step!

Intermission: Part – 2: Driving on the Road of Life.

The Premise:

Going somewhere? Are you going for business, pleasure or both? If you're happy about where you're headed, the minutes that are leading you home or to your next destination can be quite enjoyable... What makes this possible is the place you're coming from on the inside, as you're traveling – on the outside!

Driving, like any other activity that's enjoyable, can give you a feeling of being somewhat still and comfortable within yourself, as you're moving along. Although this might involve other people, cars and a roadway, the positive feelings that we can create here – are the same, as anywhere else. Once you know where you're going (or at least a general direction), how you choose to get there is up to you. Are you going to rush past the journey, or are you going to enjoy the trip?

The Experiment:

Paying attention on the road doesn't always need to be as stressful, as we sometimes make it. Since we're always moving in some way with the people around us, how we choose to go about it is also up to us, too...

If you leave yourself enough time, know roughly which direction you're headed in, and have what you need for the trip (some good music, quiet time, or perhaps a beverage of choice), you're just about all set to go...

When you observe other cars on the road, there is a way to look at them like you're in good company, instead of feeling like you're "stuck" in traffic... You're the "traffic" too!

Everyone is going somewhere just like you – to a place that's important to them; regardless of where that is. So, leave enough space between you and the car in front of you, have your navigation set before you go, put your phone down, and pick a lane that best suits your comfortable (and legal) driving speed.

You can easily pay attention to what's around you, without having to give up the enjoyable space within you. Since you're always standing on home-plate (inside), you can vary how you look a little closer and a little further away at what the environment and the other cars are doing; and how you fit into *that rhythm*. Since you're traveling with other people, common courtesy applies here, too. *And, realize that this is just as much for you – as it is, for them.* (If you only get one sentence out of the entire book, that's the one to remember!) If everyone is paying a little more attention to how they're "relating" to what's around them, you'll be in a peaceful place where there's no danger for them, or you. Once you're there, you'll find a natural harmony within yourself, while being surrounded by others. (It almost feels like floating.) Here, you can also appreciate the environment around you at the same time. (Safely, of course!)

Inner or outer peace allows your reflexes, concentration, and your vision to expand and become sharper, without the stress. That's the "place" everyone wants to be in – including you! And, you can make this enjoyable space possible for yourself, and the positive effects of doing this will extend out to your fellow travelers, as well...

If you notice that someone might be lost or confused, give them the benefit of the doubt for a few moments, before reacting negatively. This choice in reaction is for yourself and them, equally. No matter how well we pay attention, we can easily lose our focus for a few moments. *So, remember that!* Simply slow down, take a breath, and give them a little more space, or proceed to the passing lane when it's safe. In that moment, realize you're still headed to where you want to go. An extra minute is not going to make *that much* of a difference in where you're going.

For some other considerations, your "blinka" should be used a fair amount of time before you're about to change direction, so you leave yourself and others enough time to adjust their speed and direction, too. Letting someone go or get ahead of you in real-time traffic can be a little

confusing sometimes, but here's a good guideline...If you can safely let them pass or come out into traffic, without putting the cars around you at risk, then you should do that when you can. But, if stopping to let someone go is going to cause you and those around you sudden confusion or harm, proceed ahead, and they can pull out into traffic when it's safe. Better to save or give up a few seconds, than it is to risk a lot more than that. In time, especially on the road, you'll come to realize that what's good for someone else is just as much for you, as well...

If you're just learning how to drive, practicing some of these ideas on roads that are a little less crowded at first, will make a huge difference. Like anywhere else, as long as you keep your eyes and ears open, pay a little more attention to what you're doing – in relation to those around you, you'll enjoy the process of getting somewhere, just as much as the destination. On the road of life, we are both passengers, and the ones who take us where we want to go. So relax, and enjoy your time here. When you adopt this attitude more often, not only will you create a greater sense of ease, but you'll have even more energy and enthusiasm for the place you're headed to – once you arrive.

A Final Thought:

Driving is one of the few places that we can be, almost still – while moving at the same time. In a way, you could say that this is just like a meditation, or a dance that we do together. When we realize that – like anywhere else, we can enjoy the steps or the miles, as we're taking them. And, we'll come to appreciate those that are traveling right along with us even more, too. Eventually, regardless if you're walking or driving, with a little patience and some practice, you'll find your "sweet-spot" on the road of life. So, enjoy the trip...You're Almost There!

C18: My Fire is Lit...Now Where Do I Put It?

The Premise:

Inspiration and motivation are extensions of the same positive energy. Inspiration is the boost from the initial idea, and motivation is the desire and the willingness to move into it. When we understand what we would like to do, what follows is to take a single step in that direction. If you already have the inspiration, a good idea and the time, you can begin creating it – at any time you wish!

Now that you've found some ways to increase the positive energy you have, you'll probably want to take yourself somewhere specific – to put it to use! As you've seen in a few experiments, you can take yourself into many different places to have a pleasant experience. The ideas you've come up with could be very simple, or the goals you've uncovered could involve a much longer-term project, perhaps. Regardless of what you've decided to do, these goals and plans are a way to keep yourself motivated, so that energy has a chance to keep on circulating through you, and building itself up. Even if your ideas are very small, you'll notice the more you follow through with them, they will begin to grow. And, this is where your truest and deepest desires begin to take shape.

One of the benefits of following our inspiration (like in any good story), specific circumstances will begin to come together, as we move ahead. Knowing this will take the pressure off of figuring out every detail about how your plans will unfold. Usually, we only get a bit of insight at first, so we can manage the step we're on. As you move ahead, you'll be able to see more details develop. With this framework, we don't always have to know exactly where we would like to be, before we take our steps forward. Often, a general direction is all that's needed to begin our adventure into something that's good for us! This allows us to put more focus on enjoying the experience, and to see how things are going to develop from where we are now. So, have you finally decided on what you would like to do with the energy you've found? You get to choose

what you would like to do next, based on what's interesting and exciting to you.

Even if you're not sure of where to take this energy, it's important to remember that you have time to think about it. If you've already decided, you might be asking yourself why I needed more than a few chapters to answer these very simple questions. If you can think back to a time when you were stuck or unsure of what to do, it takes a little time to figure that out. If we've had quite a few negative experiences lately, then we need some positive messages or ones to replace them. The more encouragement you have at this point, the more you'll be willing to take a step ahead into something that can really work to make you happier...

I know in my own life (years ago), that the positive messages I received from books were the only thing I had to change the way I felt. Once I started hearing some "good news" for a change, the sky was the limit – at least, in what kind of thoughts I was building for the future! And, after many years of reading and thinking about them, it led you to the words you're reading now...All of that exploration has brought me and you together – here! The journey of spending most of my time alone to build my dreams for the future, has helped me create the most significant accomplishment in my life. So, see how our more positive moments are always leading us to something more?

As for your future, besides the positive moments that you create, eventually you'll want to put your energy into a specific place, or use it for a reason that's meaningful to you. In fact, you might even know where, or what that is now! Your inner fire is lit, and you're very excited about what your future could hold. So, do you know where you're going yet? Do you see any more significant plans on the horizon? If not, you can still enjoy the trip immensely! I wouldn't trade those years of wandering, thinking and dreaming for anything. But if the picture of your future is becoming clearer, it's time to take a step towards it...

If you have any doubts, fears or concerns about that, you're not alone. Everyone feels this way once in a while; since the exact future is

unknown. However, the idea now is to find something that makes you a little more excited, about it. If you can make a positive experience happen now – alone and with someone, that’s all you’ll need to be able to do, once you reach a place that makes you happier to be there. It will be much easier to keep this energy going when you enjoy what you’re doing, more often. It doesn’t matter if it’s the routine things that you need to do every day, or if it’s a place that you enjoy most of all. Half of that enjoyment is the attitude you bring into those things, and the other half is what those things are bringing – to you.

Your future plans could involve: a specific career direction, going back to school, relocating to somewhere new, taking a class, or something else, perhaps. As of right now, you get to decide what you would like to do more often, based on what you enjoy. If you hear about an idea that someone else is excited about, could you look into it? In someone else’s enthusiasm, there’s a hidden treasure if you pay attention. You might ask: What could I be doing right now that will make me happier, too? What would I like to do in the future, regardless if I think it’s possible, or not? Or, is there something good waiting for me in what they like to do?

Seeing others enjoy themselves is for you in two ways. Not only does that energy feel good, but it’s also a hint of what you could be doing for yourself! The only real difference between you and them is that they took a good look into the options they had, or they went looking for some. And, it’s the same with you, too. Long-term happiness is something that you’ll have to work with for a little while, until you find something that definitely raises your spirits. This could be a cause you believe in, a place that you love to go, an activity, or something unique that’s special to you. The first step to getting closer to what you really love, means getting closer to what you enjoy, right now. Then, you’re on a happier path to eventually discovering what that is...

It doesn’t matter if you have one special place, or many things that you enjoy. It only matters that you’re building something for the future, and you’ll be spending time in a place that makes you feel good. If you like

more than one thing, you can choose your favorite, or you can spend time in a few different places. In time, you might have to put something aside for a bit to focus on one of those areas. I had to leave music alone for more than seven years, so that I could write this book; but now I'm back into it! So, what's important to you will always be there; as long as you keep it close to you in some way. And, just like this book perhaps, did you know that even your greatest dream, isn't just for you? When you're happy, this is the energy you have to extend out to others, and they need it, just like you do.

That's why choosing a place you love – is just as much for you, as it is for other people, and the whole world around you. From here, you do the most good for everyone involved, and you'll feel your best at the same time. Imagine that? That's what life can really be like, when we get closer to making a decision about where we would like to spend our time, more often. This positive and inspired energy makes its way into every part of our lives, and it benefits everyone around us, as well. So, just keep following what makes you happy, and in time, this will develop into something wonderful for you!

We all have specific dreams, goals and talents that are ours alone to develop. No one can tell you exactly what they are, or where they will take you. But that's just a part of the journey, and we see further into it, as we go along. Even if you're just beginning something that you love to do, you'll get better at it in time. So, head in the direction that your heart tells you to go, regardless of how good you are now. Listen to other's suggestions (especially those who are involved with what you like), but remember that your path – is yours to follow. If something feels right, even after thinking about it, then it is...And, that's your next big step! So, follow it with an open mind and heart, and make sure to encourage others to follow their dreams and goals, too. That inner-flame of enthusiasm and inspiration is helping everyone to remember what's important to them; and that's why our dreams are needed. So, take hold of the flame, and keep it – burning bright!

The Experiment...Part – 1: Something New.

This is probably the most challenging and rewarding experiment, so far. A few suggestions might be to take a beginner class of some kind. Learn about a new subject. Take up drawing or painting. How about a musical instrument? Or, you might want to start cooking, or doing something else that's interesting to you...

No matter how far ahead we think we are there will always be more to do, and see. Here, it's all about enjoying the process. Happiness also comes from not knowing exactly where something is going; but having enough enthusiasm to take those steps forward. Taking a step – is one step closer to figuring out where you would like to be, even if it's just for now! So, enjoy yourself and see what happens. In the future with a little experimenting, you'll see that exploring something new can be just as exciting, as what you already like to do.

Part – 2: Something Known.

Spend a little time researching a few more options with something that you really enjoy doing. If you have a dream or a goal that you'd like to get started on – now's the time to do it! Regardless of what you choose, these experiments will take you further along into solidifying your plans for the future. At this point – that's the goal. With something new or something that we already like to do, happiness eventually builds a specific direction that we would like to move towards. If you can keep this in mind, no matter where you are now – a smile will be there to meet you!

Part – 3: Something Known and Unknown.

What if you have a big dream that you're being pulled towards, and you're not sure of what to do – next? This one was inspired by my aunt, Jennie Putnam. Thanks to her, this exercise came about when I was at a crossroads on what to do – with my dream of writing full-time. If you have the means to follow a direction, as long as it's not harmful to you, then the opportunity is right there. However, what if it involves a big

step that will affect more people, than just you? How do you know which choice to make?

To honor the feelings of your heart and of those close to you, do what she suggested. Tell your dream to someone in your family that you trust, and can honestly speak with. Just like she did for me, she listened and gave me the benefit of the doubt first; and then wisely – put my desire to the test. How? She actually said a prayer out loud with me on the phone, to say, “God – if this is you talking, and you’re telling Jeff to take a big step into the unknown, please – let us know, and also, what his next step might be.” As much as I think I know about following your heart’s path, I would have never considered this approach. And, I’m very glad that she shared it, with me...

In this way, you get to honor and share your feelings, you bring your relationships closer together, and you’ll know – if the message is clearly from a loving source. How? Because if your spirit or your soul is calling you to move into a certain known or even unknown direction, it won’t hold back from sharing this truth – with the ones who love you. After a few days or so, if the message sits well with the people you trust – then, they’ll be left with the same positive feelings and impressions, as well. Since they’re more detached from the situation emotionally, they might even get a few clues or solutions, as to how this might unfold in a way that’s beneficial to everyone.

As she explained, “Doing it this way brings everyone closer to each other, and to what’s really there.” That way, you can come up with a bigger and clearer picture than you could have, on your own. If the results are positive, you can help each other to move ahead in a way that’s needed at the time. Like she reminded me, love will ask you – to follow it. However, it also has everyone else’s well-being in mind, too. As long as you come from a more neutral place, having no particular attachments to the truth of what’s there, the right answer will make itself known. Then, you and everyone else can proceed with a little more faith and enthusiasm for the positive changes ahead! If the choice is a good

one, it might not always be a clear and easy path. And, it shouldn't always be. If you knew everything about every single twist and turn; you'd actually lose your excitement about where you're going! But, in the end, it will put you closer to where you truly desire to be, and closer to each other, as well.

If you come up with mixed feelings or results, you can brainstorm together on what you could do, without trying to have the "best" answer. This sharing of ideas might lead to a solution that works for everyone involved. At the end of the day, those who care for you want to see you happy; but they'll also want to know a little more information about what's ahead, too. As love always has "our" hearts, in mind. When we realize that, we open ourselves up to what's possible – together. And, I believe that was always love's *first* intention, all along.

A Final Thought:

For many years, I lived in Amesbury, MA...A town that used to be called, "The hat capitol of the world." Trying to land a lifelong goal right away, would almost be like trying on different hats in the largest store you can imagine...The key to your enjoyment is not picking out the perfect one. It's having fun, while you're trying to see what suits you. Since you'll be spending more time experimenting at least for now, get used to finding things you like, and even some things you don't. Both of these results are giving you clues, as to what might be good for you. And, like a hat, you can always change the direction of where you're headed, as you go along. As long as you can start enjoying where you are now, you'll have everything you need to find the one that fits you – just right!

If you could use a little help "in this department," look into anything written by Barbara Sher. No one makes it more exciting or enjoyable to discover what you would really like to do – now, or in the future. My favorite of hers is listed below³⁵.

³⁵ Barbara Sher, *Live The Life You Love: In Ten Easy Step-by-Step Lessons* (New York: Delacorte Press, 1996).

C19: You: In Your Place.

The Premise:

“Our place” can be anywhere where we are really enjoying ourselves. However, our real contentment comes from the positive emotions we feel on the inside. When we make how we feel our first priority from now on, this gives us a lot more choices than we’ve ever had before about where we can go, what we can do, and what it means – to be happy!

Congratulations! It isn’t always a quick or easy journey to get here...But, now that you’re here, life will become a lot more exciting, and you will feel that you are giving and receiving the best of who you are. This “place” is different for everyone. A graduation from school, or maybe you’ve landed the job you’ve always wanted. You might have found the perfect place to live, or maybe you’ve reached a personal goal that you’ve been working on for quite some time. Even though these are different places for us to be in, our levels of happiness from reaching some of our most important goals impact us in the same way. It’s certainly an accomplishment. This shows that you can make your goals, plans and dreams come true. And, you’re going to be in a place where you can enjoy yourself, much more often from now on...

What will really change here is the amount of energy you have. Because you are very happy – to be here, this energy will circulate and travel through the other parts of your life, too. Since you feel different about life on the inside, your positive outlook will be following you wherever you go. The bright and colorful lens that you see life through now, will help you appreciate the people and places you’re involved with in a much deeper way. Personal relationships will take on a new meaning; as you can hopefully see that it took more than just your own energy to get here. And, while this is especially true for you where you happen to be, we’re all helping each other to reach these happier places in our lives. Every single positive encounter we have is taking us directly to our enjoyment on the inside. And, this is helping to give us the energy and the focus we need to see how we would like to move ahead in our lives

on the outside. This is one of the ways that our inner and outer lives are connected.

The positive energy that we have created in our own lives, and setting a specific goal, followed by our actions, blended with cooperation – has made this possible. When we arrive at a place that we've always wanted to be involved with, we also become an example of what's possible for others. And, it doesn't matter if our goals are the same or not. From reaching this plateau in your life, it will show everyone who is looking for inspiration, what they can do in their own lives, too.

That's why you've heard me say that our greatest dream is not just for us; as everyone who comes into contact with this energy and the experience is uplifted. The positive feelings from being here are felt by you first, and then you radiate and bring that energy out to others. Then, they feel inspired, and return some back to you. This back and forth of energy is what all of our positive relationships are doing in one way or another. That's the complete cycle of energy, and how it travels back and forth, between us. In the larger parts of our environment which includes more people, the same thing is happening here, too. The positive effects from a group of people being happy together, extends out a little further and it affects even more people. Again, one positive emotion or interaction's energy is just traveling out – and causing the same things to happen, near and far away from us. Localized energy is always influencing the outer parts of energy that it's connected to; as those waves travel outward. So, when the energy is positive, it's doing much more than we can see. It benefits others far beyond us, or even a group of people. And, to think all of these benefits come from – just enjoying ourselves!

While this place will be wonderful for you and those around you, there will still be some people who haven't begun their personal positive journey, just yet. So, it might be a little difficult for them to see you successful. However, everyone arrives at different times. And, in a direct and indirect way, the success that they're witnessing should inspire them.

If it's possible for you, this means it's possible for them, too. The situation might not be the same, but – it's the fruition of the dream itself that matters. And, when you've had a few good opportunities in your own life, you'll remember this, when you see someone else rising to where they wanted to be. You'll remember the thrill and joy of that experience, and it feels really good – to be reminded of it...

On the other side of this joyful experience, to get to where we desire to be, everyone has their share of failures and difficulties. It doesn't just happen – instantaneously. Some things can, but most of the time, the results require a bit more from us than we originally thought. And, that's why it's so “sweet” to see those conditions, finally come through for us. Everyone is on different steps in where their lives are going. So, take this opportunity to enjoy your place, as much as you can. When you see that someone could use a little lift on their journey, share some of your energy with them. Everyone needs a boost sometimes! And, besides celebrating our own happiness and success, encouragement plays a big role in how we land where we want to be; and it's also how we maintain our joy, once we're there...

If someone is serious about heading to a better place, you can also share some of your journey with them. Knowing a little more of what to expect, inspires more confidence and faith for what's ahead. Like anywhere else, regardless of how far we've come, the energy you share with other people needs to be sincere for it to have any positive benefits. And, by sincere, I mean that you would like them to be happy for themselves, just as you are – for you! It works the same way for someone who wants to spend time with you, too. People who really care about you, will love you – at every point along the way of your journey. So, for happiness to stay with you long-term, you'll need to be a little discerning about where to spend your time and energy, just like you did to reach this destination.

In the end, it's not about how much you have or how far you've come. Those pieces are important, but it's really about the quality of the

relationships you've developed, and how you feel together. Of course, the feelings you create together, translate into the other parts of your lives, too. Everything is adding up to how we feel about life. And, the rest of the story from here, will work itself out and develop naturally, over time...

As far as your relationships are concerned, if someone is serious about growth or feeling better, after a few good conversations, you'll see them take little steps in their own way. If not, that's their choice; and you'll need to build your energy, so that you can use it to the fullest where you are. As long as you're enjoying your time with them (more often than not), that's all that's needed, so the relationship can be healthy for both of you. Believe it or not, some people might not be interested in some of these ideas, because they're already happy where they are now! So, discovering all of the in's and out's here, might not be someone's cup of tea. However, if someone is really struggling, and you have the means to help them, it's the right thing to do. But, for that to work – they need to be actively involved in getting the help they need to grow, as well. That's how you know it's a good investment on your part. When someone is already on a path to wellness or joy, it's a very good indicator that they mean it. They're willing to put forth the effort to do what's needed, so that their situations improve. Judgement needs to be used a bit here; not to judge where or who they are; but where they want to go, and if they're headed in that direction for themselves. If they're on a specific path, most people will choose to develop themselves in their own way, and in a time that's beneficial for them...

For those who are still struggling to find or create your “happier” place, all that you'll need to remember is with some patience and persistence, your rewards will come at just the right time for you. Life has a way of knowing far beyond what we can see, when the perfect time will be to achieve the goals we've set out to accomplish. One of the most important reasons for this comes from the people we'll influence, or meet along the way. Our goal is going to make the biggest impact on a particular group of people – who need to be involved with it, or inspired by it. That's a

large part of what's developing behind the scenes of what we can currently see. And, it's not something that we need to worry or wonder too much about, as far as our role in that is concerned. Regardless if we're on the first step of our journey or the last, our goal is to enjoy ourselves as much as we can, so that we can be happy. Then, this becomes an example of what's possible for others, too. If we're in a good place, we can even get more involved in the process of someone else's development, too. That way, we'll get to see even more of how the process of happiness and success are unfolding on the outside; from start to finish. So, no matter what side we're on or where we are specifically, the entire journey in finding "our place" can become a truly wonderful experience!

Besides your chosen field, special place or current role, there are many other types of experiences that you can enjoy, while you're here. With this as your foundation, it will be much easier to embrace the other parts of your life, because you'll have more energy and enthusiasm. You'll be able to give the other areas of your life the attention they need, because you'll naturally have more energy to share...

Before we delve deeper into what happens now that you're here, give yourself a moment to remember all of the work, effort and time it took for you to be in "your" place! Since appreciating and enjoying exactly where you are was the goal all along, this part of your chapter is complete. What you'll experience in a place that means the most to you is the next part of your trip. Yes, you still have plenty to look forward to! In a way, you could say that you've really just begun to enjoy yourself, and what you're doing. And, there's always more to see – even at this very happy peak in your life!

The Experiment:

Take a little time to write down some of the low and high points you've experienced to arrive here. Not only will it show you how much you were able to accomplish, but it will reveal how much the world around you, has been helping you along! Sometimes, it's only when we look

back that we can see just how many little pieces had to come together, so that we could succeed! If you have a little more time, you can reflect on some of the things that you hoped to discover here, as well. Even when we think we've reached the "top," the journey of creation and discovery never ends. It just keeps on getting more interesting, exciting and sometimes challenging. Seeing your place from this perspective, will bring the past, present and future together, so that you can be truly grateful – about where you are, right now.

A Final Thought:

Enjoying wherever we are – was really the most important goal, all along. Now that you're "here," this energy and enthusiasm will be influencing the other parts of your life, as well as the people in it. By reflecting on where you are and where you've been, you can see more of the effort you've put in, the challenges you overcame, and the people who helped you succeed. Looking at all of the major parts of this journey will make you feel happier, but it will also make you realize how important we are to each other's lives. To realize that we are all helping each other to arrive where we really wanted to be – happily, makes the view from here even more beautiful, than we thought it would be!

Author's Note:

Two classic spellbinding tales to spend some quality time with are, Dan Millman's "Way of the Peaceful Warrior: A Book That Changes Lives"³⁶, " and Mark Fisher's "The Instant Millionaire: A Tale of Wisdom and Wealth"³⁷. " Both of these expand in much greater detail, the part of the journey that's presented here.

³⁶ Dan Millman, *Way of the Peaceful Warrior: A Book That Changes Lives* (California: H.J. Kramer, 1984).

³⁷ Mark Fisher, *The Instant Millionaire: A Tale of Wisdom and Wealth* (California: New World Library, 1990).

C20: *I've Found My Place...So, What Happens Now?*

The Premise:

Almost everyone dreams of being in a place where life is a lot easier, where they can experience the happiness often heard about in “fairy tales.” While life is not exactly a fairy tale all of the time, being in a place that we truly enjoy, will make us feel close to it! By following what we love and what inspires us the most, we naturally boost the amount of energy we have. From here, we experience life as it can be – in the most positive ways, possible. This energy extends out to all of the people we come into contact with. So, it ends up doing the most “good” for us, and the world around us at the same time. As we create more enjoyment from here, energy moves with us into every other part of our lives, so that we can enjoy more of our time spent in those places, too...And, it just keeps on moving into the future to create even more exciting possibilities for us, as well. So, can you see how our enjoyable moments now, are only leading us – there?

Dreams that have come true are everywhere in the world around us. Every single business, home or structure that you can see is an example of it. Everything literally wasn't here at some point, and now it is. So, someone had a dream just like you do. With a little effort and by looking a bit further ahead into what's possible, one thing led to another – and there you have it!

For those who are searching for a role model or an example of success in what matters to them, notice this has less to do with having very large amounts of money or being famous. That's actually a by-product of how you're positively influencing others around you. Some of the richest and most successful people in the world get “here” from being in a place they love; because they can literally do the most good for everything; inside and out.

This comes from the enjoyable feelings and the positive energy that's circulating through you – while you're there. This goes out to others to

benefit them. Then, it multiplies and comes back to you. Since the “Law of Attraction” only works to benefit us from what we’re doing with love, from this enjoyable place we’re able to attract more money, and grow our positive influence that much easier. Remember – the LOA is a by-product of what you’re doing³⁸. It’s the tail-end results of what’s happening here with love – not the beginning. As you move ahead and build positive momentum in what you’re doing, even more possibilities will open up to you. And, that’s what this is all about. It’s energetic “interest.” Nothing more, and nothing less. As you’re moving forward happily and with a sense of purpose, more energy or the LOA will be influenced in a positive way. And, as this energy touches more people’s lives, greater circumstances and interest from others naturally builds, along with it.

If you talk to someone who’s in a place they love, it’s all about the freedom to contribute something positive in a way that (emotionally) also benefits them the most, too.

From here, positive conditions will keep on building, with much less effort and energy. And, that’s what the LOA does. The more time we spend in a place we love, the more energy has a chance to accumulate and gather momentum, which helps us to create the results we would like to have, but at a much greater level. If love is creating positive possibilities in our lives, where we feel our best – will create more opportunities than anywhere else. Besides our own enjoyment, that’s why this place is so special. It just keeps on bringing in more things for us to be happy about; and it’s also the energy that we have to give back out, too...That was the whole idea!

When you’re building life from here, as long as you remember why you’re there, you’ll be able to put all of your gains into a healthy and sustainable place. Most people, even the ones with great success, wouldn’t trade “their” places for any amount of money. Instead of

³⁸ Michael J. Losier, *Law of Attraction: The Science of Attracting More of What You Want and Less of What You Don’t* (New York: Wellness Central, 2007), 14.

finding “love” only trying to build more wealth, they obtain it through the feelings they have within themselves. If you become rich and famous at what you’re doing, you can easily manage both places easily, as long as you remember that the “love” of what you’re doing and why, always comes first...Money is a very close second, but without love – in first place, the meaning of both and how they complement each other will be lost. Money is used for a lot of different things in our lives, but we “spend” so much time everywhere else. That’s why where we are coming from emotionally on the inside, always matters – first. If you put love and money together however, the possibilities are endless in what we can create here...Who said – you couldn’t have both?

Loving material things was also meant to be a large part of our lives, too. It’s only when our material or financial wealth becomes more important than love, where the meaning and joy of what we have begins to diminish. But – why? If you draw a circle with you in the middle, and you add in every major important piece of life around you, take a look at how many things are material, and how many things are – alive. Once you’re past the idea that you’re wealthy – then, you are free to pursue *anything* from the standpoint of the emotions you’ll find and feel – there. So, money is never *the* end. It might be a great beginning to the development of your success story, but once you’ve gathered quite a bit, your focus should literally go past what’s there, and onto something that touches your heart – even more. (A lot of wealthy people get stuck “here.” And, it’s a shame, because you can still appreciate what’s outside of your circle, as well.) So, can you see the trajectory now? Even growth in what you’re doing isn’t exactly the end, either. The positive influence you have, just keeps on expanding – past the “matter” that you can see, have and measure. What’s here came from energy and formed into matter; and then the benefits of what you’re doing go through matter, and back into the energy where it came from. From there – what comes back out, as far as results are concerned is even greater. We could also call that evolution. Not in how we first got here; but with something that’s beneficial that keeps on growing and maturing, with us. It’s hard to

describe exactly what's happening here with words, because those little increments are extremely subtle, but I think you get the idea now!

If love and the positive feelings that go along with it are what you're really after, then what you have has to be looked at from this perspective – to achieve the greatest emotional results. You can have both love and money in a very healthy and balanced way. And, love itself – will always create more of everything that's good for you. With money, it's really the second part or the material that love's energy is using to transmit those benefits – from here to there. See the difference? It can bring a lot; but it's still – just a vehicle. All of the different parts of our lives are adding to how good we can feel here. Just focusing on the money, cuts us off from the positive energy that's available to us in so many other places. Not only that, but to gain very large amounts of money primarily, it usually means that other important parts of our lives have been neglected in the process. This creates a negative return everywhere else; which removes us from the positive emotional place that we really wanted to be in... However, with love, we get to have all of it. With just the love of money we lose everything else; and money is the last thing to go. But, by then, it doesn't matter. Once the love is gone, since the emotions in our heart-space have drifted “south” too, we can't feel or see the benefits of what's there. Does this make sense now? So – love both places. Make love inside and out, come first – and you'll always have more of both!

We can balance our lives and gain the most from those other areas at the same time, without having to get stuck on one part of it, even if that area is very special to us. Life never says, you can only love this – or that. Our hearts are literally big enough – to love everything. And, that energy doesn't stay – outside of us. It's also growing within us at the same time. It's the only known “material” in the universe that can give the most out – and gain the most for itself at the same time. And, that's why we have so many different things in our lives; especially and including the people in it. Each person or category in life adds their own impression on how we feel. So, everything is here to help support what's right next to it,

regardless of how much you have. And, that goes for our happiness, as well. It's all intertwined and related. The framework of the world was made this way, so that everything can retain its individual worth, while contributing to what's around it at the same time. (If I had the opportunity, I would love to show the richest man on earth exactly how this principle works. How would it feel to have the biggest heart internally – full of energy, and the biggest wallet, full on the outside? More on that later in the business chapter.)

When it comes to growing our internal energy, life was put together so that it comes from inside of us, and from what we're surrounded by; since we're always in the middle of energy – remember? So, in sharing or exchanging our energy with each other, we're not depleting our own. We're growing even more around us, so that we both have more of it! When energy is just about unlimited, there isn't a reason to compete for it. It's already here! And, this isn't an old fashioned moral tale or idea, either. It's built right into what everything is made up of, and how it all works together. That's the only reason why “loving each other” works, so well. It increases energy where we are, and it increases the amount of energy that we're a part of at the same time. It covers both places – inside of us and out, simultaneously. Now do you understand why we never had to compete or worry about what we have? The energy that literally makes up “everything,” has helped you to create something – where you are! And, it's doing the same thing for everyone else, too...

When you're growing what's for you, and sharing some of what you have, you put energy into where it will have the greatest benefits. And, you'll always have more of everything – coming back to you. You're always physically connected to what you're doing, so those results couldn't go anywhere else! That's another secret of building more wealth, happiness or anything else. Love's only concern is in the positive benefits – of all that abundance. If it's doing something worthwhile and beneficial, which is what everything here was “made” to do (including you) then, it's not a problem – no matter *how much* you have! Since everything's connected, once you've made it to where you've always

wanted to be, and even become wealthy perhaps, you just need to remember what it's for. As long as you remember that the greatest abundance will be created by doing what's good for yourself and others, this will keep all that you've worked so hard for in its place – without the fear of losing it. One part of life didn't need to go without something that's important to it, so you could have more of what you wanted. Just like atoms share and exchange themselves, we can all have what we desire and need. There is more energy here than we could ever use; as long as we're using it in a positive way. It's only when we hold back our energy and ourselves in fear of losing something (that we already have), where negative energy begins to diminish everything that could possibly be here, for us. We are guiding – how energy reacts and responds – to us. If you remember that, worrying will easily be replaced with appreciation, and the ability to share and enjoy what you've created...

So, remember why you're here specifically, so that you can keep your positive feelings with you. All that you have can remain intact, without having to put anything, at risk. What you are here to do benefits you in how you feel, and in what you can have. Then, you can share and contribute this energy and those resources outside of you, as well. And, you can do that in your own way. It's a very good habit to get into. Not just because of what it does for you and others; but so that when abundance shows up, you'll know how to handle and manage it, joyfully and successfully.

Everything here is working together, so that positive gains can keep on growing everywhere you are. Now, you can rest easy in what you're going to do, what you can have for yourself, and in what you'll contribute to the world around you. Every separate category in life is just a part of the same circle of positive energy. No matter how much you contribute, you'll always be standing – right in the middle of all of those positive results! And, that's why you desire to follow what you love. You'll create the best of everything you could ever have for yourself and the world around you at the same time – from a place that you enjoy, most of all!

The Experiment:

To make your special place even more meaningful, write down how many ways that “love” is helping you, and wherever you happen to be “in your place.” This way, you’ll be able to see the positive connections and benefits everywhere in what you’re doing. Not only will this increase your motivation, but it will make you feel even better about what you’re contributing. Here, your energy goes back into your work, out into the world again, and it comes right back to you to start this enjoyable process, all over again...

Life, energy and love were all put together, so that we could see *exactly* what we’re doing with it, and each other. And, you’ll always be able to see this positive cycle, because this is where you’ll be spending much more of your time. Now, how do you feel about what you love?

A Final Thought:

One of the most amazing things about being in a place we “love,” comes from how much joy we’ll have, and from learning more about the positive effects that this energy has on us, and the entire world around us. This is what makes people feel “blessed” about what they’re doing. The closer you get to positive loving energy, the more you’ll realize just how much it’s doing to transform the lives we’re living. We get to be extremely happy here, and we help others to become even happier, too. So, how does it – get any better, than that?

C21: Loving the Road Ahead...

The Premise:

When we're in a loving "state" for longer periods of time, energy begins to build on itself. From here, we have all the energy we need to take care of the other important places in our lives, too. Both in and out of "work," since positive energy is being recycled through us, we are gathering even more of it, as we go along. This is one of the ways that energy makes its way into the other parts of our life that need it. We are just taking the energy we have, and we are using it now in a way that restores us – wherever we happen to be.

Loving energy, when it's activated makes its way through all of these internal parts of us: Spiritually, Emotionally, Psychologically and Physically. The last four places outside of us (not necessarily in this order) are: Socially, Sexually, Financially, and Environmentally. Loving energy cycles directly through "us," more than any other place in our lives. This is why people throughout the ages have focused more on what this does for us on the inside, rather than on its external effects. However, all of these separate areas or parts of our lives are linked together. The energy we have and feel is always coming through us; and then it travels out into the world, around us. We are always taking energy with us wherever we go, and this obviously effects what we're doing in the world outside. So, a complete cycle of positive energy is having a positive effect on everything inside and outside of us at the same time!

Since you're in a place where you are gathering more energy now, you'll be able to affect all of the parts of your life in a more positive way. Energy will be making its way through you in two ways. One comes from the positive feelings you'll have. Then, from here, your actions will be healthy and productive for the relationships you have with what's around you. As you begin to see how this energy is benefitting what's there, even more positive feelings will come back to you. Then, you can keep up with the positive moments you wanted to become a part of, all along! In essence, the energy output you have will be coming back to

you at almost the same time. You'll be observing what you are helping to create – in real-time. Because you have more energy, this will also be bringing up the energy that's surrounding you, as well. And, that loop of energy just continues along with you in almost the same rhythm, as breathing does.

Without having to try “to do” so much work to produce positive results, this is how energy changes our situations for the better in our family, our place of business, and in the community around us. We do have to make some movements in our lives, but since we're the carriers and movers of energy, positive changes will begin to happen on their own. As energy is increased in its vibration (which is what love is and does), it creates its own affects, just from being brought up to a higher level. Since we're made of energy, this is how our overall health begins to improve. It's common sense, but as stress levels are decreased, our body is making its way back into a healthier direction. Here, our body is not only more relaxed, but it's also able to function more optimally at the same time. And, this idea works in the same way with the positive energy we exchange, between us. As Dr. Deepak Chopra states in his timely book *“The Path to Love,”* “Love provides homeostatic balance³⁹.” So, anything that's good for you begins to put your body back into a healthier state. And, it works this way with our positive emotions, because our emotions are a direct part of our body, as well.

So, from a more positive emotional state, you'll naturally be able to take care of the other parts of your life without so much strain and effort. You'll have more than enough energy to meet the demands of daily life. Certain situations will still require some actions or movements to complete them, but since you have more energy, those activities will not be draining your supply. You'll be much closer to seeing and knowing the positive effects of your actions beforehand, so you'll gain more of it while you're taking your steps ahead!

Even though you'll have more energy here, you still need time to rest

³⁹ Deepak Chopra, M.D., *The Path to Love* (New York: Harmony Books, 1997), 42.

and rejuvenate. The principles of “how” we live our lives in a healthy and successful way, don’t change because we feel better, or have more energy. We still need to be mindful of how we feel, and take care of ourselves by listening to our feelings. Our bodies will always tell us when we need a little break! Having more energy doesn’t mean that we need to waste it – to use it in a beneficial way. We simply need to start using the energy we have now wisely, and we’ll understand more about how that works, as we go along...

When we’ve reached a place where we feel that we’re becoming our best, we’ll desire to remain here, much more often. When you remember this feeling, the activities that take you here will be much more of a joy to begin, or be involved with. As we see how energy is working for us, the goals that once appeared difficult will be much easier to step into. When we’re low in energy, everything can seem like a chore; even the good stuff! However, when we realize how something makes us feel, we’ll want to be a part of it. Having more energy in general, also changes the way we look at what we’re going to do. So, the distance between how we feel, the steps we take and the goal itself, will be much closer together than we thought! For all of the other parts of your life, your situations will improve because you’re bringing your positive energy into those places. You may have heard the expression, “All boats rise with the tide.” This is what’s happening to those parts of your life, as well. Because your energy is up, you’re bringing those situations “up” with you.

As you start to notice situations improving in your life, some people still might be in the same place. Although most people will be very happy for you, there will be some people who are new to these ideas. So, when you interact with them, have a little more understanding and respect for where they are. Sharing yourself, and being attentive to the moment you’re in is the best thing you can do. It might help you to realize that you’re not responsible for all of the actions everyone takes. Their role is to see and appreciate the beneficial energy you have to share with them. And, with it, they can begin to have a more positive moment with you.

They are the only ones responsible – for noticing this energy, and being happy that they’re receiving something that’s needed. And, you might not notice the change right there and then; but being “there” with them is enough to let energy do its own work. So, keep this in mind; especially if you’re looking for a reaction. Sometimes, your attentiveness is all that it takes! If you’re like me, and you’d like to continue having even more positive experiences with others, there are two things you can do...

Depending on where the conversation goes, you can share some of your experiences with them, so that they feel someone understands where they are. On your journey, you’ve had a few challenges along the way, too. So, remembering where you can from, will allow you to relate to them in a more positive way. Not every moment we have – will be to celebrate where we are happily, even though that’s where everyone wants to be! A part of getting there is seeing how we can share ourselves, so that we *move closer* to that goal. A step is still a step in the right direction...

Everyone wants to feel better; and we all have an opportunity to create so much more of that, regardless of where we are or what our circumstances look like. Our positive interactions – directly change how we feel, for the better. And, that changes our point of view about what’s there. Now that we have more energy and feel better, we can start to take action in a way that begins to improve what’s there. See how that works? Changing how we feel for the best – happens directly in our encounters. Then, regardless if we’re trying to build up what’s good, or what could use a little help, the step – is always the same: A positive one!

Besides, it takes a lot less energy to make ourselves feel better in our moments, because those situations might take quite a few movements to completely turn them around. When we realize that we can almost always make a positive encounter happen together, it will give us the energy to feel better – immediately. Then, we’ll have more energy for everything else. So, this is always the shortest route to feeling better, regardless of what we desire to do.

And, if we need to share a bit of where we are, and what we’d like to

improve, that's still a step towards resolution. We don't need to stay stuck in those negative emotions for too long to move onto something that feels better. Now is our opportunity! Obviously, if it's a very serious situation it will take a little longer to get back to where we really wanted to be. But here, it's more about our point of direction that matters, and not how fast those changes are happening. Like everything else, it's always just one positive step at a time. When we understand that, we can easily manage whatever we desire to do, feel or accomplish...

So, just keep looking for ways to feel better about where you are. Then, you'll have what you need to move things around – from here to there. Understanding this can really transform where you are, even if you're very happy! If this idea has worked for you, and you know someone who could use a little help, sharing this book might be helpful. That way, they'll be able to understand how positive energy can work for them, too.

In my life, this is the part of the journey that took me the longest to figure out. When it comes to helping others feel better (besides making a more positive moment, or lending a hand occasionally), there's only so much we can do. Even the advice here, as helpful as I feel it is, will only work – when it's put to use. And, we can't "make" others choose what's good for them. If a person is really interested in an idea to change their lives for the better, most likely they will bring it up, or they will be engaged in it, even in small ways. And, that's always something you can work with. As long as someone is putting in the effort to do what's beneficial to them (and to you), everything can only move on up – from here!

So, if you can relate in a positive way most of the time, that's the only criteria you'll need for anyone's company. Everything else comes down to an individual choice, as far as habits go. Giving people the freedom to have their own wishes and plans is always a part of any healthy relationship. So, we need to respect our "own" personal choices, while realizing that what we share with others is also having a positive or negative effect on them, too. I think for any relationship to last, besides

making it enjoyable, that's all we really need to remember...

Another thing we can do, besides taking our attitudes and our conversations to positive places is to spend more time on activities that energize us. If there doesn't seem to be many possibilities where you are, there are plenty of different meet-up groups. I'm sure you'll be able to find people who will want to enjoy their time in a similar way. And, if you're pro-active, you can start a meet-up group of your own. Since everyone would like to be happier, there's a wide audience out there, looking for more ways to do that! That's why Dr. Wayne Dyer's movie "*The Shift*" was such a success. He tied together how we can take our lives and our relationships to new, deeply fulfilling heights⁴⁰. Any one of these suggestions will help you begin putting your energy into places that will make a positive difference to you, and those who are receptive to feeling good in their lives, too.

Every other activity that you're involved with, besides work and spending time with others is also helping to keep your spirits "up." Sometimes, when we've reached such an important place in our lives, we can lose sight of the "little things" that are also here to sustain us. So, from now on, pay a little more attention to the simple tasks you perform during your daily routine. Just like a supporting "muscle," they are helping you to maintain the life you have now. In fact, every part of your life is giving you something positive – to enhance where you are. The master key to feeling better about the simple things is to see how they are directly helping the larger vision you have for your life. And, if you look closely, the positive connections are always – right there!

The Experiment:

For this one, all you'll need is five minutes. No paper or pen is necessary! Just take a few minutes to think about how one part of your life is directly related to what you love to do. See how those are linked

⁴⁰ Dr. Wayne W. Dyer, *The Shift*, directed by Michael Goorjian (Hay House, 2009), DVD, 3hrs.

together. One part of our lives is another place to enjoy ourselves, but it's also supporting who we are in a variety of different ways. Once you make the positive connection between what you love, and any other part of your life: Smile! Now you have even more reasons to enjoy what you're doing. If you're in school, seeing the connections between each subject you're learning about (just like those muscles), will begin to tie everything together into a cohesive whole. This will compound the meaning of everything you're in the process of doing. And, even more possibilities can open up for you, from here. That's another reason why every part of our lives, and what we're doing in them are so important. They are all giving us something in their own unique way to help make our lives – worth living.

A Final Thought:

When we're close to happiness, if we give it some thought, we're able to understand how everything is helping to support our favorite place to be – in a variety of different ways. When we grasp this, we'll feel even better about where we are, right now. And, that's exactly what this experiment was here to help you see!

Author's Note:

Dr. Deepak Chopra and Dr. Wayne W. Dyer have arguably been the most infamous names in putting health and spiritual well-being together, than any other authors in this century. And, I'm all for praise in anyone's commitments to doing what's right for them and for others, as well. Looking up to others who have achieved so much – is a great place to start your journey...However, after all of the inspiration from others has been activated...It's going to be up to you – to put yourself into a place that feels good inside and out; even just in the moment. Others can help; but even the best ideas and the people behind them – must take a step back, as you move into implementing what works in your life – right where you are now. You are the first and last “giver and receiver” of the positive feelings you desired to be a part of. Always remember that; and you'll find yourself in a place where you can always – begin!

C22: Enjoying Your Tasks!

The Premise:

In our fast-paced world, it's common to rush through some of the things that we need to do during the day. While we can still accomplish some of our tasks this way, feeling good while we're in motion is another story. The biggest drawback to rushing is that those moments end up being like empty calories. We go through the motions, but we desire to feel something good from them! If so, that's exactly what this chapter is for. To get into the spirit of these ideas, I've written this chapter very early in the morning. (And, I'm not a morning person...) That way, I can see if having a more positive attitude even when I'm tired, will help me accomplish the tasks I need to complete, happily. So, in a way you could say this entire chapter is my experiment – for you!

When we have very little energy or there is a strain on the energy we have, we have to work in spite of how we feel to get things accomplished. All of us go through periods like this in one way or another. But, there has to be something to give us back more energy, from the steps we're taking...

Being tired is a great way to see if a principle has a positive effect on us, or not. Since being “low in energy” is pretty much the same feeling as being tired, here is where we'll be able to see quite easily, if this idea works. To start with, there are two ways of looking at how we go through our motions during the day. The first part has to do with how much time we have to complete our tasks. We all know that if we're not rushed, we're able to ease into our activity, and this usually makes us feel better about what we need or want to do. The reason why we feel this way is because “rushing” is taking more energy – away from us. It causes anxiety; and that's one of the reasons why some tasks feel like a drain on our energy. When we're rushing, our bodies perceive this as an emergency – and that's exactly the way we feel, about it...

The second part comes from not thinking very much about why we're

going through those motions. Everything we do – from the most routine things, to the things we only do occasionally, all have a positive purpose behind them. Everything has a place and a reason for being a part of our lives. So, to feel good about doing or accomplishing something, we need to remember the meaning of “why” we’re there. Then, we bring the purpose and the positive energy behind getting them done – back to us. We gain a lot more energy from the moves we’re making, because we can see the benefits of those actions, while we’re in motion. Neale Donald Walsch, the author of the *Conversations with God* series is the one who turned me on to this idea. His viewpoint has helped me tremendously to see my daily activities in entirely new light. It’s the attitude we bring into what we’re doing that changes us, and what happens there⁴¹. Just like seeing the connections between the different parts of our lives, we can get closer to discovering how our everyday actions are benefitting us. When we combine the positive activity’s meaning with our positive attitude, some really magical experiences can happen in the most familiar places!

When we understand why we’re doing something, we get more energy out of that, because we see the importance of our actions. This especially works for the things we enjoy most, because they have the most meaning to us. However, we can view our other routines in the same way. Once you see the benefits of what you’re doing with any task – for yourself and others, you gain a boost in energy that you didn’t have, before...

At first, it might not seem like this attitude is going to benefit you that much, from one simple task. However, since we make so many moves throughout the day, after a little while of getting into this mindset, our energy really has a chance to build itself up. So, think of some of the things that you do every day – as a springboard into feeling better about life, and what you *can do* in it!

Just like the simple positive moments that we share, our daily routines

⁴¹ Neale Donald Walsch, *Neale Donald Walsch on Abundance and Right livelihood: Applications for Living* (Virginia: Hampton Roads, 1999), 43.

are also showing us – what we can do. Even a very simple or enjoyable action, if we're present – is giving us a positive feeling, and a sense of accomplishment. As you start taking this outlook into more activities, what do you think will happen to how you feel, and how much energy you'll have? And, what do you think that will do for how you see life?

As time goes on, you'll be able link the most important things that you love to do, with your other tasks, and you'll see the direct connections between them. This gives you a more seamless stream of energy that stays with you more frequently; rather than going from one exciting task to a boring or stressful one, and back again. (Flip-flopping with our energy causes much more harm than good.) So, once we begin to see the meaning of our activities as we're completing them, we'll feel much better, and better about them, too! This is like putting very small amounts of positive energy – in the bank, so we'll have more of it... Especially, for what matters most. Can you start to see the connections now, between here – and there?

So, with anything that you need to do, see if you can slow down a bit to recognize what you're doing, and what that's doing – for you. It's normal to like some things more than others, so keep that in mind. However, the next step comes from seeing how all of your tasks are supporting you, and what you love to do. This way, you gain as much energy as possible from all of the steps you are about to take. When you put these moves together: between the meanings, accomplishing them, and being a part of them... You'll find the boost of energy that you've been looking for – out of life!

The Experiment:

Take one activity that you enjoy doing the most, and do it – for 15 minutes. While you're there, try to identify two things. Why do you enjoy this so much? Is it what you are doing, the meaning of it, or both? Then, take one task that you like the least, and while you're there, see if you can notice – what you're accomplishing, and the purpose of it. How is this task – helping you?

The last part is to directly connect some of your other tasks to what you love to do. Like William Blake, the poet who saw infinity and the whole world in a grain of sand in his poem, “*Auguries of Innocence*,” the more you practice this idea, the more you’ll see the meaning of everything that’s in front of you, little by little⁴². By expanding your focus a bit, you’ll see how all of the moves you’re making with a positive attitude are helping you to have more energy – than you’ve ever had, before! When you feel the surge, you might want to speed up a little. Just take it easy! You’re building the energy you have – up; so let it build on its own. Remember, slow and steady almost always allows you to concentrate your efforts to not only do a job well done, but to enjoy the meaning of what’s there. This idea works while we’re taking our steps forward, or if we need to take a break to admire the beautiful world that we always have, all around us. Either way, our positive relationship “inside and out” is still there, with us...

A Final Thought:

Anything that we’re doing with a more positive attitude can increase the amount of energy we have. Seeing the meaning of the simple things we do every day, not only gives us a boost, it allows us to see the purpose behind what we love to do, as well. Indirectly, we are also developing some healthy habits in the process. Putting all of these things “together” allows us to enjoy ourselves much more often, no matter where we are. And yes (just to let you know), getting up a little earlier to write this chapter, gave me the boost of energy I needed to get into a good frame of mind, for the rest of my day. It’s nice when you can give yourself – your best, before the day begins. That way, you’ll have a little more energy to put back into your tasks. And, after all of those meaningful steps, rest is exactly what we need to rejuvenate and reflect appreciatively, on all that we’ve been able to enjoy and accomplish, so far.

⁴² *The Complete Poetry & Prose of William Blake*, edited by David V. Erdman, commentary by Harold Bloom, newly revised ed. (New York: Anchor Books, 1998), 490-492.

C23: Rest and Your Rhythms...

The Premise:

When we think of resting we usually think of sleeping or taking a nap. However, there are many different ways that we can rest our body, mind and spirit. Technically speaking, any activity that brings us just as much energy or more than we're using at the time can be considered a restful activity. During "rest," our body has the chance to repair and rejuvenate itself. However, this can also be done while we're awake, and moving ourselves around, too!

The single most important aspect of resting is the part where we give our body a chance to come back to center, with the least amount of negative interference from energy on the outside. When we cut out most of that interference – we begin to use less energy, which naturally builds more of it. A “stressor” is anything that requires us to use up the energy we have in an emotionally negative way. Most often, these are extra short-term bursts of energy that we need to fix a problem. However, if we can see the positive outcome in what we're doing, usually that will bring more energy back to us...

In order for our bodies to function in a healthy way – or in the way that they were designed or created to work – for and not against us, our body has to “use” some of the energy it has, so that we can put it to use during our movements. This idea follows the common phrase, “It takes energy, to make more of it.” While this is a normal part of how our body operates, there are many ways to take this idea into our daily movements, so that we end up expending the least amount of energy, while gaining back more of it. This idea, biologically speaking is what our bodies are always working to do, from the inside out. In other words, it would like the most positive “return” on the energy it's using. Long-term, it doesn't like to waste it. (Just a little tidbit, the terms recycling and rejuvenation are actually a physical and biological process of how *we* utilize energy.) So, our bodies are wise investors with the energy it has to use!

While it's not necessarily "wrong" to use more energy than we need to produce a certain outcome, in the long-term to stay healthy and enjoy what we're doing, our bodies would like to be able to perform all of their functions in the least stressful ways, as possible. This allows us to function in a way that's quite relaxed. Even with all of the communication between our cells and organs, our body would like to do this in a way that makes it feel good – about what it's doing. And, it's the same with us, too...

To fully grasp this idea, think of all of the cells in your body (for now) as just one big cell. We could call this – you! So, how do you feel most of the time about the tasks you need to do? Do you feel relaxed while making those movements or do you feel a bit anxious, rushed or uneasy? The feelings that you "feel" are essentially what's happening to all of your cells put together, and that's why – we feel the way we do. If you feel good about what you're doing, this is what's happening to your entire body. Since how we feel about something comes down to: how much energy it requires, how fast we're going through the motions, what the outcome will be, as well as what it means to us, we can easily see why we might feel the way we do sometimes (positive or negative) about accomplishing our goals. So, what does all of this have to do with taking it easy?

Well, it's all about making it easier on ourselves physically and emotionally, while we're living day-to-day. There's an unfortunate misunderstanding most of us have adopted that says we need to work "very hard" to produce a positive or successful outcome. This is simply not true; according to how our body functions and stays healthy, long-term. To see this idea in action with a few simple examples, the next time you go into your closet to get something out (pending that the closet is somewhat organized) observe how much "force" or effort it takes to complete this simple task. We all know how to do this, how much energy we need to put into it, and what the outcome will be. During any one of our movements, all that we need to put into them – is no more energy than it takes to do this. In other words, putting more energy into this

“task” than is needed to be successful will *not* produce a better outcome. We’ve attached the idea of being diligent and dedicated to a cause, and making the process difficult – on us. Smart work, might be much more beneficial in succeeding at any task.

Another good example comes from getting things accomplished in a way that allows us to use the “best” energy we have at the time. For example, I love to write late at night. It’s quiet, and you could say, I’m a bit of a night owl. However, if I know I’m going to have a busy day, I can stick to my routine (knowing that I’ll be tired), or I can adjust my time based on the amount of energy I’ll have. It’s great to have a dedicated routine, but we also need to be a bit more flexible sometimes, too. So, this all comes down to picking the best time on a given day to get the important things done. I know this obviously fits right into organizing our time, as well...However, at the end of the day, everything comes down to how we feel, and what we’ve been able to do. So, managing your energy output levels (pacing) longer-term is a very important step, if you’re looking to feel good about what you're doing!

The reason why I wrote a chapter on rest, while in motion – is for us to think a little more about how much energy we’re using (and sometimes wasting) throughout the day to complete our tasks. Most of us feel drained or tired after work and there are many facets to that; but we’re simply using way more energy than we need to accomplish what we wanted to do. Since everything we’re “doing” is pretty much run and decided on by us, in order to be happy and to stay healthy, we need to take the same principles that our bodies use – and apply them to our lives on the outside. This is so important to our success; especially for business and the bottom line. What’s happening “to us” at work (on the inside of us) is exactly what’s happening to our business – on the inside of it! And, visa-versa. (See the direct connection in those two places?) Since we’re running our business, how “we” run it is how things will turn out, as far as positive results go. Many scientific studies have already been done on how well “we” work in relation to productivity. So, if you think “catch-as-catch-can” is the best model to increase your

bottom line, you might want to review your options. Anxiety, even to get to a better place, still creates – more of it.

Once you're on that treadmill, not only does it use up way more time, energy and money than is necessary, but it doesn't feel good and it's not healthy for you, either. You can't rush your way to real success, but you can create it in such a way that it works – for you, and your business, consistently. (And, that's when the process begins to pick-up speed on its own.)

Since we're literally made of the same physical energy that we're using, it doesn't matter if you're at the very top or bottom of your business. Energy at our core, affects us *all* in the same way. The myth that we're somehow disconnected from the energy we're using is under the assumption that we have to rush to get what we desire, or that we have to cut corners out of what's needed to get more... However, we really can have a process that works for everyone, where there aren't many problems, at all. So, we can enjoy what we're doing without very much stress, and produce the maximum results that we wanted to see at the same time. Suffering or pain was only meant in the short-term for the initial burst of energy that we needed to get moving, or to get what works into place. Once the proper conditions are set – our continued success was only so that we could feel more relaxed, confident and happier about what we're doing. A 5% or 10% raise in the bottom line short-term, with an increase of stress regularly on everyone – including you, means you're essentially “paying” for a ton of headaches and more mistakes. This only delays your forward momentum. It's difficult to enjoy your “gains” emotionally or financially in this way; because your body is where you feel *all* of your emotions. And, we might “think” that we can separate those out. However, our bodies, just like the bottom line, takes *everything* into account. (More on that in a little while...)

So, put all of that hard work to better use, by making your life and the lives of millions of others easier, by simply putting into place what it takes to rest easy – in your success. If you have some doubts about the

final outcome with this method, you can go back to the way things were... But once you see how easy it can be to avoid the struggle between ease and more money (when you can have both), you'll never go back. A good question to lead the process in this direction, would be, "What would we really need to do to make everything run, as smooth as possible?" No more, and no less. When you discover an answer, simply put those things into place. If you're successful, there's no bigger loss than "struggling" to enjoy what you have; when you have the means and the ability to make what you're doing – work so much better!

Since energy is contagious, in this kind of environment, customers and employees will feel extremely happy about visiting your business; beyond just the goods and services. Google in its beginning stages, the WD-40 Company, and Paul Mitchell have been three great examples of businesses that put the idea of "enjoying work and profits" together. And, look where they are. Does anyone know why – we've separated these two ideas to begin with? (When you're used to chasing after something, even when you get it, it's hard to let go of the struggler's pace. So, if you've made it – relax into what you've got, as more is coming in. Try it, and see how you feel!) When you have a great day at work, that energy is coming right home with you. And, the opposite is also true, as well...

This brings us home, so we can enjoy all of our other movements, too. If you haven't made the connection, feeling "good" really comes down to how much positive energy we have. Besides slowing down a bit, so that you can see the benefits of the steps you're making, there are a few other ways that we can give our bodies a rest, or a boost.

I couldn't think of a more relaxing activity than to meditate for a bit, to listen to some soothing instrumental music, or to simply sit outside and observe nature for a little while. Reading a good book, doing some Tai Chi, or spending quiet time with our children or pets, will relax us and build up our energy at the same time. We might consider Yoga, a walk, dancing or even some light exercise. However, not to single out anyone's

traditional ideas about relaxing...Anything that we enjoy – will relax us, and put us into a better mood! So, this idea can extend out much further into what we love to do; as we naturally gain more energy here – than we’re using. (Did you feel a little shift in your understanding?)

Sharing positive energy with each other during our conversations can also be a great way to gain more energy, while we’re using it. Imagining what our future could look like, reflecting on and appreciating where we’ve been, can be other ways to gather up more energy. For me, I happen to gain the biggest “boost” from doing what I enjoy, most of all. That would be while writing, solving some of the world’s “biggest” problems, spending time with my cat Apollo, or playing music. Outside of time with my family and friends, and having a great conversation perhaps, I gain more energy through these activities, than anywhere else...

So, what about you? How do you like to rejuvenate? Could you carve out a little more time for that? A majority of the activities that bring us the most joy can be done for 15 minutes to 30 minutes, regularly. If we look closely, we have more time than we think to spend on what’s most important. We can do some of our favorite things with our friends or significant others, too. That way, we can really see what those activities mean to us.

To wrap this up, there are many more ways than I could ever list about how to rest, to enjoy our life’s pace, and our favorite activities at the same time. All of these ideas are closely related, because of how they make us feel. As far as our energy is concerned, it all comes down to that. So, make your time, energy and your movements work for you, and you won’t have to do much – to feel “relaxed!”

The Experiment:

For this experiment identify two simple things. One is to see how you can spend more time relaxing in any way that you enjoy. Set aside a time on your calendar. It might seem strange to schedule this “very easy task,”

but even if it's only for an hour a week, you'll see what a difference it can make. The second part comes from a previous experiment with a slight change. See how you can involve yourself with an activity that requires a bit of movement; but one that's relaxing! Give yourself an hour here, too. In combining slowing down or being still, and being energized by our movements, we get to see what each side of this does for making us feel good. At the heart of it, resting is all about living in more ways that bring positive energy – back to us. Like Sadhguru said, “If you could remain relaxed while performing all of the activities of the day, you would be about the same in the evening in terms of energy and enthusiasm, as you were in the morning⁴³.” From personal experience, I have seen this idea work wonders many times over. So, see what this approach does for how you feel while you're moving, and even at the end of a very long day.

A Final Thought:

Anything that we're doing – with joy and purpose, can give our body, mind and soul the rest and energy they need to become vibrant and healthy. This approach makes us feel our best, so that we can enjoy life much more often. In whatever way that's special to us, now is the only time we really have to enjoy being a part of it; so that the rejuvenation we've been looking for – is right there, with us.

Giving Everything a Break:

Has it been a long day? Was it a mix of a few rough patches and a few good moments? Was it amazing, but you're spent? Did you give it your all, and it still went south? No matter what the reason or the cause... We all have days once in a while that we wish we could erase from our memory banks, or completely do over. Not because things didn't work out, but because there's literally nothing we could have done about them. So, if you've had one of those, there are a few things that you can do after you've calmed down a bit...

⁴³ Sadhguru, *Inner Engineering: A Yogi's Guide to Joy* (India: Penguin Ananda, 2016), 141.

Rather than trying to change or even understand what happened – forget all of that. Why? Sometimes, all of the understanding in the world isn't going to change the final outcome. So, I'll give you a few internal and external things that you can do to give – everything a break...

On the inside, realizing that you couldn't have done anything different to change the outcome will lean you closer to acceptance. And, you don't have to be happy about it. That's not what this is for – yet. Every now and then, the collective energy of the world comes together in ways where nothing is lining up. Understanding that our personal power only influences so much can free us from feeling responsible, for everything that's happened. Positive or negative, you're a big part of what's there, but not all of it. So, remembering this will allow you to let go of your desire to influence your path on days where you simply can't. And, this allows you to let others off the hook, too. I'm all for the power to transform our moments, our lives – you name it... But some days, we just can't change the outcome. So, now you can “rest” into that wisdom. The day was – what it was, and that's it. Every day is important, but on the universal clock of life, this is such a small fraction of time. If you really did what you could, no one is going to think any less of you; nor will this stop your goals or plans from becoming a success. This is just a moment for you to put life “on-pause” for a short period of time. Sometimes, we need to tune-out everything – but ourselves. We just have to be where we are, without trying to change or do anything. Once you realize that this is more than ok, you can ease into a few routines that will help you relax, even more. Now that you've unplugged from the progress wheel, you can take a long shower, spend time with a pet if you have one, journal to process your feelings, meditate – just for the sake of quieting down, or you can just go to bed early...

As long as you realize that some moments or days will be like this, and it's not going to stop your momentum, this allows you to get back into the flow of life again – from a place that has no desires or expectations, but to coast along with what's there. (And, this is a good routine to get into, when the power to control certain outcomes are not exactly in your

hands.) This could include dealing with children, the elderly, or even when someone isn't feeling well. Life has afforded all of us with a silent and invisible "barrier of protection" to certain situations and moments like this. So, look at these moments – as opportunities to practice compassion, and to go easy on yourself and others. More positive than not *overall* is the goal here. It's not mandatory in the short-term; as forces far beyond what we can see or even understand sometimes is also developing its own plans for how things will turn-out. A little more trust in what we can't see yet, and giving it time to unfold, will go a long way into easing the stress of what's there...

When you loosen your attachment to having it this way or that, you can come back to center in a shorter period of time. And, on days like this, that's what "tomorrow" is for! As a reminder of what you have to look forward to very soon, and how much our combined positive energy really does for us. This reassuring "note" should put you back into the right frame of mind – just before you fall asleep. (Sweet Dreams.)

Author's Note:

The idea of resting into my movements came together when I was doing valet work. Over a six year period, and through my positive interactions with over 30,000 people, I was able to not only have more energy to put back into my work, but that's how I wrote this book.

When you're doing something simple that many times, you can really see what's working there; almost like being in slow motion. From a standstill between customers, I was able to notice how life was unfolding from the positive interactions I was having with other people. I could see from just about every angle – inside and out – how positive energy was helping my focus, productivity, and to see the meaning of what I was doing, and how this made others feel. So, besides a little help from my EMT and nursing background, that's how I put the book together. And, I was able to put all of these ideas together in my mind – while I was actively working...So, that's how much we can really gain from the positive experiences we have, regularly. They're literally expanding

everything we can do. The joy, ease and purpose I found here – gave me the extra energy and insight I needed for something greater to materialize. So, hopefully, this example alone will show you how much positive and enjoyable energy – can really do for us!

C24: Eating and What You Take – Into Yourself.

The Premise:

You've often heard the phrase, "We are what we eat." While food is truly an important part of our lives, everything that we're involved with (energetically speaking), becomes a part of us in both large and small ways. Since we're literally swimming in a sea of energy, everything we are doing and that we are a part of has an effect on our entire being. So, choosing foods that resonate with our biology and our environment plays a huge role in how healthy and happy that we can be – for the rest of our lives.

While it would be next to impossible to keep track of every single experience and *everything* that's happening in them, we have a lot more control and ability to make positive choices than we think! We just need to remember the "why" of what we're doing. Choosing our food wisely is another part of our creative process. We need a wide variety of the seven food groups: carbohydrates, proteins, healthy fats, vitamins, minerals, fiber and water to sustain ourselves⁴⁴. And, the healthier choices we make here will also make us *feel* better. (Someday, I hope positive emotions land on that list of necessities...)

The reason why I focus more on how we feel is because we use energy for everything. When we feel good, it means we'll have the energy we need to stay active in whatever we would like to do. Consuming food that we "know" will be good for us will only go so far. In other words, if you know what you're eating is keeping you healthy, this can make you feel good about it for a little while. However, being able to *feel the difference* (especially after we eat), will be the best motivator in choosing something that's good for us. The same can be said for anything that we're doing. (Just like our conversations, right?) Making any positive choice comes down to how it makes us feel; and for how long.

⁴⁴ Patrick Holford, *The New Optimum Nutrition Bible*, revised ed. (California: The Crossing Press, 2004), 44.

So, from beginning to end, this process combines: the idea of eating something good, making that decision, taking ourselves to it, enjoying the act of eating, and then benefitting from what that's doing for us, emotionally and physically. (That's quite an incentive to grab something that's healthy to eat!) Health and pleasure long-term come down to how we feel about our final results, and the steps we're taking to get there. If something feels good to you (especially if it's healthy) you'll want to be involved. So, think of this point, as where survival and thriving – meet! Feelings *are* our feedback; and they are the only incentive we have to keep something good – up!

Remember when you were young and your parents told you to, “Eat your vegetables?” It was certainly a nice idea, but most weren't able to explain why this was so important. Explaining the physical benefits might help, but if we could have a “Popeye” like moment, it would probably be difficult to keep up with the demands for spinach. (I can't tell you how many times I asked my grandmother to make me a bowl, while I was watching the show. Somehow, oatmeal would creep its way in there, too!) While our muscles don't grow as fast as they do on TV, the ability to gauge how good we feel after eating, can happen in a very short time. So, when we feel good about what we're eating, and what we're eating is making us feel good, you can easily see just how far this goes. To begin with, the positive feelings we'll have will always come first; but our results are directly connected to that. By putting together how good something is for us, why, and what that feels like, we'll want to keep up with that...

Besides feeling good, function also plays a role in how to stay motivated about eating better. When we have more energy, we'll be able to perform our tasks in the best possible way, and we're also able to focus for longer periods of time, easily. Since everything that's happening inside of our body has an influence on what we can do, this will help us make the connection between what we're eating, and how this relates to our lives on the outside. So, eating well influences our ability to get the most out of what we're doing, and this obviously makes us feel better, too!

(There's that wheel, again.) Since our prime goal in life is to be happier about it, this is where you can combine your goals and your desire to be happy, *healthy* and successful. You can figure out more of what you need, based on what your goals are. And, you can always get more specific or change your approach, as you go along.

We all have different needs as far as calories and nutrients go, depending on our age and our activity levels. If we choose a wider variety of foods, daily or weekly, this is a very good starting point to get the nutrition we need to become healthier. Once in the body, all of these separate nutrients combine for many different purposes. If we have the basics covered, we can always fine-tune our diets with certain foods. While it would be impossible to list all of the major groups of food, what they do, what vitamins and minerals they contain, and what those are good for here (whew), any basic nutrition book will give you much more information about that. Rather than trying to learn "everything" about nutrition, begin by learning more about what the seven food groups do for you, and how digestion works, in general. This will go a very long way towards choosing foods that will be healthier, and understanding why they are important to you...

The next step is to make a few very small positive changes. And, this doesn't have to be a chore! You can still eat what you're used to eating, or what you like. Simply add a few new healthy ingredients into your meals, and see how you feel in a few days, or by the end of the week. The easiest way to begin is to choose a different snack, between meals. For example, when my wife Robyn was in nutrition school, she packed a lot of different fruits and vegetables in my lunch. I happened to be working in valet at the time; and I was always on the go. I noticed from eating a few healthier snacks that it really made a difference on my energy levels. So, try this (especially on an empty stomach), and you should be able to notice a difference in how you feel, and in how much energy you have. Eating more nutritious foods will also help you to eat less, too. Often when we feel hungry, we need more vitamins and minerals or more of a specific food group, and not necessarily more

calories. So, when we're giving our body what it really needs more often, we usually won't be as hungry.

Besides changing up what we eat, there are a few other suggestions to get the most out of our meals. Chewing our food better and eating slower helps our digestion, too. Eating slower will allow you to realize when you're full. When we eat too fast we bypass that message, and we tend to overeat. The idea is to make it easier on our bodies to fully digest our food; so that we get the most nutrition and energy from it. Fiber is very helpful, too. (Please go easy, here!)

Making sure you're getting enough water is important, too. Besides oxygen, our body uses water for every function it has. While the amounts keep changing on how much water we need, a little extra than we normally drink, should be enough. Drinking water in the morning when we first get up, before or between meals can be good for our digestion, as well. It's ok to sip on water while we're eating, but we want our stomach acid to be able to do its job. So, drinking before or between meals can be more beneficial to you. Late night snacking is alright once in a blue moon, but if we eat our last meal closer to four hours before bed regularly, we'll sleep much better. When we're asleep our body goes into repair mode. So, eating closer to bedtime interrupts this cycle; and we don't need those extra calories to sleep...

So, any one of these simple suggestions in time can make a big difference in how you feel, overall. When you begin to make very small and easy changes, it will motivate you to take other positive steps in your life, too. As soon as you notice a change in how you feel, you'll be able to make more positive choices without very much effort. Feeling better, naturally *activates motivation and our faith*. (Who would have thought that food can also increase our faith?)

How you spend time in a positive way will make you feel better, but this also helps your digestion. When our stress levels are down, those benefits work on every single part of our body. One positive choice has a direct and indirect influence on our entire lives. And, this shouldn't make

you worry more about making better choices. Just know that when you do, it's helping out more than just that specific area of your life.

Hopefully, learning a little more about how nutritious food is helping you out in many more ways than one, will give you the boost you need to get started. With any goals, including the foods you eat, remember to start off small and simple with your choices... There's no need to rush it!

Little positive choices regularly will transform the way you feel, both now and in the future. So, put your attention on the little steps that you can take where you are; and you'll be very close to achieving your goals – in no time! Any healthy way that you can increase the energy you have, will keep you inspired to take steps everywhere else in your life, too...

As you've seen so far, there are many ways to increase the positive energy we have; especially with the time that we spend together. And, our meals play a big role here. So, like food, mix-up the ways that you can make your relationships more enjoyable. What we choose to do (alone and together), such as: what we talk about, listen to, read and involve ourselves in, will all have a profound effect on how good we feel. So, pay a little closer attention to that... That's why I called a part of this chapter, "What you take – into yourself." Everything we choose to do in one way or another is leading us closer to happiness and health, or further away from it.

Rather than trying to think about "doing everything right," just ask: Is this a healthy and happy choice? This works for food, just as much as it does for everything else! If you get a little overwhelmed about any of these ideas, remember – it's only one positive choice at a time. Not the perfect choice; just one that's beneficial. If you get off track, keep in mind "why" that choice is important to you. It's as simple, as that. You'll be making happier decisions as you go along, for the rest of your life. These recommendations are not fixed goals that need to be reached by next week, or even next year. They are only ways for you to feel even better, about being here. So, always start off small in a single,

manageable area that's important to you. As far as food goes, be happy about what you're going to eat now, and in the future. If you take your time and do a little research, there are so many positive, easy options for making healthier choices. And, there's no "right way" for everyone. Take it one step at a time, remember the basics, and you'll soon be on your way to becoming the healthiest you – yet!

The Experiment:

Since "experimenting" is supposed to be fun, the next experiment might make it a little easier! The next time you go shopping, just pick out one or two different things to try. Let your intuition and excitement lead the way. You'll always gravitate towards the things you normally like to eat, but hopefully, you'll have a few more healthy things to eat, too⁴⁵.

Rather than speeding straight to the fruits and vegetables, start browsing in areas you're comfortable with. That's always the best place to start making changes. (There's nothing to fear about trying a new food!) The worst case is you simply won't like it. And, that's it. The real goal is to get excited about something that's good for you, as well as trying something new. Some foods might be the best thing you've had, and others might not be so hot. Just explore what's available to you. At the end of a few weeks, you might find some new items on your list. So, have fun, and you'll see that making a few positive changes, doesn't have to be boring or difficult, at all!

Eating is one way to feel better; and what we "digest" in other ways, also has an effect on our happiness, health and well-being. So, consider this when you're choosing a healthier option. Who knows... When you're looking for new ways to enjoy yourself, if you haven't prepared your first meal yet, something different might make you curious about how to do that. So, see? One positive step always has so many more benefits, than what's on the surface. It just leads us into discovering some new

⁴⁵ Elizabeth Lipski, Ph. D., CCN, *Digestive Wellness*, revised 3rd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005), 148-149.

things that we can do! And, with that, isn't it about time for you to get cookin'?

A Final Thought:

Choosing healthier foods gives us the nutrients we need for our body. They also help to sharpen our focus, so that we can concentrate on what's most important. Happiness comes from how much positive energy we have; and food is a direct way to it. Connecting what we eat, how we feel, and what we can do, will make trying new foods more exciting. Your next meal is the first opportunity you'll have to feel how good this "boost" can be. If you realize that our healthier choices are here for us to enjoy them and ourselves more often, you're starting to put the recipe together...A healthy, positive choice can be a much happier one – from start to finish!

Author's Note:

Picking out healthier choices doesn't exactly have to start where our mouths or bellies are. Everything that's good for us (in one way or another) got started in the soil...So, to get even more excited about the food you're about to eat or cook, take a deeper dive into the ground below your feet. There's a whole universe under there to explore. You'll be quite surprised to discover just how all of those nutrients find their way into our food...

There are many movies and documentaries popping-up about the soil, and how we can take better care of it. We nourish it – so that it can continue to nourish us. (And, that's what any positive relationship is really, all about.) The more you explore it, the more you'll discover just how closely related we are, and what we're doing – for each other. Two of my recent favorites to watch are, "Fantastic Fungi" and "Kiss the Ground."

Enjoy.

C25: *Wow. Now You're Really Cookin'!*

The Premise:

In case you need a few more interesting facts to get you curious about making your first meal, did you know that digestion begins, before we even put food into our mouths? Any sound, sight, odor, taste or texture associated with food, triggers the body to prepare for what might be on the way⁴⁶! Cooking, our saliva, and our teeth take care of the first part of digestion; then our stomach with the help of hydrochloric acid, enzymes, and our intestines finish the rest of the work. With each step here, we are getting closer to the most important part of eating. Taste might be the best part for your mouth; but how about when this all boils down and becomes – an actual part of your body...How's that for culinary art?

If you're like me, the idea of making a meal can seem a little intimidating! Luckily for us first timers, it isn't the end of the world if you decide to take a leap into this to see what you can do. Like anything we try for the first time, beginner's luck can easily happen, but it usually takes a few times to smooth out the edges, and to see how we feel about it. My first cooking experience when I was eleven didn't turn out so well, because I didn't understand what I needed to do; even while I was watching TV. Now that you're older, you might fill your "stuffed tomatoes" with something other than just bread crumbs! (Who would have thought a simple mistake could be a great running joke in my family, almost forty years later?) In fact, laughing at my first attempts, might give you a little courage to try your hand at it. I'm sure your first dish won't turn out, as bad...So, you're starting out in a much better place, already!

One suggestion to calm down your butterflies is to view making your first meal, like going behind the scenes of something that's *extremely* enjoyable to you. Since almost everyone loves to eat, why not look deeper into the mystery of it? Here, you can get a little more fascinated

⁴⁶ Lipski, Ph. D., CCN, *Digestive Wellness*, 22.

by what's actually happening. Maybe for the first time, you can observe someone; and with each step you can get a better idea of how it works. That way, when it's your turn, you'll be more prepared. If you buy a little extra food, you'll be able to try it again if something goes sideways, like my tomatoes did! Besides, no one is expecting you to be the next "Julia Child" of *The French Chef* on your first try...

If your favorite dish is complicated, tone it down a little, or give baking something simple a go. Usually, there aren't too many ingredients, and most things can be made in a few easy steps. And, that's what I did to get started. In fact, I enjoy baking much more than cooking. (My wife loves to cook, but she'd rather leave the baking to me.) A salad could also be an easy, tasty and colorful way to get going. If you explore these ideas, you'll find that most dishes require almost the same steps. Your recipe may involve a few different ingredients or a longer cooking time, perhaps. Like anything that we can already do, it just takes a few times to get over the hump...But, then – the fun begins!

If you're successful right away, this might inspire you to try a few new activities in other parts of your life, too. Even if we aren't, almost anything will come out right with a little repetition. Everything you can do now was once new. So, like getting to know someone we're already good friends with, spending a little more time with food will allow you to appreciate what it's doing for you. Hopefully, since the last chapter, you've had time to get a bit more curious about the foods you enjoy. The more information we have about how something works and why, the more confidence we'll have. Since food is such an important part of life, when you get more involved, you'll be able to know more about what it's doing for you, and your health. This way, you can appreciate the entire process of cooking, eating and digestion that much more, as well...

Cooking is like any other part of our lives. When we participate in doing something that we enjoy or that's good for us, we will feel – the same way! Seeing cooking up close or watching a cooking show can be very

enjoyable; but being directly involved (especially with something that we make), brings our enthusiasm meter “up” much higher. You might not know this with cooking yet, but you definitely know how this feels with some other things you enjoy. It’s only a matter of time before you dive into something that looks interesting to you! So, if you become more involved, you’ll feel even more comfortable taking the next step. And, that includes eating the meal, too. Hey, if it looks *that* good – why not, try it?

Besides making a meal, taking a trip to an orchard or to your local farm can be a great way to get a little closer to what you’re about to eat. For me, seeing something that’s close to nature – or in its natural state, allows me to see the connection to what’s happening, before it gets to my plate. This helps me to follow the food chain, and I gain a lot more appreciation out of what goes into making something that I enjoy. Remember, even the simplest things in life, can take months or years before they’re ready. Do you know how long it took for us to have our modern day knife, spoon and fork? Venture into the past to see how we had to eat a few hundred years ago, and even what ingredients they used. We often overlook the common things we use every day; but there’s an entire history behind everything that’s here. If anything, this might make you interested in learning more about how our favorite dishes were invented. (Yes, I meant that *both* ways...)

To get started with something new, we just need a different perspective on what we’re about to do. Being able to see your food “grow-up” will open-up more wonders about the environment, too. This will give you so many more options to enjoy yourself in a whole new way. See? Brand new experiences can be fun, exciting and nourishing all at the same time. But, we only discover this, when we give something a chance. So, like someone had to do to make your favorite meal for the very first time, jump in and see what you can do. You’ll easily find your way to a few laughs, and who knows... You might add something to that dish to make it even better, than it is – right now!

The Experiment:

Since you've successfully made it past the first shopping experiment, take your significant other or a friend with you, and pick-out something to cook together! It doesn't matter what it is. When you take the time to pick out exactly what you need, you'll be building up anticipation as you go along. Doing this together will strengthen your relationship, and it might give you some new ideas about what you would like to eat, or do in the future. Usually, when we go shopping for the same things, we miss out on everything that's out there for us. Trying to figure out where a "weird" food comes from or how to pronounce it, will add even more laughs to your adventure. So, if we use our imagination there are many fascinating ways to get more involved with food, long before it reaches our plate...

A Final Thought:

Before we gather up the courage to prepare our first meal, there are many ways to get closer to what we eat. Taking the time to experiment, to learn more about what we put into our bodies, and even how long it takes for certain foods to grow will allow us to fully appreciate our meals, and what they do "for us." So, if getting involved from seed to plate, will allow you to enjoy your favorite food even more, would that be enough incentive for you – to get cookin'?

Bon Appetite.'

Author's Note:

Besides having a degree in nutrition, my wife Robyn happens to be my favorite cook in the entire world. Out of at least 3 billion people, how did the universe know... When she didn't even know "how good" of a cook she was, before she met me? I guess love will do that to you. It simply brings out the best of who we are. And, maybe that's all the inspiration you really need to get started!

C26: Exercising: You.

The Premise:

Motivation is the positive incentive we have to follow through with an activity or goal that's important to us. Today, most of us seek something to get motivated about, rather than putting our focus on creating positive energy together, so that we'll have the energy we need – to take a step in any direction that's good for us! Exercise, as good as it is, happens to be only one of our options; as there are many ways to keep ourselves physically and emotionally healthy...

By now, almost all of us are familiar with the benefits of exercising. It has a strengthening and therapeutic effect on our entire being. Just like eating healthier, we've heard about the importance of it, but the rewards only *come after* we find the inspiration to get started! So, for now, we'll focus on the benefits of moving around, what it does for our energy levels and our mood, and how we can take that energy into what's most important to us. If you notice a pattern developing through the book, we're always building thoughts and energy internally, so that we can use them on the outside in a way that's meaningful; which only comes back to how we feel. So, exercise fits right into that circle. It's just a way to strengthen and energize what we have now, so that we can continue to use ourselves and this energy in the future when we need it. And, in turn, that's another way to extend our happiness, about it! Since this is a different way to look at why we're exercising, let's look at how positive energy moves through us again, so that we can create more of it for the activities we wanted to be a part of. That way, it will be much easier to accomplish our goals, because we'll have the energy we need to move forward. The entire process of making a decision to move (besides springing into action), can take place right where you are now. So, you don't have to go very far. However, by the end of this chapter, you should be able to follow through with just about any decision you would like to make. So, let's get to it!

Wherever you happen to be right now, sooner or later you're going to

have to make a move. A move to get up, to get something to eat or drink, or maybe even – take a nap! Whatever that choice is – if you’ve already switched gears and moved on to something else, how long did it take you to make that decision? This little space is the same space we find ourselves in, whenever we decide to do something, or – just before we make a decision. We’re always either closer to a position of rest, or we’re moving ourselves around in some way. The space that I would call “transition time,” is the time it takes to move ourselves, from here – to there. Sometimes, we make thousands of different moves during the day, and we can shift through those motions quite easily. Other tasks, like exercising (or maybe doing the dishes), usually takes a little longer, for two reasons. The first – is because we’re already low in energy and we don’t have much to spare. Or, because we haven’t had the positive experience yet – of getting a real “boost” from that activity. However, like anything else, once you realize that your steps are going to put you into an even more enjoyable place, then – there you go! So, we can think of anything else that we would like to do (such as exercising), in the exact same way.

To make any decision, we need to know three simple things: What we desire, that our effort is going to be worth it, and that we can, in fact – take a step. If this isn’t something we know the answer to yet... There’s only one way to find out! That’s the little space, between here and there – everywhere. The first step always requires a little more energy, but that doesn’t mean it needs to be painful or difficult. Once you get an “idea” of the positive energy or the feelings that will be found in an activity, you’re all set! Those doubts have turned themselves over into the initiative to take a step forward. And, this is where positive energy starts to build momentum. When you add a very good reason for doing _____, into your mind’s equation – it’s only a matter of time, before you make a move. To move past where you are right now, you just need to focus on what that’s going to *feel like* – when you do! That’s how you get over the feelings of being too comfortable where you are. So, if you want to move – this *point* should be your focus. Then, you’re putting yourself – into the future, emotionally. That’s how those “grumbles” get transformed

into something that feels much better now! When we feel any hint of inspiration, those feelings are forecasting how we will feel – if we move ahead into something.

If we're standing still, but we still desire to move forward, that's the perfect time to take a step. Why? Because it's what we *really* want to do. So, let those positive feelings lead you – the next time you're making a decision. Unless it's life or death, it's unhealthy for you, or it could put what you have now at serious risk, how you feel in a positive way – is the “Ace” in your deck of cards. At the end of the day, if you're going back and forth with an idea (looking for a guarantee), unless it's something you've done before – you won't know the answer: 100%. It's rare that we get an inspiration so strong that there are no doubts, about it. And, if we do – we're probably already, in motion! So, in one way or another, you already have the answer on what to do about – getting up to eat, drink, take a nap, exercise, or any other choice that you would like to make. You're either going to stay where you are, or you're going to make a move. These are the only two options that we have to choose from!

If you can't decide what to do, either way – then, it's simply a matter of dismissing the idea for now, until the idea comes back, or you find an even better decision to make. Even though it might seem like I have some very strong opinions or ideas about how things work, and how we can make them work better for us, in this area... To me, there isn't very much middle ground. Since I know (for the most part) how much energy most people are using throughout the day – just to get through it... If exercising is something you're leaning closer to doing, then – you'll find the correct information that you need to get started; and it won't take that long, for you to get moving in some way. (Even if those moves are very small and simple.) And, if you're leaning away from doing this, you'll stay “there” until you decide to make another decision. So, there's no mystery between those two points. And, because I know that if you decide to do something good for yourself in this department, you'll see and feel those benefits – firsthand. If moving led you into a positive

experience, you'll remember that feeling, and you'll want to come back to it! And, it's the same with anything else that you can do, as well...

However, if you're actually looking for the motivation to get moving on exercising or anything else, you'll keep looking for it – until you make a decision. For a great example, you wanted to be happier, and you're reading this book now...So, with anything that you would like to do, if it's important to you – it's only a matter of time before you take a step into it. And, if it's something that you would *really* like to do now...The book will be here when you get back!

If you're on the fence, but you'd still like to _____, then – give yourself some time, set a date on your calendar, and simply – follow through with it, even just once. And, you can decide what that activity is going to be and for how long (start off small), from a very comfortable place. Now, you might actually be looking forward to what you're going to do! When the date arrives, take what you need with you, and – there you are.

If you haven't exercised yet, you're just giving this a chance to see if it's giving you something back. If you have a few good reasons, and you know what you're going to do, you're all set for now. Once you're there, see how you feel. Regardless if you liked it, or you would like to try something different, you're still closer to *everything* you wanted to do; because – you took a step forward. You gave it a chance. Now, you can take the same first step everywhere else, too. See how taking one positive step forward is creating more possibilities? That's exactly what anything “good” for you – can do.

When we're doing something that's good for us or that we enjoy, we're directly connected to the positive energy that's created and found – here. It's a mixture of energy coming from the cells in our body, and from the chemical signals in our brain, known as endorphins. These are released into our system, when we do something that's positive for ourselves, or others. Those are – our feelings! And, they give us an incentive to get back to whatever is making us “feel” that way. (Also known as reinforcement.) When you experience this – once, now you know what

to expect, which makes you feel even more comfortable. (See that loop, again?) Now you fully understand why thinking about a positive step, planning on it, and taking it – are so important to you.

To avoid the time it usually takes to get moving, get moving first – in an enjoyable way. From here, you can add in as many positive reasons to keep that activity going. And, you can change your motivation, as you go along. If you already know that the experience or the activity is fun, then – you can do it for whatever reasons you want! As long as it makes you want to get back to it, that’s all that counts.

Now that you’re past those doubts about what you can do, and how easy it can be, look into a few more simple and safe options to move yourself around for a bit. You get to choose what that is, when and why. Just remember to take it easy; especially in the beginning. Having a healthy, very easy to follow routine for now, goes a long way towards improving your self-image and your well-being. For now, you just have to think about doing this – once. And, once you’ve done that, then you can see how much you’d like to get back to it. Remember, you’re in charge of what you want to do here. If you can do this once for a very brief period of time joyfully, then take a step up to two times a week. (Even if it’s only for 15 minutes.) You can always increase what you’re doing and when, as you go along. If you have a medical condition or have questions about one, it’s always best to seek the advice of a physician *before* – you begin an exercise routine. Like anything that’s good for you, a little professional advice now, goes a long way towards building a healthier and happier future...

In addition to: exercising, eating healthier foods, drinking water and resting... Spending quality time with ourselves and others is also building up our energy, too. So, go to the places where you already know that you’re going to feel great, and spend as much time there, as possible. Now that you’re thinking about what you “love to do,” see how exercising is helping this very important part of your life, too. That’s one more incentive to keep what’s enjoyable – close. And, when you do,

more energy will always be there – for you!

The Experiment:

Since you understand how positive energy is working with and for you now, choose a simple activity where you can move around for a little while. Then, pick a time and a place to begin...That’s all you need to do.

A Final Thought:

When we understand that any type of regular movement is making us stronger, and the energy we use is coming back to us, we need to apply this to something that’s most important to us. When we’re positive in the moments we have together, not only is this enjoyable, but we’re also “creating” more of the energy we need to get moving, or to keep up with what’s meaningful to us. Exercising is just another one of those positive steps. So, to begin doing anything good always go to the direct source of your energy: Love. Love is the positive feeling that makes you want to come back to it. And, once you get going with something you enjoy, you’ll see that your inspired steps, take almost no effort, at all...

Author’s Note:

Hopefully, you’ve realized that having a positive attitude, enjoying your time with others, and seeing the meaning of what you’re doing – is just bringing more energy back to you. Starting to feel better about where we are is the way to give ourselves the boost we were looking for. So, if you feel you’ve got some energy to spare – use it wisely, immediately. Once you feel the benefits of taking action, you’ll give yourself the jumpstart you need to leap into any activity that’s beneficial to you.⁴⁷ It takes a little energy to make more of it; so put it into what’s giving you the greatest return more often. From this point of view, exercising won’t seem like a chore. Anything that gives you a “lift,” will be something you’ll want to spend time with!

⁴⁷ McWilliams, *Do It! Let’s Get Off Our Buts*, 91.

C27: Our Emotions: Understanding Where We Are Now.

The Premise:

No matter where we've been, what we're doing, what we desire to do, or who we're surrounded by, everyone desires to keep their positive emotions going, so that they can grow into something more. If someone is in an emotionally negative place or situation they want the same thing, too. So, regardless of where we are, the only question that matters now is – how are we going to make that increase in joy, possible?

Once we get the idea that we want to feel better, the next step is to simply begin, wherever we are. Since this happens through and with us, it's only what we're going to think about, talk about, or do right now – that's going to take us here. Why? Because it's happening – in real-time!

We all know what a positive or negative emotion feels like. We all know how they feel when we're alone and together with someone. We might not understand everything that goes into feeling this way, but we can certainly narrow it down to make it easier to understand. No matter where we are, we only have two options to choose from: emotions that feel good, and ones that don't. And, these are the same options we have in both good times and bad. And – that's it.

So, if you're in a place where you would like to feel better, forget about digging into the past. *You're right here.* Rather than trying to understand all of that history, it's your current feelings that you want to change. And, as you begin to want to do that now – your mind gets the same idea! It changes – with you. If you're alone, no matter how good you feel or not, there *is* always something that you can do to make yourself feel better. And, you'll only notice the difference in how you feel when you look for that possibility, and take a step closer to it. It doesn't matter what it is for now; as long as it's a choice that you'll enjoy...

In that moment, everything inside of you – your energy, your emotions and your thoughts move into a new position: A happier one. Anytime

we're not feeling well, we just need something (for now) to interrupt and redirect that energy, *after* we've acknowledged how we feel. It doesn't matter if it's a thought, an activity, something we're looking at, or something we're listening to. When you spend a little time with something that's enjoyable to you in any way, how you feel – is going to move to a better place. Like anything, it takes a little time to recognize or feel that shift, but it's going to happen. And, in fact, some of the reasons why we experience negative emotions are to feel that shift. Happiness comes from being there sometimes, and from moving closer – towards it.

Now that you're feeling a little better, hopefully you've realized two things. You always have an option to choose something that's beneficial to you, regardless of how you feel. The second is once you make a positive decision your emotions will be following you. And, that's all you need to know for now...So, the next time you wish to feel better, you already know what a positive choice looks and feels like. In time, you'll get better at making this turn-around by choosing something that will bring you more enjoyment.

There are a lot of things that can change how we feel. But, when we know from a little experimenting that some things work better than others, we can simply choose those things *first*. When we do, we're beginning to put our happier experiences together, more often. If something negative comes up, we'll be in a better place to handle what's there, without so much of a loss of energy. When we have a little time before our next encounter or experience, we can see what that situation might have needed to turn out positive. And, we can put that wisdom directly into our next experience, or when we're involved with that situation again to make it better. For now, since the goal is to feel good – let this be your focus. (We'll be exploring our other emotions soon.) By the way, did you know that half of our negative emotions come from not knowing how to make a positive experience happen? So, with this understanding alone, we can replace most of our emotions with something better. And, this leads us into our next option, and it involves our time spent together. The same method applies here, too...

Regardless of what “we” said or did in the past, or what our current situation looks like, we have the ability to make ourselves feel better together, right now. Rather than hashing out every negative detail of a past interaction (and when we feel better, sometimes that’s important!) for now – we only need to remember two things. That we both wanted to feel good; and what we are about to say and do together, right now – is going to take us *there*.

Once we realize that we both wanted to feel good, and making a more positive moment now is helping us to accomplish that, then – you’ll know what to do. Since happiness is “our” goal, now you’re both headed in the same direction. Most of the time, when we feel a negative emotion, it comes from an outcome that didn’t happen, or from not remembering that we both have feelings, and they matter to each one of us, equally. Once we realize that, we can simply make our next experience together a more positive one...

As we go along, we can choose a few options that we know will make us feel better. From here, just like when we’re alone (in time), we’ll see that there are many ways to make this possible! When we’re on a happier path, we can decide together, how we would like to keep that going. And, if we get off track, just notice that, and say “I’m sorry” (because we both feel bad that we lost those feelings), and with that acknowledgement – you’re back on track, again. Little by little, we learn that happiness is always a possibility; if we remember that a positive feeling was always our goal. And, this is something that we can choose to make happen more often, so that those enjoyable emotions are there, between us.

When we’re in a happier place, our moments will unfold quite naturally, without having to overanalyze, or worry so much about our steps. We know that we desire to feel good together, and we’ve been here many times before. When we realize that this is something we can choose to do more often, everything that we wanted to see develop will happen much easier. And, our steps will become much more enjoyable to make! The

will and desire to make both of us happy, finds a way to keep making that possible. Eventually, with this shared attitude, we almost always land in a place that makes us feel happier to be there. And, those positive feelings will lead us right into the most important dreams and goals that we have for the future...

When we feel better (alone or together), this is what we'll want to work on, or become involved with more than anything else. Did you ever notice after making-up with someone, you almost immediately start to talk about all of the positive things that you would like to do together? Why does this happen in our highest and lowest places? Because the feelings of enjoyment that we wanted to become a part of, only come from one of two places. What's inside of us, and what's between us. When we "make-up," we're putting ourselves back in touch with where we really wanted to be. And, that love – or the feelings of what's most important is helping to guide us back there. When we're at a low point – what's above us also becomes clearer, as well. So, the love of what we have, and desire to feel together – is always present with us in some way...And, those feelings, or what's important acts as a "light-post" to guide us back to a better place. When we're on the road to feeling better, what's even better – is much closer to us.

That's why making our moments a little more "enjoyable" has always been so important to us! Not only do these experiences make us feel better and strengthen our relationship, but they give us the energy, confidence, and the faith we need to make some of our biggest goals and dreams, possible. With this energy, we're both making it possible for each other to feel fantastic about being alive! And, the greatest ideas we have for the future are another way to keep our positive emotions with us, much more often. These goals give us something to get excited about, so that everything we're a part of can become, as enjoyable as possible. So, do you see how our positive emotions now are always leading us to something – even better?

A Final Thought:

Now that you know how you wanted to feel, how to get back there, what this is leading you towards, and why it's important for everything in your life...Isn't it about time to make your experiences closer to what you wanted them to be? And, with that suggestion, I've come right back around to where you are...

The Experiment:

Isn't there something enjoyable that you wanted to do? Well, now is always your opportunity. And, when you realize that – more positive emotions will be right there with you, too. And, if it happens to be raining or it's too cold to go outside and play...That's exactly when we need to bring the smiles and the sunshine – in!

Author's Note:

Without denying what's present or how we feel, we're just adding something positive back into what's there. That's why I focus more on feeling good, and learning more about how we can create those emotions. If going through a negative experience makes us learn even more about what works and why, then – from both places, we shorten the amount of time it takes to bring joy back into our lives. Once we realize that we can create a more positive moment right now, we'll get into the habit of choosing “that” option – first.

This chapter is dedicated to all of my closest friends. We've celebrated the ups, and have been there when we really needed a lift, too. You have been such an inspiration in helping me follow my path. I hope I have done the same for you. That's what friendship is all about. And, I'm so glad – the best of you – decided to stay. I wouldn't have it any other way!

C28: Your Fear, Failure, Faith, and Success.

The Premise:

As we continue to create more positive experiences together, our faith in what's possible will also be growing. From here, the goals that we truly desire to experience and achieve are born; as well as most of the energy and the resources that we need – to make them come true!

In a way, this is just a continuation of the last chapter's emotions, as we are building how we feel from a more positive place. And, when we're "there," we'll have more confidence about what we can do. To me, faith is the belief in our ability to feel good and to accomplish or become a part of what would make us happy. It obviously goes much deeper than that, but it's a very good starting point. Where do we find faith from? You could say that "faith" comes from how many positive and negative experiences we've had; at least as a foundation for where we are now. Of course, there are some exceptions, but everything that we are doing is relaying a message back to us about how life can be, and what we can do in it to make ourselves happy. So, can you see how our beliefs are being influenced during our moments together? Our ability to have faith is also related to the success we've had so far, as well. Unless a goal involves something completely different or new, if we've had a string of successful moments, it will be easier to think that the next ones will be good, too. This is because of the current position we are in with regards to our recent past memories, and how we feel about them. Another part of having faith in what we would like to do, comes from knowing what our first few steps are. Learning more about what we're going to do gives us more confidence in what's ahead. So, faith is a process that grows, with us. In most of the experiences that we have or create together, we're bringing what isn't "here" just yet – to life. Besides the specifics of your particular goal, there are a few more principles that we can follow to make sure we're putting our best foot forward in the steps we're about to take!

When we set a goal, no matter how big or small, the motivation

underneath is almost always the same. If we succeed, we think that we'll be happier in some way. And, most of the time we're right! So, for now, rather than trying to tackle a huge goal, just like the incentive to exercise, take it one small step at a time with something that's important to you. It doesn't matter exactly what that is; it just has to mean something to you. As long as you head in that direction, you'll be learning a few specific things about faith. The first part is that you're choosing to stay close to what matters. That's your decision. The second part will be in how you feel, as you're moving towards what's important. That's your commitment. And, the last part comes from how you'll feel, once your goal is achieved. That's completion. So, can you see how each part of this is adding to how good you can feel about yourself, what's possible, and about what you can do? In the beginning when you're setting out to have even "more" faith, you might want to achieve more than a few things to build up how you feel. But as those ideas are growing, you'll find yourself slowing down a bit to choose what's *most* important to you. And, that's when you'll be refining how you spend your time and why. So, faith eventually becomes a part of choosing exactly what you would like to see come into your life, and spending much more time – there. And, if the goal happens to be big, it's not a matter of that just popping right out at you. However, it is a matter of you taking small consistent and manageable steps towards that end. Because you're literally headed in that direction with each step along the way – that's how your faith increases; because you're getting closer to the fulfillment of it. Just as a quick writing example, I'm on my last round of edits for this book, and I have about seven chapters left to go. The closer I get to the end of the book, the closer I am to completing it. And, since there's also quite a bit of joy in each chapter that I'm focused on, I can also rest easier with the results of the final outcome, as well.

So, everything that we do to feel good and to be happy follows the same pattern. We're specifically choosing something that will make us feel good to be a part of. We're moving ourselves towards that; and then – we're there with it! As we continue to do this more often (even with the simplest of choices), we're growing our enjoyment and our faith in what

we can do. As you go along, you'll see that it becomes less about what we're accomplishing, as it is – that we have the ability to become a part of the happiness we wanted to feel. That's really what's underneath of every goal we have, both large and small. And, it's also about what we're becoming along the way to achieving those goals that makes us feel fulfilled, too. Goals are giving something to us in the “happy-ending” part, but they're also building up our abilities, our character, and our faith along the way to that end, too...

So, if you have some small and simple goals, move ahead with them! The more you step out into making something that you desire to become real, the closer you'll be to your faith and what motivates you. That's why our goals are important. Not only are we learning how to create more fulfillment and happiness, but we're also refining who we are, and who we want to be in the process. So, move in the direction of a few things that you've wanted to do. As you move ahead, you'll see further into where those smaller goals are taking you. Not all of our goals need to be connected to something big. Some things that we like to do might not be related to work or our greatest dream, at all. Simply being interested in something that we enjoy and spending time there, does quite a bit for enhancing every part of our lives. In time, you might drop a few ideas or pick-up some new ones. It's completely up to you how you would “like” to invest your time!

If you're happy with what you're doing, or planning on doing, then – it's the right decision for you. If you need to do a little more experimenting to see what's out there for you, that's fine, too. You see, even with a careful explanation of the process and how it's unfolding, this really comes down to you – making yourself a little happier, more often. Walking on the path of joy expands our vision and us – as we're taking our steps forward. As long as you're enjoying the journey, that's really the most important part of what you desire to achieve. The money, the acknowledgement and all the positive reinforcement that we might find on the outside is wonderful; but it's how we feel on the inside about ourselves that will matter the most. Dreams are the subject matter and

the materials we're using to feel and become our best. So, see what those are doing for you on the inside, just as much as to what you'll find on the outside. And, when your goal finally arrives, it will make you happy – inside and out...Especially if that dream or goal truly represents who you are, and who you would like to be. For your biggest goals, the deeper the personal meaning they have – the greater the emotional rewards will be...

So, since you've made it this far, you've probably learned a little more about who you are, and what you wish to become a part of. While I could spend time exploring a few more points on success, let your positive feelings and your inspiration lead you forward. The more you take positive steps where you are, and you encourage others to follow what they see for themselves, the entire process will unfold naturally – from here. Knowing that the goals you have are important to you, and keeping those feelings alive (by taking a few steps towards them regularly) is exactly what you'll need to do to stay on your path towards greater fulfillment. You'll discover what's happening – inside and out, as you go along. I'm providing you with a map or an outline, so you'll have a better idea of what's ahead. However, this is your path, and what you'll see and discover there, is literally – for you! My words will take you right up to the point of making a positive choice, but then the actual experience – is where your life, begins. And, since you're heading in a positive direction, there's nothing to be “worried” about here. You might meet with a few unexpected challenges, but as momentum builds, it's only going to get better as you go along. So, embrace what's ahead with enthusiasm!

Make your plans and have a few small goals to begin with that inspire you to want to fulfill them. You'll discover more here about yourself, than anywhere else. If you have a specific interest, it will be helpful to have some information about that, of course. And, talking to some people who are “there” will be helpful, as well. Take in whatever they say, and consider it – but ultimately, follow what feels best to you. You have your own truths to discover for yourself on your path. In time,

you'll eventually learn more, and find more of what you need to make your goals come true... Even if it doesn't appear that way. Since life and everything in it already had a plan long before any of us got here, I trust in that powerful and divine intelligence, even if I waiver sometimes. And, that's a part of the journey, too. Faith, like happiness can be found on both sides of what happens to us, along the way...

To make our biggest dreams come true, we need to have some faith in what we're seeing on the outside, and on the inside of us, too. Depending on how life is looking right now, we switch back and forth between those two places, as we're moving ahead. When the sun is shining bright – take it all in! And, when it's cloudy, remember what the sun feels like – and bring a little of that warmth into where you are. Eventually, those two happier ends will come together, more often. Remember – when you can't see a way to what you desire, and you're looking for “proof” that what you desire can be here... Everything that you see around you was someone's dream at one time, and that's all they had, too. Just an idea. You might not know how it's going to come around for you sometimes, or even when – but what you deeply desire to experience here is possible. And, the world is full of examples of that evidence – all around you. So, when you can't see the how or when, just keep what it is and that it's possible, in mind. If there are some specific steps that you need to take, with an open mind that comes from enjoying more of where you are, the next step will have to make itself known to you. So, take it easy, take it one enjoyable step at a time, and do your best to enjoy the scenery on your way there. (That's half of your dream's purpose, remember?)

When you see something that you can do, every step that you take now – no matter how big or small, is only giving you more faith and energy to move ahead. If we get tired, lost or down once in a while, that's why we are all here together. Sometimes, even the best need a little reassurance to move forward. And, that's helping the both of us to remember what really matters. At the end of a particular goal or chapter in our lives, we gain the most not just from all that we can do, have or achieve. We get it from how much of a positive difference that we made in each other's

lives along the way; and from realizing just how far that takes us. Your most important goals and dreams are missing pieces of life's puzzle that need to be put into place. And, that dream is for you, just as much as it's for others, too. The witnessing of a dream coming true inspires others, even if they don't realize it!

As you make your way forward, some situations are going to turn out better than expected, and others might not go, as well as planned. (That's a part of the bigger picture sometimes, too.) When something doesn't quite connect in the way you wanted, there's usually a good reason for it, and something better is coming up around the bend. Just be patient and open to some other opportunities, besides the exact one you've had, in mind. When something isn't working out – it's not the end of the whole story...Just a particular page! The next example will help to keep this in mind, when you really need a boost, and can't find one. When things are going great – it feels great. But, when things take a turn, it means that some situations are flipping themselves over – into something better. So, here's a good example of what that “flop” looks like...

My wife and I ordered a couch from a local furniture store. We spent months looking for one that we wanted. Once we decided, we put the order in. On the night before it was going to be delivered, we got into a huge fight (about what, who knows...), and we cancelled our delivery in the morning. See how an unplanned, negative moment comes along, and ruins our plans? Now here's the part where divine timing works out what we really wanted to do, in a much better way. And, we would have never thought of it at the time...

After “making-up” and letting some time pass, we saw another couch at a different store, and we ordered it. Looking back, after a few months had gone by – the first couch would have never made it through our doorway! And, if we tried to make it fit, the cushions would have been severely damaged. (A much bigger mess for us, and the store.) We didn't realize this until months later, when I had to take exact measurements on the doorway – for something else. On top of that, the couch we ended-up

with lasted for many years. And, when we sold it 10 years later, it was still in great shape! To this day, we haven't had a more comfortable or well-built couch. So, from now on when plans go sideways, my wife and I have a good laugh about the whole negative episode – that led us to something even better, instead. Could we have picked out the “right” couch the first time and avoided the fight, altogether?

Perhaps, but we needed a great example to “keep the faith” that things will work out if we remain patient, and do our best to enjoy more of the time that we have to spend together; even when the skies are cloudy. So, bring a few laughs into those clouds. It's helping to transform those moments (and you) into something else. In the end, everything worked out for the best. And, by the way, this example happened 15 years ago! So, sometimes we never know how much something that seems like a “mistake,” is going to be helping us – later on. (Some would call that experience.) In fact, the idea for a book wasn't even a thought, back then. So, who would have thought that our “nightmare weekend and our dream couch,” would be combining to help people keep their faith – in a book? So, take my example and your own, when things appear a little upside-down that life is in the process of making it straight. And, while that's happening, if you hang in there and learn to laugh your way through what appears messy at the time...What you desire, will eventually be right there with you, when you need it – most of all.

(And, yes – we still miss that couch!)

The Experiment:

To roll our “mixed emotions” ahead, take a little time to think about a past experience that didn't “appear” like it was going to work, but eventually did. Besides the positive energy and encouragement that we share with each other regularly (which increases our faith), this is the best example you have – to be confident about your future plans. Sometimes, we can easily forget all of the situations we've made it past! If good things can come out of situations that look shaky, imagine how things will turn out if you add in a little humor, patience and a

willingness to see what's ahead, until your goal or your dream couch finally arrives...

A Final Thought:

Anything that we've experienced can be an example of what works, and how to remain positive when the path ahead looks uncertain. Even though we might not feel this way at the time, every experience we have is a new opportunity, so that we can start out in a more positive state of mind. We need to understand what "faith" looks like – from both sides. Often, when we look back on a situation that didn't quite work out, something better was in the works, or we'll have another opportunity to clarify what we really wanted to do. So, how can you begin your next moment in a more positive way? See how this attitude helps to restore your faith. It gives us the direction and energy we need, so that we can feel better and follow through, until our goal is delivered...Even if it looks a little different, than the first one we picked out!

Author's Note:

For anyone looking for a much deeper understanding of how faith works, I know of no better person to recommend than Joel Osteen. Through his ministry he has inspired so many people's lives in a deep, meaningful way. His books and sermons have always been a very comfortable place to sit – and restore your spirit.

C29: Your Business Profits Come Around: Full Circle.

The Premise:

Even though most modern businesses are still learning how to fully embrace these ideas and put them into practice, everything that happens in our business – as far as becoming a real success in a happy and healthy way, follows the same “relationship” principles that guide every other area of our lives. This is because “we” are always using the same parts of ourselves to achieve our goals, and the positive outcomes we desire. Underneath of our badges, nametags, or given titles, positive energy works on our bodies, minds, hearts and souls in the exact same way, no matter who we are, or where we happen to be. When we finally understand this together, our lives and our businesses will be able to function in ways that are almost unimaginable; in how well that they keep on working for us.

This chapter is going to completely change the way you think about running your business. So, if you’re intimidated by an idea that will allow you to prosper in ways that are beyond your current limits, please move ahead to the next chapter! However, if you’d like to expand your understanding of how energy works for us – at the heart of all things, just keep reading. I can promise you from my own experience that your life and your business will never be the same – but in a very positive way; that’s not often talked about, even in the most lucrative businesses on the planet at this time...

I would imagine that if you’re in business, you are only there for one of two main reasons. One is for the love of what you are doing, or maybe you want to raise as much capital, as possible. Of course, you could be here for some other reasons, but most people in business are there for one of these two things, primarily. Just a thought before we begin...Did you ever consider *combining* your reasons – for being there? (More positive reasons will keep you motivated, and that will only give you a boost.) For now, let’s just say that you’re there to expand the business, and make more money...

If you happen to be in a place where you are making substantial amounts of money (and if this is your reason), that's – your business. This means without a doubt, you have to make sure everything is running in tip-top shape, so that those movements can provide you with exactly what you're looking for. While this end is certainly fine (at least for now), what eventually ends up happening is that the process of getting to the bottom line, slowly loses its effectiveness over time. If you keep looking to see what's coming “in,” then what's happening on the other side of your business process tends to get overlooked. And, since the process itself is creating your profits, this means the way you are generating “money” will no longer work for you. In time, since the process and the positive energy being generated here are becoming diminished, your financial rewards are also going in the same direction. So, if you are in business for the money primarily, what you'll need to do to guarantee yourself the maximum return, won't be found in the traditional things we often think about, such as: more merchandise, savvy marketing ads, or even additional investing. Although, these things can, of course, be helpful at times...

To make sure the process of A-Z is working like a fine-tuned machine to produce those fantastic gains, your focus should only be on – the process – of getting to the bottom line. Why? Because as the process of your business is running smooth, energy (in the form of money) as well as real confidence is building itself up. (Again, this is the observer effect in action.) So, any snag along the way towards the end “result,” is only delaying and shrinking your return. Most of the time, when we're overeager to get somewhere, even if it's to a good place, our final results end up being much less than if we put our calm, solid focus on what's making the outcome – happen. And, this can't happen if our bottom goals are constantly under stress, which also changes the outcome. However, if we eliminate that pressure or stress, almost 99% of the time, the bottom line never becomes in question; because everything is in the right place – to produce that objective.

So, put your positive attention and energy on the here and now, and what

you have in front of you – to see what’s needed in the process. See what happens when running your business in the most effective and easiest way possible, does for growing your bottom line. As each transaction runs smoothly (and people are very happy about it), the guaranteed money from just doing this alone is right behind it. When our business is a little less organized or stressful, capital and our energy is being tied up and wasted in that cluster. Then, we have to work much harder for an even smaller positive result that could have happened in a much easier way. So, we’re saving a little money to feel good about it – but we’re also giving ourselves a headache and a hassle, during the process of getting there at the same time. (Did you notice a conflict of interest here?)

To me, this is one of the major reasons why it becomes harder to enjoy what we’re doing, and to achieve the “big” results we desired to have, happily. Put more focus on where your starting line is and where that energy is going in the process. You’ll easily have the results, as well as the happiness that comes from reaching your goals, without any unnecessary stress, time lapses or struggles. When we leave a half-hearted process in place, we’re actually wasting our own money – to try to make more of it! If money is our most important goal, there are plenty of other ways to make our money work for the results we would like to see. It might sound a bit critical on the surface, but we can gain the most by putting it where it’s most needed – in the process. That way, both ends of this equation are taken care of, easily...

This leads into the next reason for having a business – because you love what you’re doing. Of course, this has its fair share of challenges, too. You could enjoy so much of what you’re doing, that “money,” becomes somewhat unimportant. While this might seem like a fantasy for someone who doesn’t have any money concerns at all, love also asks us to pay a little more attention to what we’re doing with what we have. And, it’s wise to be aware of what our money is doing. Love is wonderful; but it doesn’t mean that you have to waste your profits to keep on experiencing that! If anything, this is the opposite of being too

obsessed or worried about the money you have. Love and prosperity require a healthy balance; since both of these areas are sustaining you.

In business, we want to acquire two things: as much love for what we're doing as possible, and as much money as we can have, from the healthy and enjoyable process that's taking us there. If we put more attention on the process first, and what's in place to meet our ends successfully, then we can look at our bottom line, and manage that. Not compulsively, from a fear or loss based perspective, but from one that understands what's there, and would like to appreciate that amount. (Yes, I meant that emotionally and financially. Same thing!) These two areas only grow because we realize the positive value of what's there, and how to maintain that value for the people involved...Not just the specific "dollar" amounts. That's only half of the story – in how those numbers were produced to begin with...

So, having all of the money in the world won't diminish anxiety or fear. It's usually not the lack of money that's creating these negative emotions. When we feel this way, especially if we're successful, it comes from how we're operating what we have, how we appreciate what's there, as well as managing our funds. When we only think short-term, a part of us knows that this approach might not work out so well if we keep heading in that direction; and this – causes anxiety and fear. We're only *really comfortable* when we know that what we have works, as long as we manage it in a way that's sustainable – for now, and later on, too. We might measure time by a certain amount; but life and our emotions are just a continuum. A solid line from where we now that just keeps on going. And, within that – we accumulate how we feel.

So, rather than working very hard just to have a little more money, which may produce more for a little while, eventually the loss of focus on what we're doing catches up to us, and our bottom line. We can have ease and a lot more money at the same time, without needless suffering or a delay in the process. Ok, so how do we accomplish that? It all goes back to the basics – to square one. Remember when you first opened your business?

Not only were you extremely excited about what you had the chance to do, but you made sure that you had more than enough – emotionally, logistically and financially, so that everything ran extremely well for your customers and your employees. (When these two ends are taken care of, you won't have to worry about yourself, or your shareholders.) This ensures that your money and a great experience can keep flowing, so your business can keep growing. And, these are the only two primary halves that are creating – what you have now. Shareholders only really invest, after you've got something good going...

So, to bring back the enjoyment, enhanced productivity, and smooth operations tomorrow – pretend it's your opening day, again! Ask your managers what they need to make sure everything is in tip-top shape. And, listen – to what they have to say. It might cost a little bit for a very short amount of time, since we've put most of our focus on the ledger numbers to the right; but when we take care of the process, what's right – only keeps adding up, without a question or worry. It's as simple as that to have both sides work – for you. And, since you're wealthy now, there's no reason to be reckless with your money – or to act like you don't have much. Neither of those mind-sets will take you any higher emotionally, about what you've *actually* got in your hands. So, when you realize exactly what you have, and what you have to work with to create more...Then, you bring back the positive energy “boost” you were looking for the whole time!

Your process runs almost as smooth as silk, the customers and employees are very happy about what's happening, and the bottom line...Well, you know what will happen here, too. What we're coming down to is a balance on both sides of your business equation; so there isn't a “lack” of anything that's needed to grow as much as possible, consistently. Everything has what it needs now to stay – up, and to keep on growing from there.

When we give the two biggest parts of our business – our customers and our employees – exactly what they need to have a great experience

without a struggle or hassle, not only do we enjoy what we're doing (because we're right in the middle of that success), but at the end of the day, those numbers are going to surpass our expectations. Then, we get up the next day, and repeat the same winning formula that's always worked – ever since we first opened our front doors...

Even though we might have been a little “excited” by what's rolling in, we can come back to center, by understanding that what we put into our business, that's good for it – is exactly what we'll see at the end of the day in how we feel; and in what shows up for numbers. Like a fantastic domino effect, we need to be the ones who push the first domino into place with our positive energy, mutual respect, and an enthusiasm for what we're doing...From here, energy does all of the “traveling” work for you. It spreads that exact same message through every person and every part of your business; even with the routine steps that we normally take, every day. Since we are seeing positive results in the way we work together, we only gain even more energy, and money back in the process. We're literally throwing (nicely) our energy into the field of energy that's surrounding all of us. And, what comes back, if it's collectively more positive, will literally be good for everything... Including our bottom line.

To gain more, we never really had to put a stress on the side of the process, so that we could have more on the other end. Neither side ever has to go without what it needs to work. That line is always connected and looping back and forth together, anyway. Just like we are, with the energy we use in our interactions throughout the day to make success – happen. If we desire to keep positive energy going, so that we can enjoy what we're doing, logistics that work need to be in place. Why? Our enjoyment and our productivity are directly intertwined. Positive emotions, plus logistics that work for us, equals – how big our bottom line will be. And then, the cycle just repeats. By taking something out that's “needed” to create more, the solid structure we've built no longer works for growth, or the larger goals we have in mind. (This is where excitement *and* fear are being activated.) So, when the process is

effective: emotionally, logistically and financially – leave it alone, and just check-in to see how things are going...It's working for you!

Emotionally, if you know how to have one positive interaction with your employees and your customers, and the services are there to match that enthusiasm; your numbers will also be growing at the same time. Why? It's all the same – positive step! Energy is just traveling through your logistics process and the people there to create a specific enjoyable end. One positive step in your business means that you can keep “up” the good work and your profits, for as long as you want. With a great system in place, besides the occasional small mistakes, where could it go wrong? So, the enjoyment of working and our financial rewards never have to stop or diminish very much, at all. Getting back to this is really no “Everest” to climb, but the rewards will be far beyond what we expected – everywhere.

In business, life, and in our relationships, we never have to trade one good part of something to have another part of it that we desired. As a business and positive relationship consultant, I couldn't be more thrilled that we really can have it all, in a profitable and enjoyable way. As long as we are willing to put some of our focus back on the process, the bottom line and our daily operations – will take care of themselves. It's just a matter of repeating those same successful steps. Once we have the template, the hard work is already done because we know that those steps are leading us to what we wanted to see, financially. And, that's what makes it easy – to keep our business moving.

Whatever we put into the circle of our business – is exactly what comes out of it.

Whatever energy and resources we put there – was always for everyone involved, and us at the same time. There was never a need to see these two parts of your business – as separate. I hope knowing this makes it so much easier to invest what you need, so that everything turns around, just like it did in the beginning. And, that's only one positive step away from you. It's a very small and simple step, but the rewards are endless.

You just have to say “yes” to get back to it. There was never a need to cut corners out of what’s needed to make success continue to happen, or grow. No matter who we are, we’re always making adjustments, so that our rewards could be greater. And, with all of these benefits to make everything practically run itself and raise the bottom line at the same time, how could anyone say no to it – when that’s exactly what we wanted all along, from day one?

A fabulous day – always starts in the moment that we begin working together in this way, again. There are no limits to what “we” can achieve emotionally, logistically and financially; as long as we put into place – what’s working to accomplish that end, easily. This is the only real step that we ever needed to make to become – happy, healthy, wealthy *and* wise.

The Experiment:

For the next two weeks to a month, have your managers and employees put some of their attention on the “process” of completing a bunch of sales transactions – from start to finish. Look for a few simple ways to make the process run that much smoother. So, emotionally, logistically and financially, everything is working out well. For now, the idea isn’t to cut corners or to spend money. The goal is only to see how much potential time, energy, and money is being “used” in the current process. Not for judgment. Just to see how well it’s really working out for you. When we’re spending quite a bit of time, energy and money to make the process work so-so, sometimes a little bit more in the right place – will produce far beyond what we imagined...

One of the biggest mistakes we can sometimes make in the “rush” of getting to our bottom line is from not having enough solid, positive and clear communication between departments, management, and the employees. Every “eye” is needed to see exactly what’s happening – the good, and what needs a little improvement. Just like a football game with slow motion cams from a few different angles, everyone can see a necessary piece that will make the transactions run that much smoother –

from beginning to end, without stress. The more stress that's involved, the more worry and anxiety you'll generate here – because something that's needed is missing to take you straight to your goal.

At the end of the month, without a hassle about what you find, there will be a common theme present. Again, this is not for a negative judgment of what's there. The only purpose is to see where or how the process can be made easier for everyone involved. Believe it or not, you've already done this many times, since the beginning of getting your business up and running. Although it's familiar territory, it will do wonders for you!

In the process of just doing this alone, relationships will improve, communication will improve, and everyone will feel like they are working towards the same happy end – because they are. Every suggestion will come down to a few key things that are needed to guarantee the entire process, will be much more effective. Since I'm a consultant, here's a little money and time saving tip: Instead of hiring an expensive firm; try putting a few more people in your key areas, first. This way, you won't have to re-invent the wheel. A few more people pushing it, will do the same if not more, than reworking your whole system. If this doesn't work, then you can bring in – the muscles! Hiring a QC manager who understands how flow works between major departments, such as “Shipping and Receiving” is also very helpful. (These are the book-ends of your entire process.)

Since the transaction between employees and customers is where the bulk of your energy is going, and where the most amount of money is being generated, this will have a dramatic effect on all of the other parts of your business, naturally. Just like the body, when a major part of it is doing well, all of the other parts connected to it will run better, too. So, for now, put your focus here and you'll be very surprised at just how simple and easy, making a greater profit can be...

When you've fine-tuned the process, leave it in place to work its magic. It has what it needs now to keep on working for you! In fact, if my assessment is on-point, the same things that are needed here are the same

solutions you'll need for the other parts of your operation, too. The same key principles apply to how we feel emotionally about the process, and to what shows up, financially. That's why gains are also called principle, or interest. One good move for you and your business, means it will affect everyone in a positive way. And, because of that, your results will always come back to you, and multiply themselves – emotionally, logistically and financially...Positive energy and capital just need to travel through many other people first, before they come back to you at a greater level. That's business, and it's just how the multiplication process of energy and money, works. They both pick up steam, momentum and growth, as they are "moving" through your business. In essence, life and business are just a two-step process. From here – to there, and back! If you'd like to hear more about how this philosophy works out financially, my next example will show you exactly how all of this positive energy, converts itself into more money...

A Final Thought:

When I was hired by a very large company as an assistant store manager, I wanted to improve the morale of the employees, as well as making the process of working together much more enjoyable. As I was wondering "how" I was going to accomplish this, it occurred to me that I could put into place a very simple idea; one that would make the employees a little happier about their day...

It turns out (with a little help from a calculator and a district manager), with company-wide average participation, this idea alone – would have yielded an extra 5-12 million dollars of yearly revenue...Without any money needed to put it into place, and to keep it up and running. That was in 2011. Since then, the annual numbers have jumped to 115 million dollars+ of additional income...Just from making a part of the business that much more enjoyable to be a part of. And, from one good idea, comes more to follow it. That's how I started my business consulting practice, combined with my knowledge of how people and places connect. If you're new to it, it's called "One Full Circle Consulting,"

because one good idea in the right place, produces rewards – everywhere. Is it just a coincidence that more money could be raised, from making a single part of the business work in a more positive way? Could the winning formula be that simple? If we improve on an emotional or logistical situation in our business, do the numbers also grow within that energy? As of right now, the lifetime gross projected sales totals on the same formula for all of the businesses that this would impact comes close to 5 trillion. However, I'll let you be the judge to determine if this is how we really can – have it all. With love and money put together in the circle of our business, what would be missing from our bottom line...Since – that's exactly what's creating it!

“That which gives of itself without holding back (especially with our positive intentions) will produce the widest net, as far as profits go.” The only catch is that the gesture has to be sincere. It should desire to see others as happy as they could be, as well as ourselves. If you can wrap yourself around that idea, feel it, and share it...You'll extend the most, but have the most for yourself at the same time; because there is no conflict of “interest” in those two places to begin with. This is the ultimate, straight to the point truth about love and money. They're simply extensions of the same energy: One part is the cause, and the other is the effect. And, that's it. You can't break either one down as far as their relationship goes, any simpler than that.

Author's Note:

Information about One Full Circle Consulting can be found here, and at the end of the book on the “About the Author” page. If you're interested in transforming your business into all that it could be long-term, with the same values shared here, I would look into anything by Matthew Gilbert. My relationship principles of how we work together successfully (even to produce more profits), came out of biology class, and my experience in working for 65 companies in various roles. If you would like to learn more or if you have any questions, you can contact me through my business website: www.onefullcircle.wixsite.com/home.

C30: On Money and Living Happily – With and Without It!

The Premise:

Money is a symbolic and literal representation of love’s creative energy and expression. And, the same goes for any material here on earth. This is such a varied and wide-open topic, so I’m going to explore this in six different ways. While it would be almost impossible to completely narrow money down to just one chapter, here – like in the rest of the book, I’ll make sure to include no more than what I know for certain, about it. Since this affects so many different parts of our lives in a very influential way and our lives are always changing to some degree, as well as the amount of money we have, it’s only fair to speak from my direct experience with it.

Since any relationship – has a past, present and a future, let’s examine where we are now with the money we have. If we desire to have a much better relationship with anything, thinking a little more about its role and importance in our lives is a great place to start. Then, we can see where we would like to go with it. Although logistically, money just provides a transitional “means” to a greater end, how we feel about it is very personal. In time, like any relationship, our ideas about it can grow and change as we do. So, to begin, let’s jump into this with a few questions to see where you are. Then, you can define exactly where you would like to be in your relationship with money, and what it means – to you. Before we get into those questions, I wanted to let you know a bit of my personal experience with money. That way, you’ll have a much better vantage point of where I’m coming from, and why...

Like most people I grew up with, I came from a middle-class family. We always had a roof over our heads, and although times have been quite lean here and there, luckily – due to my parents sacrifice and hard work, we always had food on the table. While we didn’t always have the “best” of everything at our fingertips, my parents were as generous as they could possibly be, with what they had. And, that’s a very big part of where my “open” relationship principles come from. Over the years in

my life (as I got older with my wife), we've had our fair share of money problems, times when we could just afford the basics, and an even a few small extras. So, I've seen what it looks like when we were down to our last few bucks between us for the week, and I've seen times when we had a few hundred to spare here and there, as well.

For the most part, when we first met, our philosophy was – as long as we have enough to get by, we'll be just fine. And, since we had “just enough” to do that, our relationship with money and balancing it between us, wasn't *that* much of a problem. If anything, I was the spender, and she was the saver. In time, we both found our way to put aside what we needed for bills – first, and then the rest was ours to spend as we wanted. So, we've been through the cliff-hangers, the times when we had just enough, and we've sailed happily through having a little extra, too. And, luckily – for those “big” expenses, our families were there to help support us through those times. As of right now, even though I deal with hundreds of millions “on paper” being a consultant, for me – those larger financial numbers haven't come to fruition yet; even though I'm always working on them...

My current relationship with money is the exact same, as with love – itself. I have no problems with giving out or sharing money, or taking it in...Just as I do with the positive energy I have. Both sides of me are “open” to having and doing much more than what's here, right now. Although I can enjoy “the little things” as much as anyone, and I've been doing that for many years, my desires and tastes have matured. I can be just as happy with something that's expensive, or something that doesn't cost much, at all. I simply appreciate the positive experience I'm having with whatever that happens to be. Even though I wasn't looking for money or to deal with millions of dollars, those numbers found me. Perhaps, it's because I was so “open” to new possibilities for happiness and growth. Not just for me, but for others, too...

For me – money, like love is very important. It's completely necessary to help complete the puzzle of life. But once you understand how and why

something works, it's not something that you have to compulsively think about. I love the idea of having millions someday soon, because I see nothing "wrong" with having more positive options for myself and others, too. So, to me – money is never an "end," in and of itself. Even if I'm worth that someday, I'm still me, and I'll simply use some of it to enjoy my life in the ways that I've always wanted to... And, I will help as many people as possible to be able to do the same. Since I know that life is so much bigger than me, I'm not hanging on to money – or my love. I share them both freely, with what I have at the time, and depending on what's needed. I feel that since I've been able to give and receive equally well, if more than I ever expected or desired materializes, I would be extremely excited about those possibilities, of course! However – I see money for exactly what it is, what it can do, and what it could do. To me, I feel the exact same way about the energy I have. Since a positive moment is possible now – then, let's just get that going! Even in dealing with very large numbers, I'm not afraid of them. I just have a healthy respect for it. And, my values are not swayed by it, because I already know that very, very large amounts of money can be made, increased, shared and had – without harm. So, it's necessary, and I enjoy it, but it's not my master. In all of the disciplines I've studied, keeping what's here healthy for myself *and* others, creates so much "more" than any other method. So, there you have it... That's my relationship with money, so far. What about you? Could you take a little time to think of some high and low points with money, so that you can see where you've been, and where you want to go with it? Just consider how your ideas, what you have, and what you desire, have changed with time. That's all you need to do...

So, now that you've examined your history, what would you like to do in your relationship with money? If you have very little of it now and you're struggling, of course – you're not going to feel as positive about it, as you wanted. But, if you had enough to make ends meet and a little extra – how would you feel about it, then? Or, would having a lot more than you needed, change your opinion of it?

To me, money is a neutral to positive material. Without any, it's hard to do something with it, because it's not there at the time. With a little of it, there are plenty of small and very meaningful ways to enjoy yourself and your present moment. With lots of it, without a little thought and consideration (like anything else), it can be taken for granted, or used on things that might not be very important to you, at all. And, to me that's like choosing a short-term burst of energy – instead of a joy that lasts.

So, honestly taking time to think about what you have and how you feel, without trying to change your mind about it (at least for now) is a very healthy thing to do. If money is a gift – just as anything is here, how can you make the most of what's available to you, right now? And, that's a question only you can answer – for yourself, based on what's closest to your heart. Can you see how this question works: emotionally, logistically and financially? That's what the following experiments are here to help you discover...

The Experiment...Part – 1: A Little Bit Goes a Long Way.

As a quick “pop-experiment,” take \$10 out of your wallet if you have it (or even just a few dollars) and think about where this could take you, emotionally. Just consider a few possibilities. Doing this will remind you that you have a little money now. The second is to get you to be happy, about it. The third is to put what you have to good use. If it's for something you “need” or desire, simply make it go to a place where you'll feel really good – about where it's going...

This exercise can show you how and where you spend your time, and money. It can reveal a glimpse into what's important. And, whatever you choose, as long as it makes you feel good, that's the relationship you want to start having with what's here; especially with money. It's one of the two biggest sources of material creation on this planet. So, regardless if you have very little, or more than you'll ever need to think about, this will show you how to manage what's there in a way that works best – for you. Hopefully, you can see that the “relationship” underneath these examples isn't really about money, at all. That's just the surface

“material” you’re working with. The core of any good relationship is being able to see what you have, and what you can do with it... To carry those creative choices out, and to be happy that you’ve had the opportunity. To complete this experiment – remember that so many people went into making your experience possible. Not just this one, but all of the ones you’ll have in the future, as well. And, you’ve made many of those positive moments happen for others, too. These points should put you in a much better place, as far as appreciating – what you currently have. And, that’s the beginning of any *healthy* relationship!

Part – 2: Stretching – What We Have.

Another way to enhance how you feel about money and what’s available is to extend what you have a little further out, than you normally would. This experiment is very subjective, because the exact amount might be different for everyone, but the positive results are the same. The idea is to step-up what you would normally buy for yourself. If you have a few dollars to spare, and you would really like something special, if it’s not going to put your basic survival needs at risk, make that opportunity a reality! Sometimes, we dream about having something nice, but when we’re a bit lean, we might choose a “cheaper” option. Some examples could be: a nice meal, some organic groceries, a good pair of shoes, a new release of some kind, or even a “day” trip. If you’re an artist, you might need a nice brush or some fancy paper, perhaps. While it might not be practical to do this all the time, the goal here is to stretch what you’re comfortable with. (My wife learned this from me.) If we want to increase our prosperity, it’s good to do something nice for ourselves. Obviously some discretion is advised, but if it’s really needed or wanted, you’ll be surprised learning that the universe wants to support your goals for happiness. The “dollar” amount isn’t what counts. It’s how you feel – about whatever that is. Shiny object syndrome (SOS) can easily grab a hold of you at first pass, so put a little more thought into it. And, when you do – *those* are the emotions that are going to be there – for you!

Part – 3: Appreciating Where We Are.

Now that you've been able to change the way you feel about what you have for a moment, let's do the same thing, from a different perspective. There will be times in your life (and you might be here now), when you're going to be a little unsure or worried about how you're going to make ends meet. Since this is a wide-spread concern for many people these days (including those who have money), let's take the dollar amount out of the equation for now, and put your focus on how you feel. When there doesn't seem to be a guaranteed way to control exactly what's coming in or going out – we must ride along with what's there. While on the surface this might not seem fair, at least for now, give what's invisible – the benefit of the doubt. Everything that you have now or desire to have in the future (regardless if it's for living or pleasure) wasn't here at one time, and now – it is.

Just like the few spare dollars, a short-time ago – wasn't in your hands, either. So, ideas, time, materials, food, money or anything else that you can think of, wasn't "there" with you a short while ago. And, now – it is. Everything that's present in the world wasn't here at some point, or it was somewhere else, before it was there with you. When we're worried about having enough, if we could pull what we needed out of "thin-air" in an hour's time, we would never worry about where our money is going to come from. So, while we can't perform those types of creation miracles everywhere (just yet), we have two options to make ourselves feel better about where we are – emotionally and financially.

The first is from knowing exactly how much money you have. It might only be a little. So, you can put that away if you need to save it. Or, you can put most of it away, and take a few dollars out for yourself. Here, even though you might be worried, you're making the best of what's there. You're saving what's needed, but you're also giving yourself something to feel good about, too. (And, wouldn't you know, Robyn taught me this lesson!) So, from both ends, you're changing the way you feel, and you're managing what's there. The finish is to go back into the past a little bit, to realize – that what you really need to live and survive, will be made available to you in some way. Although you can't see how

or from where, just yet – not knowing exactly how ends are going to meet is a part of life. The idea is to relax a bit more into those spaces “in-between.” Simply observe how money is constantly moving out, and coming back in...

So, even here, while on the surface, you do need more money – it’s how you think about this position that determines how you’ll feel, about it. Of course, this attitude doesn’t answer every single part of your situation. But, if you can view this as an opportunity to relax just a bit into knowing that what you “need” is going to find its way to you... Then, you’ll be able to strengthen this area of your emotions, and your “faith” in the future, as well. Even with millions of dollars, there are times when the future of our money, looks uncertain. Realizing – somehow, in some way, that things are going to work-out, takes us to a point where we can either find a direct solution to what’s there, or we can allow time to mend what *seems* to be missing at the time. Even though it feels and even appears rough, the truth is – these feelings and that situation are only temporary. It will pass, and you will move past this – to see other situations through in a more positive way. Life is always in a state of flux; with having things come in and go out, over time. Knowing that what you really need will find its way to you is all you’ll need to remember to enjoy a little more of what’s actually there, with you... That’s how you make – the best of it!

So, now you have a way to worry less, and enjoy a little more. When you’re able to see both sides of this clearer, when things work themselves out (and they will), you’ll have the ability to see into more positive options, than before. Not just to make yourself feel better, but to ride the waves – and let what you put you here, handle the rest of it, at least for now... Sometimes, that’s all we really can do! But, if we practice making the most of it, we’ll find ourselves surprised in how those situations work out. So, have a financial situation that looked “scary” but worked out fine in your memory bank. It will help you, especially when the road ahead seems foggy. In times of uncertainty, make laughter possible, and focus more on appreciating what’s there. It

might not always come easy, but it will definitely create more confidence and the faith to look forward to – what’s on its way. If this situation was another opportunity to remember how to strengthen the emotions that make you feel – better, would that change how you feel? It might not always be right on the surface to see – but every experience is an opportunity to get back to what feels good. When you see this as practice...You’ll definitely be able to afford – a smile or two!

Part – 4: Creating More Abundance...It’s a Surprise!

Let’s review where we’ve been...So far, we’ve been able to examine our past with money and how we feel about it, we’ve been able to make “the most” out of where we are with what we have, we’ve been able to appreciate more of what’s in our lives right now, and we’ve been able to view our emotions and our financial situation in a new light...Wow. We’ve traveled quite a bit! How do you feel about that? Does this change the way you see yourself, money, and what’s possible, as far as flipping those emotions over into something better? Now that you’ve made it this far...Let’s see if we can feel, even better. For this one: It’s a surprise! You’re going to be doing the same thing, but for someone else! All of the hope and joy that you’ve been able to give to yourself is going to travel out – just past where you are now.

Now that you feel better, it’s time to grow your energy and your faith, even more. Hopefully, you’ve been able to see that feeling better, comes down to a lot more than just buying or having something. Emotionally, we’ve discovered that we are always a direct part of the energy we’re taking in, and giving out. Both of these “movements” activate and grow the positive energy that’s around us, and in us. So, witness what this looks like, from the outside...

One of the best ways to lift ourselves “up” is to show ourselves that we have the ability to turn a negative into a positive. Half of the energy that you have on the inside comes from what you’re doing alone; but it also comes from the positive experiences you have – with other people. And, there are only two ways to make this happen. We can put some positive

energy “between us” when we’re already in a good mood, but we can also do the same thing to make ourselves feel better, too. So, take the opportunity that’s there to remind yourself of what’s possible. Take a bit of this energy and enthusiasm into someone else’s world. When you do, not only will you have the chance to see the world change before your eyes, but who you are on the inside will also be growing, as well.

Anything we’re a part of that makes life more enjoyable together, right now...Changes how others feel, but it also changes how we feel, too. Again, it’s another opportunity to feel good about who and where “we” are. So, if you want to expand how you feel and your abilities for growth – material or otherwise, there’s no better way to do that, than to transform what’s there. Making your own or someone else’s day, produces the same positive energy boost, within you. Since it’s the thought that counts, put into this what would make both of you – feel great! The idea might involve money, but it’s the positive emotions you are creating with the money you have to share, so it’s really just a method of transmission. Now you have two different ways to see what positive energy, combined with money can do, and what you can do – with it. Stop here, until this exercise is complete. You’ll be taking what you felt and learned about yourself, into the next experiment...

Part – 5: Feeling Our Worth Grow.

So, after doing this...Did you feel less, or more of yourself in creating that moment?

See? You already know how this works! You do it, often. But, sometimes when it comes to money, you might feel inclined to hold back a bit. Who originally said, that this wasn’t coming back to you? (No one on earth can answer this question by the way. So, why are we following that assumption? And, why would we build our entire lives – on it?)

The truth is, when you hold back energy and your sincere intentions for others to be happy, you’ve just added a “negative” into your own energy system. (Your body.) You’re reinforcing that there’s not “enough” to go

around. So, as you keep holding back (creating a lack), inside you are becoming less, while you – crave more. See the mixed signals here? With this mind-set, for every plus we gain, a negative is also being created internally and externally at the same time. This leads to an addictive cycle; because we're trying to break free of the negative consequences – while they're directly attached to the positive benefits that are there.

When we extend ourselves for any reason, especially to add to the happiness that can be created for ourselves and others, not only are we growing who we are and how we feel, but we're also telling ourselves that – we are “more” than enough. We have more to spare. So, instead of holding back and shrinking, we're growing energy – inside and out, when we add to the joy that we can create. Since enjoyment is the highest form of energy (and appreciation is the tail-end of that), when we are a part of making this happen, we gain the most from those actions and intentions. And, if it includes other people, we get to witness our “highest power,” and we are increasing what's possible for us to accomplish in the process. I could go on, but I think you understand now...

When you add something positive – into the energy of life, for you and/or someone else...Not only are you growing to your fullest potential, but you're also increasing the potential of what's possible – in life. Here, we are giving to the energy that we're all living – inside of. Within that circle of energy that surrounds us, little by little, we're adding to what our world is made of. And, what it's capable of giving to us, and everyone here. That's why “we” never had to worry about ourselves in the process of extending our energy. We are just expanding who we are, and the world we live in – at the same time. And, this is true in any positive relationship we have. See the perfect symmetry in this model? That's what wholeness – is.

Part – 6: Clockwork...Increasing Our Gains – Together.

If you've been blessed with the ability to have almost anything you

desire, this next exercise is just for you. If you own or run a company perhaps, if you give it a little more thought, you'll realize that everyone working for you – your customers and employees – all helped you to get where you are. It's true. So, to me (since I deal in large numbers), the best thing you can do is reward your employees; both emotionally in how they are treated day-to-day, and in how you compensate them. I've worked for so many companies, and although most are generous outside of work (with bonuses and day-trips, etc.) why not make it easier for them to be happy – on the job? Since they'll be working, the energy you put forth here will go right back into their work. This way, you can both see how you're working together to create more happiness *and* more revenue. To me, there is no greater reward than being able to actively remind yourself (and them), that – we couldn't do this without each other's help. So, think of one or two creative ways that you can make sure they'll be able to do their best – on the job. All of the energy that's being generated here is coming back to you, anyway. So, you'll be very surprised at how this makes you, and everyone else feel. If you want to go deeper into this “idea,” remember – the energy they take home from work is going directly into their lives, and into their families' lives, too. They might not be able to live exactly like you financially, and that's quite alright. However – at least their happiness should be close, with what they have to work with. Just give this some consideration, and I'm sure you'll come up with something wonderful. It's all about the positive thoughts and experiences between you – that matter. So, make them last!

In the end, when it comes to money or having more of it, the “value” we see in ourselves and in each other – is expanding and growing what's possible for us to have, and create here. So, if you think you're “wealthy” now...Imagine how much more will be available to you (and everyone else) when we're not holding positive energy back – and we are collectively adding to what's here. What appears like it was for something “outside of you,” was always just as much for you, and the entire world, around you. From an energetic perspective, this means you are giving and growing three times as much, than if you – just “took” something for yourself. How's that for “interest” on your investment?

And, with this method, there are almost no negative side-effects, inside or out. So, long-term, the positive consequences you're paving now – will be traveling with you far into the future...Ensuring the fantastic conditions you've created, will be there when you arrive. How's that for security? When we're working to enjoy and sustain what's here – life gives us more, because we're directly connected to that gesture.

My wish is that you can see with a little money, or having millions, billions or more, that this isn't bad, at all. It's great to be abundant! Now, you just have to do a little more on the other-side of you to understand your "full" value. Once you realize that doing something good for you, or someone else is also bringing you "up," you're well on your way to more – love and money. So, from now on, there's no reason to see these two parts of your life as separate, or at odds with each other. When you put these two resources together, there is almost no end to what you can do. And, wasn't that the goal? Unlimited growth and fulfillment?

Now... You have the fullest capacity to live from your own joyful center of being; while also helping to take care of what's around you at the same time. These places are not separate, and they never were. When you see that you really can have it both ways, by taking joy in, and giving it out...No matter what you do or where you are, fulfillment will be there. And, that's really what you were looking for. So, you can have your wealth, share it, and grow it, too. Once you make a habit out of this...Money and love are literally coming – from somewhere else now. And, it's almost automatic...

So, with a little money, or as much as you can possibly count – you're still growing. It's all about the enjoyable and rewarding direction you're heading into, that creates and grows more wealth and happiness. Both were born – in love, and with love – they go right back into it. And, where "we" meet in the middle is life and our shared, joyful experience – of it. To finish these experiments, take what you've learned and do something positive with it. Not just for you, but for someone who's with you, too. Stand back and witness...What happens.

A Final Thought:

With a lot of money or a little of it, the goal was to appreciate more of everything we have, by understanding that there is always a way to make joy possible – for us, and those around us. There is more than enough of everything here to live in a way that makes us happier together. When we look at life – from this point of view, we find the opportunities we need to make positive circumstances and those rewarding emotions, possible. In time, with love and money, we realize that to have the most for ourselves, the other half of this equation comes from extending what we have, outwards. Rather than losing in this extension, we gain the most of everything we were looking to feel good about: More love, more possibilities, and even more money, too. To see this for yourself, since you already understand what “your side” looks like, it can only happen from desiring to make someone else feel just as happy, as you wanted to be. From here, you will feel, understand and see that love’s abundant circle – will finally be: Complete.

Author’s Note:

In time, as you’re working on developing the “love” of your life and your relationship with money, now that you realize it’s healthy to put these two transformative things together, if you want the most satisfaction out of your efforts, there are three ways to approach this. If you’re already in a well-established career, find some creative ways to enhance the love – of what you’re doing. If you consider this, some ideas will naturally find their way to the surface. Or, you could also spend a little more time with another area of interest, too.

If you’re looking out towards a brand new horizon, consider – a cause or subject matter that you deeply care about, something that you already love to do, or something that you’re gifted with. In combining a few of these suggestions, not only will you get closer to what you truly love, but since you’ll be in a more receptive place emotionally, more opportunities and even more money could easily open-up to you, as well. Remember, this path is something that will grow and develop in time. And, you don’t

need to have everything figured out to take a step forward into a positive direction...

Enthusiasm and an appreciation for what you're doing, will help to work those details out. And, if by chance or design, you come into more money than you thought was possible, and you would like to think about having more from a spiritual perspective, look into, "The Greatest Salesman in the World" by Og Mandino⁴⁸, "Cracking the Millionaire Code: Your Key to Enlightened Wealth" by Mark Victor Hansen and Robert G. Allen⁴⁹, and "How to be Happy though Rich" by Peter J. Daniels⁵⁰. All of these are excellent choices for learning about how to grow more wealth, while appreciating and sustaining everything we have.

⁴⁸ Og Mandino, *The Greatest Salesman in the World*, trade ed. (New York: Bantam Books, 1985).

⁴⁹ Mark Victor Hansen and Robert G. Allen, *Cracking the Millionaire Code: Your Key to Enlightened Wealth*, read by the authors (New York: Random House Audio, 2005), 3hrs.

⁵⁰ Peter J. Daniels, *How to be Happy though Rich* (Australia: The House of Tabor, 1984).

C31: Our Relationships: Loving Them.

The Premise:

If we desire to gain the most from all of our relationships, it might be helpful to understand what our relationships are for. In seeing them for what they are – we will be able to see more of what they are giving to us, and what we are giving to them. In any positive encounter with someone or something, we're left with a positive emotion from the moment we've created. From here, we are able to see more of the value – of each other. Every positive moment that we have together is another way for us to feel good about ourselves, each other, and the world in which we live. That's always our goal, and that's why all of our relationships are so important to us...

So, instead of reading about how important our relationships are, I would rather have you see, feel and experience this for yourself! Before we begin, I would like to say that without something outside of us to “relate” to, how could we fully experience life? We couldn't. It's only through our relationships that we see the magic of what life really is – and what it could be. Not just from the opportunities that we can create, but from the positive feelings we'll have about how much of *a gift* our lives, really are...

On the surface, this might sound deep, sentimental, or even complicated. But, once you're there happily – with something that's important to you, you'll understand *exactly* what I mean. And, you'll see the opportunity we have to keep positive emotions with us, more often. You could say that our positive moments together, only add to how good we can feel about being here. And, that's what our relationships are for in one way or another. Since we're all unique, this makes all of our relationships and our moments together a once-in-a-lifetime – experience.

In this experiment, you'll be able to see more of what someone or something means to you. Once you see this – from your point of view, you'll understand why the positive moments you have together are so

important. From here, it will be very easy to maintain the relationships you have. Every experience that we have is another opportunity to make us feel good about being here together. No matter who or what we're relating to – that's what our relationships are giving us the chance to become a part of. In our encounters, we all have an opportunity to add something positive into them to make it an enjoyable experience for both of us. Once you realize that you are able to make this happen together, that's when your *real relationship* – begins!

The Experiment...Part – 1: With Something.

Take a few minutes to be alone with something that's very important to you. While you're there, see how much "joy" this has brought into your life. Now, look at how much this has given you the chance to give something positive – back to it. Every time you're together, it's giving you an opportunity to experience happiness in some way. If you can begin to see it through this lens, while you're using it – this is the *real relationship* you have. Now, you'll be able to enjoy and appreciate it much more often. And, you can do this with as many different things, as you'd like.

Once you realize (seeing through real-eyes) what you have, you'll be able to see everything around you in the same way. You'll understand that appreciation is giving something back to you. Like the enjoyable reflection we receive from looking at something we find beautiful, we'll finally understand that love going out or coming in – always produces a positive feeling. That is love's ultimate secret. From both sides, it's always giving "us" something to be happy about. When we remember that – only joy will be found here!

Part – 2: With Someone.

When we share a smile, if we could slow time down to a standstill, every positive situation that could ever be discovered, or created in life together – is happening here. Everything begins and comes back – to this. In a positive encounter, we are celebrating the opportunity we have

to enjoy life together for a moment; and each one of us is making that possible. The “thanks” recognizes the positive feelings and the enjoyment that we’ve made happen. In a positive encounter this is happening to and for both of us – equally. (We’re both standing in the middle of the energy we’ve created together, remember?)

So, for this part of the experiment, make a positive moment happen with someone in a simple transaction. See how you feel during, and at the end of it. Now, repeat this with a friend. And, if you have someone very close to you, do the same with them, too. Put a little time aside to think about how easy it is to create a positive experience with someone. Look at what this has done for how you feel about yourself, life and them, too. The journey of all of our relationships travel through this enjoyable “back and forth” process, in their own way...

Obviously, we have many people in our lives to fulfill different purposes. But in some way, love is still what we’re left with, and it’s what we are here to experience together. Love, in essence is the positive energy that we put forth to make an enjoyable experience possible. It simply goes out – and comes, right back. Once we realize that, it will be easy to appreciate whatever happens to be in our lives, right now. And, when we make a positive moment possible with the people that are closest to us – we’ll simply feel *our* best. From the everyday moments that we share to the most important moments we can have, we’re always looking to create a positive feeling in some way together. And – that’s it! (Here comes that smile...) That’s why all of us are so important to each other. Without “us,” those feelings...Wouldn’t be possible.

Part – 3: With a Positive Situation.

Regardless, if we are working together, or if we are alone doing something that we enjoy, we are going through the same process here, too. We are taking ourselves, and the things we have – and we are making a positive situation, possible. It may appear that we have different goals or skills, but underneath of those, the goal is so that someone or many people can experience joy – in a certain way! When

we realize that this is what we're working towards, not only will we have a great time, but we'll see even more of what we're contributing to make that possible. If you're working with other people, take a few moments to consider – how all of you are working together to make a positive outcome happen. Every day, in a particular way, we are adding something that's needed into the world to make someone's day, and our own – a little brighter. And, so many others are doing the same for you; sometimes in ways that you can't see. How about that? We are all sharing something valuable, so that we can experience joy in some way. Every important decision that we make – comes down to making positive emotions possible. And, when we make decisions together from here, our results will speak for themselves. Who said that you can't have your life, and your relationships – and enjoy them, too?

A Final Thought:

Now you can see that everything we have, and all of the people in our lives are here, so that we can experience joy in some way. Everything that “we” are doing is only to keep those positive emotions, with us. So, how can you contribute in a way that makes joy possible? It doesn't take much energy to give to our relationships or to a good cause; but it certainly gives us something back, in return. And, that's was always love's message...

When we appreciate what's in front of us (by seeing how “that” is bringing us joy), it's very easy to extend ourselves, so that we can keep positive emotions, between us. When we share a positive moment with something, someone or an activity that we enjoy – we get a chance to see just how happy we can be. Our relationships are helping us to create everything that we wanted to feel, about being alive. And, in our own way, we are helping to make those feelings possible for others, too. And, that's exactly what our relationships are for. Each one is special and unique – just the way it is. Everything around us is adding something valuable to how it feels to be here – together. And, now how do you feel – about everything you see? From this point of view, the best moments in

your life and in your relationships can now be made possible...So, Enjoy Them!

Author's Note:

Every positive experience that I have ever had has helped me write this chapter. My interest in what love can do, came from seeing Leo Buscaglia on PBS, when I was seven. So, can you see just how much our enjoyable moments are influencing our entire lives? And, to think the opportunity to step into that enjoyment has always been here, for us. Would love – invite us, into anything else? For those who are new to Leo's material, I would recommend, "Love"⁵¹. However, any one of his books or lectures is a real treasure to explore.

⁵¹ Leo Buscaglia, *Love* (New York: Fawcett Crest, 1978).

C32: Conflict Resolution: Back to Where Love Resides...

The Premise:

A conflict is any situation that didn't produce the positive feelings or the outcome we desired to have. While we can correct a mistake when we're alone a little easier, the situations in our relationships contain a few more moving parts. The negative circumstances we find ourselves in here are usually created by not paying attention to the Golden Rule: "Am I treating the person across from me – the way that I would like to be treated?" If we are, most likely the results will be positive. If not, this is often the cause of any disagreement we have. If we're treating each other with mutual respect, an invisible bridge of understanding is built between us. From here, there is almost always a way to find a favorable or enjoyable outcome – for both of us.

Any encounter we have will always contain a “call and response” transmission of feelings and information. And, since how we act is literally affecting what “our” combined responses will be, to navigate to higher ground together, we'll need to keep in mind “how” our interactions are unfolding to produce the positive feelings we wanted to have...

When we are next to each other in our encounters, our energy fields are surrounding both of us. And, these combine to form a larger circle. What we put into that circle of energy is what we will both feel – there. In looking at this circle, we realize that what we put into *our encounter* was never just supposed to be for one person. We're both – present. So, our moments were never supposed to be viewed in a singular way. Our bodies are on opposite sides, but our combined energy and our actions are still there – together. When we create a positive moment, it's for each one of us individually, and for both of us at the same time. It doesn't matter if it's a quick, one-time interaction, or if it's our closest relationship. What we put “in-there” is going to directly affect how we feel individually, and how we feel about each other. For a quick example, picture a movie screen that's directly between us. The “movie”

we're watching is being broadcast in real-time. And, how we feel is directly being affected by what's happening there. Believe it or not, together – we are the creators of our life's movie. Our thoughts, words and feelings are the real, physical and emotional impressions we leave on each other. And, this is creating the situations we're involved with. So, when our intentions are positive or sincere for each other the results will be beneficial for both of us. If what's there is good for one person more than the other (unless it's a special occasion perhaps), eventually our positive “relationship” and the feelings between us, begin to diminish. Then, we both feel this, and that's usually where our conflict begins. Hopefully, you've guessed that it's really not so much about the specifics of what's happening or who we are; as it is to how we *both* feel, about it. That's why mutual respect almost always allows each one of us to “feel” like we have enough individual energy to direct what's there to a positive place. We're creating that stability between us – with how we treat each other. If not, regardless of who gains or loses more, it's still a painful experience for both of us. So, before you move ahead, think about what's happening here on both sides...Did any missing piece of *our* puzzle – fit into place, perhaps?

Since we spend more time with others than we do alone, you can see just how important our positive moments are. We can influence how good we feel on our own, but our interactions make up most of “our time” spent in the world. So, our encounters effect how we think and feel much more than we realize. Those left-over feelings (positive or negative), also carry over into the next series of experiences we have. If we're in a good place, it will be much easier to keep those feelings moving along, with us. If not, then it will be a bit more difficult each time to come back to center, within ourselves. And, this is how we're creating the lives – we live, every day. Outside of certain unforeseen events or emergencies, we are making our lives unfold together in the ways they do. Since it takes more than just ourselves to produce an enjoyable outcome, that's why the “Golden Rule” always applies to where “we” are.

The interactions we have together can only go to a few different

emotional places. They can be neutral, they can put us onto a negative path, or they can take us “up” to a higher place. We are both choosing “where” we would like to go in the moments we have together. We might even be standing still there; but like any journey, we’re definitely traveling – somewhere. And, we can choose to add something to this “picture” that brings “us” up or down. And – that’s it. Two choices. (Where would you like to be?) Usually, we feel the emotional effects of an encounter long after we’re there. That’s why *our* moments are so important. What we think and talk about here – is what we both have to digest, internally. In the thousands of interactions I’ve seen or have been a part of... We have conditioned ourselves to believe that in an encounter, there isn’t enough energy to meet the needs of both people⁵². Even though from an energetic point of view, this isn’t true. There is literally more energy here than we can actually hold or contain. So, trying to “take this” for just our side, often ends up in a conflict. The idea that there might be something to lose for ourselves in “our” encounters, distorts our view of: the world, our feelings, ourselves, and the energy we have to work with – to actually create a positive experience!

And, we’re losing our opportunity for happiness in that assumption. Why? Because it places the positive outcome to either side, at risk. It puts “us” at a crossroads; as to what could happen if another person enters the picture. The blind and negative assumption that someone “outside of us” is a threat or could be was decided on 200,000 years ago! (Imagine that? An old and familiar “idea” is not necessarily any better or safer, than a new one.) In fact, energy – in how it responds to us, has always acted the same way. The rules or laws of how energy interacts together (physics and chemistry) were put into place a very, very long time ago. And, we’re literally “made-up” of the same tiny matter, or material. (That’s a hint into how our moments affect us, and why.) Physics, Chemistry and Biology – are all just extensions of the same energy. And, in science currently, those universal building blocks of matter are atoms. So, regardless of who or where we are, and when...

⁵² Redfield, *The Celestine Prophecy*, 65-66.

We are either in a positive place emotionally, moving away from that, or we are heading to one of those two places. So, let's take this 200,000 year old idea – into our present moment. Let's see what it does *for* us...

The fear of not being able to take care of our “own” needs, while others are present (based on that old assumption) is why “those” encounters suck – the energy out of us. When we're grabbing all that we can for ourselves (due to a fear of loss) there isn't any energy left – for us to create something positive! There's simply nothing “there” between us to work with. And, that's what we're fighting about. (We're “up-set” because the positive outcome that “we” both wanted to have didn't happen.) So, I hope this “right before your eyes” example – puts you back into center space. Can you see now, exactly where this “old and outdated” idea goes? It goes nowhere positive – for either one of us. The fight is an extremely old, unconscious memory and response from a long time ago. Not exactly towards one other; but because – we could have been creating a positive and pleasant moment together...From the very beginning!

As people who literally came-out of a cave, we simply didn't have the capacity to understand or even discuss “how” to go about achieving – that end! (That's part of *our* frustration.) But, now we understand much more. And, it doesn't have anything to do, with us. As much as we like (or even dislike each other), we're simply moving energy around between us in our encounters. How that energy comes together (or not) creates our outcome. Since this is a very modern day way to think of how we “relate,” let's explore that a bit more...

We're using the energy in and around us – and not just “ourselves” to produce a positive outcome. Like breathing, we're going through the physical motions, but we're not the direct source of *everything* that's occurring. That's why we never had to worry about energy running out, or just going to one side or the other. It's just passing – through us. We're the directors – of it. When positive energy comes in or goes out – it directly influences our biology. And, that's what we *feel*. If we're

sending positive emotions out into “our” encounters – that’s what we’ll *feel* like. (Can you see where this is going now?) In the process, those positive feelings are also helping to keep us – alive. So, maybe now you understand why our negative moments can make us so upset. If we are involved in a lot of conflicting or negative moments with others, it puts *our own* joy, health, and success – at risk. And, that’s the “message” our negative feelings are sending us. That’s why, our “fight or flight” response happens. And, what usually happens – from there? So, let’s see what happens on the other side of this scenario...

When we realize that we can work together to create a positive outcome, not only do we enjoy the process and our results, but we’re also growing our *own* energy, faith and confidence when we’re cooperating. Our positive encounters allow us to function at a much higher level of health, happiness and well-being. That’s where the majority of our positive feelings are coming from! It’s our cells relaying a positive message back – to both of us. Since this is what we are creating (and witnessing) we internalize what’s happening there. Now that the “movie” looks good from both sides – the energy between us is being multiplied. (So, see how “this idea” isn’t really that difficult to understand, at all?)

We can choose to be here to “enjoy” each other’s company, to work together to achieve a certain goal, or to solve a problem. All of these “ends” create a positive outcome and the feelings that go along, with it. That’s – our relationship. So, we’re both literally affecting ourselves and each other during every experience we have. We’re just doing that – together! It’s only scary or difficult to believe in this, based on the false premise that you and I are completely – individuals. So, let’s look into this philosophy...

Selfishness is destructive, not because of its “interest” in oneself; but because it actually hurts more – than just you. Selfish-ness fails to understand or recognize, that it takes more “than just itself” to create something it needs or wants. So, one side of this point of view feels – that it’s more important than “anyone” else. Ok. But – it also needs “the

help of others” to create what’s needed, for itself. Without going any further...Can you see the problem here? Two conflicting points of view (one is positive and the other is negative) are trying to occupy the same “space.” (In physics, two bodies cannot hold the same space, unless they combine. It’s the same with *everything* here; including “our” ideas.) And, that’s why this model is destructive to both of us. What happens if *both of us* are fighting for our *own* way? This method only works when we’ve got the same idea, right? So, how limiting – is that? Since we’re all a little different, you can easily see just how “fast” those positive options will begin to disappear...Not just for one of us, but – for both of us! So, this “idea” doesn’t really work to make *anyone* happy for very long. Or, even if it does – it creates just as much suffering for both people in the process. And, even just for “ourselves” how long can we keep happiness up – here? So, see how this framework puts “us” in doubt, about how long we can remain “up” there? (Then – we get to work defending our position...)

As far as feelings go, this method places a plus and a minus in both of “us.” So, with that mix, how can we easily work – for any side? We can’t. And, that’s where the conflict is. Both of us, on a path that’s only big enough “for one” will have to struggle or fight – for that very thin line. So, in a world full of 8 billion people who are inter-dependent on each other to live...How could that “idea” work? It doesn’t and it can’t. With this model, eventually – everyone is a potential enemy or a threat. And, from there – naturally, even one’s joy disappears.

On the flip-side of this one dimensional idea, in every scientific discipline on earth, a “kind” relationship between us, not only allows each “separate” body to exist, but it also maintains the positive relationship we have to ourselves and each other at the same time...Even with our different ideas. So, let’s leave the third oldest thought we “ever” had – in the cave. Now, we can move into the present and the future happily, with something that works much better – for both of us. Let’s look a bit deeper to see what this idea looks and feels like on us, today...

During our positive and productive encounters, we are sharing our ideas and our emotions, and we are working out the logistics of how to make “our” goals, possible. And, we both have some information to share, and a role to play in that happy ending. In the process of working together successfully, we’re also making each other’s day and life – exactly, what it is. In time, the little moments we’ve shared have taken all of us to where we are, right now...

And, now that we have a much better idea of what’s happening, or could – we don’t need to worry about trying to make everything perfect! Only, a little more positive, and that’s it. This sets our energy into motion, and we’re just building – from there. Make sense? And, the “lift” in energy, happens to both of us, naturally. Once we understand that there’s always more energy to work with, there won’t be a struggle to make a positive outcome happen – for “just” one side, or the other.

We both play a part in creating success, and all of the rewards that come with it. So, whatever we share together in our moments from now on – will change what you “see” on the screen of life where you are. It will be much more positive emotionally, and it will be much easier to communicate from here, as well. When we realize there’s more than enough for both of us to gain something out of what we’re doing together, our “conflict of interest” for just one side or the other – vanishes. And, this immediately creates a win-win situation...Something we’re “both” interested in. In this, more energy is produced for each person, so that we can start creating something positive and enjoyable – between us. And, that’s where our positive “relationship” begins!

If there is anything that we might need to do to create a certain outcome, it will be discovered from this more energized place, without stress. It will simply be the next logical step. And, since we’re supporting each other while we’re working together, it will take even less energy – to get here. So, how does *that* idea – make you feel? Afraid or excited?

The idea of “Treating someone, as we would like to be treated,” was only supposed to be the first step or the beginning of something positive.

Not – the end. This sets the direction of where *our* energy is going. And – that’s it. If you share a sincere positive moment with someone, you’ll be able to see and feel (for yourself) that this is only a bridge to what’s possible for us to enjoy together – from there. It’s a very small, important step that’s creating a much bigger happy ending, for each one of us.

Especially in our closest relationships, if there is something that one of us wants to do, we can emotionally encourage their idea, we can help them directly, or we can find a way to put our separate ideas, together. If we desire for our relationships to be positive, these are our options; pending that the idea is healthy, or it’s not extremely disruptive to another person’s desires or well-being. So, we can work on that together, or we can allow each other to do what they wanted – to make themselves happy. When you have each other’s happiness in mind, being able to encourage them or their ideas shouldn’t be a problem. (You’re just supporting their desire to choose happiness, and they can do the same, for you.)

If this requires very little adjustments to scheduling, other plans, or even money, well – you’re all set! If there are some details to work-out, just make sure to take each other’s joy into account. Most of the time, that’s all we need to do. And, once this happens, you’re actually working together to put something good, into place... You’re putting the pieces together. From here – a more positive outcome *for both of you* can happen, quite easily... Viola!

Since we’ve explored how energy works between us, and how we can work together – for our happier ends, I hope you can see that most of our conflicts come from one of two places... From not realizing that we can meet both of our positive emotional needs in our encounters, and that we don’t always have to agree on everything – for our relationships to be enjoyable! If we allow each other the room to be themselves, and we allow them to have joy, just as we would for ourselves – there really isn’t a problem, at all. And, that’s where our relationships can begin to

provide us with all of the joy and freedom we were looking for, in life...

From here, it will be much easier to make some of those situations happen in a way that works for both of us. If there is something that our partner or friend isn't interested in, that's why we have alone time, or time with other friends. Every relationship will have a meeting place of differences, and things we have in common to work with. And, that's why we have a relationship to so many different things. Each one of them is adding something special and unique into our life's experience. For the most significant decisions, it might take a little longer to find a solution, or to examine the reasons behind our most important goals. When we understand our partner's wishes and why they're important, we come closer to figuring out a healthy solution. Sometimes, we need to make a little more "room" for our most important needs or differences. We're always in the process of growing. But, when the foundation of our relationship is solid, we are only adding to the circle of – who we are. So, a new idea with an open-mind and a little exploration can do a lot more for us, than we realize. By sharing our thoughts and feelings respectfully, we make more room for both of our ideas, and our relationship is strengthened in the process. So, this can be a way to highlight what we *both* enjoy. The truth is – at least 80% of what we are *really looking for* individually, can be made possible in our relationships. And, it doesn't come from changing anything or anyone, individually – just how we feel about being together. One simple adjustment between us (rather than trying to change everything else in the world and in our minds) allows everyone to be who they already are – happily. From here, even more positive options on how to do that will be made possible! (It's amazing how those two pieces "fit" together...)

As long as you remember that shared "happiness" was always the goal underneath of your plans and ideas, it should put you on the same page, or at least close to it. This is where we can create possibilities and solutions that will keep both of us very happy, about the time we have to spend together. A more positive outcome can easily take place, if we simply ask ourselves, "Am I treating the person across from me – the

way that I would like to be treated?” When we make enjoyment *our* first priority, even our differences can turn into a fantastic opportunity to create a better life with each other. And, looking at your relationships from both sides...Now you finally understand how to begin making this possible!

The Experiment:

The next time you're with the person you care deeply about, see if you can listen closely to what's important to them. This could be a goal or a dream they have, or just something simple that they would like to do. (When love first made its presence known, you were paying attention to them, right?) So, not only will you feel closer here, but what you find will be great material for some of your best conversations...The ones that lead you into the closest – of all possible experiences that you can have together.

A Final Thought:

Because we are always sharing energy while we're together, we both have an equal impact on how we feel about being – there. And, this doesn't always have to be positive or perfect all of the time! Once we realize that, it will be much easier to put our focus back – on the things that matter most. When we understand that the happiness we're building together is “ours,” we can get back to it, as soon as possible. It might take a little time to remember this “point” of our relationship, but once we do, love will take it – from there.

How to Resolve a Conflict:

A conflict is the result of using our thoughts, words or actions in a way that didn't create the positive feelings or the outcome we *both* wanted to have. (And, this can happen sometimes due to stress. So, consider that when a moment fails to measure up to what you wanted it to be.) The reason we're taking a look at something here, isn't to blame each other. It's to understand how we create positive moments together, and some of the things that get in the way – of making this happen. Once we look at

our situation, from this more logistical point of view – it will be much easier to see how “we” got off track, without a fight. This approach also takes a little steam out of our negative feelings, as well. So, can you see how this is just leading us back to – where *we* really wanted to be?

To begin going in this happier direction again, only look at your part – of the situation. When we do that, not only do we learn more, but we cut out half of the time and energy that usually goes into arguing about what we did, or didn’t do. Then, we’re halfway to a resolution, or a solution that works. Remember the steps here: Notice – what was missing in that situation. Recognize – *just your part* in creating that. Apologize. Express – what would have worked out better, based on what you wanted to do. Now you both – Understand.

However, if the situation is complex or if it involves more people, see what’s needed to make it better – together. This might not fix everything, but it will make you both feel better, and it will put you on the right track to making that situation enjoyable, again. Here, find a way to put both of your ideas together; especially since you’re focused on fixing the same problem!

Realizing, that we are only moving away from something that’s negative – towards something positive, or closer to it, will allow us to put our attention on where we wanted to be. And, that “U-turn,” begins to make us feel better. Now, we remember that being in a place that feels good together, was always – our intention.

If the situation is getting heated, take a little space and read this section alone. You’re just taking time to re-think what the goal was. And, that’s it. Once you identify it, the process will start rolling back into a happier direction. You’ll easily be able to see more of what happened and why, and you’ll be back to restoring what’s between you. Remembering our positive goal is all that we need to change course. Every time something positive or negative happens, we get better at understanding what keeps *us* – there.

If you're in a place where you can't hear each other without fighting for your "own" side, take a little more time apart (a half-hour is good), and come back when you can *both* listen and share. Not about what, where or who went wrong, but about what you – really wanted to do together. This should always be your prime focus, anyway. Here, you're closer to each other and the ability to reach your goals, successfully. Agreeing to take a little "time-out" before an argument goes south, will put more trust between you. When you go, make sure to let each other know that you'll be back to talk soon. (And, agree on the amount of time, way before you need to do this, so it won't be a surprise.)

If you can successfully listen and share your ideas on the phone without yelling, it's the right time to make amends in person. When you realize that, you're already in the process of getting back together. You're simply working out a solution that respects both of your feelings. In essence "making-up" means you're bringing each other's energy and how you feel together – to a better place. Before jumping into something positive, right away – take a moment to try to understand the "fault" that took you here. (Learning from our mistakes allows us to keep positive emotions between us, more often.) Just notice and acknowledge what happened. Believe it or not, mistakes are personal (because they happen to us), but they are also impersonal at the same time. It's usually not our deepest intentions, but the method of getting to them – that causes "us" pain. So, as you start to look at the situation this way, you put a healthy distance between yourselves, and the pressure that's there. That release alone, will always begin to end the conflicts we have. It might take a little time for the situation to improve, so expect things won't be 100% perfect...And, they don't need to be! It takes a little time to turn certain situations around, again.

However, in the process, we learn even more about the path that leads us both to joy. And, that's just a part of how our path unfolds. It's not always about where we are, but where we're headed together that counts. In the future, if we make a mistake or hurt our partner's feelings, simply say, "I'm sorry." Realize what you're saying "sorry" for, and head back

to a place that recognizes *both* of your feelings...

You've had plenty of enjoyable moments together. If you can accomplish this once, you can do it, again. The same goes for mending our conflicts, too. In time, we'll see that each one of these places is only reminding us of – how to get along, why it's important, and what helps to keep our positive emotions, between us. This is always going to be a journey... Whatever comes along is just practice for us – to get even better at it. So, do your best to see your time together, as another “opportunity” to make each other smile. It's the *only reason why* – you're there!

Author's Note:

Working as a family mediator, and many years of struggling to make my own relationships work have helped me put these ideas together. “The Marriage Course,” which was created by Nicky and Sila Lee has been extremely beneficial for understanding what's happening in a conflict, and how to get back to where love resides – once again⁵³.

⁵³ Nicky and Sila Lee, *The Marriage Course*, www.marriagecourse.org.au/.

C33: Organize Yourself.

The Premise:

Organizing is a way of getting ready to do something that's important to us. There are many approaches to figure out, prioritize and gather the materials we need to follow through with our plans. It's up to us to decide how much time and energy we're going to put into our activities, or the goals we would like to accomplish. Preparing for this is what organization is all about. It's a way to set the positive conditions, so that we can be successful in our endeavors. You could say organizing is the first step – before the steps we're about to take!

When we take a step to accomplish something, regardless if we're just thinking about it, or we're moving our schedules or materials around, we're in the process of organizing ourselves. Any activity that we can think of has six components to it. To do something we need: a time, place, some materials, an end goal, how we go about achieving that, and a good reason why we're doing this! However, we can also get moving right away, if we feel inspired. But, it might help to see every step in the process first, so you have a better idea of what to expect. And, that's the beginning of organizing ourselves, and what we're going to do...

Having a good reason to do something, can sometimes be the only thing we need to get started! When we know what the final outcome will be, most often, that's all we need to get ourselves moving. When we think of organizing, we usually put more focus on what's outside of us. This could be our materials, schedules, or anything that we might need to do, so our goal is reached. While organizing can help us to have a more enjoyable experience when we're there, before we take a step – we have to be coming from a motivated place to get moving! So, for now, let's examine our intentions...

Imagining where this goal will take you – emotionally, logistically or financially is our very first step. Even if we don't have a specific goal yet, putting ourselves into a positive mood can inspire us to take action

on something. Once you feel good, the things that make you happy, or what you would like to accomplish will find its way to the surface. Moving our emotions to a positive place on the inside is the first “move,” so that we’ll have the energy and inspiration we need to get moving on the outside. See the progression? Feeling good in general puts us into the “right” frame of mind, so that something *specific* can – come up. Once we’ve landed on something interesting, our positive emotions will continue to grow. And, this leads us up to the point, where we are “just about” to take a step forward into something...

If it’s a very simple task, you’ll see that it doesn’t take *that* much effort to enjoy yourself! You just have to make a few simple moves, and be present in what you’re doing. When it comes to the bigger goals or projects we would like to do, it’s always good to start off small, so our moves won’t require that much energy. And, this also allows us to see progress easier, too. This way, we’ll notice the enjoyment we find in the simple things, can also be found in the tasks or goals that are more complex. Even complex goals can be broken down into very easy to make moves. Once you get that, it will be easy to get closer to something that seemed quite far away from where you are now! To me, the hardest part of doing anything is being motivated enough to move – and following through with the steps that are necessary. So, think of a few simple steps that you can take with the larger goals you have in mind. You’ll find that doing this – even once, will give you more energy, as you’re moving ahead. When we feel like we’re seeing progress in the steps we’re taking, positive energy is coming back to us – as we’re using it. (That’s what feedback is.) And, this gives us even more enthusiasm to keep going! So, all of the emotional energy loops that are mentioned in the book, are just ways to keep what’s working – moving along. As energy is coming out of us, and out – into what we’re doing, it comes back to how we feel, so that we can keep those actions and our emotions “up.” Biologically, as complex as the entire process seems (internally), life is always offering us a natural incentive to keep going with what’s important to us. Yes, life wants us to feel “good” about being here... Wherever that happens to be! Remember how I said that

everything in life was designed or created to keep our happiness and us – alive? Maybe now, you’ve finally understood just how far this idea goes...Once we see progress, we can refine what we’re doing by remembering what the goal is, and why it’s meaningful to us. Then, we can see if we’re moving closer towards that happy ending. And, this leads us up into taking an actual step forward, right now...

When we’re in the process of moving, it always takes a little time to get into a rhythm with what we’re doing. If we’re in a good mood, and we keep in mind why the activity is important, both sides of our brain are now engaged. As we notice some progress, our energy and our abilities are naturally increased. (This is also a part of the feedback loop. So, see how energy, inside and out are working together?) Once we realize that our actions and our emotions are combining into something that works and feels good, we’ll desire to come back here – much more often. That’s how we keep ourselves motivated and moving, until the goal is complete. The motivation to continue only gets going – *when we make a move!* The very first step is on the inside. The second is on the outside; and the third is when these two places finally come together. And now, we’re happily in motion!

When you realize that moving into an activity will make you feel good, you can get back there without much effort. When you’re in motion, you can start to “organize” your steps and the materials you’re using, even more. The closer you are to defining your goal, the easier it will be to become more effective with your steps. Rather than going deeper into how the process unfolds, I would like you to use your own eyes to notice how it feels – to be here. While you’re active with something, simply observe how the process is unfolding. Now, is there anything you could use to make your project even more enjoyable, or productive? Nothing to stress about here. When you’re enjoying yourself where you are, what’s needed will be the next step that develops on its own. Only see what’s necessary at the time, and make those little adjustments. You’ll end up saving a lot more time, energy, and even money using this “on the job” approach. In time, you can organize what needs it, and your steps will

just get better as you go along. So, being actively involved with something that you feel or find meaningful is where all of the good stuff, happens! And, you'll only realize this for yourself, when you take a step – into it. So, your rewards are right there and waiting for you; and – they always have been! Now that we're here, we can move even further into what's there, with us...

When it comes to materials or your space, you can always set aside a little time to gather the materials you'll need to have a better outcome. And, you don't have to spend much. Just get what you need. However, if you have a little extra money for something that inspires you, go for it! But ultimately, to reach your goals and to have a great time, keep your focus on your positive emotions. Then, the steps as you're taking them. And finally, how good you'll feel when your mission is accomplished. Let the enjoyment of what's there carry you along, until your last step is complete!

To organize the other parts of our lives, we might not need to do this, as often. Whatever it is, just like the steps in your project, all that you need to do is make the task enjoyable! Positive emotions are the most natural incentive we have to do something. Feeling good is how we move closer to what's exciting, and to those things that require a little boost to get started. It's our attitude that makes what we're doing fun! So, whatever we need or desire to do, as long as we bring a little enthusiasm into it, that's exactly what we'll find coming back to us...

As far as finding time goes, there are more than a few ways to fit a half-hour into our schedules to enjoy what matters most. Once you realize that, it will be much easier to get moving! You can set very small goals to reach, and this will keep you focused on where you are in the process of getting things done. Even if your hobby or special place isn't to do anything but enjoy yourself, setting little goals here, will make you feel motivated to make progress in other areas that are more important. Again, you're setting the limits on what you want to do. Sometimes, our activities are only for enjoyment; and others are for a specific outcome.

Either way, this is time – well spent!

Before we move on, I want to share a few quick examples for those who need a little more time or space to get moving on a project. There are many ways to get started, without having to spend a lot of time or money. These recommendations are personal, and they've certainly helped me. They just might be the suggestions you need to start enjoying yourself, much more often...

Even if you have a very busy schedule, if you prioritize the things you need to do to live, and the things you would really like to do, there's an easy way to balance them out. The first step is to see where you can make some room by taking out what's absolutely unnecessary for you to do! I'm sure your T-shirts won't mind, if they're not exactly in color coordinated order. (Although, since my wife's closet is organized like this, she might disagree!) Then, you're left with only two categories: a need and a desire.

If you think about what's really important, you can find extra time for that and your relationships, by spending some focused, quality time together, even for an hour. It's what we put into our moments and activities that count; not necessarily, how much time we're spending on them. Of course, for a big project or goal you have to set aside more time; but you can still make substantial gains with a few dedicated hours per week. We often assume that we need much more time to accomplish our goals. When in reality, it's a little time spent regularly, that takes us exactly where we wanted to be. From now on, follow Cheryl Richardson's great advice. Take what's on your "Absolute Yes" list of things that you *really want to do*, and choose those – first⁵⁴!

For example, John (a very close friend of mine) and I, get together every Wednesday night or every other, for about four hours or so. Not only do we have a lot of time to talk, but we set an agenda of things that we can

⁵⁴ Richardson, "Take Action! Create an Absolute Yes List," in *Take Time for Your Life*, 64.

do to help each other with our goals. We've been meeting in the same small music studio now, for over twelve years. Not only is this exciting and enjoyable, but we have plenty of time to gain momentum on our projects, too. I also do this with a lifelong musician friend of mine – Eddie, as well. We might only see each other every other month, but we do the same thing. We keep each other up-to-date on all that's happening, so we can encourage each other to stay motivated, and to keep moving forward with our plans! Even very small windows of time to spend on something or someone that's special, can yield fantastic results. So, it doesn't require a whole lot of time to enjoy ourselves, or to get things done. When we realize that the steps are “do-able,” we're much more likely to keep up with them...

Another example comes from my wife, Robyn. Besides being a florist, she's also a crafter who makes a variety of “nature based” items that she features on Etsy (www.robynspath.etsy.com). Around the holidays we're both working more hours, but we need time to write and craft, too. If our schedules are full, we take an hour to go out for coffee to discuss what we're working on, and what we need to move forward. Then, we both have about three hours to spend on what we're doing. Here, we connect, encourage each other, and fit in time for our “art” on the same night. This routine has been working out great, and we allow each other the time and space we need to make progress. But, we're also a part of the process, too. And, being “creative” doesn't always have to relate to writing or making something. However, we can always use our imagination – to find ways to manage our goals, so that we can accomplish them. Creativity is also about making the space or organizing our time, so that we can bring something enjoyable – into our lives!

Before I close the chapter, there are a few more ways to organize whatever you're going to do. How? With your pace. If all of your time is taken up by other activities, rather than trying to rush through them, take them: one step at a time. If we slow down a bit and are present for each activity, we'll gain more energy in the process. Not only will we be able to feel more joy in what we're doing, but our concentration will improve,

so that we can accomplish those tasks easier, as well. If you own a business, try this approach, at work. Your body needs to use no more energy than is needed to get something done. By putting more stress on yourself or everyone else, your enjoyment, productivity and even your financial gains will be decreasing, as well. Bringing joy back into the workplace can help us to think much clearer, so that our movements become more efficient and effective, without the hassle or stress...

So, these are some of the ways that we can organize ourselves, and what we're doing. I hope you're beginning to see the connection between our energy, and how we move ourselves around in a healthier way. This alone, can benefit everything in our lives. A positive attitude, a steady and relaxed pace, and a worthwhile goal – spreads positive energy throughout our entire body, our relationships, our business, and even our environment. (It can even create more financial profits, as well.) Enjoying ourselves and getting things accomplished, wasn't supposed to be a pain! Everything here was made to be enjoyable. And, at the heart of it – that's what "organizing" is really all about.

The Experiment:

In the next few weeks, schedule two "half-hour" blocks of time to do two things. One is a need, and the other is a desire. The reason why you might be putting the desire before the need comes down to how you think "it" will make you feel. Of course, you'd want to put your enjoyable feelings first! So, can we do that with a need, too? How? What is the need going to give you – when it's completed or accomplished? A desire puts those positive feelings – right out on the table! While, a need often asks us to look behind or past what's there. Since needs and desires both require a little effort and energy, this all comes down to getting back in touch – with the payoff. If you think about it, after either one of these ends are finished, you're left with a more positive outcome. Realizing this is the first part. And, it's a little adjustment to how we're currently looking at it. The second part (which follows the same outline of this chapter), asks you to move your positive feelings about the ending

to the process that's taking you – to your goal. With a need or a desire, once you can see the “happy ending,” your movements will become more of a joy to carry out. Every step in both places is still taking you to somewhere better, than before. Once you start to see forward momentum in almost anything, energy is coming back to you, and “that” will feel like it's worth your time to be there. 30 minutes is just long enough to remember how it feels to do something – that's good for us!

The next half-hour is specifically for a “desire.” Here, we'll be involved with something that we're already interested in. As you're thinking about what you need to get started, this can also be a good time to organize what's there. (Hmmm. Even in a desire, we have certain needs, too. So, see how those words are interchangeable?) If there are some supplies you need, you can schedule a time to get those, or you can make this a part of the experiment; as it puts a desire and a need together. As you're moving ahead, remember what this is leading you towards, and why it's important. When we see what the entire process is doing for how we feel – from beginning to end, we'll be much more inclined to get things accomplished. These two short experiments will allow us to find a small amount of time to put energy into something that we need, or desire to do. And, it's much easier than we think to fit in a little extra time into our schedule...

As my amazing drum teacher Mike Mangini (of the band *Dream Theater*) once said to me, “There are plenty of ways to streamline our schedules to fit in small blocks of time regularly, so that we can keep up with what's important to us!” Although he was talking about practice time and fitting that into my schedule, his suggestion works for anything we would like to do. Even if we put ten minutes aside regularly for something, in time, we'll be able to see just how far we've come. Once we see progress, we'll want to make more time for it, because we'll finally realize or remember *how good* it feels to be there!

When you're coming from a happier place on the inside, you're giving yourself and the people around you, your best. So, getting back to what

really matters isn't just for you. It's for everyone who comes into contact with your energy. In one way or another, everyone could use a little more of "this" in their lives. And, to think that you put all of this beneficial energy into motion, from taking a little time to organize and enjoy yourself. Kind of makes you want to get moving on something, right?

A Final Thought:

Organizing is less about time, and more about remembering "why" we enjoy the things we do. When we realize why something's important, it's only a matter of time before we get started, and stick to our plans. By following through, we prove that we have "what it takes" to become a part of those activities. Sometimes, realizing this on the inside is the only step we need to make, so our goals become a reality on the outside. In fact, the tiniest step forward right now, no matter how small – is how all great things happen!

Author's Note:

There are quite a few suggestions in here about how to carve out time to spend on what's most important; but what about a dedicated space? If "room" happens to be an issue, there are a few simple options... Remember that closet?

You might not want to color coordinate your clothes, but if you have a little extra time (or an extra closet), you could always donate some of the items you're not using, or have a yard sale. That would make a little extra room for you to do your thing. Really – in a closet?

In an average-size closet, there is just enough room to fit a small desk and maybe a few shelves. (I actually know someone who makes multi-million dollar international business deals from the privacy of his tiny closet...Imagine that? How's that – for working with what you've got?) Now, you have a nice and quiet rent-free space to enjoy yourself! Here, you could: Meditate, develop pictures, practice an instrument, or even write a book. I think you get the idea...By the way, did you know that

more than 85% of all the writing I've ever done – took place in the passenger seat of my car? I've traveled more miles in that seat, than I have on the road. So, if we look carefully and use what we've got, there will always be a way to make the time and a space – to fulfill our greatest needs and desires.

C34: Following Positive Energy in Our Moments – Together.

The Premise:

The joy we were looking to find in our lives was meant to be felt – in our present moment. We can have plans or goals that we would like to accomplish, but since our emotions work in real-time, the happier moments we wanted to have, begin – right now. Every positive step that we take in the present is only leading us to a much happier future. So, we really can enjoy ourselves now – and then. As we go along, we’re linking one positive experience to the next. Eventually a pattern develops, and the longer we stay on this happier path, the more fulfilled we become. Now we’re choosing to have and create more moments that bring us joy. When others are a part of it, they take the energy that’s found here, and they use it in their own lives to make their experiences better, too. This “back and forth” of shared positive moments and memories keeps us moving along, so we can have many more of them. That’s the reason why the positive moments we create together now are so important. They’re taking both of us happily – to where we’ve always wanted to be!

Once this chapter is finished, you’ll have the space and time to do something else that you *really* enjoy. Since you’ve made it this far with these separate ideas, it’s time to put more than one positive activity together. It’s time to connect your moments. This is how our lives are built; in one positive experience and encounter at a time. Now that you realize this, it’s almost time to get ready to leave the book behind, at least for a little while...

While books are taking you somewhere and they’re helpful, your life begins – right where you are now. There are so many possibilities. We can choose an activity from the past, we can think more about our future, or we can make the most of what we’re doing, right now. As far as happiness is concerned, any one of these is a positive option. But, since happiness comes from choosing something that *really* makes us happy, it’s time to become a part of that much more often... Where you are.

Since our conversations also affect our moods, what do you *really* like to talk about? Can you see how those subjects are building up your energy, so that you can take a step into them? When we have a positive conversation, we're enjoying our time together... However while we're there, we can discover what we really want to do, why that's important, and even how to go about it. So, we're sharing positive energy to have a good time; but we can also work out the details about our plans for a much happier future. And, this is how our present and future experiences connect. In our conversations, we're shaping our happier lives – from this moment on. And, hopefully you understand now, why this is so important to both of us!

The goal is to start putting together what you're talking about, the plans you're making, and the activities you're a part of... To see how all of these areas are helping you create the experiences that bring happiness into your life. And, whatever we decide to talk about or do, as long as we feel good about it – is always the right decision for us. Your internal compass (your intuition) becomes activated when you feel good. So, it will always be with us, if we're making a positive moment possible. From here, we'll actually be – right in the middle of it. We only “look” for our intuition, when we've separated ourselves from the joy that's present, with us.

Since positive emotions awaken our spirit, from here it gets directly involved, so that we can continue to have even more experiences that will be beneficial to us. And, what we love or enjoy most of all is always a part of those plans. So, can you see how everything we're doing, or that we want to do is just to bring joy our lives, more often? And, your enjoyment is helping others to continue to enjoy their lives, too. See how this energy is working its way into every part of our lives, so that we can continue to be happy? Everything that we can do, or that has been created in the world – only has one true purpose...

No matter how deep or wide you explore and dig into life, you'll find that everything is only trying to lead us – in a direction that's beneficial

to us, and that makes us feel good to be there. Everything that we need to do to live, enjoy ourselves, to take care of each other and our environment is only so that we can be happy here – for as long as possible. That’s exactly what sustainability is. It’s the ability to enjoy something now, and later on, too. Everything we’ve ever heard about life and how to live it – has only had this one enjoyable goal, in mind.

Why? What else would be the purpose of life – if not to enjoy it? Or, to remember how to get back – to that? These are the only two steps we’re making. And, notice these two steps follow every activity we can think of, included – under one giant umbrella of life. Every piece of creation, hard work, dreaming, planning and striving – in one way or another is all reaching for the same happier beginning, middle and end...

So, with one positive step at a time...Once you understand that what you’re doing is only so that you and others can be happy about it – everything in your life will start to fall into place. You’ll easily be able to see if what you’re doing is working towards that end, or not. Sometimes, you’ll need to put a few positive things into place first, or you might need to do the same things in a slightly different way. And, if we discover what we *really* want to do in life, in order to be happy here – we need to start putting that idea into motion, even if it’s only in small steps. The greatest dreams and goals we have are here to make us and so many others, as happy as possible. When you follow your dream, love is deeply attached to it. And, since your pursuit is not completely solitary, it will have a profound and subtle effect on those you come into contact with. Not necessarily the dream itself (although it’s helpful), but it’s more about the “you” that’s present in it. Here, you’re not just fulfilling a dream on the outside, but a place within you. And, when you’re there, this enjoyable space is where you’ll meet – the rest of the world.

Now you know why your talents, interests and gifts are so important! Life has given to each one of us a few specific (and very enjoyable) ways to give ourselves and the world – our best. Even your greatest dream is a little bigger than you thought it would be, as far as how helpful it’s going

to be for those around you. It's only when we take a step onto our happier path that we begin to understand this. The more we follow this enjoyable direction, the more we'll realize the importance of what we're doing. The positive vision or interest that's unique for everyone, gives all of us the freedom to become who we really are. And, this is what we're expressing in the world. We came here with an inner vision – to make a reality out of it. That's the only purpose of life, besides the joy that's found in the goal. And, since the path is enjoyable, it allows us to enjoy even more of the time that we have to spend with each other. (See the loop in how these two enjoyable parts of our lives, fit together?)

So, regardless of where you go from here, keep paying attention to what's making you feel good. And, you'll naturally come back to those things. Soon, you'll know more about where you want be, and you'll start spending time there. That's why knowing more about yourself is vitally important for creating happiness. When you know what makes you feel your best, you'll have a specific direction to follow. And, this isn't just about your life's work. It's about everything you're doing. The more you see what's bringing happiness to you, the more happiness you'll bring into your own life, and into the lives of others. And, this works in reverse, too. The more positive moments that you begin to create, the more you'll learn about how to keep them going!

You'll see happiness and joy in what you talk about, in what you decide to eat, and in how you spend your time. Little by little, we're all just trying to get even closer to what's making us deeply happy. And, our positive moments are where this happy journey, begins. In some places, you might hear about how this is "just" your path; but beyond what we choose for ourselves, the moments we share is where all of this energy is coming together – to take its place! Since we have a relationship with everything around us, our two points of joy – are now visible from both sides, and the circle of expression and fulfillment is complete. Then, the whole process begins again, in a new moment or experience. The movement of positive energy through us – from idea to fulfillment is the "breath" of life. It's breathing through us – the positive ideas it desires to

create and see fulfilled. Not just for your benefit; but for the entire world, itself. (Whew!)

We can start doing our own work individually, but this energy and our positive intentions are still going – right into *our* moments. It's just a complete circle of energy. It starts from the inside of us – and it goes out into what we're doing together. Then, we take what happens there – back in. And, since we spend so much time with others, or at least – that's where our final results are created, making our moments more enjoyable should always be our focus, for now. Once we're steady and clear on the inside, we can bring our larger visions to life. Even in this, focusing on just your happiness – leaves out half of the picture of what's really happening. Each person should focus on the individual goals and ideas they have; that's why we have them! But to make any of those ideas come true – that's where *we* come together. No one has *ever* achieved a dream – big or small, without someone else's help... To reach it, or to sustain it.

And, that's why we've heard so much about the Golden Rule. It's "golden," because it draws a positive circle of energy around everything we know – and could ever know. It helps to keep every part of our energy, the energy between us, and all around us – strong, vibrant and intact, so that we can build something positive with it! Energy is the building block – of life itself, right? So, what did you think "we" were doing, with it? The Golden Rule is helping to harmonize what's inside and outside of us at the same time. This energy is bringing everything together – in alignment. Before, we didn't really understand that the idea of this rule – wasn't just to behave, or to be nice. Nice or enjoyable – *is the foundation* that we're building the rest of our lives on!

Emotions are a state of being; but we also need a logistical landing pad for those, as well. Emotions, or the condition that our energy is currently in – wasn't just meant to stay inside of us. Emotions and the sharing of them is how life communicates *with* itself. (You could say, it's the conversation it's having, through us!) We have conversations to enjoy

our experience, but to also begin creating every positive feeling or situation that we ever wanted to become a part of – alone, and in our relationships. So, maybe you’re finally beginning to understand why that “golden” idea is so important. It’s the straightest and strongest point – that directs our energy to everything we’ve ever wanted to have, or create that’s good for us. And, there are only two ways to accomplish this aim: Alone, and together.

The energy or love that we specifically give to ourselves – is the other half of this enjoyable circle. Here, in this enjoyable space (on the inside), we get more specific about what we really want to do, on the outside! This energy helps us to relate to other people, because we’ll have something positive to share with them. And, if they’re following their happier path more often, this “joy” is what we’ll have to bring to each other. Then, the plans we’re building keep moving forward, so that we become even happier about the time we spend together. So, alone and together, we’re making happier moments possible – for now, and later on, too. And, that’s exactly what everything you’ve read about in here – is for. All of these chapters are just different routes or ways that we can get back into *our happiness*.

The thoughts, words and actions that we’re using are only here to make us happy, so that we can relate to other people, and what’s around us in a positive and beneficial way. That’s always been the real relationship we can have, with everything that’s here. And, what we like or enjoy is simply material for us to work with, towards *that end*! Everything that we can take part in, and all of the things surrounding us – is all matter – for us to be a part of, so that we can feel good about it! So, how does knowing this make you see the world, around you? (Take a quick look.) Every part of it is another route that we’re using to create – a positive experience. If that doesn’t make you appreciate your environment, nothing else will...

And, everything here, started out – with just a single positive thought, or idea. Whatever decided to create all of this – had a great idea, too. Just

like the ones we have in our own lives to fulfill. With something as small and simple as an idea, this is how our most enjoyable moments happen. It's how our relationships grow, as well as the largest goals we could ever imagine. We just keep creating and following through – with our positive energy and our ideas. In time, they lead all of us into the much happier lives that we wanted to become a part of. So, before we move on, let's follow the lifeline of positive energy in our moments together. Once you finish the book, you'll be creating and following positive energy in your moments to be happy, and to help build everything that you desired to see. And, you'll be helping others to do the same for themselves, too. That's why, we are all here – together.

How We Create and Follow Positive Energy – Together:

In making a positive moment happen together, energy is being activated, released and absorbed by both of us, equally. So, there was never a reason to worry about what we're going to "get" here. During our encounters, we're making positive energy available 100%, for both of us. We didn't know this before, and that's why our past moments might have been difficult. The enjoyable feelings for each one of us are only multiplied when "we" put our positive energy together. That's why these enjoyable moments make "us" feel so good – about where *we are!*

Once we feel good, our energy and our happiness begin to grow. Now, we can get more specific about what we would like to do. Because we're in a positive place, it will be much easier to share what we're *really* interested in doing, and why. Then, we can put our ideas together, or find one that works well for both of us at the time. Once we understand that creating happiness was the goal all along, it won't be that difficult to find something worthwhile to do. As we travel along this path, what we wanted to do individually will become clearer, too. This is how we begin to see and shape the happier futures we would like to have...

When we see each other again, we'll have more positive things to talk about and discover, as far as making plans together. And, the plans we have in our own lives will begin to take shape, as well. As our energy

and our vision grows, we'll naturally create the motivation we need to take a step ahead.

It doesn't matter if we're already in our profession, or just starting out. Our happier moments will begin to take us further along, in whatever we're doing. This could be at home, at work, in a hobby, or during leisure time. Greater positive plans and ideas will start to develop from here. (Love is a very, very creative energy.) Then, we can start to put those ideas – in place!

As our lives become filled with more enjoyable things to do, not only will we have more energy, but our relationships and our habits will start to develop and refine with us, too. In time, as we go along in a happier way, life will start pulling in more options, people, resources, money, and even new relationships to help us achieve our goals. In time, we're living from a place that truly makes us happy – about who we are, what we're doing, and what we have to share with the world, around us...

Our joy becomes a reminder of what we are all here to do; so that we can keep positive energy moving through us, and out into the world that we're a part of. Eventually, everything we're doing becomes more enjoyable, productive, sustainable and profitable in the best possible way; both now and in the future. This is – the happier world all of us wanted to live in...And, our simple enjoyable moments together are making all of this happen. Not just for you, but for the entire world, around you. Not just for now, but for as long as we would like to be a part of that. This is life at its absolute best. And, together – like this, we're making it possible to enjoy our lives, so much more than we do, right now...And, isn't that exactly "where" you wanted to be?

Now, we have a direct way to make our enjoyment – possible.

The Experiment:

In your next conversation, direct it to a much more positive place, and see what happens together. See what this does for how you feel. Then, see how those feelings lead you into wanting to do something with the

energy you have! You can do this, when you're not feeling so great, too. The jump up – will be felt, immediately. So, instead of using your time to talk about another “negative experience” unless it's to find a solution that you're going to put into place right now, see what this does for how you feel – instead. When you're feeling “low,” it might take a little extra energy to begin. But once you're in motion, you'll know where this energy is going, and how it's going to make you feel. (That's how we get excited about the experiences we're going to have!) So, keep following what you're creating. Like weaving a magic carpet, we're arching energy outwards – and we're traveling on it, at the same time. If the person you're with is down as well, share what you've learned here. Let them know (respectfully), that if we both want to feel better, we'll need to start changing the direction of where – we are going! We won't get anywhere as far as feeling better, until we start steering our moments and our conversations – to a happier place. If we've just had a negative experience, our next one is to turn us, and our feelings around! Does that make sense now – why? So, that's what our next experience is for. We wanted to be happier; so going backwards or staying in the same negative place, isn't going to help us feel better. Once we acknowledge where we are now and why (even to ourselves), it's time to create something – positive.

“Follow Your Bliss,” wasn't just meant for a life or career path. It's a suggestion for anything that's enjoyable to you, right now. So, keep going, and see where this energy takes you. The more you travel on this road in your thoughts, in your conversations, and in what you choose to do... You'll rise to even greater levels of happiness. So, create “that” more often. If you're with a significant other, this will help you to have a better physical relationship, so that you can enjoy more of your time there, too. Love's energy is fantastic for turning everything good on – in our lives!

So, follow the lifeline of love's energy in your moments together now, as much as possible. See how you feel. See where this takes you. See what it creates for you, and others, too. This is an invitation to become a part

of the enjoyment that's always been here and waiting for us...

And, now is our time – to take a step into it.

A Final Thought:

When we put positive energy into the moments we have, that's exactly how we will feel, about them! From here, we can bring this energy into the other parts of our life, too. As these areas become more enjoyable, energy just keeps on growing with us. And, that's how we begin to create the dreams we've always wanted to become a part of...

So, notice – that someone across from you wants to be just as happy, as you do. Now is the time to begin making these feelings possible together, even in the simplest of ways. Just be natural with it... You've had plenty of enjoyable moments like this, already! Happiness has always been something that we can become a part of; and our enjoyable moments together are taking us here. So, keep this energy going in your life, and include what's important to other people in that energy, too. Our interests, goals, and talents are only here to help make our positive moments possible... They remind us of what we are all here to do; in one way or another, until our greatest dream – comes true. And, you can rest and relish in the dream you've just created successfully, for as long as you desire to do that. Then, if you choose, it's onto something else. This is simply the rhythm of how our lives are constantly unfolding... Can you see the beautiful pattern now?

C35: Ringing Bells in the Bedroom...

The Premise:

It's pretty difficult to enjoy something extremely beautiful, when the line between love and fear are sometimes close together. It's not uncommon for us to take the most enjoyable and most sacred parts of life, and view them in such a way that we can't actually see – what was intended for us, there. In fact, how we view getting along with each other, fits right into the same framework. If we can't "get close" to one another without fear or worry leading the way – then, how is our physical "union" supposed to be – enjoyable? In a way, it can't. So, that's what communication – is for. And, I'm happy to say – that this part of our lives is at least opening up to new possibilities. Not only for enjoyment and safe, accurate education, but so that we can take part in something that was only supposed to bring us together – in love...And, in so many ways – both literal and symbolic, that's what "sex" does. If we remove ourselves and our bias from the picture for just a moment, we'll begin to realize that everything here on earth came together – through a union of some kind. And, that very "idea" travels all the way down into the smallest places that we can currently identify. Everything here – in one way or another, combined itself to produce physical matter, and life itself. So, we are just mirroring that process. I can only guess that if the Divine Creator had a problem with us getting here in the way we do, it would probably be happening a different way...

And, once we understand that, we'll still have some concerns to discuss...With unprotected sex, there's obviously an increased risk of creating new life, contracting a disease or having health issues that we didn't want. And, these issues need to be fully respected. However, beyond them, if you are in a committed relationship, are of legal age, are following your sincere beliefs, and you are honest with yourself and your partner about your feelings, what else is there to be afraid of? Fear of anything – is only useful or helpful when it takes both sides of what's there into account; the potential dangers and the opportunities for

something meaningful to take place. Like anything else, as long as our expectations are realistic this is probably the most enjoyable thing that we can experience together! So, this is something that we need to celebrate and enjoy much more often. How we view this is tied into how we see ourselves, as well as anything else that could be good for us. But, if you're following any of the suggestions in here, you'll notice that our past ideas can easily change into something that's much better for us. Then, we'll be able to see this as the gift – it was always intended to be.

It's not my intention to tell you what "to do" about this very special part of your life. It's your decision. Only after honest, careful consideration, can you decide what's truly right for you. My only goal is to help you reach those decisions in a way that removes – not the concerns, but the issues that get in the way of you enjoying this part of your life to the fullest. Like anything that's healthy – once you see past the real and imagined barriers to your happiness, what's left, will be right there – with you!

Since this book is primarily concerned with enjoying your experiences, and you've had plenty of time to do that in a variety of ways, I'd like to get right to the experiments...However, if you would like to take a little more time to thoroughly explore and think about intimacy in much greater detail (before you make any decisions), my absolute favorite book on this is, "*For Each Other: Sharing Sexual Intimacy*" by Lonnie Barbach, Ph.D. I started reading this way back in 1995 or so; and even today, it's still my go-to source for anything related to this subject. And, with that...

Our concerns or doubts were never supposed to diminish the joy that's to be found in something pleasurable, or good for us. They are only here to serve as a reminder of what could actually get in the way – of that. So, if we consider this, we're most likely aware of what our concerns *and* desires are. And, if you know what those are, how can you address them, so that you bring back the joy in what you *really* wanted to do? In looking at sex from both sides, we take care of our concerns, and we give

ourselves permission (for adults what a terrible word) to become a part of what's there and waiting for us to enjoy. And, that's exactly – what love does. It gives us knowledge, a healthy respect, and even gratitude for the opportunity that we have to feel fantastic about life – together!

Before we go into the experiments, I want to remind you that when we're coming from an honest and positive place within ourselves, our hearts will guide us – from there. Our hearts are capable of figuring out past what we're aware of at the time, where a choice will go. If we feel a little more positive than negative about something, after some consideration – there's your answer. If you feel more hesitant – this doesn't necessarily mean it's the wrong choice. It just means that you need to take a closer look into those feelings. If even after more thoughts or discussions about it, you still feel the same, then – I believe that's your answer, as well. Sometimes, you know it's the right decision, and sometimes our feelings will tell us to wait; or that there's something more to explore there. So, it's always good to take the time to examine our wishes, concerns, and desires – especially here. If it's a good choice for you, further exploration will only show you more of why it is. And, the same goes for the other side, as well. When we are more open to how we feel, our spirit will direct us into the places that *are* good for us. And, that's the reason why we have feelings to begin with.

We have positive feelings to create love – first. And, anything else we feel is only to protect our love and enjoyment. Hopefully, you've seen that the full enjoyment and appreciation of our lives is the only reason why we're here together. Everything we do, in some way – is only to create and keep those positive feelings with us and between us...And, that's it!

However, even with our concerns and some negative experiences from the past (and we all have them to some degree), as long as we're headed into a more positive direction with anything in our lives, we're traveling on love's path. So, love in all its forms is life's greatest pleasure; and we are only here to become a part of it together, in every healthy way that's

possible...

So, before you begin “ringing bells” in the bedroom, remember that this is a journey. It will take time to get to know each other, and to learn more about what both of you would like to experience. As long as what you decide to do is not harmful emotionally or physically, there is a very wide variety of experiences that you can create together. And, you can always adjust what you’re doing, as you go along. Like anything else, this is an enjoyable work in progress. So, make it – something to enjoy! Put more focus on the positive feelings that you wanted to have. Discuss both sides, but always put your focus on how you wanted to feel together; and your concerns will transform into something that’s healthy, exciting, and much more fulfilling. If you do that – just as you have with everything else, you’ll be surprised by what you can do. If you’re in a committed relationship, the positive feelings you create in the other parts of your life, will only bring you closer together here, too. So, in and out of the bedroom, start to notice how one positive feeling between you, leads to another – and more ways to make them possible!

The following experiment has a few different parts, but you can complete them separately. Or, if you’re in the mood, you can put a few of them together. Each one has the same goal...To bring enjoyment back into your relationship! Since everything you do is to enjoy your time together, when you’re “there,” sex can easily follow the positive emotions you’ve created. And, that’s what these exercises are for. They help to create everything you need for your relationship to thrive: communication, discovery, surprise, putting your ideas together, problem solving, goal setting, some role playing perhaps, and most important of all – having a few good laughs, between you...

The Experiment...Part – 1: For Your Eyes Only...

Talking about sex (for some people) can be much harder than having it; because in talking we have to slow down, face each other, and feel the emotions that are present. But if we skip past this, not only will our trust bonds weaken, but our sex-life will become less enjoyable, too. (We’re

extremely connected there, right?) So, here is where you can turn those feelings around. You know how much time that you spend talking about other things? Does talking about them, make you feel more comfortable? So, if you can enjoy doing this exercise together, every part of your relationship will improve, and become a lot more fun. When that happens, of course, sex will be more enjoyable, too. But, before you dive-in, remember the attitude that you bring into these exercises, will go a long way towards turning those “negatives” into positives – naturally. Here’s what to do...

Write each other a letter. It can be short and sweet, or even a few pages long. In it, tell your partner what they mean to you. How it feels to be close to them, emotionally. And, include a few suggestions to help make your sex life better for both of you. Be specific. It’s important to include something for them and for you, as well. Keep it positive, and tell them what you would like to see a little more of – based on your desires *and* concerns. This will make it easier to explain how you feel, and why. And, your partner can read this when it’s a good time for them. In this message – just be yourself...It’s for their eyes only! The more you express exactly how you feel here, the easier it will be – to be yourselves, while talking to each other. (Consider this practice, on the page.) Exchange them on the same day, if you can. When you’ve read them alone, set aside a time to discuss them...But, not as yourselves! For now, you’re two of the world’s most famous sex therapists. Imagine that? Your goal is not to solve the mystery, just yet. Bring a notebook, grab some coffee or tea, and spend an hour or so, with what you find. Your assignment is only to list and make notes about the concerns and desires of your next case, together. For this to be fun, informative, and to turn out well – no analyzing, debating, or judging...Just the facts, please!

Make a small list of each person’s concerns and desires; put them into two separate columns. Then, see what you can come up with together for ideas to take care of those, one by one. Make sure to stay in character, and see if highlighting a “positive” will take care of a negative concern, just by a shift in focus. If you find a few easy solutions to take care of

those, write them down, so you'll both have a copy. Then, you can get together (as yourselves) next time to discuss and explore what you've discovered. Do your best to complete these two assignments within a week's time – just on paper, for now.

Since you'll be more comfortable with the subject matter, you'll have a great time problem-solving together, and it will be much easier to discuss what you've learned. When making suggestions and exploring options, the same encouraging attitude applies; just as if you were dealing with another couple... It's only to find out more information to help make this part of your lives exciting, while discovering more about each other at the same time. When you've isolated a few simple things that you would like to focus on, stick with those. Keep a copy of the letters, so you can come back to work on a few more items in the future. You'll find that this exercise will be helpful in some other parts of your relationship, as well. It might even start a habit of writing each other letters, more often...

Now that you're more comfortable talking, you can spend time exploring some other parts of your life, too. Not to fix anything, but so that you can bring more enjoyment back into those areas of your life. This will definitely help you to share and combine the ideas you have. When you're ready, you can set a time to revisit what you've discovered in any one of these exercises. If you have a few butterflies about anything in this chapter, remember... You're sharing this – with the one you love. So, focus *on those* feelings!

Part – 2: Turning Yourselves – On!

Set aside a few hours. Pick your favorite spot to visit – and go there! Talk about why you like this place, so much. And, how does it feel to be there – together? It doesn't have to be expensive, or far away. It's more about the energy and the positive emotions you find that makes this place special. And, once you feel those emotions between you, you can start to create them wherever you go. Now, you're beginning to see what's turning yourselves – on! Not with sex directly, but with the positive

energy you feel within yourselves, and between you. If you have time, discuss some other interesting places that you would like to visit. Just bring your inspiration and enthusiasm. This will make you willing to try some new things, and you'll find some different ways to put those possibilities together. Sometimes, our partner would like to go to a particular place, more than we do. It's good to be involved with what's important to each other; it's great material for your emotions, remember? So, this is really about the positive energy that you can awaken and create, between you. Once you realize what those "places" are doing for how you feel, you'll want to do some exploring together. To stir energy up, make it a point to visit somewhere new or different, at least once a month.

When you're in a place that's exciting, did you notice that you felt a little closer? Did that make you want to be physically closer to each other, too? This works in reverse, as well. The more you extend small physical gestures regularly, for nothing other than because you wanted to – it will make you both feel good, and it will bring you closer together. But, don't rush into anything – yet! The "magic formula" is to slow down to see how these bonding emotions are naturally building and simmering underneath the surface, when you're enjoying yourselves together... That's what you're trying to stir-up! So, rather than trying to manufacture or rush to those specific, physical emotions – let them show-up, by what you're doing elsewhere. You can also turn yourself "on," by spending time in places that you really enjoy, too. This is half of the energy you'll have to bring to your partner. Once you understand how this energy is being made, and you can build it between you more often... You'll desire – to be together!

Part – 3: Being Together.

How you choose to do this is completely up to you. Talk it over. What are you both comfortable with? Do you need a date on the calendar? Is being spontaneous, exciting? How about a time, in general? If one of you is a day person, and one of you is a night owl, could you meet in the

middle – once in a while?

Giving yourselves the freedom to be together in a way that works *for both of you* is the best gift you can give each other. Maybe after some time passes and you both feel good, you can decide that you'd like to try something different, or new. The time, place, or what you choose to do, can be changed at any time you *both* want to do that. Some things might take a little longer to get comfortable with, just like any other plans we have. But, as you go along with: talking more openly, visiting your favorite places, sharing little physical gestures, planning for the future, solving a mystery, or just enjoying more of what you're doing together... You're going to want to be – as close as you can get!

Like anything else, once you understand that you can turn love “on” at any time, you'll find that this part of your lives can be almost as easy, exciting and enjoyable, as anything you dream of doing. One positive, physical experience is all that it takes to remember this. Love is willing to take us wherever we would like to go together. And, sex – as amazing as it can be – is just another one of those wonderful places.

A Final Thought:

Any positive emotion that we would like to feel with our partner can be created, as long as we remember what brings us together happily; and we make time to visit those emotions and those places, more often. Our physical love is just an expression of the emotional love that's already, between us. So, there was never anything wrong with it; especially if we're in a committed relationship, and we're honest with each other about how we feel, and what we would like to do together.

Even if it takes a little time to think and talk about a few concerns or desires, treat it the same, as anything else that's important to you. Just simply hear both sides out, before trying to jump to one side or the other; and in that little space of “sharing” possibilities...

Rather than being difficult or stressful, this part of our lives – like everything else, could be fun, enjoyable and exciting. If you appreciate

the opportunity you have together – you'll make the most of it. And, it will just get better in time. Some things you will always like to do, and others might fade into the background, as new discoveries are made. It doesn't always have to be perfect to be enjoyable. So, we're right where we need to be to make love – everything it could be, for both of us. As long as we're enjoying ourselves and our desires more often, those concerns have turned themselves over, into something that feels – so much better now!

C36: This is Just the Positive Beginning: For All of You!

The Premise:

There is nothing to fear about love. Before we understand this, we might have some concerns or doubts about what we will discover here. Remember, from your own experience – the positive moments we share together, are the ones that make us happy! Besides feeling good, nothing about “us” needs to change. Love doesn’t ask us to change. It only asks us to use the energy we have in a beneficial way; so that we can enjoy those results. Love, only encourages us – to become who really we are. At its core, it does two very important things. Loving energy benefits you, and those you share it with, equally. Then, it travels out from “our circle” to have a positive effect on everything around us, as well. It only naturally enhances everything that’s here. And, that’s its role; just as everything else here plays a part in that mission, too. This is the energy we are exchanging with each other, so that we can feel good about the moments we have together. There is no right or wrong way to share this with the world, around you. As long as your motives are sincere for the benefit of you and the people around you, love – can complete its mission. The more you get to know the people you’re with, the more you’ll understand what their interests and needs are, and how you can support them. From here, you can direct your energy into the places that need it; and they can do the same for you...As we all have places in our lives that are fulfilling, and places that need to be filled with energy. So, we all need the same things; even though our lives appear different on the outside. This means that “love” and all of us, will always have a good reason for being here. No matter how far we’ve come or what we’ve achieved, there will always be something more for us – to become a part of, happily. And, our enjoyable moments – alone and together, are how we begin taking a positive step in that direction...

And, reading about these ideas will only do so much. Although the template I’ve used in how our lives unfold is universal, you will discover some new insights into how love works, from your own point of view. It

would be impossible for anyone to write *everything* about love in a single book. Love – in all its forms, spans our entire history of time, since the universe was created. And, we could all fill a book of at least 50 to 100 pages for every day that we’re living here! Love’s energy can be awakened on paper, but it was meant to be felt and applied directly to the lives we’re living – where we are. That’s the only reason why we have this “message” to begin with. And, it was never a demand or a command. It was only an invitation into an enjoyable experience; and how we create that – together. The most enjoyable moments you will ever have, will come from your own experiences here. However, these words, and the words of your most sacred and cherished book will encourage you to keep creating those enjoyable moments, wherever you happen to be...

If you encounter someone who isn’t feeling well, or isn’t ready to share this energy yet, don’t let that stop you from doing your best to enjoy where you are. Keep living. You can’t make someone “choose” to be a part of a positive moment. You can only help, by sharing what’s needed to create one – with them. Your role is to take care of the positive energy you have inside; and then to share it with others, so that the energy in each one of you is maintained, or grown into something more. In time, when they realize that there’s only something to “gain” here, people will want to become a part of those happier moments, too! Positive energy has always had an immediate effect on anyone who: accepts, appreciates, shares and returns it. Sometimes, a very simple “please and thank you,” or a returned smile is all that we need to activate it. That’s really all there is to it. Although, the closer we are with other people, the more we can share our energy together in a specific way, based on our relationship, and what we know about each other...

When you experience more positive moments in your life, you’ll see that you have a much greater appreciation for everything you have, and everything – around you. This energy allows you to see much deeper into the beauty of what’s already here. Besides enhancing our feelings, it will give you the clarity to see what you would *really* like your life to

become. We all have different interests and goals that we would like to fulfill; but this energy (at its core) works in the same beneficial way for all of us. Although we might subscribe to different religious, political or even historical backgrounds, our bodies, minds and souls – were all created from the very same source of energy. Physically and biologically this is true; even though we might have some of our own specific ideas, needs and desires. At the “heart” of all things, we all function in the same way. That’s why this energy can literally do so much – for everyone. It reaches the deepest parts of who we are, and it rejuvenates us from the inside out – and from, the outside in. Love allows each one of us the freedom to have our own goals, interests, and personalities, even though it affects us all in the same positive way. It already knows that we are all different – on the outside; but our emotional needs on the inside are the same...

As we get closer to who we would like to become, nothing in the world “around us” will change. The only difference is that we will be much happier about ourselves, other people, and what we’re doing in our lives together. And from there, we can build something even better to keep joy with us, more often. As for the rest of the world, people are still going to be who they are, except for those of us, who are open – to love. Since we’re all seeking this energy in one way or another, now you’ll have even more of it to share. And, as others take this energy in joyfully, now they have some for themselves, and some to share with others, too. That’s the complete circle of what “love” does, for both of us. The beauty of its message is that it invites all of us to become more of who we are, and to become happier, for as long as we’re here. Loving energy will always be waiting for us to use it, and become a part of it.

The energy in the world around us – is love, in its trillions of different forms of expression. Our life, and where we live – is the most magical and amazing place that we could ever imagine being in; and that’s why we’re all here together... To see, and experience it. Even though it has been difficult for us to do this in the past, we are here to “love” the lives we have. And, when love is present, we feel complete...

That's why Jesus said to, "Love your neighbor, as yourself." (Matt. 22:39 NIV)⁵⁵.

Along with the specific, personal religious or spiritual beliefs and traditions that we honor, he was only trying to tell us how to get "here." To see the full beauty of life. He saw the divine in *everything* and he was inviting all of us to be in that magnificent place, too. That was the mission of his message, or anyone who's inviting us into the same "enjoyable" space. They are just letting us know that there is a way for us to feel a positive connection to ourselves, each other, and everything around us. Love is the way to those positive feelings and emotions. And, if you've ever had a moment where you feel truly connected to what's in front of you, you'll always remember it, and desire to create that experience – again!

When you begin to feel positive energy on the inside, the outside world will look just a bit different. Not so much in its appearance, but in how much more "alive" everything will appear to you. Since your senses are being heightened during a positive moment, your senses combined, will make things look much more crisp and clear. And, you'll see this for yourself. Here, you will feel like you are standing right in the middle of the world – because you are; both inside and out. You will be able to see and feel the beauty of what's all around you. Love is the joyful place where what's inside and outside – meet. There, time almost stands still – and the boundary between us and what's present disappears for a moment, and we're right there – together. Rather than being scary, we feel completely at home. And, for a few moments – we are. Love makes us feel completely full of energy within ourselves, while we're a part of something on the outside. That's where – it wants to take us. And, we never lose ourselves, or who we really are "there." Here, we fully recognize – the positive relationship *we* have. And, this can take place with anything that's in front of us...

In the future, if you would like to experience life in a different way, that

⁵⁵ *The Holy Bible, New International Version* (Colorado: Biblica, 2011), 31.

is a normal part of love's growth. We all grow and change a little, in what we would like to do; and this is completely natural. So, share what you would like to do now, with the people you're spending time with! If there is something that you would like to do that other people might not be interested in, as long as it's healthy and not harming anyone, you are free to follow your heart's inspiration. If you feel that love is leading you into a certain direction or place, and the message is very strong – listen to that message. Have faith to follow that calling. Love only has your best interests, at heart! You can still be yourself, and love other people – no matter what you choose to do. And, they can love you just the same, as well. We all have our “own” paths to follow, right beside each other. So, that's how we can be ourselves, and love each other at the same time. We never had to be the “same” to do this. Love between us – makes our individual differences ok; and this allows us to be ourselves. And, no two people are exactly the same. In our moments together, we're simply creating something for both of us to feel good about...And, that's it!

If you are involved in a moment or a situation that isn't enjoyable or loving, all that you need to do is apologize to the person you're with. Love never requires perfection. It only asks us to remember what's making our moments healthy and enjoyable, so that we can stay “there” more often! An apology notices what might have pulled us out of that space – so we can take a step, back in. And, that lesson is for both of us to remember, about what's keeping us – here. Then, we can begin again, on a more positive note. *That's all there is to it. Two steps.* As we grow, we are all learning more about how to develop ourselves, what we're doing, and how to create more positive moments together. From this enjoyable place, you'll decide what you would like your life to look like, as you go along. We are all here to share and build love, but in a way that makes us very happy to do it!

That's why the phrase, “Follow Your Bliss,” came through Joseph Campbell. He was another complete, living example of his message. He stayed very close to what he loved; and look at the life he lived! He helped to inspire George Lucas, which led to the *Star Wars* movies that

have impacted over four generations of people, so far⁵⁶. Did you know that?

So, if you're in a close relationship, you can inspire each other by building whatever dreams you have – together. There will always be a way to see each of our ideas through, if we would like to do that. When we make a little more “room” for each other – we'll love where we are. It may take some time and creativity to work out the details, but that's *our* life's adventure! Not only do we increase our chances of success with that support, but it will also bring us much closer together...

If you're single, waiting for your “soul-mate” to appear, when you spend more time making positive choices that represent you, and what makes you happy, then – your “mate,” will come along, when the time is right for both of you. This is because “here,” you are being your truest, authentic self. From there, someone will also be – themselves, too! Learning how to enjoy your own life – is what you are here to do. So, put your focus “there,” for now. You'll need to know how to keep this energy going in your own life. Then – you can bring it into the relationships you have. From here, you'll know how to encourage others, and why that's so important, too...

As your loving journey continues, realize that some of the plans you have will take time to build and create them. Some of the things that we would love to do will come together – right away, and other plans might take some time. Since our dreams also affect others in a positive way that's needed, that's what the “wait” is for! Sometimes, what we love will take us to some unexpected places; but we'll still find the positive feelings or situations that we were looking for. So, be open to other possibilities, besides the ones you're dreaming about. As long as you enjoy the trip, that's all that matters. With faith, patience and your enjoyment, you'll arrive when the time is just right for you...

So, keep taking your positive steps ahead – and enjoy yourself, your

⁵⁶ Campbell, *The Power of Myth*, 144-146.

environment, and the people you're sharing this journey with. From here, you'll get to where you really wanted to be as soon as possible, and you'll have a great time along the way... That was love's idea for us, all along.

The Experiment:

This is the easiest and most enjoyable experiment in the book! All that you need to do is take ten minutes of quiet time to think about the best experience you've ever had – alone. What made it – so memorable? Can you get back to that experience in some way? This is how you fill yourself up with loving energy. Now, think of the best moment you've ever had with another person. (In either case, one of the best moments will still work!) What did this do for you, them and your relationship? How did this extremely positive experience affect your life? Did you notice right after one of these very enjoyable moments, that your view of the world – looked better, too? Now, there you have it. Joy – inside, and joy – outside. That was the goal, and love takes us – there.

So, when you're spending time alone with something that you really enjoy, with other people, and when you're outside in your environment, each one of these places are making you feel even more at home – in your body, and in how you feel about being in the world...

In time, we were meant to feel and experience love – wherever we are. All of the messages from the greatest people in history were only trying to lead you – *here*. And, now that you have a good idea of what love looks and feels like, how can you keep bringing this positive energy into your life, and into the lives of others? In our own special way – that's all we are here to do.

A Final Thought:

If we would like to experience more happiness, health and success, now is the only time we have to make that possible. By making our moments a little more enjoyable together, we will feel the way we've always wanted to – about being alive!

So, do your best to enjoy, appreciate and share this positive energy with yourself, and the people around you. Once you start doing this, I know that your life in every way will never be the same. It will just keep getting better. You will see soon enough, that with love – we always end up in:

A PLACE WHERE WE LOVE TO BE.

About the Author: By John Paynter.

Jeff Sadowski is a one-of-a-kind guy. And, I don't say that lightly. I have known him for 25 years, and he has been where he said he would be, and has done what he said he would do, consistently. I feel with this book, he has given us a profound gift...

He is a Holistic Health Sociologist, Life Coach, Business Consultant and a Musician. Since the age of seven he has been fascinated by just two very important questions: What does it take to be happy, and how can we be happier together? Don't we all ask that? It's the *together part* that's the key to his philosophy.

In his many years of study on how people can get along joyfully, he credits: Leo Buscaglia, Peter McWilliams, Barbara Sher, Dr. Deepak Chopra, Dan Millman, James Redfield, Joseph Campbell, Dr. Wayne Dyer, Neale Donald Walsch, Cheryl Richardson, Og Mandino, Mark Fisher, Joel Osteen, Mort Fertel, Bob Proctor, Sadhguru and George Carlin as his main influences of wisdom and inspiration. So, he likes to keep very good company!

His mission is to experience as much as joy and happiness as possible, and to share how this works with others, so they can offer their unique gifts to the world, and reach their fullest potential, as well. And, that's exactly what our friendship is all about...

Recently, his latest business venture called *One Full Circle Consulting* has written over 40 billion dollars in annual sales proposals to some of the world's largest companies. The goal is to show that with positive energy and sincere cooperation between us, it will only increase effectiveness, sustainability, fulfillment, and grow profits to heights well beyond any of our current limitations.

He believes in life and in business, there is never a need to sacrifice our relationships or our environment to make success happen. Every part of our lives should be working together (just as we can) to make sure the

dreams we have for the future will become realized. So, let's finally hear it for the work-life balance we're all craving!

He can be reached at: jsadowski321@gmail.com or on his website: www.onefullcircle.wixsite.com/home for any comments, questions or suggestions. And, although his ideas might sound "pie-in-the-sky" to some, he's very down to earth and lives in Ipswich, MA.

John Paynter

Lifelong Friend, Author and Musician.