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"Life is what we make of it" Short version

You can change your life

One of the reasons why I am sure that you can change yourself is that I know a side of you that is unknown to even you, much less to your doctor, psychologist, psychiatrist, or what have you. Those Christians who claim that religion can solve all of our problems are no closer to having the answer; after all, they have been unable to solve their own problems. I want to help you activate this hidden side of your being. You can achieve this by means of a few exercises that can improve your life, bringing joy to yourself and everyone around you.

Be confident and stop doubting

Be confident and open without rejecting anything out of hand just because you doubt your ability to change anything whatsoever. Overcome all negative thoughts whenever they crop up, and replace them with 'I can,' 'I will,' 'I am doing it,' and 'I am really looking forward to experiencing the results.' So, chuck away that doubt and those negative thoughts, those venoms that poison every step of progress. The ideal positive point of departure is a whole-hearted conviction and complete faith in your abilities. This is the best fertiliser of all, one that nourishes the sprouting of results and helps them mature into a blithesome harvest. When doubtful thoughts begin convincing you that you are unable to do something – that you are insufficiently skilled, that you are a loser –, then stop them in their tracks and think with all your conviction that *of course* you can, without a doubt you can. Always call forth this positive mood, filling yourself with satisfaction, when doubt attempts to trap you in its web.

The prerequisite for achieving results is that you keep your positive mood in good condition, thereby resisting doubt's infiltrations. If doubt finds a way in, its venom will destroy the sprouting process of your results. The doubt, you can be sure, will come— But cast it out quickly, and it will do you no harm. The more you invest in conviction, the more quickly you will reap a good harvest.

Do not give up in the middle

Changing something from bad to good is an uphill journey all the way. It is the equivalent of standing at the foot of a hill and having to roll a large, heavy ball up to the top, where you will be rewarded with victory. If you give up halfway, you have, perhaps, won a half victory, but you risk the ball rolling back to the bottom again, putting all of your efforts to waste. Even worse, you risk the ball rolling even farther down than where it was to begin with, making the situation worse than before. Such are the dangers of giving up in the middle. This is comparable to our conscience easing up on its cries of alarm the more often we do something that it becomes alarmed about, until at last, we lose our conscience entirely and can spread alarm no longer.

The greater the goal we set for ourselves, the longer and more difficult the journey to the top and to the victory. So, begin by setting easier goals for yourself, thus improving your abilities by practice.

Goals and desires

The acquirement of economic riches is an oft-fancied goal, but it more frequently makes us less satisfied and less at ease than it brings us happiness and peace of mind. Wealth tends to produce more problems than it does solutions. A man who has suddenly come into possession of a great fortune knows that wealth does not offer the life of freedom he thought it would, and it is not inconceivable that he will eventually wish liberation from his money. Let nothing in your life depend upon money; rather, spend what you have with wisdom, and use always less than you earn. Only buy a scooter once you have money enough for a motorcycle, and do not buy a motorcycle until you can afford a car. All varieties of loans result in extra expenses. They work to decrease your earnings, and it surely is not your goal to impoverish yourself! Never think about money— It is a waste of time, and since you will receive as much as you need without worrying about it in the least, you should apportion it as few of your thoughts as possible. The most important goals I am concerned with here are that you become free from external control over your emotional life and that you learn to be unaffected by the situations that you encounter in your daily life so that they too are prevented from ruining your peace, harmony, and love. You will thus achieve self control instead of remote control. A life without feelings is death itself, and life afflicted by remote-controlled feelings is a half death. On the other hand, a life in which you maintain emotional self control is one in which you can thrive within those emotions you value most highly. This is a life of joy and happiness.

Expectations, demands, and desires

We are raised on a system of rewards, and this system controls our emotions. We thrive when we receive praise and appreciation, yet we falter when we sense criticism and lack of appreciation or, even worse, when people talk behind our backs and make false accusations against us. People demand things of us, and we demand things of them. This sort of relationship precipitates enormous problems, and if we want to prevent being kept down by it, we have to learn how to deal with it. The best thing we can do is to stop expecting praise and appreciation from others; that way, we will not be disappointed by the praise and appreciation they do not give us. If we receive it regardless, of course, then we are sitting pretty, but the important thing is to give yourself the praise and appreciation you deserve, not letting yourself depend on other people to do it for you. If you do not live up to your own goals and expectations, then convince yourself that you will manage much better the next time around. Negative emotions handicap us, so get rid of those feelings that do nothing but degrade, tear down, and ruin your life. Optimism and positive thoughts, on the other hand, produce peace and happiness, helping us onwards and upwards, which is precisely where we want to go.

We resemble remote-controlled robots

It is necessary for you to change how you think about your emotions. As it is now, you allow your feelings to be affected by what you experience over the course of a day or, to be frank, over the course of

a lifetime. In fact, these experiences are reigning over you, and it may even be appropriate to say that they are *controlling* you. It is more than a bit shocking to acknowledge that your mood, temperament, and emotional life are controlled by those situations you encounter every day throughout your existence. In this sense, you are controlled by external forces, and so far as this is concerned, our emotional reaction patterns are one and the same. Our feelings are, of course, driven by certain external factors that make us dependent, undeveloped, immature, and very fragile. I would almost be tempted to describe us as remote-controlled robots, as machines that are programmed to interpret existence in such a way as to deny our independence and the possibility for emotional autonomy. This means that the methods and solutions that can free us from the slavery of a robotic existence— Well, we do not have sufficient faith in them. Our own opinions and convictions are thus obstacles blocking the path toward renewal and development. We vehemently believe that the cost for an eye should be an eye, a tooth for a tooth. We believe we need to hate that which is evil and love that which is good— But these are lies that hold back peace and love. Love is the sum of all that is good in life. Evil is the sum of all that is negative in life, and it is rooted in egoism. Life can only be lived with Love. There is no life in the violence of evil, just death and annihilation. As egoism spreads, it consumes and rots our Spirit, and this process continues until the Spirit ceases to be capable of delivering the energy necessary to our eternal body, the result being that our eternal existence comes to a close. *You* are one who is responsible for ensuring that you choose those feelings that you care for the most in your own, private Paradise. Similarly, *you* are the one who has to learn to avoid negative feelings and stop them from trapping you in your own, private Hell.

Life's true values

Satisfaction, joy, harmony, happiness, and love are life's true values, and they aren't things that you can buy with money or gold. They cost nothing, but if you want to acquire them, you first have to give up your negative values, then they will come to you of their own accord. Unfortunately, we are so deeply entangled in the realm of thoughts and conceptions that we struggle to find a way out of it. The Lie tells us that we have to have a reason for feeling good; the Truth is that you can decide it for yourself. Luckily, we have not yet begun believing that we also need a reason for breathing! Your own desire to enjoy a certain emotion is reason enough, so it is just a matter of getting started and enjoying those feelings with which you most want to spend time, enjoying them and finding joy together with them. It really is that easy. Just do it, and if there are thoughts and other obstacles blocking your path, simply ignore them, and they will go away.

You deserve happiness and love in your life, and best of all, you already own these expensive treasures. You have *always* owned them, but you have betrayed them for the sake of negative emotions and thoughts. You have allowed yourself to be lured away, so far away that you have forgotten the course of action you must take. Allow yourself to find the happiness and love again. Look into yourself, and meet these emotions again. Fill yourself with their wonderful Being, and never leave them.

Practise these exercises thoroughly

Satisfaction, joy, harmony, happiness, and love.

The objective is for you to learn, for you to invoke these wonderful emotions whenever you miss them or whenever you wish to feel them. It is best, of course, if you always keep them with you: Then, you will always be a top player in this game! Those unpleasant emotions will trap you every so often, but if you learn to think of them as pain-inducing sadists, it will be easier for you to return to harmony and joy again or, even better, directly back to Love, which is the best state of all. *You* are the one who has to learn to control these feelings, to trade in the negatives for the positives at will. We are bombarded with far too many negative effects, effects that will more or less destroy us if we fail to raise a strong defence against them.

Invoking an emotion

It may sound impossible at first, but invoking a particular emotion is much easier than you imagine. When you have trained and practiced, then it is really just as easy as, say, choosing between five different CDs, each of which contains music to which you are extremely attached. If you are having difficulty invoking a particular emotion, just remember an event that made you happy or filled you with immense joy or peace. This will act as your helpmate in invoking the desired emotion. Maybe, you could also imagine a situation and use this to come into contact with the sought-after feeling. When you are caught in a disturbing feeling or thought, then stop focusing on it; these feelings want to control you, but it is better when you control them instead. Then, they will learn to leave you undisturbed when you are engaged in more important contemplations. When thoughts disturb you and refuse to cooperate with your quest to be filled with specific feelings, it is generally because your presence in these feelings is too superficial. The deeper you experience specific emotions, the less disturbed you will be during the experience. It is, for example, an extremely good sign if you do not even hear the phone ring.

The value of positive emotions

Beyond making you a joyous and loving person who has found happiness within him- or herself, positive emotions will keep you young and beautiful throughout your life. Happiness and joy are so powerful that they prevent attacks from stress and sickness.

Your life-affirming joy resides far about the vibration level on which negative feelings dwell; it is this imbalance that weakens us and causes the ailments that afflict us.

During the exercises

You need to be completely focused on the experience itself, on the emotion you are practicing. Do not let any unwelcome incidents trap you or distract you, neither thoughts nor sounds.

Set a stopwatch at, for example, three minutes, and train every emotion separately.

Satisfaction

Let this lovely feeling of satisfaction and wellbeing fill you.

Joy

Let the joy bubble and rejoice.

Harmony

Everything becomes wonderfully still under the influence of harmonic peace.

Happiness

Happiness is the fruit of Satisfaction, Joy, and Harmony/Peace/Stillness.

Love

We find this in ourselves and share it with one another.

Love is the sum of Satisfaction, Joy, Harmony, and Happiness.

Love is Life: It is Universal, and when we are ensconced within it, we are one with all the components of eternal life.

Egoism is Death: It is of the Earth, and when we are trapped within it, we are one with all the components of eternal death.

Stop searching for love here and there in the external world.

First, find love within yourself. When you have done this, you will have found it in everything that is external to you as well.

When you have discovered the Earth's greatest treasure within yourself, share it with those around you.

“Love solves all problems”

—Tage Winther