

The background features a light blue gradient with abstract, glowing purple and yellow lines that resemble fiber optic cables or neural pathways. A faint, stylized face is visible in the background, centered behind the title.

A Simple Guide To Inner Peace

Joseph Bernard, Ph.D.

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Introduction

You are blessed with an unlimited potential. You can become who you want to be. The only thing in your way is you. This short book is designed to encourage your exploration of who you are, what you can become and how to find your inner peace. Welcome to finding yourself at a new and deeper level. Take these ideas and practices and let them stirred in you a real inspiration that will guide you on a transforming journey toward your true greatness and genuine peace within.



First a few simple instructions

An open mind, a willingness to ask yourself real questions and a desire to be all you know you can be, will guide you well in this chapter. There is no real order. Read the ones that interest you first. Experiment and get a feel for the ideas and see what you can learn about yourself as you go. Purposely attempt to break old patterns and have some fun while doing it. Avoid taking yourself too seriously it will only hold you back.

Inner peace comes from living life with a sense of lightness and calmness. There are no right ways and wrong ways of exploring the practices in this guide. Find out ways that work for you. This guide is set up to encourage you to write about your experiences. On the left page you will have text to read and explore and on the right side you will have blank pages for your notes and observations. The writing will deepen your self-awareness by encouraging you to observe yourself in the process of investigating these provocative lessons of human potential and inner peace. The blank side can also

be used for drawings and other visuals of your experiences. Colored pencils or pictures from magazines can make it fun to experiment with visual images.

See this as a special project that you do on your own unless you know someone who might want to play and explore with you. Keep open and allow the depth and simplicity of these practices to captivate you. It is important to remember as you change, the world changes with you.



Slowing Down

Do you ever feel your life is too fast, or in too much of a hurry? Take some time each day to break from the fast pace of life. Go for a slow walk; sit quietly; try not doing anything for awhile; stop by a quiet place like a church or garden and enjoy being there; drive a slower more relaxing way home from work; or do some other activity which downshifts you to a slower speed. Experience the peace inside as you do explore these activities. Notice how it feels to slow down. How does it feel inside when you are slower? How is the world around when you move more slowly through it? Watch when you are hurrying and then break the pattern by slowing down.

Slow down and be with others you care about and see how much more they enjoy your company. Also see how much more you enjoy yourself when living in the world at a more relaxed pace. As you slow down you will experience the world around you in new and wonderful ways. When you are slowed down you bring peace to yourself and the world.

Breathing

I do realize that you already know breathing is important. Breathing happens without you thinking about it. That is fortunate because, like the rest of us, you do tend to get distracted. In this different way of breathing, you will actually be using your mind to focus on your breath. When you bring focus to your breath, your breath naturally gets deeper. A deeper breath relaxes you, slows you down and opens you more too each moment. With hardly any effort you can deepen your breath, feel more energized, be clearer in thinking and feel peaceful.

Since the breath is a constant, it is a great place in you to use as a focal point for your attention. As a way to focus the breath, bring your attention to a long slow exhale, notice the point between air passing out of the body and the moment when air comes into the body. Invite the air to fully fill the lungs again. If you feel overwhelmed with life breathe in slowly and deeply as if you filling up your belly and chest. Then as you let the breath spill out imagine that you are releasing all the tension in your body. Experiment with the amount of inhale and exhale in different situations. A full steady breath will help you feel confident, healthy, present, fully alive and at peace.

Feeling Gratitude

You have so much to be grateful for today. If you truly saw how beautifully your life was unfolding; how wonderful everything is around you, you would find yourself in almost a constant state of awe, gratitude and joy. At the beginning or end of each day take time to appreciate all the blessing you have. Look around periodically and experience the richness of your life. Try being especially thankful to those you love. They will be grateful when you do. Thanksgiving Day can happen year round.

I love the ocean and when I am walking along the beach I almost always feel gratitude. On bright days when the sun sparkles on the water with such beauty, my feelings of gratitude can almost be overwhelming.

The United States is one of the richest nations in the world. Compared to many people of the world you have such incredible wealth. Billions of people in the world live on less than a \$2 per day. You can be grateful for your freedom, for being alive, for your healthy body and your wonderful senses, for your car starting, and on and on. Each of us takes for granted so many things. Instead imagine a world in which you felt grateful throughout the day. Experience the inner peace that comes from a grateful heart.

Writing For Insight

A powerful and insightful way to understand you is to write about your thoughts and feelings. Have a notebook handy and when you feel something going on inside sit down and write about it. Avoid editing and worrying about spelling and grammar. Simply write and let the words flow freely across the page. This free form of writing can: bring clarity about yourself; help explore your ideas; lighten the load of heavy emotions; bring a sense of stillness; or even turn into creative expressions like a song, poem or story.

Writing helps sort things out and let's things flow. When you find yourself stuck, confused, or spinning in a circle, sit and write and watch yourself open up to direction. If you find yourself confused about how you are feeling try writing from your heart. Writing can also be a way for your Higher Self to communicate with you.

As a way to prepare myself for writing projects, I often spend a number of days freely writing every idea that wants to come up. Because I avoided censoring my writing, there are a wider variety of ideas available for my projects.

What would it be like in this world if people who were upset took time to write about it? Writing about your own unrest helps bring quiet to your inside landscape. There would be many more healthy thoughts and loving hearts in the world if writing was used to unclog the congestion caused from holding so much inside.

Quieting the Inner Critic

Have you noticed there is a critic inhabiting your thoughts? The inner critic stops you from doing many things. The critic zaps the life out of your creative expression. The critic has no joy; no peace; takes itself way to seriously (warning: seriousness can be terminal); and generally makes you feel worthless. It is never okay with anything you do. This critic may sound a lot like a critical parent. Sometimes the critic seems like an endless tape replaying in your head what is wrong with you and your life. Please stop reading, remove the tape from the player in you head and stomp on it until there is nothing left. Experience the peace of a silenced inner critic.

The inner critic doesn't make you a better human being, it just make you feel lousy about yourself. Be aware enough to work on those aspects of yourself that aren't working and put the inner critic on the unemployment line. Develop compassion for who you are. Remember you essence is Divine. Make your inner dialogue supportive and encouraging and watch your world come alive with more of what you desire.

Watching Your Thoughts

Be aware that in addition to shrinking your inner critic there is still much work to be done with your thinking if you want inner peace. Did you know you have somewhere around 50,000 thoughts each day and up to 80% of them are the same as the day before? No wonder inner peace seems so elusive with all this endless jabber going on. Your thoughts shape your experience of the world. If your inner words are negative, fearful and worrisome then your world will reflect that. If your thoughts are positive, peaceful, loving and hopeful then your life will be full of that. Take a few minutes multiple times throughout the day to watch your inner dialogue. Notice it and be careful not to judge yourself. Judging will increase your negative self-talk.

If you truly want more aliveness, peace, joy and love in your life think about experiencing that rather than concentrating on what you don't have. Don't argue for your limitations ... "or they will be yours" says Donald Shiboda in the inspirational novel, *Illusions*. Instead argue for your dreams and for all you can be. Your thinking can change you and the world.

See the Beauty

You are surrounded by beauty. Whether it is the beauty of a smiling face, a flower, a moon lit night, a moment of self-appreciation or some other special experience, all you have to do is look around and discover. Being in nature is a great place to practice seeing the beauty since it is everywhere you look. When you take time to quiet yourself you will notice that often the beauty of things become more apparent. Imagine seeing the beauty of your partner's heart; the sparkling eyes of someone laughing and full of life; the light of a city as dusk fades to darkness; the lively colors of a painting; or the many other beautiful things just waiting for you to see them.

Seeing the amazing perfection of creation will enrich your life and open you to seeing the beauty in you. The world will be a better place when you are able to see into the depth of the beautiful person you are.

Walking

When you don't know what to do; are feeling frustrated; restless and unable to sleep; too heated over something; stuffed from a good meal, get up and go for a walk. Walks are very healing to our body, mind and spirit. As you walk breathe fully, let your mind clear and experience the peace of a quiet walk. Walking along a river, through a neighborhood, along a trail, over to friend's house, or wherever you would like. Walks often make you feel great.

One way to generate ideas and solutions is to get up and go for a walk. Listen as the ideas come flying to you. Walking can be very meditative. Slow your walk down, breathe more deeply and focus your attention on a point up ahead. With some practice this method of meditation has the ability to create genuine peace within, awaken you to a deeper consciousness and open you to a richer self-expression. Thich Nhat Hahn an inspirational Buddhist monk and writer has a wonderful little book on walking meditation called *The Long Roads Turn To Joy*.

I find walking as a form of meditation to be very powerful especially at the end of the day. This practice helps me release any tension from the day; it helps me tune into a quiet knowing place inside; and inspires me for the next day.

Being Divine

You are Divine. Even in your imperfection you are Divine. See yourself as the son/daughter of the Creative Source of the Universe. Ask daily to be guided toward the realization of your Divine nature. This guidance is always available if you are quiet enough to receive it. Some choose a path of prayer or meditation others open to their Higher Self or the Divine Within seeking to contact that guidance. When asking for guidance, ask as if you deserve it. Begging for help is selling your self short. As you open to this guidance you will discover great wisdom, higher states of consciousness and the direction you need to realize your highest potential.

The Divine Spirit within you knows no limits. You are a Divine creature having a human experience. Imagine yourself opening to your Divine nature and then imagine waves of peace and love surrounding the earth as you join with other Divinely realized individuals.

Freeing Yourself From Judging

Judging others takes away you energy. How is it that you think you have the right to judge others? Observe what happens to you personal energy when you concentrate on the shortcomings of others. Even more devastating to your life force is judging yourself. What this judging does is make you far less self-accepting. Explore ways to go beyond seeing everything as good or bad. The labeling of good or bad might have made sense when you were a child as a way to protect yourself. As an adult see yourself, other people and situations with a sense of impartiality as if you are simply observing. Become an observer of life and learn from what you see. This is called becoming more conscious.

A powerful question to ask yourself: "Is the way that I am working for me or not?" If not, see what you need to do and choose to change. Eliminating your judging won't take away your ability to assess others and situations. It will simply allow you to see people and things beyond the narrow limits of a good vs. bad perspective. As you free your life from the weight of judging notice how much lighter you feel.

Laughing Works

If you watch children you will see they laugh many times a day. How many times a day do you? Has your life gotten so serious that you have stopped laughing? If so STOP and take some time to re-evaluate everything because your life has been derailed. Taking things too seriously can be terminal (as in dead, not the train station).

Find ways to bring laughter into your life. Hang out with people who make you laugh. Watch funny shows when you are attacked by the imagined seriousness of your life. There have been a number of studies that show laughter is actually healing. Let's say there is a political figure (maybe even in the White House) you find especially annoying, image him/her when they speak as Bozo the Clown, with a big red nose. Even laugh at your own mistakes especially why playing some fun games like golf (a game which people take way too seriously because they forgot it was a game and you are suppose to play). When you can laugh at your own follies you have made a major step in your evolution. Laughing through life is more fun. Laughter opens you to being at peace with you and your life.

Healing Nature

Nature is heaven on earth. Walking along the beach feel your spirit soar. Hiking in the mountains takes you higher. Listening to a stream sends you into another world. Sitting against a tree connects you too the earth. When you life is confused, your heart is heavy, your mind is troubled, simply enter the womb of nature and soak in its healing energy. Take time to notice the rhythms of nature like the changing of seasons, weather patterns, the movement of the wind, the play of light and darkness, and feel your self in response to them. Feel the stillness of nature engulf you.

If you are concerned about protecting the environment take time to get deeply acquainted with it. Your work to preserve it will be more powerful if you actually have experienced nature's depth. As you let nature work its magic you will feel you body relax, your mind quiet, your heart expand and your spirit dance.

Sitting Quietly

Sitting quietly has for centuries been a valued practice that enriched the lives of many who sought a higher way of being. There have been many studies that report and support the benefits of meditation. Do your own research project. Take time each day (try 20 minutes) and see what benefits you receive. When you listen quietly inside you find out who you are and open yourself to the deepest inspiration. Many individuals like you have used the practice of meditation to reach high states of consciousness and love.

Find a comfortable place in your home where you can sit undisturbed and begin your meditation by becoming aware of the inhale and exhale of your breath, as you notice your breath you automatically begin to enter into a more relaxed state. As your thoughts come up simply notice you are thinking

and then return to following the inhale and exhale of the breath. This breathing meditation is simple by design but it will offer you many challenges as you explore the ego mind's endless chatter.

There are many books and tapes that have meditation instruction. Finding a teacher may be even better.

Meditation has the power to liberate you from old limiting patterns. In meditation you have access to expanded states of self-realization. As you meditate you are able to open up to who you are. This opening to yourself will bring more awareness and light into your life. This light and awareness raises your vibrations. As you and others meditate the consciousness of the planet expands. This is an invitation to you to come and join forces with the many of us who meditate and help bring peace, love and consciousness to the planet.

Develop Compassion

Compassion is the way of the heart. A compassionate heart is a powerful guiding force that will enrich your life and those you interact with. So much of life's struggles can be offset by compassion. Your open heart can be a healing force for those in the midst of difficult life challenges. The loving support you give will be greatly appreciated.

One of the most compassionate acts you can do is learn to listen. A person in the midst of struggle often just needs to be listened to and this will help them release much of the anxiety. As a counselor, I have spent many hours listening. Listening was what most people wanted who came to see me. It was the most precious gift I could give. Many who came for counseling seemed as if no one had really listened to them ever before. I felt like my listening gave them a chance to renew their life. I was often very touched and enriched by their journeys.

When you reach out to help those in need, your ability to love expands. As you open to ways to serve others, you will be inspired to act beyond your self needs. The amazing thing is when you compassionately give to others, you are almost immediately rewarded by the feelings you have inside. Having compassion for you is twice as powerful. If you can learn to care for yourself even in the lowest of moments, this act of compassion will lift your spirits.

Possibly the biggest challenge is to have compassion for those you don't like, those you have labeled as not okay, those you have seen as your enemy. The power of compassion can heal even the most troubled relationships. Imagine what would happen in the Middle East, Northern Ireland and other contentious places if compassion for the suffering of each other was developed. How big can your compassion be? Inner peace is often a product of your compassion for yourself.

Exploring Inspiration

Everyone needs inspiration. When you compliment; when you recognize a special ability; when you appreciate someone, it feels good on both ends. What you appreciate, appreciates. Imagine if it was your sole/soul job in life to inspire others. How would you go about your job? How would you encourage the best in those around you? How would you bring out the best in yourself?

Inspiration is all around us. You can find it in the lives of people determined to make a difference. The public libraries are full of books, tapes, videos and cd's that can inspire. Seek out places that are inspirational in your city. Find people that uplift you and learn what qualities they have that makes them so enlivening to be around. Listen inside to hear the call of what inspires you. Read poets like Rumi and Rilke.

I love to paint so I often explore the artwork of others for inspiration. Two of my favorites are Kandinsky and Rothko. I also appreciate the works of many of the local artists.

Imagine a world in which inspiration took us all beyond self-limiting ideas, beyond beliefs of superiority and beyond war.

Creating

Each of you has creativity as part of your inheritance as a human being. When was the last time you wrote a poem, painted a picture, made up a song, designed a garden or participated in other creative adventures? It is well worth the time to explore where your innate creativity wants to express itself. Find activities that inspire the create urge. Fun places for inspiration include: arts and craft stores, music shops and bookstores, galleries and libraries, print/frame shops and more. When you feel creativity, explore it. Creativity often makes you feel alive and in a place of inner calmness. There never has been found a limit to human imagination.

Let yourself be open to the creation of a life that matters, a life inspired by your creative solutions for a better world. Look around you. Most everything you see began as an idea in someone's mind. Which one of you will create the next thing that changes the world?

Uniting Forces

You and I are deeply connected. When the astronauts ventures out toward the moon they saw this beautiful blue globe down below with no boundaries. They were inspired by the visual unity of our planet. All of us together inhabit this small speck out in the universe. The energy of

who you are affects those around you, which then impacts others until it circles the globe. Your acts of kindness send waves of compassion around the world. Your inner peace spreads outward. When you hurt, others feel it. When others struggle you may sense it. The vibrations of who you are flow on and on. Imagine the kind of vibes you want to send out as a member of this closely connected global family? Individuals like Jesus, Gandhi, Einstein, Martin Luther King, Mother Theresa and so many more have had a profound affect on the whole planet. What levels are you willing to raise your consciousness and love to be an agent for transformation?

*Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure
It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us
We ask ourselves, "Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous
Talented and fabulous?"
Actually who are you not to be?
You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve
The world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so
That other people won't feel insecure around you
We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is
Within us. It is not just in some of us; it's in everyone
And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give
Other people permission to do the same
As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence
Automatically liberates others.*

– Nelson Mandela –

Loving Possibility

There is no greater way of being in the world than expressing love. Love is really all there is. Fear, anger, hate and other expressions are because of the lack of love. When you love you are open and expansive; you are experiencing your highest state. Think of all the love you have when you are in love. Love is the most natural of states. Imagine being in love with life. Love is joy, passion and aliveness. If you are uncertain, or fearful of what to do, love is the answer. Love is the liberating force of the universe. True freedom comes from opening your heart. Self-love is actually very revolutionary and radical. When you give your power to others, allow others to deceive you, exploit you or oppress you it is because of a lack of self-love. Self-love feels so joyous that before long you will want to spread all the love you can.

There are so many books written about love. Find an author you are drawn to and explore their writings about love and compassion. Jesus, the Buddha, Mohammed, as do all religions, had love as the core of their teachings. It is time for you to explore ways of expressing your love to those who matter to you.

A simple way to expand your loving ways is in any situation ask yourself what would be the loving thing to do and do that. Sometimes to love can feel scary, step past the fear and choose to love.

What if you loved everybody? What if you chose to live your life with as much compassion as you could? Your heart deeply longs to express itself. Can you feel that longing? You have enough love inside to fill the universe. Let this call to love be your guide.

Living on Purpose

Remembering why you are here in this lifetime may be your greatest task. You have a special purpose only you can fulfill. Your purpose or mission can be like a compass that gives your life direction. The whole planet benefits from you realizing your mission. If you go through your life and never fully discover or act on your purpose, then everyone misses out. When you are on purpose, you are filled with energy, feel alive, have focus, are at peace, and love what you do.

If you are unclear what your mission is then take the time you need to find out. There is an ancient practice called a vision quest that has been used by indigenous cultures and guides to assist others in exploring their purpose. If you are lost as to what your purpose is find someone to help guide you. A Life Coach (like myself) can help you explore your inner nature and discover what is important to you and how to realize your potential. As your life evolves so too can your purpose. Set out to realize your mission and see how everything falls into place to make it happen.

Don't Worry Be Happy

Remember the song? Well that was a simple song and a powerful idea for inner peace. Worry is incredibly ineffective. When you worry about something the more you worry the bigger the anxiety. Have you ever watched someone take a small worry and turn it into something very large in a short time? You and I do that in our minds regularly. This is a waste of your life force.

Choose instead to be happy. Focus on those aspects of your life that are going well. Make a plan and take action on those areas of life in need of renovation. Put the light on being happy and watch happiness become your life.

Trust in things working out for the best. The more you trust the more things work out. Sometimes you will even be surprised at how life works out so much differently and even much better than you had thought it would.

Taking this “don’t worry be happy” as a global perspective can be a little more challenging especially if you watch nightly news. The news does not portray a happy world where most things work out in the best of ways. Instead the emphasis is on reporting so much of what went wrong. It is as if fear is the networks preference for programming? You can choose to get your news from other sources and read about the good, the happy, the real life separated from all the drama. I have been on nightly news fast for some time now and I am glad to have so many less fearful images in my life.

Do what it takes for you to feel okay; for you to not worry and most of all be happy. The world needs you to be happy and free of worry so your light can shine on all of us.

Awakening

First one to enlightenment wins. Find out who you are? What is truly important to you? What you value most? Explore what turns you on about life and makes you feel alive. What really makes you happy? What do you want to do with your life? What helps create peace inside? As you tune in, listen and become more awake to these questions, your life will seem so much richer. With all of your life experiences and social conditioning sometimes you can become numb or less alive. The world is full of people walking around in trance like states doing their jobs and surviving. Awakening is the opposite. It is questioning yourself, the quality of your life and the ways you relate to others. These kinds of questions wake you up and expand your awareness and bring real wisdom into your life.

The Self Help and Spiritual sections of your local bookstore are full of books waiting to assist your awakening. Seek out authors who have a depth of understanding that you appreciate. Abraham Maslow, a pioneer in exploring the Human Potential says when you involve yourself in personal growth you feel positive about yourself. Unless you are growing you may experience a restlessness about life, as if things aren't as they should be. Awakening is filled with wonderful insight and delicious opportunities to be more of who you can be. Image a world in which everyone awakened to the many great possibilities inside of them.

Following The Golden Rule

The Golden Rule is simple, it says, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Translated to simple terms the rule is: treat others, as you would want to be treated. If you choose to follow this powerful rule your life will be filled with joy. What you put out comes back to you. If you are kind and loving to others, your life will be full of kindness and love. If you are angry and hateful toward others then life will be unhappy. The law of karma applies here. What kind of karma is unfolding in your life? If you have noticed your life is not what you had hoped then look at how you are limiting yourself by the way you are.

I have noticed about myself that when I am loving and compassionate to others my life seems to go so much better than when I am closed and guarded. When my heart is open love comes into my life very freely. When protected I may even push the love I want away.

Imagine your life filled with loving-kindness? How would you act in your life to make that happen? How would you and the rest of us need to act to end all war, murder, greed and other problems on our planet? What part can you play to help turn things around?

Explore Your Spirit

It has been said, "we are not human beings having a spiritual experience but really spiritual beings having a human experience." When you explore the spiritual aspects of yourself, you will discover an endless resource within. Spirit is the guiding force of your life. There are two major paths of spiritual exploration. One is the path of wisdom in which you study and meditate on the great truths gaining deeper and deeper understanding until you reach enlightenment. The other path is of the heart in which you explore love opening to richer and richer expressions of love until you reach unconditional love of all things. These two paths are too simply stated but spiritual expression is at its purest form simple in its nature. Your Spirit has no limit, is Divine and eternal.

There are many ways to explore your Spirit: reading inspirational books, going on retreat, exploring spiritual teachings, interacting with other seekers, meditation and listening deep inside, compassionate action, creative expression, being present, having a spiritual teacher and so many more. As you explore different ways to tune in to Spirit pay attention to what takes you to joy, an open heart, inner peace, a feeling of connection to all things, to the light, and then follow that way. The path of your Spirit is an inner journey. The quality of that journey will be enhanced as you open more fully to insight and awareness. With consciousness your light brightens. The world needs your light.

Seeking Balance

As a human being you are made up of four aspects: mind, body, emotions and spirit. Each of these aspects needs to grow and be cared for if life is to be balanced and harmonious. You create real health for yourself by keeping your body fit, your mind alert, your emotions explored and your spirit enriched. Balancing these four aspects can be challenging but worth the effort. You can

have aspects you naturally are drawn to and others you simple don't think much about. Focus on one too much and you can feel out of balance.

A good practice is to find ways each day to take care of your mind, body, feelings and spirit. An example of some activities that take care of these aspects include: going for a walk or hike; reading books of wisdom; writing in a journal; communicating with others about how you are feeling and what thoughts have you inspired; spending a morning in silence; and so many others ways just waiting for you to explore. Balance comes from listening deeply inside: to the messages of the body; to the passionate vibrations of the heart; to the thirst for knowing of the mind; and to the joyous call of the spirit. When you truly hear yourself and the wisdom of all you can know then balance comes naturally. This is the way to richly live life.

Accepting Yourself and Your Feelings

Begin today by accepting who you are and all that you feel. Accepting yourself helps you open to learning how to be even better. With acceptance comes a deep sense of peace.

Feelings serve a powerful purpose by informing us what is going on inside. Your feelings are telling you that you are alive enough to have reactions to life. When you learn to pay attention to how you are feeling you have so much more information about what you want and need. If you ignore your feelings they tend to eat away at you and make you much less accepting of yourself. Feeling who you are is a powerful honoring of you as a person.

Loving and accepting yourself makes it possible for you to love an accept others. The better you get at this self-acceptance the more you become an inspiration for the world around you. Imagine a world where self-acceptance and self-love was highly valued.

Be Here Now

The only place you can truly be is in the moment. As you read this and remain focused on the words you are present to the possibilities of these ideas. Too often you spend time thinking about how things were in the past or imagining how life will be in the future. When your thoughts are in the past or future you can easily miss the opportunities of the present.

You know what it is like to read something while your thoughts wander off; what you are reading is lost because your focus is elsewhere. Have you ever thought life will be better when this or that happens? When I finish school, get the job I like or have enough money then everything will be ok. This idea that the future will make life ok is inaccurate. Only in the moment can life be ok. Only in the moment can there be real joy and love. If you truly want to enjoy life be present to each moment. The gift of life is called the present. Planning for the future and learning from the past are valuable and only possible in the now. Appreciate your life and live it fully each moment of each day. How the world would change if each moment was appreciated for all it has to give.

Practicing Forgiveness

Forgiveness is essential to inner peace. If you hold on to the wrongs others have done to you, you give those people precious amounts of your life force. Resentments are small little hurts you are holding against others. These too need to be forgiven or you will be less open in your heart. You need to learn to forgive even the most difficult of situations to keep yourself healthy and fully alive.

A few years ago, I read a story about a woman whose daughter had been killed by a young man. She found herself very ill and came to understand it was from all the hate she had against this young

man. She decided she needed to heal herself so she wrote him letters in jail. He finally responded with such a sense of sadness and remorse that they opened up a dialogue. The dialogue brought healing to the mother and to this young man. She was able to forgive and her health returned. When he was released from prison she went and picked him up and helped him start a new life. Her life was transformed from that incredible act of forgiveness. She began to do talks and teach others about the power of forgiveness. If she can forgive the man who killed her daughter, what keeps you and me from forgiving those around us?

Take time each day to forgive and release. Forgive yourself also for the times you have fallen short of your own expectations. Today free yourself from the limits you have placed on yourself by holding on to the past. Forgive, let go, and be free to enjoy life as fully as possible.

Sensing and Imagining

Your senses of sight, sound, touch, smell, taste, and inner knowing can be wonderful allies in the creation of a more powerful expression of yourself. Anything you can imagine has the possibility of happening in your life. If you can see it happening; feel it coming into existence; hear the sounds of it in your life; smell the richness of it; taste the glory of success; and sense it deeply, you can manifest it. Creative visualization involves using the senses to create new realities for you. Athletes have used creative visualization and mental rehearsal (the practice of focusing and imagining yourself doing something over and over again in your mind until you feel you can do it just right) for years as a way to enhance performance and success.

I have taught athletes in gymnastics, tennis, golf, swimming, baseball, running and other sports to enhance their performance through their imagination. It was a real pleasure for me to see the athletes take this information and really upgrade their ability to succeed.

The results of training your mind to improve performance can be amazing. This goes way beyond athletics. Many successful people began their road to success by seeing the results they wanted in their minds. Jim Carey, the comedian, wrote a million dollar check (long before he was known in the business) that he was to receive in the future for his work. He not only received that check but many more. He imagined the end result.

Here is a little exercise to let you see the power of the mind to create reality. Close your eyes for a moment and image there is a lemon sitting in front of you on table. Imagine sitting next to the lemon is a knife. Imagine taking the knife and cutting the lemon in half. Now imagine taking the lemon and sucking on it. Did you pucker? That is the power of imagination. Now imagine the life you want and see it daily in your mind. Imagine a world in which there is peace, where everyone has all they need, where.....

Spreading Light and Love Daily

As a daily practice this is a fantastic trip. Imagine everywhere you go you spread love and light. Everyone you cross paths with is touched by this love and light you spread. Light can loosely be defined as insight, consciousness, grace, blessings or whatever else you want to include. Imagine how it would feel if each day you first felt yourself full of light and love and then went out into the world and spread it everywhere you went. People would enjoy your company and get naturally high from being with you. Would that be fun or what?

There once was a sad young man I met who could find no happiness in his life. In a moment of inspiration I bought him a book called Living in the Light. He took that book and decided to find the light in his life. As he sought the light his life was transformed. He called me a year later and I felt so blessed by his happiness. There is no doubt that spreading your light and love can change the world.

Last Thoughts

Well these ideas have hopefully stirred you and you are no longer quite the same. Now go back over these ideas, if you haven't already, and see which ones resonate most strongly with you. There may be several or many. Take the time to explore them even more deeply. There are easily lifetimes of exploration available here. Don't stop here however. Keep on growing every day of your life. Live in total awe and wonder about all that is inside of you and around you. There is so much love, joy, light, success, fulfillment and inner peace available to you. Why not go for the best life you can. All humanity is awaiting the realization of who you can be.

Please feel free to send emails with questions, guidance or inspiration to create more happiness in your life.
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33 Ways to Have More Peace in Your Life

- Slow down and let your body come to rest once in a while
- Let your inner critic go and instead talk nice to yourself
- Listen to your heart and love more freely
- Pay attention to your feelings, make sure you are doing ok
- Spend time in the calmness of nature
- Take a nap and dream about being peaceful
- Pay attention to your intuition and act accordingly
- Be more playful, do more fun things and laugh often
- Have art days and express yourself creatively
- Read about being peaceful, Thich Nhat Hahn is great
- Sing songs that uplift you
- Check out the dances for universal peace in your community
- Go for quiet and relaxing walks
- Listen to the birds sing, the sounds of a stream or the wind
- Feel gratitude for all you have and for each moment
- Expand your breathing and feel how alive you are
- See the beauty of the world around you
- Finish unfinished stuff that is bothering you
- Have friends that really listen, be a friend and listen too
- Change beliefs that limit you or make you feel guilty
- Stop watching nightly news, do something healthy instead
- Notice where fear runs you and change your thinking
- Be kind to yourself and love and accept who you are
- Do what feels right, say no to what doesn't
- Follow your own truth and live by your values
- Enjoy your uniqueness and express who you are
- Have a purpose in life and live it with passion
- Only make commitments you can honor and follow through on
- Focus on the positive and expect good things to happen
- Stop blaming, take responsibility for creating your life
- Explore what interests you and be a life long learner
- Wake up and see yourself having a wonderful day
- Find the peaceful place inside and visit often

You can start creating a peaceful life today. Enjoy and explore these ideas and let me know how it goes.