

Opportunities for Personal Growth



☞ *Grow and Flourish in 2012* ☞

Opportunities for Personal Growth

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Its purpose is to *encourage, inspire & challenge* you

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The writers are coaches, authors & inspirational speakers who courageously share their personal stories, insights & strategies to guide you in your quest for personal growth & fulfilment

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Personal growth? Who me?



As I've read through the contributions to this eBook I am struck by the different ways each author has interpreted and developed the question of Personal Growth. There are so many aspects to this topic and numerous viewpoints about what it is and how it occurs.

Some of these ideas will resonate with you immediately. You may want to chew over other concepts and get more information before making up your mind about how you can use them. There may even be some opinions you outright don't agree with. That's okay... Keep reading and take your time to think about what you have read. We hope we can contribute to your quest for personal growth and a life that allows you to flourish and bloom as you were meant to.

Personal growth is NOT about 'self improvement'

You and I don't need a makeover! We don't need to be transformed or changed so radically that we are unrecognisable. What we DO need is to grow fully into being ourselves – to fulfil our potential and become who we were meant to be. In every landscaping show I have watched I have been impressed by the instruction to 'start with what you have'. Today I want to say the same thing to you – 'start with what you have'.

We are each individuals and, like plants in a garden, we grow and develop in our own unique way. Some plants give shelter while others provide fruit; some produce beautiful flowers and others have interesting foliage; some are lush and extravagant, with heady perfumes while others are delicate and unassuming, growing quietly in the shade. Each one has its own special place and together they provide a wonderful diversity and richness to life's garden.

Personal growth starts with accepting who you are

- ❖ really get to know yourself and what is important to you
- ❖ appreciate your special qualities and celebrate your strengths
- ❖ acknowledge that your value as a person comes from being the amazingly unique individual you are; not from what you look like, what you own, or what 'success' you achieve in life

Self acceptance, combined with self knowledge and self love, allows us to build on what is good so that it becomes even better. As we come out from behind the cover of false expectations and assumptions about who and what we should be, we clear the way to expand into the fullness of who we are. Acceptance means that you are able to recover from the exhaustion of fighting against yourself and turn your attention, energy and effort into growing and blossoming as you were always meant to. Without judgement, you are then free to clear out what isn't working and make room for what can be. Personal growth isn't about 'perfection' – you are perfect just as you are. A seed contains within it all that it needs to grow into a strong, healthy, beautiful plant – and so do you!

*Grow into being more of who you are;
not who you, or anyone else, think you should be*

Develop a strong appreciation of who you are

We are all distinctive combinations of our personalities, our upbringing, our own particular set of skills and abilities, and a culmination of our life experiences and our reactions to them. Embrace your own uniqueness. Know without question that you are worthwhile and that you deserve a life that gives you satisfaction, meaning and purpose.

*You are who you are meant to be
and your gift to the world is to live as the best possible You there is*

Growth is a lifelong process

A plant doesn't grow 'into' something and then stop developing. Without regular periods of growth plants become stunted and stagnant and eventually shrivel up and die. Just as their leaves yellow, wither and fall without the right conditions for growth, we can lose our motivation, enthusiasm and direction and feel like there should be more to life than this. Take heart.

There are seasons for growth

Plants are not constantly in 'growth mode'. Shoots push through the ground and reach for the sunlight. Leaves sprout on branches and are often followed by flowers. The plants may bear fruit or set seed. Between times the plant rests and draws nourishment from the soil to prepare for the next period of growth. There are times in our lives when we need to rest and take a long deep drink, and open our hearts to feel the warmth of the sun; to heal and consolidate and prepare for the next stage of growth; then prepare to create new opportunities for personal growth and make the most of possibilities that offer themselves.

Opportunities for growth come in many different guises

- ❖ we can make a conscious choice to put aside beliefs, attitudes and actions that aren't working well for us and try new ways of being
- ❖ we may decide that something needs to change in our life circumstances to provide a more nourishing environment for us to flourish
- ❖ by honouring our personal values and following our heart to pursue our passions and dreams more fully we may find greater fulfilment
- ❖ life sometimes presents us with challenges that test us to the limit
- ❖ building our resilience can help us weather the storms of life and continue to grow even through adversity

by Marian Kerr

see also: page 39 & page 72

Solidify your commitment to grow

It's one thing to think that you want to develop yourself in some way;

It's another to commit to doing the work

Some simple actions, however, can help you solidify your commitment:

❖ **Prioritize your growth process**

The whole idea of growing can seem overwhelming. Breaking down the phases of your journey makes it more manageable. Make a list of the top five ways you want to grow, and then approach them one by one.

❖ **Carefully define your goals**

Be very clear about what you want and why you want it. The more connected you are to the idea of your own personal growth, plus what will change and happen when you do, the more likely you are to stick with the process of change.

❖ **Create a timeline**

The most important tool in achieving your goals comes from developing a strategy. Decide what steps need to be taken, in what order, and then set dates and deadlines to you give yourself structure.

❖ **Set a schedule**

When you know your ultimate timeframe it's easier to break down time into increments, and from there to break down the growth process into manageable chunks.

Give yourself a task each month, each week, or even each day.

Developing a growth habit is important; setting a schedule ensures you find time for all aspects of what you need to do.

❖ **Buddy up!**

Get a partner to support you along your personal growth journey. This can be anyone, but it should be someone you feel you can trust, and who will honestly help you maintain your commitment.

❖ **Reward yourself**

Remember when you were a kid and you were given a gold star for good behaviour or a good math or spelling test? Newsflash: Your grown-up self likes to be rewarded, too! For every step in your personal growth process, reward yourself for the achievement. Make a list of items or experiences you want and then give yourself one thing per goal achieved.

❖ **Give yourself some room**

While it's important to plan, commit, act, and follow through, it's also important not to become militant, rigid, obsessed or fanatical. Growth should be gradual, holistic and natural.

There may be pitfalls and setbacks. Don't beat yourself up over them! The surest way to kill your commitment is to feel abused by it. Know that you're on the path to achieving your goals and have faith in yourself that you will get there by being generous, understanding and supportive of yourself.

by Michele Rosenthal



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Look to nature: strength in the midst of fragility

*'Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth
find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts'*

~ Rachel Carson ~



This weathered leaf captured my attention as I tidied up in the garden recently.

I was struck by its delicate lacy patterns and the fact that it was still intact despite its dryness and the holes in it.

It had caught my eye, so I sat for some time and contemplated it.

Here are some impressions that came to me:

- ❖ Initially it reminded me of how vulnerable we can feel at times in our lives, when holes seem to have appeared in our protective coating and it feels as if there is only a patch or two holding together.
- ❖ Then I thought about how frail the leaf looked at first glance, but upon closer inspection, it is in fact still strong. How often do humans of all ages find themselves in a frail state but something within them is still strong and able to move on with life in time?
- ❖ We can feel stripped bare of so many parts of our lives at times but our basic framework and structure holds us together firmly enough and enables us to rebuild.
- ❖ Despite decline and ageing we all have a deep beauty to reveal.
- ❖ While the leaf was once lush and green, now that it is dying all the many tiny aspects of it that have enabled its life can be seen. We too have a multitude of attributes to us that are not always visible.
- ❖ The tiny veins of the leaf were integral to its ability to stay alive by providing its means of nourishment. The veins drew this nourishment in and helped remove any waste. What are the myriad of ways we can use to draw in life and shed the things we don't need?
- ❖ The leaf was once part of a tree but had its own special function in that bigger picture. What is your part in the big picture of your family, community, society and life itself?

The complexity of the leaf mirrors our complexity in so many ways

by **Lynley Chapman**

see also: page 35 & page 53

Be bold in 2012

'The worst thing you can do is be aware of what you want and not pursue it, to spend years regretting things never achieved or experiences never had'

~ Jim Rohn ~

Does this quote speak to you? Are there things you want which you have never pursued? Are there things you've wanted to achieve? Or experiences you are after? Make 2012 the year of pursuit.

I often meet people who know what they want their next step to be but they haven't yet taken it. What is stopping them? Often it's their own thoughts. There are fears and beliefs which have set like immovable barriers, standing between them and what they really want.

What are your 'can'ts'?

- ❖ I'm too old!
- ❖ I'm not smart enough!
- ❖ it's too hard!
- ❖ it costs too much!
- ❖ I haven't got the energy!
- ❖ my partner won't let me!
- ❖ I'm too busy to fit it in!
- ❖ I am too scared!
- ❖ I won't be any good at it
- ❖ I'm not fit enough

*If you resonate with any of the statements above
it is time to 'turn your can'ts into a can'*

My friend Trish McQueen won the *Courage in Sport Attitude Award* for completing the Kapiti Women's Triathlon in 2011. This may not seem a courageous achievement; but Trish has cerebral palsy. For Trish to complete this event she had to firstly decide she was going to do it by getting her attitude right. She joined the gym, found some training supporters, raised funds to buy a large trike to use and recovered from a fall one week out from the event.



Trish could have said 'it's too hard' or 'I'm not co-ordinated enough', but she didn't. Trish said 'I can do this if I want it badly enough' and she succeeded.

Decide today not to let your 'I can't's' win and turn them into 'I can'

by Susan Handisides

see also: page 51

Person-all growth

What is Personal Growth? I think of it as PERSON-ALL growth!

*Yes – the growth of **All of Who-You-Are**.*

How EXCITING!! We can keep adding in 'stuff' we like – and letting go of 'stuff' that doesn't suit Who-We-Are anymore. Sometimes personal growth is additive – sometimes it is re/claiming who we are more powerfully. So we become More Ourselves.

The core of personal growth is truly Being Who-I-Am. And oftentimes Who-We-Are has been compromised along the way by our desire to fit in and be acceptable to others. So we have the positive legacy, and sometimes the negative legacy or 'baggage', arising from core beliefs that arose from the decisions we made in response to our past experiences. So our family of origin, our relationships, our work, our religion, our cultural background, our friendships, etc, bring great riches, but sometimes great challenges too.

Most importantly, we make decisions about Who-We-Are in response to the good *and* not so good experiences – 'I'm OK' (or not). Other people are OK (or not) and The World is OK (or not). However we can 're-decide' those earlier decisions at anytime. Eric Berne said *It's Never Too Late To Have A Happy Childhood*. We do have to be committed to the healing and personal growth that it takes to change our early reactions/decisions.

Before we continue this conversation

I do need to make a proviso about Personal Growth:

It's ALL about You

You can't grow your spouse/partner, or adult family member, or friend. They're not your business – You are Your Business. (Your children are of course in a different role with you). You can encourage and support another Adult, but a full-blown Agenda to change/grow someone will most often be seen to be overstepping your boundary and responsibilities, and even as manipulative.

Another point to note which often causes some frustration for those of us who are committed to Personal Growth is this – not everyone is interested in Personal Growth. And more than that – Personal Growth is not the best choice for everyone. One of my spiritual teachers says that the soul's purpose varies for every individual, and Personal Growth is not the soul's purpose for all persons. Some people's primary purpose is to Grow. Others have different purposes: to express and create; to lead and influence; to love and care (for others, animals, ideas, things, and the planet); to survive and to toughen up; to inquire and observe; to play and enjoy life; to rest and go quietly.

There are many aspects to the soul's purpose for a person.

*If Personal Growth resonates with Who-You-Are;
then read, draw, think, rest, get support, and share with trusted others*

by Fiona Camberun

see also: page 26 & page 64



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Fiona is passionate about 'hearing and seeing' others – she believes invisibility is a dis-ease of the modern era & believes healthy relating to self & others is vital for our happiness

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Struggling to be You

*Most of the time we go through life on the surface; working hard at our job,
raising a family, doing the things we think we ought to be doing;
but operating on auto pilot*

The pressures of day-to-day living take up a lot of our precious energy. We make decisions about what to eat, how to do our job, who picks up the kids, where to go on holiday... In fact, we exhaust ourselves with constantly 'doing'. Not only doing, but doing what we think others expect, trying to live the perfect life and fit in to our community groups.

Sometimes we, as individuals, get lost in the labyrinth of the groups we belong to: the family group, the work group, the friend group. We get trapped into playing the roles we think are expected: the roles even we ourselves expect.

Many of us have built up the habit of bending to the wishes of other people in order to 'make things work', to have our home life flow without conflict, and our work life chug along without drama. In doing that, perhaps we have lost ourselves in the power of others.

*Maybe the time has come to look deeper
to ask 'who am I really?' – this can be scary
you think 'what if there is no more to me than what is on the surface?'*

I suggest you would not be asking yourself the question of who you really are unless you know that there is more to you than you are currently showing and experiencing. This is an exciting realisation. You want to recognize all that is good in yourself – to get to know the You that might have got lost over the years or has never been free to fully show itself.

The first step to connecting with the real You is to stop and take a look at the roles you currently play

We all play many roles in life – parent, partner, son or daughter, home-maker, business person, worker ant, Mr or Mrs Fix It, caretaker, decision maker... The list goes on.

Are the parts you play in these areas of life authentically you?
Or do you do what's expected of you and toe the line?

**The next step is to ask yourself:
'what would happen if I didn't toe the line?'**

What would you be doing and what do you think you SHOULD be doing?

So there's an interesting word... 'Should'.

Let's look at where that fits in our lives. What 'shoulds' do you have?

- ❖ I should work hard to earn my pay
- ❖ I should keep up appearances
- ❖ I should visit my relatives every week

'Should not's' are also in that category:

- ❖ I should not get angry
- ❖ I should not complain
- ❖ I should not expect too much from life

*When you look at life as a list of 'shoulds', it robs you of choice
you become a victim of what other people want*

By getting to know yourself and your own true worth you become free to be your authentic self and have choice in your life; to make decisions based on what you want; and to know who you are and to act on it.



Discovering the real You and enjoying that journey of self discovery is immensely satisfying.

Although digging deeper into who it is we are can be daunting and at times uncomfortable, the rewards are worth it.

by Averil Maher



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Who inspires you - who are your role models?

Who are your heroes in life?

- ❖ are they real people or characters from a comic book or film?
- ❖ are they world-famous, or are they unknown?
- ❖ what traits do you recognise in the people who inspire you to achieve more?

When I stop to think about who the biggest hero is in my life, I find it really difficult to pinpoint one particular person.

Throughout my life I have met some amazing people who don't make a fuss; they just get on and make things happen. They live life the way they want to, not how others dictate. I have also read/heard about people (particularly New Zealanders) who have left a legacy for generations to come.

What makes these people stand out for me?

Their:

- ❖ focus
- ❖ self-motivation
- ❖ willingness to try and try again
- ❖ ability to beat the odds
- ❖ selflessness – putting others before themselves
- ❖ commitment to living their values
- ❖ desire to strive for excellence
- ❖ humility

What traits do you recognise in the people who inspire you to achieve more?

Who are your heroes in life?

Take a moment to record the names of these inspirational people now. Write about them in your journal; find some photos of them and create a vision board; mind map your thoughts or whatever works for you.

- ❖ if you spent a day with them, what would you do?
- ❖ what questions would you ask them?
- ❖ what gold nugget are you seeking from them?
- ❖ what would you do with the information they share with you?

We are surrounded by people who achieve more than others. They overcome adversity; they push through their own comfort zone and keep their eye on their personal target.



When I worked in recruitment, I met Melissa Clark-Reynolds. She came to inspire us, share her story and leave us with a call to action. She overcame battle after battle to own, operate and sell Fusion Healthcare and then went on to have many other success stories. She stands her ground, surrounds herself with people who share her vision. She is a strong leader, a sharp business woman and lives her values.

Other people who have inspired me in my adult years include:

- ❖ Stacey Swanson, a young Wellington woman I had the privilege to mentor: she taught me so much
- ❖ Professor Swee Tan
- ❖ Jeremy Moon, CEO of Icebreaker and a significant player in exporting merino around the globe
- ❖ Phil and Teds for taking a product made in their garage and exporting it to the world
- ❖ Colin Murdoch who invented the plastic disposable syringe
- ❖ Torvill and Dean, and Nadia Comaneci for going for more than gold and receiving a perfect score for their routines
- ❖ Valerie Adams for her continued drive to better her own sporting achievements and her ability to see when it is time for a change of support crew – even though she had one of the best coaches in her sport (Kirsten Hellier is a star in her own right), she made the choice to try someone new
- ❖ The suffragettes who led the way and allowed New Zealand women to be the first in the world to vote
- ❖ Jean Batten for being a pioneer in aviation
- ❖ Sir Edmund Hillary for conquering great heights
- ❖ Sir Peter Blake who achieved many things, but died for his cause
- ❖ Burt Munro who achieved great speeds
- ❖ My nana, who was a widow raising 5 children on her own while working, volunteering and always making time for other people

*In life we are surrounded by amazing people achieving amazing things –
this includes You!
so what are you doing each day to inspire and be inspired?*

by Tracy Keith

see also: page 37

Thriving not Surviving

What does a thriving life look like to you?

Living in Christchurch during the latter part of 2010 and during 2011 has been one of fear and disruption whilst experiencing major earthquakes and many thousands of aftershocks. Suddenly, without warning, Cantabrians were surviving rather than thriving in times we will hopefully never repeat.

What does it mean to survive? – People just getting through their daily chores; exercise routines put to one side; healthy eating not a focus; people getting through as their bodies and minds will allow. Relationships suffer in times of surviving as there is often little to give.

For me personally, the fear that came with major aftershocks held me hostage in my own home, which didn't support me to thrive. Since I work from a home-based office, I found it easy not to go far from home, to remain only minutes away from my son's school so that I could pick him up should it be necessary. That strategy worked for me, as school did close several times after large aftershocks, however, it didn't allow me to thrive.

After a two-week break out of the country in June I came home to a new beginning and a new house and decided to look forwards and rebuild my life and business so that as a family we could thrive again. I'd had a shift in my attitude and thinking.

Many people have moved out of Christchurch, but as a family we're committed to the rebuild of our beautiful City – we're in for the long haul I guess you could say. We're committed to Christchurch.

No matter what life throws at us;

what can we put in place to ensure we thrive rather than survive?

Here are some tips to support you:

❖ **Discover your vision for your life**

What are you aiming for? Who do you want to become? What's the impact that you have in the world? What's missing today for this to be achieved? What are you committed to?

I want to be fearless. At the time of writing, Christchurch has experienced more large aftershocks two days prior to Christmas. Today I was fearless and my family and I went through the tunnel in the hill over to Lyttleton so we could go boating. This is an area where there has been extensive rockfalls... so Fearless I was!

❖ **Decide which relationships you value**

What's missing from those relationships right now? What do you need to put in place to enhance these important relationships? For example, you may need to incorporate date nights with your loved one or spend quality time with your children and surround yourself with people you enjoy being with.

❖ **Eat well**

Superfoods support your body to thrive. Build your knowledge on what is good and best fuels your body. When you put fuel into your car, you are particular to ensure it's the right fuel. What happens if you put diesel into the fuel tank of an unleaded car? – no further explanation required! Naturally there are some occasions, like Christmas, where we indulge in sugary foods without guilt!

❖ **Drink 1 litre of water for each 30 kg of body weight per day**

Water is free and one of the healthiest drinks you can put into your body. Water flushes out the toxins and contributes to a thriving body.

❖ **Eat healthily**

Our food is depleted of so many minerals and nutrients as our soils no longer provide them. Supplementation supports your immune system.

❖ **Exercise**

Put in place a routine where you're doing some form of physical activity at least 30 minutes a day for 5 days a week. If you can't find blocks of 30 minutes then break it down into 3 lots of 10 minutes. Be committed to your well-being and ensure you value yourself and your health. Get Wise!

When challenges or tough times hit we can still thrive to the best of our ability

When I share earthquake stories with people I see a common thread: most of us think differently now. We are more aware; we have good stocks of basic needs and food; as we go about our business we consider where it is safest to walk and where the nearest exits are in a shopping centre. We are putting our newfound knowledge into practice and keeping ourselves safe but allowing ourselves to thrive in a changed City.

Go ahead THRIVE not survive in 2012!

By Lea Bartram



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Lea inspires you to thrive! She support hers clients to gain clarity, focus & direction, developing confidence, increasing profitability, improving relationships & creating a balanced life

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Ancient Gaelic Poem

Deep peace of the running wave to you,
Of water flowing, rising and falling,
Sometimes advancing, sometimes receding.
May the stream of your life flow unimpeded!
Deep peace of the running wave to you!

Deep peace of the flowing air to you,
Which fans your face on a sultry day,
The air which you breathe deeply, rhythmically,
Which imparts to you energy, consciousness, life.
Deep peace of the flowing air to you!



Deep peace of the quiet earth to you,
Who, herself unmoving, harbours the movements
And facilitates the life of the ten thousand creatures.
While resting contented, stable, tranquil.
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you!

Deep peace of the shining stars to you,
Which stay invisible till darkness falls
And disclose their pure and shining presence
Beaming down in compassion on our turning world.
Deep peace of the shining stars to you!

Growth: yours mine and ours

Christchurch experienced more large earthquakes this afternoon as I completed my articles and I am moved to write the following...

We live in a time of great challenges to the world-wide economy and the money system. Countries have declared bankruptcy recently. The flow-on effects are being speculated about by governments and the media.

The Planet on which we live is also undergoing significant changes at this time. Many believe that Mother Earth (or Gaia) is also a living being like us. They believe that the Planet is entering a new phase in her own consciousness. Such a philosophy links our development as individuals and as a species intimately to this Planet's.

Ancient philosophers foretold the end of the old era and the changes that would accompany the new era. Many people have concerns that the Mayan Calendar reveals the end of the world in 2012. Others tell me they believe the book of Revelation talks about this end time now. But my thinking is that this is not the end of the world but it is the beginning of a new epoch.

It seems that the Earth changes that have begun around 2011 will continue over the next year in particular. As such, there are predicted to be further disruptions and continuing changes to the crust of the Earth, along with changes to the atmosphere with rainstorms, tornadoes, and hurricanes around the world.

Accordingly, we need take stock, learn to listen to our selves, and trust our intuition during this time. We need to soothe ourselves and look after others too. The challenging times we are living in will require the best of us. This will be very stressful at times. But it will invite each of us to bring out the best of us, the compassion in us, and to foster the humanity in our communities.

In Christchurch there are continuing tremors. There have been huge losses to families, to the community, to businesses, to the nation. There are many who grieve, and many who are suffering from trauma and fatigue. It is noticeable that there is a real sense of reaching out, of caring for others, of looking out for your neighbours, of valuing community, of having to slow down a bit, of re-evaluating what is important. This is a lesson to all of us, and in no way diminishes the losses or what the people of Christchurch have and still endure.

We should all be prepared for any future emergencies as well as we can be. Then we need to listen to the still, small voice within; to trust our feelings on where to be and what to do; to be Who-We-Really-Are – and be mindful to bring our Highest and Best Selves to this life.

And later, musing on the Queen's speech led me to add more...

Queen Elizabeth in her Christmas speech this year said she and her family have been 'inspired by the courage and hope (they) have seen in so many ways around the world'

Bringing to mind the natural disasters around the world she commented that strength and courage often were found in our families and friends as crisis and tragedy often brought out the best in people and *'families and local communities held together to support each other'*.

She went on to say how some of her family had seen for themselves the results of some of the disasters in New Zealand and Australia. *'[We] saw how communities rose up to rescue the injured, comfort the bereaved and rebuild the cities and towns devastated by nature'... '[We] saw first-hand the remarkable resilience of the human spirit after tragedy struck in a ... mining community, and how communities can work together to support their neighbours'*.

As Queen Elizabeth says, '*finding hope in adversity*' is one of the themes of Christmas. I firmly believe that we must do our Personal Growth – push our boundaries, get out of our comfort zones, have empathy for Others and Love our Neighbours/Animals/the Environment as we do ourselves. From that place we grow strong, resilient, compassionate individuals, families, neighbourhoods, communities, nations and our Planet.

So, how do we grow as persons?

Various therapies present ways to complete the dual aspect of Personal Growth; **to Heal** wounds, blocks, or trauma; and **to Grow**. The ancient Greeks believed in *physis*, the energetic flame within each person growing toward wholeness. Many of us have experienced this yearning – but what helps us to grow?



For some people it's falling deeply in love and having that love returned. For others it is through creative endeavours such as music, painting, poetry, writing, acting, dancing, etc. For others it is through parenting, or serving others or the Planet. Other people find a more formal path through meditation, therapy, or working with a coach.

There are many other opportunities for growth including having a vision or waking dream, having a near death experience, or experiencing spiritual union. Some people have life-changing experiences being in cathedrals or crop circles, or in contact with angels, or aliens, or ancestors, or animal friends.

Personal growth can come from the daily, ordinary experiences of our lives or from the spiritual, the psychic or even the paranormal. Personally I think we humans are limitlessly perfect and perfect-able!

by Fiona Camberun

see also: page 14 & page 64

Very personal leadership

The term 'leadership' is bandied around so much by so many. I think for every person who reads that word there might be as many perceptions about what it really is, or what it really means. As I often say to clients 'nothing means anything to start with', so for this short article let's create our own meaning for 'leadership'. Here I am talking about your own very personal leadership actions and skills. In this context you might not be 'leading others', as in a workplace or team environment, but leading your good self.

As you consider the many opportunities for change, growth and inspiration for 2012 and beyond ask yourself – how do you need to 'be' as a leader in your own life to achieve those things you truly desire?

Here are a few questions to start to develop your vision of you as the leader in your own life, accepting responsibility for all of the choices you make along the way. You might use a mind map approach to answering these questions for yourself, or if that doesn't work for you, maybe just write down the answers in a journal.

❖ **Vision thinking**

What is your long-term vision for your life? (Or at least the next 12 months?) Spend time each week getting connected to the longer term. Imagine you have set yourself goals to make that vision a reality and you have in place the steps to get there.

Each week (even better, each day) spend time imaging what it will look like; how it will feel; what else will be going on; and what people will be around you when your vision is a reality. In other words, tap into all of your senses. Live it.

❖ Resources

As a leader, what skills and resources will you need to have around and available to you to achieve your goals for the year? Resources such as:

○ Confidence

- to make tough decisions
- to listen to your intuition
- to let go of anything that you need to move forward

○ Emotional state

- what state will you need to learn to be in?
- how can you use curiosity about the world to support you in your life?
- how are you honouring your values each day to ensure you are not in internal conflict?

○ Knowledge

- what will you need to learn?
- what skills will you need to polish up on?
- where and how will you learn?

○ People

- who are the people important to you to be with?
- who are the people you can help, who in turn will support your vision?
- who are the people who can be on 'your team'?
- how do you want to be perceived by others?

This is just a start in clarifying just what kind of leader you want to be for YOU.



- ❖ notice where you are starting from, how you are now, and what these answers lead you to see.
- ❖ then notice what is in the gap
- ❖ from there, develop your action plans to close the gap – apply them to your goals – and enjoy

By Gai Foksett



MBA, Master Certified Coach (ICF), Master NLP Practitioner – Gai has been a leadership & personal coach for 11 years, working globally with leaders, business owners & entrepreneurs.

She is passionate about helping her clients learn to 'be' as much as they 'do' – transformation is a key part of her client's achievement

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Have you have lost your mojo?

Do you feel like you have lost your spark?

Perhaps things aren't quite going your way. Do you find yourself going through the motions, but deep inside you are feeling lost and directionless? Perhaps you have gone through some significant life events and your life as you have known it has changed forever? The old is gone but the new isn't entirely clear yet.

You have more questions than answers, if you are even clear about what these questions are. It's quite normal during such times to feel despondent, doubting of your own self and your abilities, and to experience feelings of anxiety and/or unworthiness.

Well – the good news is that this is a very natural part of the evolving human journey. Everything changes and nothing stays the same.

Life does what it does and sometimes we get served circumstances way beyond our control. And even if they are within our control, we make choices and decisions which take us down a path that hindsight suggests we could chosen 'better'.



*However, as the great philosophers have said: 'what is, is'
we can't undo what has happened; but we can start afresh*

Here are 7 tips to finding your mojo and to get your groove back:

❖ **Accept where you are right now**

There is power in acknowledging the truth of your situation as it is. By acknowledging and accepting, you can move forward. Give yourself permission to really feel the feelings. The more you fight, the longer it takes to get back on track.

❖ **If possible – take time out for yourself**

Our life has its own rhythm – sometimes there is high activity and demand, other times there is a lull. As a client put it, 'outside there is summer but I feel stuck, like I am in the winter of my life'. This reflective time can connect you with what really matters to you. Our sense of meaning, purpose and relevance changes with the different chapters of our lives.

❖ **Re-visit the big picture**

What do you really want out of your life now? How do you want to be living? What about your job and relationships? If you could have all that you wanted – what would this list or picture include?

❖ **Re-connect with your sources of inspiration**

What are the small and big things that energise you? What gives you a sense of connection? How about meaning? Or purpose? Brainstorm and/or list these. Choose to do something from these identified activities every day.

❖ **Enjoy dreaming, creating and planning**

Capture these thoughts, ideas, images, symbols or pictures in a diary or vision board. Externalize it if you can. If you could have things your way, how would your life look, feel and be? Try to experience these feelings now.

❖ **Find support with close friends and trusted others you can talk with at the heart level**

Ask them to remind you of what they see as your gifts, talents and abilities. Try to connect with that which is your biggest strength and the unique value and gift you bring to others.

❖ **Appreciate and focus on all the things that are good and working well in your life right now**

Acknowledge the things that you are grateful for. Give yourself time for the new to evolve. Know and trust that you will be okay!

Before long, you will find yourself back in the groove with a renewed perspective and greater compassion for yourself and others.

Challenging times grow and stretch our resilience and, like everything else in life, it too passes!

Be kind and compassionate to yourself

by Jasbindar Singh



Jasbindar employs an holistic approach as a business psychologist, leadership coach, inspirational speaker, & author who contributes to newspapers, magazines & business blogs

She is award-winning author of the book & companion workbooks *Get Your Groove Back - How Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) can give you the work and life you really want*

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What needs to be cut back in your life in order to allow room for new growth?

Sometimes we need to remove obstacles and blockages to open up the way for growth to occur in our lives

It is amazing the difference a week can make!

Our neighbours recently cut down and trimmed trees in their large backyard. Several of these trees were very, very big and were shading our living area, our garden and the line on which we dry our washing.

So I am delighting in more sunshine, warmth and light in both the house and the garden. Two more macrocarpa trees came down and we now enjoy more sun and warmth. I am sad to see trees being cut down but these ones have become too large and unmanageable and really were unsuited to an urban garden.



We lost some privacy, but this was balanced by the reduced need for heating in the house. What I have gained is a new view of the familiar out of my windows and also some new glimpses of things not visible before, which I am enjoying.

A member of my family benefited from firewood to use for a long time to come and the neighbours tell me that they are going to plant a large vegetable garden, so something new is going to grow from their work.

As we clear out the things that block us, we make way for new growth and a wider vision of what is possible

I have been considering all the cutting and removal that has happened and how that could connect to us as humans living and growing. Cutting things back and pruning and trimming in the garden can be about looking for improvements in the shape of trees, stimulating new growth in spring, allowing more light and air to filter through, and getting rid of dead or damaged wood.

As we consider ways to grow:

- ❖ how can we reshape our lives or routines to better suit our needs for rest, relaxation, relationship, creativity?
- ❖ what might we need to do now that will require us to wait for the results to be seen in a few months time?
- ❖ what can we do to bring in more sustenance, nurturing and refreshment for ourselves?
- ❖ are there bits of our lives that need our care and attention or that need to be finished with?

Removing trees to let in more sunshine, light and warmth seems to me to encourage us to think about obstacles and barriers that might be in our way and which we need to stop working around as they are stopping us growing and flourishing.

Out of change comes new possibilities...

by Lynley Chapman

see also: page 10 & page 53



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It's my life! (I hear you roar)

Who recalls stomping their feet and yelling this statement at their parents as a teenager? Well Jon Bon Jovi sang:

❖ *'it's my life, it's now or never...'*

'I ain't gonna live forever. I just want to live while I'm alive, it's my life!'

Jon's lyrics are there to inspire him and the band and everyone who is listening. He is encouraging you to take control of your life and make it look and feel like you want it to be. He is also reminding you that life is short: you get one shot at it, so why not enjoy it!

❖ *'I ain't gonna be just a face in the crowd.'*

'You're gonna hear my voice. When I shout it out loud'

What are you doing to stand out from the crowd? How will your employer know that you want to move within the organisation or climb that corporate ladder if you are not demonstrating to them you actually want it? Let them know during your performance appraisal process. Tell them what skills you want to develop further and what your career path plan is. Put your hand up for additional responsibilities, be part of a project team or find a mentor.

❖ *'Like Frankie said – "I did it my way"...*

Luck ain't even lucky. Got to make your own breaks'

Here Jon is referring to Frank Sinatra singing *I Did It My Way* and making the statement that you need to forge your own future. It takes hard work and dedication; it may not be handed to you on a platter. Yes, there are some fortunate (or unfortunate) individuals who appear to just be in the right place every time and don't appear to do anything but get everything!

*However, most of us need to put in the effort, create plans or career paths
and take action to get us to where we want to be*

Take some time to create your 'bucket list', and then put timeframes against each activity and create milestones or a plan of attack where relevant. Lock the dates into your diary, schedule your annual leave from work, share your plans with someone special and make it happen.

So, can I ask you:

If you were to complete this statement what would you stomp, sing or say?!
'It's my life, it's now or never. I am going to...'

Write it down and create an inspiring plan of attack to make this happen.

If you are not sure how to go about this, Google 'goal setting', read *Personal Best* by David Rock, or meet with a coach.

Life is short: you get one shot at it, so why not enjoy it!

by Tracy Keith

see also: page 19



Tracy is a self-employed career, emerging leaders & achievement coach who is based in Wellington

She believes in living the life you want to live, not the one your parents, partner, friends or teachers think you should be living – and have fun doing it!

Make your own luck

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Provide the best conditions for growth



Just as a plant needs the optimum conditions to thrive and grow, there are elements that we require to ensure our personal growth; to flourish and grow to our full potential and blossom into the fullness of being our complete and authentic Self. Decide which ingredients to put in place to aid in your desire to be more completely and happily Yourself and begin today a wonderful journey of growth.

How to grow your life as a flourishing garden

❖ **Research the situation**

get to know your values, strengths, personality, passions, hopes, dreams
evaluate your external and internal environment with a fresh eye
understand the advantages and potential problems of your situation

❖ **Plan for what you want**

think about how you want your life garden to look, feel and develop
consider how to provide interest, balance and harmony in your life
find out how to source the things you need

❖ **Prepare the site**

decide what needs to be retained, removed, added or avoided
get rid of old outdated ideas and habits that might hold you back
dig out any stony hard-hearted attitudes

❖ **Choose the right plants for the conditions**

work with what you've got – accept yourself – be who you are
don't try to be someone else or something else – be true to yourself
reflect on skills, abilities, habits, routines, hobbies you want to develop

❖ **Feed with the right nutrients**

learn what it is that most nourishes and your soul and care for yourself
go organic – limit toxic input, influences, activities, attitudes and people
feed yourself with what is good and righteous and honourable

❖ **Provide enough water and good drainage**

access what refreshes you and helps provide the nutrients you need
don't become clogged up with assumptions, preconceptions or prejudices
don't overdo it – enough is enough!

❖ **Allow sunlight to penetrate**

cut back what is standing in the way of your growth
open your heart and your mind to possibilities
give yourself space to grow, accessing enlightenment, love and warmth

❖ **Prune when necessary**

be prepared to let go of what isn't working
give yourself time to recover and be renewed – protect your vulnerability
aim for progress not perfection – rely on your intuition

❖ **Provide strong supports**

put in place structures you can rely on to shelter and sustain you
set boundaries to provide a framework and protect you
build your resilience against harsh summer winds and winter storms

❖ **Choose beneficial companion plants**

don't try to do it all yourself
spend time with people who enhance and encourage your growth
ask for help when you need to – coaching might be beneficial

❖ **Weed regularly and eliminate the pests**

don't allow yourself to be choked by weeds of fear, self-doubt or hatred
eradicate bitterness, resentment and self-pity that impede your growth
get rid of what is blocking your ability to grow – don't hold onto 'stuff'

❖ **Have patience and trust the process**

understand that growth takes time
learn all you can; do all you can; then relax and let the growth happen
trust that all is as it should be; this too shall pass; all will be well

❖ **Take time to smell the roses**

don't get so busy trying to be and do everything that you can't enjoy life
find pleasure and contentment in the small things – cherish the moments
take time just to 'be' and celebrate what you have achieved

❖ **Propagate from cuttings**

share freely the fruits of what you have learnt and experienced
allow others to delight in the beauty you have created
give out of the fullness of your heart and see others bloom and blossom

by **Marian Kerr**

see also: **page 5 & page 72**



Marian is a coach, proofreader & author who is passionate about helping you understand more about your values, unique qualities & strengths; discover possibilities; tap into your personal power; & make positive choices towards a more fulfilling life

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Halftime

Is it really already half time?

Evaluating the first half of my own personal game...

What have I achieved so far? The first 10 years I walked on the pitch as if I were half asleep and not focused at all. The next 10 years were almost worse! I saw raw energy, but a lot of aggression and some really stupid actions. Constant fouls with whoever came in my way and a big 'I can do it alone' attitude. That's not going to work out there. It's a team game.

Pause

I saw some more focus for the next 10 years and I could see my potential shining through. I had a lot of really good ideas and they started to flow out there on the playing field. Well Done! A real turnaround. It was clear where I wanted to go.

Nobody could foresee the 'obstacle' in the 30th year and then I repeated it again after 1.5 years and again after 2 years! It kind of threw me out of the game for a while and although I tried very hard to get back into it I could only see I was getting really tired. Little glimpses of the flow sparkling here and there, but they didn't last long enough for me to turn the game around again. Until now!

Half Time!



What have you achieved so far in your game of life?

When we look back, what have we achieved? More importantly, are we happy with where we are in the game and what do we want to get out of it in the second half? Half time is a great time for evaluation, whether it's a game strategy or one's life. I think it's very important to use the half time effectively to take the time out to look back and see what lessons have been learned, and set clear goals and guidelines for the second half. Because: *'If you always do what you've always done, you will always get what you've always got.'*

❖ **I have learned that I can not do every thing on my own**

There are 10 other players with me in my team (close family and friends) and even more people on the sideline (the wider community I am engaged in). We also couldn't play without an opposition. I need to be able to work and communicate with my team so we all do get something out of the game called life.

❖ **I have learned that it is important to be flexible and to adjust to a situation so I don't make the same mistake on the pitch again**

I realized that every single game, or year of my life, has ups and downs – that is unavoidable. Knowing and accepting this has helped me to respond to it in a calmer way rather than the 'Reaction Mode' I found myself in during my teenage years where I got one yellow and red card after the other.

❖ **I can't change the outside world!**

But I can change how I respond to it and that sometimes inspires others and ultimately, how I view it with a different perspective. Being up on the top seats in a stadium of 80,000 and watching the game unfold from there made me realize how insignificant one game really is in relation to the bigger picture.

At halftime we are starting to ask questions:

- ❖ what is working well? – keep it!
- ❖ what do I need to change? – change it!
- ❖ what do I!!! need to change?

not the referee, not the spectators, not my other team members, but Me

What do I need to change?

I need to use my half time to take time out to nurture myself and look after my physical, mental and spiritual needs. I still have so much to offer to the game. I want to play the full second half until the very end and not be substituted early. I have learned so much that I can relax a little now and actually enjoy the game unfolding rather than fighting hard to establish my place. I still have goals and they get scored very often in the second half, sometimes even in the final minutes/years.

What about you? Have you had half time?

- ❖ do you still have dreams and goals you want to accomplish?
- ❖ are you doing something about them?
- ❖ I invite you to come out there on the pitch with me in the second half and give it your very best. Let's live life to the full. We only have this one so might as well enjoy it –

Game on!

by **Catrin Jacksties**

see also: page 58 & 68



Catrin is the publisher of *One Smile Magazine* in New Zealand. Her journey has gifted her 3 beautiful children & led her to this stunning country

She believes we are all one in mind & heart & need more positivity in our world to foster creativity & collaboration

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Social media: fad or a tool for growth?

Many people say that Social Media is a fad. Individuals and businesses claim that the new phenomenon is nothing less than a passing phase that will be overtaken in the next few years. It's both true and not true.



The thing is that Social Media is a new tool in the utility belt of people's lives. We've had different types of media in the past – radio, television, newspapers and magazines; and although not all people were fans of these new inventions at first, over time we've grown to recognize and love these communication methods.

Social Media is just another type of medium – a tool and a resource to help people communicate news, updates, and opinions to the rest of the world.

Just like people thought the telephone wasn't going to enhance our lives in any way because we couldn't see the person we were talking to, Social Media is one of the new discoveries in the world, giving people the opportunity to communicate with each other in a different way.

Company advertising needs to focus on the engagement of potential clients, because as consumers we're no longer constrained to learn about products or services from advertisements in the paper, or on billboards. If we need something, we jump online to check out what companies are taking an interest in their consumer's lives; what businesses are communicating with their audiences to improve their products through potential customers' feedback; who are offering the best deals; and who are willing to give an outstanding transaction, worthy of a mention online.

Use this to your advantage – give your business, organisation, or your very self the benefit of being an honest and transparent entity online. Engage your potential clients in discussion, answer their questions in a timely manner, and give them value as online fans, and it will come back to you.

*Use Social Media as a tool;
a new opportunity for you to fulfil your mission in life*

Still not convinced? Go to YouTube and type in 'Social Media' or 'Social Media Revolution' and learn more about impacts of Social Media on the world and watch the magic unfold.

by Eva-Maria

see also: page 61



Eva-Maria is a 21-year-old family coach, international speaker, social media consultant & author of bestselling parenting book *You Shut Up!*

Her business Social-e-Media employs young people from around the world to help NZ businesses build & implement Social Media strategy, providing the perfect win-win solution between generations, creating mutual value

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Motivation for Growth

What motivates you?

Clayton Alderfer put forward an interesting concept regarding what motivates us to do things or make decisions. It is called the *ERG Theory*. It is similar to, though different from, Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs* theory.

Alderfer says we are motivated by three aspects:

- ❖ **Existence:** physiological and safety needs (hunger, thirst, etc) and material wellbeing
- ❖ **Relatedness:** the need for satisfying relationships – involvement with family, friends, co-workers and employers
- ❖ **Growth:** personal growth and development, self-esteem, and the desire to be creative, productive and to complete meaningful tasks

Ideally we work towards satisfying all three needs at the same time, and if we focus exclusively on one need at a time, we will feel dissatisfied.

In addition, if you find that one of your higher level needs is unfulfilled, you may focus on a lower level need that seems easier to satisfy. For example, if you don't feel you have opportunities to grow in a work situation, you may focus on relatedness needs and socialise more with colleagues.

The order of importance of the three aspects will vary from person to person.

For example, one woman I know, when choosing a school for her child, focused on the growth aspect and chose a school she felt would best bring out his abilities, even though the school was a long way away and no other local children were attending the same school, and his relatedness needs would not be met as easily.

Another woman focused on the relatedness aspect, and chose the nearest school so that her daughter would have friends she could walk home with and play with outside of school time and so that she could meet other parents.

There is no 'right' or 'wrong', so long as the decision you make is right for you.

Bear in mind that if other people are affected by your decision, you need to ask yourself whether they would assign the same level of importance to the Relatedness and Growth aspects as you do.



Questions to ask yourself:

- ❖ are my three types of need being met?
- ❖ am I focusing on meeting a specific need at the moment?
- ❖ which one?
- ❖ when making decisions, do I find I have a tendency to be motivated more by relatedness than growth, or vice versa?
- ❖ does this work for me?

by Kim Chamberlain

see also: page 56

My journey of self discovery & growth

At the age of 24 I became a single mum of three young children. The best way to explain how I felt at that time was lost. Over the following few years I experienced short bursts of happiness, however, they were always overshadowed by a deep sense of discontentment. I moved into another relationship which was worse, and breaking point came when I turned up at my girlfriend's home, bruised and broken, finally ready to admit I was in a very unhealthy space and that I was ready to get help. It took a lot of strength to 1) admit to what was going on and 2) feel I deserved support.

I had spoken to people in the past about being in abusive relationships, saying to them, 'leave, you don't have to stay,' and now here I was, understanding exactly why they had stayed so long and wondering how it had all happened. My confidence was at its lowest and even though I had been reading self-help books and attending personal development workshops, my inner strength just wasn't strong enough to get myself out.

After another major argument with my ex-partner, I found myself in the bathroom looking in the mirror, crying and feeling a huge sadness about how my life was unfolding. Deep down I knew I was the only one that could change my life. I had read Louise L Hay's book, *You Can Heal Your Life*, a few years prior and remembered many of the wonderful messages she spoke of.

I decided to start practicing her methods and attended a seminar based on her philosophies. During this seminar we were all given a mirror and had to look at ourselves and say good things about ourselves. I found this very confronting, to say the least. I had looked in the mirror many times but not like this; it was like I was seeing myself for the first time. We were then asked to say something in the mirror that we wished we had said to someone else. I said I wished my mum had said she loved me more. This really got the tears going!

The funny thing is, after doing that exercise something changed within me; I felt different. The real magic happened two days after the workshop. People were already commenting on how great I looked, and then I went and visited my mum. I didn't tell her anything about the workshop, however when I left, she called out to me and said she loved me! I was gobsmacked and the first thing I thought was 'this mirror stuff works!' That was many years ago and to this day I still talk into my mirror. I've realized the more I love myself, the more others can love me too. During this journey of personal growth and self discovery, I also found Women's Refuge to be a tremendous source of support.

Over the last 13 years my life has changed in extraordinary ways and I know it has happened because I have learned to love myself and that what I focus my attention on, grows. It took a huge amount of strength and surrendering to admit to how bad life was and that I needed help, however, the rewards for doing that have been endless. I also realize that by loving who I am, I'm not only kinder to myself; I have compassion and humility for life and everyone I come across.

*I love how Louise says: 'when we stop focusing on the problems and start focusing on loving oneself, the problems fade away...'
this is exactly what happened to me ☺*

by Tracy Manu



Tracy is a lifestyle coach, speaker & author. She's the owner of Blossom, a personal development company that offers coaching, seminars & workshops supporting women to build confidence, improve their mindset & formulate tools enabling them to achieve & maintain goals, enrich relationships & do more of the things they love!

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Same-old same-old or something new?

A former mentor of mine used to observe that some people live the same year over and over, while others make each year a new year. Each of us has the same options – just keep doing the same-old and adding to our wrinkles or we can branch out to the new.

In 20 years do you want to be 20 years wiser and 20 years more experienced or just 20 years older!

The choice is yours. Today I urge you to choose one thing which will be the catalyst for change and growth in your life. It is amazing how even one little change can spark greater changes and you can reap incremental benefits for yourself and those around you.

What can you change today? Is there some study you want to do? Do you want to get fit? Is there some travel you want to plan? Do you want to plant a garden? Is there a hobby you've been thinking of taking up? Do you want to invest in becoming a better person? Do you want to say 'yes' more and 'no' less? Is there someone you have wanted to spend time with but haven't yet? When you decide to make a change there is also a shift in your attitude, confidence and wellbeing which flows through to the rest of your life. If you don't believe me just try it.



Recently a woman who lived in our local community went to work, had a heart attack and died. She was 48 years of age, in a job she loved, with work colleagues who adored her and with a wonderful teenage son. The people who paid her tribute talked about her zest for life, the challenges she'd faced with great courage, how she sang like an angel and what a fabulous person she was. She had no idea when she left for work that morning that it was to be her last day.

The same is true for most of us; we don't know when our last day will be. Is it tomorrow? Or in 20 years?

If you were told your last day was 12months today:

- ❖ what would your priorities be?
- ❖ what would you eliminate from your life? What would you keep?
- ❖ what newness would you bring in?

*'Whatever you can do, or dream you can do, begin it.
Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it. Begin it NOW'
~ Goethe ~*

By Susan Handisides

see also: page 12



Director of Sea Change Solutions, Susan is excited by individuals & organisations achieving their goals, reaching their dreams, & fulfilling their potential.

She is inspired by the discoveries that people make about themselves, their lives, their careers & their passions through coaching & the steps they take to a more fulfilling life

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The small things bring big results

Sometimes the simplest of situations can trigger opportunities for small steps towards gentle growth

A few years ago I was with one of my young nephews and his dad. They were on a short visit to Wellington and we were in a lovely bush reserve. My nephew saw the rocky stream and asked his dad whether he could stop and 'look for the small things'. Sadly, time pressure was against him lying on the low bridge and looking into the water; for him to wade into the stream and lift the rocks to see what might be swimming in any small still pools; to float leaves and twigs; or to seek out the tiny living creatures that can live in our streams.

His words have stayed with me since then and often come to mind. This afternoon when I felt a real need to get out into the garden I thought of looking for the 'small things' as I weeded and tidied. So what did I find?

I was delighted to find the maidenhair fern had regenerated under a covering of leaves off the magnolia tree; I noted the terracotta saucer had filled with rain water and realized that the small birds had been enjoying a bath in it; the wax eyes had hollowed out an overripe apple I had hung in the tree for them to eat, leaving just the rounded skin; the forget-me-nots have seeded heavily and are looking lush with growth; the Japanese maple branchlets are turning deep winter red; beneath leaf litter the most amazingly dark, fine, soft soil forms; and that there are a lot of big fat earth worms in the area of soil beneath one of our kowhai trees.

My focus and attention was on the small things today but the big result was that I came indoors feeling very refreshed and clearer.

by Lynley Chapman

see also: page 10 & page 35

The art of procrastination: don't let it hold back your growth

Procrastination is a real art. However it's something that even my 3-year-old daughter has mastered when there are toys to put away or vegies to eat. Oh what a world it would be if we only had to do the things we want to do.

What is the purpose of procrastination? Why do *you* procrastinate? Is it putting off having to do something you don't want to do or don't know how to do? Do you have a fear of doing this thing? Maybe, like many of us, you think the magic pixies will do it if you don't!? Who are we kidding!!

So how do you explain those days when you efficiently go about your day achieving things and ticking item after item off your 'to do' list? All the things you have put off previously you tackle one at a time – lots of them take only a few minutes each and are actually quite easy.

We all have these days where we get to the end of the day thinking 'I don't know why I put that off for so long' and pat ourselves on the back for getting through so much.

So what's different between this day and those other days when nothing gets done except internet surfing? –

did you seriously get up on a different side of bed?

Ask yourself what your chosen method of procrastination is. Answering the 'which celebrity am I most likely to marry' quiz on Facebook? Catching up on Oprah?

How about spending a day writing down what you did each time you went off track?

I have thought about procrastination a lot, in fact I have been known to use it as a very effective procrastination tool! But, through a bit of self-observation and facing some home truths, I finally I managed to identify the things I do to procrastinate and now I use those things to incentivise myself.

So my suggestion for you is:

- ❖ firstly identify your chosen method(s) of procrastination
- ❖ then use this list as your rewards blueprint after you have ticked off your chores list



Admittedly, I don't talk myself around every time, but I tell you what – I much prefer the days I get my 'to do' list done rather than thinking about where the day went while still telling people I am SOOO busy! Don't you?

By Fiona Bee

see also: page 66



Fiona is the director of OneLife Coaching, a singer, singing tutor, full-time Mum & part-time accounts administrator

Fiona's focus is on finding *your* focus – finding your inspiration & helping you enhance your strengths & address barriers between the life you are living & the life you wish you were living

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Why it's good to feel scared sometimes

There is a story about a man who heard a dog howling:

'Why is the dog howling?' he asked its owner.

'Because he's sitting on a nail and it hurts' the owner replied.

'Why doesn't he get off?'

'Because it doesn't hurt *that* much.'

Sometimes we find ourselves sitting on a nail, knowing that we are doing something that isn't right for us, yet feeling too scared to do anything about it.

Whatever you are scared of, you will always find someone who has confronted that fear, gone out and done it and lived to tell the tale

They will probably admit that the first few steps were challenging and they may have considered giving up, but they never regretted their decision and wouldn't choose to go back to their original situation.

It is said that in order to live a better life we need to ask ourselves better questions.

Whenever we find ourselves sitting on a nail, the questions we can ask ourselves include:

- ❖ what am I in the world to do?
- ❖ what can I contribute by living the life I'm meant to?
- ❖ is my current situation helping or hindering what I'm here to do?

These questions help us to see life in a different perspective, and give us an overview of our life rather than solely dealing with the challenge of the moment.

The second set of questions to ask is:

- ❖ if I'm unhappy in one area of my life, what other areas is it affecting?
- ❖ what kind of role model am I being to my children or others if I'm too scared to change what isn't right in my life?

To help us deal with the feelings of fear and move off the 'nail' we can:

- ❖ meet with inspiring people who have gone out and done it. There are plenty around!
- ❖ read about inspiring people who have gone out and done it.
- ❖ understand that in every choice there is a loss. Of course there will be, for example, a loss of security or comfort in the beginning. But if you don't take that step you may be losing out on so much more – a more fulfilling life; growth in personal development; interesting experiences.
- ❖ ask yourself 'How difficult can it be?' make a rational decision, commit to a course of action, focus on your end goal and trust that it will work. Then imagine – further down the track – telling others your inspirational story of how you went out and did it.

Know that if you are feeling both scared and excited at the prospect of the step you are considering... then that is exactly the step you should be taking!

by **Kim Chamberlain**

see also: page 47



MA Hons, Dip FJ, Dip CG, ATM, APS

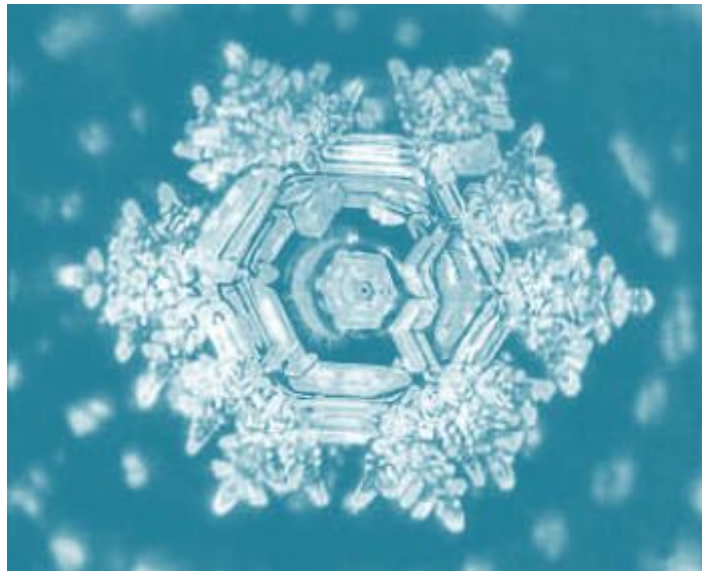
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The universal language of water

*I have a dream for all of us and I asked myself:
how could I make my dream come true?*

Remember the last time you looked at the TV news or read a newspaper and recall what news is still in your mind. Which item stands out? Observe yourself and others when you meet and talk. What is the main subject? Is the language positive or negative? We all seem to be conditioned to negativity these days. Somehow it has an attraction and creates stronger emotions than happy news. And it does affect us.



My thoughts on how to change this negativity around us started with a card. It had a picture of a water crystal on one side and was placed under my water glass in a seminar. I wondered what this was all about and took the card and turned it around.

It read: 'Truth'

I asked the speaker what this meant and she explained it to me and then did some follow-up research. Scientist Dr Masaru Emoto studied water and its reaction to written and musical messages at the Yokohama Municipal University. These are some of his findings:

- ❖ the crystals that form in frozen water reveal changes when specific concentrated thoughts, written or spoken words, and music are directed toward them
- ❖ the water appears to 'change its expression'
- ❖ water from clear springs and water that has been exposed to loving words shows brilliant, complex, and colourful snowflake patterns
- ❖ in contrast, polluted water, or water exposed to negative thoughts, form incomplete, asymmetrical patterns with dull colours
- ❖ he believes that the water of the oceans has memories of all the creatures that lived in it as water circles the globe flowing through our bodies and spreading to the rest of the world

The implications of this research create a new awareness of how we can positively impact the earth and our personal health

Our bodies are more than two-thirds water, our 'body water crystals' and by association, our health and emotions, depend on positive spoken, written and musical messages.

So if we are constantly exposed to negative messages, horrible dramas, disasters, and so on what are the implications for us? What do our 'crystals' look like?

This is where my dream emerged. I decided that if positive messages of peace, hope and love can transform water crystals into beautiful 'snowflakes' then we can send those messages via the water on the beach. So I went to the beach with my children and we wrote messages into the sand. We used a piece of driftwood and wrote words and symbols. It was a liberating experience. Initially I felt a bit self-conscious. But soon I embraced the activity and forgot everything around me, just feeling the moment of joy while writing in the sand and having so much fun. That alone would change my 'crystals' into beautiful coloured snowflakes. My 10-year-old daughter said 'let's write a message to Grandma and when she goes to the beach in Germany she will receive it'. I thought: 'She's got it!'

*Each one of us can make a difference and help to
make this world an awesome place to live*

My dream is that we would build a more holistic way of life, respecting each other and the environment and we would get excited about the simplest things in life. We would have a world with enough food for everyone; with people living in harmony together, accepting each other's differences and tastes. We would accept each other's journeys as they are. We would make a quantum leap in how we view the world. All it takes is the decision and the stepping out of the comfort zone or the limiting mind set which might whisper to you: 'What can one single person do?'

We can all make that difference:

- ❖ one random act of kindness a day
- ❖ one smile for a passing person
- ❖ one message for a loved one
- ❖ one positive message written in the sand on the beach
- ❖ can you imagine what we could achieve **together**?

by Catrin Jacksties

see also page 42 & 68

Grow your online presence

An enticing Welcome Page is one of the most effective ways to give your business a greater impact on Facebook

A Welcome Page is an extra tab you can add to your business Facebook Page. This means that if you have some sort of special offer, or even a database you can sign people up to, you can do this straight from Facebook! How great is that?! Appealing welcome pages encourage people to become more interested in what you have to offer. It's a fantastic way to actually drive people to you, and in turn, become your customers both online, and more importantly, offline.

There are a number of different resources you can use to come up with a Facebook Page – both free and paid (per month). Pagemodo gives you a range of templates to upload photos with links and text, to upload to your Facebook Page. Tabsite has a drag and drop option that lets you add texts, photos, videos and other bits and pieces to upload to your welcome page.

The other option is to get the welcome page outsourced. While some companies may charge you to keep this welcome page up, others will charge for just the design and upload of this page. The benefit of this is that you don't need to keep to any particular template. Providing an enticing offer for fans such as asking people to Like the page in exchange for a download of free information drives up fan numbers.

This can be anything – from a coupon download if you are in an industry such as hospitality, to a one-page sheet that gives your fans some valuable details about your product or service. Although this isn't a hard-sell, people who download and read this piece of information will be more likely to build a stronger bond to you, as you were the one that shared this useful advice with them, and if they see it as relevant to themselves, they are more likely to contact you for more information about your service.

Engage customers through social media to grow your business

No matter what business workshop you do or which Social Media article or books you read, one thing is for sure – the age of engagement is upon us

Rules of engagement

❖ Provide Value

In the book *The Art of War*, the author talks about winning battles by the simple understanding of your enemy. Now, your customers are the furthest thing away from your enemy, but the rule stays true – know the user of your product or service.

Ask yourself:

- who are my customers?
- who are my potential customers?
- who are my ideal customers?
- what do they do?
- where do they work?
- where do they reside?
- where do they hang out?
- what about my product or service would make them want to use it over the others out there?

Use this information to write small blog posts or articles to provide extra knowledge and value about your product or service and build your reputation as an expert and create a strong relationship with your potential customers.

❖ **Listen, Acknowledge & Reply**

If you want to know what people think about a product, service, or even your business in particular, you're just one Google, Facebook or Twitter search away from it! A big Social Media tip the 'gurus' always talk about is replying to questions aimed at you. If you're one of the businesses that earn the reputation for listening to concerns, questions and feedback of your clients, it can really go a long way online. Always reply when you are addressed online – whether someone posted a question to your Facebook Page, posed a question on your blog article, or sent you a direct message or mention on Twitter – reply, reply, reply.

Even if you don't have time to go out there and market your business to potential clients on a daily basis, make sure you are on your already existing Social Networks every day, with at least one update, and moderate and answer any questions that come up.

Treat people nicely, even if it's as simple as replying at all, and it comes back to you ten-fold. If people are pleased with your service they will tell others, particularly through social media channels.

❖ **Free Stuff!**

Everyone LOVES free stuff! Free stuff can attract people, but make sure it's relevant. People are constantly being bombarded by offers to enter draws and chances to win stuff, and a lot of the time it becomes just another 'act' that is very unlikely to get you anywhere. Offer a discount, a free drink, a free haircut when they refer a friend... anything that will make you extra business. The opportunities are endless – all you need to do is ask yourself: what can we offer that would get people interested?

By Eva-Maria

see also: page 45

Personal growth – is it the end?

I've got some SHOCKING news folks... Personal Growth ends...

Check it out for yourself. Look in every Human Development textbook! It ends, apparently, with Self Actualisation. Yes! According to these books, you – and I – become the best 'I' we can be through the journey of development, socialisation, healing our wounds, and growing. Erikson identified the stages of life and developmental tasks to be achieved in childhood to late adulthood. Ideally we integrate the learning required at each stage.

We started out at the beginning of Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs*, requiring our physical needs of safety – shelter, food, and warmth – to be met. We then hopefully experienced a family, and a community, and had our belonging and social needs met. We advanced through to having 'Peak Experiences' and gained self-mastery. We became the best 'me' we could. It's part of the *Hero's Journey* of epic tales – and not everyone takes it. For traditional Western psychology the journey of the Self and Personal Growth ends here.

However, it doesn't end there

Eastern psychologies reveal new territory that lies beyond the realm of Personal Growth. It lies beyond the personal Ego and its structures and contents. This is a new psychology - That Beyond Ego – of the Transpersonal.

The Trans (beyond) Personal has been well mapped out by Eastern and Indigenous psychologies, by Western Mystics and more recently, by Transpersonal Psychologists. There are many schools of thought. Some focus on the path to full Enlightenment – truly knowing Who I Am and letting go of Illusion. The chakra system is another approach to raising awareness and achieving Unity Consciousness.

The Highest aspects of Human Endeavour reveal themselves in the fruits of the Spirit: Love, Peace, Joy, Compassion, Serenity, Equanimity, Discernment, etc.

In the West we have the writings of Ken Wilber, Eckhart Tolle, Hildegard of Bingen, Mother Teresa, and many more. I recommend anything by Byron Katie. From the East we have the books by Paramahansa Yogananda, Sathya Sai Baba, Sri Yukteswar and many other sages, saints and sadhus. At the interface we have Deepak Chopra, Krishnamurthi, and the Dalai Lama. Information is everywhere.



Take note – Take courage – Be of good heart

It might look like the world is falling apart, that our cities and our communities are falling apart – believe me we are Falling Together. Human consciousness is evolving as a species (not just as individuals) and group consciousness is stepping into the Heart which requires loving kindness, sharing and respect for others. We are required to be living examples, not of the small self and its narcissistic demands, projections and defences – but the Highest Self. This new millennia is a Call to Conscious Living.

*We can be messengers of Love, Compassion, Service and Contentment with life
we can spread the good news*

by Fiona Camberun

see also: page 14 & page 26

Pipe dreams

What is it about those ideas we have about ourselves or our lives that seem too grandiose or too out of our comfort zones that we file them under 'but that's just a pipe dream'?

I love hearing about people's pipe dreams as it's a small window into what they secretly hope their lives could be, or perhaps what they think they should be. Whenever anyone talks about this kind of thing I see such a change in them: their body relaxes their face lights up and they get a real sparkle in their eye. If only that happened when I asked them how their day at work had been!

And ok – so maybe travelling around the world on a yacht will have to wait until you have some funds behind you; and I am not suggesting you drop everything to follow a dream to the detriment of the other parts of your life – but I do invite you to entertain for a minute what your life would be like if you started working on realising that dream.



Oh here come the excuses

(I call them excuses; you may call them reasons!):

- ❖ not enough time
- ❖ my family need me
- ❖ not enough money
- ❖ too busy
- ❖ etc, etc, etc

I have a phrase I find myself using a lot around big or overwhelming projects:
'Chip, chip, chippety, chip'.

Making a start is the hardest part but it only needs to be a small step

As an example, your goal may be to become a motivational speaker. But let's say at the moment the thought of saying anything in front of a group of people sends you into cold sweats. As a first step, how about looking at some clips of inspiring speakers on the internet? www.ted.com/talks is a great site to start with.

Start by finding someone who is already doing what you want to do, then study them:

- ❖ what attributes do they have that you have also?
- ❖ what do they have that you don't? (yet!)
- ❖ how could you go about working on those missing skills?

*Don't be afraid to put your pipe dreams into words
bounce them around the universe a little
because you never know what's out there that may just come bouncing back*

by Fiona Bee

see also: page 54

How we interpret our experiences: it's all a matter of perspective

I recently went on a school camp to Wellington as one of seven parent-helpers for 41 year 6 students. The camp's purpose was to give the children educational experiences outside the classroom and the programme was stacked up with those.

One of my favourite parts was the Nga Manu Nature Reserve. I loved the way our guide wrapped education around stories. He made it easy to listen and we had a lot of fun. The story of the eels caught my attention. An eel can live up to 140 years. These eels are born in Tonga and come all the way to New Zealand. They move from living in the ocean to living in rivers and lakes. Then one day, (usually after about 60 years), a female swims back to Tonga to mate and lay around 2 million eggs before she dies. Not all females go. Some never do. 'How do they know who goes and whether its time?' asked one of the kids, and the guide's response was 'it's a bit like a touch from God telling them to go'. I thought he was inspirational.

One afternoon we went to Laser Force, which is a place a bit like paint ball but with laser. There were also game machines, car racing, etc. I thought 'where is the educational value in this? Did we really have to come here? Is shooting at other people teaching peaceful behaviour?'

In the evening the children had to write a diary and go over all activities of that day, describe them, rate them in value for them and explain why they liked certain things better than others. I was fortunate to be allowed to read them one night and was amazed (initially) about what I was reading. They loved Laser Force because it was fun. They loved the visit in the pool and they loved the skating. They enjoyed the nature reserve too, but the highlights of the day were often the activities I did not consider educational.

And then I realized: it's all a matter of Perspective

What do I mean by that? Let me illustrate. I am holding up a book and have one student standing on each side of the book. I then ask one at a time:

'What do you see?' – 'And what do you see?'

Who is right and who is wrong?

They are both right.

They both see a book – but one sees text and the other sees an empty space. They are looking at the same object from a different point of view and therefore have a different opinion. If each student walked around me to look at the other side, they would both see a different perspective.

In the case of the camp, I looked at the activity and saw the educational value or the lack of it (as that was my point of view). And the kids looked at the activity and saw the fun in it or lack of it (as that was their point of view).

Who am I to judge what is right or wrong? Instead I realized that the kids had a different point of view and in order to 'see' that one too I had to move and look at the activity from their viewpoint. And that was a revelation in itself. I had a lot of fun! And I learned the most when fun was involved, like with those stories and animals from the guide at Nga Manu.

The more points of views you can have the better. Your perspective widens and your understanding increases with each different view. The rewards are more Tolerance, more Acceptance, more Peace. And a lot more FUN!!!

Needless to say, everything on this trip was educational

It was just a matter of perspective

by Catrin Jacksties

see also: page 42 & page 58

A strengths-based review of your 2011

The Christmas holiday is a great time for rest, renewal and reflection. The year-end underlines a natural point for a stocktake – of how things shaped up and what we are up to in our lives. With the advent of the New Year and the promise of new beginnings, pausing to take time for reflection and thoughtful intent for the coming year is most natural.

The seers have repeatedly pronounced: 'an un-reflected is an unlived life' this year, I would encourage a strengths-based approach to your reflections

Why not record your answers to the following questions in your journal? Not only will this give you a sense of achievement and consequent good feelings but it will also provide you with directional clarity for the coming year.

You could ask these questions in relation to your team, business, leadership and your personal life as well:

- ❖ what have been some of my key achievements this year?
- ❖ what stands out as a real highlight and makes me feel good, proud and strong?
- ❖ what are the strengths I used to reach my achievements and highlights?
- ❖ what is something I would like to develop next year, and how could my signature strengths help me get the results I want?
- ❖ what is an unrealized strength that I may wish to utilize more?
- ❖ what was a surprise and how did I feel about this?

And of course, the big SQ question:

- ❖ how have I grown as a person this year? For example: what skills, talents, virtues and resources did I draw upon to face a major challenge?

When thinking about your achievements – don't just focus on the obvious, tangible big-ticket items such as 'presented at an international conference' or 'established a community of interest or forum for my industry' but also more qualitative, courageous and softer issues like 'I had an honest and courageous conversation with my partner about what had been bugging me for a while'.

In reflecting on what you may wish to do, be or achieve in the coming year, don't discount any left-field idea – these could be the seeds of some new beginnings for you. When you are relaxed, lying on the beach, playing with the kids and generally not thinking too hard is the very time that creative insights and flashes of inspiration strike!

For example, a client who was extremely happy in her job found herself entertaining thoughts about attending university. This baffled her as it was not a viable option for her at that time. As it turned out, a few months after returning to work her department was restructured with her position redundant. Rather than be angry about this turn of events, she happily turned her attention to pursuing what had seemed an unrealistic option before.

The intuitive self knows that which the mind has not got a glimpse of just yet!

by Jasbindar Singh

see also: page 32



Put your roots down deep into rich soil

To support our growth, strong roots are essential

If a plant concentrates all its energy into growth without developing a strong and extensive root system it will become stunted, or leggy and unbalanced and unable to withstand the force of wintry winds. But establishing a solid, sturdy structure beneath the surface provides a durable foundation for its growth.

Put down deep roots to build a strong foundation for your growth

- ❖ putting your roots down deep helps you become healthy and robust
- ❖ building your resilience enables you to weather life's storms more ably
- ❖ feeding yourself with positivity and beauty promotes vigorous growth

Grow strong roots

- ❖ **Discover your values and what is most important to you**

Ask yourself:

- what are my values?
- what really matters to me?
- what gives my life meaning and purpose?
- what motivates me?
- what do I believe in – what do I stand for?
- what is it that I want from life?
- what talents, skills, abilities and strengths do I have to offer?

Building a life around these values, expressing them and honouring them, builds the strongest of foundations for your personal growth. It sets down the most extensive roots that can go deeply into the soil and find sufficient nourishment, making possible sturdy and healthy growth.

❖ **Enrich the soil**

- turning over the soil and breaking up your preconceptions and assumptions about life makes it easier for your roots to push downwards to reach what you need to enable you to grow
- removing entrenched beliefs and unrealistic attitudes that impede your progress opens you up to receive the life-giving rain of new ideas and strategies and accept the sunlight's loving warmth
- feeding and developing your strengths, abilities, passions, hopes, and heartfelt aspirations provides abundant resources to draw on

❖ **Build resilience to help anchor your roots in the rich soil and sustain you when the winds of life blow**

No garden or plant is perfect. Yet every garden and plant is perfect in its imperfection. Some of the most interesting and beautiful plants are those that have lived through drought, storm or fire and bear their scars and their healed wounds proudly as they courageously continue to grow and flourish. And so it is in our lives.

- becoming resilient does not deny the enormity of the challenges so many of us face
- building resilience means that even though you fall, you will get up again
- though you may be overwhelmed at times, you will find the power to continue to thrive and develop into the fullness of You

by Marian Kerr

see also: page 5 & page 39

If you want to know more about growing your life into a beautiful garden explore each author's website and writings or contact them direct to discuss how they can be of assistance



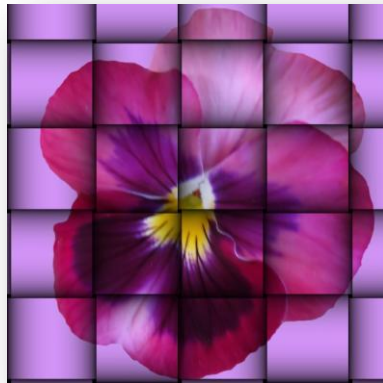
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