



FREEDOM INSIDE

*A Newsletter for Prisoners
Based on the Conversations With God Material*

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Magnificent or Insignificant? by Janine Cantin

After you read The Pale Blue Dot that you can find in this issue (page 9), you'll know why I've been asking myself this question: Am I infinitely important or infinitely small, in the grand scheme of things?

Am I the reason this whole world was created, so I could experience it all? Or am I as a grain of sand on the beach, a drop of water in the ocean?

I live my life as though I came here to the Earth to experience all of Who I Really Am. That's a choice I've made quite a while back and it's one that has brought me joy and peace and a real feeling of fulfillment.

On the other hand, I often see how small my life really is. When I look at the stars in the sky, how can I not feel infinitesimal? Or when I see the enormous problems facing humanity today and the very little I can actually do about any of it, how can I think of myself as important, powerful, great, an infinite being of light?

I'm getting depressed just sitting here, thinking about that! :-/

Can I make even a dent in the world's problems? And if I can't, why the heck am I even here? Is my journey intended to be this small? This insignificant?

How do I explain to myself why the world is as it is while still believing that the Universe, the Creator, the Source of All, is all that is good, is a loving and compassionate Being?

I look at the Earth and its place in the cosmos and I wonder. Surely it's not all about me? Surely it's not all about

humankind? Surely all of creation is not only or even mostly about little old us?

What do I make of this feeling of insignificance when I also feel the magnificence of my Beingness deep inside me?

And here lies the real dilemma. I can see how small we all are in the cosmos, how insignificant. At least physically.

But I also know our potential. Potential for greatness and smallness. Potential for both hurting and healing each other.

I'm thinking of 9/11, when I had a first row comfortable and safe seat in front of a TV screen watching insanity happen.

But from that same seat, I also witness man's greatness. While most people fled the scene, many actually ran toward it, as did the First Responders, of course, those magnificent human beings whose job it is to run toward hell instead of away from it.

Many others also did whatever they could to try and help: bringing food and water; building makeshift stretchers to carry what was believed to be an enormous number of victims; lining around city blocks to give blood.

Magnificent all!

I cannot accept the fact that such greatness of spirit is insignificant, even in the grand scheme of things. I just refuse to.

So there! End of depression!

I believe Humans become magnificent when they allow themselves to act in Love; completely, without expecting or needing anything back, without allowing fear to block the loving flow that comes from deep within us.

I believe humans become small when they allow fear to dictate their every act, thought, idea, and feeling.

The Dalai Lama said, "Our prime purpose in this life is to help others. And if you can't help them, at least don't hurt them."

But that's the problem isn't it? When we fear, one of our first reaction is often to hurt back. A pre-emptive strike as it were. We see it happen in our own lives, in the lives of friends, family, communities, and even countries which, as we know, can lead to war.

Fear contracts us, makes us harder, more rigid, needing to preserve and strengthen our defenses. Fear makes us smaller, all in the name of self-preservation.

Love expands us. It opens us up, allows us to let people in, to open our hearts and minds in order to understand problems and misunderstandings. It allows for solutions to be created. Love makes us grander, more magnificent than we ever thought we could be.

Fear divides, love unites. So one wonders why we choose fear so often.

Fear is contagious. It is all around us, it permeates almost everything we hear and read about on the news. Fear is also in so much of what we call entertainment, from the latest blockbuster movies to the most popular drama-filled TV shows. Violence abounds. And there is no

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*Magnificent or Insignificant**(continued from page 1)*

violence that is not in reaction to some kind of fear.

So if all I've said is true, or at least if it feels as true to you as it does to me, how can we put our fears aside and live in more and more love?

I believe fear has been growing within us for a very long time. Since childhood at least, if not from other lifetimes. Fear is deep seated and cleverly hidden under some very interesting coping strategies: anger is one of the best since it deceives us so completely about who and what is responsible for our feelings.

"If you only stopped doing that, I wouldn't get so angry" is a very effective way of pointing the blame of our anger on someone else and keeping our fears well hidden. The same is true of all our so-called negative emotions. They all cover fear.

But what if we choose to air our fears out?

I am blessed to have in my life some very good friends who know what fear is really about and who allow me to vent my anger without taking it personally. They allow me to let go of my rage, a bit at a time, so that I can finally see and let go of the underlying fear.

Surprisingly to me, this is not a very complicated process. It needs but some willingness on everyone's part to delve deeper than the superficial issue that caused the anger in the first place. Accepting that anger is but a reaction to someone touching our pain. And knowing that when someone touches our sunburn, what is needed is to heal the sunburn, not to blast the person who, most often quite unwittingly, touched it.

So if you can, find someone in your own life who is willing to go below the surface of things, who is willing to let go of any argument, let go of the need to be right at that particular time, and see what the wound is that was touched. Once the wound is identified and aired, it will lose its ability to hurt us and the fear will subside.

The Universe is truly a miraculous place, filled with magnificent beings. No wonder it's so huge. It needs to be to encompass it all.

*Yes, fear is contagious.
But then, so is Love.*

WHAT DID I DO WRONG?**from Letters to Neale****published in the CwG Foundation Weekly Bulletin
Issue # 584, March 14 2014**

Neale,

I badly need a prayer or two, and some deep encouragement. I have hit a very low point in my life. I am fighting a battle with Alcoholism, despair and deep depression.

I am totally broke, with only 40 cents left to my name, even though I have a full time job! My paycheck is getting smaller and smaller every other week. I find myself falling further behind on bills, and can barely afford to put gas into a 26 year old rusty car. I am no longer allowed to have overtime, and it is getting harder and harder for me to get ahead financially.

I feel like a total failure in life. I tried very hard to do my best work for the company I work for, only to get screwed with criticism and lower pay. I can't afford to leave this job, and now with all the bills piling up, it is hard to keep up.

I feel like giving up on life. Thoughts of suicide have crossed my mind a few times. The only thing that keeps me going is a faded dream of someday becoming a writer and an artist.

My health is failing. I can't afford to see a doctor, dentist or anyone else. I am worried that if money doesn't come in soon, that I will end up homeless, and out of a job.

How do I keep going, when my life totally sucks right now?

I am extremely lonely, single (wanting to have a loving partner) depressed, frustrated, angry, etc.

I am wondering why God is so pissed off at me. What did I do wrong? I am trying very hard to be a decent person, but I keep failing at everything I try.

What can I do, when I am totally broke and things seem hopeless? Any encouragement you can give me will be greatly appreciated.

A very Lonely Guy...Eric in California

Neale Responds...

My Dear Eric,

You are "Two Phone Calls, Four Books, and A Movie" away from having your whole life change. I am so glad you have written to me!

First, I want you to know that I have been where you are. I had nothing after having suffered a broken neck in a car accident. I was unable to work, and wound up living under the stars, with no shelter except for a camping tent, no car, no food except what I could scrape together with the money I could scrounge picking up soda cans and beer bottles in the park and asking people for loose change on the street. I have been there, Eric. I have been there.

(Oh, and by the way, I was not there for a week or two, or a bad month or so. I was there for a year. All of this is described in my book, Friendship with God.)

At the time, I thought I was never going to get out of there, never going to get off the street. I was 50 years old, Eric. Who hires a 50-year-old who looks like a derelict?

First of all, about the "badly needed prayer," we'll go there at the end of this communication! With regard to "badly needed encouragement," let me tell you that this is not the end of the line for you, there is much more life yet to be lived, with much more joy and much more peace and much more love and much more excitement and fulfillment and just plain fun in store. But first, you have to really choose it. And choosing it requires action that takes courage.

Eric, pick up the phone and call Alcoholics Anonymous. Do it. Right now, after

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WHAT DID I DO WRONG?

from Letters to Neale

(continued from page 2)

reading this message. Do it. Stop arguing with yourself and just do it.

Your story is one they have heard many, many times. The people who you will meet at AA are compassionate, deeply understanding, and powerfully helpful. Pick up the phone, and then get over there to their next meeting. There, you will be helped to get in touch with a Higher Power, a Source of Power that some people believe is outside of themselves. I don't happen to agree with that description. I believe that the Power is within you. I believe that the Power is God, and that God lives within you, expressing AS you. This is what *CwG* has told me, and that thought has changed my life.

It doesn't matter, however, whether you believe that God is One with you or "out there" somewhere. Either way, a BELIEF in this Power can change your life. This Power, Eric, can defeat your alcoholism, and every other negative experience or energy that is part of your life. This Power, Eric, can overcome it all. And what AA can do is help you get in touch with this Power. Without using this Power, Eric, you are powerless.

If I give you a car, but you refuse to drive it, in that sense you are immobile. You can't get from here to there. The truth is, you are NOT immobile, you have a car to drive, but if you do not use it, you may as well not have it. It is the same way with God. If you do not "use" God, you are powerless over the addiction that has controlled you. For the Power IS God--whether you believe it is outside of you or within you.

So go to the phone in the next three minutes and call Alcoholics Anonymous. Or go to your computer, turn it on, and navigate to:

http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org/en_find_meeting.cfm

Just click on the link I have provided.

There is nothing shameful or embarrassing about seeking help, Eric. You have done so by writing to me. Now take the next step.

Some of the most famous people in the world have acknowledged their addiction to some substance or

experience. The truth is, nearly all of us are addicted to something. Some of us are addicted to love. Some to security. Some to sex. Some to drugs or alcohol. Some are addicted to power, and will do anything to get it and hold it. Some of us have big addictions -- that is, we REALLY need -- and some of us have small addictions. But I'll bet you that nearly all us are addicted at one level or another to one experience or another. Our freedom from addiction is our path to Self Awareness. It is a path we all can take.

There are many people, methods, programs, and sources of information that can lead us to that path, Eric. The book *Conversations with God* is one of them. And so I am going to invite you to read *CwG*, Book 1 over again. I assume you have read it once, or you wouldn't be writing to me. Please read it again.

You have said that it is harder and harder to stay ahead financially. I know all about this. I have faced the exact same problem. I went to a WONDERFUL place called the Consumer Credit Counseling Service. Here is the link:

<http://credit.org/cccs/>

These people changed my financial life. They saved me from incredible depression, because it "looked like" I could NEVER get "out from under." They helped me get "out", and I will be forever grateful to them. You can choose to work directly with a counselor in person, by telephone or online. As a team, you and your counselor will work together to create a livable spending plan and establish an action plan for becoming debt free and achieving your financial goals. This WORKS, Eric.

After my first appointment they told me to come back with nothing but an envelope filled with every bill I had, and they would work with me to handle everything. Then, they called each and every creditor I had, they called them personally, and spoke with them on my behalf, telling them that I was going to pay off these bills if it was the last thing I did -- but that I just needed a little patience and a little time. Then they made a pledge on my behalf to every creditor of what those creditors would receive on a regular basis. Then they

piled all that into one lump sum payment that I sent to the Counseling Service each paycheck, and they paid all the bills for me, breaking my check into many different smaller parts and distributing cash to every creditor. And they always made sure that I had enough left to live on.

I couldn't believe there was actually a service like this! Someone who could TALK to my creditors, get them to UNDERSTAND, and, most important, get them to GIVE ME A LITTLE SLACK. It was amazing, Eric. Call these people TODAY.

Now Eric, you have said, "I feel like a total failure in life." Please, Eric, I want you also to go right now and get a copy of *Communion with God*. Read about the Ten Illusions of Humans...and pay particular attention to the chapter of "failure."

Failure does not exist, Eric. Every scientist knows this. Scientists and researchers understand perfectly that every so-CALLED "failure" in the laboratory is actually a stepping stone to ultimate success. It tells the researcher what is NOT true -- and that is the first step on the path to what IS.

You are a "researcher", too, Eric. You are researching your Self. You are on a search for Who You Really Are...and every so-CALLED "failure" is simply a stepping stone to ultimate success in that search. Believe me, Eric, I know. I have walked this path, touching every stepping stone along the way! No one has "failed" more than I have, Eric. I have had 26 jobs, six wives, nine children, lived in five states...geez, can it get any more hectic than that????

Eric, you are on the path to attainment! Congratulations! Don't you DARE "give up." I know that you have even entertained thoughts of suicide. So did I! But now I want you to read yet another *CwG* book, the very latest. Eric, I want you to read HOME WITH GOD in a Life That Never Ends. Please pay particular attention to the material on ending one's own life. It is amazing, insightful, and the book itself is deeply healing.

You've told me, Eric...."I am wondering
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FROM THE OUTSIDE

THE LONG JOURNEY

by Tom Brown

Posted on February 20, 2014 by Charles Tom Brown

In many ways, the longest journey we will ever have to take is from the head to the heart. Our head (mental level) always wants to be right, always wants to justify, to judge someone or something. Our heart, however, has no need to be right or to justify. The heart simply wants to love and understand.

Recently, a television documentary told the story of a daughter who was able to answer a letter from one of the men who murdered her father and later to meet with him. This compassionate act raises the question, "How do we reconcile our grief with the offender's inherent worth and dignity?"

By quieting our minds and going deep

THE VALUE OF THE DIRECT EXPERIENCE

by Tom Brown

Posted on February 23, 2014 by

Explain to a friend the wonder of the Grand Canyon and he may say, "Yes, I know. I've heard it's amazing," or "I've seen photographs," but until he's been there and seen it with his own eyes, the vast splendor of it, felt in his innermost being the immensity of it, the magnificence, he doesn't know it.

There's nothing quite like the direct experience. Nothing can substitute for it. One must have had to shed tears to know that they taste salty and bittersweet.

within our heart, we are able to allow both truths to coexist in the spaciousness of a bigger mind and heart. Our grief becomes just grief. The stretched heart hurts but can hold it all. We learn to see the uniqueness of every person and situation and the interconnectedness that binds each of us to everything.

The more we classify people and warehouse them into groups the less we can see who they are and be of help. If we refuse to label others, to stereotype, categorize, and prejudge, we will see the oak tree in the acorn. We will understand the process of helping the oak to become a great oak.

Are we learning to forgive and live from

the spirit of the heart instead of the spirit of judgment? When two hearts meet, healing can occur, the level of love and understanding grows and deepens, and our relationships are able to grow and expand in a most profound and intimate way. Let's remember that intimacy is an invitation to "into me see".

This journey from head to heart is the one true path. Without heart, without increasing love and compassion for oneself and for others, all the rest is an empty form. Our inner core is love. Like the sun, it can be hidden by dark clouds of fear and negativity and limited beliefs. But it is never put out.

THE MIRACLE OF SPRING

by Tom Brown

Posted on March 1, 2014 by Charles Tom Brown

Soon it will be spring, and all around everything small and buried will surrender to a process that none of the buried parts can see. This innate surrender allows everything edible and fragrant to break ground into a life of light that we call spring.

As a seed buried in the earth cannot imagine itself as an orchid, neither can a heart packed with hurt imagine itself loved or at peace. We can flower in an instant, though, as soon as the pain of not

flowering and not loving become greater than our fear.

In nature we are given countless models of how to give ourselves over to what appears to be dark and hopeless, but which ultimately proves to be an awakening that is beyond all imagining. This moving through the dark into blossom is the threshold to the divine.

AN INVITATION FOR ACIM IN IOWA PRISONS

Mary Thomson is a ACIM student who would love to go into prisons to share this message. In her own words:

"My goal to help everyone understand that they do not have to suffer regardless of what their circumstances or history might be. By studying the spiritual thoughts system "A Course in Miracles" I have found peace and real happiness, and finally understand my true nature

and purpose. Looking for peace and happiness outside of myself never worked for me no matter how good my circumstances were. We all are the light of the world, and if you don't believe that I would love to help you see that in yourself.

I am willing to travel within Iowa and possible further. "

If you would like to have such a group in your facility, please let Mary know the name and contact information of a person who could help her set such a group up. You can write to Mary at

CwG Foundation
Attn Mary Thomson
PO Box 507
Ashland, OR 97520

BOOKS AND RESOURCES

SUGGESTED READING FOR PRISONERS

Dear Prisoner,

The list of books below are some of the most profoundly helpful and the ones I would highly suggest for your library. You can request them from me, and if it's within my power, I'll send one or more to you, free of charge.

I could use your help. Save this list and send it to friends or family.

I've

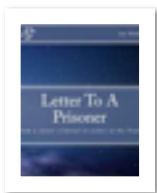
included the internet links for them to access each particular title..

ALONG WITH YOUR BOOK REQUEST, PLEASE SEND ME YOUR INSTITUTION'S MAILING REQUIREMENTS. This will avoid all the returns I've been receiving.

- (1) A Course in Miracles,
- (2) The End of Reincarnation with The Five Signs, by Joe Wolfe, Gary Renard and Carrie Triffet
<http://TheFiveSigns.com>
- (3) Conversations With God, by Neale Donald Walsch
<http://CWG.org>
- (4) The Holy Spirit's Interpretation of The New Testament by Regina Dawn Akers
<http://ForHolySpirit.org>
- (5) A New Earth by Eckhart Tolle,
<http://NamastePublishing.com>
- (6) A Parenthesis In Eternity, by Joel Goldsmith
<http://Amazon.com>
- (7) The Disappearance of The Universe, by Gary R. Renard
<http://GaryRenard.com>
- (8) Long Time No See, by Carrie Triffet,
<http://UnlikelyMessenger.com>
- (9) Books by Dr.Jon Mundy,
<http://MiraclesMagazine.org>
- (10) Books by Beverly Hutchison,
<http://MiraclesDistributionCenter.org>
- (11) Time Ocular (A Novel) by Joe Wolfe
<http://TimeOcular.com>
- (12) Books by Robert Perry
- (13) Books by David Hoffmeister
- (14) Books by Ken Wapnick
- (15) Letter to a Prisoner

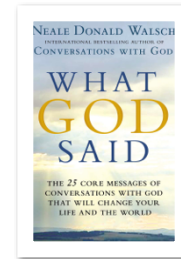
Letter To A Prisoner is a 370 page book produced by an ex-prisoner with the intention to reach any prisoner with a glimpse of Hope, Love, Light and the Peace of God. It has changed the lives, beliefs and behavior of many people either in prison or headed there.

Friends and family can order Letter To A Prisoner directly through Amazon



Joe Wolfe,
Spirit Light Outreach
PO Box 1174
North Riverside, IL 60546

NEW BOOK OFFER



“What God Said”

Do you want to read the 25 most important principles brought to us throughout the CwG Materials? Em Claire has generously donated some of this new book to the Prison Outreach Program. Please take advantage of this wonderful offer and write in to request your copy.

(This book comes in hard cover only, make sure you can receive it in that form or we can cut the covers off if that would be acceptable)

“Happier Than God”

You've heard the phrase “being richer than God”, meaning there is no way we could ever be richer? Well now learn how to be “*Happier than God!*” A wonderful book donated by Neale D Walsch to *Freedom Inside* for our readers.

“The Earth Angel Training Academy”

When Head of the Earth Angel Training Academy, Velvet, receives a call from an Elder on the first day of term, she knows that the new class will be unlike any other she has taught. While experiencing the most tumultuous time of her very long existence, Velvet must remember her buried past, and open her eyes to the future so that she can prepare the Earth Angel trainees for the toughest missions of their existence - to Awaken the humans before the world ends. Time is running out..

“Bringers of the Light”

This is a photocopied version of the booklet, *Bringers of the Light*, that completes the list of concepts found in *ReCreating Your Self*. This consists of about 20 double-sided and stapled pages. Please make sure you are allowed to receive these many copies before requesting this booklet.

WHAT DID I DO WRONG?**from Letters to Neale***(continued from page 3)*

why God is so pissed off at me. What did I do wrong? I am trying very hard to be a decent person..."

My wonderful new friend and pal...stop it. Just...STOP IT. You know doggone well that God is not "pissed off" at you. You know very well that you have done nothing "wrong." The Universe doesn't work that way, and you know it. So stop it. I want you to read a fourth book...

Ask and It Is Given, by Esther and Jerry Hicks. This is quite a reading program I am putting you on, but you have said to me...

"What can I do, when I am totally broke and things seem hopeless? Any encouragement you can give me will be greatly appreciated."

I am telling you what you can do. Four books that can change your life. Read one a week for four weeks, and in 30 days your life will begin to turn around. It will probably begin even before that.

Do you like movies? Do whatever it takes to see a movie called *The Secret*. Go to the following website...

<http://thesecret.tv/>

Obtain and watch this movie! Watch it over and over again! Watch it every day for a month!

Okay, Eric, there is your formula: "Two Phone Calls, Four Books, and A Movie." I love you, pal. Get going. Your life is about to change.

Oh, yeah...that prayer.

Here is the Magic Prayer that I want you to say once each hour, every hour, all day, for one month. Here it is, Eric. Write it down.

Thank you, God, for helping me to understand that this problem has already been solved for me.

Good. Now I feel complete. I am glad you wrote to me, Eric. The Best Days of Your Life are ahead of you, my new friend. They are ahead of you.

God has blessed you, now and always.

Your pal

Neale

FIVE LIFE LESSONS**A Compilation
Sent by a friend****1 - First Important Lesson - Cleaning Lady.**

During my second month of college, our professor gave us a pop quiz. I was a conscientious student and had breezed through the questions until I read the last one:

"What is the first name of the woman who cleans the school?"

Surely this was some kind of joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times. She was tall, dark-haired and in her 50's, but how would I know her name?

I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank. Just before class ended, one student asked if the last question would count toward our quiz grade.

"Absolutely," said the professor. "In your careers, you will meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you do is smile and say 'hello.'"

I've never forgotten that lesson.. I also learned her name, she was Dorothy.

2. - Second Important Lesson - Pickup in the Rain

One night, at 11:30 p.m., an older African American woman was standing on the side of an Alabama highway trying to endure a lashing rain storm. Her car had broken down and she desperately needed a ride.

Soaking wet, she decided to flag down the next car. A young white man stopped to help her, generally unheard of in those conflict-filled 1960's.

The man took her to safety, helped her get assistance and put her into a taxicab.

She seemed to be in a big hurry, but wrote down his address and thanked him. Seven days went by and a knock came on the man's door. To his surprise, a giant console color TV was delivered to his home. A special note was attached.

It read:
"Thank you so much for assisting me on the highway the other night. The rain drenched not only my clothes, but also my spirits. Then you came along. Because of you, I was able to make it to my dying husband's"

bedside just before he passed away... God Bless you for helping me and unselfishly serving others."

Sincerely,
Mrs. Nat King Cole.

3 - Third Important Lesson - Always remember those who serve.

In the days when an ice cream sundae cost much less, a 10-year-old boy entered a hotel coffee shop and sat at a table. A waitress put a glass of water in front of him.

"How much is an ice cream sundae?" he asked.

"Fifty cents," replied the waitress.

The little boy pulled his hand out of his pocket and studied the coins in it.

"Well, how much is a plain dish of ice cream?" he inquired.

By now more people were waiting for a table and the waitress was growing impatient..

"Thirty-five cents," she brusquely replied.

The little boy again counted his coins.

"I'll have the plain ice cream," he said.

The waitress brought the ice cream, put the bill on the table and walked away. The boy finished the ice cream, paid the cashier and left. When the waitress came back, she began to cry as she wiped down the table. There, placed neatly beside the empty dish, were two nickels and five pennies..

You see, he couldn't have the sundae, because he had to have enough left to leave her a tip.

4 - Fourth Important Lesson. - The obstacle in Our Path.

In ancient times, a King had a boulder placed on a roadway. Then he hid himself and watched to see if anyone would remove the huge rock. Some of the King's wealthiest merchants and courtiers came by and simply walked around it.

Many loudly blamed the King for not

FROM THE INSIDE

YOUR STORY

by WPR
Virginia

I've never met a man. That is to say I've never truly met another human being. I've met their story. That is to say the story they tell themselves and others. Needless to say, there are usually discrepancies between their story and their reality. Not that people don't tell the truth. Often they do. But most people embellish that truth quite a bit. Others are clearly delusional. Their story and their lives just don't match up.

Wouldn't it be shocking to meet someone for the first time and then have that person say something like, "I've got a story but I'm not my story."

What would you call such a person anyway? Genuine? Authentic? Real? honest? In recovery? In therapy? What would you say in response? Would you proceed to tell them your story? Who are you without your story?

What do you say to another person without your story?

What would you say if a friend called you up and said, "I want to come over but I don't want to talk. I just want to be with you." We'd probably ask what's wrong. Worse than that, we might actually ask if there's something we can "do", even when nothing's being

asked to be "done." Would you honor the request? Would you say, "Come over. We'll just sit together." Wouldn't it be nice to have a friend that would just allow you to "be" with them.

Most of the time when we think of our friends we think about what we're going to say or do. I'm just saying maybe we should give some thought to who we're going to "be" when we're with our friends. There's nothing wrong with saying or doing things with your friends. Just recognize and be mindful of the power silence contains. Silence is pregnant with meaning and answers. Just try it.

FROM THE INSIDE

WHAT MATTERS NOW

by RB
California

Tom Brown writes wonderfully about various feelings and attitudes that we can have by "choosing" to have them. Then we are able to show that by "BEING" the loving, caring, pleasant person we are when we are fully accepting this as part of our "BEING" one with and part of "ALL" that is the oneness of "GOD".

On the outside world I was a Professional Therapist, Medical Social Worker, College Instructor, Choir Director. What matters now is the acceptance/incorporation of the fact that all is One and everyone is REALLY part of each other. The past has no direct involvement with who I am in prison. I am an inmate who acts and enjoys helping all others as the

opportunity arises. Everyone is my best brother or sister, deserving my full love and concern because we are "one." As God explained all is one, not just humans, but the trees, plants, all life, rocks, land, lava and everything, "ALL."

For me, what some people refer to as "surrender," I feel is the incorporation of my all as part of the ALL that is GOD. With this incorporation my choices are to always feel good, always treat others as part of the one no matter what is happening. I am continually working on concurring some of my personality traits which sometimes arise when a goal of mine is blocked and I react with increased

volume and intensity which sidetracks the process that is occurring.

I constantly Thank God for the many opportunities that are provided to help someone in any way.

I am always feeling positive despite the crazy conditions and situations that are around me in the prison setting.

When anyone asks me, 'How are you doing?' I can always say, "Great!" Because this is the truth.

I always feel the peace and incorporation with God that I have achieved.

FIVE LIFE LESSONS

A Compilation Sent by a friend

1 - First Important Lesson - Cleaning Lady.

During my second month of college, our professor gave us a pop quiz. I was a conscientious student and had breezed through the questions until I read the last one:

"What is the first name of the woman who cleans the school?"

Surely this was some kind of joke. I had seen the cleaning woman several times. She was tall, dark-haired and in her 50's, but how would I know her name?

I handed in my paper, leaving the last question blank. Just before class ended, one student asked if the last question would count toward our quiz grade.

"Absolutely," said the professor. "In your careers, you will meet many people. All are significant. They deserve your attention and care, even if all you do is smile and say "hello."

I've never forgotten that lesson.. I also learned her name, she was Dorothy.

2. - Second Important Lesson - Pickup in the Rain

One night, at 11:30 p.m., an older African American woman was standing on the side of an Alabama highway trying to endure a lashing rain storm. Her car had broken down and she desperately needed a ride.

Soaking wet, she decided to flag down the next car. A young white man stopped to help her, generally unheard of in those conflict-filled 1960's.

The man took her to safety, helped her get assistance and put her into a taxicab.

She seemed to be in a big hurry, but wrote down his address and thanked him. Seven days went by and a knock came on the man's door. To his surprise, a giant console color TV was delivered to his home. A special note was attached.

It read:

"Thank you so much for assisting me on the highway the other night. The rain drenched not only my clothes, but also my spirits. Then you came along. Because of you, I was able to make it to

my dying husband's' bedside just before he passed away... God Bless you for helping me and unselfishly serving others."

Sincerely,
Mrs. Nat King Cole.

3 - Third Important Lesson - Always remember those who serve.

In the days when an ice cream sundae cost much less, a 10-year-old boy entered a hotel coffee shop and sat at a table. A waitress put a glass of water in front of him.

"How much is an ice cream sundae?" he asked.

"Fifty cents," replied the waitress.

The little boy pulled his hand out of his pocket and studied the coins in it.

"Well, how much is a plain dish of ice cream?" he inquired.

By now more people were waiting for a table and the waitress was growing impatient..

"Thirty-five cents," she brusquely replied.

The little boy again counted his coins.

"I'll have the plain ice cream," he said.

The waitress brought the ice cream, put the bill on the table and walked away. The boy finished the ice cream, paid the cashier and left. When the waitress came back, she began to cry as she wiped down the table. There, placed neatly beside the empty dish, were two nickels and five pennies..

You see, he couldn't have the sundae, because he had to have enough left to leave her a tip.

4 - Fourth Important Lesson. - The obstacle in Our Path.

In ancient times, a King had a boulder placed on a roadway. Then he hid himself and watched to see if anyone would remove the huge rock. Some of the King's' wealthiest merchants and courtiers came by and simply walked around it.

Many loudly blamed the King for not keeping the roads clear, but none did anything about getting the stone out of the way.

Then a peasant came along carrying a load of vegetables. Upon approaching the boulder, the peasant laid down his burden and tried to move the stone to the side of the road. After much pushing and straining, he finally succeeded.

After the peasant picked up his load of vegetables, he noticed a purse lying in the road where the boulder had been. The purse contained many gold coins and a note from the King indicating that the gold was for the person who removed the boulder from the roadway. The peasant learned what many of us never understand!

Every obstacle presents an opportunity to improve our condition.

5 - Fifth Important Lesson - Giving when it counts.

Many years ago, when I worked as a volunteer at a hospital, I got to know a little girl named Liz who was suffering from a rare & serious disease. Her only chance of recovery appeared to be a blood transfusion from her 5-year old brother, who had miraculously survived the same disease and had developed the antibodies needed to combat the illness.

The doctor explained the situation to her little brother, and asked the little boy if he would be willing to give his blood to his sister.

I saw him hesitate for only a moment before taking a deep breath and saying, "Yes I'll do it if it will save her." As the transfusion progressed, he lay in bed next to his sister and smiled, as we all did, seeing the color returning to her cheek. Then his face grew pale and his smile faded.

He looked up at the doctor and asked with a trembling voice, "Will I start to die right away".

Being young, the little boy had misunderstood the doctor; he thought he was going to have to give his sister all of his blood in order to save her.

THE PALE BLUE DOT

by Carl Sagan

From Wikipedia:

The Pale Blue Dot is a photograph of planet Earth taken in 1990 by the Voyager 1 spacecraft from a record distance of about 6 billion kilometers (3.7 billion miles) from Earth, as part of the solar system Family Portrait series of images. In the photograph, Earth is shown as a fraction of a pixel (0.12 pixel in size) against the vastness of space. The Voyager 1 spacecraft, which had completed its primary mission and was leaving the Solar System, was commanded by NASA to turn its camera around and to take a photograph of Earth across a great expanse of space, at the request of Carl Sagan.

*Subsequently, the title of the photograph was used by Sagan as the main title of his 1994 book, *Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space*.*

The following text, written and read by Carl Sagan, was transcribed from a video that can be found at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p86BPMIGV8M>



From this distant vantage point, the Earth might not seem of any particular interest.

But for us, it's different.

Consider that dot, that's here, that's home, that's us. On it, everyone you love, everyone you know, everyone you ever heard of, every human being who ever was, lived out their lives.

The aggregate of our joy and suffering, thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines; every hunter and forager, every hero and coward, every creator and destroyer of civilization, every king and peasant, every young couple in love, every father and mother, hopeful child, inventor and explorer, every teacher of morals, every corrupt politician, every superstar, every supreme leader, every saint and sinner in the history of our

species, lived there, on the mote of dust, suspended in a sunbeam.

The Earth is a very small stage in a vast cosmic arena. Think of the rivers of blood, spilled by all those generals and emperors so that in glory and triumph, they can become the momentary masters... of a fraction... of a dot.

Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of this pixel on the scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner. How frequent their misunderstandings; how eager they are to kill one another; how fervent their hatreds.

Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the universe are challenged by this point of pale light.

Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our

obscurity, in all this vastness, there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves.

The Earth is the only world known so far to harbor life. There is nowhere else, at least in the near future, to which our species could migrate. Visit? Yes. Settle? Not yet.

Like it or not, for the moment, the Earth is where we make our stand.

It has been said that astronomy is a humbling and character building experience. There is perhaps no better demonstration of the folly of human conceits than this distant image of our tiny world.

To me, it underscores our responsibility to deal more kindly with one another and to preserve and cherish the pale blue dot, the only home we've ever known.

THE POETRY CORNER

IN THE GRAND SCHEME OF THINGS

by FR
Florida

As I sit in this concrete box, isolation and deprivation,
my only companions,
my mind wonders, "How many others share this injustice?"

All I can offer you,
my brothers and sisters, and friends,
is all I know to do:

Breather deep, endure, and observe,
pulsate with the cosmos, with all of creation.

We are truly tiny creatures, our sorrows less than dust
in the grand scheme of things.
Let us smile as we turn inward,
seeking peace that knows no bounds.

With love, respect and gratitude

BEST WISHES

by BA
Michigan

I bless you in 2014...

To be in good health
be fruitful this year, more so than the last
That what dreams you had in 2013, this year you get the
chance to take more steps manifesting them in your life.
To have access to that which is true so you can avoid living a
lie.
To be courageous in all your endeavours, and not allow your
past mistakes or failures to cripple you from forward motion.
To be fear's rival as you stand in power over its lying illusions.
That God, by His will, allow you to come to know Him more,
and that you have the courage to seek Him passed all of man's
futile beliefs.
That you continue to grow in love with you and Him and
always forgiving yourself and others when you get the chance.
To conquer and see through the limitations that have been
placed on you by society, culture, upbringing and or religion
and yourself.
That this year will be more fulfilling than last year and that
you always look forward to what's ahead.

*Sorry for publishing this a bit late in the year but the sentiment
works for Spring too, doesn't it?
Thank you, B*

LITTLE LIZARD

by JMS
Florida

*(This is a song JMS wrote,
I just loved the message and wanted to share it here)*

Looking out a little window
At a little lizard sunning itself on a little stone
Well little does that little lizard know
The the universe is very vast and it's not alone.

Sometimes I feel quite wise
when I spy things like this with my eyes.
Sometimes I feel sky high
when I spy things like this with my eyes.

Looking at my face in a mirror
wondering if the mirror reflects what appears
to be me, to me or could it be
someone else, if I believe it to be?

—————
Not a silly song at all, J. I love it!

HOME

by ABE
South Carolina

Home is where the heart is, is so very true.
Because "Home" is the heart.
The spiritual heart and essence of our being.
That: One-With-God Self.

That infinite, eternal, immortal One.
Pure Conscious Living Energy
The Inner Self of All, and Heart of All
the Life of All
Is our Home

This is where we yearn to be, and meditate to see
not remembering this, we wander
endlessly searching for Love...

Lost and lonely, and feeling so far apart,
simply because
we've forgotten where Home is,
our own Heart!

But here's the best news:
Through deep meditation, we find our way back.
Because it's a journey with no distance
to a place we never left.
I'll see you there!

Namasté

MY OWN GREATEST HERO, MY OWN WORST ENEMY

from *Unapologetically You: Reflections on Life and the Human Experience*

by Steve Maraboli

Your life is a story you're telling yourself. I like to live each day of my life as if it's a page, a chapter in my life's story. I get to choose how my story plays out. Even if I don't get to choose the events that happen, I do get to choose the labels I place on the events and what role I play in this story.

When I'm the hero of my story: I see opportunities, I feel gratitude, I am inspired by choices, I am emotionally strong, I am psychically relentless, and I am aware and conscious to place empowering labels on the events that occur throughout my day. For me, this system of mindful choice-making as the author of my story has led to tremendous levels of success.

Are you the hero of your own story? If you are not the hero of your own story, then you're missing the whole point of your humanity. Maybe the hero that is missing from your story is you. When you become the hero of your own story, you activate a power within you to make changes to your entire life.

Whether consciously or unconsciously, we are all the authors of our own story. Too many people play a victim role or spend each day writing in the same things that caused them stress the day before. They keep themselves surrounded by the same disempowering or drama-filled characters and rarely make the mindful choice to change the story. Sometimes people even let others write their story for them. This leads to a

feeling of helplessness and hopelessness; the opposite of your design.

Today is a new day! You have the opportunity to pick up life's pen and change your story. Become the hero; the greatest hero in your story, and you'll see how much more exciting your life will be. You will watch your goals and dreams transition from something you simply hoped for to something within your powerful grasp.

Remember, life itself is simple; it's just not easy. Each new day is a day that no one has ever seen... a blank page in your story. What are you going to do with it? What will this page say? Will it be a story of a hero... a powerful story... a redemptive story... what will it be? Only YOU get to choose.

YOU'RE NOT DROWNING

from *Unapologetically You: Reflections on Life and the Human Experience*

by Steve Maraboli

You are not broken. You are not ugly. You are not unworthy. You are not too short. You are not too tall. You are not the number on a scale. You are not too old. You are not too young. You are not your mistakes.

You are a person designed with a purpose and the greatness within to bring that purpose to life. Whether it's cosmetic companies, latest diet fads, self-help or spiritual gurus, or numerous

other agencies, this is a truth the marketing world NEVER wants you to know. They can't sell you a life-vest unless they can convince you that you're drowning. So they spend enormous amounts of money creating an advertising blitz that is 100% designed to have you feel broken enough to need their products.

You're not drowning. You are a unique gift to this world. Don't let psychological

warfare from an advertisement campaign blind you from the truth of your beauty, possibility, worthiness, and purpose. Stop chasing what you already have. Your greatest self is never caused by a product; it is revealed by a choice to embrace your truth. Anyone who tells you differently is trying to convince you you're less than what you are; that you're broken... so they can sell you the fix.

IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

from *Unapologetically You: Reflections on Life and the Human Experience*

by Steve Maraboli

There are so many beautiful things happening right now.

Within all the beauty that radiates in this very moment, amongst all the happenings of the now, and woven within the fabric of this moment, you will find an abundance of opportunity.

This opportunity is available at all times and remains inactive and formless until YOU give it form and set it in motion.

How will you define and use the opportunity available to you?

Let today be the day you make the choice to no longer throw away the opportunities presented in each passing moment.

Seize the opportunity accessible in the NOW! Empower yourself to take hold of

the opportunity for change, for decisions, for growth, for simplicity, for love, for forgiveness, for compassion, for happiness... the opportunity to live the life you've always wanted to live, to live in alignment with your dreams, to express your greatest self, to be unapologetically YOU... the opportunity to act on all of these things is present right now.

What are you willing to have left undone in your life?

We all have had so many goals, so many visions, and so many dreams for ourselves, yet we often put them on the back burner.

We put them on the back burner, not because we don't want to do it, but because we are convinced that a later

time will be better. We are confident to the same degree that any gambler is confident.

Our confidence is rooted in the idea that we can pursue our goals, dreams, and desires at a later time and that it will somehow be an easier journey. But the reality is that the cemetery is full of books that were never written, full of chances that were never taken, full of relationships that were never started, full of resentments that were never mended... full of regret. The cemetery is full of gamblers that got it wrong.

Don't let yourself be another example of a life gambled but not lived. Do not waste another day!

If not now, when?



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You are blessed and a blessing to all

Janine