

J a n u a r y 2 0 1 7

Life mpass

The Evolving Self ...when growth is the only option.

The Evolving Self is an e-newsletter that reflects the belief that growth is a choice that can bring an ever deepening and expanding awareness of who we are and what we are here for. The reader can expect affirmations, quotes, book reviews, insightful commentary and tips that support the growth of the individual.

Powerlessness By Jaqui Duvall, MA

One of the things I love about coaching other people is that I often have the most amazing insights that I can apply to myself. I was working with a veteran this week who has been the source of inspiration and insight many times for me as we were discussing his issues with anger. The gist of the conversation was the realization that he is using anger in situations where he has positional power to balance out the many other areas of his life in which he feels completely powerless.

This makes perfect sense when you think about it. The whole foundation of the Stress System (Fight/Flight/Freeze) of the mind/body is our perception of power in the particular situation. When we perceive that we are more powerful than our "opponent"--which can be a situation or a person--our instinctive response is to get angry. This is why so many people have road rage; the separation of individuals in cars gives us a false sense of power. When we perceive that we are less powerful, our instinctive response is to run away, to get the heck out of dodge. When we don't have enough information, or are overwhelmed or there is no way to get away from the stressor, we freeze.

So many people I encounter, have accumulated quite a collection of situations, people etc., in their lives over which they have no power. This is the foundation for the serenity prayer composed by Reinholdt Niebuhr for Alcoholics Anonymous: God, Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference. The intention is to consciously let go of those people, places and things we can't change and can't control.

So, first we accept the things we cannot change. Second we change the things we can. What do we have control/power over? While it may come as a shock to some, the only person we ultimately have control over is ourselves. We have power over our own behavior and actions. We also have power over our inner experience, including thoughts and feelings. We also have power over what we say, what comes out of our mouths. We just have to learn how to utilize it.

Having control over ourselves I believe to be a lifelong endeavor of personal growth and development as there are plenty of situations in which our past traumas and dramas get triggered and our reactions seem to be beyond our control. Our emotional programming is 95% unconscious by the time we are 18. So much of the work is to raise awareness of and examine our own stuff. Much of that "stuff" is recognizing when we have given away our personal power to people who have abused it which brings me to forgiveness.

Forgiveness

Forgiveness is another subject that has recently come to my attention thanks to a veteran I work with. It just happens to be a very timely subject for me personally right now.

I don't believe there are many people who have gotten into their 50's without having collected a few people and situations that are challenging to forgive. There is no argument that some behavior and actions are *unforgiveable*. The *only* explanation for this is that "**Hurt people, hurt people.**" I spent several months discussing this in 2015. Nevertheless, the challenge with forgiveness is another perception issue. If I forgive this person, am I condoning their behavior, inviting them to do it again or losing power in the situation? My anger protects me somehow and the boundary it creates keeps me safe. By not forgiving, I am actually punishing the person for their behavior.

All of these are simply false perceptions because the truth is...and often a very painful truth: The only person who is being hurt by our lack of forgiveness is ourselves. You may have heard the saying, "Hanging on to anger/resentment is like taking poison and expecting the other person to die." The source of this saying is nebulous but the truth of it is undeniable.

Here's the clincher, when I look more closely, the situations and people with whom I have the toughest time forgiving are people with whom, for whatever reason, I gave away my power. This behavior also goes back to our early experiences and programming. This is why when we forgive others for their abuse of the power we gave them; we also have to forgive ourselves for having given it. In virtually every circumstance, there is some inner cue or signal that I ignored or ran roughshod over to the pursuance of what seemed more important to me at the time. The end result, I got hurt, and in reality I am responsible for my own hurt and that is really, really hard to accept. But, to set ourselves free, accept it we must and thus releasing ourselves from our self-made prison of un-forgiveness.

Affirmation: I am powerful beyond measure and I use my power intentionally and deliberately for good.

Quote: *"The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."* -Mahatma Gandhi

Jaqui Duvall works as a coach, mentor, trainer, facilitator and public speaker developing and delivering workshops, leading mentoring groups and working with individuals to help them identify and express their inner spirit and live a life of consciousness and intention.

Jaqui@lifecompass.org

In



F e b r u a r y 2 0 1 7



The Evolving Self ...when growth is the only option.

The Evolving Self is an e-newsletter that reflects the belief that growth is a choice that can bring an ever deepening and expanding awareness of who we are and what we are here for. The reader can expect affirmations, quotes, book reviews, insightful commentary and tips that support the growth of the individual.

Ignorance is Bliss By Jaqui Duvall, MA

Many years ago I watched as a friend of mine had a whirlwind romance of two weeks before getting engaged and then she began planning the wedding of her dreams.

Knowing my friend was challenged by past trauma and abuse, I was convinced that she was in the midst of blissful ignorance rushing into a situation that was not going to end well and tried to gently tell her so. I was one of the only of her friends who did and she said, "Why can't you just be happy for me?" I certainly wanted to be happy for her, but I couldn't get past my gut sense that she was being guided not by the voice of intuition but by the voice of dysfunction within her. In truth, I also found myself feeling a bit jealous of that moment when she was enjoying the fantasy of a happy ever after. Ignorance as they say, *is* bliss.

The wedding was lavish and beautiful. There were rose petals lining the aisle as I looked for a seat, flowers everywhere and a gazebo to enfold the couple as they exchanged their vows. Fortunately, her mother was paying for it and had a lot of money to spend, which she did.

I have worked with scores of people who talk about the bliss of ignorance in the past tense, wishing they could get it back after awareness has replaced it with a cold, hard truth. Don't get me wrong, I think awareness is wonderful and is the first step to making great changes in our lives. But, it is typically followed by the realization that our lives will never be the same, that we and only we can make the changes we need to make and life and change is just not that easy. Once awareness has been raised, we can never really go back to ignorance. As for my friend, her marriage ended after 8 months.

The Flip Side of Ignorance

Working as a health coach in a healthcare setting gives me a fascinating view of humans in a variety of stages of personal development and growth. My patients are either told by their doctor to come see me or are simply shown a chart and asked what they want to work on.

There is no guarantee that the person who shows up at my door is actually ready or even willing to change anything in their life. I have said before that awareness is the first step toward change and I absolutely believe that to be true, but like many things, awareness is a double-edged sword.

In my article above I discuss the bliss of ignorance and how I sometimes wish for the return of the bliss of that ignorance. As long as we don't know or are unaware of our issues, we can move through our lives on automatic pilot wreaking havoc wherever we go and have no conscience about it.

The truth for many people is that much of the pain we experience in our lives and the challenges we face are self-created or at least made worse by our ignorant actions. That's the ignorance we encounter every day in many of the people around us. With awareness comes responsibility. Knowing what I know, I feel obligated and determined to do something about it, to actually take steps toward change.

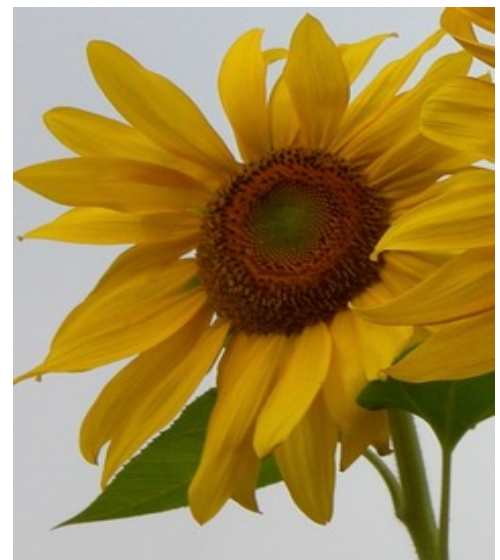
Even with the sometimes painful truths of awareness, most people I encounter say they are happier to know how they contributed to their problems and realize they would not be who they are today had they not experienced the challenges they faced, whatever they might be.

The good news is that on the other side of awareness is the possibility of growth and the hope for attaining peace of mind. I think this comes with the action of accepting and loving ourselves as we are. It sometimes also requires that we forgive ourselves for ignorant actions we took before we knew better.

Affirmation: I put awareness into action by taking steps everyday.

Quote: *"Where ignorance is our master there is no possibility of real peace." -Dalai Lama*

Jaqui Duvall works as a coach, mentor, trainer, facilitator and public speaker developing and delivering workshops, leading mentoring groups and working with individuals to help them identify and express their inner spirit and live a life of consciousness and intention.



M a r c h 2 0 1 7



The Evolving Self ...when growth is the only option.

The Evolving Self is an e-newsletter that reflects the belief that growth is a choice that can bring an ever deepening and expanding awareness of who we are and what we are here for. The reader can expect affirmations, quotes, book reviews, insightful commentary and tips that support the growth of the individual.

The Inner Battle By Jaqui Duvall, MA

As we were growing through the first 20 years or so and our need to be seen, heard and understood in our interactions with others was not fully met, we typically *split off* any painful feelings that resulted. Splitting off refers to a defense mechanism that enables us to continue on in our life and simply push away uncomfortable feelings relating to our experiences. Eventually the unresolved and unprocessed feelings develop into separated *parts* that float around our subconscious. By the time most people reach middle age, there is a significant accumulation of these parts.

Internal Systems theory states that these internal parts interact with one another like members of a family. Imagine a typical day in your family as you were growing up. If you had siblings, like I did, each one of us had our own needs, desires, and perspectives and interacted positively and/or negatively (think sibling rivalry) with each other. Our internal parts act just like that inside us. The end result is that we have parts opposing each other. In its simplest form, it's like having an angel on one shoulder and a devil on the other.

These hidden parts are acting upon us all the time. They are the parts that sabotage our success and interfere with the ability to complete a task, the parts that prevent us from establishing viable relationships and business ventures. Or they can simply haunt our nights and days with memories and negative feelings that won't go away. They can prevent us from moving forward in our lives like having one foot on the gas and the other on the brake.

Interactive Guided Imagery is one of the most effective and powerful tools to help resolve this *inner battle*. I continue to experience it myself as a catalyst for self-awareness and growth. The power of guided imagery is in the fact that it enables us to give voice to and hear perspectives from these battling parts of ourselves that have been hidden beyond the level of our awareness.

Re-Parenting the Inner Neighborhood

You could consider that the subconscious inner "parts" I was referring to above are your inner child or rather a whole neighborhood of children, aspects of whom got left behind when they were split off for lack of acknowledgement and connection.

Unless you had an objective adult helping you interpret life events as you were experiencing them, it's unlikely that you made it through childhood without some leftover residual of unmet needs. Since we are no longer children however, we can never go back to childhood and get those needs met through our original family system (not that we don't try, it's called co-dependency.) It is one of the most painful aspects of growing up. As an adult today, the only way to get those original needs met is to give them to yourself.

The goal of inner child work is to integrate the split off parts, which we can only do by giving them what they need. What do children need? They need to be seen, heard and understood. This is done through re-parenting ourselves and connecting to all of our inner parts with love and caring.

In my experience, so much healing work really comes down to one simple (not easy) thing and that is to learn to love and accept ourselves, all of ourselves exactly the way we are. We can accomplish much of this work through Interactive Guided Imagery.

Affirmation: Everything I need is inside me right now.

Quote: *"One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious."* -C.G. Jung

Jaqui Duvall works as a coach, mentor, trainer, facilitator and public speaker developing and delivering workshops, leading mentoring groups and working with individuals to help them identify and express their inner spirit and live a life of consciousness and intention.

Jaqui@lifecompass.org



A p r i l 2 0 1 7



The Evolving Self ...when growth is the only option.

The Evolving Self is an e-newsletter that reflects the belief that growth is a choice that can bring an ever deepening and expanding awareness of who we are and what we are here for. The reader can expect affirmations, quotes, book reviews, insightful commentary and tips that support the growth of the individual.

Smile Therapy By Jaqui Duvall, MA

In the classes I teach on stress, anxiety and depression management, the subject of brain and body chemistry is discussed as a contributing factor to these conditions.

I draw pictures on the board illustrating the neuro-transmitter and receptor connections to indicate that sometimes these connections go awry and then ask the class to name things that affect our brain/body chemistry. I get answers such as drugs, alcohol, exercise, food, and sleep. Sometimes people will mention sunshine and the 11 o'clock news. I answer that the things that affect our brain/body chemistry can be summed up in one word, "Everything." This is really true. Everything we do, everything we ingest, everything we think, everything, affects our brain/body chemistry.

I've talked before about the power of laughter therapy and how infectious it is and just how it can completely change our brain/body chemistry. This is also true of simply smiling. When we're stressed, anxious or depressed, it is often the last thing we actually feel like doing, but the good news is, our body doesn't know the difference between a real or fake smile. If you plaster even a fake smile on your face, your brain/body chemistry responds.

For my New Year's Resolution this year, I decided to try an experiment with smiling. I leave my house at 5:15am in the morning to avoid the traffic as I commute to Palo Alto. After nearly 4 years of this, I have developed a little bit of an attitude. While I have and will continue to feel deeply honored and rewarded to work with Veterans, the early hour and long days is wearing. The experiment was to smile as I drove to see what affect it would have on my brain/body chemistry, my mood and my attitude.

At first, I really didn't feel like smiling at all and my face resisted. So, I plastered a fake smile on my face driving down the road feeling like a complete idiot. Within a couple of days, I noticed that I didn't have to work so hard at it and in fact, was feeling an improvement in my mood.

At the two-week mark a truly amazing thing happened. My boss told me I could leave Palo Alto early and finish my day at the San Jose location enabling me to avoid the afternoon traffic. This was HUGE. This improved my attitude dramatically as I just received about 3 hours/week of my life back.

Since then, I have received several comments from people who say I look really happy and that there is a wonderful energy emanating from me. The best part is, I actually feel better and happier. I feel more excited by my life and my future. It might be worth an experiment for you as well to discover the power of *smile therapy*.

Making Room

Have you ever set a goal or stated an affirmation and experienced the exact opposite of what you wanted unfolding before your eyes? Maybe the universe was responding exactly as you requested but simply needed to *make room* for your new vision.

When I was living in my house in Campbell, there were several years in which I was living beyond my means. I knew that things needed to change. I really wanted to keep my house, but it was over 100 years old and needed expensive repairs. I tried to work with my mortgage company to find a way for me to keep the house, but by 2012, it became clear that I needed to let go and move on, which I did.

I was clear when I left the Campbell house that it was the right thing to do, but now five years later, I'm even more able to see why it had to happen the way it did. Even more than keeping the house, what I wanted was to bring my "financial" house back into balance and live within my means. I am now doing that.

To respond to your vision, sometimes the universe has to make room for it by clearing out old ways of being. When that happens, we can mistakenly believe that something negative is happening, when, in reality, the universe is actually responding to our request. Marilyn Monroe said, "Sometimes good things fall apart so better things can fall together."

Maintaining a positive attitude is vital to the magic because it can take some time for all of the pieces to fall into place. Trusting that the Universe has our greatest good in mind, but more than anything realizing that we are co-creators of our reality by taking responsibility for what we put out into the universe.

Affirmation: I am responsible for what I put out into the universe.

Quote: *"The greatest self is a peaceful smile, that always sees the world smiling back."* -Bryant H. McGill

Jaqui Duvall works as a coach, mentor, trainer, facilitator and public speaker developing and delivering workshops, leading mentoring groups and working with individuals to help them identify and express their inner spirit and live a life of consciousness and intention.



M a y 2 0 1 7



The Evolving Self ...when growth is the only option.

The Evolving Self is an e-newsletter that reflects the belief that growth is a choice that can bring an ever deepening and expanding awareness of who we are and what we are here for. The reader can expect affirmations, quotes, book reviews, insightful commentary and tips that support the growth of the individual.

Changing Established Beliefs

By Jaqui Duvall, MA

If you think it's hard to make changes in your own life, consider for a moment how hard it is to influence change on a larger scale. Most people are familiar with the challenges faced by Galileo in his effort to convince the world that the earth revolved around the sun. Galileo was tried and found to be guilty of heresy for making this statement. He was forced to recant and lived for the rest of his life under house arrest.

Another person who faced dire consequences for trying to influence change was Ignaz Semmelweis. He was a Hungarian doctor who practiced obstetrics in Vienna in the 1840s. He began to notice that women who were under the care of midwives in the hospital rather than doctors were not as susceptible to fatal childbed fever. He figured out that the difference in care was simply that the doctors, who were coming straight from the morgue where they were doing research, had not washed their hands before doing examinations. Their hands were still covered with the blood and germs of the corpses they had just been working on. At the time, germs had not yet been discovered. Semmelweis tried washing his hands before seeing patients and his patients stopped contracting the fever. He implored his colleagues to do the same, but was met with scoffing and laughter.

Semmelweis's observations conflicted with the established scientific and medical opinions and his ideas were rejected by the medical community of the time. Later, after Louis Pasteur proved evidence of germs and Joseph Lister implemented hygienic methods to medicine, it finally became an accepted practice. Semmelweis was eventually committed to an insane asylum where he died within two weeks after being beaten by the guards.

The Mind-Body Connection, it's not just a Theory

Like the examples above, knowledge of the mind-body connection has been discussed in literature for at least 20 years (not to mention the 2500 years of cultures who practiced it.) However, the modern healthcare industry is lagging way behind in terms of programs and services that support people in healing modalities utilizing mind-body practices. This, in the face of data that proves scientifically that the mind-body connection is not just a nice theory (Thank you, Candace Pert!) Of course, the healthcare industry is significantly influenced by funding and support from the moneybags of big Pharma. These days, the likelihood of treatment plans that don't include pharmaceuticals is almost nil unless you decide to go to a natural physician on your own dime.

In her book, *The Molecules of Emotion*, Pert discusses the research and findings that show, "the flow of information throughout the organism (body) as evidence that the body is the actual outward manifestation, in physical space, of the mind." In other words, "the body is inseparable from the mind."

"Every one of the...systems of the network--the neural, the hormonal, the gastrointestinal, and the immune--is set up to communicate with one another via peptides and messenger-specific peptide receptors."

This is powerful information that supports the implementation of mind-body practices such as relaxation exercises, deep breathing, mindfulness, meditation and many, many more as ways of intentionally aligning the mind and body. We can utilize the power of the mind to influence and even change the structure of our cells and chemistry of the body simply by learning to manage our inner communication systems.

Affirmation: I'm so grateful for being teachable.

Quote: *"There is more wisdom in your body than in your deepest philosophies."*
~Friedrich Nietzsche

Jaqui Duvall works as a coach, mentor, trainer, facilitator and public speaker developing and delivering workshops, leading mentoring groups and working with individuals to help them identify and express their inner spirit and live a life of consciousness and intention.



J u n e 2 0 1 7



The Evolving Self ...when growth is the only option.

The Evolving Self is an e-newsletter that reflects the belief that growth is a choice that can bring an ever deepening and expanding awareness of who we are and what we are here for. The reader can expect affirmations, quotes, book reviews, insightful commentary and tips that support the growth of the individual.

Emotional Sobriety By Jaqui Duvall, MA

If you've ever attended an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting, you may have experienced the celebration of sobriety days. Many meetings will even hand out chips to help people gain a sense of pride and motivation to maintain their sobriety, 30-days, 3-months, 6-months, 1 year, 5, 10, 20 etc.

The achievement of sobriety for many is very elusive and challenging and in fact, there is a rather small percentage of people who achieve or even attempt sobriety. The 12-steps of AA are a spiritual approach to recovery. It involves a process of surrendering, recognizing the limitations of personal power, identifying a higher power, examining behaviors, recognizing that these behaviors were coping strategies, seeking to make amends to people who have been harmed by their behavior and establishing a regular maintenance program to ensure continued sobriety.

The members who have achieved lengthy sobriety are viewed with admiration and appreciation, as it is a significant accomplishment involving a "spiritual awakening" and change of daily living. Achieving physical sobriety however is not a guarantee of *emotional* sobriety.

Bill Wilson, the co-founder of AA wrote an article called, "The Next Frontier: Emotional Sobriety" in January 1958, more than 20 years after the founding of AA. In it he describes the challenge of aligning his "fears, compulsions and phony aspirations...with what [he] actually believes, knows and wants." He discovered for himself that he was dependent on people or circumstances to supply him "prestige, security, and the like" and that when it failed to happen which it always eventually did, he would find himself depressed and defeated.

Getting past the difference in language from 58 years ago, what Bill is actually describing is co-dependency. Amusingly, his wife Lois was pivotal in the founding of Al-Anon, also based on the 12-steps but directed to help the spouses and families of alcoholics to recover from their own part of the "family disease" which was an enabling, co-dependent relationship. It would likely have been beneficial if Bill had joined Al-Anon.

What is Emotional Sobriety?

Emotional sobriety is having achieved a reasonable and healthy level of connection with your feelings. Knowing how you feel and why, being in touch with what you want and need and having the ability to process experiences from a feeling perspective. That doesn't mean you don't have reactions to life's experiences. It simply means you are aware of yourself and of your mind and body's responses to life's experiences: thoughts, feelings, behaviors and physical sensations.

In addition, there is a sense of intentionality and deliberation in your responses to life and other people. You know what you value, what's important to you and you act in alignment with those values. You are generally kind and thoughtful of others. Again, you have the full range of feelings, but you manage them and communicate them by taking responsibility for your experience.

Finally, you have a clear sense of who you are and are able to appropriately esteem yourself rather than being dependent on others for positive regard to feel ok about yourself.

Our patterns of behavior, also known as coping strategies and defense mechanisms, were established for a reason, typically, because we were in fear and/or emotional pain. Our needs were not being met and in some cases, we were even being traumatized by the experience of others around us. The strategies that we developed to cope during those times are deeply engrained patterns that are often linked to survival in our mind-body system. As we grow into adulthood they often become more of a liability than an asset. They are the behaviors that drive other people crazy and interfere with our ability to be successful in the world and in our relationships.

Emotional sobriety is worth pursuing whether through Al-Anon or otherwise as it improves our relationships and our underlying happiness. Through Bill Wilson's efforts towards Emotional Sobriety, he stated that, "I have been given a quiet place in bright sunshine."

Affirmation: I am emotionally sober.

Quote: *"People are meant to be part of your world, not the center of your universe."* -Leidy Vazquez

Jaqui Duvall works as a coach, mentor, trainer, facilitator and public speaker developing and delivering workshops, leading mentoring groups and working with individuals to help them identify and express their inner spirit and live a life of consciousness and intention.



J u l y 2 0 1 7



The Evolving Self ...when growth is the only option.

The Evolving Self is an e-newsletter that reflects the belief that growth is a choice that can bring an ever deepening and expanding awareness of who we are and what we are here for. The reader can expect affirmations, quotes, book reviews, insightful commentary and tips that support the growth of the individual.

Fear and Anxiety By Jaqui Duvall, MA

Working not only in healthcare, but also in Psychiatry, I have a front row seat as I watch people desperately seeking help for Anxiety and Depression. Our healthcare system is swarming with people afflicted by these conditions and the numbers continue to increase. There are a lot of reasons that people are afraid that I won't go into here, but the truth is people are scared and are desperately seeking tools to deal better with the stressors life brings them.

Of the instinctive coping strategies of the mind/body system, Anxiety or the Flight of Fight, Flight or Freeze, is possibly the most uncomfortable. Because of that, people employ coping mechanisms to deal with it. For many, these are compulsive behaviors such as cleaning, putting things in order, collecting things, playing computer games and such. For others, they try to control everything around them or project their fear onto others and justify all kinds of bad behavior behind the rationalization that someone else caused it.

When experiencing Anxiety, many people feel like they're going to die and develop fear of that outcome, many people drink alcohol or take drugs in an effort to distract themselves. In all cases, people simply don't feel safe.

I had an experience many years ago when I encountered some significant conflict with a family member and sank into a depression, possibly one of the worst in my life. Knowing what I know about Depression, I decided to set an intention and state an affirmation to encourage the release of the pent up frozen emotions I was perhaps, afraid to feel. It was: "I allow the free flow of emotions through me."

Be careful what you ask for, you might get it? What occurred over the next few weeks was exactly that. I had envisioned having myself a good cry, recover and be on my way. Instead, I was overcome with anxiety. Not what I bargained for.

I decided to do the best I could to simply experience the Anxiety in a mindful way to learn as much as I possibly could from it. What I came to realize was that I was afraid I couldn't keep myself emotionally safe in the presence of a person who by society's standards should have been the safest person for me to turn to, but based on my experience was anything but. Over the next year, I attempted to break the mold of who I was supposed to be, how I was supposed to act and what my role was. I chose to re-define myself. As part of that effort, I had to find my own safety. Safety within myself from a source that I perceived as powerful and mighty. To do this successfully I had to be clear about what I believe in.

Creating Safety

Dr. Bruce Lipton, author of *The Biology of Belief*, states that the cell membrane is the brain of the cell, not the nucleus. And the cell membrane is the part of the cell that is constantly feeding information from the environment to the genes. What is the environment? It's the moment-to-moment biochemical changes created by your thoughts and emotions and behavior. And that behavior — and those thoughts — are all based on what you believe. *(Quoted from Christiane Northrup)*

That basically means that your beliefs are expressed through your cells and body chemistry. This is powerful information as these unseen processes effect what we think to be true about ourselves and the world. If you believe you are not safe, then you will behave in ways that support that belief and vice versa.

In their book, "How to Be Safe in an Unsafe World," Harold H. Bloomfield, M.D. and Robert K. Cooper, PhD discuss the attitudes and behaviors that make people more vulnerable to unsafe situations. They cite studies showing that the person who is commonly singled out for assault often has a poor sense of self and self-esteem making them the more common target. If you believe that we create our own reality, then these truths start to lead to the possibility of creating a sense of safety within yourself that people can sense and respond to.

One of the most powerful ways to put all of these ideas into practice is to use the power of visualization to create your own sense of inner and outer safety. This work involves aligning your desired outcomes with intentional images and positive feelings of gratitude.

I use this technique all the time. I wrap myself and my loved ones in a protective cloud of light. I create smooth flights without turbulence. I arrive home safely from trips. I find parking spaces. I also use this technique to ensure that I have everything I need to live, shelter, clothing, steady income. I also use it to calm myself, to create a sense of inner peace and relaxation. I believe this is exactly what a lot of people are missing in their lives: A way of finding safety within themselves.

Affirmation: I create my own safety.

Quote: *"Safety is something that happens between your ears, not something you hold in your hands."* -Jeff Cooper

Jaqui Duvall works as a coach, mentor, trainer, facilitator and public speaker developing and delivering workshops, leading mentoring groups and working with individuals to help them identify and express their inner spirit and live a life of consciousness and intention.



A u g u s t 2 0 1 7



The Evolving Self ...when growth is the only option.

The Evolving Self is an e-newsletter that reflects the belief that growth is a choice that can bring an ever deepening and expanding awareness of who we are and what we are here for. The reader can expect affirmations, quotes, book reviews, insightful commentary and tips that support the growth of the individual.

Self-Love, AGAIN By Jaqui Duvall, MA

After many years of working, people retire. At least that is what many people strive for. The opportunity to finally enjoy leisure time and activities they truly enjoy. One of my dear friends has just taken that leap.

Interestingly, while she is happy to not be working anymore, she is actually struggling significantly with the vacuum that not working has created in her life. Sleeping until noon, watching a lot of television, feeling unmotivated to do much of anything. While there are many people who make this transition gracefully, unfortunately, this response to retirement is not that unusual.

It turns out that of all the things people can be addicted to: drugs, alcohol, sex, relationships, shopping, food/sugar, etc., etc., the most common addiction of them all, the one that is socially acceptable and even revered, is workaholism.

There are many reasons why people put so much time and effort into work, perhaps they are seeking financial gains and accolades or maybe they enjoy what they do. Often, they are secretly seeking self-esteem. In addition to our relationships, work is one of the most likely places that people go to raise their self-esteem. "Hey, I'm good at what I do, people praise me for it, it feels good, I want to do more," positive reinforcement at its best. Nothing wrong with that, except that for many people, this is the *only* way they gain self-esteem.

Whether it is from a relationship, work, or other source, when we seek our worth and value from something outside ourselves, we can become dependent on that source to make us feel good about ourselves. When that source dries up, i.e. retirement, divorce, etc., it can adversely affect our self-esteem unless or until we find another source.

I came to this realization for myself recently a year after a relationship ended. I struggled mightily with the break up all the while realizing that my deepest wounds had been triggered. The realization that I had been looking to my partner to esteem me was the end result of significant effort to process my experience of that relationship.

Given such a realization, the question always becomes, "So what, now what?" Having had this experience and this insight and learning, what do I do with it so that I can change my life and live differently? That is always the challenge.

What did I really learn? It may sound cliché, but what I learned (not for the first time) is that I ultimately need to love and esteem myself. This, from a person who has been using affirmations and positive self-talk for years. And yes, I have been doing that all along. Part of what I learned, however is that words are not the same as actions. You know, the ol' walk the talk thing.

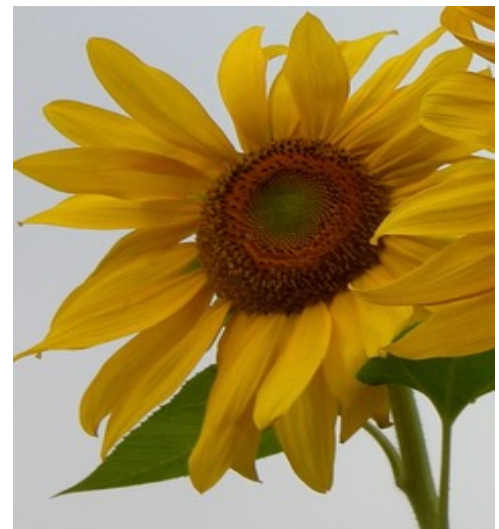
So, I started asking myself what I could *do* differently rather than just adding more affirmations. The answer I came up with was to behave in a self-loving manner and to do self-loving things. For me, that means not settling for less than what I truly desire, and turning my attention fully to creating and living *my* life. If I'm not waiting for someone to show up who's going to make it all right, then I'm making choices based on my needs and desires and joy *in this moment*.

Affirmation: I behave in self-loving ways.

Quote: *"The most terrifying thing is to accept oneself completely."* -C.G. Jung

Jaqui Duvall works as a coach, mentor, trainer, facilitator and public speaker developing and delivering workshops, leading mentoring groups and working with individuals to help them identify and express their inner spirit and live a life of consciousness and intention.

Jaqui@lifecompass.org



S e p t e m b e r 2 0 1 7

Life mpass

The Evolving Self ...when growth is the only option.

The Evolving Self is an e-newsletter that reflects the belief that growth is a choice that can bring an ever deepening and expanding awareness of who we are and what we are here for. The reader can expect affirmations, quotes, book reviews, insightful commentary and tips that

Extroverts vs. Introverts By Jaqui Duvall, MA

I had a significant and visible reaction to something I read recently. The comment was simply stating that, "Extroverts typically deal with stress by viewing it as a challenge, taking a problem-solving attitude." In the next sentence, it said that, "taking a passive approach can lead to bitterness, depression and loneliness..." I took this to be a 'compare and contrast' jab at introverts.

It has been my observation that many extroverted people seem to judge introverted people as if there is something wrong with them because they prefer solitude. Perhaps it comes simply from lack of understanding, which may be at the root of the differences between the two.

In my life, I have on more than one occasion been on the receiving end of comments that were judgmental and critical about my tendency and need to spend a great deal of time alone. Yes, I am a confirmed introvert. I live a particular lifestyle that I have chosen that is dominated by a significant amount of alone time. I'd like to take a moment to define the difference between extroversion and introversion and of course, there are different definitions.

According to Myers-Briggs (based on a Jungian view,) on a scale measuring extroversion vs. introversion, they refer to these behaviors as the way people re-energize. Extroverts orient their energy to the outer world, while introverts orient their energy to the inner world. That definition is very different than the possibly more common view that extroverts want to be around people all the time and introverts want to be alone.

One of Jung's and Isabel Myers' great contributions to the field of psychology is their observations that introversion and extroversion are both *healthy* variations in personality style. Variations on a scale with extroversion on one end and introversion on the other, is about how much stimulation we require and can absorb from our environment.

It occurs to me that because extroverted people are typically more outgoing, more vocal and visible that this is the standard that has been set for "normal" behavior. I have forever been exploring what determines normalcy as it comes up in discussions all the time. In reality, statistics show that Introversion is slightly more pronounced in the general population introverts 50.7%, extroverts 49.3% (based on Myers-Briggs first random sample in 1998.)

What these statistics don't capture, however is that there are different types of introverts.

4 Types of Introverts This is an excerpt from an article published in *New York* magazine's Science of Us blog published July 1, 2015.

The research of Wellesley psychologist Jonathan Cheek and his graduate students Jennifer Grimes and Courtney Brown quizzed 500 adults about their personalities. The findings, they argue, reveal that there isn't one kind of introversion, there are four flavors. They gave these types the handy mnemonic STAR for social, thinking, anxious and restrained. An individual can be strongly one or a mixture of several. Here's a basic rundown of each:

Social This type of introvert isn't shy in the traditional sense. Social events don't give these folks anxiety. It's just that they prefer to socialize in small groups rather than large ones and sometimes to opt for not socializing at all. This choice isn't about fear, but is simply a clear personal preference for the intimate and quiet.

Thinking Sometimes an introvert isn't driven by their preferences around other people at all--they're neither shy nor particularly averse to groups. These folks simply come across as reserved and unsocial sometimes because they're often lost in their own thoughts. If this is you, "you're capable of getting lost in an internal fantasy world, but it's not in a neurotic way, it's in an imaginative and creative way," Cheek explained to Science of Us.

Anxious This type of introvert conforms to common stereotypes of the quiet person--they're withdrawn and quiet because other people make them nervous. "Unlike social introverts, anxious introverts may seek out solitude because they feel awkward and painfully self-conscious around other people, because they're not very confident in their own social skills," Science of Us explains.

Restrained Rather than being anxious, imaginative, or most at home in small groups, this final kind of introvert is simply slow moving. They take a while to get going and need to be deliberate in their actions--they always think before they speak. In an extroverted world, this appears much the same as the other types of introversion, though its root causes are quite different.

Based on these four types, it is perhaps, a little easier to understand why there is so much confusion about introversion, there is significant variance between them. If I could come up with an appropriate conclusion to this discussion, it would simply be that understanding ourselves is something worth striving for and once we've gained awareness and understanding, to make conscious choices to do and behave in such a way that serves us. The final goal, as always is to love and accept ourselves with all of our quirksiness.

awakes." -C.G. Jung
into your own heart. Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside,
Quote: "Your visions will become clear only when you can look
Affirmation: I accept myself exactly the way I am.
intention.
life of consciousness and
help them identify and express their inner spirit and live a
leading mentoring groups and working with individuals to
and public speaker developing and delivering workshops,
Jaqui Duval works as a coach, mentor, trainer, facilitator
Jaqui@lifecompass.org



O c t o b e r 2 0 1 7



The Evolving Self ...when growth is the only option.

The Evolving Self is an e-newsletter that reflects the belief that growth is a choice that can bring an ever deepening and expanding awareness of who we are and what we are here for. The reader can expect affirmations, quotes, book reviews, insightful commentary and tips that support the growth of the individual.

The Human Dilemma By Jaqui Duvall, MA

I just finished teaching a class on the subject of Suffering for an on-line Bachelor's program in Liberal Studies for the University of Philosophical Research. The first time a new class is taught, it is always interesting to see how the many long hours of development and preparation lead to insights and learning for the participants. There are some interesting tidbits that came out of the experience that I would like to share.

Kind of an obvious truth, people suffer. I haven't met a person who hasn't suffered over, because of, in spite of, in some way, shape or form at some time in their life. It is what I refer to as: *The Human Dilemma*. You can't get through life without some kind of suffering. It is inherent in the human experience in life.

First, there are many philosophies, religions etc., who have profoundly spoken on the subject of suffering. Buddhism, for instance with the Four Noble Truths which state, 1) The truth of suffering; 2) The truth of the cause of suffering; 3) The truth of the end of suffering; and 4) The truth of the path that leads to the end of suffering. More simply put, suffering exists; it has a cause; it has an end; and it has a cause to bring about its end. Buddhism offers the 8-Fold Path to detach from our attachment to things which, it says, is the cause of suffering. The good news is there is a path before us that others have trod successfully that can offer hope.

Second, how do you deal with it? And there are so many people dealing with it...Some, well, some, not so well. All of the suffering people who choose mind-altering substances to alleviate their suffering in an effort to distract, avoid, deny, numb out, etc., from feeling and knowing what kind of pain they are in....often discover even more suffering.

Third, Why? If you believe in God, why, would the earth and all the people be created just to suffer? Since we have already established that it is happening. Many people feel the need to understand what's happening and to make sense of the God element of the equation.

I don't pretend to have all the answers, but I can say that I believe there is purpose in suffering and that is: To inspire learning and growth. I believe we come into this world into a particular body, into a particular family, into a particular culture, into a particular region, because that "life" would provide the opportunity to suffer in a particular way that could/would lead to the particular growth needed/desired by our particular soul. Not everyone responds to their life experiences by choosing to grow, but they certainly have the opportunity.

When you consider the "how people deal with it" question. It is obvious that there are some people who deal with suffering in a manner that is all about becoming a better person, a more enlightened person and there are others who are brought down by it.

A good example of this dichotomy comes from Viktor Frankl's book, *Man's Search For Meaning* in which he says, "We who lived in concentration camps can remember the men who walked through the huts comforting others, giving away their last piece of bread. They may have been few in number, but they offer sufficient proof that everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's way." Ultimately, this is what I believe suffering is all about: to find that spark of humanness in the midst of our instinctual human reactions that enables us to rise above, regardless of the circumstances.

Singing is Not Required. It seems in our fast-paced society and busy lives there is often a tendency to skip over one of the most important parts of processing a challenging experience. That is to express yourself. Not only that, it is not necessarily easy to find someone who is skilled at listening much less comfortable with whatever feelings you need to express. So, many people just don't, and begin to amass an incredible load of unexpressed emotions and experiences.

Many years ago, I found myself with such a load of unresolved, unexpressed emotions, which I had gathered over many decades. It seemed like it had gotten so heavy that it was leaking out. So, when the opportunity arose I signed up for a workshop called, "The Mastery of Self-Expression" which was being taught by two people from the entertainment industry with a vague hope of relief.

We were asked to bring a "performance" piece, which we would perform in front of the entire group and be coached through the process of breaking down any barriers to full and authentic expression. I had chosen a piece that even I viewed as a cop-out but seemed like the best I could do at the time.

As I watched my classmates get up one-by-one and witnessed the process they were being coached through, I realized that I needed to dig deeper. So, in the moment, I decided to change my performance piece and sing a song that I knew by heart and felt would authentically reveal what I was feeling. It was the song "Listen" from the musical *Dreamgirls*.

When my turn came, I nervously took the stage, very aware that I hadn't practiced but chose to trust the process. With no accompanying music, I sang, and as I did, I tapped into years of pain and heartache. I didn't worry about how it sounded (pretty sure I butchered it) but focused instead on the words and the feelings they conveyed. I let all of it flow freely through me.

When I finished, the entire class jumped to their feet in a standing ovation. The two instructors looked at each other and simply said, "Wow!" They had no words of coaching for me, nothing I should have done differently because what I expressed said it all. It was an incredibly validating and healing experience.

I encourage you to express what you need to express. Singing is not required.

Affirmation: My feelings are valid and worth expressing. **Quote:** "Stay strong, make them wonder how you're still smiling." -Kushandwizdom

Jaqui Duvall works as a coach, mentor, trainer, facilitator and public speaker developing and delivering workshops, leading mentoring groups and working with individuals to help them identify and express their inner spirit and live a life of consciousness and intention.



N o v e m b e r 2 0 1 7

Life mpass

The Evolving Self ...when growth is the only option.

The Evolving Self is an e-newsletter that reflects the belief that growth is a choice that can bring an ever deepening and expanding awareness of who we are and what we are here for. The reader can expect affirmations, quotes, book reviews, insightful commentary and tips that support the growth of the individual.

Leap of Faith By Jaqui Duvall, MA

Have you ever visualized a change you wanted to make and then years later realized that that vision is now your reality? Many years ago, as I worked in corporate hi-tech in Silicon Valley, I had such a vision.

I was working for a telecommunications company at a time when telecommunications was a declining industry as technology was shifting from digital to VOIP. For perhaps, ten years, I came to work every day, enjoyed friendships with my co-workers, did the job I was being paid to do but felt something was missing from my life. At one point, I had a realization: I wanted to make a difference in the lives of others, but had absolutely no idea how to do that from where I was or how to get to a place where I could do that.

Through many efforts to figure out my future, I became aware that I needed to let go of the "Golden Paycheck" that provided me apparent security (amid layoffs,) benefits, etc. I finally became clear, however that I needed to let go of all that to move in a different direction and within a month, I was laid off. I'll never forget all the wonderful hugs I received as I walked out the door and all the people who said, "When you get a new job, come and get us."

I had no idea where I was going, but in my heart, I knew that corporate hi-tech was not it for me. Within a week, the field of Life Coaching made its way to my awareness. Soon I was flying to the mid-west to take my first class. I started applying for jobs to continue that golden paycheck and even had an offer, but sat there in the intense and calm awareness that I just couldn't do it.

I felt like had so clearly asked for a new way of being in the world and knew that I would be trading that for security, so I turned it down, taking what I can only refer to as a *leap of faith*, trusting that I was on the path of my purpose and that somehow, I would be taken care of.

That was fifteen years ago and so many amazing things happened as a result of that decision that I think is only possible when we use our intuition to guide our decisions. I have been working in healthcare as a behavioral health educator now for fifteen years. I have also worked in healthcare as a Health Coach for four years. I have established a regular writing practice through this newsletter and have published several articles in on-line ezines. I have offered and taught my own classes and workshops and produced recorded material as well. But most importantly, I have been making a difference in people's lives.

When I left hi-tech 15 years ago, I had no idea I would be where I am right now. But I had a vision. Much of the time through the past 15 years, I had experiences that felt like loss, but as the universe is planning the next adventure and responding to your vision, sometimes it needs to clear the space to make room for it.

An Attitude of Gratitude While there are no guarantees, there is something that I believe contributed to the success I have had in redefining my work and personal life. In my experience, one key to making the shift I described above was maintaining an *Attitude of Gratitude*. This became very clear to me recently when I started practicing Smile Therapy.

For my New Year's Resolution this year, I decided to try an experiment with smiling. I was leaving my house at 5:15am in the morning to avoid the traffic as I commuted to Palo Alto. After nearly 4 years of this, I had developed a little bit of an attitude. While I felt deeply honored and rewarded to work with Veterans, the early hour and long days were wearing. The experiment was to smile as I drove to see what affect it would have on my brain/body chemistry, my mood and my attitude.

At first, I really didn't feel like smiling at all and my face resisted. So, I plastered a fake smile on my face driving down the road feeling like a complete idiot. Within a couple of days, I noticed that I didn't have to work so hard at it and in fact, was feeling an improvement in my mood.

Following that, however have been some amazing things. At the two-week mark, my boss told me I could leave Palo Alto early and finish my day at the San Jose location enabling me to avoid the afternoon traffic. This was HUGE. This improved my attitude dramatically as I just received about 3 hours/week of my life back.

Since then, I left the job in Palo Alto when my contract ended. I am back working for Kaiser, full-time, for now. While I miss working with Veterans, I continue to practice smile therapy, knowing and trusting that the next perfect thing will happen for me. How do I know that? Because it always does.

Affirmation: I am so grateful for the sweet flow of life, joy, health, prosperity and unconditional love.

Quote: *"There are two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle."* -Albert Einstein

Jaqui Duvall works as a coach, mentor, trainer, facilitator and public speaker developing and delivering workshops, leading mentoring groups and working with individuals to help them identify and express their inner spirit and live a life of consciousness and intention.



D e c e m b e r 2 0 1 7



The Evolving Self ...when growth is the only option.

The Evolving Self is an e-newsletter that reflects the belief that growth is a choice that can bring an ever deepening and expanding awareness of who we are and what we are here for. The reader can expect affirmations, quotes, book reviews, insightful commentary and tips that support the growth of the individual.

Spark By Jaqui Duvall, MA

Many people, including myself, have, through much of their lives, accepted and tolerated unacceptable behavior from some others. Even with teaching Assertiveness for 30 years, I find that my old behavior patterns still show up now and then.

Fortunately, it doesn't happen so much anymore, I've become more genuine and natural in my assertiveness through the years, but these habits die hard. There was a time when I felt ashamed of how I allowed others to treat me while feeling somewhat mystified by how I continued to attract the same type of people. I don't know who said it, but it is so true, "If you live like a doormat, you're going to attract a lot of muddy boots."

Lately, I've been contemplating why some people live like this and then one day something just kicks in. They say, "Enough is enough." That moment when a current day pain outweighs the fear of an unknown future and they stand up for themselves. I call it the human *spark*. A place deep inside that gets activated by injustice and oppression and suddenly just rises up and speaks.

In the movie, *The Holiday*, the character, Iris, played by Kate Winslet has such a moment. She spent three years of misery with a "muddy boot" who lured her in, gave her just enough attention to keep her attached, and then makes a public commitment to someone else. Iris admits to being "pathetic." In her dejected state, she takes advantage of the opportunity to go on holiday and in the process makes new friends who help her see another part of herself. When the "muddy boot" shows up and tries to continue his emotional torture, she finally has the courage (gumption, in this case) to tell him, "It's over."

For most people, there is a part of us, sometimes buried very deep, that has the courage and the strength to speak the truth regardless of the consequences.

Bodacious Inner Child

I recently encountered my own inner spark as I was participating in an Interactive Guided Imagery session with a colleague and friend with whom I share these skills.

I have spoken about Interactive Guided Imagery many times in this newsletter, and I will say again, that whenever I'm stuck, uncertain, lost, blocked, etc., etc., etc., this process gets me moving again. I get the answers I need at the moment I need them and support from my own inner advisers and guides. It is incredibly powerful. In my recent session, I encountered what I call my *bodacious inner child*.

This inner child is 5 years old. She has limitless energy, excitement about life and confidence in herself. During the session, I was once again reminded that this part of me, which seems so distant in the past and sometimes lost forever is still alive and well and living inside me. With that reminder came the opportunity and invitation to tap into her incredible spirit.

In Interactive Guided Imagery you dialog with parts of yourself that are living in your subconscious but are still acting upon you. Sometimes, this is a good thing, but other times the positive aspects are being blocked or are simply overwhelmed by negative experiences.

In my dialog with my bodacious inner child, she reminded of how it feels to be unstoppable, to believe so much in yourself that there are no obstacles and that life is full of joy. When I asked her how I can better honor her in my life today, she said, "Let me live through you!" And went on to say that she will show up as intuitive urges and impulses.

Revisiting my bodacious inner child and intentionally bringing her energy into my present day has given me a sense of empowerment and excitement about life at a time when that is exactly what I need. What might you find in the recesses of your mind?

Affirmation: The spirit of my inner child lives through me.

Quote: *"And suddenly you just know...it's time to start something new and trust the magic of beginnings."* -Meister Eckhart

Jaqui Duvall works as a coach, mentor, trainer, facilitator and public speaker, developing and delivering workshops, leading mentoring groups and working with individuals to help them identify and express their inner spirit and live a life of consciousness and intention.

Jaqui@lifecompass.org

