



THE INSPIRED LIFE: Unleashing Your Mind's Capacity for Joy

What is an Inspired Life?: To answer this it is helpful to be clear about the word inspire – which comes from the Latin, *inspirare*, that means to breathe into and imbued with spirit. An inspired life is a life that is rooted in your passion, your gifts, talents, skills and abilities. It is a life that is aligned with your vision for your life - generated from the inside out.

It is the life that is your response to, *What would you do if you knew you could not fail?* An inspired life is your heart's desire and is based on making a conscious choice to live your life grounded in joy and appreciation. In committing to live an

inspired life you nourish your happiness as you serve a greater purpose of contributing to the peace and happiness of all.

How do you unleash the mind's capacity for joy? You start out by understanding the creative process – that thoughts, generate feelings and lead to action. With this understanding you unleash your mind's capacity for joy by using the full resources of your imagination to create your vision of a joy-filled life. With this vision in mind you ask yourself: What are the thoughts that support and nourish my joyous inspired life vision? You then live your life aligned with the thoughts, feelings and actions that generate joy in your life. In addition you fill your day with the activities that give you an experience of joy. When you notice you are feeling victimized by a circumstance in your life, use this breakdown as an opportunity to become of your thinking, your beliefs about yourself, others and life. Do these thoughts support the life you desire, if not then it is time to upgrade the software of your mind and create new brain pathways aligned with peace, happiness, joy and love. A simple Inspired Life Action that is recommend is creating a Pleasure List of people, places, things and activities that when you focus your attention on them you experience joy. When know notice you are engaged in focusing on thoughts that generate misery and unhappiness you acknowledge yourself for noticing and then re-focus your attention on an item on your Pleasure List. Some of the items on my list are: my dog, sunset over the water, the sound of grandchildren's voices.

What prerequisites are needed to live an inspired life?

- The desire to make a change to be free of the patterns of the past.
- An understanding of the creative process – how the mind works: thoughts → feelings → action which over time creates new brain pathways and new habits of thought and behavior
- A clear vision of your inspired life
- An understanding that when you make the choice to live an inspired life you will often be faced with challenges (breakdowns) and that it is crucial to view these breakdowns as opportunities to choose a new pattern which will naturally lead to a breakthrough

Can anyone live an inspired life? While most people have the capacity to live an inspired life it takes a deep commitment, discipline and practice to “upgrade the software of your mind” to evolve

the point of view that life is happening to you to the point of view that life is happening through you. People who are suffering with serious emotional problems must first be stabilized in order to focus on the work that is necessary to live an inspired life.

Given that people have different ways of learning and processing information how do you approach living an inspired life with different people? Since living an inspired life is grounded in each person's personal inspired life vision (you may love exercising and your spouse may love sailing) having people articulate and connect with their personal vision crucial. Then our exercises can be adapted based up the learning/processing style of each person.

What are the major challenges people face in living and inspired joy-filled life?

- Their belief in the truth of their false identity – their particular version of “I’m not enough.”
- Their failure to understand the creative process and how they can tap into the infinite creative potential
- Believing that life is happening to them rather than through them
- Using breakdowns as evidence that they are victims to the circumstances of their life
- Failure to have a clear inspired life vision
- Failure to practice new thoughts/feelings and actions
- Being seduced by familiar habits
- Lack of belief in themselves
- Lack of support or guidance

How do you define joy? An experience of well-being, peace of mind and feeling that you are valuable and making a contribution. We can think of joy as being an experience of delight, gladness and well-being, grounded in the present moment.

Does joy have universal qualities? It is grounded in a sense of connection, love, peace of mind and gratitude – and a trust that you are supported by life.

You write about breakdowns being opportunities for breakthroughs – what are some examples of this? A simple example is you are stuck in a traffic jam and your familiar reaction goes into high gear: you feel anxious that you are not going to get to your appointment on time, you are cursing the cars in front of you and feel victimized by this situation. As soon as you notice your reaction you can say, “Oops,” acknowledging what you are feeling and that this circumstance is an opportunity to make a new choice and create a new pattern when you are in a traffic jam or feeling victimized by a circumstance. Ask yourself:

- What is my intention for this situation?
- What will bring me joy?
- Listen to the answer
- What can I think and do right now that is aligned with my intention?

How do you create an Inspired Life Vision?

- Write your obituary – this will define what is most important for you
- Ask yourself – Who would I be – what would I do, if I knew I could not fail?
- What are my skills, talents, gifts and abilities and how do I want to use them for the greatest good?

What are the most important keys to maintaining an inspired life?

- Keeping your eye on your North Star – your inspired life vision
- A community of support
- Being awake to your “programming” your beliefs about yourself, others and life
- A regular, consistent spiritual practice of meditation, journaling, time in nature, being of service

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