



NATUROPATHIC WISDOM NOTES

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Quotes:

"Work is not always required of a man. There is such a thing as sacred idleness, the cultivation of which is now fearfully neglected"

George MacDonald 1824-1905

"If you spend a perfectly useless afternoon in a perfectly useless manner you have learned to live"

Lin Yutang

"How beautiful it is to do nothing and then rest afterward"

Spanish Proverb

"The miracle is not to fly in the air or to walk on the water but to walk on the Earth"

Chinese Proverb

Creating a Space

Creating a space is really creating a time for healing. A time for healing before you really get sick, because you will be "sick in spirit" before you are "sick in body". A time to stand back to get a better look. To create a space will allow you to take the misguided energy of your unplanned life and channel it into the formation of a beautiful crystalline nature you can call your own. There is no one right way to learn, to love, to grow, to heal, to live, to feel, to know or be known. There is only "your way" and that will be hard to find unless you have time to dream a thing or two. Day dreaming takes time and space and the thing can only come true if you can dream it. Creating space is really saying to your personal kingdom, your body, "I am now listening to what it is that you really need". JK Rowling talks about the pensive in *The Goblet of Fire*. "One simply siphons the excess thoughts from one's mind, pours them into the basin, and examines them at one's leisure. It becomes easier to spot patterns and links you don't understand when they are in this form." This is an excellent meditation technique for standing back to get a better look.

Listen now to your body. Is it telling you that it doesn't want to do one more thing that it doesn't want to, that it only wants to do what you have been promising for the last 20 years or so but haven't done yet? Your body really houses a three year old, sitting on the steps of your life, waiting for you to come out and play. We have not been listening to him/her for so long that we no longer know what the word "play" means any more. Instead we go out to the pub for another beer, reach for an "affair" or medication or some other addiction to satisfy this unconscious need to play. To be in charge of ones life takes work and maybe you are not quite ready to change anything yet! However bodily symptoms will often give you clues: indigestion might mean that you can't "stomach" your life right now, or your headaches might mean that your "mind is overpowering your heart". Stop and ask yourself what has your body been telling you in the last year.

Martha Stewart has a new magazine called "Blueprint" and in the middle of it is a blank sheet of grid paper that you are invited to map out your "renovation" plans. I laughed as the only renovation that for me is worth working on from year to year is my personal life and certainly one sheet of paper will not nearly cover it! Using the "First Things First" Steven Covey model, I need seven sheets of grid paper, one for each of the major roles that I play in my life. Covey's message is timeless: Create your life purposefully, be the dog wagging its tail, or life will take over and it will be the case of the tail wagging the dog in a reactionary way.

John Kabat Zinn states "This participation to act more fully in our health and well being is simply to trust the messages from our own body and mind and feelings". Developing such an attitude means authoring ones own life. Then in the words of Martin Luther King Jr. "If it falls your lot to be a street sweeper, sweep streets as Raphael painted pictures, Michelangelo carved marble, Beethoven composed music or Shakespeare wrote poetry". In other words be excellent in whatever you choose to do.

There are several steps required for this process of creating this masterpiece called your life:

1. To appreciate what one has already is to open the gates of abundance.

- a. Gratitude: this establishes the first law of abundance. When you are grateful for even the slightest things, this makes room for more small things to enter your life for which you can be grateful for. This exercise also makes you more aware during the day and you learn to recognize those moments when you are grateful as you are living them, not trying to remember them hours later!
- b. Write down 5 things you are grateful for every single day of the year in a special book that then turns into a very quick diary reference! You can also make this into a shared exercise with a family member or a friend using email.

2. To map out your life requires that you are aware of the 7 most important roles you play in your life. The reason for doing this is that most of us identify with a few: parent, spouse, boss or employee and the other 4 roles may not contribute to our income nor be high on the list of importance but it is the ignoring of these important roles that makes us feel "life is just a to do list" and not fulfilling. Identify other roles you might play in your life such as daughter or sister; beauty, creativity, financial planner; spiritual student and friend. Do you miss calling an old friend on the phone more regularly, or spending time doing your favorite hobby, or not spending enough time attending your church of choice? Once you identify and write down these roles then you subconsciously start adding them into your life and you begin to feel that your life is more rounded and balanced.

3. Establish goals in each of these roles that you play. Identify goals for the next 6 months, one year and 5 years. Just start. You won't get it all written down in one session and when you get an idea write it down right away. You will be pleasantly surprised when you review your notes one year later how many of your goals you have attained!

4. 15 times exercise is a way to break up old patterns. Do not attempt this exercise unless you are ready for change because change will come! This sentence needs to be in the present tense and no more than one sentence long. Remember you will be writing it out 15 times! Continue for 21 days then change it.

Examples:

- a. I accept prosperity and abundance into my life
- b. I am confident, content and creative.
- c. I am enough.
- d. I am now experiencing abundant health, wealth, joy and love in my life.

- e. I am ready to change in order to accept contentment, creativity and confidence into my life.
- f. I fill my golden cup of life with love, beauty and joy.
- g. I have a good healthy opinion about myself.
- h. I am using my God-given creative powers to create a healthy and happy life!

5. To really get your creative juices flowing you may consider taking yourself on a self-guided retreat. Try and go alone for one 24- hour day or more. By creating such a space you will finally have the chance to be quiet and listen. It will allow you to stand back for a better look.

6. Once you have started this you may find that you want to create a "daily space of solitude" where you allow your higher self to get a word in edge wise. This will help you in your day- to- day struggle of maintaining a balance in your life. An excellent book to get you started is "Wherever You Go There You Are" by John Kabat Zinn. He will ask you to learn to be mindful so that when you do the dishes you are only doing the dishes or when you have a cup of tea you are doing nothing else but having a cup of tea.

Recipe for a Retreat

An essential element for an effective retreat is no telephone or TV or newspapers. The goal is to get in touch with your world, comprised of your dreams, aspirations and goals that have not been watered down by someone else's point of view. Take along books to help you with self-discovery. Some of my favorites over the years have been:

- The Artist's Way by Julia Cameron
- Simple Abundance by Sarah Van Breathnach
- First Things First by Steven Covey
- Gift from the Sea by Anne Morrow Lindbergh
- The Art of Pilgrimage by Phil Cousineau
- Taking Time to Be by Helen Exley.

See "Recipe for a Retreat" on my website for more ideas.

In the time allotted whether it is a few hours or a few days treat it as "sacred solitude for soul" uninterrupted at all costs. For men a retreat might be a solitary sojourn into the mountains or onto the sea or into the shed in the back yard. As John Gray says "men need to go into their caves" once in awhile.

Go ahead and take time to stand and stare. Take stock of your life. This inch of time is an inch of gold. Everyday the first day: each day a life. Each life sacred, loaded fragrant with the bloom of potential. Fill your empty well drop by golden drop with sacred idleness. You owe it the health of your body and soul.