



Life *equipping* *News*

Volume 4. Summer 2014

Living is the journey we take.
Sometimes the road is narrow,
Sometimes the road is wide.

No matter the width or the length of the road,
We are responsible for the choices, memories,
friendships... and how we finish the journey!

Imparting HOPE

Igniting PASSION

Inspiring LIFE

WELCOME....

The LIFE newsletter is produced quarterly. We hope it inspires you to pursue a life that is free and driven by purpose and passion

Our desire is that the articles will inspire, encourage and equip you on life's journey.

We all have one life to live and the choices we make today will impact all our tomorrows.

Today choose to live and love, your **LIFE!**

We would like to acknowledge Pam Visscher as copy editor.

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together making a difference

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The Journey

Have you ever considered the journey of life as an expedition? Have you ever known anyone to go on an expedition alone? Have you ever thought you could accomplish something great all by yourself?

Expeditions are always planned with a specific purpose in mind. There is always a team of individuals who work together for the purpose of accomplishing the task at hand. Almost always there are set goals, budget and time frames put in place to accomplish these goals. Every little achievement is celebrated, simply because when you are on an expedition the journey is about discovery.

When a team is put together for an expedition specific people are often chosen for their skills, knowledge and understanding of the task at hand. Key requirements are endurance, desire and a sense of adventure.

Before long this group of people become a community who count on each other. They may not always agree on specifics but they know that to accomplish the purpose for which they joined the team they must work as one body. Each person is important and required to balance the load.

Each of us have a purpose for our life. We are not born to just take up oxygen that we breathe. For some of us the circumstances we are born into are extremely challenging, while others could be viewed as being born with a silver spoon in their mouth.

Yet, what remains the same for each person is that they must go on a journey of discovery. They must view this journey as an adventure and expedition. Each person at some point has to realise that they can't do the journey alone. From the beginning of time it was recognised that it is not good for anyone to be alone.

So why is it that many of us think that we can do the expedition called life alone? Today if you look around you will find many lonely people in the world, be it in your workplace, school, church and even perhaps in your home.

We are all born into a family and at times we need to choose our family. Family is the community we choose to do life with. We need to connect with like minded people on a regular basis for common purposes. We must contribute and share the load so that we can know and feel that we belong and are accepted just the way we are.

Candy Daniels

The Gift

As we are in that time of year where we traditionally think about giving gifts to those we love, I would like to talk about the gift giving and receiving process. How would you feel if the gift you gave was not received well, or was given back, even re-gifted or sold over the internet? You spent much time and energy searching and saving for just the right gift, injecting all your love into making sure everything is as perfect as can be. Then one day you find that your efforts and love are not being received. Your gift of love is being discarded. Personally, I would probably stop giving, yet wouldn't that turn my gift into a debt? The saying goes "It is better to give than receive". However, when your gifts are being rejected, surely you would need to stop giving?

People say that children are a gift, and part of what we believe makes up a family. What happens when this process doesn't happen naturally? We have surrogacy, fostering, kinship care and adoption. I would also suggest that blended families fit into this type of category as well. That of caring for a child from another person. We hear of couples who have desperately wanted a child and the hardships they endure to create a family. The efforts blended families go to trying to integrate and find common ground as they struggle towards harmony. We also hear tragic stories of children living in neglected or abusive environments needing someone to take care of them. All we want to give them is our love and devotion. A gift so precious that we can't live without. But what happens when this gift is not received? We can love and accept someone with all our heart but we can't make them receive it.

When we look at the statistics around children who have been adopted, we find that they are over-represented accessing mental health institutions and services as well as the correctional and legal systems. Perhaps we can conclude from this that these children were adopted into inappropriate or uncaring families. If you ask the adopted person, many would say they are very appreciative of all that their adopted families did for them, believing they were loved and cared for. Similarly, the adopted families would tell of how much love and time they put into their 'gift,' loving the child as if they were their own. So why do so many people cared for outside their family of origin struggle in life?

Unfortunately there are few studies available to help answer this question so I would like to pose some psychological studies and draw you to my own conclusion. There are many studies carried out on the mother/child bond, from conception to birth and beyond. What we know is that the child is bonding with the mother from within the womb. The child learns the ups and downs of mother's emotional states, her voice and tone, as well as the general rhythms of the family life. This knowledge comes to the baby through the five senses; touch, taste, smell, sound and sight and begins to make up the child's emotional state before it is born. When the child is born, it uses these senses to search out the mother, to gain security, warmth and have its emotional state regulated.

The mother is the primary source of emotional regulation, nutrition, security and care and the child senses this through the mother's engagement as familiar. Research shows that if the mother disengages, the child becomes anxious (drop in serotonin, elevated adrenaline and cortisol levels). What was unexpected in this study is that when the mother re-engaged with the child, the child becomes more anxious, with the mother needing to engage with the child longer in order to soothe. What we can conclude from this is that the source of the child's security, belonging and identity now become unstable or unpredictable, leaving the child unsure of the source of its very survival. The child at this stage of development does not possess the mental capability to reason or understand what has happened within the environment. It can only feel.

If we take this study and apply it to an adoption situation, I wonder what the child would do or how they would respond. Not only has the source of security been removed, but in some situations, so has the environment, society, tones and rhythms been removed.

A study on separation trauma by James Prescott (1997), suggests that there are physical responses to trauma in the brain (serotonin, adrenaline and cortisol) that are significantly reduced in a failed mother-infant bonding. This reduced serotonin level influences conditioned avoidance (interactions), difficulty regulating sleep and influences impulse control. All problems which are often mentioned by adoptees.

What this statement is saying is that the part of our brain that tells us when we are safe or when we are in danger is constantly on alert, avoiding, not resting and reacting to the environment. This reduces the ability to actually know when we are safe or when we are in danger.

This leads me to another question. How can you know you are being loved and accepted when you don't know what that feels like? I think it comes down to choice. We believe we are accepted and loved when we choose to believe we are accepted and loved and cease to look to others to affirm our place in the world/society/family. A difficult thing to do, regardless of the place you start however, for those dealing with possible separation trauma, even more difficult.

We can't make someone believe they are loved and accepted. It is a choice only they can make and a precious gift we choose to continue to give.

Jodie Chambers

Grace - a gift freely given with no expectation of getting anything in return

Inspiration - a gift of motivation that creates possibilities

Faithfulness - a gift of reliability and allegiance that makes one family

Thankfulness - the ability to receive a gift with gratitude

LIFE talks - life lessons

I have been contemplating the year that has been and all that there is to be thankful for.

It has been a year of challenges, excitement, adventure, new beginnings, hellos and goodbyes. The one thing all these have in common is that it involved people from all walks of life who have made a difference and who have been a catalyst in many of the lessons I have learned this year.

One of the biggest lessons that I have learned that I am thankful for this year is the importance of patience and the continued need for obedience. Obedience is a character trait that is a blessed reward and favour, while patience is a virtue that gives us calmness. Two things that we often equate to children and often two things children struggle with. Yet, two things that don't end in adulthood but continue to be an important requirement for a blessed and peaceful life. After all, do we ever stop being children or should I say acting like children. If we call God our Father, I guess we will always be His child who needs to continually learn obedience and master the art of patience.

If you are wondering what exactly I needed to learn with regards to patience and obedience, let me fill you in. You see, when I get excited I tend to run ahead, get carried away and yes, this often leads to wasting precious time. All because I didn't have the patience to wait for direction. Time - you know that thing that we all value and wonder where it goes. Yet we still get 24 hours in a day and 365 days in a year. Time doesn't go any quicker from one year to the next.

It is just that we seem to fill every waking moment with the need to do more than we actually have the time to.

Every life lesson comes with an assignment and in the case of obedience it is the ability to listen and act accordingly. I must say I am not too bad with obedience. The assignment on patience however, I seem to need to continually resubmit. This assignment some may refer to as persistence, endurance or even simply the waiting game.

Although I learned the importance of obedience at an early age, it seems that I failed the exam on patience. So, this was the year I had to sit an exam instead of the assignments. Yes, it seems when you don't do too well on assignments eventually you have to have an exam.

We often think that God requires us to be sacrificial but what He requires from us is obedience. This is because God desires to bless us. He longs to endow us with favour. When we jump ahead of His ways and plans due to lack of patience we slow the process of receiving the blessings. Perhaps at times our inability to wait on God puts the blessings out of reach.

God has given each of us a purpose and with it comes endless promises. For us to receive these promises we need to be obedient and for us to fulfil the purposes we need patience. We must learn to wait for the right time. No child can truly learn to run until they have learned to crawl, stand and walk. This process may seem endless and boring but what it teaches is a life skill of balancing and coordination.

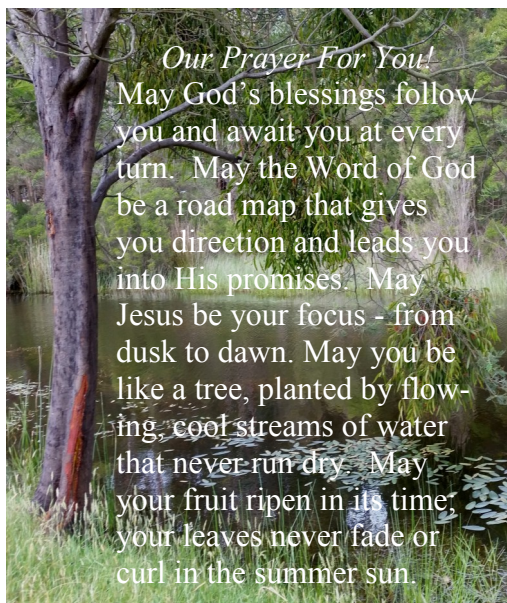
I am grateful that God is full of grace and

mercy. He looks at the heart and intentions of the mind that desires to obey but lacks the skills with regards to patience. I am also grateful that His time is not according to my time and that He works all things together at the right moment, although the assignments are often very challenging.

I am feeling confident that I have passed the exam of patience. I am sure there will still be many times where revision is needed and required. This ensures that I retain not just the information or memories but the knowledge of what it is about and understanding. Also, I am in no hurry to do a degree, masters or doctorate on it.

I encourage you to take time to reminisce over this year and look at the many lessons you have learned and the tests you have passed. Ensure you have gained adequate understanding to not require further study on the same subject.

Candy Daniels



RESOLUTIONS

Before long we will all start to think about resolutions. Before you decide on what new things you are going to do in the upcoming year or what you are going to give up, consider what it is you actually want to achieve.

What is going to drive you to keep going until you have reached your goal? You may be surprised to know that those who usually reach their goals are people who have a cheer squad. Your cheer squad essentially needs to consist of at least one person who believes in you and who will stand with you on the days you feel like giving up?

Your cheer squad needs a person or people who

- ◆ You get on well with
- ◆ You can dream with
- ◆ Who inspires you to dig deeper
- ◆ Works with you, not against you
- ◆ Challenges you to rest
- ◆ Reminds you of your capabilities
- ◆ Acknowledges your achievements
- ◆ Holds you accountable to your goals & dreams
- ◆ Respects you for who you are not who they want you to be
- ◆ Accepts you just the way you are
- ◆ Makes you smile/laugh
- ◆ Is delighted to be associated with you

Ensure you keep this person close!

The team at LIFE believe that the following 3 P's are keys that are an essential part to living life. We believe these keys are necessary for keeping us on track. These keys are an essential part of life for unlocking doors and realising our passions, potential and possibilities.

3 P's for Living



These 3 keys have the capability of unlocking the many frustrations you may have been facing over the years. We have further found that the keys work best in the following order maintaining a holistic view that is essential for your well-being.

First key is *Peace*

Pray – your ability to connect with God ensures you are not alone.
Energy – place yourself in a relaxing and empowering posture
Anchor – ground yourself mentally to the one (Jesus) that keeps you steady
Challenge – know the truth and the relevance of it for the situation
Exercise – find creative ways to use movement for relaxation

Second key is *Patience*

Prepare – make time to plan and prepare for the goal you wish to achieve
Attention – stay alert and give attention to the detail
Trial – learning curves and stepping stones are not always stumbling blocks
Invite – surround yourself with people who are like minded
Enquire – continue to enquire and engage with God
Notice – take time each day to renew your thinking and see what works
Clarity – stay focused on the plan at hand, ask for directions when unsure
Enjoy – make time to enjoy the experiences and stay in the moment

Third key is *Persevere*

Persist – not everything falls into place the first time you try it (when in doubt *pray*)
Endure – you need to hang on through the rough patches (*exercise* strengthens you)
Re-assess – make necessary changes (evaluate those you have *invited* to surround you?)
Stand – stay the course and know your plan (remember who your *anchor* is)
Experience – learn from your experiences (let it *challenge* you)
Visualise – there is power in visualising your path before walking it (pay *attention*)
Encounter – you will meet people & go places (don't get complacent, continue to *enquire*)
Respect – be true to your vision and goals (take time to *notice & challenge*)
Evaluate – repeat all steps in keys one, two & three. Make changes as needed

PRESCRIPTION – Administer twice daily

Life is lived at a fast pace these days and as Christmas approaches there seems to be even more demands. There can seem too many things to accomplish in too few hours. The task in front can seem too big to take on or perhaps you feel stressed and a little overwhelmed or having trouble coping as ‘the big day’ draws closer.

I am going to prescribe for you some medication to take. For best results take it twice daily, once in the morning and again in the evening before bed. This medication is designed to help you refocus your thinking and gain some extra bounce in your step. It will also improve your resilience to the ups and downs of life. There are a few steps involved in this prescription.

Step one put your hands on your hips. As you take three steps forward say “I am strong and courageous.” What you have done is place your body in a positive position that tells your brain you are strong and courageous. The three steps inform your brain that you have a purpose, or that you are doing something strong and courageous. By vocalising you are helping to enforce the positive feelings. This one exercise improves your physical, mental, emotional and spiritual resilience.

Step two reinforces step one. Place your hands in the air and say “Jesus has the victory.”

Research shows that we generally only raise our hands in the air when we win something. This posture and declaration creates winning emotions and chemicals in our brain. The declaration is a statement of faith and hope as you realise you are not alone. This exercise also improves physical, mental, emotional and spiritual resilience.

These two sequences of movements may seem silly, however I encourage you to try them and see if your physical, emotional, spiritual resilience improves your mental outlook. If nothing else, you will have a laugh at yourself and we know laughter is good medicine.

This prescription is safe for all age groups and is impossible to over-medicate.

Jodie Chambers

LIVING LIFE FEARLESS

If fear is knocking on your door, it is time to open the door and look it in the eye. The antidote to fear is love. Perfect love casts out fear and gives you peace.

Face the truth

Most often you will find that in life the things we fear are the things that appear real or that we convince ourselves are real. The only way to face the truth is to know the truth.

Evaluate the evidence

We are scared of shadows, yet we forget that to see a shadow there must be light nearby. Shed light on the facts and on the truth to gain insight and understanding.

Accept the consequences

Most often we are prone to react to the circumstances that we face rather than act appropriately. This reaction often creates or feeds the fear that is within our minds.

Renew your integrity

Our reactions often cause us to lose control and in turn we lose sight of our moral and ethical character. The part of us that adds worth to self.

We were born to be fearless and yet fear dwells within our hearts and minds. This fear we nurture and grow most often on a daily basis when we don't face the truth, when we avoid the evidence, when we blame others and when we lose integrity. The fear within cripples us from life and living, from the joys of loving and being loved.



LIVING Life

SEMINARS/WORKSHOPS

ESTABLISH

Imparting HOPE - gain knowledge, understand your capacity, experience being free to be you.

ENRICH

Igniting PASSION - imagine greater, achieve goals, unleash your creative genes by gaining awareness & balance to live and love your life.

EXPLORE

Inspiring LIFE - release tension, revive lost dreams, restore confidence by unlocking your potential.

These events are interactive, exploring fun and healthy ways to create change through experiences that challenge our thinking, feelings and behaviour that often impact us physically, emotionally & spiritually.

POPULAR TOPICS

- RESILIENCE** - knowing & understanding individual capacity*
- ENDURANCE** - knowing & understanding behaviour as language*
- BOUNDARIES** - the essentials for everyday living*
- RESPECT** - the art of conflict resolution*
- STOP** - recognising the signs & speaking up against abuse*
- IMAGE** - understanding all that you are meant to be*

For further details or to book a seminar (one hour interactive presentation) / workshop (tailored to suite your needs) contact us through info@lifeinternational.com.au



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