

Joys of Summer...

We are enjoying the calm weather, warm breezes, blue skies and bright sunshine. Put these all together, and we have SUMMER! It's time to bask in the vibrant colors of the season. Notice the heady phlox, the flaming marigolds. Inhale the pungent nasturtiums, lilies and roses.

Listen to the words of Helen Keller as she reflects on "Dawn in the Garden."

Sometimes I rose at dawn and stole into the garden while the heavy dew lay on the grass and flowers. Few know what joy it is to feel the rose pressing softly into the hand, or the beautiful motion of the lilies as they sway in the morning breeze. Sometimes I caught an insect in the flower I was plucking, and I felt the faint noise of a pair of wings rubbed together in a sudden terror, as the little creature became aware of a pressure from without.

Another favorite haunt of mine was the orchard, where the fruit ripened in early July. The large, downy peaches would reach themselves into my hands, and as the joyous breezes flew about the trees, the apples tumbled at my feet. Oh, the delight with which I gathered up the fruit in my pinafore, pressed my face against the smooth cheeks of the apples, still warm from the sun, and skipped back to the house!

Sunshine is like love—It makes everything shine with its own beauty.

Anonymous

Pessimism Hazardous to Health

The link between mind and body has been contemplated by physicians and philosophers since the time of Plato. Few long-term studies have closely examined this association. A report from the Mayo Proceedings suggests that individuals who profess pessimistic explanations for life events have poorer physical health and a higher mortality rate compared with either optimistic or middle-of-the-road types regardless of age or sex.

Pessimists may be more passive leaving them more prone to particular life events such as illness or injury that can shorten life span.

Pessimists may be more prone to depression and may avoid seeing doctors and often neglect their health because they feel there is little they can do to stave off disease or disability.

A dark outlook on life is linked with reductions in immune system functions.

The conclusion of the study states that pessimism itself is a risk factor for early death and should be viewed in the same way as other risk factors for each death, such as obesity or a high cholesterol level.

A key point may be that having a pessimistic view of life leads people to make bad decisions, while optimists tend to make good, beneficial ones.

Conclusion: those who look on the bright side of life are likely to get more out of it and more of it.

**Do you know why we have two ears and one mouth? We are supposed to listen twice as much as we talk. Anonymous*

**Make your life a mission, not an intermission. Arnold Glasgow*

**Be aware that a halo has to fall only a few inches to become a noose. Dan McKinnon*



Music Influences Life

Just exactly what is it about music that has the power to transform us? T.S. Eliot wrote, "You are the music while the music lasts." It makes us wonder what types of glorious tunes this great writer and poet listened to that inspired him.

Who cannot feel the emotional range within a symphonic overture? Who has not wanted to tap their feet to the upbeat rhythms of reggae, good ol' rock n' roll and the happy strains of a polka band?

Robert Glass says this about the power of singing and chanting. "It's a vibrational reality as our voices are joined together...it gets into your body...getting people to sing together is such a powerful experience, a bonding and creating of community."

We all know how good it feels to have soft, soothing music playing in the background when we are involved in some type of mental work. Music has been used for years by healers and shamans. Mainstream hospitals are beginning to catch on hiring sound specialists who suggest particular types of music that produce calm healing energies in their waiting rooms.

The best type of music is the one that resonates at a deep soul level. What may calm and relax me could drive you nuts and vice versa. It's truly a personal choice, although I think there are some types of sounds that are naturally more conducive to a sacred feeling.

In many cultures, singing and chanting are a large part of spiritual life. Bhakti yoga, which is the practice of chanting the holy names of God, is said to be beneficial for the healing of the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual bodies. If you think about it, some of the best times of your life involved music. And these happy memories can be revived anytime you listen to those same tunes.

Perhaps music is the universal language that will eventually bring us back together as community. Music will be the key to recognizing the Divine spark within that connects us all. Thomas Carlyle revealed this truth when he wrote, "Music is said to be the speech of angels... it brings us near to the infinite."

In the final analysis, we wouldn't be the people we are without the sound of music. We, as vibrational essences, respond to other vibrations. The higher and purer they are, the more inspired, connected and joyful we become.

And I like to believe that's what we're here for, to experience and express the joyful, loving beings that we truly are.

What if the hokey pokey is what it's all about?

Aging and mellowing?

We mellow out as we get older. The things that used to call up our warrior spirit are no longer reasons to step out of our joy. We are now ready to fully integrate the behaviour accumulated through the years and put it into practice by living a gentler, more peaceful existence.

The older we get, the more we shed the meaningless things and negative preoccupations. We become not harder with age but softer, not more bitter but more gentle. As we do we recognize that we are doing, in fact, what we came to earth to do. We are becoming the person we have wanted to be.

We now have the experience and strength and wisdom to deal well with life's challenges, even the challenge of aging itself. If you can affirm your aging and refuse to let your life get stagnant, your aging will present you with rich opportunities to explore new dimensions of yourself.

**** The wiser mind mourns less for what age takes away than for what it leaves behind. William Wordsworth***

**** If you ever feel that you should do something, lie down until the feeling passes! Arnold Patent***

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