



THE POWER OF ACCEPTANCE

Relishing the Good Times

By Catherine Dowling

Life seems to be exceptionally good to some people. Their lives soar effortlessly on a tide of apparently endless luck. Those of us who belong to the ‘glass half-empty’ crowd can look on with everything from amazement to jealousy. Yet in my experience, those so called ‘lucky’ people almost invariably espouse the ‘glass half-full’ philosophy. They know how to relish the good times, to wholeheartedly embrace their ‘luck’.

Our birth colors our lives to the day we die—or so the research I’ve been brushing up on lately tells me. It affects the way we think, feel and behave throughout our life and I have to say my own experience bears this out. For me birth was a near death experience. It laid down a blueprint for the way I respond, not so much to the hard times as to the good times. Birth is just one of the many early life experiences that can limit our ability to deal with difficulties, but it can also limit our ability to recognize and accept the good times when they come our way.

While researching, it struck me that being open to and embracing the good that life brings is just as important for our wellbeing as our skill in dealing with the difficulties.

I watched an experiment recently where film makers tricked the inhabitants of a whole village in England into believing they could create luck by touching a ‘lucky’ statue in a village park. Some of the inhabitants clung doggedly to the belief that they never had any luck, that good times never came their way. It was fascinating to watch how those glass half-empty people overlooked opportunities the film makers deliberately placed before them. They just didn’t see the good life delivered to their door, literally. Even when the film makers placed money on the ground directly in their path, they walked on by without seeing the notes at their feet.

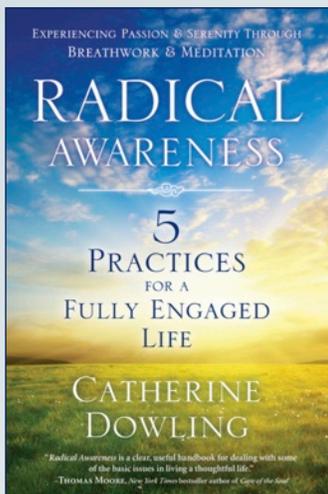
Regardless of whether this disposition to see the negative and ignore the positive is caused by our birth, it’s worth questioning ourselves about our ability to recognize and accept the good when it comes to us. How do we react to praise for example? I know I tend to shrug it off. In the grand scheme of spiritual development, we can get to the point where we are equally detached from both praise and criticism. But in the meantime, how much better would we feel if we could embrace the good will and love that people lavish on us when they praise us.

What we’re really doing when we accept praise is accepting our own talents and accomplishments. That acceptance allows us to approach life as if it were on our side. When we see life as being on our side, we begin to notice the little opportunities, connections and supports strewn in our path as surely and visibly as the money the researchers placed on the ground in that English village. Then we begin to make our own good times.

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“There is no coming to consciousness without pain. People will do anything, no matter how absurd, in order to avoid facing their own Soul. One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious.” ~ C.G. Jung



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