

The Visible Woman

**A Collection of Blogs on
Wisdom**

By Irene Brankin

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Stay on the pot if you want!

By Irene Brankin



My work with women is to support them to stop pretending and start living their life as fully as they can. By that, I mean – they see that they have a choice to get ‘off the pot’ and start listening to themselves.

Turning Point

I’m suggesting that, like most women, you were moving along quite nicely in your life when maybe something happened – could have been exciting, indifferent or boring. It could perhaps have been unexpected or something that you knew was in the offing. However it came about, it was something which caused you to stop, slow down and wonder where to go from then on. This is, what I would call, a Turning Point in your life.

Ignored Your Inner Call

You may also only recognise these turning points when you look back and reflect on your life so far. You can see where you ignored that beckoning (sometimes fleeting) inner call to take a different route. It can be painful to see what happened when you ignored yourself. And there may be occasions when the outcome took you in what turned out to be the right road for you – simply different!

Choice

These turning points are signals to you that it is now time for a change of YOUR CHOICE! What I am saying here is that this is when you ask yourself, "What is it I would like to change?" Or it may be you ask yourself, "What would I change if I knew anything was possible?"

Change is possible

It is really important that you remember to actually acknowledge that change is possible. Another thing to remember is that a question always empowers whereas an answer can block you into just that one conclusion.

Importance of Asking

The important thing is the asking as, until you ask, you can't receive anything different from what you have now. That last sentence is quite simple and we don't always put it into action.

A great question to start with, as it's always the start of creating different possibilities:

- What would it take to change this - whatever "this" is?
- Am I willing to put that into action?

It may be that your answer is, 'No I am not - I am going to sit on the pot' which is totally fine. It helps you to come into that place of your truth - a place of acceptance. This is your reality right now and really important to acknowledge.

I also know that it is hard to take action when a part of you is always holding on to the status quo! You can't change and stay the same at the one time.

It may though be that somehow from the inside, you are being told that it's so important that you allow the waiting, that you pause while you reflect on what you might do. This can be such a valuable place to be AND it is also important to eventually 'get off the pot'. You see, it's these internal conflicts that cause the lack of motivation!!

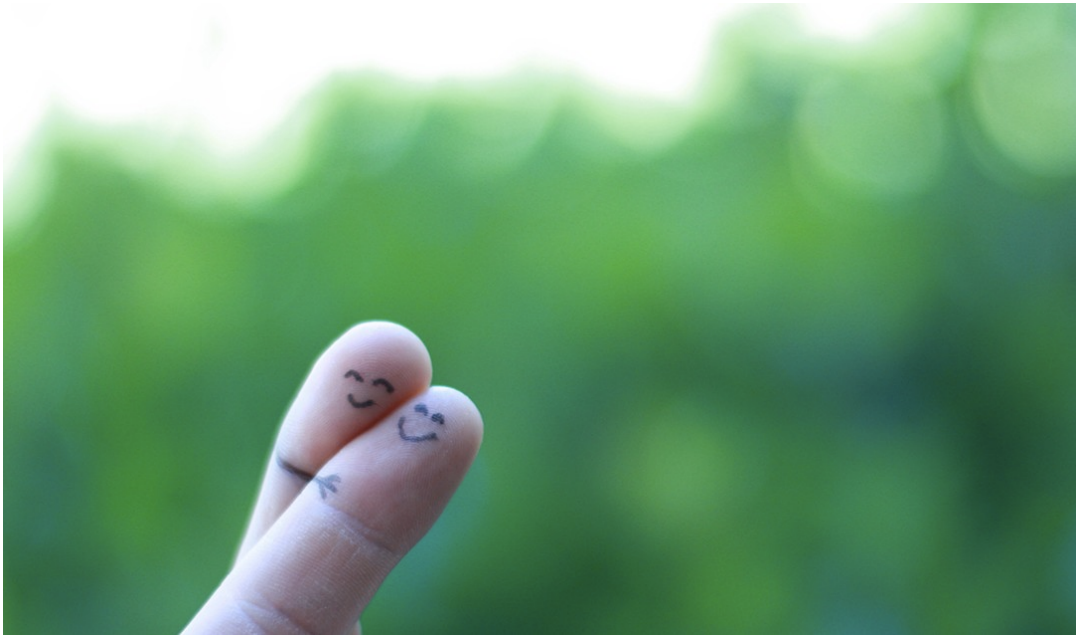
I come from a place that when I hear, "I've had enough of this," from myself and others, I simply say, "If you don't intend to change the circumstance, then don't complain".

Act on your own core values and take responsibility for your actions and that way you allow others to own theirs!!

I'll finish with that old saying, 'Life begins when you do!' so check out those turning points.

Hands Up for Hugs!

By Irene Brankin



Hands up for longer hugs or simply hugs???

I ask you to be a wee bit patient here before I get to the 'hugs' bit – thank you. I know it's important that you read the first bit too.

“Many of us hide painful feelings”

Painful Feelings

Many of us hide painful feelings whether that's sadness, feeling lonely, being in pain, or simply feeling lost and afraid because it's still not really okay to show or share these except in certain circumstances or with certain people.

It's tough to keep swallowing back our needs and to ask for help in any way so we strive to show the world that we are totally fine in whatever form that means for you
(you can add your own one to the list)

by putting on a face that the world wants to see
by being busy, busy,
by trying to have lots of fame and fortune,
by focusing attention and energy purely on family, work or
social media to your own detriment
by talking or laughing too much
by not allowing our vulnerability to be seen

It may be that you are dispirited in some way or that you are simply exhausted – who knows? What do we all need? We all need to be seen, acknowledged, be included and to be part of something whether a group, a family, a community..... It is indispensable nourishment for our soul. When this need isn't met, it leads to pain inside you that is all the more searing when you are conscious of it.

Research

I didn't know this so for me (and hopefully you) this is useful information from a Robert Milstein –
"The average length of a hug between two people is 3 seconds. But researchers have discovered something fantastic. When a hug lasts 20 seconds, there is a therapeutic effect on the body and mind. The reason is that a sincere hug produces a hormone called "oxytocin", also known as the love hormone. This substance has many benefits in our physical and mental health, helps us, among other things, to relax, to feel safe and calm our fears and anxiety. This wonderful calming is offered free of charge every time we have a person in our arms, we cradle a child, we cherish a dog or cat, we're dancing with our partner, the closer we get to someone or just hold the shoulders of a friend."

Wasn't that worth waiting for???

To have this wonderful information that proves what you and I have known all along – the benefits of genuine hugging!!

The Asking

The one thing for me is that we can all forget to do is to ask for help and support. It is as simple and as hard as that!! The important thing is the Asking as until you ask, you can't receive i.e. anything different from what you have now.

If you are lucky enough, sometimes a person spontaneously will be there for you as they are aware that you simply need that support – to feel someone is there who doesn't want anything from you.

“Something in touching strengthens the will to live in us”

Touch and Hugging

In my years of being around, I've been lucky enough to have had many different kinds of healing touch – reflexology, massages of different traditions, Reiki – too many to put down here. For me, benevolent touching is a very old way of healing.

This kind of focused physical contact most probably stimulates our life-force, not just on an emotional level but on a biological level inside our very cells. Something in touching strengthens the will to live in us. It allows us to receive that moment or more of letting go to, and trusting another. When we get a real, giving hug, we can feel supported and lean upon someone and rest.

For me, the healing comes about not by saying anything but by letting another know that their pain, their suffering and their fear matters. You are giving them refuge and silently saying, 'I see YOU and YOU really matter'.

So are you with me? Is your hand up for more of the giving and receiving of Hugs? I hope so because mine definitely is!!

Having the courage to face up to life's challenges

By Irene Brankin



Real courage is not about the absence of fear, but about doing the right thing in spite of it. Even the most timid of us can be helped to overcome our fears.

You must know someone, or have read something about people of all ages who have suddenly found the strength to save others; or to stand up to a bully even knowing they may not win; or to change direction when everyone else is saying “don’t”.

Fear can come in, as when you take your courage in both hands and speak out, you can literally be crucified. This has actually happened to the people who have been “whistleblowers” within our NHS recently. This is what I call courage and I salute those who do this knowing the consequences.

And when life confronts you with difficulties (expected or unexpected and perhaps not as large as the above) or challenges you in your everyday life, remember you are resilient and will come through whatever it is that’s pulling you down.

When you feel scared, timid or anxious, allow the feelings to be there, and then take some deep breaths, even cross your fingers, and face whatever your fears are. Facing and dealing with the challenges life throws at you, takes courage – real courage. And don’t forget, that simply living life takes courage too.

Don’t miss out on having fun on this life’s journey through seeing yourself as lacking courage. Know that you have this, and are resilient. Enjoy all those wonderful opportunities and experiences on your way.

Connection: An energy that sustains our well-being

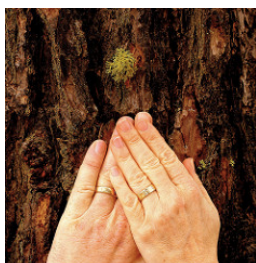
By Irene Brankin

Sometimes we don't realise or acknowledge how fond of someone we are until they go away – this could be through illness, death, change of job or moving house.

It's not only the major losses that are important to acknowledge, it's also the more usual changes that most of us don't even think too much about.

What about when someone leaves their position or goes on holiday or no longer attends the same exercise class? Yes, at times it can be a relief or a big sigh of "thank goodness" but in the main we dismiss our feelings of loss – that we simply miss them.

So what I'm saying here is for you to store up your memories of that person or happening, and allow yourself time to think of when you argued, laughed, simply nodded in passing, or shared special insights or offered support. Why? Because out of the blue, at unexpected moments, those memories will give you that connection with the person, people or happening wherever they are and whatever it was.



"We need to let go of the myth of self-sufficiency"

I think the definition that the American writer, Brene Brown, uses rings so true. She sees "Connection as the energy that exists between people when they feel seen, heard, and valued; when they can give and receive without judgment; and when they derive sustenance and strength from the relationship". Lovely words that warm my heart as we can forget that from the moment we're born, we're wired for connection. It's in our biology – to thrive emotionally, physically, spiritually and intellectually.

We need to let go of the myth of self-sufficiency – "I'm going it alone or I don't need anyone or I can do it all by myself". Not so. We need other people in our lives whether as friends, acquaintances, lovers, supporters - as mirrors to show that our existence counts, and that we matter.

It's good to take a pause and connect again with those memories as you move through life.

Living a wonderfully rich life stems from a state of mind

By Irene Brankin

Whilst on my recent Swedish supervising weekend I talked with some of the other coaches about the tools and techniques we use in our work. One of them was to do with “If you woke up tomorrow after a wave of a magic wand, what would your ideal life look like?” or a variation on that theme.

This got us all thinking and reflecting, which created much amusement and some deep sharing later on.

So I'd like you to reflect on that same question: “If you could wave a magic wand, what would your ideal life look like?” At this time of year it's particularly pertinent as we move towards the end of 2012 and the beginning of a brand new year.

For some of you, it may be that your life is right on track. While for others, it's not.

“If you could wave a magic wand, what would your ideal life look like?”

Abraham Lincoln once said “Most people are about as happy in life as they make up their minds to be”. Wise words. And what I would say from that, is that discontentment comes from when your life's reality is no match for how you thought it would turn out.

Your life is not about working hard, pleasing others, and so on (of course most of us will do this at some point in our lives), but it comes from you being in a contented emotional state, which then allows you to maximise your effectiveness. See it is an inside job. If you want to achieve that magic wand place, you have to win the battle in your thinking first.

You can't let any failure outside you, get inside you.

You can't control the length of your life – but you can control its width and depth.

Sharing our gifts and talents with the world is the most powerful source of connection with one another, our Self and the mystery of life. This is what brings a sense of perspective, meaning and purpose to our lives.

Thank you for reading.

If my words touch you and you want to know that you really matter, then visit my [website](#) or [contact me](#) and let's see how I can do that for you.



Dene