

Playing the what if game....

Do you remember as a child thinking and dreaming, wondering what things would be like when you grew up? I think most kids thought what it would be like to be 18, have their own room, car, to have more choice, because they were now 18; how about when they turn 25, 30, or oh my, 40. The mind of the child would go where it wanted to, unless they were already beaten down by harsh words, facts of life, or told not to get too big, or etc.

My question to you is. "What did you dream up as a child?" Were there certain future ages that would of meant something significant to you? 21 maybe, or the day you get married, a parent, etc. Recall the dream, for that is what it was. What did it feel like to be free enough to let the mind wonder, literally and figuratively, 'wonder' "What will it would be like when I am?"

Now, you get to play the game again. They say day dreaming is important to mental health. Gets us out of the mundane, the now and helps us find solutions to problems. When we use it during times of goal setting and recording, it can be even more powerful in creating not only solutions, but also our future. Everything we have was once a thought, which then went through the process of cultivation through to an actual thing or event.

So, here is the game. Each day, for the next 2 weeks, as you move through your journal, not only are you to reflect and notice what has happened, but also what you wonder about.

- Where does your mind go?
- What are the images and ideas that come to mind?
- What are the emotions and situations that arise from these images?
- who is there and how are they interacting?

In your journal, record the most significant points that come up. Even dot points will help anchor the memory and plant the seed of change easier.

Another suggestion of how to use this is, and more so when you are feeling overwhelmed, down, bored or frustrated as these can be signals of not looking after yourself.

Take a few deep breaths, and allow your mind to wonder, similar to the last exercise and ask yourself..

"What if I gave myself permission to....(choose a mindfulness activity as listed on page or any other self care activity"

The purpose of this activity is to start increasing the types of self care activities you give yourself, and if you do not currently look after yourself much, helps you to start doing so. It is likely to be uncomfortable and confronting at first. Thoughts such as "How do I even do that?" Am I allowed to lay in the bath and read a book?" "How about xyz that needs to be done, or people to see, or what would..... say?" The exercise is to do just these things, bring up some of

your limiting beliefs about yourself and give you the opportunity to see if the belief is

1. Nurturing to yourself;
2. Mean or derogatory to yourself and the way you see yourself
3. It is ok for others to do, think, say these things but not you

Bottom line, the questions are to increase your self-awareness of how you see yourself, and if you are prepared to start looking after you, or allowing others to help look after you.

Personally, I went through a horrible phase in my journey when after we agreed to separate, with two small children, I needed to relearn who I was beyond a mother, wife and student. Those first few weekends without the children were really confronting, and certainly gave me the space to ask the questions being suggested here. I needed to start thinking about what else I could be doing, and what in fact I wanted to be doing. My limiting beliefs and blocks previously preventing me from doing the things I started to dream and what if about, with or without kids, and what I was going to do about it. My outcome was a little less exciting than what it could have been, but I did learn it was ok to be a workaholic, and perpetual student, that I in fact really loved my own company, and this was one thing missing while we were together. I have learnt that I am a quite achiever, and more creative than I would of

thought, all those years ago. I have been able to see myself and others in a different way. I learnt to feel less guilty about some of the simple pleasures and also started to feel the value of small rewards, and pleasure times and doing things 'my way'. I turned out to be a much nicer person, more compassionate, because I needed to be compassionate on myself when the challenges of self-care came up.

A huge learning curve that doesn't particularly end, I think we just become more ok with doing things without too much worry about what others think or say. I challenge you not to wait until you have a major health crisis, or a seismic shift in your world before you start to allow your inner child be heard and felt again. Give yourself the gift of self-love, care, and nurture, and then show others around you how you want to be treated. For how can you show another, if you don't know yourself?

If you are stuck for ideas, read book on self-care, self-development. I love to read novels that describe other people's lives and tend to think, wow that lady did that, maybe I could too. Biographical books of people you admire, or would aspire to be if you chose to. Action and adventure books, or movies etc and put yourself in the picture and get a sense of what it might be like if you were in fact doing those things.

A few movies that really struck home for me was 'Under the Tuscan Sun' this lone woman transforming a villa in a foreign country with such different ways

of living, attempting to assimilate while finding herself after her divorce. There are so many powerful metaphors and analogues to people attempting to find their way in a foreign setting of life.

Another way of helping you through this phase, and beyond is think this experimental you as being a young child or even the rebellious teenager. They are stages of life that **must** be moved through to grow into an adult. With this in mind, what do you say to an infant who is trialing new things? Tastes, textures, activities, etc. do you automatically say, “No that isn’t for you?” or do you encourage them to explore to test and try different things to expand their world? Why do we need to stop as adults to develop the newer parts of ourselves? I dare say we don’t, and I encourage you to start experimenting and seeing what you do and don’t like.

The beauty of this is you are experimenting, and You don’t have to know before you try what the pleasures in life you have. Start small. Read different books, go to a movie by yourself or with someone different, do a day trip somewhere new and see what is around you. You might like time by yourself, you might like the collective feel in a movie house, or exploring with travel. Art, or creative sides may come out if you consider drawing, writing, painting. It doesn’t have to be published, it could be just for yourself. Writing short stories for loved one’s birthdays where you capture their or your year in third person adventure. These ideas are in fact giving me a few ideas too, but they

wouldn’t have come out, if I hadn’t sat down and started putting down ideas of what I have learnt of the years during my own self-discovery.

Preparation for the coming week

What self-care are you committing to this week? _____

How many times and for you long? _____

Describe how it will feel to do this self care activity. _____

What is your commitment for focused change this week? _____

What do you need to do, or plan to bring it together? Some ideas could be meal planning, exercise regime, time planning, organising a sitter, book into a class, talk with family about changes you want to make and explain why.

How will you know you are achieving your commitment? _____

How will it feel to complete your committed to activity? _____

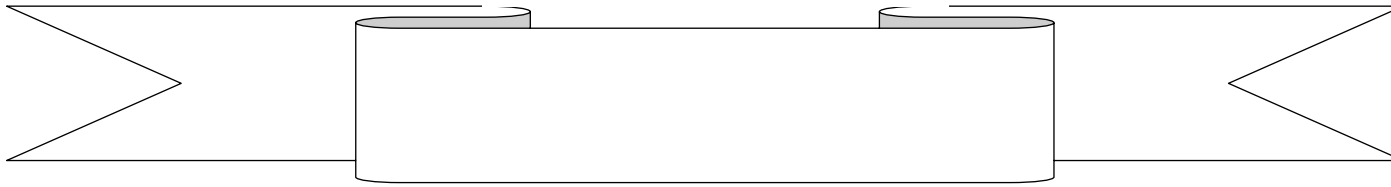
What might it mean in the bigger picture of what you are working towards?

Who do you need to contact to ask for help to action this commitment?

What is the real cost if you don't follow through? _____

What is the cost benefit of following through? _____

Week's Focus



Tasks to complete this week towards your goals

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Important activities to include in this week's planning

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Meal Ideas – Focus on _____

Shopping List

- Self Care, reward activity Ideas**
- Explore your values and what is important to you
 - Walk in the garden/park
 - Refine your mission statement and character list
 - Hug a tree
 - Write in your journal with honesty
 - Go out to a white table restaurant and spoil yourself
 - Draw your dream home
 - Buy flowers for the home/office
 - Get facial, pedicure or manicure
 - Go for a drive to somewhere new
 - Be a tourist for a day
 - Re write your budget
 - Clean up your bank accounts
 - Cancel subscriptions you don't use any more and tally up your savings for the months to come
 - Declare what is important to you, to significant others.
 - Count your blessings and all the ways you are looked after.

| <u>Day/Time</u> | <u>Monday</u> | <u>Tuesday</u> | <u>Wednesday</u> | <u>Thursday</u> | <u>Friday</u> | <u>Saturday</u> | <u>Sunday</u> |
|-----------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Before 7am | | | | | | | |
| 7am – 9am | | | | | | | |
| 9am – 12noon | | | | | | | |
| 12pm – 3pm | | | | | | | |
| 3pm – 6pm | | | | | | | |
| 6am – 9pm | | | | | | | |

Weekly Planning

From the various roles, tasks and events you have committed to doing this week mark them on the weekly planner, here you can see where and how you can fit everything in.

"Beware of a man who laughs and his belly does not jiggle;
that is a dangerous person."
Confucius

Day 36

Breakfast _____

Morning tea _____

Lunch _____

Afternoon Tea _____

Dinner _____

Snacks _____

Self Care for the day _____

In your Life's Journal record the following for the day:

What feelings or emotions come up during today's self-care activity?

What is the lesson from this? _____

By whose rules were you operating from today? _____

What great thing happened today? _____

While playing the 'What if...' game, what came up? _____

How did these ideas make you feel? _____

Describe what were you doing in the ideas that came up? _____

If I was unafraid and acting from my highest self, what would I be doing to move forward in my life?

What would it mean or lead to if I just did it? _____

What step or action do you need to take today towards achieving your goals? _____

What is the root emotion here? _____ Tap it out.

Who do you need to forgive to create positive space for the now?

"This is the beginning of a new day. You have been given this day to use as you will. You can waste it or use it for good. What you do today is important because you are exchanging a day of your life for it. When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever; in its place is something that you have left behind...let it be something good."

Anon

*"The brain is a wonderful organ. It starts the moment you get up and
doesn't stop until you get to the office"*
Robert Frost

Day 38

Breakfast

Morning tea

Lunch

Afternoon Tea

Dinner

Snacks

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What step or action do you need to take today towards achieving your
goals? _____

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Who do you need to forgive to create positive space for the now?

"The work will wait while you show your child the rainbow, but the rainbow won't wait while you do the work."
Patricia Clafford

*"Nourishment is not limited to food alone. It includes
all the ways we feed the many needs we have"
Marc David*

Day 38

Breakfast

Morning tea

Lunch

Afternoon Tea

Dinner

Snacks

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What would it mean or lead to if I just did it? _____

What step or action do you need to take today towards achieving your
goals? _____

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Who do you need to forgive to create positive space for the now?

*"You don't get to choose how you're going to die or when. You can only decide how you're going to live."
Loan Baez*

"The minute you begin to do what you really want to do, it's really a different kind of life."
Buckminster Fuller

Day 39

Breakfast _____

Morning tea _____

Lunch _____

Afternoon Tea _____

Dinner _____

Snacks _____

Self Care for the day _____

In your Life's Journal record the following for the day:

What feelings or emotions come up during today's self-care activity?

What is the lesson from this? _____

By whose rules were you operating from today? _____

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"As you practice these precious teachings, slowly the clouds of sorrow will melt away, and the sun of wisdom and true joy will be shining in the clear sky of your mind."
Kalu Rinpoche

"When I loved myself enough: I stopped trying to banish the critical voices from my head. Now I say, "Thank you for your views, and they feel heard.
End of discussion."

Kim McMillen

Day 40

Breakfast _____

Morning tea _____

Lunch _____

Afternoon Tea _____

Dinner _____

Snacks _____

Self Care for the day _____

In your Life's Journal record the following for the day:

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What is the lesson from this? _____

By whose rules were you operating from today? _____

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"Let us take care of the children, for they have a long way to go. Let us take care of the elders, for they have come a long way.
Let us take care of those in between, for they are doing the work.

Anon

"Nobody sees a flower – really – it is so small – we haven't time – and to see takes time. Like to have a friend takes time."
Gloria O'Keefe

Day 41

Breakfast

Morning tea

Lunch

Afternoon Tea

Dinner

Snacks

Self Care for the day

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What is the lesson from this? _____

By whose rules were you operating from today? _____

What great thing happened today? _____

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What is the root emotion here? _____ Tap it out.

Who do you need to forgive to create positive space for the now?

"Ponder on this:

How do the standards you set for your diet relate to the standards you set for yourself as a person?
Are these standards realistic? If not, consider what you would suggest to a friend, and listen to this wisdom.

"You are what you repeatedly do. Excellence is not an event - it is a habit." Aristotle

Day 42

Breakfast _____

Morning tea _____

Lunch _____

Afternoon Tea _____

Dinner _____

Snacks _____

Self Care for the day _____

In your Life's Journal record the following for the day:

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What is the lesson from this? _____

By whose rules were you operating from today? _____

What great thing happened today? _____

While playing the 'What if...' game, what came up? _____

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What step or action do you need to take today towards achieving your goals? _____

What is the root emotion here? _____ Tap it out.

Who do you need to forgive to create positive space for the now?

"To ignite the healing fire, you need to believe something with your heart. The heart holds the catalyst that causes the rest of the body mind to heal in a chain reaction."

Carolyn Myss