



When Life Takes You In A Different Direction

When you were little, what did you dream your life would look like? Perhaps you would you be an adventurous astronaut, a beautiful ballet dancer, or an outrageously talented writer! When you got a little older, did you imagine meeting “the one,” having a family, landing your dream job, enjoying financial security, and even traveling the world? Sometimes life can be full of surprises... and sometimes, just sometimes, it doesn’t always look the way we thought it would. As kids, most of us looked toward our parents, our culture, and our peers to model and shape the way we thought our lives should look. So now that we are all grown up, how do we reconcile the vision versus the reality that we are living? If you are living the life you always dreamed of, congratulations! If you feel there’s still more work to be done, read on.

In this issue of Staying Connected, we talk to Hoffman graduates who have had unexpected turns in their lives, what they did with those beliefs of how life should have turned out, and the inspiration that came with turning in a different direction. The road to happiness is rarely ever straight. Realizing the possibilities right in front of you, meeting yourself where

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Great Expectations

Process graduate Tamara O’Brien talks about life’s great expectations.

Teacher’s Corner

Hoffman teacher Kani Comstock talks about missed motherhood and tools for regaining our footing.

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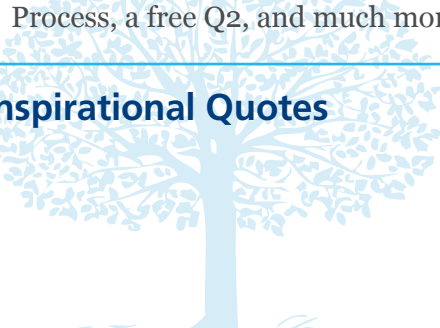
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Inspirational Quotes



Hoffman Institute Foundation

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Great Expectations

By PAULA JONES

Heather describes herself as an emotionally sensitive person raised in an environment of emotional toxicity. She adapted and became successful as an adult, but Heather said her internal life was still in dire straights. She was plagued with chronic feelings of grief, anxiety, dread and fear, and these feelings took a huge toll on her body. In her early 30s, she was hospitalized for a worsening condition that had her at the edge of death. Fortunately, the treatment Heather received began to take hold and she began to get better. "In a way, it was a miraculous recovery," she says.

Heather noticed, however, that instead of feeling appreciative for her renewed lease on life, she had an incredible sense of loss. She was very confused by her feelings and decided to search for a way to come back to life. "My body had come back, but the rest of my life had not," she says. "I had to do something. I was losing my life again."

When she spoke to a couple of family friends who had attended the Process, something inside her said, "Just do it." She applied for a scholarship and heard almost immediately that there was one available to her. After attending the Process, Heather no-



"Life is what happens when you're making other plans."

~ John Lennon

ticed many benefits from her experience. She laughs more, feels closer to friends, meets people more easily, feels others are more drawn to her, recovers from adversity quicker, feels more pleasure in general, wakes up expecting exciting things to happen, and feels there is more access to "invisible guidance."

A school social worker who works with high school students, Heather views the purpose of her job in a different way since the Process as well. "Instead of having an agenda to change these kids, my job is to see them for who they really are -- to

see their divine spark and to be curious about their experience." She has also felt the courage needed to start some really important conversations in her relationships and is surprised by how easy it has been. "When you are standing in truth or vulnerability there is a courage and a grace that stands with you," Heather says. From a physical standpoint, Heather reports that she has had "perfect lab work" since attending the Process. "It turns out I didn't have to change my life, I just had to change my perspective about it," she says. "My problems were

mostly internal, not external. There is an incredible freedom in that."

Heather Kazda delighted me. I feel as if she has traveled very far in her life, gaining much wisdom. I am personally thankful that the Hoffman Scholarship Fund enables people like Heather to go through the Process, allowing a shift in a recipient's life. The fact that Heather is in a helping profession, guiding young people at an especially vulnerable age shows how the Hoffman Scholarship Fund has a ripple effect on society as a whole. Many of us feel if we can help just one person, then our gift has been well worth it. Heather is an example of how a gift to the Hoffman Scholarship Fund does not help just one person on her journey, but also helps that person spread her amazing spirit in order to help many others. [H](#)

Spirit, Lead Me

By PAULA JONES

I spoke with Kani Comstock, Hoffman teacher, former director of the Hoffman Institute, and author of *Journey Into Love* and the upcoming book *Honoring Missed Motherhood: Loss, Choice and Creativity*, about measuring up to the expectations we have for ourselves.

“I don’t know anybody whose life has turned out the way they planned it,” Kani said. “What our lives look like is different than what we imagined.”

Kani stresses that in visioning our lives, we shouldn’t get mired down in the details. So many of us envision the exterior of our lives, such as what our house should look like, where we should live, what we should do for a living, how much money we should make, what we should look like, what our partner should look like, and how many children we should have. “These are visions formed out of our patterns,” Kani explains, “which is not the path we want to travel.”

We may be adopting the patterns of our parents, for instance, when choosing our career, or rebelling against the patterns of our parents by choosing a particular partner. Either way, the pattern is doing the guiding, rather than our own spirit.

In deciding what our lives should look like, where we should be and when we should “arrive,” many of us compare ourselves to others. “Comparing ourselves to others is a pattern,” Kani continues. **“Whenever we are looking outside of**



ourselves to others as a determining factor in a decision, we are off track. Just the fact that we are comparing ourselves to others should be a danger sign.”


If we fail to achieve the milestones we think we should have reached along with others in our community, this can burden our self-esteem. We may feel that we must have missed something or that there is something wrong with us. We may even feel that we will never find true happiness in this lifetime if we have missed a particular life event.

How do you stop looking outside of yourself to define what your life should be? Kani encourages us in-

stead to get in touch with our own spirit in order to determine what is true for ourselves alone. **“We can tell what is really best for us if it brings us to the state of aliveness, self-worth, joy and creativity,”** she says.

Focusing on these feelings is the path to defining and then achieving true fulfillment, rather than focusing on what the exterior of our lives should look like. When we focus on what we truly want to feel, we may want to feel loved and loving; trusted and trusting; supportive and supported; whole, happy and healthy. If we hold the feeling of what we want and assess our options about those feelings, the decisions we make will be aligned with our true desires -- and we won’t lose our way trying to paint the exterior of our vision.

How do we get in touch with Spirit? Kani reminds us that clearing out patterns, one at a time, over time, is a way to connect with Spirit easily and directly. The more conscious we become, the fewer obstacles we have in connecting to Spirit. While it is still normal to get disconnected from Spirit on a regular basis, maintaining a spiritual practice builds our ability to reconnect regularly, as well. The more practice we have in reconnecting to that spirit, the easier and quicker it becomes.

In the short term, however, Kani reminds us of a simple way to get in touch with spirit. “Just ask!” she says. **“Say ‘Spirit, lead me’ and see what happens.”** 

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Hoffman teacher
Devi Cavitt

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Click [here](#) for contest details.



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- 1st Place: 50% the Process for a friend or family member - value of \$2350
- 2nd Place: A Free Q2 - value of \$1295
- 3rd Place: 5 sessions of coaching - value of \$750
- Weekly Prize: Every Friday on Facebook we will give a weekly winner 10% off ANY course, PLUS 2 free coaching sessions with the teacher of your choice - coaching value of \$300.

See our [website](#) for more details.

When Life Takes You In A Different Direction *continued from page 1*

you are today with what you have right now, and frequently readjusting your vision can lead you down a path beyond your wildest expectations.

In our Teacher's Corner, Hoffman teacher Kani Comstock tells us how to identify patterns that are at work

in regard to the goals we set for ourselves. She encourages us to tap into our spirit regularly and address the patterns that block our connection to spirit, so we can set goals and stay aligned with our true path.

“A wonderful gift may not be wrapped as you expect,” says Jona-

than Lockwood Huie, “but if you can look at this very moment as a gift, then you know you are living in the “present.”

Here's to Staying Connected... with yourself, with others, and with your Hoffman family.

Receiving Inspiration

Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect.

~ Mark Twain

I think the reward for conformity is that everyone likes you except yourself.

~ Rita Mae Brown

The individual has always had to struggle to keep from being overwhelmed by the tribe. If you try it, you will be lonely often, and sometimes frightened. But no price is too high to pay for the privilege of owning yourself.

~ Friedrich Nietzsche



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