



## Daily Emotional Fitness, *October 2020*

Select from one of the items below that speaks to you today. Perhaps it takes your mind to a different place for a few minutes. Perhaps it creates a different mood or new perspective.

### SHORT STORIES:

#### **A three-year old mind**

I hung out with a three-year old today. Don't worry, we were socially distanced (impossible you might think but this girl is SO mature, she totally gets it). I walked in the street while she walked along the sidewalk on a tiny pink bike, lifting her feet occasionally, finding balance for a brief moment and then returning to her 2-wheeled-waddle. I wondered what all this must feel like to her, she runs up to hug me and her mom yells "hey little one, let Stell have her distance" and she stops short, what does that teach a three-year old? She's a little quieter than she used to be, a little bit of sad about her now, a little bit of sad about all of these days... But as she "rode her bike" next to me, she'd tell us to stop. Look! There! Purple flowers. Look! There! Pretty tiles! Look there! Butterfly! Ants! A snail shell! The smell of cookies! Pretty grass! And I thought about how a person who is beginning, for the very first time, to form a sense of self is doing so in the midst of all of this messiness. Is doing so in the midst of all this fear, anger, uncertainty, and lack of information and yet, there she was making everyone stop every other minute to take in beauty. All it took was a moment, to check in, notice the surroundings.

And she wasn't wrong, it was beautiful, every single time she showed us.

I'm going to keep thinking about that, keep rerouting my brain to the three-year-old inside of me, who wants to stop and see the flowers and the ants.

Stella Totino

#### **Searching for Happiness**

A wise teacher once brought balloons to school, told her pupils to blow them up and write their name on one. After the children tossed their balloons into the hall, the teacher moved through the hall mixing them all up.

The kids were given five minutes to find the balloon with their name on it, but though they searched frantically, no one found their own balloon.

Then the teacher told them to take the balloon closest to them and give it to the person whose name was on it. In less than two minutes, everyone was holding their own balloon.

The teacher said to the children, "These balloons are like happiness. We won't find it when we're only searching for our own. But if we care about someone else's happiness...it will ultimately help us find our own."

Blake Menefee 3<sup>rd</sup>

Innovative Sales Executive/Speaker/Author/Futurist

## **REFLECTION/QUOTES:**

You are worthy now.

Not when you get that job,

Not when you lose twenty pounds,

Not when people know who you are.

Now. Simply because you exist.

*(Nina Parker)*

*Tinybuddha.com*

"Let everything happen to you

Beauty and Terror

Just keep going

No Feeling is Final"

*Rainer Maria Rilke*

"Say yes, and you'll figure it out afterwards"

*Tina Fey*

The difference between life and the movies is that a script has to make sense.

*Arthur Schoopenhauer*

"A walk in the woods brings the soul back home"

*Mary Davis*

Life is like walking through paradise with peas in your shoes.

*Charles Edward Jerningham*

"The best thing for being sad," replied Merlin, beginning to puff and blow, "is to learn something. That's the only thing that never fails. You may grow old and trembling in your anatomies, you may lie awake at night listening to the disorder of your veins, you may miss your only love, you may see the world about you devastated by evil lunatics, or know your honour trampled in the sewers of baser minds.

There is only one thing for it then — to learn. Learn why the world wags and what wags it. That is the only thing which the mind can never exhaust, never alienate, never be tortured by, never fear or distrust, and never dream of regretting. Learning is the only thing for you. Look what a lot of things there are to learn."

*T.H. White, The Once and Future King*

“I am an old man and have known a great many troubles, but most of them never happened.”

*Mark Twain*

#### **HUMOR:**

“Laughing at our mistakes can lengthen our own life. Laughing at someone else’s can shorten it.” *Cullen Hightower*

“A woman is like a tea bag – you can’t tell how strong she is until you put her in hot water.”

*Eleanor Roosevelt*

“My grandmother started walking five miles a day when she was sixty. She’s ninety-seven now, and we don’t know where the hell she is.”

*Ellen DeGeneres*

“The road to success is always under construction.”

*Lily Tomlin*

“Age is an issue of mind over matter. If you don’t mind, it doesn’t matter.”

*Mark Twain*

I always carry a knife in my purse. You know. In case of cheesecake or something.

Dear Heart, Please, stop getting involved in everything. Your job is to pump blood. That’s it.

*Rebel Circus*

#### **FOR WRITERS/LIST MAKERS:**

<https://littlecoffeefox.com/brainstorm-list-of-100/>

Shelley Abrahamson, LittleCoffeeFox.com, writes “All you need to do is pose a question or theme that you would like to explore, then **write out 100 ideas in a list**. That’s it. Seriously.

The magic happens when you force yourself to push past the ideas that you are already familiar with and come up with surprising and unexpected answers.”

Sitting down with 30 minutes to generate any answer that comes to mind allows one to then reflect on this very long list of thoughts and perhaps see trends or patterns. See LittleCoffeeFox.com Questions may include:

#### **ACTIVITIES:**

**The first thing in the morning:** Quick tip to start the day, when you wake and before you get out of bed, roll on your back, close your eyes and begin to scan your body slowly starting with your toes and ending with the top of your head. Notice any stiffness and relax those muscles, 1 by 1 while taking in a deep 4 count nose breath and a 4 count mouth exhale. You can complete this in 2 minutes and before you get out of bed, set your daily intention.

**Before breakfast:** When you first get up, step outside and inhale slowly, imagining the new day filling your lungs, then exhale longer than you inhaled to release everything from yesterday and the night. Repeat 3-5 times.

**Emotion acceptance exercise:** Take a moment to notice your emotion, name it. Now close your eyes and notice where you feel it in your body, breathe into it without judgment, allow it and continue to breathe, When you're ready open your eyes, take a 4 count nose inhale and a loud forced mouth exhale. Negative emotions will often soften, while positive emotions will often continue.

Lose yourself for 10 minutes while traveling the world on a **virtual museum tour...**

<https://www.travelandleisure.com/attractions/museums-galleries/museums-with-virtual-tours>

**Free yoga for educators Thursdays at 7:30pm** Michelle Weintraub

free Yoga class for anyone working in the school system (*even parents who are teaching their own kids!*) - public/parochial/private. If you or someone you know is educating children - in any way - please use the Zoom link for an All Levels class. Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom/register/tZlvdemoqTMuHt0fTTog5HCvFawFLPWyfW4d>

**Yoga to shift perspective (20 minutes)**

YogawithAdriene.com

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=icfwMWYDeac>

Tackle a small decluttering project – just a kitchen drawer, closet shelf or bin in the garage.

#### **NATURE:**

Offer to walk a **neighbor's or friend's dog**.

Find a small body of water and **toss pebbles** to watch the ripples. Or watch the patterns created by leaves or twigs floating on the water.

Take a short **night-time walk** to observe the stillness.

At night, sit outside for 10 minutes at night to **observe the stars/moon/clouds**/outline of trees and the fresh air. Try this wearing your pajamas and a warm jacket if needed – doing something that that might feel silly.

Invite a friend for a **picnic on the grass** at a local park. Sit on a blanket on the grass or sit in a chair but take your shoes off so you feel the grass.

Test the theory that a 15-minute **walk in the woods** reduces cortisol hormone level, lowers blood pressure and heart rate, and increases alertness.

### **ARTSY THERAPY:**

Take a short walk in the woods, noticing as **many shades of green** as you can, then all shades of brown, yellow, and red.

Using your phone, **take photos of things you find beautiful** and create an album you can look at containing only photos you love.

Create a small pillow or fabric mat **using fabric you love** (could be repurposing a piece of clothing or household item) and embroider, paint, or sew on a collage of scraps to form a word that resonates with you. The ability isn't important here, the creation of an item that reflects you without a pattern or expectation of perfection is what counts.