

You Are
Enough





A MESSAGE
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Dear Friend,

We all have times of feeling inadequate or unsure of ourselves. We may worry that we will fail, get hurt, or be ostracized by others. Our fear may keep us from stepping out, trying something new, and living a full and happy life.

How can we remember that we are perfectly imperfect—that we are good enough just as we are?

The following stories reveal how others have learned to quiet their inner critic and cultivate self-acceptance, self-love, and inner peace. May they help you to know that you are a whole, worthy, unique expression of God—and you are enough!

With love on your journey,

Your Friends in Unity



You Are Enough

By Rev. Lesley Miller

On the first day of seventh grade I was given an orange math book, while most of my friends got blue ones. The other students also had different teachers from me. I was soon known as one of the stupid kids. In time, I believed it too.

By high school, I quit doing homework, found creative ways to skip school, and showed up mostly for things I liked—chorus, show rehearsals, English, and history. Math teachers gave me Ds and moved me on.

The proof I was dumb came in 11th grade when I tried to solve an equation on the blackboard. When I turned around, the class was laughing at my proof. I felt small and ashamed. Blessedly, the bell rang, so I moved to erase my work. The teacher said to leave it. His advanced placement class was already coming in. My boyfriend was in that class. I remember running out of the classroom as the incoming students began to laugh. “That was you,” my boyfriend said after school, “wasn’t it?”

Yeah. Stupid and worthless, that's me.

After high school I went to work in my father's office, eventually starting community college at night. I did okay, once I got the knack of it. In time I transferred to a four-year college, married that boyfriend, graduated from college, started a family, and went wherever his career took us for 24 turbulent and emotionally scarring years.

In my 30s, I decided going to business school would help me. Once again, I headed to community college. On the math placement test, I could only answer two of the 20 questions. The counselor said, "This puts you in noncredit, remedial math. Honey, maybe you should find another goal."

What I heard were those high school classmates laughing at me at the blackboard. This time I got angry. "Honey," I said, "I don't need your credits. When is the class?"

Three days a week for an entire semester that noncredit course was magical! I aced it, and later, algebra, trig, precalculus, statistics, economics, and computer programming ... and got into University of Maryland Graduate School of Business full time!

Did it change my life the way I planned? No. I learned math and worlds more. I learned I was far from stupid. I left business school halfway through when my husband took a prestigious job in another city. I was still highly codependent, with no idea that I deserved better. That came later in healing the addictions that numbed my inner pain and kept me from knowing my worth. Years later Spirit showed me the false beliefs that had kept me in the prison I made for myself.

There are just some things we learn when we're ready—not before—and that's just fine.

Enough Already!

By Rev. Michael Korpan

A few weeks ago in response to my sister's request I officiated at my brother-in-law's funeral service. I was particularly nervous about doing this, thinking that whatever I might come up with would not be right or enough. I knew this audience. It was neither religious nor spiritual. All the way to the funeral chapel I fretted to my wife Susan that I just had not come up with something as meaningful as I wanted it to be.

Right before the service my sister made an extremely last-minute music request that disrupted what I had planned. Furthermore, the setting simply was not conducive to what I had in mind. Even the service time was moved up 45 minutes. I felt I had completely lost control.

During the service folks were invited to come forward and share any thoughts they had about the deceased. My three nephews got up and read a poem they had composed in tribute to their father. They were followed by my niece, Samantha, who has Down syndrome. After about three minutes of trying to express her feelings, she gave up with a shout of, "I can't do this!" She returned to her seat sobbing while a lump appeared in many of our throats.

At the beginning of the service I had distributed small battery-powered tea lights to everybody. I closed the service with R. Kelly's song, "I Believe I Can Fly," and invited people if they felt moved during the song to turn on the tea lights symbolizing the light that Luis (the deceased) had shared with them. Five seconds into the song, Samantha perked up. She recognized the

song and knew every word. Five seconds later she jumped up and began to sing the song, encouraging everybody to join in. The entire room responded by lighting their lights, holding them in the air, and swaying while Samantha sang on.

It was one of the most moving, emotional experiences I had ever been a part of. It was powerful on both a human and spiritual level. In a few short minutes I had witnessed my niece transform from the depths of pain to a joyful rebirth. Through her, Spirit opened the hearts of everyone present.

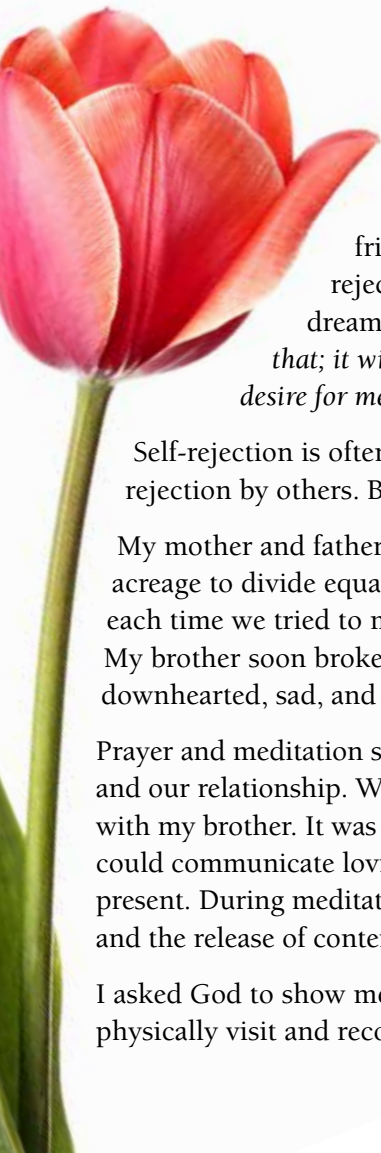
I had come into that experience feeling that I had not done a good enough job and that the success of the service was all on my shoulders. On the way home I asked Susan to remind me in the future that it was not all about me, and that I should get out of the way so Spirit could do what Spirit is always eager to do.

Many times our feelings of not being enough keep us on the sidelines. Those feelings also can motivate the opposite—thinking we must control every situation to overcome our inadequacy. Our spiritual work is to never lose sight of the fact that we can never be anything other than enough. We are the great I Am.



'Chant the Beauty of the Good'

By Rev. Frieda King



Feeling unaccepted or unworthy, even in a small way, is disheartening. We may have a perfectly valid idea or offering that is rejected by a spouse, relative, friend, coworker, or supervisor. We may reject our own good ideas and significant dreams. We may tell ourselves, *I could never do that; it will never work*, or *That's too big a dream or desire for me*.

Self-rejection is often more deflating and damaging than rejection by others. But we can help ourselves through it.

My mother and father left my brother, sister, and me some acreage to divide equally among us. Sparks began to fly each time we tried to make a decision about selling the land. My brother soon broke off communication with me. I felt downhearted, sad, and dejected.

Prayer and meditation seemed the best way to heal myself and our relationship. When I went into meditation, I would talk with my brother. It was as if we were together spirit to spirit. I could communicate lovingly and openly. His love for me was also present. During meditation, I asked for any needed forgiveness and the release of contentious feelings and thoughts between us.

I asked God to show me the way and give me the time to physically visit and reconnect with my brother who lived several

states away. As I did, thoughts of God's will for me came to mind and rested in my heart. God is absolute good, and I am the embodiment of divine good. By spiritual right I claimed individual self-worth, acceptance, and well-being in myself and in all my life experiences.

In time, divine guidance led me to my brother's home. I moved forward bravely and humbly, remembering the love I felt between us during meditation. We had a joyful reunion after about seven years of no communication. During those seven years the property sold and was divided equally.

Ralph Waldo Emerson suggested we not waste time brooding about dismal things. He advised instead that we "chant the beauty of the good."

Certainly, the good is always present. You, me, and every other person and group are divine creations. Our nature is divine and it is pure, good, and unaffected by opinions, words, or any outer circumstance. Our wholeness is always present within us. In truth, we cannot be diminished. No one can.

Jesus believed in the divinity of humankind and said we were holy just as he was. He spoke of "Abba, Father" as our father too. He had great faith in humanity, and said we would, "Do greater works than these" (John 14:12). Jesus believed in the Holy Spirit and Truth within each one of us.

Knowing this is powerful and uplifting. It is something for us to remember when someone or something causes us to feel or believe that we are inadequate, less than, or undeserving.

Our feelings of rejection and inadequacy are not permanent and do not define who we are. Who we are remains untouched. We are beauty and goodness, no less than the Divine in human form.

I Am More Than This

By Rev. Mark Fuss

The day was finished and I was glad.

Sitting on the edge of my bed that evening, I felt overwhelmed and unprepared for the change and busy-ness that had overtaken my life. It felt as if my work was never finished, an all-too-familiar feeling.

I reached over and picked up a new book by author Brené Brown that had been on my nightstand for months. As I thumbed through the introduction, my eyes fell on this statement:

“Let go of exhaustion as a status symbol and productivity as self-worth.”

Ooof!

It was as if I'd been punched in the stomach. I read it again and sat with my recognition of its truth. Much of my life had been filled with an urgent sense of striving, accomplishment, and achievement. I don't like to leave a task or situation undone, incomplete, or unfinished. That makes it hard for me to let go, put tasks aside, and step away for a while. Even when I have successfully completed my work, the sense of accomplishment is fleeting as I move on to the next cycle of achievement.

Pondering that realization, I remembered a lesson from years before. My Unity minister had noticed my striving energy and called me on it. “You are more than this,” she said, “more than any task, project, or achievement—you are an expression of God and you are enough.”

The tears flowed as I sat on the bed, both a release and a remembering.

I am more than this. I am more than any situation, task, or achievement. I am enough.

You, too, are more than this. You are more than any situation, task, or achievement. You are—as Unity author H. Emilie Cady once wrote, “A portion of God made manifest.” You are enough.



In the Land of Plenty

By Elari Onawa

In the Land of Plenty, I am already more than enough. This Land of Plenty is a wonderful, thriving place—a space of Truth and love. In this land, I know to the core of my being that I am already whole, complete, and perfect, just as I am. This is true regardless of what I look like, or what I have or haven't accomplished. In this real but sometimes far-off land, I know in the deepest part of my being that there is nothing missing within me. The answers are all there! I also have nothing to prove. In this space of Truth I don't need to earn love, I am love. I am worthy and securely rooted in the reality of being enough, immersed in plenty, immersed in love.

There is also a Land of Not Enough. When I'm in this space, I feel a need to prove myself. I see only lack, what's not yet finished, not enough time, and I feel fear. I certainly don't feel loved, or even lovable. I even wonder about my own worthiness. This land can feel quite real, but it is not.

You may have visited this land at some point too. However, regardless of the population there, it is an illusion born from the stories we tell ourselves. Something unwanted happens, and we start to question our abilities or perhaps our worthiness. If we stay in this space, we will always feel that we are “not enough,” no matter what we accomplish, how much we give, how hard we work, or how much we receive. It can be no other way, for it is done unto us as we believe. This is the tool by which we create.

If we forget who we truly are, we also forget why we are called forth to create more. We are called toward more, not because



we're not enough, and certainly not because we have to justify our place on this beautiful planet. Our heartfelt dreams and desires call us forth to who we truly are—eternal creators with infinite potential! So, we will naturally be called toward more. We are called forth to create because that is who we are, powerful creators, playing in the sandbox of time and space! We do not *have* to create, we *get* to create! We get to be here, we get to play, soar, and express all of the inspiring possibilities that are bubbling up, just waiting to find expression through us.

In this Land of Plenty, a land of divine perfection, we are already enough. In fact, we are amazing. We eagerly await what is in the process of eternally becoming and know that all is well. See you in the sandbox!

Awakening Faith

By Rev. Evelyn Foreman

I became an orphan at the age of 16 when my beloved mother passed away. As a teenager, I raised myself and was determined to get through to the other side of my struggle. “Getting through” meant diligently working to support myself and simultaneously earn a college degree.

Three years later, after working three part-time jobs to make ends meet, enduring many sleepless nights, and completing lots of hard work, I graduated with a bachelor’s degree in international business and a minor in economics.

Whew! I did it! I thought. I made it to the other side.

As days and years passed, I realized that “the other side” was simply a new beginning of something greater. The other side meant greater challenges and more life. I continued to allow my ego to lead me in breaking barriers and overcoming obstacles. And for a while, it worked.

The time eventually came when who I thought myself to be didn’t fit anymore. My usual way of resolving a problem or issue no longer worked. Everything I thought I knew fell apart. I began to spiral downward, feeling lost, confused, and overwhelmed. I turned to God for help when I was no longer able to rely on my old techniques.

In my quest to become whole, I began to truly understand that God is in all, through all, and as all. The foundational statement of God as Principle became my mantra: “There is only one Presence and one Power, God the Good.” Returning to this

statement became an act of faith. It helped me surrender my limited thinking as to what to do next. I no longer needed to be in charge, but could allow God's grace to work in me, through me, and as me.

In his book *Mysteries of Genesis*, Unity cofounder Charles Fillmore defines *grace* as “The conscious result of awakening faith.” Grace is more than the mercy of God given to us—it is the transforming power of God that allows us to express our Christ Nature within.

Knowing, experiencing, practicing, integrating, and living my life with the Truth that there is only one Presence and one Power, God the Good, helped me become sufficient unto myself. Now my self-confidence comes not from my head or from my ego nature, but from knowing that I am a child of God, one with the Christ within. As I allow this presence and power of God to shine through me, I am the vehicle for the Christ within to flow forth. I am one with the presence and power that is God. I am enough.



I Am More Than

By Rev. Jeanmarie Eck

I once saw God as a man,
And I felt less than.
I learned of Jesus, the man,
And I felt less than.
I looked in the great book
Written by men,
Edited by men,
Translated by men,
Controlled by men,
And I felt less than.

In the scheme of things
As a petite young woman
I felt small.
I felt I was the smallest of all.
I couldn't grow in the church
Of glittery things,
I couldn't grow in the church
Of punishing things,
I couldn't grow in the church
Of separating things.

Then I found a place where
People sat in the dark and
A bright light shone on me.

I found my joy as I
Danced
And my light grew.

I found my joy as I
Sang
And my light grew.

I found my joy as I
Spoke
And my light grew.

And people could see this light
And called it good.

And I took the light home with me,
But I didn't know what it was.

So I had to protect it.

And I protected it,

And protected it,

And protected it,

Until it didn't come out

Much anymore.

And I felt small.

And I got sick.

Oh, I **was** sick.

The sickness stopped me from

Singing,

The sickness stopped me from

Dancing,

The sickness stopped me from

Acting,

And I went from teacher to teacher

To see if they could see that light.

And I was told that I had

To try harder.

And all I tried wasn't

Enough.

But inside the light danced,

And inside it sang,

And inside it shone

Like a star.

Then,

When I was as small as I could be,

I found UNITY!

And little by little

The principles soaked in,

And there was a spark.

And I knew that I didn't have

To protect the light anymore

Because it couldn't be put out.

And

I learned that God is

Not a man,

And I felt MORE than.

I learned that the Christ is

Not a man,

And I felt MORE than.

And I learned that the great book

Was there to tell me

That I am MORE than.

And the healing began,

And the light grew,

But this time people didn't

Have to sit in the dark to see it.

And

I learned to be the REAL ME,

Which is more than man or woman,

It is **I AM**.

A photograph of a sunset over a body of water. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright, golden glow that reflects on the water's surface. Four geese are flying in the sky, their silhouettes dark against the bright light. The overall mood is peaceful and contemplative.

The Call

By Linda Berardi

*“... Whoever you are, no matter how lonely,
the world offers itself to your imagination,
calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting—
over and over announcing your place
in the family of things.”*

From “Wild Geese,” by Mary Oliver

When I was 4, a famous book greatly influenced my approach to life and its challenges. “I think I can. I think I can.” This was the mantra of the Blue Engine in *The Little Engine That Could*. It taught optimism and hard work as the keys to personal growth and achievement. If you think positively and believe in yourself, you can achieve your dreams.

Growing up, I sputtered “I think I can” under my breath during many challenging times. My first solo bike ride, first day at college away from home, first real job, first experience with a business sale, and more. Stick with it, have a can-do attitude, put one foot in front of the other, and you can accomplish anything.

However, life is always urging us to do more and be more—to stretch ourselves to greater achievements. And no matter how much we have accomplished or overcome, we are often plagued by the background noise of self-doubt: “Am I successful enough, smart enough, kind enough, pretty enough?”

When I first read Mary Oliver’s poem “Wild Geese,” I had just lost my job because of a harsh turn of events. I felt like my identity had been stripped from me, and I was left barren and cracked open. I didn’t know what to do next and had no idea how to apply positive thinking. I felt that my achievements had vanished into thin air.

In my state of lost identify, Mary Oliver’s words offered direction. They opened a deep well of hope within me.

Moved to tears, I realized my “lack thinking” had dissipated, and the clarity of her message was piercing through my confusion. There were no comparisons, no mountains to scale, no pressure to perform; no call for fortitude, courage, guts, stick-with-it attitude, or can-do spirit. The poem said nothing about having to achieve or strive or persevere against any odds. It was nothing

like the childhood story that had guided me in the past. It wasn't a mantra I needed to repeat, or a belief I had to instill that I could achieve or do anything. It was deeper and more compelling than that.

As I took in the words of her poem, I felt a presence in the air around me, in me, through me, *as me*. I realized I didn't have to do or accomplish anything. I only needed to listen, feel, and embrace a call that was meant uniquely for me.

“The world offers itself to your imagination, calls to you like the wild geese, harsh and exciting.”

Achievement without fulfillment leaves us wanting. Fulfillment is our true purpose and it springs from simple realizations:

Be who you are. That is how you answer the call.

Be who you are fully. That is how you respond to your divine and natural purpose.

The chug-a-lug “I think I can” chant of the little engine has quieted within me. Rising up in its place is a sweet whisper that hums my name: *Listen. Hear. Be*. Then do what is yours to do, what you *must* do, naturally and easily from “your place in the family of things.”

The wild geese are calling your name too. Can you hear them?



The Gift of You

By Karen Drucker

How often have I limited my thoughts and manifestation abilities with the idea that, “Well, I never win ... it always goes to someone else ... I’m not as good as so and so ...” or in my personal life, “I’m not worthy, or talented enough, or ...” fill in the blank. Growing up as a competitive swimmer it always felt like my issue was that I would hardly ever win—I always seemed to be on the other blocks but not on top in first place.

During the Posi (Positive) Music Awards in February, I taught a workshop about looking at the thoughts we think and how they affect us; specifically the concept that anything we say after “I am” is what we invite into our lives. Saying negativisms like “Oh, I am not good at that,” “I am not smart,” or “I am not worthy” plants that seed in our fertile mental soil and we water it unconsciously every time we say it.



Awhile back I was having a writing session with the highly talented singer/songwriter Karen Taylor-Good. We went back and forth with ideas of what to write about, and we both shared

what was happening in our personal lives. After complaining about getting older and how everything seemed to be sagging and dropping, we both realized we wanted to stop whining and start declaring our beauty and worth. From that came the idea of saying, when we looked in the mirror, “I am a gift,” and this song was born.

I Am a Gift

By Karen Drucker and Karen Taylor-Good

I am a gift, no matter what age, no matter how I look,
there's beauty in each stage.
I am a gift, and I promise every day,
when I look in the mirror I'll say, “I am a gift.”
I am a gift, I've loved really well,
and every year I've lived has a different tale to tell.
I've made mistakes, have some regrets.
But I promise I'll never forget I am a gift.
There may be times when I forget the truth about me.
When it seems time and youth are just marching on without me.
That's when I might need you to find me,
and ever so gently remind me that
I am a gift, a precious child. I'm put here on this earth
but only for a while.
So I make this vow and I say it with love,
“I am perfect and whole and enough, and I am a gift.”

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Feeding the Hungry

By Rev. Barbara Hadley

It was my regular Saturday to feed the hungry at St. Paul's inner city soup kitchen. While I was passing fruit to the people seated at tables, a man asked me if I was a preacher. That was a question I asked myself all the time—I



was in seminary and felt called to ministry, but was I a *preacher*? I made the decision right then that if I was a child of God, and if I believed God was always with me, then I could minister to this man.

I told him yes and he said he wanted to talk to me later. After I'd served pancakes, he asked me to step into the hall. We sat down in a little pew in the stairway.

"I'm in trouble," he said. "Somebody's trying to kill me. I got a lady friend and she told me that her brother's going to kill me because I passed her over. I went to the police and filed a report, but they can't do anything for me. I had to jump off the bus because there was a guy on the bus with his jacket zipped all the way up and I knew I was in trouble ..."

While he was talking I was trying to listen but was thinking, *I don't have any resources to offer this guy. I can't take him home,*

there's nothing I can do. I don't know who could help him. What can I do? What should I do?

I doubted myself and my ability to minister when I thought, *Prayer! Yes, I could pray with him.* Just as I needed to know my own strengths, he probably needed to know that he was enough to overcome the danger.

I asked him, "What's your name?" He told me. (I'll call him D.)

I said, "D, I bet you just want those guys to leave you alone. You just want to be okay and to stay out of trouble. Is that right?"

He nodded and said, "You believe me, don't you." It was a statement, not a question; he could tell I was hearing him.

"Yes. Would you like to pray about this?"

"Yes, I'd like that."

I thought *Oh, good, I guessed right!*

"D," I prayed, "you are enough to get through this. You have the same power inside of you that Jesus had, and you are aware of everything going on around you. This power guides you to make wise decisions about where to be and how to get around. Just like Jesus, you are wise and can overcome this challenge." I saw D's face light up, so I quickly said, "Amen."

Then I asked him, "When I said 'Jesus' your face lit up. What did that mean to you?"

He was smiling and he said, "It means I have Jesus inside me and he's going to guide me and help me. I have Jesus' eyes!"

"Yes, and that's a power that's always with you, D."

I left that day filled with peace and the faith that I could move forward with courage, and so could he.

A photograph of an older woman with short, light-colored hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a coral-colored sweater with a white collar and a gold necklace. She stands in a classroom. In the background, a young girl with dark hair is sitting at a desk, focused on writing. Another student is partially visible in the foreground, also working. The desk is cluttered with school supplies, including blue pencil cases, a black pencil holder with several pencils, and papers. A bulletin board with various papers is visible on the wall behind the students.

A PR Challenge

By Joyce Flowers

My boss's PR director called me and said, "He wants to nominate you for the National Distinguished Principal of the Year. The application is due Friday."

Many feelings flooded through me—delight, pride, and gratitude. I researched the award, a prestigious one that would involve delving into all my past experiences.

"I can't do this," I said to the PR director. "I don't have the membership credentials."

I let a small, fixable problem stall me out of the game.

It was fear, plain and simple. Suddenly, in the midst of the opportunity, I was flooded with self-doubt. Who was I to go for this nomination? I had made mistakes. I was not always performing up to my own standards. I was—simply put—human. I was not enough.

I prayed the next morning, going through my usual morning rituals of prayer, meditation, and readings from Unity authors. Then it came to me: "*Go for it; you have nothing to lose but fear.*"

I took the advice of my own higher guide and called the PR director that morning. "I am ready to try for this," I told her. "I was afraid before and telling myself I wasn't right for this honor, but now I'm thinking that I should do the application for it."

When I spoke with my boss that day, I said, "I'm thinking that it's okay that I've made mistakes, and I don't always meet my own expectations. There will be very few perfect people going for this award."

"I'm so glad you decided to do this," he told me. "And there will be *no* perfect principals participating in this award!"



Making Life a Masterpiece

By Rev. Toni Stephens Coleman

Life is an ongoing process of action and interaction. Everything is always in motion. Cause and effect, gravity, and so on, are all laws, always at work in life. Things happen in a lifetime that one might not consider to be a blessing. We fall down, have an accident, lose our job, or don't get what we desire or feel we deserve. In truth, everything that happens in life offers us the opportunity to learn how divine laws work. When we respond from our heart, we expand to a greater awareness.

Many years ago my daughter gave me a card with a weed-filled garden. In the middle was an etched sign that read: “The secret to life is ...” Brambles obscured the end of the sentence. I put this card on the wall over my drafting board where I looked at it regularly and tried to see around the brambles. In a flash one day—I got it! The rest of the sentence is “to live!”

Divine principles are often so simple that we overlook them. They are hidden in plain sight. The moment I realized that my reason for living is to live, I felt amazingly free. I realized that there is no way for me to fail. Guided by the awareness that life is for living, I live life to the fullest and make my life a masterpiece.

God in each of us is the only measurement that counts. When we live life to the fullest and look at each new day as a new opportunity to be creative and expansive, God expresses life through us. It is our joy to live life fully. Every day is a day filled with possibilities.

What is a masterpiece? It is unique for each individual person. For some it is beauty; for others it is simplicity or complexity; for others “most interesting!” For some people life is smooth and poetic. For some it is coarse, textural, and tactile; a calm meadow or a joyride! The value judgment is between our personal self and our Highest Self. The most important common element of a masterpiece is that it is authentic.

It puzzles some people why an apparently simple creation may be considered art. For example, Pablo Picasso’s line drawing “Dove of Peace,” created in 1949. The reason it is a masterpiece is because it is the original first work like it. Many people have copied the line-drawing style and that is fine, but their work is not a masterpiece. Picasso taught us how to make such a

dynamic minimalist statement and created a masterpiece.
Everything else like it is a copy.

We may strive to copy someone else in our life, but we can only be a good copy. It is a place to start and to learn, but we must go beyond and release the mold. We must find our own authentic self to express. By following our bliss, we can be an original. By following our heart's desire, we can be a masterpiece! Live life to the fullest, creating your unique life as an authentic original. Let your passion for what you love be your guide.

Celebrate life, feeling it coursing through your veins, acknowledging God as your life energy, and accomplish what you desire to do. Feel the life force as you interact with others and celebrate their life expression. Feel the presence of God moving within and be grateful for this awareness.

The activity of God as life within gives you the ability to grow and heal, develop and experience in every way. Fulfill your life purpose as you live authentically. Know that you are more than enough. Make your life a masterpiece!





I Am Good—I Am Enough!

By Rev. Jamie Sanders

Many of us, no matter how spiritual we believe ourselves to be, may still face the challenge of honoring ourselves through the art and practice of embracing our self-worth. We know our Truth principles, we pray, meditate, study, and so forth, and yet we still attempt to hide the fact that we feel unworthy or not enough. For some, these feelings of unworthiness are wounds from our childhood; for others, they may stem from feeling we have failed at relationships, in business, or as a person. Nothing can shift *for us* until it shifts *within us*.

The questions we must address are: How do we truly feel about who we are and how we are showing up in life? Are we clear on our intentions, clear on our issues and challenges? And most important, are we willing to clean up any messes we have created within and around us?

When we begin to love and respect ourselves, others gradually begin to do the same. They not only interact with us differently, but they begin to interact with themselves differently as well. What we give ourselves is given to others through our intention of healing and transmuting negative thoughts and behaviors.

To engage the fundamental truths of self-esteem, we affirm our value and worth throughout our day. We meditate on releasing anything that holds us back from living our lives fully and in joy. We commit to doing our inner work that in turn opens the way to healing and renewal on a cellular level. As I do my work—I am transformed in body, mind, and spirit.

May we each take the time to sit with ourselves in the Silence. Let us agree to release any blocks that keep us from being free of lingering hurts, past resentments, and words of harm we have spoken to ourselves or to others. By being willing to release what has been, we step into the new light of what shall be.

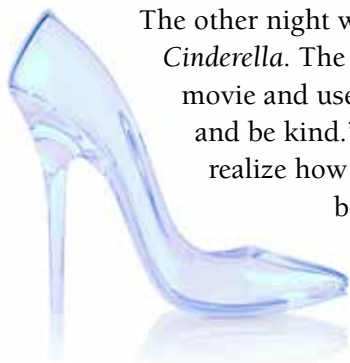
Today I am committed to embracing my worth, to honoring the God Presence within me. Today I affirm: *I AM Good—I AM Enough*. And so it is.



Have Courage and Be Kind

By Elise Cowan

At the end of the day when all the work is finished, my husband Ken and I often watch a movie before bed. We talk about what a good message the movie shared about life, or how it has played out in our own lives.



The other night we chose the 2015 Disney movie *Cinderella*. The message near the beginning of the movie and used throughout was to “have courage and be kind.” As we watched the movie I began to realize how instrumental those two things have been in my own life.

Like the Cinderella character, my life started out well enough. I was a happy child and could do most anything I set my mind to. Then as an adult I found I couldn’t always do what I dreamed of—at least not on the first try.

I decided to become a hairstylist and enrolled in beauty school. Upon graduation I hadn’t really learned enough to be successful at it, but I got lucky. I was hired by a chain salon that took the time to give me the extra training I needed.

I remember my trainer telling me to “Go for it!” when I was unsure of my next snip of hair. “Be courageous,” she seemed to be saying. “You are enough if you believe in yourself.” Trust me, I messed up my share of haircuts through the years but with the courage to learn from my mistakes, I worked as a successful hairstylist for 30 years!

I learned through that experience to have courage in other aspects of my life as well. I began to believe that I could do most anything I could dream of—with practice of course—because who I am is enough.

Nevertheless, courage, when misapplied, can have unintended consequences. For example, when I've gotten angry or thought somebody else's bad mood was aimed at me, I have sometimes found the courage to tell them exactly what I thought, and it wasn't always nice. In time, I've learned that kindness gets me further in life than unkindness. The saying is true that you can catch more flies with honey than with vinegar. When I recognize and acknowledge who I truly am, a child of God, kindness is always the right and natural answer.

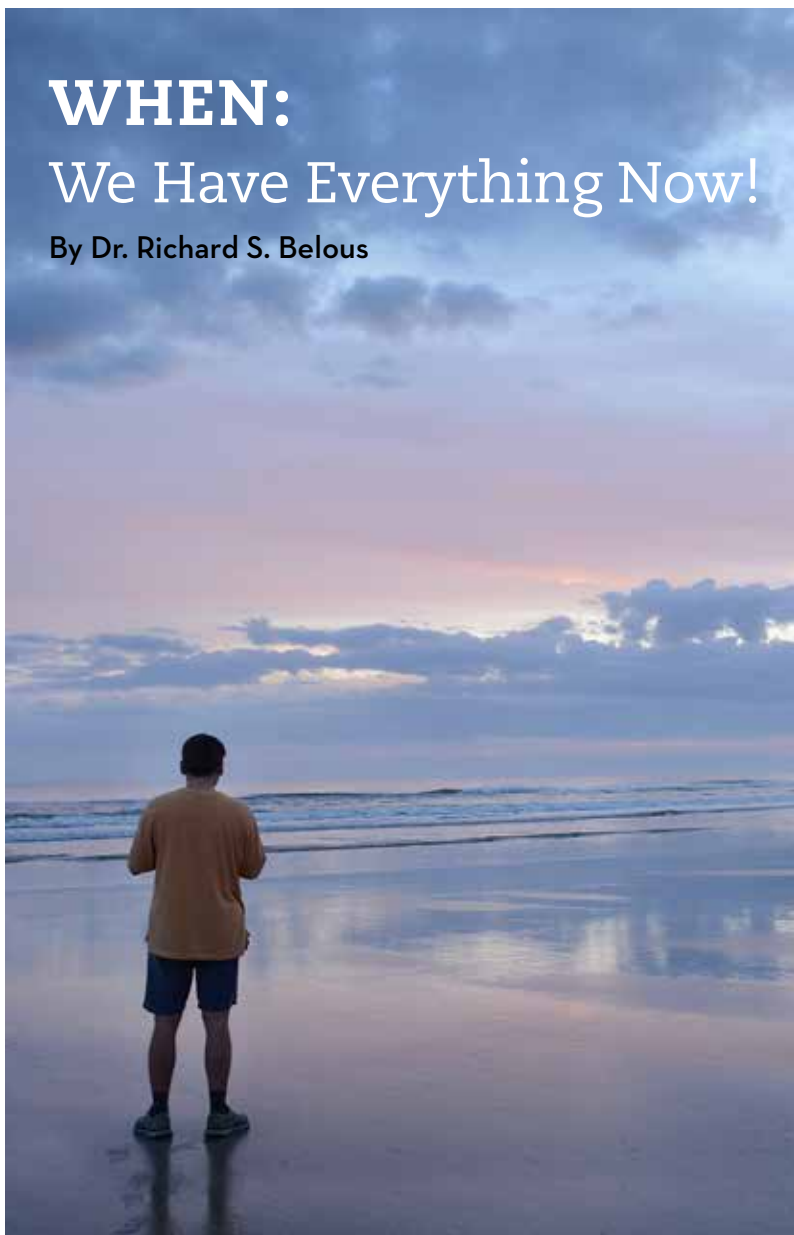
Being kind also taught me that whatever mood someone else is in probably has nothing to do with me. When I respond with the courage to be kind, I realize that I am always enough. You are too.



WHEN:

We Have Everything Now!

By Dr. Richard S. Belous



Years ago I lived on the East Coast and was on vacation in an ocean community in Southern California. I went to a meeting of a spiritual fellowship held in a highly affluent church. In a circle, people took turns reading a paragraph from a sacred text, and then giving their commentary on what they had read.

One woman—whom I observed to be poorly dressed—read a paragraph that contained the word “when” in it. In her commentary, she said, “When? So many of us say, ‘When will this happen, or when will that happen? When will I get X, Y, or Z?’”

She continued: “But ‘when’ can have a different meaning. It can stand for: WHEN ... We Have Everything Now.”

This woman’s commentary hit me. I thought, *Yes, we already have what we long for.* Then I thought, *How ironic. This room is filled with wealthy people, and the ‘pearl of great price’ comes from a woman who is probably a maid in this resort community.*

After the meeting I walked up to her outside of the church, and I told her how moved I was by her comments. She said, “Thank you.” Then I thought, *This is Southern California, and public transportation is not great. Offer her a ride in your rented subcompact car.* So I did just that.

The woman smiled and said, “How kind of you, dear. But this is my car.” Then she got into a beautiful black Mercedes-Benz and drove off.

That day I learned two lessons:

WHEN = We Have Everything Now

I do not need to look down on other people, or stereotype them, to remind myself that I am enough.

I Need to Know Who I AM

By Rev. Ed Townley

There I was, shivering in a brilliant orange sunset on the Golan Heights, overlooking three small villages in the distance, on the Syrian side of the border. I was with peace troubadour Jimmy Twyman and a gathering of religious leaders and peace activists from Israel, Palestine, and other far-flung places across the globe.

I was asked to say a few words before we began a silent meditation, to be joined by many thousands of others across the globe. Jimmy shared his musical gifts, and at exactly 5 p.m., just as the sun was setting behind us, we entered the Silence.

However, no silence was strong enough to quiet the anxious, fear-based voice within me, demanding to know just what I thought I was doing. Bringing peace to war-torn Syria? I can barely maintain peace within myself; I don't exactly have an abundance to share with others. *I'm not really feeling this*, my inner voice insists; I'm obviously not doing it right. Where's the tingle? How can I channel peace through me when my ego mind refuses to quiet down and allow safe passage? I'll bet everyone



here is having an experience right now, and I'm standing here in the cold and dark, having a whiny argument with my ego mind.

Something suddenly happened: The silence became the Silence—a free and open space in which my quiet Spirit voice could finally be heard. According to that voice, I had (once again!) forgotten who I AM. I am not a bringer of peace, or channel for peace, or even an advocate for peace. I am the peace. I AM the peace.

To believe that I need to channel an energy of peace is to buy into the illusion of duality: that there is peace, and there is not peace. That illusion quickly generates experiences of conflict and fear that distract us from spiritual truth. There is no absence of peace anywhere; there is only forgetting to make the choices that will bring it into expression.

In the far, far distance I could see a flickering light expressing in each of three tiny villages spread out across the horizon. They had no electricity, probably no food, but they apparently had one candle each.

“There,” my Spirit voice said. “Each light is expressing the Presence of peace. Appreciate the light; appreciate the peace. That’s what you’re here for. You don’t need to channel; you don’t



need to affirm, you don't need to insist. And while it's good to feel connected to thousands of others, in Truth you are all you need. There is nothing you are not. By appreciating peace in those flickering candles, you are choosing to nurture it. Focus on the lights, and see them growing, filling the homes, and the villages, and the nation, and the world with a heart-deep realization of the gifts of the peace that are already at hand. Don't oppose the conflict; that creates more conflict. Make the choice to be the Peace."

I focused on joining my I AM faith to the distant candles. I AM not impotent against manifestations of conflict; I AM not dependent on the accumulated energy of others. I AM peace.

I could feel my body and ego mind relaxing in that peace. I could feel it in the energy of those around me, and all those everywhere who were with us in Spirit. I believed without hesitation both in the light I could see and the peace which, although I could not see it, was equally present.

It's not that we don't benefit from the supportive energy of others; of course we do. But it can be frustrating when we begin to feel *dependent* on anything beyond the power we are.

Our I AM Spirit is infinite. It is our individual faith, our choices about what we choose to create, that express as this mortal experience. And it's all good! Infinite Spirit enfolds and embraces every side of every conflict as long as we choose to believe in its necessity.

Well, a shaky, tentative cease-fire was agreed to in the week after the Golan Heights gathering. To everyone's surprise, according to *The New York Times*, it has held; people in those distant villages are being fed and supported. I'm not surprised, and neither should you be. Peace is who we are. It's what we do.

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