



Living an Inspired Life and Live It Inspiring Others

LIVING AN INSPIRED LIFE AND LIVE IT INSPIRING OTHERS

Empower People Around You with a Powerful Goal and Touch Their Lives in many ways!

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Introduction

There are two aspects to inspiration – being inspired and inspiring others.

The first of these enriches us and the second helps us enrich others. In this eBook, we shall learn how we can go about achieving both these results – how we can be inspired and how we can inspire others.

Read on and enrich yourself and others.

Chapter 1:

Living an Inspired Life

Summary

It is inspiration that keeps us going.

Living an Inspired Life

In.spire

v. in·spired, in·spir·ing, in·spires

v.tr.

1. *To affect, guide, or arouse by divine influence.*

2. *To fill with enlivening or exalting emotion*

a. *To stimulate to action; motivate*

b. *To affect or touch*

3. *To draw in (air) by inhaling.*

4. *Archaic*

a. *To breathe on.*

b. *To breathe life into.*

What is meant by an inspired life? Is an inspired life lived only by saints and prophets? Is inspired living the sole domain of Enlightened Ones?

The English Dictionary defines ‘inspire’ as ‘*to affect, guide, or arouse by divine influence*’. It also means ‘*to fill with enlivening or exalting emotion*’ and ‘*to stimulate to action*’. Another meaning of the word is *to draw in air*.

But an archaic meaning of the word ‘inspire’ is ‘*to breathe life into*’! So Inspiration implies a breathing in of life, as well as to give life to others. For ordinary individuals and for everyday life, it means breathing in and out better. Simply put – **Living Better**.

To live an inspired life is to walk with an enhanced awareness of everyone and everything around you, to see divinity and delight in everyday people and events, and to infuse your environment with the same magical energy.

Again, that sounds mystical and out of reach, doesn't it? But an Inspired Life can be inculcated through little steps every day – by reading, listening, talking, touching and breathing in only the best and beautiful of experiences. We are conscious beings, constantly being fed by our five senses. Immerse your senses in the inspiring creations of Man and Nature and you will feel the difference.

In these chapters let us explore ways and means of getting that extra special glow of inspiration. How do great people get inspired? What is the raw material for an inspired mind? What blocks the high ways of inspiration? How do we recharge our inspiration? How can we inspire others? Let us embark on a journey **to breathe life** into ourselves and others!

Chapter 2:

Qualities for Inspired Living

Summary

What does it take to live an inspired life?

Qualities of Inspired Living

“If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put foundations under them.”

- Henry David Thoreau,
American author and philosopher

Many qualities are spoken of by the few people who live a truly inspired life. But what do these much bandied qualities actually mean in everyday life? Take a quick look at 5 prized qualities that are the hallmarks of inspired living and how they can be expressed in your actions:-

Honesty and Conviction – Be yourself and believe in yourself. Ask for what you want and express yourself clearly. See everything clearly for what it is. Seek and follow only the truth.

Love and Compassion – Care for the less fortunate and love your fellow human beings as much as you love yourself. Love your work passionately too or find your true vocation where love of work comes naturally.

Courage – Follow your deepest and highest dreams. Dare to jump out of the box of conventional thought. Clobber your bad habits. Defeat your deepest fears. Never say never to even the most impossible ideal. Persevere even in your darkest hours.

Efficiency – Optimize your work, but remember to also smell the flowers. Stop complaining and start working. Exploit every hour of the day. As the Romans say, ‘Carpe Diem’! Seize the Day! Get rid of the weeds in your mind. Dream of the future, but live in the present

Inspiration and reflection- Mentor someone weaker than you. Utter an uplifting quote and smile all day. Appreciate the good around you. Meditate and explore the farthest corners of your heart and mind.

The opposites of these qualities are always lurking around to overpower the weak willed mind. But stick to it and make these sterling qualities your own. And you will have surely started laying the foundations under those dream castles that you have built!

Chapter 3:

Gardener of the Mind

Summary

The mind needs to feed on a few things. Unless there is good nourishment, there's no development.

Gardener of the Mind

“I have never had so many good ideas day after day as when I worked in the garden.”

– John Erskine, American author

How do you prepare a garden for growing flowers and fruit trees? Do you just plant the seeds and water them straight away? After a while, the flowering plants and fruit trees will rise, no doubt, but in that pampered soil, the seeds of weeds also rise. Weeds are ruthless creatures and can eventually strangle the most beautiful and inspiring flowers.

So it is with the garden of your mind. If you set out to plant inspired ideas in your life, you first have to get rid of bad habits – the weeds of your mind. Not just remove them at the start, but continuously watch out for them. Even the most brilliant of inspired thoughts will die in a forest of vices. Even one bad apple can ruin the basket.

How do you keep weeds out of the Mind Garden? Focus hard on your dream. In an archery contest, Arjuna, one of the mythological Pandavas in the Hindu epic Mahabharata, is asked what he sees when he aims at the fish hanging from the ceiling. He answers – I see only the eye of the fish.

Thus you can cast aside vices that tempt you. Read great books, watch classic movies and listen to good music for inspiration. Vices creep in through the windows of your senses. So immerse all your senses only in brilliance and beauty. Your face will shine like an Enlightened One all day and your mind will have an invincible power. And only then will your inspired seeds bloom into achievements.

By the way, when was the last time you worked in a garden? Go out there today and put your fingers into the earth. Smell the soil and the roots of plants. *Thou doth forget the earth and the life that it nourisheth and yet thou seeketh the seeds of inspiration!*

Chapter 4:

How to Inspire

Summary

Inspiring others is more challenging than getting inspired yourself.

How to Inspire

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”

- John Quincy Adams

A place that could do with loads of inspired behavior is your workplace. How do you inspire yourself and your colleagues into working better? Or in the words of a thesaurus, how do you animate, stimulate, invigorate, energize, galvanize and revolutionize them into action?

One truth stands out from among the thousands of corporate self-help lines tossed around nowadays – ***There is no leadership except leadership by example!***

You must inspire your workforce by being a **role model** of dynamic, efficient and honest work. Modern gurus say – don’t work hard, work smart. But to achieve that level of efficiency, one has to work hard indeed. Your perseverance and courage will empower your team to step out of their comfort zones and do better. When you exceed your own expectations, your staff will seek to do the same.

In these harsh recession days, employees are watching how much you make and how much the top guns reward you. If you flash past your workers in a Ferrari, that is not going to inspire them. But if you take part of your bonus and spend it on a workshop or creativity seminar for your staff, they will be moved and roused by your **selfless action**. Steer clear of backroom politics, your workers will respect you more if you skip the spin speak and nasty gossip.

You can hold your staff to high standards, but don’t expect them to get there overnight. Don’t give them that lecture of praise only on retirement day. **Praise**

progress, it will give a lilt to their step and they will love you for it. Talk less and listen more. Empathize with everyone at a genuine level.

Your people have creative minds. Let their inspiration benefit you too. **Invite new ideas**, small ones and big ones and award the best ideas, however tiny they may be. Remember 'to inspire' means 'to take in breath' and also 'to give life to'. When every member of the firm gives and takes, breathes in and out, there will be growth in the company tree.

Chapter 5:

Simple Ways to Re-Inspire You

Summary

There will be times in your life when the inspiration begins to sag. You need a booster dose. Where do you look for it?

Simple Ways to Re-Inspire You

“The mark of a successful man is one that has spent an entire day on the bank of a river without feeling guilty about it.”

- Anon

There are time when you may feel completely deflated, like a punctured tire. How would you fix the tire? Find where the hole is located and plug it. And then inflate it. How do you re-inflate the tire of your soul? Try these exercises on yourself:

1. **Be kind to yourself** – First you have to heal the hole in your soul. Treat yourself to a good movie and a good meal and the company of someone you love. Stop expecting perfection of yourself. Even waves flow through crests and troughs. The hills swoop down into valleys. Like the old cliché goes, Ups and downs are a part of life.
2. **Listen to people** – When the noise in your head is too loud, you know you have had too much of your own company. Walk in a park and listen to children talk.
3. **Step into a church or a mosque or a temple** – Or even a museum. There is something about the awe and tranquility of these exalted halls that automatically sweeps you higher. Meditate and converse with your innermost soul. Chat with your Creator, tell him your troubles and ask him for a hand.
4. **Go for a swim** – Or just work out on the lawn. Feel good endorphins will surge through your brain and inspire you like no nasty drug can. Getting addicted to exercise is a jolly good thing!

5. **Dance** – Holding a loved one and dancing close to soft music is great medicine for a tired soul. Jiving up and rocking the place is equally great. Sort out your music for your moods. And surprise yourself sometimes, listen to opera for a change!

6. **Read an autobiography** of a great man or woman. Walk in their shoes and learn how they did it. Read Khalil Gibran, listen to Zig Ziglar, watch black and white classic films. Just keep filling your spiritual well.

And voila! You are charged up and ready to go. Don't forget to take your dear ones and your colleagues along on some of the recharge sessions. They will appreciate it and always be there for you. After all cars and buses and bikes need more than one tire to run!

Chapter 6:

Your Hidden Cheerleader

Summary

Your inspiration comes from within yourself.

The Hidden Cheerleader

“During [these] periods of relaxation after concentrated intellectual activity, the intuitive mind seems to take over and can produce the sudden clarifying insights which give so much joy and delight.”

– Fritjof Capra, *physicist*

There is someone very close to you, who has been either inspiring you or depressing you throughout your days. It's your Subconscious. Your intuitive mind. You are often so busy with your conscious self that you forget that the mover and shaker of all your thoughts and deeds lies deep within you.

Your subconscious mind has been receiving inputs from your conscious mind since the day you were born. Good and bad experiences, all the books you read, the songs you heard, the praise and damnation you have received, they all sink slowly through the film of your consciousness into your inner core. It is the good stuff that rises to spur you on to great achievements, but if negative messages have been accumulated for too long, they too will reach out and drag you down.

The intuitive mind is a great co-worker as Fritjof Capra observed. When Kekule the chemist fretted over the molecular structure of benzene, he could come up with no solution. Yet as he slept, he dreamed of two snakes chasing each others tails. He woke up to the sudden inspiration that the structure of benzene was circular!

The tale of the Shoemaker and the Elves, wherein the little elves work at night to finish the incomplete shoes of the tired old man, is also a metaphorical story of our Subconscious Mind.

Try it out for yourself. If you have a vexing task, focus hard on it for a few days and then let it rest. After a few more days, you will find the answers come floating

hazily up from your inner intuition. Grab the idea and then give it shape. Your subconscious team mate has been working while you were sleeping and has tossed up the solution to your Conscious.

If the Subconscious is empty or hurt, it cannot give you great results. So feed it with good literature, music and loving relationships. It will grow healthy and powerful within you and then keep you supplied with many a Eureka moment of inspiration!

Chapter 7:

The Chain of Inspiration

Summary

Inspiration fosters inspiration.

The Chain of Inspiration

“No, it's not a very good story—its author was too busy listening to other voices to listen as closely as he should have to the one coming from inside.”

- Stephen King

When we read a Harry Potter book or listen to Stephen Covey or listen to the Beatles, we often feel that there is a direct connection between the artist and us. That the creator of the work and the receiver have a straight and self-contained connection.

But it is a fact that an author or singer is inspired by events involving other people. Those other people may have been inspired by yet other men, women and children who have moved through their lives. You, the presently inspired one, in turn will influence and inspire your colleagues and descendants.

This chain of inspiration is the heart of civilization.

All scientific and social advances are catalyzed and carried forward by inspired links. That is why it is essential to expose young children to great ideals at a time in their lives when they are the fertile seeding ground of germinating thought. A childhood wasted is an adulthood laid to waste.

Even if you are feeling middle aged and jaded, you can pick up a book and read. You can attend motivational sessions. Agreed, sometimes those celebrity lectures are a rip-off, but you must choose wisely. Above all, you must think for yourself, for as the Buddha said – *As you think, so you shall be*. After listening to everyone else, listen to your own voice, the one coming from inside!

You owe it to civilization and to life itself to be an inspired model for others around you. Without great role models, a community shrivels up and becomes decadent. If you are neither connecting to great men and women of the past nor inspiring the young ones for the future, you are not playing your role in this Universe!

Thanks to the Internet, vast inspirational resources are available at a mouse click. But as in the movie Matrix, Morpheus tells Neo – “I can only show you the door. You are the one that has to walk through it.” He is just repeating what ancient gurus have been saying for ages.

So go forth, walk through the door of knowledge and be inspired and act. Only then will you have taken your rightful place in the Chain of Inspiration.

Chapter 8:

Filling the Creative Well

Summary

Your creative inputs are a big step forward in inspiring you.

Filling the Creative Well

“Seek the lofty by reading, hearing and seeing great work at some moment every day.”

- Thornton Wilder

Creative personalities need inspiration for their works, even more than the average person office or factory going person. They have to produce writing, music, theatre or dance of original content. These creations have to come from the springs of their mind. Surely sometimes the springs go dry or ebb like the tides. How do accomplished artistes keep going? What do they use for inspiration?

Linus Pauling, the Nobel winning American chemist, was asked how one comes up with innovative scientific theories. His way was to come up with as many relevant thoughts and concepts as possible, and then eliminate the unfeasible ones. This is ‘brainstorming’, a technique used by creative think tanks all over the world today.

The Abstract art genius Picasso said - *“The artist is a receptacle for emotions that come from all over the place: from the sky, from the earth, from a scrap of paper, from a passing shape, from a spider’s web.”* Just going for a walk by the seaside or watching flora and fauna or listening to people talk is a great way of absorbing ideas. Allow the ideas to cook within your subconscious and then suddenly one morning you will be struck by an Eureka moment!

Creativity is associated with right brain activity as compared to the logical processes of the left brain. Thinking ‘outside the box’ is another phrase for lateral thinking or unconventional thinking. As children we all think unconventionally, until schooling and society compel us into narrow norms of thought.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep...Robert Frost, the creator of these timeless lines has some good advice for inspiring the poet in you -"*No tears in the writer, no tears in the reader. No surprise in the writer, no surprise in the reader.*"

If you yourself do not feel the emotions in your creative work, how can you expect your readers to be moved by them? It has also been said – To do something amazing, you must *be* someone amazing. So first fill your own creative well and let the springs bubble forth.

Chapter 9:

Inspirational Speakers in Cyberspace

Summary

Here is a look at how inspirational and motivational speakers perform in the vast realm of the cyberspace.

Inspirational Speakers in Cyberspace

“To speak and to speak well, are two things. A fool may talk, but a wise man speaks.”

- Ben Johnson,
English dramatist, poet and actor

The thought of Inspirational Speakers immediately conjures up a stiff thousand dollar attendance fee and pompous lecturers who go on and on blowing their own trumpet!

But who says that you *have* to shell out a lot of money and catch up with the latest gems of wisdom spouted by an obscenely wealthy ‘life performance coach’? A cover-all speaker may not always help your specific field of creativity. The Internet is the New Seminar Hall for the world today. Trawl your favorite search engine and you will get upto ten-minute long videos on You Tube, which cover every field on earth (and probably the moon too)!

If you are a writer, listen to Ray Bradbury, Stephen King or the scores of successful authors share their inspirational stories with viewers in cyberspace. If you are an actor or singer or poet, there are thousands of clips and interviews that you can benefit from. Make sure you keep a writing pad handy to make notes and grab that one idea that strikes you real hard. Listen to the audio or video clip with as rapt attention as you would pay if you were in a five star conference hall having paid a thousand dollars for exclusive attendance! Just because it is free does not devalue the advice in any way.

Many adults of today grew up reading Dale Carnegie’s *“How to Win Friends and Influence People”* and *“How to Stop Worrying and Start Living”*. Stephen Covey’s bestseller *“The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People”* is a modern

classic self-help book. But numerous self-help books standing on your shelves should not lull you into a false sense of security. Absorb and practice what you read. Else all that you ingest will be merely excreted without enriching your soul.

Some worthy names stand in the modern hall of motivational fame: Wayne Dyer, Deepak Chopra, Zig Ziglar and Mark Victor Hansen (*Chicken soup for the Soul*). Do not forget that the oldest wisdom is the soundest wisdom. Holy books and tomes of philosophy may be difficult to wade through, but if you take the trouble to get to the gist of their messages, you will be richly rewarded.

Chapter 10:

Inspiration for Creative Artists

Summary

Creativity is an important aspect for getting inspired. In fact, it is an essential element in your bid to live an inspired life.

Inspiration for Creative Artists

“Writing is no trouble: you just jot down ideas as they occur to you. The jotting is simplicity itself – it is the occurring which is difficult.”

– Stephen Leacock

That is a very witty piece of observation. Yet it is a profound fact of the creative life. If you are empty, ideas will not occur. No idea, no work. Creative artists sometimes struggle for months and years, even in the middle of their fame, walking in a mental wilderness without inspiration. How can a writer or a poet or any creative artist be inspired again? Here are a few tips from artists who have been through it all!

1. "**Read, read, read.** Read everything—trash, classics, good and bad, and see how they do it. Just like a carpenter who works as an apprentice and studies the most. Read! You'll absorb it. Then write. If it is good, you'll find out. If it's not, throw it out the window." - *William Faulkner*
2. "**Art is not a handicraft.** It is the transmission of a feeling which the artist has experienced." - *Leo Tolstoy*. If you have not experienced feeling and emotion yourself, how will you write and sing about it? Will those moving insights come to you as you sit at a writing desk year after year?
3. "**Dreams are illustrations** from the book your soul is writing about you." - *Marsha Norman*. Your dreams can be a fertile bank of ideas to write on. Keep a notebook by your bedside and jot those dreams down before they fade away like gossamer.
4. "**Free writing.** One of the best ways to get unstuck if you're uninspired. Just start writing. Anything. It doesn't matter. Don't edit, don't pause, don't think. Just write and let it flow." – *Leo Babauta*. Before you know it,

a story will take shape before your eyes. It was there all along in your mind waiting for your hand to rise.

5. “**Serendipity** is the art of making an unsought finding”. - *Pek Van Andel*.
Do not be afraid to tread the unbeaten path, the road less taken. A branching off from your main idea may lead you to greater things and unsought gold. Just follow your instinct. Art is not an ironclad discipline. It is a lithe fairy that dances after the light.

Conclusion

You now know what it takes to be inspired and inspire others as well.

Go forth, set an example for others.

All the best to you!!!

