

# My Quest

Today's Meditation: Have you ever committed yourself to a plan then, maybe some hours later, realized that you had completely forgotten about it? For me I am easily distracted by the busy-work of life, and every time I try to focus on my plan I am quickly distracted again. Annoying, no? It seems that life conspires against us by keeping us perpetually distracted. In some Eastern traditions this is described as our attachment to the drama of our own egos and to the world of form. This is why mindfulness is so heavily emphasized in these traditions. For many of us this busy-work, this state of perpetual distraction, has become a way of life.

I have found it helpful to contemplate what life would be like if I was able to drop my need to be busy, to drop my need to worry, plan, figure out, defend my views and opinions, seek approval, or to be consumed by the need, the ambition, to "become something." What would it be like to live without all these distractions?

OCCC News - Other than the "Table-takeover" in the chow-hall things have been quiet here lately. Last year was filled with violence and suicides, but doll has been going rather smoothly considering the environment.

We're supposed to be getting a new superintendent soon, not that it means anything.

AVP (Alternatives to Violence Program) weekend is coming up. April 8<sup>th</sup> starts the advanced course. Volunteers will come in to lead a weekend long workshop on ~~ways~~ ways

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to resolve conflicts Peacefully. I'll be Participating in this Weekend's workshop. There's a basic course, an advanced course (which is the one coming up), and a training for trainers course. It's a popular program. The only thing guys complain about is that it doesn't award graduates any good-time - something that is exceedingly rare to come by here.

An Arts and Music fair is scheduled for the fall. Pulitzer prize winning author Michael Cunningham will lead a workshop on creative writing, a band will be here to play music and there will be an exhibit featuring poetry, artwork, and short-fiction created by Old Colony inmates I went last year and enjoyed myself. We have some amazing artists. I submitted a short-story last year and received some good reviews.

Book review - Just finished The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho. What a great story filled with timeless wisdom. The idea that life is a quest and that it is up to us to make the journey, to follow our dreams and listen to the guidance always available to us is one that strikes home with me. I ~~recommend~~ <sup>recommend</sup> this book for anyone intrigued by the mysteries and wonders of life and especially to young people. It's message is one that can change lives.

Current Happenings - I'm writing the prospectus for LifeQuest. I should have a typed copy available by the end of the month for anyone who is interested. As I've said before, I would

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like to attract some support. What I really need is some help creating the course curriculum. I have the main principles and skills I'd like LifeQuest to teach, but I'd like someone to review what I have and make sure it is the best it can be. People ~~are~~ familiar with any of the following fields will be welcome to take a look: Psychology, Personal development, addiction recovery, life-coaching. I would also like to find out how I can protect myself, as in "intellectual property" rights. How can I solicit help and ~~be~~ be sure no one will create LifeQuest without me? The Prospectus includes the main features of LifeQuest, how it will run, and the details of what it's all about. Would copyrighting the Prospectus protect me? I don't know.

I may be moving to the Prison in Norfolk soon. It's supposed to be a lot better, we'll see.

I'd like to share with you some of my beliefs ~~and~~ so you know what it is I'm trying to achieve. I've led quite a dysfunctional life and I have many obstacles to face, but I want to give hope to others ~~that~~ who doubt they can change or improve their lives. ~~The~~ The idea is, if I can do it, anyone can. So ~~here's~~ here's a look at some of my values.

• UNconditional Love - I believe that there is no reason for hate or contempt. In fact, I believe we are all worthy of love. I mean, who wants to be judgemental, to feel contempt, to hold grudges, to hate? What good are any of these? I have a hard time practicing unconditional love, but I believe it is a worthy ideal.

• UNconditional Forgiveness - This doesn't mean I don't hold

harboring

People responsible for their actions, only that I don't see how ~~harboring~~ anger and resentments is helpful. In fact, these things detract from the quality of my experience. I still hold people accountable, to face just consequences, but why involve ill-feelings? We're all human, and I don't enjoy holding grudges. I've heard it said that holding a resentment is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die. Crazy, No?

I believe that we each contain a core of amazing beauty and potential, that our true selves are ~~not~~ good, pure, ~~and~~ <sup>are</sup> a perfect and unique creation of God. Some people are able to shine their light upon the world with such beauty and brightness that it inspires me. ~~But~~ Then there are people whose inner light is so obscured by pain and anger, and dysfunction that their light is hidden under layers of debris... but it's still there, still burning as bright as the sun. Most of us fall somewhere in between. It is my belief that life is all about clearing away the debris so our light can shine its brightest and learning to love and accept other people no matter how brightly or dimly their light shines. We can help each other in this work rather than point fingers, make moral judgements, or reject others. I also believe that this work of clearing the debris spans life times and that each of us has in one life or another ~~been~~ had our light completely obscured causing us to lead dysfunctional lives. So why judge others who are in the same position we all once were? Why not believe in the light that shines in all people and practice unconditional love? Sure as hell beats hating everyone!

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I guess I rambled on enough for today. I hope you're all enjoying the Spring weather. I miss the blossoming trees, especially Dogwood's and Magnolia's. Take Care.

Quote of the Day - Forgiveness is the fragrance of the violet  
Shed on the ~~heel~~ heel that crushed it - Mark Twain

Last week's  
Puzzle

CHIMP - answer: Make a monkey out of him 😊

This week's -

T M C  
A U O  
H S M  
W T E

What popular phrase does this puzzle represent?