

5 Steps to a Vivid Existence

Life is indeed beautiful and fascinating, a mystery that at times attracts and at other times repels. We may love the inherent and dynamic unpredictability of life, yet there are some things we all wish were more predictable. Don't we all long to know the recipe for more consistent ease rather than struggle, more pleasure rather than pain. Many of us have become masters at creating the struggle and pain that functions to deny this ease and pleasure. Then we exhaust ourselves searching to undo these habits of our existence that undermine the quality of our days. The 5 Steps to a Vivid Existence are a road map in a different direction that thankfully calls off the search. Just as we can be masters at creating struggle, we can also become masters at creating ease and pleasure and therefore living and breathing a more vivid existence. The 5 steps outlined here will give you a taste of the essential elements of an embodied and highly sensual way of moving through the world. These steps will awaken and sensitize you and your body to the little graces of life; the huescape of a gorgeous sunset, the sensing of warm water running over your hands, the sensual pleasure of moving in synch with music. The degree to which you are able to be present in your body to vividly experience the little graces can determine the quality or vividness of your existence!

Step #1. Sense the world curiously and deeply.

Our senses bring us into relationship with the outside world and create echoes inside of us called sensation. These sensations, inner responses to outer stimuli, invite us to want more or less of that stimuli. Pleasurable sensations, like experiencing the scent of a fragrant flower, create happiness, joy and fulfillment. Think of the most contented people you know. Are they content because their lives are complicated and overwhelming? Or, do they practice appreciation for that which is simply beautiful in its authenticity? *As Metzger said "Beauty appears when something is completely and absolutely and openly itself."* Creating the habit of saying thank you daily for the simple blessings we are given naturally takes us deeper into our sensual experience. In fact, true appreciation can only be felt when we are having a vividly sensual experience of that which we appreciate.

Step #2. Ground in your relationship to the earth.

If there is anything that can bring you vividly and instantly into the moment, it is sensing any part of your body in its relationship to the earth. Our bodies resonate at the same vibrational frequency as the planet, therefore choosing to appreciate and sense your physical connection to the earth will always give you an experience of vivid coming home-ness. The earth, after all is what we are made of; her waters, her minerals, her air. Mental and emotional dis-eases and imbalances can often be a result of a chronic disconnection to the natural world. Grounding into that connection by noticing your roots extending from your feet and your tailbone deep into the earth, lying on the earth and feeling her breathing into you, or crawling on the earth on all fours propelling yourself against and by virtue of, the earth's support, are some examples that will easily and sweetly encourage an intimate and vivid groundedness.

Step #3. Mobilize your life energy.

Stagnant waters are known to breed disease, coach potatoes are just plain bored and unmotivated. A rushing waterfall and a body in motion on the other hand, inspire and intrigue. The life force energy inside of you thrives on being engaged and activated. Why does activity create more zip in your step? Because energy breeds energy! We know that exercise creates endorphins that make us feel good. Conscious, inquisitive and creative movement with the intention to mobilize the potent life force within, the sap that is our life blood, activates those same endorphins and awakens us to the sensations of our body. This in turn encourages greater connection to ones self, ones likes and dislikes, ones truths and ones betrayals. Start living from your truth more consistently and watch the life you are living become way more juicy and vivid.

Step #4. Harness the life force.

Grounding even potentiates energy. Energy, as we know, is most powerful when contained, like wind energy in a sail, or water energy in a dam. Ever feel so excited you thought you might just burst? Ever make a wad of cash and have the aching desire to spend a good piece of it? These are both examples of amplified or mobilized life force that cannot contain itself. As a result, we spend, act out, talk, eat, smoke, drink, etc. Instead of harnessing and sensually enjoying mobilized life force, we often discharge it through addictive behaviours that allow us to comfortably maintain a limiting self-image. Energetically, mobilized life force expands us beyond the familiar boundaries of the container we identify as our physical body, the way the potential of the sprout exists within the seed. Complementary to mobilization is grounding. When we bring groundedness to mobilized life force, we create a harness, or closed circuit of energy that keeps feeding itself, enhancing our potential for energetic and vivid personal expansion.

Step #5. Express your life force freely.

When you are able to mobilize and harness your life force, you can then make conscious and healthy choices as to how to use it to express yourself in the world. There is nothing more powerful than an embodied individual with a dream. This person can effectively take their life force and apply it to any endeavour or aspiration. This person is supported by the universal order of all things and acts in synch with the community of all creation; simply put, this person is in the flow. Tasks are accomplished through the path of least resistance. As Osho said, "Don't try to force anything. Let life be a deep let-go. See God opening millions of flowers every day without forcing the buds." Fewer struggles will mean more vivid enjoyment of your results! The freedom to express, coupled with the confidence that you have a valuable message to share in that expression, is a powerful recipe to manifest your dreams into fruitful and vivid realities!

These five steps are a continuum of experience. We flow between them continuously. Having an expectation that once having experienced the 5 steps, we are home free for the

rest of our days in the stage of conscious and free expression is unrealistic and not in keeping with the nature of life and energy. Developing familiarity and effective habits with these steps can become a way of life, so that one can identify him or her self at any stage of the continuum and make choices. Become a master at creatively identifying your location within the continuum and taking the appropriate steps to move forward, and you will be in the habit of enjoying an ever more vivid existence!

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