

Balance with Grace

A monthly newsletter by Grace Durfee, personal coach

Volume 8, Issue #8, August 2008, *Measures of Happiness*

A fellow book-lover recently asked me how my summer has been. I enthusiastically told her that it was one of the best ever. I then began to reel off a list of some of the great books that I'd read over the summer: *Nineteen Minutes*, by Jodi Picoult, *The Doctor's Wife*, by Elizabeth Brundage, *Cold Mountain*, by Charles Frazier, *Ahab's Wife*, by Sena Jeter Nasland, and *Folly*, by Laurie R. King, among others. I realized that I could easily measure happiness by the number of books read. In fact, I've often said that I'm happiest when I have a good fiction book going. Then I began to think of the other ways I could measure my happiness this summer, and started to make a list:

- Books read
- Date nights
- Reconnections with friends
- Walks on the beach (with bonus for dolphin sightings)
- Meals eaten outdoors
- Belly laughs
- Flower arrangements made with garden flowers
- Referrals received
- Plants or veggies shared with others
- Laps swum

As the list grew, I found my spirits lifting and lifting until I was positively euphoric. It reminded of the classic song *My Favorite Things* from *The Sound of Music* with its wise message to dwell upon your happiness.

My younger son recently invoked this song's magic as he invented a few new lines in an attempt to distract himself from the pain of new bottom braces and freshly "cranked" top ones. (Anyone who's ever had braces can surely relate.)

"When my mouth hurts,
when I can't chew,
when I'm feeling sad,
I simply remember
Camp Birch Hill (this is the New Hampshire summer camp he loves so much)
and then I don't feel so bad."

This helped cheer him up and also made me realize that people must have different measures of happiness. It's likely, for instance, that some of this summer's Olympians would measure their happiness by medals won or world records broken. Or those who were fortunate enough to witness the Persiod Meteriod showers might measure their happiness by shooting stars seen. Take a few moments to consider and record:

How do you measure happiness?

What are you doing today, this week, and this month to create happiness?

There was a beautiful Sanskrit blessing in the September issue of *Yoga Journal*:

*Lokah Samastah
Sukhino Bhavanta*

*(Low-kaah Suh-muh-staah
Soo-khee-no Bhuh-vuhn-tu)*

*May everyone everywhere be happy
May the whole world be joyous*

Have a happy Labor Day weekend. Enjoy these last days of summer and the transition to the quickening pace of fall.

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Readers' Feedback

In response to last month's issue about "Undoing", I received the following:

Thanks Grace,

This was sent to me at just the right time. The boys and I have been having a wonderful summer, but I noticed I was out of sorts this week. I realized that now that the boys are older and we have lived here a while, we have made wonderful new friends. While this is so important and we have enjoyed some wonderful days at the beach or the pool or just hanging out, I was missing some of my alone time with them at home pattering in the garden while they snoozed a bit later, or sitting out on the deck with the birds just "being." Once I gave myself some more quiet time, I noticed a calm right away.

Warmly,  
Melissa Kitchen

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Upcoming Programs

**Mentor Coaching Group**—only two spots left!

A new mentor coaching group is forming for coaches who are growing their businesses, honing their coaching skills, and preparing for certification. Group coaching hours can be used toward the ICF's new mentor coaching requirement. The group is limited to 8 participants, and there are only two spots remaining. Another group, meeting on Thursdays, may begin in October.

Monday's 12-1 p.m. Eastern

- September 15, 22, and 29
- October 6, 20, 27
- November 3, 17, 24

Fee: \$200 month

### **Get Clients NOW!™ A Marketing Program for Service Professionals**

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Kickoff Seminar

Two Tuesdays, Oct. 14 and 21, 2008

10-11:30 PM PDT (1-2:30 PM EDT, 6-7:30 PM BST)

Group Sessions

Four Tuesdays Oct. 28 and Nov. 4, 11, and 18

10-10:45 PM PDT (1-1:45 PM EDT, 6-6:45 PM BST) AND One Thursday, Nov. 20th

10-10:45 PM PDT (1-1:45 PM EDT, 6-6:45 PM BST)

Note: Depending on registration, an alternate group may also be scheduled on the same dates at 11:00 PM PDT (2:00 PM EDT, 7:00 PM BST)