

The Principles and Truths of Bliss



How to move from the edge of essence to the heart of all that matters.

James Hutchison

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Introduction

Whether you're struggling with the meaning of your life purpose, or just your flat tire, the principles that govern our life here on Earth are the same: you can experience bliss and happiness no matter the circumstance. This is not pie-in-the-sky, theoretical, new-age, chemically-induced hippy speak, but some real information and strategies that you can meld into your life without a lot of hard work. Enlightenment is truly not as big a deal it was made out to be years ago; learning truths about these things is really more of a discovery of what you already know, but don't realize.

I'm guessing you're reading this right now because you want to experience peace, happiness, and – if possible – bliss. Who doesn't? Well, the answer to that question may or may not surprise you. The fact is, most of us are unfortunately addicted to our pain, anger, and even suffering... it's a harsh thing to say but very true.

Intrigued? Read on.

What I am proposing for you is something I have experienced myself, so I know it works. Not just for me, but millions of others as well. As the world becomes more and more aware of spiritual truths and principles, the information and teaching is available like no other time in history. By absorbing and incorporating into your life the few steps and principles I lay out in this publication, you will have access to fulfillment, happiness, and yes – bliss. If you refuse to believe that is possible because of your circumstances, then all the more reason to read this, because my friend - no person on this planet has been permanently made happy with “that one next thing that will do it for me”. We know this already... the ideal spouse, job, money, house, boss, car, sexual experience, bottle of wine etc. are pursuits with temporary happiness. It's why they can be called addictions... we need that new fix soon after the last one has worn off. As they say, if you can't be happy where you are, you never will be.

And for the suffering, whether it be disease or loss, you have the ability to find relief and release if you want it. Something you may not know is we can be addicted to suffering, anger, jealousy... they also serve a very real purpose in our ego's makeup. More on that later.

So if you'd like to break free of the shackles of all that holds you back from happiness and contentedness, I ask you to put into place the practices and principles described here, and you will be a changed person – from the inside. I'll warn you – it is your ego's job to keep you from evolving past your addictions, excuses, and laziness. You may be challenged, but the results are refreshing, real, and most of all – life-changing.

Right from the get-go, I should also mention that the evolution of the human spirit has in it's path a number of commonly experienced realizations and milestones that must be

acknowledged and accepted. One of these important facts is that there is an intelligent, creative, loving, over-seeing force that holds the universe together. Call it God, Allah, pick your deity... but it is a critical component of this journey of self improvement and spiritual evolution. The other important fact to acknowledge is that this "force" is not a single entity that takes up a specific location... it exists in and through the entire universe, and is made up of unseen energy, which flows through us and makes up our physical as well as spirit being. It's one thing to look at rocks, planets, and physics in general and draw a conclusion that it's all just naturally in motion in random sequences. It's quite another to look at DNA and life itself and how it continues to evolve into higher and higher forms of life... there's obviously intelligent design at play.

You're busy, so I have kept this book short and concise. You may have categorized your pursuit of happiness and bliss as a back-burner project for some time in the future, or perhaps you think you don't even deserve it. It is for you that I have written this book.

Good luck to you on your journey.

Jim Hutchison



Part One: Laying the Groundwork

I like to think of these principles and practices as “transformational wisdom”, because their use will indeed transform you. They are “wise”, because of their long history of success when used in the lives of the millions of other people just like you. What separates you and me from the years of meditating, research, etc. that others have done is the sheer availability of the tools and principles that used to take decades to master. It’s all here, now – if you want it. *That* is the key.

You have to want change, you have to want to be challenged in your current beliefs, because – you’ve figured out they don’t exactly work for you. If you’re content with your life, you’re either in denial, or have evolved beyond the need for this book. Either way, you’ve wasted the purchase price... sorry, no refunds. (Kidding.)

I will help you cultivate a state of mind that is more aware of, and involved in, the present. It is in this “being present” that we let go of our worries, concerns, mental chattering, and perceived stress. There is a direct connection between the mind and body, and it’s no wonder that some simple, yet very effective tools can be used to draw our attention to the “now”. By using these tools and techniques regularly, your subconscious, and eventually your ego, will get the message to move out of the way.

Here are some basic and necessary precepts you need to understand for this journey to work. I ask that you resist paging ahead, and allow me to lay an important foundation that I’ll build upon later in the book.

It is our life purpose to evolve. We seem to take a long time to learn lessons. The older we get, we either just give up, or give in to the wisdom that our parents tried to drive into our heads. Yet despite that, our society is very gradually evolving into a higher state of functioning, even though we see events repeat themselves as though nothing was learned. In this way, society is a macrocosm of each individual, and each individual is a microcosm of society. Sometimes we just don’t learn, but all the evidence shows that we are indeed growing and evolving as a race, albeit slowly.

It’s fascinating to watch society awaken to the higher principles of evolved living. There’s changes happening for the better, and you and I are part of it. Change for the better is becoming more common.

It is our ego’s job to stop that from happening. Get to know what your ego is, and how it operates. All of the mental chattering, which is either about something in the past, or something in the future, keeps us distracted from the present

moment. We chunter about how we look to others; if we're successful enough to retire comfortably; if what we said to someone offended them - the list is endless. Our egos did a great job keeping us alive when we were regularly being eaten by predators, but we don't need that function any more. We have carried our fight or flight instincts into the present, and will react to any perceived threat. The key word is "perceived". Fear is the at the root of stress, anger, and anxiety, and we must learn to tame it if we are to experience freedom, bliss, contentedness, gratefulness, peace of mind... all the things we search for.

Being occupied unnecessarily with the past, the future, and any perceived threat only ties up our thoughts, and impedes the flow of positive restorative energy. And interestingly, we can always change how we feel right now, but we have not an ounce of control over the past or future events.

We must acknowledge and cultivate our spirituality. Spirituality is different than religion, most of us know that. To be on a path of personal growth is to eventually come face-to-face with bigger issues than just our own existence. As the saying goes, a person all wrapped up in themselves makes a very small package, so as we begin discovering new and wonderful insights about ourselves and others, they eventually touch on issues such as the existence of an afterlife, spirit beings, the origin and reason for the universe, love and compassion... Questioning and seeking these truths is a natural and vital part of our pilgrimage. We know we are born, and we die. Existentialism, or the believe that there is nothing but a physical world, is a shallow, unevolved belief that ignores the majority of what makes up our world.

For example, the healing art called Reiki uses unseen energy, and demonstrates the reality that our bodies are composed of energy centers (called chakras) that respond to the trained healer. It is amazing how commonplace this practice is in North America, yet no more than a couple decades ago, was totally unknown. I have witnessed and personally experienced physical changes in my body thanks to this discipline.

So, if you have a lot of question in this area, bring them to the table... the earnest seeker finds answers.

Acknowledge a higher intelligence. There is indeed some incredible complexity and inherent creative intelligence behind our universe, and you are part of it. I've heard it said that God is the ocean, and we are the waves. This seems to fit exceedingly well with the experience and wisdom of the great teachers that still influence us today. I highly recommend (if you haven't done so already) to read *Conversations With God* by Neil Donald Walsch, and *Your Sacred Self* by Dr. Wayne W. Dyer. Both books are very appropriate material for anyone on a spiritual path. Do not let the words *God* and *sacred* throw you off. Both terms are used in very modern, insightful, and unconventional ways.

The above precepts form the groundwork needed to get through the following chapters, and are important to absorb and foster. Becoming a whole and balanced person requires the cooperation and cultivation of our mind, heart, spirit, and body. The following chapters deal with a holistic, practical, and very realistic approach to living a life of happiness and bliss.



Part Two: Breathe, Drink, and be Merry

Stress keeps us on edge, and there is a massive list of physical symptoms associated with it, many of which we already know such as sweating and a racing heartbeat. Then there's the chemical changes we experience, primarily due to adrenaline. *Another key symptom is shortness of breath.* I emphasize this, because it is something we have control over.

We have a level of consciousness we call the *subconscious*; that part of us we're not quite aware of, but it's working away at keeping us alive, and talking care of things so we don't have to think about them. It operates in very simple concepts, with no judgments about right or wrong, and more importantly, cause and effect. By this I mean that we can effect a change in our subconscious' interpretation of threat and thereby reduce our stress by outer stimulus.

The subconscious is on the alert for external signs of threat. Because threat is a totally subjective perception, we can out-smart this mechanism by feeding it evidence that we're actually OK. The following very simple techniques do this, because the subconscious, in it's rudimentary interpretation of external stimuli, associates them with relief, relaxation, and safety.

Here's three things to feed your body (and subconscious) with, so as to send the message that you're not threatened, and thereby reduce stress.

Air

"Breathe" Helen said – "Take lots of deep breaths". I was taking some counseling a number of years ago, and this was the first thing she suggested, being outright adamant that deep breathing is a form of stress reduction. We've all heard about it, but who does it, really? It's become a cliché – "take a deep breath and settle down". Like all clichés, there's so much truth in it, that it gets overused and sometimes misunderstood.

There's an interesting appreciation for advice that comes along with a price tag, so as simple as it sounded, I began to include deep breathing as a regular part of my day. Every hour, I'd take 5 deep breaths, filling my lungs to capacity each time. This is the first of a few physical things you can do to begin preparing yourself for your journey to spiritual and emotional peacefulness.

Sound overly simple? Well, as I said, it targets stress, the basis for a multitude of other negative emotions that are detrimental. It's not the only thing to use as a de-stressor, but it's a good one.

So, there's technique number one: during your waking hours, take a one-minute timeout every few hours for a few deep breaths. This alone will begin to make a difference in your stress level immediately.

Water

Technique number two: drinking. Beer is great, but not in this context! I'm referring to water. Along with deep breathing, drinking water also sends messages to your subconscious that "Hey, we're OK - that lion has stopped chasing us and it's time to relax". Taking long, refreshing gulps of water is not only healthy from a physical standpoint, it also tells the subconscious that it's OK to urinate, which our fight-or-flight mechanism tells us to *stop* doing. It's an effect of adrenaline, and again, our subconscious is only a very simple interpreter of external messages.

Water is so abundantly available in most environments, and you can even make it a special treat by adding ice cubes and a twist of your favourite citrus fruit. As a part of your daily rituals, drinking water along with deep breathing are de-stressors that will help in a significant way.

Candy

Number three: suck on candy. Doing so enforces the above concept that there's no immediate threat; that we are treating ourselves with something that is normally associated with relaxation. Sugarless candies are available if you are concerned about the extra calories, the best being those made for diabetics. Still tasty, and guilt-free!

These three habits, when practiced regularly, will single-handedly take your stress level down quite a few notches. I was quite amazed at their effectiveness. So do yourself a huge favour and save on coaching fees... as simple as these sound, they do indeed effectively reduce stress. The less stress you have in your life, the more attention you can put on your other areas of growth.

One more note on stress: I do not mean in any way to minimize any dire circumstances that may be in your life at this time. If that is the case, I urge you even more so to use these techniques as helpers to get you through any actual crisis you may be experiencing.

Stress comes from perceived threat. The immediate physical effects can be managed with these simple techniques. I can't emphasize enough their importance in preparing you for the next few sections.



Part Three: Silencing the Chattering Monkeys

By continuing to practice the previously described stress-reduction techniques, you're making space for a more refined set of tools that will quiet your mind and soften the harshness of your ego's constant chatter. Ancient spiritualists describe our minds as having "chattering monkeys, wild horses, and rampaging elephants". A more modern description would be to describe our minds as constantly occupied with decision making, worry, doubt, fears... there is constant internal dialogue with ourselves that keeps us away from the current moment. As I wrote before, it is when this chattering stops that we can feel relief from this frenetic state of mind. It is when we stop to smell the roses that we appreciate, love, and are thankful for what we see, smell, hear, and touch, experience.

Our next goal then is to reduce, if not silence, this inner dialogue. Practicing this regularly will begin to influence the rest of your day, and you'll find things don't stress you out as much.

I have a question for you: what activity do you immediately gravitate towards when you have a minute or two that happens to show up in your day? People generally stay busy, and because of their work ethic, may find something productive to do. Other may turn on a soap opera, or listen to a radio talk-show. It is in these spare moments that we can take our next step in fostering peace and bliss, and that is through...

Meditation

Silent meditation can take place anywhere, anytime, when we have the chance to be alone for a few minutes to close our eyes. It goes beyond breathing, though deep breathing is part of it. Now we're stepping into the realm of mental quietness, though if you think it is difficult, the opposite is true. These mental health breaks are just that – you're mind's way of kicking off it's shoes and chilling out.

If this is new to you, I encourage you start with guided meditation, where someone with a calm, relaxing voice asks you to visualize certain things, and takes you to a mental state of relaxation. It sounds mysterious to the inexperienced, but once practiced a few times, it becomes a place you will want to visit constantly! Most cities and towns have meditation circles you can join, and there's also the option of purchasing audio CDs with various tracks meant specifically to guide you into a meditative state. An Internet search will result in a plethora of down-loadable MP3s, CDs, etc. Actually, meditation and self-hypnosis have a lot in common, in that they both induce a relaxed state of mind. Self-hypnosis tends to be more goal oriented for results such as losing weight, smoking cessation. etc.

Once you are introduced to silent meditation, you can call upon it anytime you have the opportunity. It will sooth your mind, silence the chattering, and bring relief from the demands of life, internal and external.

I recommend practicing meditation on a daily basis, if not for just 5 minutes. It's an awesome break, and the physical and mental changes you will experience from it will be exciting! Longer periods of meditation (fifteen minutes to an hour) will obviously have even more impact.

The following is a short meditation that works well as a five to 15 minute session. Read it through a few times to get the gist of each sequential step, so you don't break the "flow" by missing anything. It includes some visualization of energy fields:

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In a comfortable chair or lying in bed, take three very deep, deliberate breaths, in through the nose, and out the mouth.

One - two - three...

On the fourth breath, visualize that you are protected and surrounded by a white light, above you, below you, on all sides. Breath in this white energy on breaths five and six.

It's OK if you feel slightly light-headed. You are feeding every cell in your body with life-giving oxygen, energy, and relaxation.

Now begin a slow scan of your body starting from bottom to top. Imagine your toes and feet bathed in white, warm, healing light, relaxing them like they never have before, releasing all tension. All the muscles in them are still and limp.

Slowly move your awareness to your calf muscles, shins, and upper leg muscles, relaxing them as you continue to breath in white, healing light from around you. You may reduce the depth of your breathing now, but not too shallow.

Move your awareness to your lower back, stomach muscles, and chest, all the time letting go of any tensed muscles, allowing them to settle and totally relax. Take one more very deep breath.

Your shoulders and neck carry a lot of tension, so take your time here to settle them and relax all tensed up muscles, feeling the warmth of the light as it travels up your body.

As you move up to your face, you let go of any tension that may be there, and you even let your jaw drop slightly as you feel it let go. You are feeling very relaxed now, and even your scalp muscles are letting go of tension.

As you notice the sensation of air moving in and out of your lungs, your mind may wander a bit. That's OK, just come back to the room and put your attention on your relaxed state, and your breath. Feel the cool air move in and out of your nose.

When you come back is up to you, but stay in this meditative state for at least a few minutes. You may begin to feel twitchy, or the opposite – you may doze off. It is in this very relaxed state that much healing happens, and our silenced mind takes a much needed hiatus.

Come back to the present by small movement in your eyes, or toes... something subtle. As you “return”, move around and take one last cleansing, deep breathe.

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This is a very generic guided meditation that is commonly used in meditation circles, hospitals, seminars, etc. I encourage you to put it to good use, and get creative with it. As you learn about other meditations, you'll soon find a few favorites that suit you quite well, and are useful in maintaining your focus and attention.

The Compassionate Observer

You have opened yourself up to a new awareness. Something may have happened to you during that meditation, perhaps a vision, sensation somewhere in your body... some people experience profound things, others may be distracted by the shopping list for the evening's meal! Darn monkeys! Don't feel like your experience was missing anything though; what happened to you was just for you; just the right thing.

It is in this silence and stillness that our egos are put on hold, or at least minimized. The chattering monkeys are silenced. This allows for your spirit to emerge and experience a previously unknown environment of peace, tranquility, and aloneness with Spirit. Here, you can look back on yourself in a figurative sense and observe that in fact, what you are made up of it *not* your body and brain/intellect. You are, in fact, a spirit being having an earthly experience. Think on that for a sec...

Yes, we are spirit. Even these bodies we carry around are mostly space, as the distance between our atomic particles is similar to the earth and the moon, sun, etc. Our concept of reality begins to shift as we explore and discover what it is we're really comprised of.

Part of this new perspective is a self-observation that I mentioned above. You start to become an observer of the functions of your ego from the third-person. “Look, there I am reacting again”. “Interesting how I let that get to me”. “I got so angry when that cell-phone using, coffee-sipping ignorant driver cut me off”. Knee-jerk reactions like these originate from fear, and it is the purpose of our ego to interpret and act on these threats, quicker than the blink of an eye. But rather than following through with a composed response, such as anger or panic, we can short-circuit and therefore minimize these

perceived threats before they dominate our psyche *by being the third-person observer of ourselves*. And I entitled this section *compassionate observer*, because as we cultivate our real essence, and learn how separate we really are from the body and the reactive ego, we lovingly understand and give space to ourselves.

It is in this state of conscious awareness that the reactive ego is defused, and the normal follow-up patterns of upset/anger/angst/hopelessness/panic etc. no longer have to be part of us. Don't think that it is an ignoring of your feelings, but rather an entirely new re-wiring of your mind/body.

My own direct experience with this cultivation of the *compassionate observer* has led to some interesting changes in my normal mental chatter. I discovered at one point that I no longer feasted on melancholy, and mistakes of the past. It hit me at one point that it had been weeks and weeks since I beat myself up over financial errors I was responsible for, as well as dwelling on the anger of my previously failed marriage. Those memories used to be conjured up often, and would be met with deep sighs, feelings of regret and powerlessness, accompanied by more damage to my self respect. Well, guess what? I'm free of those debilitating, caustic thought processes, and not by direct intent, but by allowing the compassionate observer to enter as many life experiences as possible.

Things will start dropping off the wagon without you noticing it, while at the same time a lightness and positive attitude to life becomes more normal. You will still have reactions, stress, etc. but they will no longer have the dominant place in your personality they used to.



Part Four: Gratitude and Wealth

The last important milestone to move through in our path to happiness and bliss is gratitude. The more we are in a state of gratitude and thankfulness, the more positive energy we create in our lives, and attract to ourselves. This attitude and frame of mind plays a direct role in attaining bliss and happiness.

It is very common to correlate happiness and bliss with wealth and prosperity, in particular for people living in the more developed and rich societies like North America and elsewhere. But we know that attainment of happiness and bliss through these things is shallow and unevolved.

We are now being told that wealth, prosperity, and material goods will appear magically when we become more spiritually realized; that we in fact attract these things by visualizing them. The law of attraction is a hot topic, and the pop culture interest in it is immense. Not to distract from some of the truths and principles currently being taught in the many "Law of Attraction" movies, books, and seminars, but some of it is appealing to our materialistic inclinations, in that it is still ego-centered.

Don't Wait to Win the Lottery

A survey said that over fifteen percent of North Americans are depending on some kind of windfall to bail them out. And, our egos are sometimes offended by the inequality of riches in the world, and can be jealous even of the neighbor with the bigger car, summer home, whatever... It is our egos that drive our need to survive and prosper, no matter how comfortable and rich we actually are!

By fostering gratitude and thankfulness, we again short-circuit this primitive need in us to compete, conquer, and dominate. And with the basics of our needs met with comfortable homes, food, and clothing, we have even less reason to worry. So, the following exercise is an effective way to cultivate your happiness and bliss. Practice it daily for a week, then at least weekly after that.

Start the whole process by making a list of all the things you would like, such as your dream home, job, relationship, friends, hobbies, etc., as if there was no limit to the money you could spend on them. Pull all the stops out. Do you like a rustic cabin? Imagine living in a lodge. Do you like to travel? Imagine your own private helicopter and pilot, there to whisk you away to anywhere on the globe. You like baseball? Imagine owning a stadium. You would like to act? Imagine starring in a Broadway play, or Hollywood blockbuster. You get the point... let your imagination go wild, and don't limit this list to just material things.

The next step is to create what is called a “vision board”. Start gathering pictures from magazines, or from the Internet, that represent all the things you have listed above, and when you think you have enough, paste all these pictures on a bulletin board where they can stay. What you have in front of you is a visual representation of your highest potentiality coming true on this earth; the completion of all the dreams and aspirations you have right now. Locate it somewhere in your house that is easy to see, and somewhere that you pass by often.

Now, take it all in – look at the board, and begin feeling the thoughts and sensations you’d have if you really had all this. Breathe it in deeply and begin to feel the completeness in your life; the deep sighs of relief knowing you finally arrived; the relief of lost fear, concern, and worry of the future. Make this visualization as visceral as you can, feeling every bit the same now, as you would feel having all these things. Make it real. And finally, feel the *gratitude* and *thankfulness*. Give thanks to the universe for blessing you so immensely, and bask in this feeling as long as you are able.

Eureka!

Now, realize this: those feelings of love, gratitude, and thankfulness are yours to possess. Did you not feel blissful? Happy? It did not actually take *having* these possession and achieving these goals to reach the euphoric state of elation; but rather changing the state of your mind. You were not fooled into believing any lies; quite the contrary - you knew full-well what you were doing. Two other side benefits come from this. One, you can actually begin attracting these things into your life. Two, it's not much of a stretch then to feel gratitude for what you *already have!* The more you do it, the more you are drawn into an existence of contentedness, casting away the greediness and jealousy associated with materialism, success, power... all the things the ego drives us towards.

You will be able to draw on this anytime, anywhere. Feeling left behind in the real estate market? Recall how you felt during your vision-board experience, and let the gratitude swell up in you. Got dumped by your boyfriend, or were served divorce papers today? Recall the vision-board experience. It is the feeling of *gratitude* that you now can call upon at a moment’s notice. Use it often. The relief it creates transcends anything your ego can throw at you.



Recap and Conclusion

It is our life purpose to evolve. Personal and spiritual evolution is a natural process that requires a bit of work on our part, because...

It is our ego's job to stop that from happening. Our ego, or subconscious, is there to keep us at the center of our universe, and it will struggle to maintain its place of authority as our guardian and provider. That's why it's a good idea to...

Acknowledge and cultivate our spirituality. We're more than just our mind and body; we have a spiritual core which actually is the essence of who we *really* are. After realizing this, we then naturally will...

Acknowledge a higher intelligence. We are part of that higher intelligence; we are actually divine beings that need awakening to our potential. We need to loosen the hold our ego and mind has on us. We need some tools to waken up...

De-stress with deep breathing, water, and the odd candy. All are techniques that take the edge off of the anxiety that our ego uses to keep us in submission to its power. It begins the process of quieting our thoughts. Then,

Meditate daily for 5 or more minutes. Further quieting your "chattering monkeys" with meditation, this easy technique opens you to experience changes and shifts in your perception of yourself, and those around you.

Cultivate the compassionate observer in you. This powerfully transforms your self-identity, and detaches you from the reactive subconscious ego. Many issues that used to bother you seem to take care of themselves... And finally,

Develop inner wealth with gratitude. If you are rich or poor, having a grateful heart is the biggest gift you can give yourself, and to those around you.

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There you have it - some things you can incorporate into your life without a lot of effort, time, or money. No need to climb a mountain, pay a guru, or go to an encounter weekend. It is within your grasp, and only takes the desire to learn and discover some new things. Your belief system may be challenged, and your ego may not want to let go of certain things. Remember that it is when we're willing to shift our perceptions, that we have our "Ah Ha!" moments, which then lead to decisions that can alter the rest of our lives for the better. It's like walking up a hill, where with each step, the horizon widens to reveal things we didn't see before.

I wish you love, peace, happiness, and success in your journey. You deserve it.

The End

