

THE YEAR OF LIVING GENEROUSLY!



“Generosity is the most natural outward expression of an inner attitude of compassion and loving-kindness.” — **Dalai Lama**

BY PAMELA BARIT NOLAN

Introduction

Another full year of newsletters. Wow - I really never thought that I would write so much. Each newsletter has been welcomed by the subscribers and often they gave me wonderful feedback. Once again this year we decided to pull the newsletters into an e-book for you to enjoy. Like the last book, each chapter has a different story and reflection to consider. Generosity and living generously is a gift to the world.

My dear friend, Bishop Rose Hudson-Wilken, who is the Bishop of Dover for the Church of England, has made generosity a pillar of her ministry. In support of her ministry of living generously, I thought we could explore what it means to live this way.

What does this word, this emotion, this sentiment mean to us and to others? How might living generously help us and others and make the world a better place? I did a bit of digging and these are some of the things I found:

The Christian Bible speaks about generosity in over 20 places. Here are some examples:

In the book of Proverbs, it says, "A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed."

In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, he says: "Remember this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion....."

Buddhism also speaks to generosity. A blog post by Beth Ross on Tricycle.org, suggests that: The Buddha said, "If you knew, as I do, the power of giving, you would not let a single meal pass without sharing some of it." He taught that when we truly understand the power of generosity, we experience how it brings joy to the giver as well as the receiver.

And the Quran notes that God says that He will repay the generosity of a believer. God is the one who provides for us and He expects us to share generously. We are encouraged to be benevolent and unselfish with our possessions, with our time and with our exemplary behavior towards others.

Generosity is good for the soul. I hope that you enjoy reading this book and, as you do, consider how generosity plays a role in your life and in your world. I hope that each chapter encourages you to continue to live generously. Your generosity will make the world a better place for sure!

Pamela Barit Nolan



Generosity – Chapter 1

How do you live generously? How have you received others' generosity? We need to be able to do both.



Generosity

The Cambridge Dictionary defines generosity as a willingness to give help or support, especially more than is usual or expected.

Coming off the season of giving at the end of the year, I thought pausing and reflecting on the topic of living generously might help us consider how we approach generosity in the year ahead.

We read and hear stories every day, especially during the pandemic, about heroes in hospitals giving of themselves selflessly to help save the lives of others. We perhaps have experienced in our own communities the generosity that is shown through Christmas hampers, visits to those confined to their homes or the success of a Toys for Tots campaign. Perhaps we have been the ones to deliver a meal to someone in quarantine or have gone to the grocery store to ensure that a neighbor has food to eat and be nourished.

Generosity – Chapter 1

Generosity doesn't have to be about giving money. Generosity can be about being unselfish with our time, our possessions, and our behavior towards others. Generosity can be about how we approach our work, a project, or an intention.

I know in my own life, caregiving for a 91-year-old mother and a 30-year-old horse, that time is the best gift I can give both of them and perhaps a scone or an apple could help too.

Even the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle thought about generosity. He wrote a whole chapter on it in his *Nicomachean Ethics*. A quote from this publication is:



“Actions expressing virtue are noble and aim at what is noble. Hence the generous person. will aim at what is noble in his giving and will give correctly; for he will give to the right people, the right amounts, at the right time, and all the other things that are implied by correct giving. He will do this, moreover, with pleasure or without pain.” - *Nicomachean ethics*, Aristotle (384-322 BC)

Another quote that I found encouraging is: “Behold I do not give lectures or a little charity, When I give, I give myself.” A line from verse 40 of “*Song of Myself*.” - poet Walt Whitman (1819-1892)

Generosity – Chapter 1

So with these inspirations, let's get together and live generously this year. Let's find places where our time, treasure and talent can be used to improve the world. How will you begin? I am starting off by giving my time and ability to help a lovely cousin get married. I am so thrilled he asked and so excited to be participating. Generosity does indeed benefit both the giver and the receiver!

Another way I live generously is to offer anyone that is interested a free 30-minute discovery session.

This time to be used to explore how working with me might help you, your family, your company, your community – whatever is a priority for you at this time. Let's find out how our collective generosity can change the world.

Pamela



The Gift of Mindfulness – Chapter 2

I hope that Chapter 1 inspired you to reflect on generosity in all its forms. Perhaps you paused for a moment to reflect on how generosity plays a part in your life.



Mindfulness

There are a number of ways to add mindful behavior into our days. We might start with meditation. Meditation is being generous to our minds

One of the most important places generosity can have a positive influence on our lives is in how we live generously for ourselves. I don't mean this in a selfish or egotistical way. Research and experience show that if we don't care for and be generous to ourselves that we will have nothing left to give to others.

If you chose to take the short assessment offered in Chapter 6 of the Pathways book then perhaps you learned that you are a Pleaser. If so, you likely think of self-care and generosity to yourself as a low priority. I coach many Pleasers and have battled a Pleaser saboteur in myself. These clients arrive at sessions exhausted and frustrated as they battle illness, stress, and burnout as they scurry from place to place, ensuring everyone is happy and served.

The Gift of Mindfulness – Chapter 2



When they look in the mirror, they see dullness in their gaze and dark circles under their eyes. Hmmm, what is to be done?

Perhaps adding some mindful practices to your day can help and will add a bit of generosity to yourself. What is mindfulness you might ask? "Mindfulness is awareness that arises through paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, non-judgmentally," says Jon Kabat-Zinn. "And then I sometimes add - in the service of self-understanding and wisdom."

Our minds work all day and all night, creating thoughts - some are helpful and some not so helpful. Meditation allows our minds to quiet, to be still and to rest.

I often share **this video** with those that are not so convinced about the power of meditation. I have heard from several clients that sitting still in silence is just too hard for them. Or some don't have time between work, family, and other activities.

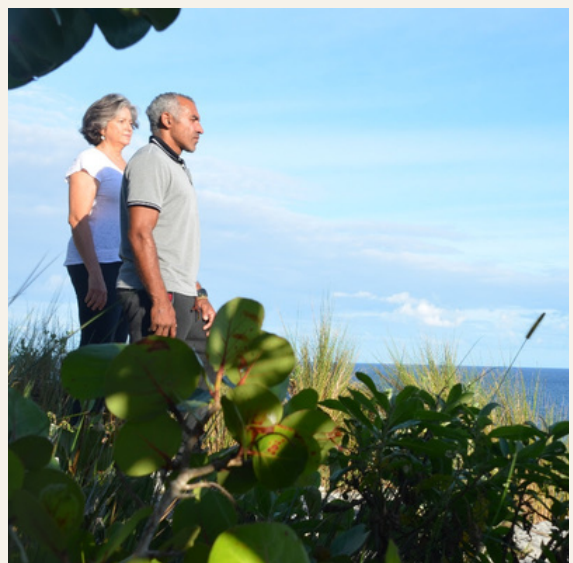
The Gift of Mindfulness – Chapter 2

Davidji, a master meditation teacher, says first, comfort is queen so you don't have to sit cross-legged for an hour. Just find a comfortable posture or place to sit and be quiet. He also notes, as many teachers do, that consistency of practice is the most important thing of all. So if you can only give a minute or two then start there. He even offers a breathing practice that can take 24 seconds...24 seconds that can help give your mind a rest and bring your attention back to the present.

If at all possible, invite yourself into a meditation in the morning to set your intention for the day and then a meditation in the late afternoon or early evening. This practice can help you to let go of all the things that perhaps rattled you a bit during the day and can be the most generous practice you could offer yourself.

At the beginning of our pandemic journey, I considered how I might be of service to my clients, my community and myself.

How could we weather this storm with generosity, compassion, grace, connection, and love?



The Gift of Mindfulness – Chapter 2

As a consistent meditator and student of mindfulness I decided to offer my community online meditation sessions twice a week. We started at first with a 10-minute meditation that grew to 20 and finally to 25 minutes. There is no required continuous commitment from the group – the invitation is always there and so sometimes it is just me and at others 5 or 6 join on Zoom.

We check in with one another, we breathe, we settle, we let go and we enjoy sitting in silence together for the better part of 25 minutes. At the end, we close by selecting an inspirational card from one of the decks I have and then we leave each other to carry on with our evening or morning whichever the case may be (we have a meditator that joins from Japan!).

This is our way of being generous to each other and to ourselves. [Read some testimonials](#) from a few of the participants about the impact this consistent practice of generosity has had on them!



Email me at pamela@transformbda.com if you would like to join and I will add you to the Zoom invite.

The Gift of Mindfulness – Chapter 2

Follow these links for some gifts to help you consider adding meditation to your life – creating generosity for you.

Let's keep living this year generously!

Get on board. It might just be fun!

Your thoughts are Bubbles

How can we pay better attention to our attention?

All it takes is 10 mindful minutes

Meditation, a generous gift to yourself. Perhaps you can start your own meditation circle with your family or a group of friends. Your mind and your whole self will celebrate and generously give back to you a thousand times over.



The Gift of Giving– Chapter3

In the first chapter of this year's series, I spoke about how it can be just as important to give generously as well to receive. In this spirit and to practice the art of giving I am giving you a copy of my E-book compiled from 2021 Pathways Series.



"If you knew, as I do, the power of giving, you would not let a single meal pass without sharing some of it." – Buddha

I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it and if you are on a rocky pathway, I hope that it brings you comfort.

[Click here to download my gift to you](#)



Connecting with Creation– Chapter 4

In 2010 after I completed the **Hoffman Process**, my team at The Centre on Philanthropy gave me a cedar tree to plant. In Bermuda, there is a tradition that when celebrating an important life event you plant a Bermuda cedar tree, a tree that is endemic to Bermuda. If the tree grows big and strong so will the marriage, child, or another important event, grow and be strong.

At the end of the Hoffman Process, they suggest that upon completion you have a new “birthday” and so this is why my team gave me the tree - to mark my re-birthday. The tree was small and hardy and we decided to ask the Parks Department if we could plant him in Devonshire Bay Park, now named Mary Prince Park. The Parks department kindly obliged, and we planted this lovely gift up on the hill and affectionately called it “Tree”.



*Connecting with
Creation*

Tree and I connected and
began a relationship
and so this is Tree's story

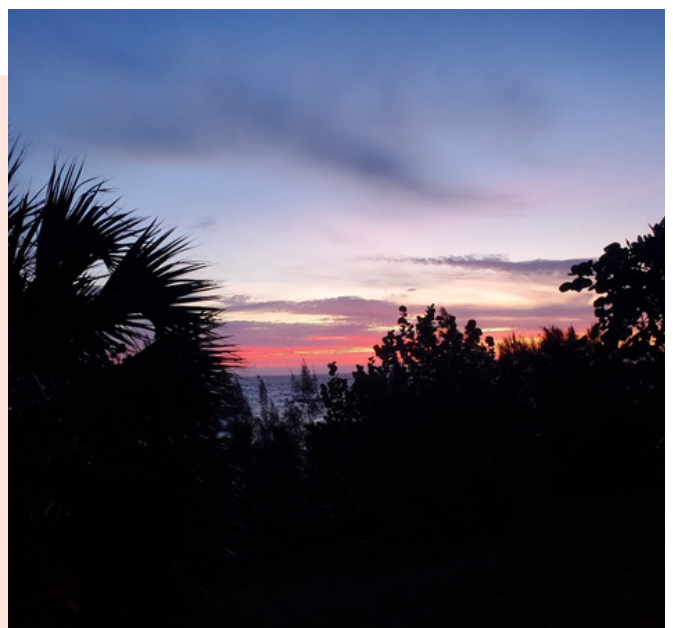
Connecting with Creation– Chapter 4

I was purchased in 2010. I had been grown in a pot and was delivered to my person as a gift. This gift exchange was full of love and generosity, generosity flowing from the givers and generosity flowing back from the receiver. Generosity was a lovely feeling to be in the middle of. As you can see from the photo above, I was quite small at this time. The lovely people from the Parks Department met my person at Devonshire Bay Park and they wandered around for a bit until a spot for my planting was determined.

Generosity was present at this moment too, as the gentleman from the Parks department willingly gave of his time and his tools to make sure that I found a good spot to be planted and a place to call home. He had brought some alternative trees with him that were bigger than me, but my person thanked him and said that it was I that needed to be placed on the hill. I was very grateful as I wanted to put down my roots and grow.

So I settled into this great spot – I had a lovely view of the sunrise.

I was glad about that as the morning light from this vantage point is very special.



Connecting with Creation– Chapter 4

So began my journey. Unfortunately, a while after my planting another crew from parks showed up to maintain the park and I was mown down! My person came to visit me and was horrified by the little stump that was left of me. No one was sure if I could make it back from being mowed over. My person cleared the area around my small stump and promised to keep an eye out for me. I pushed through this setback and made an effort to return. I was able to do so until once again I was mowed over – really how is that possible to be knocked down as you are doing your best to grow and to be seen!

My person returned and felt defeated. Her husband was with her this time and suggested building a protective wall around what was left of me and so they installed a circle of stones – how generous of them not to give up but to protect me. This was a lovely gesture that gave me renewed hope. I was determined to return.



On the third attempt to mow me over, the stones were great protection and broke the blade of the mower which was found on the next visit from my person and her husband. They celebrated and danced around the circle and added more stones to ensure that I was able to finally push forward and establish my rightful place on the hill.

Connecting with Creation– Chapter 4

Generally, cedar trees have one straight trunk as you can see from my baby picture but given my rather traumatic start, my regrowth did not quite go that way. I bushed out in all directions to ensure I filled the space so I could be seen.

In celebration of my new growth and progress, my person decorated me for Christmas in 2014 and put some candy canes under my newly formed branches to be generous to any that might come to visit me. I did have some lovely visitors and once again we experienced the joy of generosity – giving and receiving even in a small way.

I have survived about a dozen hurricanes and other various storms, but I continue to grow. My person noticed a while back that I have 5 main trunks instead of the usual single trunk. She laughed and said how much alike we are – we couldn't just do one thing well but many and she likened my trunks to the branches of her life – Faith and Church, Coaching, Philanthropy, Family and Friends.



Connecting with Creation– Chapter 4

My person and even some of her other friends visit me from time to time to check on how things are going. Due to the protective ring of stones, I am now almost 12 feet tall. My person recently began to walk every morning and ends her walks with me. We pray and I give her a hug and we think up an intention for our day. It is a lovely ritual and one that encourages me to continue to grow and spread my wings.

I have a bit of a bald patch on my northerly side as that is where the fiercest winter storm winds blow from. My person doesn't seem to mind that imperfection – no one is perfect after all. If I have a few flaws then it just gives me more character! Come and visit me sometime if you are near the park or on the island, I would love to connect with you.

Perhaps you don't think that creation can talk to humans but give it a try – come down and sit with me and see what comes. You never know what exciting adventure we might cook up together. Perhaps sitting by me is just the peaceful place that you need to do nothing. We are a good pair my person and me. We both listen, hold space and provide a quiet place to explore life's mysteries. She may ask you harder questions than me, but we are both here to support you on your journey!



Taking risks – Chapter 5



The title of this chapter might seem odd and out of the context of living generously. I think taking risks can be a gift to us and to those impacted by our risk-taking activity. Think about it.

When my husband and I were traveling in China we found ourselves in Yangshuo, a town where many ladies want to take tourists on bicycle rides through the rice paddies on a very proscribed route that is full of busy places that want you to spend money. When groups stop at one of these places, the guide gets a commission. This was not something that we were interested in participating in. We prefer quieter, off-the-beaten-track routes when we are exploring new areas. We got pestered by many of these ladies in cafes and walking around the town.

Taking risks – Chapter 5

One day we were approached in a restaurant by our waitress, a shy young woman, who said she wanted to practice her English and we chatted with her for a bit. Her name was Lily. By the time we were getting ready to leave the restaurant, she asked if we wanted to hire her for one of the bike rides. My husband and I looked at each other and without speaking thought it might be worth taking a risk with this girl – she was different. We said we would accept her offer only if she did not take us on the tourist route. She agreed.

When we met up with her the next day and set off, she took up the tourist route and we had to kindly stop her and say we would end the ride if this was the route she was taking. She apologized and led us off on a different pathway. We loved our ride with her exploring quiet paths and chatting with her. We enjoyed lunch together.



Taking risks – Chapter 5

At the end of the ride, she asked if we would like to come with her sister to meet her mother on another day. Once again, a look passed between my husband and I, and we agreed. The next day we found ourselves on a very small, Chinese-only ferry going up the river with Lily and her sister. We disembarked and walked inland for about an hour.

The countryside was amazing, and we eventually found her mother's house in a small village. She had no electricity or running water in the house. She cooked us a simple but delicious meal and gave us a tour of her home. Before we left, we took a photo of her and her two daughters and then found our way, with Lily's advice, back to Yangshuo on the bus.

The experience was magical and would have never happened if we did not take a risk in trusting Lily and accepting her offers. When we tried to think about how to return her generosity, we found a Kodak store in the town and had a large print of the photo made, bought a frame, and took the photo back to the restaurant where we met Lily and asked them to give it to her.



Lily with her
mom and sister

Taking risks – Chapter 5

Later in our trip, we received an email, letting us know that she had received the photo and had given it to her mother who cried tears of joy as she had never seen a photograph of herself or her daughters. What an amazing exchange of generosity that was for all of us. And all it took was for us to take a risk and trust our gut that this connection was a good one to make.

I think these opportunities can arise for us every day. We have a choice of whether to take or avoid a risk. We can take the leap and quit that job, accept the invitation, buy that house, take on that new client, walk down that pathway we have never explored before, or we can continue on our habitual path and miss opportunities to learn and grow and experience new things.



Taking risks – Chapter 5

Each time I accept a new client there is a risk – will I have an impact? Will we make a good connection? Will the client feel that the journey has been worthy of the investment they made in coaching? There are so many questions that flood through me each time I receive a request for a discovery call. I use my intuition to know when to say yes and when it is best to refer a client to another wonderful coaching colleague and I pray that my intuition guides me in the best possible way.

I had a lovely coach that asked me to pay attention when taking on a new risk. She invited me to notice whether I felt physically light or heavy. If the latter was present, she said, I should take a different pathway. That sage advice has supported me wonderfully. Trusting our intuition and taking risks doesn't mean our choices are always right. We can still stumble and get off our pathway. Generally, though, I find that taking the risk, and being generous by taking the step that might feel a bit uncertain, or downright scary, leads to magical moments like the one that my husband and I experienced on the ferry in China.

I was telling this story to a friend of mine just the other day and she told me her story of risk-taking....a story of accepting an invitation from a complete stranger...and how did her story end...well you should see the lovely ring on her finger today!

Taking risks – Chapter 5

How will you take generous risks in the months ahead?

What gift might be waiting for you if you let go of the bank of the river that represents your habitual life?

I offer you a piece by Margaret Wheatley that I think says it all:

Perch where the wind comes at you full force
Let it blow you apart till your feathers fly off and you look like hell
Then abandon yourself. The wind is not your enemy.
Nothing in life is.

Go where the wind takes you – higher, lower, backwards.
The wind to carry you forward will find you when you are ready.
When you can bear it.



Forgiveness – Chapter 6

What are you holding on to deep inside yourself that needs to be realized and set free? Perhaps this is something that has long haunted you or even something that happened a few days ago.

We all feel hurt and have stories of how we feel others have wronged us in some way or another. The incident could have originated from the workplace, during our formal education, or perhaps from family or friends in our childhood. Each hurt or challenge gets filed in our memories and, if we don't address them, they get buried in our unconscious or subconscious mind. Often the emotions that go along with these hurtful memories get lodged in our bodies someplace.



My coaching programme, the Newfield Network, taught us about the dangers of trapped emotions. How they can come raging back at inopportune moments and can even create sickness when we least expect it. What are we to do with these hurts and trapped emotions?

Forgiveness – Chapter 6

I have often worked with clients that have begun to realise the consequences of harboring these hurts and emotions in their bodies when they turn to me for help to get some form of relief.

I took one such client down to the beach here in Bermuda and when we found a quiet spot, we stopped, and I asked her what it was that she needed to say to this boss that had tormented her and made her feel small and unworthy. She started rather tentatively in a quiet voice expressing a few things. I stopped her and asked her to consider that the ocean was her boss and to speak directly to the waves as they came to the shore. She closed her eyes and took a deep breath. A tear or two made their way down her cheeks. I placed my hand on her back and encouraged her to speak about what she had been holding on to for so many years. With this added encouragement words began to pour out of her. Her voice rose and her body was shaking. But the words kept coming. I encouraged her to breathe and to continue. And she did until there was nothing more to say.



Forgiveness – Chapter 6

I brought her back into the present and asked her to open her eyes and to look around her in order to ground her and allow her to come back into her body. She stood tall with her shoulders back and began to laugh as the tears continued to flow down her face. She kicked the waves and took a few deep breaths in. I asked her how she felt, and she responded that she felt lighter.

This act of allowing herself to shift these emotions, to release them and no longer have a hold on her in any way allowed her to fully forgive herself for holding this story for such a long time. The release allowed her to realise that she could change the story by releasing these old feelings, straighten up her body and open herself up to new possibilities, to a new story.



Forgiveness – Chapter 6

While sometimes the act of forgiveness does involve two people and a conversation, often the forgiveness needs to be turned inward, to ourselves. Harboring these stories and hurts has a huge impact on how we show up in our world. These releases, whether they come through writing a letter and burning it, meditating in silence allowing our bodies and minds to open and release, or going down to the shore to speak to the ocean, can allow for huge shifts in our lives.

I never in my wildest dreams thought that I could create my own business and serve the world the way I do now. My story was about staying small and staying within the safety of a traditional workplace. But here I am, after some encouragement from a wonderful coach, with 8 years of being on my own under my own umbrella of Transform, having served over 300 clients and coached almost 1700 hours. To do so I had to uncover some of my own hurts and trapped emotions. I also had to forgive others and most importantly myself for allowing my stories to keep me boxed in and somewhat hidden.



The gift of a smile or a laugh – Chapter 7

Before you go any further, I would like you to watch **this**.

How did you react to this video? Did you notice anything? Did you feel lighter or heavier? Did you feel energized or depleted? Reflect and learn about the power of a laugh or a smile on you and those you interact with.

In an **article published by the British Council** in 2014, the author, Ding Li, notes that Charles Darwin's facial feedback hypothesis suggested that emotions could be altered by facial muscles' activity. Li goes on to say that researchers have proven that intentionally exercising your zygomaticus major and orbicularis oculi facial muscles actually makes us feel better. How? Smiling!



The gift of a smile or a laugh – Chapter 7

“When our smiling muscles contract they fire a signal back to the brain, stimulating our reward system, and further increasing our level of happy hormones, or endorphins. In short, when our brain feels happy, we smile, when we smile, our brain feels happier.” And by the way, smiling is proven, like laughing, to be contagious. ?



Over the last few weeks when have you noticed yourself smiling or laughing? Often at the beginning of my meditation sessions with my clients, I suggest that we begin our practice with a smile. What better way to enter a meditation session than with happy endorphins moving about our body! You should try it sometime. And you are also welcome to join us for a smile and some silent moments on Tuesdays and Thursdays if you like.

The gift of a smile or a laugh – Chapter 7

I am not suggesting that we can be happy all the time by just going around with a cheesy smile on our face. Of course, we all experience challenging times where our emotions can be quite stormy. The Poet Rumi would suggest that we welcome these stormier times, as times of learning and growth (see his poem the **Guest House.**)

In my coaching practice, I work somatically with my clients, helping them appreciate the wisdom of and the support we can gain from our bodies. Did you know that we have what some call a second brain in our gut? Neurons are cells found in your brain and central nervous system that tell your body how to behave. There are approximately 100 billion neurons in the human brain and 500 million neurons in our gut. (if you want to know more go **here** or **here**)

When we smile our
brain and our body
connect and secrete
endorphins and we
feel happier -
how great is that!



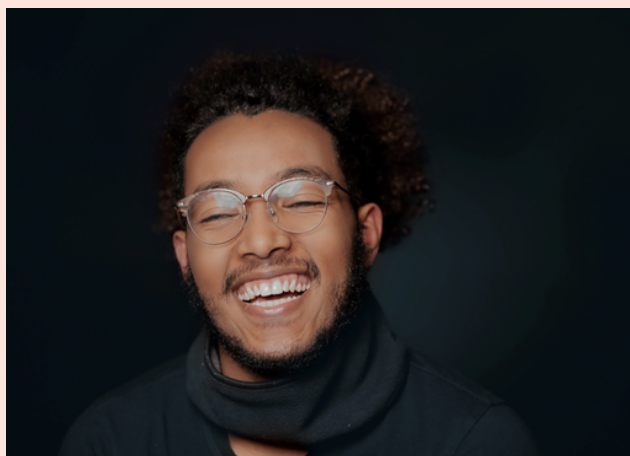
The gift of a smile or a laugh – Chapter 7

Early in some coaching relationships I ask clients to stand in front of a flip chart piece of paper and write down all the words that they hear about themselves from others. Words like compassionate, focused, kind, goal-oriented, empowered, approachable, and supportive make their way onto the paper. When they are finished, I ask them to step back and take a look at what they have written. When these descriptor words are put down on paper, clients are sometimes surprised. What others say about them is not always how they feel about or see themselves.

As you are probably only too aware, we all experience what some call the voice of the judge in our mind. Others might call these voices gremlins or chattering monkeys. Whatever you might call these voices, they are often the ones saying that they are not good enough or not worthy of such words and descriptors. They constantly beat us up and rarely compliment us. When my clients see these lovely words that others might say about them a smile often emerges on their faces as they perhaps see themselves for the first time. That smile generally translates into quite a productive coaching session, as we use those endorphins to dig into how these feelings of unworthiness got their start. Where did that voice of their internal judge get its ammunition? How can we begin to quiet that voice down, so that this lovely person, that many others seem to see, can get on with living more fully and joyfully with a truly authentic smile on their faces?

The gift of a smile or a laugh – Chapter 7

One suggested practice that I offer to those clients that are burdened with their own “I am not worthy” assessment is that they wake up each day and go to the mirror, smile and then say I love you to their reflection – they must look themselves in the eyes and say this with intention and maintain the smile throughout the exercise. I encourage them to try it again at night. The combination of this brain/body exercise allows these neurons to begin firing differently, building a new pathway that perhaps will quiet the judge and the assessment of “I am not worthy”. By doing so, we begin to see ourselves for who we really are – a gifted, loving child of God who is on earth to create goodness and to change the world for the better one person at a time.



After a week of doing the smiling/I love you exercise, most clients come back standing a little taller and feeling a bit lighter and believing that they can choose a different story for themselves. Small things can have such a huge impact on us and others.

The gift of a smile or a laugh – Chapter 7



Prosy, Mary and Angela know the power of a smile as they celebrate the building of Sonshine Campus 2 in Kiwoko, Uganda! There is more to do so if you would like to join the Friends of Sonshine Primary School, [email me](#) and I can give you the details.

The gift of human connection – Chapter 8

Have you ever taken the risk to enter a completely foreign environment and after entering you feel like you have always belonged there?

My husband and I have done that recently in the Azores, where after only a few visits we've purchased a property and are gradually integrating ourselves into the environment and the community.



So much is still unknown and we are sure to make many mistakes, but we are working on it and also trying to learn Portuguese....not an easy language. People ask us why and the only way we can explain it is without words. We simply arrived last summer, got off the plane and before we even got into the airport we said to each other that something felt different. The energy and the people are different!

The gift of human connection – Chapter 8

When have you noticed that you felt you were in the right place at just the right time with the right people? How does that feel physically and emotionally? What do you notice at that moment? What is your intuition telling you?

I often wonder how my clients find me. Sometimes I ask and some say it was just a feeling that I was the right person to coach them at that time.



I think of my priest Canon Ant. Somehow I ended up on the vestry when my church was seeking a new priest. I knew the moment he and his wife, Ruth, walked into the room for his interview that he was the right person for our church at that time. Over the last 12 years, he has guided and encouraged me as I explored my faith and my vocation. I hope in some way I have also been a support to him.

The gift of human connection – Chapter 8



Human connection

– is our meeting ever an accident or does god just Guide us to the people that will love us and support us just when we need it even if we don't know it?

One recent client that only signed up for a few sessions wrote me this upon completing her 2- month package.

"My life is really taking off now and I want to say thank you for all of your help and keeping on my toes and pushing me into the right frame of mind. I am looking forward to going into this as a new experience with wide open eyes and a new fresh outlook for myself. It's time for me to shine and with God, on my shoulder, I will be ok. It's just a matter of breaking the chains and letting go of the things that are holding me back. But I just have to say thank you again for all the support that you have given me. These couple of months have made me take a good look at myself and realize what I want matters. I am someone who matters and has a voice finally. Now I am off to fill out more paperwork so I can start my new job. Positive vibes only going forward."

I read her message and I cried. What a privilege it is to connect with human beings and in doing so watch them open to the possibilities life is offering them but for whatever reason, they don't see.

The gift of human connection – Chapter 8



At this moment I am sitting in a place in the middle of the ocean with 4 other women that before Thursday I had never met. In 3 days we have laughed, cried and opened our souls to one another. We have slowed down and seen one another, felt one another and shared space.

A gift offered to us by 2 special women. They have brought us to a place like no other and connected us. How delicious! They are creating amazing places for people to connect and grow. If you want to explore these extraordinary opportunities then check them out here: [**mahilawake**](#)



Connecting with animals – Chapter 9

How often do you give yourself the gift of stopping and doing nothing? Time to connect with nature, with animals and with other people? The world is spinning....sometimes in crazy ways. Wars and famines....God gave us everything we need and yet we live in scarcity....if we stop for a moment...as I am currently, we begin to appreciate the abundance that surrounds us. And when we stop, we can appreciate the connections we have with everything. Rather than looking for differences, we find similarities. We can connect with and appreciate how everything fits together.



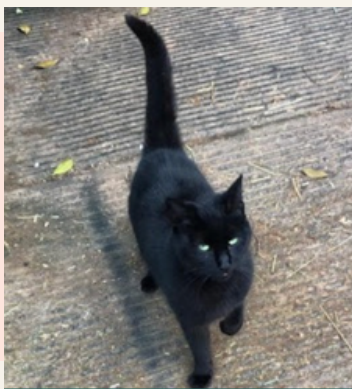
When we stop, we can allow things to come to us. To connect with us....I have recently had this experience with a cat called Chester aka Ginja. Chester showed up a few years ago at one of CATs' Bermudas feeding stations. He befriended the feeders at two different stations and convinced them that he wanted to connect more with humans and so they brought him in. After some time of socialization, they thought perhaps he might like to find a new home. I was away at the time and saw this post on Facebook.

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How could I resist this picture - could you? I tried - I even told them to see, while I was away, if he could find another home. Someone did come to see him, but decided he wasn't the right cat for her or perhaps he decided to just wait for me.

Animals and humans have long been companions. Having animals in our lives can lower stress levels and create unconditional connections that fill us up. They are great listeners, snugglers and playmates. Giving the gift of a safe home by rescuing an animal is a huge act of generosity and one that I highly recommend. I currently find a great connection with Nala the cat, Moon the cat and Brooke the horse



Connecting with animals – Chapter 9

and now Chester. All rescues. All have different personalities, needs, and wants. Each one showed up at the perfect time and have added to the fabric of my life very positively.

I was fortunate several years ago to have connected with **Maia Kincaid**. Maia has had a long and special relationship with animals and generously shares her knowledge with others through her animal communications courses. She has even been generously working with a group connected to the United Nations to see what animals have to say about the Sustainable Development Goals. She has also been in a documentary called **Being with Animals**. I encourage you to watch it and perhaps learn. I can't say that I communicate perfectly with my animals or others, but going through her course helped me realise that I could communicate and listen and deepen my relationships with animals and nature. We just need to open ourselves to this possibility and realise that we are communicating even when we don't realise it through our thoughts, our words and our actions. Pay attention and your communication will be clear to you quickly.

Perhaps now is the moment that you are ready to be generous through the act of adopting a rescue animal. Or if that doesn't feel quite right in the moment then perhaps give to a rescue organisation. There are many beings out there in the world today that need a kind soul to connect with them or support them. Stop for a moment, an hour, a day and see what comes to you. See what you might connect with.

Connecting with animals – Chapter 9

If you want to immerse yourself in doing nothing to see what might become something, connect with **Nic Askew** and explore his offering to do nothing. You might find yourself with a remarkable group of people, exploring and changing the world...and perhaps connecting with the animals on the farm or with a cat on Facebook.



You might even see yourself in a whole new way.



Connecting with animals – Chapter 9

So be generous with yourself, other people, animals and nature. Find the connection that feels right for you in this moment. Open your heart and soul and be grateful for all that is. Be generous to yourself and others and revel in what emerges from that place of unconditional love.

Chester has settled in well and constantly demands love and attention. How could you resist this face!



Might your furry friend be your best coach? Could they be encouraging you to explore a new pathway and you haven't been able to hear that? Perhaps we could explore that together. I have had a few pups join coaching sessions and they opened up interesting new possibilities for their people.

Or perhaps at this time of year, you are yearning for a new companion and are feeling closed off and need some support to open your heart for a new being to enter. I always feel animals choose us rather than the other way around....perhaps a furry friend is asking to be noticed and you just haven't connected yet.

The gift of presence– Chapter 10

Someone told me recently that there are basically four types of prayers – prayers of praise, prayers for help, prayers for forgiveness and prayers for WOWS. Prayers take presence and can be gifts in so many ways.



As this book comes to a close I wonder if each one of us has paused to be thankful for and pray about the WOW moments of the past year or indeed the present moment. Those little or perhaps big moments of light and joy that wash over us at just the right moment. Perhaps we were feeling sad or lonely and POW something mysterious happens and we move from darkness to light. If we don't stay present, we might just miss these gifts. We might get too caught up in our own thoughts to realise that a light has washed over us and that a hand has been extended to help us move out of the darkness.

The gift of presence– Chapter 10

What WOW moments might you be celebrating as you read this newsletter? Maybe this moment is just the right moment to journal about this question. Pause. Take a moment now – yes right now and write down this year's WOW moments! Notice as you write them down or even say them out loud how you feel – what emotions come up for you and how are you feeling physically.

Be fully present with the moments of joy!



I have had many WOW moments in 2022 thanks to my clients, my family, my friends and my animal companions. I have had clients quit their jobs that were sapping them of all their energy. Another successfully got a new job after feeling unworthy. Another successfully transitioned into a brand-new roll after feeling completely uncertain of his capacity to manage the position. Other clients are learning about how their saboteurs impact their lives. One even named her group of gremlins the green witch as she doesn't like the color green and isn't fond of witches (although there can be some very nice witches).

The gift of presence– Chapter 10

Every time her saboteurs start interfering with her life, she tells the green witch to get on her broom and fly away.



What other WOW moments am I feeling joy about in this present moment? My beautiful horse Brooke celebrated her 30th birthday in February 2022. My husband and I purchased property in the Azores and will spend our first Christmas there together. My niece and nephew had a beautiful baby girl, named Penelope and were able to introduce her to her great grandmother this fall. I signed up for and was accepted to a course in Spiritual Direction. I watched 3 colleagues be ordained as deacons. I celebrated my niece's move back to London and got to visit with her in November. I have witnessed my nephew becoming a New York City real estate agent. I have celebrated my niece getting a fabulous new job with a design firm in San Francisco. I have loved each sharing of a moment of joy on our family chat. I have watched a school emerge from the bush in Uganda and a Ugandan artist experience his work being displayed at his first solo exhibit in London. See more on that [here](#).

The gift of presence– Chapter 10



Sure there have been other darker moments this year but I am choosing to stay in the light - to be present. To move away from the judgmental voices in my head that natter on about things that might have happened in the past or might happen in the future and just sit deliciously in the present moment. What a true gift.

The gift of presence– Chapter 10

But how do we manage to stay present, some might ask? Presence takes practice for sure and there will be many things that try to distract us. Our Tuesday and Thursday group online meditation sessions surely help me. Pausing, breathing, and fully being open to what is happening around me are all other techniques that help me stay present. Listening to music, walking in nature in bare feet and perhaps just enjoying a good cup of tea can help you stay present. If the silly voices in your head start up a symphony of distractions, command them to stop and become curious about what in the moment can be seen as a gift or opportunity. There is always something to learn - each moment of each day.

Give it a try. Be present. Fully experience your WOW moments. Pray prayers of thanks and gratitude for these WOW moments and then stay in the light - find friends to help you.

I have enjoyed this journey of generosity. I hope that you have as well. Generosity is so generative and life giving to each of us. Continue to spread generosity wherever you go and may this year be full of many joyous moments of WOW that are worthy of prayer and praise.
