

True or False

By Radhika Randall

“Be yourself; everyone else is already taken” said Oscar Wilde. And he knew this deeply!

COURAGE - PRACTISE YOUR YOGA “HEROES”

Being yourself and expressing yourself truly requires a certain kind of courage – the kind which is able to dismiss what other people are thinking about you, the kind which may even know that other people think you are strange, eccentric or even mystical. But you either don’t care, or you go ahead and be yourself anyway. The funny thing that then happens – is – you start being the person you pretended to be. Aha – honesty has been thrust upon you, despite yourself.... You can be quirky, or eccentric, or quite ordinary.

Another nice thing is that you have plenty of energy, as you don’t have to exhaust yourself by wearing a fake smile or a serious face or always exuding a pseudo personality.

It is nice at this stage to still be open to what (trusted) others say, and examine their words or suggestions in a dispassionate way. You will notice the difference between being critical (criticizing/carping) and being honest. Being truthful and trustworthy takes time. Show the same face.....

KNOW YOURSELF – NOTICE, LOOK, OBSERVE, WATCH

Most of the time, (OK 99% of the time) our attention is focused outside of ourselves. Why not change this occasionally and go inside ourselves? Look at what we are doing, listen dispassionately to the sound of our voice/s in different situations, see if we react or respond to events. Are we passive, or reactive, or what? Be aware. Be quiet for a change instead of rushing to fill in the sound gaps, and observe... .

Meditation helps us to dive deep within. Also notice if you are escaping from unpleasantness by diving into a habit.

Change is inevitable. Changing from time to time is inevitable as you mature. If you had to hang around yourself, would you want to (change something)?

LEARN FROM THE MASTERS

The ancient Chinese painters said that it’s sometimes better to paint a beautiful copy rather than a lousy original. So they practiced their brushstrokes (or in the case of martial artists – practiced each posture 5000 times). That way, you ‘own’ the thing you are learning. Accept that no matter how fabulous you are, there is always room for another. Learning from mistakes and moving on is one of the keys to personal growth and development. Love the criticism your Master gives you – you are noticed and noteworthy! Even if you can’t stand your teacher, be inquisitive, and learn, learn, learn! The current dalai lama is reputed to have said that one of his greatest teachers was Mao Tse Tang.

LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE

Avoid arrogance like the plague! Laugh a little, and live it up fully. So what if the spinach quiche green got stuck in your teeth? It may be embarrassing, but it’s not world-shattering! It’s really good to be able to laugh, to take what you do pretty seriously, but not take yourself so seriously! Consider this - at your deathbed, what

will you remember? What will you wish for done or undone?

FASHION GURU

Are you prepared to express yourself? If you want to be individualistic, well yes! It may be in the externals – in the way you choose to dress, your hair colour, the way you speak, or in the internals - the way you help others, whatever. It is not necessary to always copy. When you have learnt from the Masters, one day you will have developed your own style. As long as it is truthful, ‘grows’ you as a person, makes you a ‘character’, and does not impinge on you or others in a destructive way – go for it! If you are confident about it, then you may consider being a teacher/guide/mentor to others – show the way to interested folk without feeling too upset if others don’t really want to follow it exactimondo. They too are entitled to have their own views and style, no matter how untutored or unformed! With time and perseverance, they too will be who they are...

A DOZEN TIPS TO HAPPINESS (in no particular order)

- Accept that Change is inevitable.
- It’s not always someone else’s fault. Take responsibility yourself.
- Being righteous is not always right. Sometimes it’s better (not easier) to go easy.
- Give and take, guilt-free.
- You are not necessarily superior to others who think different to you. You could be in the wrong!
- Don’t expect to be always entertained.
- Take time to examine nature – the flowers and trees are happy for no good reason. Meditate on this and many other good things.
- An apple is not a mango; nor is it an orange. Nor even a potato. An anteater eats ants; a cow eats grass, and so on.... Be yourself.
- Practise, practise, practise (happiness – contentment, etc). Also practise your Yoga. Walking a lot (or dancing or whatever physical exercise) builds up those happiness endorphins.
- Stop comparing.
- When you’re happy and you know it, it’s good. When you’re angry and you know it, it’s good.
- Breathe. Sing. Love. Laugh. Live.