

Dusted Off and Ready

A Book About Making Life Great

Part 3

Pages 28-39

Written and Illustrated by M. Nordeng

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Second edition

Disclaimer: While many studies show that kindness and understanding lead to a stronger sense of well-being and the potential for better success in life, the author of this book is not a healthcare professional and is not offering professional advice. This book is designed to help open up our thinking regarding community, kindness, and acceptance of ourselves and others; offering an opportunity to look at life from many different angles, while gaining new and positive perspectives. To learn more about the author and their experience, please visit dustedoffandready.com

Then there are the judgments...



Really?! For real? We haven't learned this one yet?

So many of us have been told over and over, ever since we were very little, that looks don't matter... it's what's inside us that counts. **WELL IT'S TRUE!!!**

Sure, good looks (and money) have their advantages, but they don't make you who you are.



Has comparing yourself to other people ever really worked to make you feel truly better about yourself? Let's look into it.

For those who are comparing themselves to other people and coming out on top, have you ever stopped to think about whether or not this is really going to work as a permanent solution to feeling good inside? This is especially worth thinking about, considering that some of us (not all of us) might be intentionally making others feel small as we pump ourselves up. So in the end, are we going to feel truly better about who we are simply by how we measure up to those around us? Is this going to work as a long-term plan for feeling good about ourselves? Let me just go ahead and cut to the end for you. It won't.

Now maybe you really have received a lot of gifts...

Good genes
Intelligence
Talent
Nice hair
Lots of money
Access to healthy foods
Access to sports and exercise
A pretty house...

But by focusing only on these gifts, we first of all often forget to be thankful... then we often forget to look for the other gifts we might have.

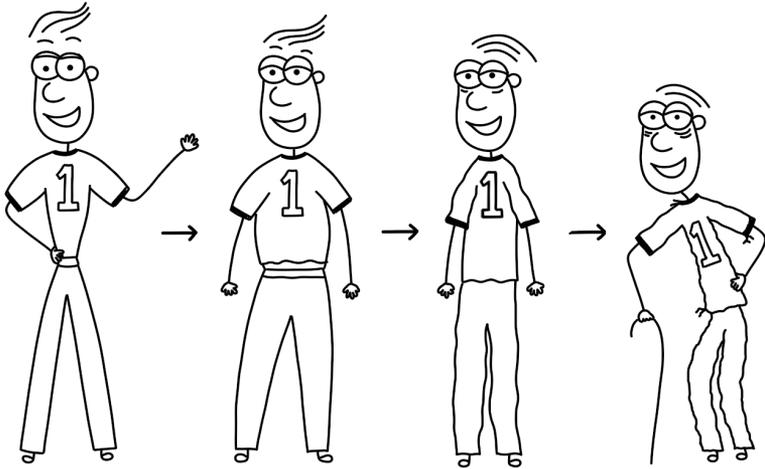
The ones that can't disappear suddenly...



be ruined by unfortunate events...



or change with time...



We forget to look for the gifts that can be found inside... the ones that really count.

- The ability to make others happy and to be happy
- The ability to lift others up
- The ability to share and help
- The ability to work hard and persevere
- The ability to see the good in others and in ourselves
- The ability to be patient and to forgive
- The ability to care
- The ability to love

This is how we find permanence (that feeling that who we are will be strong enough to last). We find permanence by cultivating the gifts inside of us that time can't take away, and by using our talents to contribute to the world in a way that is positive, helpful, and constructive. You're going to see so fast how this kind of feeling good is the kind that will stick around.

And if you're comparing yourself to others and feel like you're coming out on the bottom, then start looking at the right list. Reach in and grab what's inside of you that's good and beautiful... and then share it with the world.

Whoever you are, you have the chance to receive an even greater gift, a gift of real acceptance of yourself and others, and a gift of peace in your heart.



...and we're going to need that peace in our hearts to get through this next part.

Here's the grand finale of thinking. This one is crazy. We're going to imagine the worst.

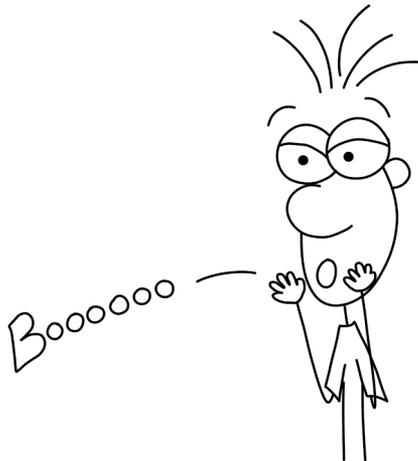


What if you just learned that the person over there (the one you hate so much and who really is the biggest jerk you've ever encountered in your whole life) was never told once, not even once, that they were loved? Or even worse, they were told all their life that they were worthless and stupid and no good? That person is hurting. After having that information, would it be easier for you to understand why they are so hateable? Would you be able to forgive them, knowing that no one was there to show them love or teach them about kindness? Would you be able to let go of your feelings and judgments? Would you be able to show them friendship?

Let's say that
we do forgive them...



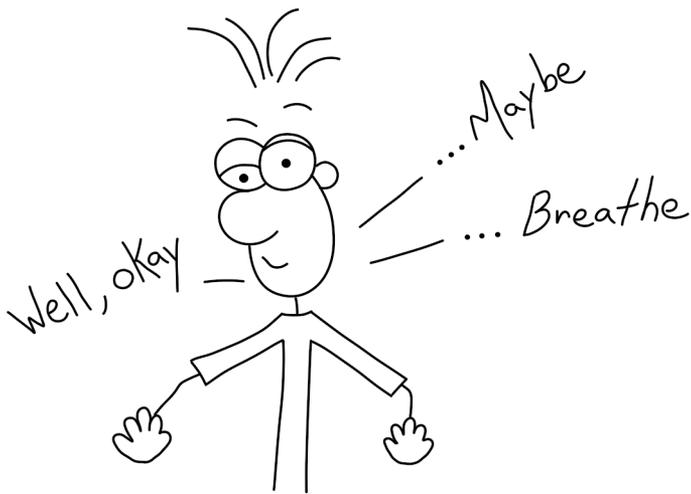
but instead of our hate disappearing...



...it shifts to those parents who couldn't love their kid!!!
Oooooooo! I wish I could just Blah-ba-dee blah blah blah
them!

Well, great! Now we gave ourselves another job...
...forgiving the parents!





Would those parents have said horrible things like that to their kid if they knew better? Were the parents missing something too? They couldn't very well have shared something that they didn't have. And they must not have had all the love they needed either... or acceptance of themselves and others, or peace in their hearts. If they had all of this, it would have been natural for them to have shared it. Instead, they shared the pain that they owned, and that sucks. It sucks for them, it sucks for their kids, it sucks for you, and it sucks for everyone else who comes into contact with it.

I know that's huge stuff to think about.

So when you're ready, try this...

What if the super-jerk we talked about before has the exact opposite problem from feeling unloved. Maybe instead of being unloved, their mom or dad told them they were right and good all of the time, even when they weren't. They grew up believing that they could do no wrong. They were never given any opportunities to learn about themselves or do any growing at all. They were the epitome, or the ultimate example of self-righteousness. This one might be harder.

First, we'd have to think again. (Darn that thinking!) We'd have to think about where love AND learning comes from. We'd have to try to forgive the mom or dad for not being born a teacher. Maybe they thought they were doing the right thing by showing as much love as they possibly could. They didn't know there was a difference between acceptance and overindulgence...
Oops.

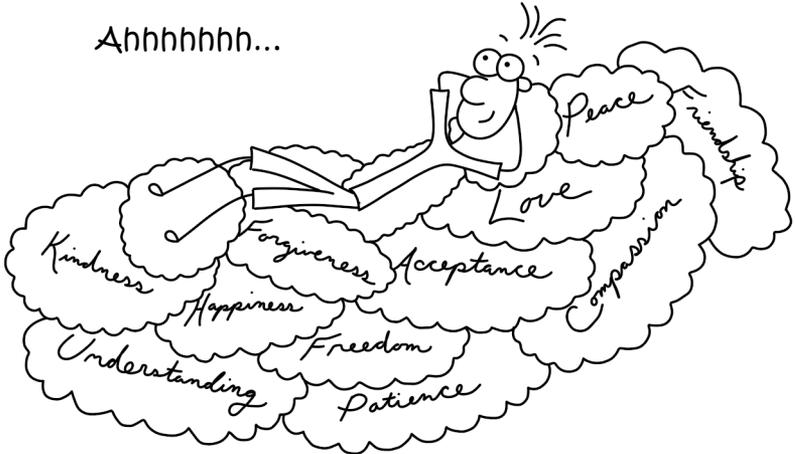


So after thinking through these two very different and extreme possible histories of a jerk, can you begin to see things differently? Can you think of any other life events (less dramatic than being either completely unloved or completely sheltered from the truth) that would make someone act like a jerk or act some other way? Can you try to understand where they are coming from? Can you forgive them? Can you show them love?

Can you think about what things in your history helped to create the person you are? If your story is good, then can you share the gifts? If your story is bad, then can you start putting some good in? It's up to you. You have the power to walk out the door every morning and either let life stay the same, make life worse, or make life better.

Let's imagine that you do make a positive change or step, and all of the judgments and anger and sadness and jealousy and disapproval are lifted from you forever. Gone. And you are lighter... freer... happier.

Ahhhhhhh...



You have been weighed down, lifted up, dusted off, and are ready. Ready to see the good in the world and ready to put more of it in. And when you see the good in people, they start to see it too. And in time, both the world inside you and the world around you will start to change. It worked for me.