

M ~ moment to moment attention

I ~ in the here and now

N ~ non judgemental attitude

D ~ detach from unhelpful thoughts

F ~ forgive and be grateful

U ~ unconditional acceptance

L ~ learn with childlike mindset



Meds to Mindfulness

Accidents Happen

My story begins on the 9th June, 1982 which was my Father's 65th Birthday and 3 weeks after my 30th birthday. I was driving an old 1418 Mercedes Benz truck on the Hume Highway near Kilmore in Victoria. I was on my way to Geelong to pick up a load of super phosphate. Suddenly, out of thick fog, the back of a stationary truck appeared. I didn't even have time to think and yanked on the steering wheel. That's the last thing I remember until I awoke in Kilmore hospital.

I found out later that I died in that accident and was revived at the scene. There was no white lights or any sort of after death experience, just blackness. The right hand back of the other truck had caught the left hand chassis rail of my rig

and twisted it at right angles. The solid steel bonnet of my rig rolled up, smashed through the windscreen, and killed my dog instantly. My much loved dog, who was a Dingo & German Shepherd cross breed named Sheeba, was a one-man type of bitch. Sheeba taught me a lesson in how to love, a lesson for us all, but that's another story. The bonnet actually finished where we had been sitting. Such was the force of the collision, that the engine block finished some distance in front of my rig.

I have no doubt that my guardian angel was with me that day and somehow I was thrown clear of the carnage. I had a conviction in me that said I was saved for a reason. My quest was under way. I started to study about history, religions and cultures. Little did I know that my battle was only just beginning.

I had multiple injuries, from my big toe (which was the most painful) to a deep laceration on my forehead. The worst damage was a crushed disc in my spine. I had a back operation in January, 1984 and by 1986 I was coping fairly well with my physical injuries. However, four years of pain and suffering was nothing compared to the psychological impact on my life. One minute, I was living a normal family oriented happy life and the next, it was taken away from me. The owner of the rig that I was driving, whose nickname was the 'black rat', never had any compensation insurance.

It wasn't long after the accident that I started suffering from stress and anxiety. I turned to drugs in an effort to ease the pain and slow down my mind. That led to mental illness. In late 1982, I had a vision and chased after it. I was unable to catch that vision and spent time in a psych ward at the local hospital. Depression soon followed and I was labelled 'manic depressive.' Medication was given in an effort to level out my moods. I had more visions in 1984, 1987 and 1992. Each time was a different story with the same result,

hospitalisation and heavily medicated.

The depression in between the highs was more severe each time. All sorts of drugs were used with little affect. At one point, electric shock treatment was used, but it seemed that there was no hope. I was told by medical authorities that I would never be cured and would have to take medication for the rest of my life.

In 1997, I had another vision. It was a Monday and I was at Central Station in Sydney waiting for a train back to Wagga Wagga. It was a powerful vision that started with the number twelve. As I started walking along a very long platform, I was suddenly aware that I was making eye contact with all the males. One by one, they glanced at me, looked me in the eye, acknowledged me with a nod or made some sort of body language. When I got to the end of the platform, my head was in a bit of a spin. There was plenty of time until the train was scheduled to depart, so I decided to walk back on the other side. I was amazed at what happened next. The same thing occurred, but this time it was all the females!

“Oh No!” I cried out to myself “Not again!” I thought I was having a fifth manic episode but this time I thought quietly “If this is you God, you can come to me this time. I’m not going to chase after this any more!” I decided to put it behind me and let it go.

On Friday that same week, I answered a knock on the door and got a very pleasant surprise. It was an old friend that I had played a lot of snooker with before my accident. It turned out that he had moved to Sydney to become a professional punter and followed the trot circuit. He visited owners and trainers to gather information about their horses. In the early days he was very successful. Eventually however, gambling got the better of him and he lost everything. He went on to tell me his story, how he had been saved by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Believe

“Do you believe?” my friend asked. I then told him that I believed in the Darkside and shared an experience that I had ten years before. It was five o'clock on a very cold morning in May. I had woken from a very bad dream. I was terrified. I left the house, dressed only in shorts and singlet, and started to run. I didn't feel the cold nor my bare feet, all I felt was fear. I ran over five kilometres and ended up on the bank of the Murrumbidgee River at dawn. It was my favourite place and for a moment, I felt peaceful.

Suddenly, a message became apparent in my mind. It wasn't a thought process and it wasn't hearing a voice either. “Kill yourself or your youngest child will die!”

I screamed at the top of my voice, “NO! F*** YOU! GO AWAY!” I then collapsed onto my knees and broke down in tears. (There's more to this story in my unfinished book) My friend prayed for me and suggested that I go to a meeting at a private house on Sunday. He explained how it was a Spiritual prompt that made him visit. He then continued his travels and I haven't seen or heard of him since.

On Sunday 12th October 1997, I went to the house on the other side of town. It turned out to be a praise and worship type meeting with music, singing and prayers. A visiting 'elder' asked me if I wanted to give my life to Jesus and be baptised. I said 'Sure! I'm on the road to nowhere anyhow!' He went to the boot of his car and pulled out a portable baptismal tank which was then set up in the back yard.

Connect

“Do you accept Jesus as your Lord and Saviour?” I replied “I Do!” The elder went on to say “I now baptise you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” I was then

baptised by full immersion.

As I came up out of the water, I was praying in tongues. I had never even heard tongues before that day and have been praying that way every day since. I love the tribal emotion that I feel and the fact that it is prayer from the heart and not the mind.

It wasn't like an overnight miracle but my life slowly began to change. In some ways, it was like waking up from a nightmare and turning on the light. My blinkers were off and I could see things clearly. I was able to stop smoking and go off medication. My daily walk with the Divine had begun and I never fail to feel connected.

Most importantly ~ no more depression! I have the black dog securely on a leash.



Relationship

The incident at the Sydney Railway Station had taught me that We are All One! My relationship with the Divine has taught me that we are all One with Spirit! We are all connected. There are no coincidences in life. When you pray and want something bad enough, things will happen. You will meet the right people, at the right time. I studied the Bible over the next four years. This is what helped build my relationship with the Divine.

I now understand why the Bible is called the Living Word! As I read the Word, God spoke to me. There were heaps of 'Ah-ha' moments too! They are moments when your Spirit lines up with Divine Spirit, a kind of 'knowing.' There was one moment in particular that was extremely powerful, much more than any other. "Help the mentally ill" I remember looking up to the heavens and saying "Whoa! but Lord, I am one of them! How can I help?" I let it go, but in time, it was to become my passionate purpose.

My wife, who had stuck by me for twenty three years, decided to leave. She couldn't understand what had happened to me...how could she? The biggest tool of the Darkside is division, not only in relationships, but in the church too!

After much prayer and searching, I started a new relationship. It was a match made in heaven and we were married on the ninth day of the ninth month, nineteen hundred and ninety nine. We like to dress to the nines, live on cloud nine and use all nine Spiritual gifts. Any guesses what my favourite number is?

Dreams Come True

When I was fourteen years old, I waggged school and frequented the local snooker hall. The owner was South

Australian billiard champion for twenty eight consecutive years. He taught me the finer points of the game and I became very good, especially at Kelly pool. That's a game where six players draw a number and pot that ball to win the pool. I did quite well and dreamt of one day running my own snooker hall.

Thirty seven years later in 2003, with much help from my wife and church friends, our Cue Sport Centre opened its doors in the main street of Wagga Wagga. Sixteen pool tables and a jukebox provided much sport and recreation for the 'City of Good Sports.' Seven High Schools, community and church groups used the very popular centre, as well as soldiers from Kapooka Army Base.

Not only did my childhood dreams come true, but in 2005, I got to travel to Las Vegas with the Australian Team and compete at the World Pool Championships. It was like a pool players heaven, with three hundred pool tables and over three thousand players from eighty four countries. I finished seventeenth and Johnny LongShot had arrived.

In 2007, four Wagga boys filled the semi-finals of the Australian Championships and I was labelled Super Coach. My counselling skills got a good workout over the six years that we were open. That made the time very rewarding indeed.

All I needed for my dreams to come true was Faith!

Mindfulness

In 2009 we decided to move north. I had lost a good friend to a massive asthma attack and my wife was using the same breathing machine, especially in winter. Moving north was an easy decision to make but what would I do? After much prayer I decided to focus on counselling.

I surfed the net to find out the latest therapies and

counselling techniques. What I found was a book called 'The Happiness Trap' written by Dr. Russ Harris. This life changing book is about Mindfulness and Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (ACT). I travelled to Canberra and was trained by Dr. Russ to be an ACT therapist.

Later that year we ended up in Grafton and I got part-time work at Juvenile Justice. I have a connection with detainees because of my own teenage years. Life living on the streets and running wild. But that's another story!

I continued surfing the net, learning about the many aspects of Mindfulness. On 11/11/11, I started a facebook page called Mindfulness Coach and shared it with family and friends. The response was amazing! Feel free to visit at -

Mindfulness Coach - www.facebook.com/mindful99

Website - www.mindfulnesscoach.com.au

Awareness

Mindfulness is all about Awareness. It's about focusing your attention on the present moment with flexibility, openness and curiosity. It involves paying attention to your experience in that moment rather than getting all caught up in thoughts.

Being Mindful teaches you to accept your thoughts for what they really are... just thoughts. No need to dwell on them, act on them, fight with them or try to avoid them with unhelpful habits. You learn to simply take notice where your thoughts come from, make room for them or let them go, like cars passing your house.

In a Mindful state, you are able to step back and observe yourself as an expression of God's love. You become aware of awareness itself. Thoughts from the Darkside have very little impact and no longer will you feel the need to react to things.

Being Mindful allows you to look at the world around you

with God's eyes opposed to just doing life on autopilot. You become aware of the ingenious ways that God uses to speak to you. You take more notice of the messages from nature and understand the deeper meaning in what people say.

Here's a simple exercise to demonstrate mindfulness. You can try this at any time of day. Quieten your mind and listen intently. As you become totally aware of your surroundings, name five things that you can hear. Notice how you are focusing on the present moment. This is being Mindful!

Act On Values

Act on your values and the things you are passionate about. Values are different to goals. Values are what you want to stand for in life. One way to work out your values is to imagine yourself at your own funeral. Now visualise what you would like your loved ones to be saying about you. What they are saying determines your values.

Then make an action plan based on those values. For example; You imagine your child saying 'Dad always had time for me.' That becomes a value so you plan a picnic in the park on Saturday.

Search your heart for the things you are passionate about. God puts them on your heart so they are easy to find. They are the things you think about almost every day. Then work towards spending time doing the things you are passionate about. Whether it's in a learning environment, volunteer work or paid work, just do it!

Walk with God in everything you do. Follow your Spiritual prompts with no hesitation and without fear. The greatest fear in the world today is the fear of what people think. What people think is none of your business!

Expect to come under attack from the Darkside. Attacks take

place in the mind. When a thought is negative or unhelpful, let it go and shift your attention to your values. Always be curious about your thoughts and use discernment. Above all...practice being Mindful!

Spiritual Bliss

Too many in this world try to deny the darkness within, wanting only to show the light to the world. But to find peace of the Spirit one must embrace both equally and fully as both sides are the key to who you are. Only then will true peace be found.

Living in Spiritual Bliss is the reward for practicing your faith. Faith in Divine intelligence and faith in the power of Spirit. Believe, connect and be in relationship with God. Make God your best friend and live as One. Remember...God is Bigger than All religions.

Living in Spiritual Bliss is also the reward for practicing mindfulness. Be Mindful to connect with the world around you. Be Mindful to build deeper, more satisfying relationships. Be Mindful to enhance learning and memory functions. Be Mindful to enable listening to Spirit. Mindfulness requires much practice and perseverance so get started now...and keep going always!

Spiritual warfare is an ongoing series of battles with the Darkside. Battles that require courage and discernment of thoughts. Battles that also require knowledge and truth. If you are struggling, seek help from Spiritual advisers and mindfulness mentors. Read self help books, surf the internet and subscribe or 'like' facebook pages that are positive and helpful. There are many paths to enlightenment.

If you have had your Spiritual victory, then share your story, especially when you get a Spiritual prompt!

Mindfully Yours with Love, Peace & Blessings Always!

**We are All One, One with Spirit, One with Life.
One Love Always!**

**This book written by
Mindfulness Coach & Mentor:**

Johnny



LongShot

Feel welcome to connect with me!

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