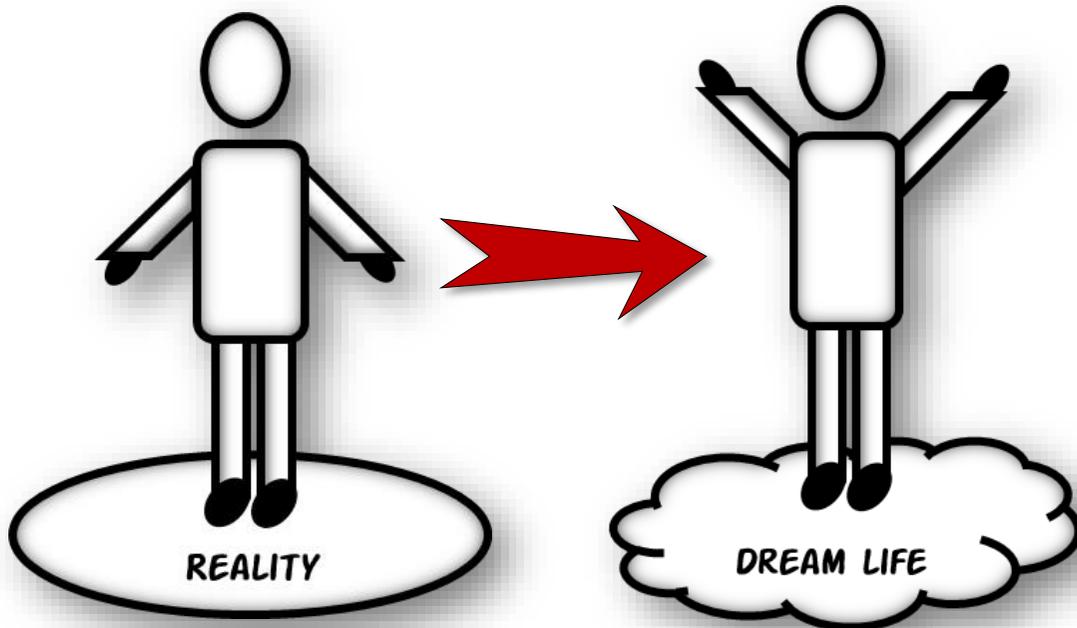


Verlag Ekiem

MEIKE HOHENWARTER



IT'S YOUR
LIFE

...DO NOT WASTE IT!

WHY THE EXERCISES AND REFLECTION

Throughout this book I will always invite you to some reflection work with the help of questions and small exercises that I recommend to you. Of course it is up to you whether or not you follow my invitations!

Ultimately, it is usually true that no one reinvents the wheel - I do not. I share concepts with you here, strategies and ideas that have helped me in my life. Many of them you might not hear for the first time. Unfortunately it happens all too often that a person reads a clever book or hears an interesting lecture, thinks: "This is good and logical, I will do so from now on!" But then these new concepts are more or less forgotten again in the same minute.

Of course, there are several reasons for this, but one of the most important is that we have only taken in the information passively and have not actively dealt with it using as many senses as possible. The moment you actually start dealing with a concept, you begin to make it your own.

Thus you should decide right now, how much you want to gain from this book in order to start creating a new future. Where on a scale from one to ten is your personal commitment? If it is seven or higher, grab a pencil now!



Note: If you do not want to write directly in the book, you can also download all the worksheets as pdf files.²

ARE YOU STUCK IN GROUNDHOG DAY?

IN WHICH SITUATIONS IN YOUR LIFE ARE YOU SIMILAR
TO IRMGARD AND CLARISSA OR RONALD AND LISA?

WHAT DO YOU THINK? WHAT HAS KEPT YOU
FROM CHANGING YOUR LIFE SO FAR?

EXERCISE 2

REMEMBER 3 SIGNIFICANT EVENTS
IN YOUR LIFE IN THE LAST 3 YEARS

SHORT MEDITATION: EXPAND

Make yourself quite comfortable and sit upright. Enter gradually into your inner world. Focus on your breath. Feel how you are inhaling and exhaling bit by bit and more and more quietly. Then make yourself a bit more comfortable, so you can be assured of being able to stay in this position for a few minutes. Do you notice how your breath has calmed down?

Now, be aware of yourself in your body. Feel where you touch the seat, perceive whether it is warm or cold. You might hear sounds, but it's unimportant, you can take them with you on your trip or simply leave them here.

Deep within you, you know that your body is not the limit of what makes you as a being - you are much bigger than your body!

Just stretch out and feel how you fill the whole room. Breathe deeply in and out.

Then you can go further and stretch your boundaries so much that they fill the whole house where you are.

Breathe deeply in and out and expand yourself so far that you encompass the whole city in which you are.

Realize that you are much bigger than your body and stretch yourself even further, until your boundaries encompass the whole land in which you are located.

Breathe deeply in and out and enjoy your size. But that is not all; extend to the entire continent.

Next, let your boundaries grow so far that they cover the whole world.

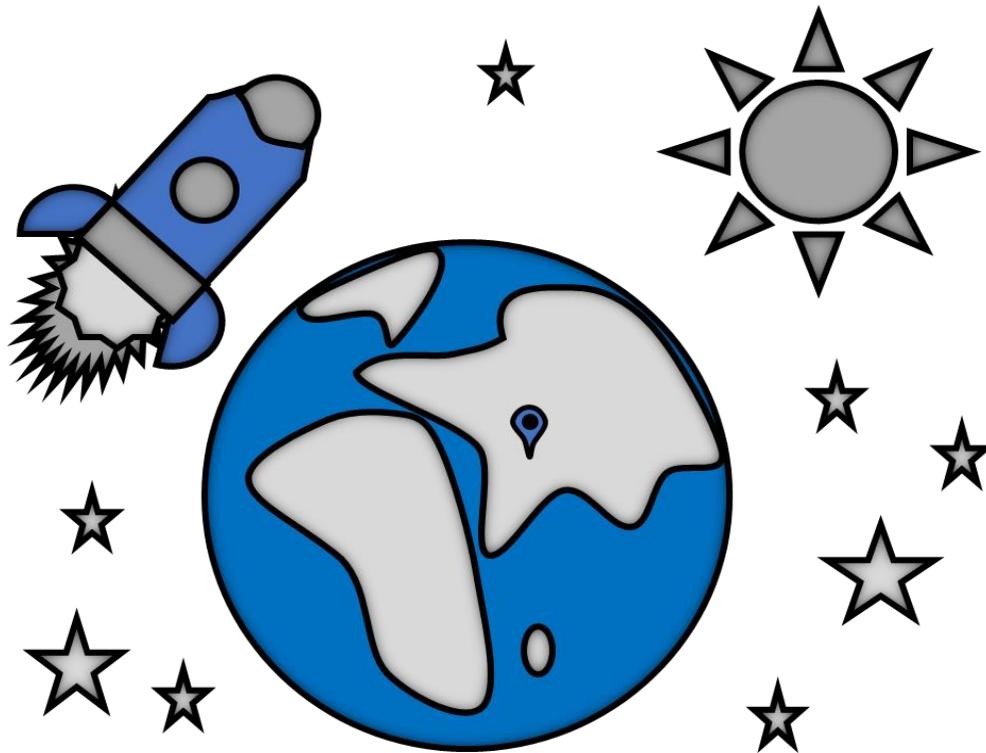
From here, spread further into galaxies far and wide, as far as your imagination goes. Notice how much greater you can be.

And then enjoy your full size. Breathe deeply in and out and feel how far you reach. Take a moment and realize with all your senses what it feels like to experience yourself in your full size.

Then, if it is appropriate for you, you can consciously return to this room again. Knowing that you are always at your full height in the world, take a few more breaths before you bring your attention back into your body.



Note: This meditation can be found as downloadable mp3 at the resource site¹¹



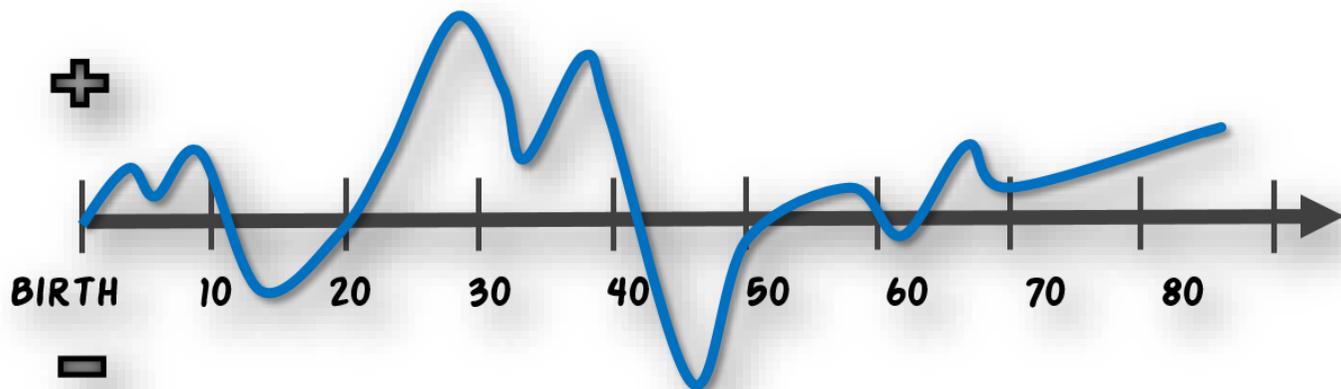
PICTURE: MY LIFE

I would like to invite you to get some distance to your daily worries. For this I ask you to present your life to your inner eye as a line. To the left is the time when you were born and then this line develops to the right, to this very day and beyond.

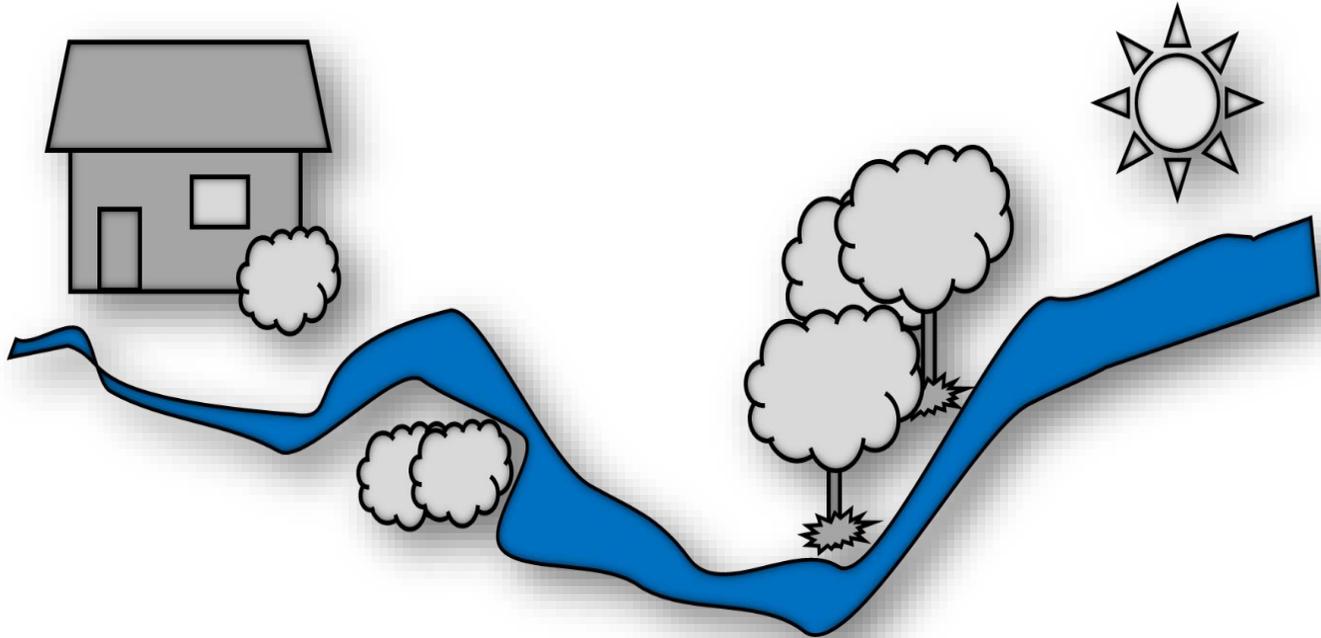
Now feel within yourself: at what time was your life particularly beautiful and fulfilled? What exactly was there? Who was with you? What were times that filled you with grief, anger, or fear? What were these situations? Just take some time and feel inside yourself. Go beyond the now. What do you expect for your future? How will it be when you are 50, 60, 70, 80? What desires and dreams are there waiting for you? Take as much time as possible for this journey and also pay very close attention to your feelings!

Then I invite you to reproduce your inner pictures on paper. It is in no way a question of art and a successful composition, but rather about expressing what you have seen in your own way, just for you.

If you are a more linear, left-brained person, it might look like this:



If you're more creative and right-brained, the picture may look quite different, for example:



The drawing should only be understandable and have a meaning to you. It is best not to just take a notepad and a ballpoint pen, but large-sized paper, such as a flipchart paper, and also colors. I personally like to paint with oil pastels.

You will notice, the more you deal with your life in the form of your "painting," the deeper you will get in touch with your feelings. Perhaps you can feel old pain and joy once again intensely. You may remember long-forgotten longings and desires.

Whatever comes, take it and be curious about you! If you want, you can hang the picture in a place where you'll see it regularly, because you will notice that these inner pictures will be with you for a while.

MY EULOGY

I know this exercise is a bit macabre, but over the years I have been offering it in various workshops and coachings, so I also know it is very effective and lasting!

Imagine, you have entered the happy hunting grounds after a beautiful, fulfilled life. Now gather all the people who have accompanied you in life to your funeral.

Speeches are held. In these orations, representatives from different areas of your life recount who you were as a person, how you influenced them and enriched them, what they experienced with you, what they particularly appreciated in you - just the things which are mentioned in such a speech - your imagination has no limits.

As always, it is best to record the whole thing in writing. Take your time and jot down these speeches. You can write them as you want people to think about you at the end of your life - the ideal case, so to speak.

Let people from all important realms talk, for example, one of your children, other relatives, friends, work colleagues, people from your groups, clubs or the community.

I hope the naked fact that you will one day be no more will not be so unpleasant that you are unable to do this exercise. Believe me, it is just the way it is! If you're having a lot of trouble dealing with your own mortality, write speeches to celebrate your eightieth birthday. But be assured, it will go deeper under the skin when you face your end!

I still have a good memory of what it was like for me when I first did this exercise in my early twenties - it has moved a lot in my life. Since then I have done it many times and have recognized new perspectives every time. If you already know this, I invite you to do it anyway. It will not be the same experience.

FIVE YEARS FROM TODAY

Since the entire life often seems too big, we are now reducing our perspective. In this exercise, I invite you to describe your ideal day in five years.

You can write the whole thing as if it were a diary entry and use the present tense, as you would record it at the end of the day. The date is this day plus five years and now you simply write:

Who is with you when you wake up and make breakfast? Where do you live? How and where do you work and how many hours? What do you do at noon and in the evening? Who is there with you? If it is important, then also describe what you are wearing, what car you are driving and the like. Take your time and let yourself fall into the images and feelings that arrive, and write it all down.

But this is only the first part of this exercise! If you, like myself, attend a lot of seminars and read a lot of books, then you maybe have already done this exercise. But as with the previous reflection, I can only tell you that every time you do it, something new is going on, because we are - fortunately - constantly developing and not staying in one spot.

Now to the second part you probably are not familiar with.

You can separate it or integrate it into the first part: Write down what has helped you the most in the past five years, to get where you are now (in five years). That is, in your fictional future diary, reflect on the path you have taken over the last five years: what choices, insights, and people did support you? What were great helps, insights and experiences on your way? I hope you can follow me, it sounds a little complicated but it really isn't - and it's very helpful!

My tip: Keep this diary entry and read it when the day arrives!

YOUR MISSION STATEMENT

You have often seen it in companies: their mission statement. The company philosophy is written down so that customers, employees and suppliers immediately know what's important to the company.

The same thing also makes sense to you personally, so take your time and consider what your important mission in life is. What do you stand for? What is your top priority? How do you deal with your parents, children, friends, business partners and other people in your life? What do you want to achieve anyway? What do you want to be recognized for? What do you want to spend your time with?

You can then shape all this into a small essay - your mission statement. It is best to hang it where you can see it every day.

Such a model is a living, growing thing, so you can always continue working on it, or create a whole new version of it at any time.



VALUES GAME

Copy the sheets with the value cards from the download area¹⁶ and cut them out. Go through the stack once and develop a short connection with each of the values. Get a feel for whether it seems important or unimportant to your life, or perhaps even evokes very strong positive or negative feelings.

Now mix the pile well and pick up ten cards. Place these value cards very visibly in front of you.

Now alternate between the following things:

1. Uncover a card from the stack and decide if you want it. If so, you have to trade one of your value cards from in front of you in exchange, so you still have ten cards in front of you after the action.
2. Sort your cards in front of you and remove one card.

Alternate steps one and two until you only have 3 cards left. Complete step one and two in a maximum of one minute each.

You will notice the fewer cards you have, the harder the process of removing a card becomes.

In the end you will record the three remaining values, and also the seven that you last removed. Ask yourself what values were in the pile that you haven't drawn, but you hoped for. Add these values to your list also; It's best to again exchange them with your other values, so the total number remains at ten.

Through this game process, you get a much more meaningful list than if you had only created it in your head!

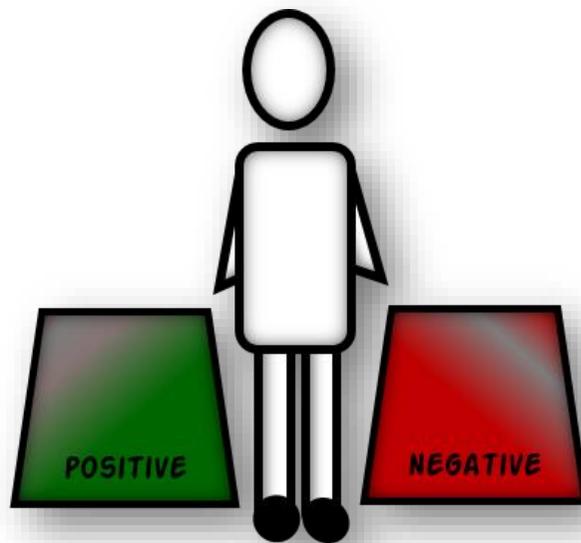
RESOURCE TRANSFER

I would like to show you a very simple exercise, here, which always produces amazing results. It helps you to handle situations where you feel weak and helpless, or are afraid to master. Like all NLP exercises, it works better in a light trance. The more you access your subconscious, your body and your feelings, the stronger it will be!

You need two different-colored sheets of paper (or something else you can step onto). They act as so-called "ground anchors." Then you decide which color you want to dedicate a POSITIVE SITUATION (for example, green) and which color you choose for the NEGATIVE SITUATION you want to heal (for example, red) and put it in front of you.

The POSITIVE SITUATION is meant to serve you as a goal, so feel yourself at a moment when you were completely relaxed and completely by yourself - for example, on the beach on the last vacation. The NEGATIVE SITUATION is the one that you intend to heal, say, for example, fear if you have to talk to many people.

The first step is to get on the green sheet and embrace all your senses in a (previously selected) wonderful-beautiful situation from your life. You now perceive them with all your senses (VAKOG), especially the first three senses, that is, seeing, hearing, and feeling.



What do you see? Is it light or dark? Do you see colors? Are they sharp or out of focus? Is the image clear or blurry? ...

What do you hear? Is it loud or quiet? Pleasant or unpleasant? Are they sounds from nature or music or voices?

What are you feeling? Are you warm or cold? Do you feel a breeze? How do your feet feel where they touch the ground?



Next, you'll see what values you live within this situation:

With what values are you living here? Love? Security? Pleasure? Wholeness? Breathe in with every breath the beauty of this situation, feel how the values completely fill you.

Then get off the green ground anchor and get onto the red, which represents the situation to be healed, for example, your fear of giving a speech. Once again, proceed the same as on the green ground anchor. That is, allow to get into the feeling and observe the perceptions of your senses:

What do you see? Is it light or dark? Do you see colors? Are they sharp or out of focus? Is the image clear or blurry? ...

What do you hear? Is it loud or quiet? Pleasant or unpleasant? Are they sounds from nature or music or voices?

What are you feeling? Are you warm or cold? Do you feel a breeze? How do your feet feel where they touch the ground?



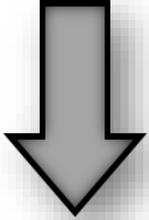
Next, you'll see what values you live with in this situation:

With what values do you live here? Anxiety? Uncertainty? Confusion?



What are you missing here? Safety? Security? Clarity?

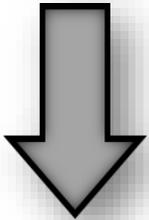
Now step from the red ground anchor to the green and feel again all the values that are sufficiently available there. Take one of the values (for example "security") and feel it more and more with each breath. If you feel like you have been enriched with this value, then step from the green ground anchor to the red - the unpleasant situation - and pour out all the security there. Then observe whether the more of security has already changed something in the unpleasant situation. What do you need next? What value would be important to make the situation easier for you?



Repeat the process with a second value, which means you are enriching yourself on the green ground anchor by breathing it in and then getting back onto the red anchor and letting it flow into the bad situation. Has even more changed? What else do you need?



After three to four rounds, you can simply transfer "all that is still missing" from the green to the red situation. Now everything you need is also present in the previously negative situation. Feel the way it is now, imagine the situation. How is it now?



This very simple exercise can bring quite great relief into situations that are difficult to cope with so far. With the new values also come new solutions into the unpleasant situation! Try it, it actually helps!

Note: If you are leading someone else, then you must be aware that this person is in a light trance. Adapt to the pace of your counterpart. You are in her world of perception and not in yours! Therefore, it is important that you work with her pictures and words and do not make it to yours and phrase it as you would normally phrase it.



You can find this Resource Transfer as an downloadable mp3^{18!}

YOUR BELIEFS

I invite you to become aware of your own beliefs. For some topics, you may find more, others less - and if you listen well to your thoughts in the course of the next few days, you will even be able to list much more.

Many of your beliefs will appear to you as popular wisdom, some might be proverbs, you have already heard before. Sometimes, you will hear the voice of your mother or your father, your teacher, your priest in your head when they said this. Often a visit with parents helps in order to find out more of your beliefs!

A small example: I have long been very attentive to my own thought police about what I say to myself (more about this later). When I caught myself a few times thinking, "The devil never sleeps!" I asked myself what I wanted to say to myself. That I always have to be on my guard? This does not correspond to my attitude toward life. Why do I often say it to myself?

Then I heard my father say this phrase twice when I visited my parents. Ah, so I had it! Whatever it may be to him, my basic attitude does not correspond, and therefore I could deliberately remove it from my vocabulary (and thoughts). This belief could go! His reaction was interesting when I spoke to him. He thought for a moment and said that it was not his idea of the world either, but that he still hears the sound in his ear, that his father had often used this sentence.

This is exactly the purpose of this exercise. The more you deal with it, the more comprehensively it will help you. Therefore, it is good to do this exercise several times - and, of course, for more than just the following three subjects. Beliefs are not positive or negative, but are rather conducive or hindering in your life. Decide therefore which ones you want to let go, because they will hinder you and which you want to keep because they support you.

YOUR BELIEFS ABOUT MONEY:

YOUR BELIEFS ABOUT LIFE:

YOUR BELIEFS ABOUT LOVE AND RELATION:

I AM LIKE THIS!

Think about what you are convinced you are. What do you always tell yourself and others about you?

I AM LIKE THIS:

EXERCISE 12

WHICH HABIT/BEHAVIOR DO YOU WANT TO CHANGE?

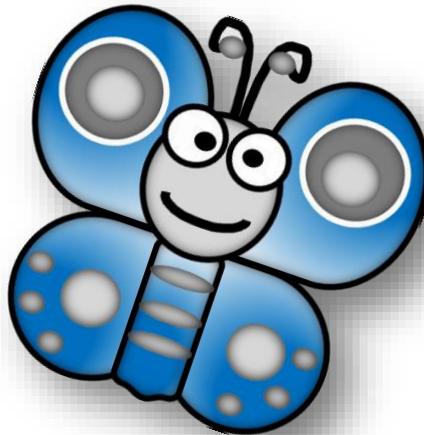
SMALL CHANGES ANYONE?

We are creatures of habit in quite a few small things that we are often not aware of. Watch yourself:

- What hand do you brush your teeth with?
- In what order do you clean them?
- What sock/shoe/pant leg do you put on first?
- How exactly do you tie your shoes?
- Which leg is on top when you sit cross-legged?
- Which arm is on top when you cross your arms?

You will most likely always do these things in the same way. Note, however, our brain is such that it loves to learn. New "brain food" leads to new levels of experience and possibly also to new adventures! As the beating wing of a butterfly can cause a hurricane, small amendments in your behavior may cause great changes.

Children often play "opposite day." Why shouldn't we also as adults? Use a hand one day a week from the side you are not used to, and be open to what happens. Your brain will thank you!



YOUR FIVE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE

In this exercise, I ask you to think about who the five most important people in your life are. These can be the people you see most often, but there can also be people who you don't get to see face to face, but online or on the phone.

Sometimes even that is not the case, but some person simply seems to have a strong influence on you, even without regular discussion. For example, you might ask yourself what your teacher, idol, or priest would decide. Or, you might worry a lot about a certain person.

MY FIVE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE ARE:
