



BELIEVE IN YOURSELF

*“If I am not for myself, who will be for me?
If I am only for myself, what am I? If not now, when?”*

—Hillel

Question: Do you see your own potential?

Do you see a variety of possibilities for living a meaningful life? Your perceptions about yourself—your character, your essence, and the actions you take—will play a big role in what kind of life you are living and where you will find yourself in time. When you line up your perceptions and your actions, you can create the life you dream.

There are going to be times when you doubt yourself, and times when you will be confident. That is natural.

The question is: In what frame of mind do you want to spend the majority of your time? It's your choice.

YOUR UNIQUENESS, YOUR IMPORTANCE

Think of a beautifully cut, faceted gemstone. It is one radiant jewel with many different angles and facets, each reflecting the light in a different way. That's you, unique in this world, hand cut by the master jeweler. No

two stones are alike. Even though they may seem the same at first glance, when viewed with a jeweler's loop and magnified, each has its own size, flaws, and color variations. Sometimes people feel dismay at feeling like just another drone in the masses. Yet, viewed with an open heart and open eyes, each person's uniqueness is revealed. You will see what you look for, so spend your time looking for beauty. How will you polish the stone of your life? How will you set the gem? How can you compare the beauty of one gem against another? Think of a beautiful piece of jewelry with many stones that all seem alike. When one falls out, is the whole not incomplete?

One way this was taught to me was through the analogy of the Hebrew biblical text which is hand written onto a parchment scroll. If even one letter is damaged or missing, the entire text is rendered unusable until the letter is repaired. This is compared to the soul of the individual within the world; each soul is needed to make the world whole.

You hold thx kxy insidx you

Xvxry timx I usx my old computxr— which I lovx—I noticx vxvxn though it works rxally wxll in so many ways, thxrx is onx xxxception. You wouldn't think onx kxy would bx such a big dxal.. It sxxms likx such a small pixcx of what makxs up the wholx unit.

It's likx that in lifx, too. Xach onx of us is only onx pxrson. Yxt xach pxrson's xfforts and gifts (and vxvxn thxir lovx) makx a big diffxrxncx to this puzzlx of lifx. At homx, at work, vxvxn in rxcrcation, who you arx and thx way you arx, makxs a big diffxrxncx.

If you vxvr think that what you do doxsn't mattxr, think of my computxr.

You hold thx kxy and you makx a diffxrxncx!

SELF PERCEPTIONS

In Buddhist philosophy, there is a term: "monkey mind." This is the part of your mind that is mischievous and troublesome. It chatters away, distracting you from yourself. Maybe it distracts you from meditation, prayer, schoolwork, the task you have at hand to complete, a relationship, or maybe even your heart's dreams and desires. It chatters all of the doubts and it knows them better than anyone because it lives inside you. When you

recognize the voice inside you that is “monkey mind,” give it a banana, a pat on the head (thanks for the wake-up call), and send it away to play somewhere else. Conquer your doubts, and do what you can.

Take the time to affirm to yourself what you want to be true about you. What are the qualities you admire in others? What you like in others is a reflection of something that already lives inside of you. Claim it as a part of yourself. Make it concrete by writing it down. Then do your best to live up to it.

You are a good person, that is the truth about you. It’s good to remember that good people make mistakes. When you find you have made a mistake, do what you can to correct, repair, or heal and go on from there. You are not your mistakes. You are something wonderful, a masterpiece of the Creator.

I have a (yet another) favorite saying: “Anyone who thinks they can’t make a difference hasn’t been alone in a room with a mosquito.” Inside, you know your talents. DO NOT UNDERESTIMATE YOUR STRENGTHS. This is a place to start.

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate, our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, ‘Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented and fabulous?’ Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking, so other people will not feel insecure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It is not just in some of us: it is in everyone. And, as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.

As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”

—Marianne Williamson