

Don't Live Your Life To Please Others (Come Home To Yourself)

BY BRIGID HOPKINS

I've heard the suggestion more than once – not to live your life to please others. I can get with that, intellectually. What I didn't understand was how *not living your life* according to another's rules or expectations would feel.

As a mother of three, wife, caretaker, and passion carrier I've spent a lot of my time considering others, doing for others, and being there for others. I gave up my sense of self, perhaps to prove a point to myself or to help the outside world, or show my devotion to family. No one asked this of me, it was mine to give, and I did it willingly.

One day, I didn't recognize myself anymore.

No longer did I know what mattered to me outside of my immediate sight, what I stood for, or even enjoyed on my own. I had become so immersed in my family, I couldn't separate myself.

Now, this isn't a bad thing, per se. I'm not complaining or dismissing the importance of being closely connected to my family. The difference was, I was attached. My sense of self and safety were tied to others. If they weren't happy, neither was I. If they were hungry, tired, or stressed – so was I. I didn't know where one began and one ended.

I made a difficult choice, to step off the shores of attachment into a world of chaos and disorder. I began to try to make sense of a world I didn't know without another person's presence – one tiny step at a time. It was painful,

scary, panic-inducing, *and* it brought me to a place I doubted was possible.

I came home to myself. I discovered who lives in my vessel. I found my faith. I found self-trust. I found that the relationship I'd always wanted actually lived inside of me!

This past week, I had three major experiences, one after the next. None could have been anticipated yet when they arrived, I knew it was an immediate yes. My body, my heart, my mind, all knew instantly, this is where I belong. This is the result of years of hard choices, learning, and experiencing life on my own terms outside of what others would perceive as normal, good, or usual.

I am living in the rhythm of the world, one that can't be heard through the daily noisy grind and hustle. I feel it, hear it, and know it. This was because I took the time to break down the barriers that once prevented me from being in contact.

This isn't heroic or enlightened, it's our natural state of being. It's what each and every one of us can do, be, and live by. If we choose. If we are ready. If we want to remember.

I looked like a crazy, delusional, frenetic mess for several years as I kept moving to the sound of a drum beat so far in the distance I wasn't sure I had the fortitude to find it. But that wasn't the fun part.

The fun was in the search – the

***rebuilding, the discovery, the
reclamation of who I choose to be.***

The best part: I am ever evolving, expanding and shedding.
This is me today, without attachment of who I may be tomorrow.

For more self-study, [The Urban Howl](#) recommends [Tears to Triumph: The Spiritual Journey from Suffering to Enlightenment](#)

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Insecurity Of Not Being Good Enough](#)***

We will be
lost and found
a thousand times
along this cobbled
road of us.

Atticus

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