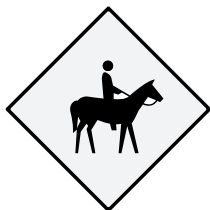


CHAPTER SIXTEEN



EQUESTRIAN CROSSING

Instead of expecting manure in life,
look for the pony.

What you see is what you get.

Believing is seeing.

OUR RESILIENCE HANDLING THE UNCERTAINTIES OF LIFE is expanded when we know we have a choice in how we view them. However, many of us fight life instead and feel beat up by it. We react as if life is an enemy to be feared, fled, or fought rather than learning to dance with it. Rather than joy, what we experience is exhaustion and ‘a-void-dance’—dancing in the void of emptiness. We spend our time shoveling the manure in life, rather than looking for the pony!

The truth is that we do not always have control over the circumstances of our life, but we always have influence over how we view them. We make the mistake of believing that not until the circumstances of life are in order can we change our attitude and become more positive and happy. It is foolish to wait! Life is too short. A step toward happiness is realizing we really do get to choose our attitude.

That’s not to say that there won’t be challenges and upsets. From time to time there are painful periods that are certain to block our access to joy. Guaranteed! Without acknowledging that we’re hurting and facing it in some way, we become blinded by denial. It’s when we choose to notice and focus on the things in our life that are working, especially when the circumstances that surround us seem to be overwhelming, that we become able to experience dependable joy. Our greatest happiness comes when we are open to the lessons of life even when life is harsh.

When we come to a horse crossing and notice the EQUESTRIAN sign, let us be reminded to ‘look for the



pony.’ Expect joy even amidst challenging times, and look for it hidden in small and unexpected ways. When we take responsibility for our focus, we will be delighted with the expansion of our happiness. When we fully understand and take responsibility for being at choice for how we see the circumstances of our life, we are back in the driver’s seat of life, ready to apply our true power.

We’re OFF COURSE when:

- We are so focused on what is not working in our life, that we lose sight of all that is working. Whining becomes habitual. Even if ninety-nine things went right during the day, what we talk about over dinner is the one thing that went wrong.
- We are trapped in catastrophe thinking, and take life way too seriously. We feel that having fun will prevent us from being effective.
- We never give ourselves a break, failing to take time for the things that renew our spirit and give us energy.
- We are attached to drama, blame, and worry, and resist seeing another viewpoint.
- We always have evidence to defend our pessimistic perspective and feel guilty when we feel happy.

We’re ON COURSE when:

- We expand our ability to focus on what is working with an understanding that what we focus on we create more of.
- Even when the circumstances are tough or we are faced with a loss or disappointment, we trust that there is ultimately a gift of insight and growth available to us, even if it takes awhile to become evident.
- We recognize that faith is a more dependable companion than logic when we are faced with what appears to be insurmountable odds. Contrary to being taught that ‘seeing



is believing,' we now find greater happiness by applying the new perspective with certainty that 'believing is seeing.'

- We know that the need to understand is often what distracts us from the miracle. We trust our intuition more, and allow ourselves to be still often enough to recognize our inner voice and hear its wisdom.
- We assume life is good and look for the innocence in others.
- We become aware of our tendency to be judgmental and defensive. We know that only when we have the ability to lighten up, become less stubborn and resistant, and open our eyes to expand our positive perspective, will we be able to access lasting happiness.
- We trust the process of life.

The greater part of happiness or misery depends on our dispositions, and not on our circumstances.

—Martha Washington

Travel Tips:

- What do you read at first glance in these letters?
I A M N O W H E R E
- Did you read: I AM NOWHERE
or I AM NOW HERE?

The ten letters are the same regardless of which way we read them. We can read them as a positive statement or a negative one. No one forces us to see it a particular way. We choose.

