

# Hope

Hope - a little magic word that can transform one's world from black to rainbow. Without it, no one would embark upon a spiritual journey of healing, for what would be the use?

Hope gives us little bits of Joy to spice our life. Every now and then in our journey, we experience that special moment in which we know, for a moment, what life is all about. We feel at one with the world around us, at one with God. Sometimes, it is the unspoken promise of these moments that gives us the courage to continue to live.

Joy teaches us many things that make life worth living. With joy we feel the loosening of our chains of pain, we learn to dance anyplace and everyplace, unceasingly in joyous gratitude, in celebration of the life that fills us to bursting.

Yet, after awhile, the reality of still being human returns, and the burning coals that we have been dancing on begin to sting a bit. Our joy falters, stumbles, our previous method of coping with life beckons like an old pair of shoes after a day spent in stiff, shiny, new ones.

But hope holds our hand when we lose our footing, and faith sends us searching anew for joy. This is itself a dance, with repeating movements, themes; and after awhile, if we keep moving on, the moments of joy come more often.

We truly choose how we will live our lives. A stream of love flows swiftly through the clearing, yet many too afraid to drink of the stream die of thirst. The grain grows majestically throughout, yet pathetic stick figures surround us. We choose whether to accept the love offered to us; to see truth and grow or to see darkness and despair; whether to allow our pain to grow into love within us. The greatest gift of love is joy. Joy does not demand a full stomach, but rather a full heart. Joy blesses pain that has been washed in love. Joy quiets despair and nourishes hope. Joy teaches us how to use anger to create rather than to destroy.

Joy hungers to share with others, to love, to flow through us to others hungry for love, for joy - to heal whatever pain surrounds it. Joy, faith, hope - all restore our confidence as we traverse our own particular valleys. We are not alone; we are never alone once we accept the gift of love.



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