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A TASTE OF ENCHANTMENT – Accessing Wonderful Memories

By Dr. Barbara Becker Holstein

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Holstein

THE ENCHANTED SELF is about focusing on your memories, talents, and capacities for joy and happiness. You may not realize that one of your most precious gifts, in terms of accessing joy, is your capacity to utilize your memory in positive ways.

All of us seem to know how to use our memories in negative ways. How easy it is to conjure up bad feelings surrounding a disappointment. How easy it is to remember unpleasant times. However, it is much more useful and leads to more happiness, if we can reminisce about good times (we have all had at least some) and also sift through our memories for our talents, strengths, and potential.

I focus on teaching you how to value your own history with all its ups and downs. Seeing your past, even with its disappointments at times, as a God-given opportunity to experience life, is a major step in validating your uniqueness and your specific purpose in life. This is your story and nobody else's. Your life is a marvelous adventure that could not and will not happen to anyone else.

I teach you how to scan your history to recognize and emphasize your abilities rather than your disabilities ... your strengths rather than your weaknesses. Learning to view yourself in a positive way puts you in an advantageous position to reinvent yourself.

For example, haven't you know someone who was a very successful businessman, and sure enough in his past was a grandparent or a parent who took him to the factory or the office all of the time, making him feel special? Or perhaps you know a mother who later in life started a successful catering business, and sure enough there was a love of cooking and nutrition that went back for many years? Successful people always pull from earlier talents and refurbish themselves as necessary.

There is pleasure and new chances to bring joy into your life in reviewing your life from the perspective of looking for happy memories. For example, you may remember enjoying archery when you were a child at day camp. Perhaps you loved being out in the field and basking in the sun. Actually you were

not interested in the archery so much as a chance to have free time, and socialize and joke with your friends. Your best friend may also have loved archery, but she loved it for different reasons. She was determined to become a champion and win the blue ribbon at the end of the season. Her intentions and experiences of pleasure were very different from yours.

Now when you brainstorm ways to bring more joy into your life, you might pick sitting at a park or spending time walking the boardwalk, or planning more time with friends. Meanwhile, your friend might decide to take tennis lessons and become a competitive player. These are certainly different roads to pleasure and joy.

Exercise: For enchantment starters try listing three things you enjoyed doing as a child. How could you find ways to do them again or what else could you try as an adult that might be similar? I hope you have enjoyed this taste of enchantment.

Dr. Holstein is the originator of The Enchanted Self and a psychologist since 1981. She is the author of two books: The Enchanted Self, A Positive Therapy and Recipes for Enchantment, The Secret Ingredient is YOU! Dr. Holstein speaks on radio, and appears on television in NY and NJ. She gives lectures, seminars, retreats and audio interviews on LadybugLive.com and is in private practice in Long Branch, NJ with her husband, Dr. Russell Holstein.

How Can We Build Enchantment Into Our Lives? – Part 2

By Dr. Barbara Becker Holstein

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Thank you for staying with me for this two part article about how our environments add enchantment to every day living. This week I invite you to read about how my Virtual Assistant, Rebecca, put beauty, meaning and form into her home. Her story is different from mine, as each of ours are, but it is the same in the sense that it is her way of building enchantment into her life.

Building Enchantment

By Rebecca Trelfa

I wanted to share a little note about creating enchantment in your home. I recently moved into an old Victorian house that needs serious redecorating. A previous owner loved dark woods and shag carpets. (Not my style!)

Since I work at home, I found it necessary to temporarily add some enchantment to 'this old house' because I spend so much time here. I took down dark drapes and replaced them with sheers to let the light in and, and sanded down and refinished some of the dark wood to give it a lighter appearance.

What a difference! Now I love my new home and am even happier to spend my days here. We have a nice back yard that I plan to plant some flowers and shrubs in once the weather is nice. I have even

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developed a new interest in Feng Shui and sit glued most nights to the Home & Garden channel watching dreary homes get enchanting face lifts.

I am reminded of an article of Dr. Holstein's called Positive Spaces, which focuses along the same lines. When you are surrounded by enchantment and things that really reflect your own personality and things that you love, you create new warm memories by bringing out the best of the past.

For example, my love of New Orleans has inspired me to create a Creole–style kitchen and my love of the Caribbean has inspired a soft bathroom with unusual colors. It is so fun to be creative and pull the best from your experiences.

A Play Date with Building Enchantment

You have now read two different accounts of making a house come alive with personal history. Take a few moments to reflect on what you have loved in the past. Was it what you saw on a vacation? Perhaps, actual household items, as I talked about. Perhaps a certain style or time period makes you feel great.

What else would you like to bring into your life ... new things ... a new home ...a garden ... new clothes? Perhaps it is nothing physical, but things like more music, or time with friends. Whatever it is, take some time to daydream. Let our stories wet your appetite and give you encouragement to bring more enchantment into your life.

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