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PRACTICAL STEPS TO ENCHANTMENT – Part 2

By Dr. Barbara Becker Holstein

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This is the second article sharing little case studies with you about people who have discovered successful ways to get in touch with their personal enchantment, i.e. positive states of well-being uniquely suited to them. Often times they pulled from their own past experiences positive parts of themselves to rebirth and give new life to.

Having felt quite down in therapy, Frank learned to work on his difficult marriage, and to begin to redefine his own talents and potential. One night Frank talked about a remarkable insight: "I was sitting in the salesroom at work, and suddenly I had an "aha" moment. I realized that I'm definitely not a salesman at heart. I love managing, and that is what I should be doing. Instead, I've been trying to fit myself into the wrong role for years and years. I can see now that I tried to become a salesman because I thought that was the best road to earn money. My father had been a traveling salesman, and I swallowed his definition about what a father should be, and what a husband should be. Now I see that all those 'should bes' were killing my soul.

I've already started to think about new job opportunities at work. I actually think that there might be a spot for me in another area, so that I won't have to change companies."

Frank was beginning to recognize his own needs, in this case in terms of his workday fulfillment. He is an example of someone on the road to personal enchantment, because he was willing to define his needs, and he was willing to change.

Fran says, "Getting in touch with my Enchanted Self left me feeling free in body and in spirit. I found myself passing a yard sale. I went in and bought a used cheerleader's twirling baton. I couldn't wait to get home and swing the baton in the privacy of my living room, just as I had at the age of twelve."

Eddie remembers the peacefulness and beauty of the beach and the ocean in Belle Harbor, where he spent the first five years of his life. Although he is only sixteen years old, he often consciously returns to these golden days in moments of stress.

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In closing, let me tell you about Sally. After a marriage of 25 years that was demeaning and not supportive to her, Sally had finally divorced. She now worked full-time, went to school at night, had friends and beyond her wildest dreams, was actually taking vacations with girlfriends. She had just come back from a wonderful vacation to a remote Caribbean island.

Sally sums up the 'magic' of her life now by saying: "Getting in touch with my Enchanted Self," she says, "made me think about my own history in a way I had never done before. I realize that I have underestimated and diminished my own life and self-worth, perhaps because of many factors going on in a bad marriage. The truth is that I, too, have an 'Enchanted Self.' I love to study, and always did. I love to travel and meet new people. I realized that I had enjoyed even meeting new kids on the block growing up. Why shouldn't I have the pleasure of travel now? I pull out lots of memories of my Enchanted moments in times of stress and unhappiness. Somehow, with this inner strength lifting me

up, my problems have become smaller and more manageable."

I hope these little vignettes have also inspired you to reach into your past and use your enchanted moments to strengthen the present, and to design your future in unique and positive ways.

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.

PRACTICAL STEPS TO ENCHANTMENT – Part 1

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In other weeks, you have learned many ways to get in touch with your personal enchantment. In this article, I would like to share several personal stories of enchantment with you.

Kay's happiest moments as a child were with a pencil and a sketchpad or watercolors. Her life as an adult has been very stressful: difficult teenage children, and a marriage that left much to be desired. One of her goals in treatment with me was to get back some of the joy she experienced as a child. She consciously practiced taking time for herself everyday, in order to draw.

Talking about her vacation to the Bahamas, which she went on recently, she said, "It was filled with the usual family bickering, but I'm proud of myself that every night, as the sun set, I was able to get out my sketch pad and draw. I didn't allow my family to get in the way of this wonderful part of me that I've rediscovered. Even the first night after we got home, I got out my paints and put in some personal art time. I love being able to own my own talent, and realize that no one can interfere with it. I share everything else in my life, but my talent belongs to me alone. I love every moment of my "me" time.

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Tess enjoyed making doll's clothing as a child. The feel and the sight of the needle flying in and out of the cloth was very soothing to her. As a young adult, she had a boyfriend who at first seemed to be a perfect match with her. But soon his negativity got her down and made her feel unhappy. She found that she was not using her artistic talents anymore. She realized that she was trying to deny certain parts of herself in order to make the relationship work. But in spite of her efforts, it just wasn't working. When Tess finally got the courage to suggest joint therapy to her boyfriend, he declined, and after much fighting he suggested that they split up. And they did break up.

Rather than feeling the depression that she expected, she found herself quickly able to return to many of her artistic areas of endeavors. She started to make handmade clothing and to work with other artists. Tess said it best when she commented, "I was able to tune into my younger self." Interestingly enough, she soon found a mate much more suited to her in temperament, a man who appreciated her artistic as well as practical side.

Tess is a good example of someone who had to make a decision in terms of meeting her needs in a relationship. Freeing herself from a man who did not have enough regard for her to work on her relationship allowed her to once again actualize her own enchantment.

We can come to enchantment only as we spend more and more of our time doing what suits us, either in both our personal and professional lives. Sometimes this is hard, as we struggle with other issues such as whether we 'deserve' to do what feels good. Sometimes it is easy to build in more time that really works for us as we thrive and see that the better it feels, the better we are at living and 'being'.

I can't promise you which road you will travel to achieve more states of well-being, to feel more whole, to feel more filled with positive purpose, but I can promise you that it is definitely the road to travel! Come back next week for more examples of recognizing what works for us as I share more vignettes

with you.

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