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THE CONNECTION: Simple Smiles

By Joanna M. Carman

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Smiles have power relative to an ant's physical ability. They can cheer someone up, improve your own mood, and make the world a more beautiful place. It amazes me how few people actually use them in their everyday lives.

I recently bought a tanning package at a new facility and am, so far, unhappy with it. My tan is beautiful and dark, so that makes me feel good, but I just don't feel good about being there. It's almost as if I'm burdening employees when I walk in the door. Without looking up from their computer, they ask my last name and how long I plan to tan for. They bark a bed number and that's it.

The only emotion I seem to get is from the sign taped to each stalls' door instructing tanners to bring out their towels and goggles emphasized by three exclamation points. As I bring out my goggles to the front counter, none of the three employees turns in my direction to retrieve them. So, I set them on the counter and walk out the door without so much as a "Bye" from any of them.

As a result, I want to go back to my old tanning facility. There, I received a smile as soon as I walked in the door and right before I walked out.

So what's the big deal about the employees of my new tanning place not smiling at me? Well, simply put, it's because I walk into that facility for 20 minutes of relaxation after a long day at work and 45 minutes of traffic, but still manage to strap one on for them.

Simple smiles make me feel better; they make everyone feel better. Whether you are the one smiling or the person seeing a smile, they communicate friendliness, happiness, content, etc. Those are emotions I like to grab on to when my day isn't going so well.

Think of how you feel when you are walking down the street and a gentleman walking in the other direction smiles and bids you a good morning. You feel acknowledged and grateful for the kind gesture.

Anyone who uses the telephone to earn a living knows that wearing a smile improves the way they sound to the person on the other end of the telephone, even if they can't see it. Those who wear smiles appear more lively, enthusiastic, and friendly. Those who don't,

tend to be more monotone and dull.

The same effect happens in real life when you smile at someone. What you say to them will not only ring better in their ears, but will be of more interest.

Smilers also find they are happier than people who don't bother to shape their lips. By forcing yourself to smile for a short period of time, you will create a habit that improves your mood, and, ultimately, your outlook on life.

Smile at everyone you see, spread the disease, and you will see the world turning into a place you don't mind being.

Joey published "GarbageDog", an ezine developed for the pleasure of readers and writers. Have your work published or enjoy reading some poetry, essays, short stories, and articles.
<http://www.garbage-dog.net/garbage-dog.html>

A Lesson From Stuffed Cabbage

By Helaine Iris

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Helaine Iris

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"One pound of learning requires ten pounds of common sense to apply it"
Persian proverb

THE CONNECTION: Simple Smiles

I just returned from a wonderful week of rejuvenating vacation that included a visit to my parent's home. In their guest room, where I sleep, is a large picture of my dear and departed red headed, Jewish grandmother.

Early one morning, as I was waking from sleep my thoughts drifted to her and I began to think about the tremendous impact she had in my life.

It was easy to recall some of my fondest childhood memories were times I spent with her. My favorite time was in her kitchen. I would drag a chair across the floor to be as close to her as possible. From the view at her elbow I watched her cook with intensity and devotion putting her heart and whole self into it. She prided herself on not using recipes as she produced her famous, nurturing culinary creations.

It was much more than stuffed cabbage and sponge cake. She was not just feeding bodies; she was conveying a deep sense of connection to something bigger than herself; the love she had for her family. This is what she passed along to me, and fed me, the valuable gift of connection.

Connection is one of the elements that creates a meaningful context for my life. It keeps me related and involved. It helps me feel a part something bigger than myself rather than separate and isolated. Also, by experiencing connection it helps me define who I am as an individual, another important element for my wholeness. Finally, connection offers me the opportunity to notice and celebrate unity rather than difference.

What or who do you feel a connection to? What connections are you wanting to make or acknowledge and are hesitating?

Here are few simple suggestions to nurture your sense of connection:

1. Open your awareness and shift your attention outwards. Another way to say it is stop the busyness of life for a moment and stop to "smell the roses". You will experience a deeper, richer and more fulfilling relationship with the world and your life.

2. Connect from your whole self. Knowing who you are first is most important. I invite you to consider that the more you connect with the world AS a whole being the more you have to offer as well as

receive.

3. Look for opportunities for connection everywhere, even in the Starbucks line. Stay open to the magical surprises you might not expect.

My connection with my grandmother is timeless. She's a part of me even though she's no longer alive. I wish I could tell her how her gift has enriched my life.

Somehow, I think she knows...

It's YOUR life...imagine the possibilities.

Helaine Iris is a certified Life Coach, writer and teacher. She works with individuals, entrepreneurs, and professionals, who want to integrate their life purpose with their personal and professional life to create a life that's joyful, fulfilling and successful. Are you ready to take a step that could change your life? For a complimentary session visit her website <http://www.pathofpurpose.com> or call her 603-357-8546 or email her helaine@pathofpurpose.com



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