

SPIRIT, MIND & BODY

TRANSFORMATIONS

If Only (fill in the blank)
My Life Would Be Better!

by Pamela Bell

The Holiday's are upon us and this would be a perfect time for me to write about crafty gift giving ideas, holiday baking or stress-management during this hyped-up commercial holiday. But articles such as these can be found in every December issue of "quality living" magazines and in most major newspapers across this great land.

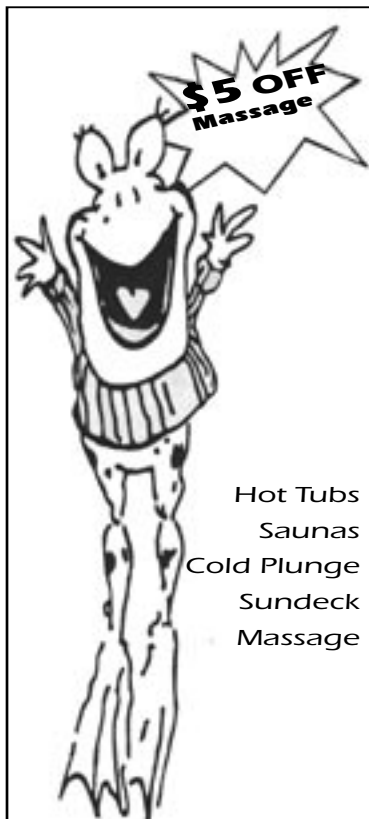
Besides the fact that these subjects don't really interest me from a writers perspective (though I DO enjoy eating those Holiday cookies if anyone wants to send me some), I am choosing instead

to write about something you might not have the opportunity to read or think much about. I write my column to make you "think" because it is only through thought, reflection and a healthy dose of discernment that the seed of change is planted. It is in this vein that I hope to plant a seed of change in how you see your daily life. Therefore, this article is about fulfillment and gratitude and about finding the "joy" that is so often reserved for the Holidays, in the midst of your daily existence.

How many of us spend our day's actually living the belief that "If only _____ my life would be better?"

If only I had more money my life would be better! (This one alone is the most popular and creates the most stress in people's lives;) If only I had more time my life would be better! (The second favorite;) If only I could find the right relationship my life would be better! (Who hasn't heard this

Continued on page 29



Hot Tubs
Saunas
Cold Plunge
Sundeck
Massage

FROGS

(415) 453-7647
School Street Plaza, Fairfax

M A S S A G E

by Ona Goodrich, CMT


Hot Stone . Swedish . Deep Tissue . Pre-Natal

Touch someone you care about
with the Gift of Massage
All Holiday Gift Certificates
10% OFF
(package of 5 at 15% off)

707-483-2399
Monday-Saturday 9 a.m.-8 p.m.
McNear Building . Seven 4th Street . Suite 5 . Petaluma

Holiday Specials

Having trouble finding the perfect gift for friends and family?
Here are some great holiday hints!



Bring in this ad
for 10% off
any purchase in
our gift store

PACKAGE 1
Intro to Yoga package-6 week Yoga for Beginners class and a block, mat and tie - only \$95

PACKAGE 2
One free yoga class with purchase of a one hour massage certificate only \$65

PACKAGE 3
Buy four massage certificates and receive a free 1/2 hour massage for yourself only \$260

PACKAGE 4
Buy four-pack of yoga classes plus a one hour massage only \$95

PACKAGE 5
Couples Stress Relief Special - Buy two 4-pack of yoga classes and two one hour massages - only \$185

BODYWORKS YOGA • 707-769-9933 490 SECOND STREET • PETALUMA

Slender Solutions



Body Wrap and Spa

Marin's exclusive
"suddenly slender"
body wrap center
Lose 6-20 inches in one hour with
slenderizing, anti-aging mineral
body wrap!

- Non-dehydrating
- Tightens, reshapes & cleanses skin
- Energizing & rejuvenating

Also available "Better than Botox"
STRIVECTIN-SD the Nation's #1 over
the counter wrinkle & stretch mark
cream. Only \$135 Call for more de-
tails. (415) 925-8746
(As seen in Vogue & on Sally Raphael
and ABC)

\$25 off
First bodywrap
& or 6 oz. supply of
Strivectin-SD

1104 Magnolia Avenue
Larkspur
(415) 925-8746



LOMBARDI'S

DELI

Gourmet BBQ

Catering

FROM 10-10,000 PEOPLE

Gourmet Sandwich Selection • BBQ Specialties • Ca-

**Now is the time to plan
your Holiday Parties!
Call Us For All Your Holiday Catering**

3413 Petaluma Blvd. No., Petaluma, CA 94952
PHONE: (707) 763-6959

one before?) If only I had the right job! If only I could do my art! If only I knew what my "art" was! If only he/she was more understanding/loving/affectionate! If only I could spend more time in nature/with my kids/doing what I love! If only I knew what I wanted to be when I Grew Up!

This list can go on as long as we are willing to let it and I don't believe that there is one of us in this country who has managed to escape the "If Only" factor. It is a modern day epidemic to always want more and to look outside ourselves for our happiness. Instead however, I would like to suggest that we start learning from those who have come

before us. That we learn from other cultures, from the spiritual leaders that are currently in our lives and from our own experiences – that looking "out there" for our happiness is like chasing our own tail. It is certain to leave us disillusioned and unfulfilled, wishing perhaps we had taken a different road.

Instead of focusing on our "If Only's" and waiting for a future date for our happiness to arrive, let's begin focusing on the here and now and start asking ourselves questions like: "What is Great about my Life Right Now?" And "What do I love about the person I am becoming?" It can be as simple as your first cup of coffee in the morning

SPIRIT, MIND & BODY

fixed just the way you like it. Or what about watching your dog or cat chase their own tail? My cat does this and it makes me laugh out loud at the futility of it all. It could be the garden that you tend everyday or the washing of the evening dishes (a chore to some, but therapy to others.) I know

ange cat (Calvin) is sprawled out in front of me taking up a hefty portion of the foot of my bed. I am listening to Handel's Messiah because well, though this is generally thought of as "holiday" music, I love it anytime of year and just felt like listening to it this morning. I am writ-

strong, and better equipped to make the changes that our spirit is asking us to make.

It is through joy and reverence that we find true grace, and I feel it is time we change our daily beliefs to reflect this noble intention. May each of you find the joy that is available to you every single day and may the season bring you one step closer to a life you can proudly say you love.

Blessings.

Bio: Pamela Bell is a professional Life Coach, Educator and Inspirational Speaker. She is founder of LifeSource Coaching and can be reached at: pamelabell@mindspring.com or by phone at: 707-762-2345.

there are countless events in our daily lives that can, when brought to your awareness and put into proper perspective, provide you with a lifetime of happiness and make everyday as special as a long awaited holiday.


someone who absolutely loves cleaning her house! I keep trying to get her to clean mine but that is another story.

What I am getting at here is that there are countless events in our daily lives that can, when brought to your awareness and put into proper perspective, provide you with a lifetime of happiness and make everyday as special as a long awaited holiday. But it is up to you to place your attention in this direction and to know what it is that fulfills you. What is it that you are grateful for? Sometimes I play this game with myself and it is a little sick but effective just the same. I ask myself: "if I was captured while traveling throughout the world and put into solitary confinement, what thoughts and memories would fill my mind? How would I keep my mind active so as not to sink into the type of rage and despair that would destroy me?" Essentially, I am asking you the same thing in a round about kind of way. What are you grateful for? What makes your life memorable? What fulfills you? I am not asking what will fulfill you tomorrow but what fulfills you right now, today?

I am currently sitting in my bed while writing this column and drinking my favorite Earl Grey tea with vanilla rice milk and honey. My 20lb or-

ing with a mechanical pencil, which I love because it maintains its sharp edge with every word I write. It is 7:00am and the birds are singing and the traffic is taking hold as the commuters pass in front of my house on their way to work (at hopefully something they enjoy.) And already I am having a great day! Sure I have to go to work and I even have to go to the dentist too, but I have learned this new self-hypnosis technique that I can't wait to practice up on. On my last visit to the dentist it worked so well that they thought I was asleep and essentially I was, I didn't feel a thing!

I am thankful for this moment to sit and reflect on my own small joys that make up my days. The people I will see, the rituals that I would not want to live without, the meals that I will share. I am grateful for so much as I know you are. And sometimes I forget to remember just how grateful I am, as I know you might also. And I don't mean to minimize the importance of our longings or the source of our unhappiness – these can be and usually are, a calling to a higher purpose. But putting all of our attention in this direction leaves us empty. Putting our attention instead on that which we are grateful for, leaves us full and rich and



Mahakaruna Buddhist Center
316 Petaluma Blvd. South, Petaluma CA 94952
707 766-7720
e-mail: khnow@aol.com

Prayers for World Peace
Every Sunday Morning 10:30-11:30
Free!

Families, friends, community, and Buddhist practitioners gather each Sunday morning in our beautiful meditation room to make prayers for world peace. All are welcome! No prior experience is required. Just come with your good intentions and help us meditate for peace in our world.

Mahakaruna Buddhist Center
316 Petaluma Blvd. South, Petaluma CA 94952
707 766-7720
e-mail: khnow@aol.com



FREE CONSULTATION
With a Chinese medicine expert & Qi Gong Master
Herb steam table treatment for pain & injury
Extensive Traditional Chinese herbal pharmacy on site

Chinese Medicine & Massage Therapy Center

OVER 15 MASSAGE TECHNIQUES FOR PERFECT RELAXATION
Swedish, Deep Tissue, Acupressure, Reflexology

- Prices Start At Only \$20
- Walk-ins Welcome
- Weekday Specials
- Same Day Appointments
- Gift Certificates

Open Everyday 10 a.m. – 8 p.m.

(707) 762-9111
172 Keller St., Petaluma, CA

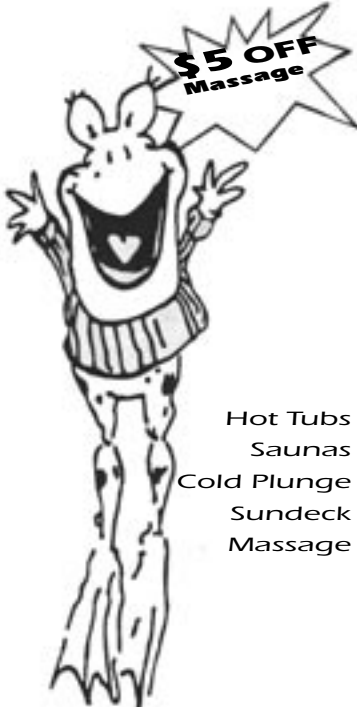


Virtuso Piano Service
since 1972



Larry Lobel
I tune, repair, restore, buy & sell
Member, Piano Technicians Guild
GOOD INSTRUMENTS
(707) 762-5800

\$5 OFF Massage



Hot Tubs
Saunas
Cold Plunge
Sundeck
Massage

FROGS
(415) 453-7647
School Street Plaza, Fairfax

