

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit



Newsletter Issues: January – December 2005

By

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Dear Friends,

The [Carpe Diem cum Spiritu](#) (Seize the Day with Spirit) is my weekly inspirational email newsletter. This volume includes the archived issues for the year 2005 published from January through December.



I believe that all are called to live a [Life Full of Spirit](#) ~ fully alive, energized, inspired and living courageously with integrity and character.

Great achievements (no matter in which area of your life they occur) are possible when balance and fullness of spirit are maintained. You have unique talents, abilities and creative potentials, which you try to utilize in some purposeful way to make a difference and get a feeling of satisfaction from life. The power of purpose is the energy that carries you forth in life and gives you direction. Maintaining a balanced life allows you to accomplish great things without depleting your self in the process. A highly motivated, inspired attitude can accomplish almost anything. Imagine your life full of that kind of spirit.

As a Personal Life Coach, I coach people to help them make the changes in their lives that they desire so that they may live with more of that kind of spirit. I help individuals to live their lives with a deeper commitment and conviction that is true to their values, talents and God-given abilities. I truly do want them to live their [Life ~ Full of Spirit](#).

I hope that you enjoy these short reflections and put them to use in your life. Also, please feel free to forward this e-book on to others you think might enjoy it.

Thank you.

[God Bless you.](#)

Mike

**To find out more about Life Coaching,
Please visit my website at:**

<http://www.hinzdocs.com>

Here's another great resource:

[Learn To Balance Your Life: A practical guide to having it all](#)

By Michael & Jessica Hinz, Chronicle Books, April 2004

www.LearnToBalanceYourLife.com

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Carpe Diem cum Spiritu: Archived Newsletter Issues for 2005

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My newsletter is sent each week to a list of subscribers who have requested it. My purpose is to provide a brief inspirational thought that is useful to people who are interested in change, growth and living a great life Full of Spirit. Carpe Diem!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

January 5, 2005

Open to Opportunities

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. John tried to prevent him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and yet you are coming to me?" Jesus said to him in reply, "Allow it now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Matthew 3:13-17 (NAB)

Have you ever noticed how we tend to get in our own way at times? We think we have it all figured out and think we know how something should work or happen, but we are wrong. It seems that there is a better way to do things or we might be missing the bigger picture and as a result our plans end up being inadequate.

People like to have control of what happens to them. As a result, some people are inflexible to an extreme. That is too bad, because to live well requires being flexible and adaptable enough to rise up to Life's many changes and challenges. At the other extreme, some people are so flexible, that they seem to be never able to make up their minds and implement any course of action.

Where do you stand? Do you think that you have it all figured out and know what's best for yourself? And maybe for everyone else as well? Then maybe you are making the same mistake as John the Baptist did in the passage above, but Jesus had another plan for him. Wisely, John decided to be flexible enough to adapt to the new plan.

We get stuck in life's many challenges, but if you are able to let go of your preconceived notions, you just might see several other alternatives that would get you unstuck and moving forward. Opinions are ubiquitous and most aren't worth the time we waste on them. In this new year, before you get bogged down on an opinion that you think is right and find yourself investing a great deal of time and energy into supporting it, make sure that it is worth it.

Remember that opinions are not necessarily "factual". An opinion is what "I" think about something. I may be right, or I may be wrong, or I may be very misguided and misleading not only myself but also everyone else that I am beating over the head with "my" opinion. It is a nasty little trap that we fall into, when we have an opinion about something, we just naturally believe that it is true and factual, which might be true but is frequently not the case at all. Furthermore, opinions frequently do not seem to be as important to everyone else as they are to you. So maybe we should work harder to keep a more open-minded perspective about Life in general.

May this New Year be full of surprises for you and may you be flexible and adaptable enough to benefit wisely from those many opportunities.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

January 12, 2005

Know Your Purpose

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

John the Baptist saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. He is the one of whom I said, 'A man is coming after me who ranks ahead of me because he existed before me.' I did not know him, but the reason why I came baptizing with water was that he might be made known to Israel." John 1:29-34 (NAB)

John knew his purpose in life and conducted himself accordingly. What is your purpose in life? How do you conduct yourself?

For many people, their purpose is just to make it through another day and that is more than enough to have to worry about. However, that is not good enough. There is more to Life than just getting by one day at a time. Sure we have to do that, too, but there is a greater purpose in life than just that.

For some, their purpose is to teach others and therefore, help them to live their lives to a greater purpose. Others spend their lives helping the less fortunate to live a better life. Others spend their lives amassing great fame and fortune and may or may not share it with the rest of the world. Others are devoted to living a good life and helping everyone they meet do the same in a free spirited, courageous, generous, and inspiring way.

There are many purposes to the things that we do and each of us can have several 'possible' purposes that make sense for our lives with the talents and gifts that we have been blessed with. But the reality is that unless you make the time to stop and clarify and commit yourself to a bigger purpose, then your time will be eaten up by the day to day routine of just getting by.

Living a Balanced Life requires you to not only keep a healthy balance of your daily routines and responsibilities, but also to maintain a good balance of your present responsibilities while allowing for what you hope to continue to accomplish into the future. In other words, your purpose embodies a vision for what you hope to achieve over time, a purpose, a sense of direction, and achievements that will add great value to your life. A value that will leave a hole and be missed if you 'never get around to it.'

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

January 19, 2005

Follow the Signs?

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

He said to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed him. He walked along from there and saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat, with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. He called them, and immediately they left their boat and their father and followed him.
Matthew 4:12.23 (NAB)

If I said, "Come, follow me," what would you do? Ignore me? Keep walking? Walk faster? Laugh?

What would it take for you to follow? What if I said, "I have a million dollars for you"? Or, "they are giving away cars down at the ..."? Or, "the perfect job for you just opened up at ..."?

We are bombarded with advertisements and messages that want something from us multiple times each day. Many of us just ignore them. However, lots of people spend lots of money on glitzy things that look too good to do without that soon end up gathering dust on a shelf or in a corner someplace.

What about your Life? Is it gathering dust? Are you an easy 'mark' for every salesperson that has something that will make your life easier?

The most valuable and worthwhile things in life are not always the "thing" that will make life 'easier' for you. In fact, most of the time your life is made more complicated and made more difficult by the things of most value, such as, relationships, love, friendship, caring, trying to make a difference in an indifferent world, and so forth.

So what do you follow in Life? What catches your eye? What do you covet? Maybe it is the person with prestige, who dresses well, has the fancy car, a nice house, and lots of money? Or maybe it is the person who may not have a lot of material wealth but is irreplaceable because of their integrity, honesty, good will, smile, and willingness to help? Or maybe, the thing you covet most of all is knowing that your Life is worthwhile, that your purpose is so compelling that you can't wait to wake up each morning and get busy, that you have so much good to accomplish that you never want to stop?

Or maybe, you just don't know how to answer these questions. Maybe it's time to stop and see what direction you are headed in Life and just what it is that you are following or chasing after.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

January 26, 2005

Where to Next?

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Consider your own calling, brothers and sisters. Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 (NAB)

Do you know what your own calling is? It won't be proclaimed on a billboard someplace. It won't be on a business card in your wallet. It won't be written on your birth certificate. It won't appear in any of the likely places that you are most likely to look or where you would probably notice it.

So, then how does anyone recognize their calling in Life? Some, perhaps many, never do.

And yet, your calling is there, waiting for you to discover it, to recognize it, to accept it and to get busy doing it. But HOW? You have to know yourself. You have to take time to think about it, pray about it, meditate about it - to do whatever it takes to really SEE yourself.

Some things to think about might include: What do I really enjoy doing? What do I not enjoy? If I could do anything, what would it be? What do I want people to remember about me after I am dead? What talents or things do I like doing, even if I don't do them much? What things energize me, inspire me, rejuvenate me? What things do I think need to be done in this world to make it a better place? Which of those things might I do myself? What do others say I am good at? If I already know what I want to do - what gets in my way of doing it? What motivates me most? If I had that - what would I do with it?

And so on and so forth. Few people spend much time thinking about themselves and their life along those lines. Rather, we spend time worry about things, about problems and concerns that need to be solved, about bills that need to be paid, about what people are thinking and saying about me, about how to raise the children, about how to get someone else to do what you want them to do, etc. Oh yes, and we spend a lot of time just whining and complaining.

What does all that get for us? Usually not a whole lot. We get a few problems solved or at least identified, we get a few bills paid, we get upset about what is going on around us in the world and within our own lives, we get frustrated and annoyed, but seldom, do we get energized, inspired, motivated, or any sense of fulfillment and real accomplishment.

That is because, you can't feel good about things that you don't think are good. When you are engaged in doing 'good' things with other people who also feel good about what they are doing -- you will feel good. In other words, if you focus on all the things that are wrong with your life and wrong in the world - you will always feel 'wrong' or bad. If you focus on good things, positive happenings, enjoying your life, doing your best - then in spite of the 'bad' things (which will still be there), you will have positive good feelings, feel energized, inspired and motivated and feel that what you are doing is worthwhile and accomplishing something. It is all a matter of in what direction you point your 'mind' and how well you listen to your 'heart'.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

February 2, 2005

Pass the Salt

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Jesus said to his disciples: "You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. Matthew 5:13-16 (NAB)

It is a good thing that you and I are no ordinary salt. When we lose our taste – Spirit – we can be renewed rather than pitched into the garbage. That is very fortunate for us, because we need rejuvenating on a regular basis.

How about you – have you lost your ‘saltiness’? Has your life taken on a ‘flat’ taste? Is the spice of life missing? Many foods that have little taste or even taste bad are extremely healthy and good for us to eat, but it is always easier if it also tastes good. Sometimes it just takes a pinch of salt to bring out its robust flavor to add that bit of zest that makes eating more pleasing.

When your life goes flat, what do you do? Do you just wait for something to happen to pick it up? Do you actively do something to get it going again? Are you just too busy to even notice that something is missing?

Many people are too busy to notice the subtle changes that over time can result in quite large changes to their life circumstances – changes that they are not happy about. Unfortunately, another common occurrence is a feeling of apathy – the notion that we are powerless to effect changes within our own lives. We somehow think that life is too complex and complicated and we just can’t control anything that happens to us – so we don’t even bother to do anything.

That erroneous belief is the same one that is mentioned in the passage above – that salt that loses its taste is good for nothing. When it comes to people, that belief is never true – no matter how much we believe it. Nor are we ever helpless to effect change within our lives. We have great ability to initiate changes in our lives. However, we must also remember that things frequently have a way of turning out differently than we had hoped.

Sometimes that is for the best and other times it leaves us greatly disappointed. Yet, it is not because we have failed in any way nor that we are powerless, but rather, that there are far more variables involved than any one person could ever hope to manipulate or to control.

Do we just give up? No, that would be silly. We should approach life with a positive, willing attitude and do our very best to make things happen that are for the best, and then keep a flexible and adaptable attitude for those many surprises that happen that we never anticipated. Those frequently are God’s gifts to us – it would be a big shame to ignore them because of our own preconceived notions of how things should happen.

God Blesses you . . . So do something with it!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

February 9, 2005

Step Into Your Greatness

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

At that time Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was hungry.

Matthew 4:1-11 (NAB)

We spend our lifetimes tempted by one thing after another. Some of us give in to temptation and some remain resolute. Some of us weaken at times while remaining strong at other times. What is it all about?

It is about **living our lives ~ Full of Spirit** ~ with the courage to always try to do the right thing no matter what the temptation. It is about living great lives attempting to make this world a better place. It is about attempting to find greatness in little mundane things and attempting to understand things that we could never hope to understand.

We can live our lives with great meaning, courage and inspiration, or we can give in to temptation and live lives that might not measure up to our potentials and to the good that we were meant to do.

There are times, frequently, that we need to stop and refocus on what we are doing in our lives. It is easy to get off track, to become sidetracked, or even stuck - and then we need to get back on task, to refocus and recommit to the goals and purpose that we are about.

You can literally do anything with your life. We blind ourselves into thinking that is not really true, but just take a moment to look at the lives of people around you and throughout history - and it is easy to see people doing literally everything possibly imaginable. A few people in history have pulled off seemingly unbelievable things. They never would have attempted them if they bought into the belief that those things were not possible.

You might think that you aren't like any of those 'great' people. I guess you would be right about that. We are each very different people with unique talents, skills, blessings, etc. You aren't like anyone else in the world - no one else is either.

But the real question is ~ Have you stepped up to your 'greatness' yet?

God Blesses you . . . So do something with it!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

February 16, 2005

Your Choice

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Stop judging and you will not be judged. Stop condemning and you will not be condemned. Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give, and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you. Luke 6:37-38 (NAB)

To **Live your Life ~ Full of Spirit** ~ is not about living selfishly but rather, self-fully. The more one gives of themselves to life, the more they receive in return. Life is like an investment account, it only pays dividends if you invest in it in the first place. Similarly, higher risks generally payoff very well over time (but sometimes do fail), while taking the more conservative low-risk route will certainly payoff with fairly safe dividends but will never be particularly spectacular.

Living Full of Spirit ~ means taking the risky high road. It means giving of "yourself" fully, not in hope of a big payoff, although that will certainly come, but because that is what life is all about. Most people play it safe and skirt life around the edges, existing, without ever fully engaging themselves in life.

Where do you stand? Are you fully engaged in **Living Life Full of Spirit** or do you hold back and play it safe?

How you live your life is a choice, a never-ending stream of choices. You choose to play it safe or to put yourself on the line for your family and others, for your beliefs, hopes, dreams, and vision for life. You choose to live your life full of purpose or to wander aimlessly. You choose to see the positive side of life or to dwell on the negative. You choose to do your best or to do just enough to get by. You choose to Love and to care about life and others, or to play it safe or wait to see what is in it for you. You choose to make a difference or to let others do it for you.

You choose.

What choices have you made about your life, the direction you are going and what you are striving to achieve? Are you **Living Life Full of Spirit** or is it time to choose differently?

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

February 23, 2005

Life is About the Unknowns

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

The woman said to him, "I know that the Messiah is coming, the one called the Christ; when he comes, he will tell us everything." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one speaking with you."

John 4:25-26 (NAB)

It is difficult to have faith when you don't want to believe. What is faith after all but belief and blind trust in the absence of plausible explanations? However, regardless of any explanation, it is easy to believe when you really want to.

People generally want to believe that life makes sense and that there are reasons for the things that happen. We like it when everything makes sense and we understand what is happening. But how often is that? Most of the time we don't understand the "whys" and "what fors" of the things that happen in the world around us. Sometimes even when we know what happened and why they did it, etc. - it still just does not make sense to us.

Do you believe because you Want To or because you are not sure what else to do and you want to cover your bases? Or perhaps you don't believe until something makes complete sense to you, until you have irrefutable evidence, and even then it is still a hard sale.

Many people are just trying to get by in this busy and complex world in which we live. Many don't have time to stop and ask questions, especially when the answers might take a while or might require some work on our part to figure out.

Are you too busy to ask questions? Do you like the answers that you have been getting lately? What do you believe about your life and the world in which you live? What do you put your faith in?

Everyone believes in all kinds of things. Even those who say they don't believe have some very specific beliefs. People are full of beliefs, hopes and trusts. That is what life is made of. All it takes is watching the daily news for about five minutes to tell that not everyone has the same ones that you do.

So what are your beliefs, hopes and trusts, and what do you have faith in? It is important to know, because that is what governs your life.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

March 2, 2005

Whose to Blame?

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

As Jesus passed by he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither he nor his parents sinned; it is so that the works of God might be made visible through him. John 9:1-6 (NAB)

Have you ever noticed how someone can say or do something and we naturally look at the negative aspects of it, what is wrong instead of what is right? We start wondering whom to blame, who was at fault, etc. That kind of thinking has its time and place and purpose, but not to the exclusion of everything else. There are always two sides to an issue, the positive as well as the negative. There are opportunities as well as the losses or challenges. However, if we get overly focused on the negative side of things, then we never see the opportunities that are also present.

There are always ways to turn a situation around to something better. If we only focus on the down side of things, we will never act to turn it around. There are a few people who excel at seeing the positive in situations and people and act with that side first, but they are truly rare. Most of us don't even come close.

When a person is stuck in a bad situation, it is common for them to rationalize about all the possible reasons or explanations for why they are stuck in such dire straits. Some of those rationalizations are reasonable and even true, but they don't explain that person's predicament. They provide handy excuses, but the reality is that that person is stuck because they haven't done what it takes to get unstuck.

They haven't looked at the positive opportunities in their situations. Rather they focus only on the negative aspects of their challenges. In effect, they choose to not see a way out. Now wait a minute, you don't mean they are actively choosing to stay stuck? Yes, that is exactly what I mean.

By focusing on one side of a coin, you will never know what is on the other side unless you turn it over and look. It is amazing how many people never bother to look. They go through life thinking that they are getting a raw deal, victimized by one situation after another, and that they can't do a thing about it. That is wrong. They are totally missing at least half of the picture – the most important part – the part with the possible alternatives.

Think of the areas in your life that are stagnant or where you are feeling stuck – when was the last time that you bothered to suspend your beliefs and judgments so that you could see the rest of the picture? How often do you cut off the other person's suggestion without actually considering the possibilities? How often when you do try to do something about it – do you do something that you have already tried before and it didn't work that time either?

Think about it and do something – preferably something that you haven't already tried and already know it won't work.

God Blesses you!

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by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

March 9, 2005

Time is the Essence

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that he was ill, he remained for two days in the place where he was. John 11:6 (NAB)

There is a time for everything and a purpose for every time. I am sure that there have been lots of times when you dawdled and then later regretted it because you missed something. There is the saying that "the early bird catches the worm". There are many other sayings that mean about the same thing, namely, keep busy, don't dawdle and don't wait to do the job that could and should be done today.

On the other hand, sometimes waiting serves a greater purpose than rushing into things. Mistakes can be made when a task is rushed into or done before everything is ready. In those cases, a prudent waiting period would have resulted in greater success or served a greater purpose.

Life is full of such moments where we might be faced with the dilemma of choosing between doing it now or waiting until some other time. You can't do everything that needs to be done right now or do everything at the same time. You have to have priorities and do things in their own best order or when the timing is right or best.

But how do you know when the timing is right? One way is to prioritize the purposes that will be achieved by the tasks. If one purpose is more important than something else, then it might need to be done first. However, if you don't have all the necessary resources or sufficient time to accomplish the task successfully, you might need to wait or break the task down into more doable "chunks" that you can begin right away and finish over time.

Time management is about organizing what needs to be done into prioritized doable "chunks". It is not about doing everything right now or even about finding a way to manage to get everything done. Not everything needs to get done ~ ever. Rather it is more about doing the most important task that is doable right now without jeopardizing something of a greater purpose that ought to be done now. While at the same time, sequencing tasks over time so that nothing "important" falls through the cracks.

I bet there are lots of things falling through the cracks in your life right now that somewhere down the road you might regret. Some of those you can foresee now and do something about them, the others, well, time will tell. If something is not getting done right now that you are already regretting, then you probably should do something about it. If something "important" never seems to get done, but you are constantly putting it off ~ then you should probably do something about it.

Time is a commodity to be spent wisely; you never know when you will run out of it and when it is all said and done, you will be judged on what you did with it.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

March 16, 2005

Tirelessly Moving Forward

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

The Lord GOD has given me a well-trained tongue, that I might know how to speak to the weary a word that will rouse them. Morning after morning he opens my ear that I may hear; and I have not rebelled, have not turned back. Isaiah 50:4-7 (NAB)

It is easy to forget why we have some of the talents and abilities that we do. We also tend to misuse them.

We were given a voice to speak the truth and to build people up with encouragement and yet we frequently use it foolishly to tear down or to discourage others. Sometimes it would be better to be quiet than to open our mouths and to let come out of it what we had intended.

At other times we forget that we have ears, we are so busy running our mouths. We forget to stop and listen to what is happening around us, to stop to listen to the people in our lives and to hear what they are really saying.

Those are just two of the senses that we have been given. We each have many talents and skills at our disposal. We have them to build up the kingdom of God, to produce something worthwhile in the world in which we live. They are there to fulfill the purpose for which we each were born.

How are you doing so far? Are you fulfilling your purpose? Are you using your senses, your talents, your skills, your experience, your knowledge ~ to good purpose?

Don't make the mistake of trying to be like someone else or trying to fulfill someone else's sense of your purpose in life. They may or may not know what is best for you and just might lead you astray. Having said that, it would be foolish to not listen to what they have to say, but the final decision is always yours to make as to what you will ultimately do.

It is never too late. Life is full of opportunities and full of chances to start over, to begin again, to attempt yet one more time to get it right.

Identify your purpose and work tirelessly to achieve that end.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

March 23, 2005

Start Fresh

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Peter proceeded to speak and said: "You know what has happened all over Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached, how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power. Acts 10:34 (NAB)

I hope that you have a joyous Easter. Now is the season for growth, change and development - for new beginnings.

The above passage could be a headline talking about you. If so, what would the story be about? What would it say that everyone is talking about you?

If you don't like the story - it is not too late to change it. It is never too late to begin with a fresh start. It is never too late to start over with a new or fresh idea. It is never too late to rise to the occasion even when you thought you were down and out or that there was no possible chance.

Life is full of new beginnings. Every new day is your chance to begin fresh with a new perspective, new hope, and a new faith that all will be well. What keeps you stuck in the same old rut day after day? What prevents you from hoping for something better and doing something about it?

Could it be a lack of trust? Could it be a lack of caring? Could it be a lack of passion? Could it be that you are just so used to plugging along that you forgot what Life is all about?

It is Easter - Spring is in the air - the earth is being renewed with new growth and new beginnings. Join the bandwagon.

It is another opportunity for you to get your Life back on track with a new or a renewed focus.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

March 30, 2005

Sent To Do A Job

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."
John 20:19-31 (NAB)

What have you been sent to do? Are you doing it now?

Life is full of side roads and diversions. Perhaps you are engaged currently in one of those tangents. Or perhaps you don't know for sure if you are stuck on a tangent or actually doing what you should be. How do you find out?

That requires some soul searching and exploring of your talents, experience and values. It means taking a serious look at your life and figuring out what is essential and what is not. It means looking at how well your hopes and dreams fit the reality of your blessings and resources. It means reshaping responsibilities to make room for the work you should be doing.

Yes, it means some work on your part ~ maybe a lot of work depending how far a field you have drifted. However, once you have done that, you should find that your life is more meaningful and filled with the things that were there all a long ~ you just kept missing them or overlooking them.

So do you have time to take a look at your life and make sure that you are on track? You will never know for sure unless you make time to find out and it is well worth your time to do so.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

April 6, 2005

It's the Company You Keep That Matters

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

That very day, the first day of the week, two of Jesus' disciples were going to a village seven miles from Jerusalem called Emmaus, and they were conversing about all the things that had occurred. And it happened that while they were conversing and debating, Jesus himself drew near and walked with them, but their eyes were prevented from recognizing him. Luke 24:13-15 (NAB)

What have you been sent to do? Are you doing it now?

Have you ever stopped to pay attention to what you spend most of your time talking about? What are you most interested in in Life? What do your interests prevent you from recognizing or seeing in the rest of the world?

In other words, when we focus on something specific, we tend to ignore or overlook or purposely avoid considering other options. If we do that chronically, it can lead us in "false" directions or away from where we actually intended to go in the first place.

We tend to gravitate towards 'arguments' or information or activities that tend to support or look similar to the positions that we already hold. We tend to ignore or eliminate 'data' that doesn't fit. What that means is that frequently we remain firmly stuck in a particular position without making any appreciable progress.

Frequently the piece that would move us forward is the piece that doesn't seem to fit into our perceptions or beliefs and so of course, it is discarded. That is a mistake that most of us make several times each day.

Few people can grasp the 'big' picture and even focusing on the 'little' picture is taxing enough. But without some grasp or conception of a 'bigger' picture, true progress is limited or somewhat accidental in nature. Progress happens, but not because of anything purposefully and knowingly that you may have contributed to the process.

You might begin to wonder how anything gets done. Well, each of us contributes in our own ways, and while no individual contribution may amount to much in terms of the 'bigger' picture, the sum total contribution does make a big difference.

It takes all of us contributing in our own ways to make a big difference. It takes all of our talents, those who see clearly the big picture and those you focus well on individual specifics, and so forth. If you are feeling stuck and are not seeing the kind of progress that you would like ~ then stop to think about your 'conversations' and what you are not 'recognizing' and introduce or allow a few more people and resources into your life.

Doing it all by yourself is great for asserting your independence and autonomy – just don't expect to accomplish as much.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

April 13, 2005

Follow the Leader?

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

The gatekeeper opens it for him, and the sheep hear his voice, as the shepherd calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has driven out all his own, he walks ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they recognize his voice. But they will not follow a stranger; they will run away from him, because they do not recognize the voice of strangers.
John 10:1-10 (NAB)

What kind of leader are you? Everyone is a leader at various times in their lives, whether that is as a parent, or at work, or amongst friends. Many do not consider themselves a leader or if a leader, would rather not be one. Or rather, many like to have control but do not like having the responsibilities of leadership.

But the fact remains that you do make multiple decisions each day of your life, some that affect only your self and others that affect other people as well. When your decisions impact others, you are in a sense, being a leader to some extent.

Who values your opinions and thoughts? Does anyone listen to you? When you have something to say, do others listen or do they tune you out and talk over you? What do you think about your self? Do you value your own opinion and judgment or do you tend to devalue it and minimize it?

A good leader has vision for the future and is willing to work towards that future in spite of challenges. A good leader has integrity and values and is courageous enough to live by them even when others don't. A good leader trusts themselves and even more importantly ~ trusts others and sees the good in others and encourages and inspires them to live accordingly.

A good leader is also a good follower; they are not always leading but also allow others to participate in leading while they participate as a team player. A good leader is a great listener and great communicator. A good leader keeps trying and has an open mind to other possibilities to help get the job done. A good leader not only has ideas and shares them but creates an environment that encourages and supports others to share their ideas, too.

Life is full of changes, opportunities and challenges ~ sometimes you are out front and sometimes you are somewhere in the line of followers. When you are out front, make sure you are a good leader and make good use of your fellow resources. When you are a follower, make sure that you are going where you want to go and that your leader has the qualities, vision, values and integrity that you desire in a leader.

When that is not the case, then it is probably time for a change.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

April 20, 2005

Cornerstone of Your Life

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Beloved: Come to him, a living stone, rejected by human beings but chosen and precious in the sight of God, and, like living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
1 Peter 2:4-9 (NAB)

It is a bit strange to think of yourself as a living stone, but let us play with the idea for a moment. Many of us are similar to stones, in that we tend to be rigid and unchanging. We tend to resist new ideas and get defensive when things don't go our way or people think differently than we do.

But when we respond in that manner, we really aren't being "living" stones, but rather, unresponsive, inactive, and 'dead' to the world. We are in fact, acting rather stone cold.

There is so much going on in the world around us; we have to be active and participative if we want to be truly living stones. Think of yourself in terms of the qualities of being someone who can be counted on, someone who is always there, dependable, consistent, trusting and trustable ~ then you would be responding more in terms of a 'living' stone.

Also think about yourself as a cornerstone. What kind of structure is built upon you as a cornerstone? What do others see in you? What do you stand for? How stable are you? Are you always changing, always under construction so to speak? Do you like the structure you have built, not physically (although that is important and counts, too) but as a person? Are you the person that you really want to be?

If you are truly a living stone, and things aren't the way you would like them to be, then part of being a living stone is being able to adapt, being flexible, being proactive to make the right kind of things happen in your life.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

April 27, 2005

Mood is a Matter of Choice

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope, but do it with gentleness and reverence, keeping your conscience clear, so that, when you are maligned, those who defame your good conduct in Christ may themselves be put to shame. 1 Peter 3:15-18 (NAB)

How would you describe your general mood? Happy? Inspired? Hopeful? Optimistic? Pessimistic? Upbeat? Frustrated? Encouraging? Discouraged?

After you have identified your mood, what contributes to it being that way? Do you identify yourself as being primarily responsible or do you place the responsibility (or perhaps, blame) elsewhere?

Ultimately, you are primarily responsible for the status of your mood. Of course, there are a million things that affect it and that you are constantly reacting and responding to. Through all that turmoil, however, there will be some common ground that threads its way through your life, no matter what is going on in it at that time. That common thread might be faith or spirituality, or perhaps, your vision for the world and your part of it.

That vision would incorporate your spiritual views and beliefs, your values, your hopes and dreams, and how you make sense of the world in general terms. That might sound like a lot, especially if you have never taken much time to sit and figure some of those things out. Every person has such a vision, values and belief system, but not all are clear about them. Many people run on automatic pilot, making decisions without fully understanding where they come from, doing things without really thinking about them.

Others are clearer about the relationship between their belief system or worldview and how they go about making decisions and why they make the choices that they do. Those who active take part in this process rather than living 'automatically' tend to be happier, more satisfied, more optimistic and hopeful, more inspired, more encouraging and upbeat than those who don't.

What's your choice? Are you a 'doer' or someone that allows to be 'done' to? Do you take active participation in your life or do you mainly go with the flow? The thing about choices is that they are changeable; they only last as long as until the next choice.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

May 4, 2005

Action Versus Words

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

I revealed your name to those whom you gave me out of the world. They belonged to you, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. John 17:1-11 (NAB)

Can you be trusted? Do you keep your word? Is that important to you?

Values. Everyone has them, but not everyone values the same ones. It is human nature to bend the truth a little from time to time. Some do it to spare someone else's feelings, or to avoid feeling embarrassed or ashamed, or in an attempt to protect someone else. There are numerous good intentions that we use as excuses for those times when we do bend the truth.

It is quite easy to find numerous examples of people lying and using their version of the truth to their own advantage. Some people would say anything that would give them the advantage in a particular situation ~ they have certain values that they adhere to. So of course, in their perspective, they aren't doing anything wrong.

What values do you always try to follow and uphold? Do other people recognize those qualities in you and admire and respect them?

We tend to take values for granted and don't give them much thought. However, they are extremely important because they form the very foundation upon which you live your life. That makes them very important indeed.

How would you want other people to describe you to someone that might not know you? Do they know you well enough to do that? Would they tell it the way it is?

To some degree, those questions are irrelevant. You can't be responsible for how other people live their lives and about what they think and say about you. That is not something that you have any control over. However, you do have control over how you live your own life, over the values that you live by, over when you will speak the truth and when you will bend it, etc.

In other words, you have a great responsibility to live your life to the best of your ability and to let that speak for you to the rest of the world. The example of how you live your life speaks louder than words, especially if the words don't always match the reality.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

May 11, 2005

It's Your Choice

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ. 1 Corinthians 12: 7, 12-13 (NAB)

You have probably wondered at various times in your life about what life is all about or more specifically, what your purpose in life is all about. It is natural that we ask that question of ourselves from time to time throughout our life.

It is a difficult question to answer. You have been blessed with many talents, skills, experiences, knowledge and gifts. So what do you do with them? That is the question.

We go through life trying to find answers to that question. Yes, there is more than one answer to that question because we are capable of using those gifts in more than one way. Most people do just that -- use them in more than one way as they meander through life.

Another key point is that we all too frequently think we have to do it all by ourselves ~ alone. Yet we accomplish so much more if we remember that one of the blessings that each of us has also been given is the choice to use those special talents in tandem with other people. We weren't put on this earth to live a lone. Rather we were put here to work together to **Live Lives ~ Full of Spirit** ~ to accomplish great things together.

In isolation your talents and blessings would not be sufficient to guarantee your survival. The next time you find yourself struggling, stuck, or blocked from advancing towards some goal ~ stop and consider the gift that you are overlooking ~ the resources available to you in the gift of "others".

If you are wondering what one particular gift that you have could ever be used for ~ maybe you haven't considered it from the correct perspective. You have been only considering it from how you could make use of it by yourself. Open your perspective to how with the additional resources of other people's gifts and blessings, you could utilize your talent with the talents of others to do something wonderful that you could never do all by yourself. That would be the missing ingredient that you have always overlooked.

Life is not about surviving alone ~ but rather, using your resources and combining them with others so that no one ever has to struggle alone.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

May 18, 2005

Alive with Differences

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Brothers and sisters, rejoice. Mend your ways, encourage one another, agree with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the holy ones greet you. 2 Corinthians 13:11-13 (NAB)

Any time strangers meet, they begin to look for similarities that can be used to connect or link the two together to form a new relationship. When there are differences, those differences stand out and both attract attention and frequently, become divisive principles that keep the two separated forever.

How do you embrace the differences within your own life? You could not have life without constantly butting into differences, because they are everywhere. In fact, the more differences that you embrace, the more life you will have within you, or the more you will be ~ **Living your Life ~ Full of Spirit.**

Differences bring new creations, new inventions, new progress ~ new Life. Shunning, avoiding, ridiculing, despising, or eliminating differences decreases the potentials of life, increases stagnation and lifelessness.

If all people were the same, life would be boring, uninteresting, unchallenging, and there would be nothing new to look forward to, no surprises, no inventions, no nothing - except the same old thing day in and day out. Moreover, there would probably be no human life, because our survival depends upon those very differences.

No matter how similar two people may be, all are different and **EXTREMELY** unique. All have slightly different talents, unique experiences, and unique ways of combining and utilizing the resources that are available to them. Should such differences be shunned? Only if you do not want to live a full life. No, if you want to shun anything, shun those who use differences to build barriers that cannot be breached. Shun those who use differences to destroy life rather than to stimulate the zest and vitality of Life.

Of course, if you shunned them, then you would be guilty of doing the same thing.

You have been blessed with differences that prepare you to Live your Life ~ Full of Spirit. What do you intend to do about it?

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

May 25, 2005

Live Forever

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Jesus said to the Jewish crowds: "I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world." John 6:51-58 (NAB)

Many families have some family traditions that they pass down through the ages, certain holidays that they celebrate in certain ways, special foods for special occasions, etc. Similarly, families promote certain rules, values, principles and belief systems. In gatherings, frequently the children of certain families can be identified not only by their looks but also by certain mannerisms, speech patterns, and yes, even beliefs and values.

Values are the foundation of our way of Life. Everything that we do, every choice that we make, every judgment or decision or opinion that we hold springs forth from the values that we live our lives by. Other people come to know who we are through those values and we pass them on to our children, to our families, and even to the other people we interact with throughout our lives.

It is amazing that something that serves such a significant role in our lives is taken so for granted, that often people cannot even tell someone else what their "values" are. They haven't taken the time to think about them or to even identify them. Yet, they rely on them thousands of times each day. You cannot live your life without them. You can live your life poorly or extremely well depending upon the values you choose to live your life by. You can be rich or poor, happy or sad, have many friends or few, be caring or inconsiderate, successful or not, engaged or disengaged, and so on.

The choice is yours to make and to live your life accordingly. You may think that there are many things in this life that you have to live with - that you really have no choice about. And while that may appear to be the case, it really is NOT. You always have choices. Sometimes those choices are not ones that you want to choose from, but they are still choices.

Whether or not you like the alternatives from which you can choose, you always have the choice to choose. Some choose to wait and see, or to not choose 'directly'. That is still a choice that you have made. Life is full of those choices where we wait to see what happens and we postpone making an active choice right then. That is still a choice that is equally valid and just as significant in how it impacts our life as a different choice that we could have made to actively engage that particular challenge or issue.

Other people will always evaluate and judge you by the choices that you make and the values that you choose to live your life by. You cannot stop them from doing so, and in fact, you do it yourself as well. Take a moment right now to identify just one value that is important to you. Pay attention as you go through the day in how that one value affects how you interact with others, how it shapes the choices you make, how it affects the way that you behave, and how it impacts your life. You might be surprised.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

June 1, 2005

Follow Me

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the customs post. He said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

Matthew 9:9-10 (NAB)

If a stranger came along and said, "Follow me", would you? Would you ask, "who are you" or "where". If the stranger said, "Join me and together we will make millions," would you? Would you ask, "how" or "what do I have to do". If the stranger said, "help me," would you?

We follow all kinds of people throughout our lives. We buy things that we see on the television or Internet, things that we probably don't need, but we buy them anyway. We follow people's advice because it sounds good, or maybe we don't want to hurt their feelings, or maybe we hope that there will be something in it for us down the road.

Why do we do the things we do? Why do you? Do you have a good reason? Do you have a reason that makes sense to you and one that you have thought about, weighing the pros and cons? Do you make decisions based on some advantage that you will realize or hope to realize from it?

I don't mean to sound greedy or calloused or cynical, but everything that you and I do, we do for some reason. If there were no reason, we would not waste our time doing it. People are rational beings, which means that our behavior is reason driven.

What is most important is for what 'reasons' do you act. Are the reasons that motivate your behavior the right ones, the ones that further your vision and values in life? If they do, then they are good reasons that serve you well. If they do not, then it is time for you to change the reasons that motivate your behavior and actions.

You cannot eliminate the 'reasons' that affect your behavior, you can only make sure that those 'reasons' are good ones. You can make sure that they are the ones that you want to be furthering. You can make sure that they are ones that you will be proud of and will never be ashamed of. You can make sure that they point you in the right direction in life and take you down the roads that you choose to follow.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

June 8, 2005

the Abundance of Life

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

At the sight of the crowds, Jesus' heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest." Matthew 9:36--10:8 (NAB)

It seems to be getting harder to find people to volunteer their time and talents these days. If you are someone that has called people to ask them to volunteer, you probably know how much harder it is these days than just a few years ago. People don't want to be bothered. People are too busy to volunteer their time.

Sometimes, people have been put off too many times when they have volunteered in the past. They haven't been listened to, they haven't been appreciated, and they haven't even been thanked appropriately. In other words, they might have volunteered their time and talents and then been treated deplorably - so why would they be eager to volunteer again.

Perhaps you have experienced that side of volunteering yourself. I think that gives a special meaning to the above words that the harvest is abundant but laborers are few. Because, yes, the harvest is indeed abundant, but few are willing to labor to reap the benefit of that abundance. Many people want the abundance to be handed to them on a platter without them having to lift a finger to earn it or to receive their 'just' piece of it. They feel a sense of 'entitlement' to it.

What are your thoughts about that? Where do you stand? Are you a laborer or waiting to receive your 'fair' piece of someone else's labor?

To **Live your Life ~ Full of Spirit** ~ requires you to unselfishly step forward and labor to harvest the abundance. Likewise, you will receive in abundance, in return. Those who expect much are usually greatly disappointed. Those who expect little are frequently overwhelmed by the abundance that they receive.

Much of what we receive in life and how life 'treats' us is a matter of our own attitude towards it. Generosity is rewarded, while selfish arrogance is begrudgingly given only the minimum that you can get away with and then otherwise ignored.

Take a moment to examine the matters of your heart or should I say, the attitudes of your soul.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

June 15, 2005

Make it a Win-Win

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Jeremiah said: "I hear the whisperings of many: 'Terror on every side! Denounce! let us denounce him!' All those who were my friends are on the watch for any misstep of mine. 'Perhaps he will be trapped; then we can prevail, and take our vengeance on him.' Jeremiah 20:10-13 (NAB)

It is amazing how readily and quickly people pounce upon one another. We seem eager to look for any reason to whine and complain about others ~ almost as if that were our favorite pastime. Think what a better world this would be if we devoted those energies to attempting to make every situation into a "win-win" situation.

You might think that that is not possible or that it would be a waste of your time. Think about all the times that you have come out on the losing end of a deal where you might have been much happier to have compromised and come out more of a winner than a loser.

Yet, there are individuals who aren't willing to compromise at all. They want it all and aren't willing to settle for less. It is almost as if they want "all or nothing", but of course, aren't even willing to consider that nothing would be a real possibility. They will adamantly pressure to get what they want no matter what. They believe that there should be winners and losers as long as they are never the loser.

We live in a world where that is the prevalent attitude. Yet, there are very few situations that with the right attitude and some willingness to be flexible, reasonable and to compromise ~ that couldn't be turned around to everyone's advantage. If you have a problem with seeing that as a realistic possibility, then you are a strong believer in the win-lose philosophy. You are probably more willing to attempt to bend the situation to your will than to adapt yourself to the situation. It also means that you have a much greater probability of failing more of the time than of succeeding.

Wait a minute, isn't it a 50-50 chance? Only when the situation involves only two people and how often is that the case? Most of the time many more than two people are involved and if only one person will win and the rest will lose ~ than your odds of losing are much greater than of winning.

Nothing in life is fair! That is another battle cry for the win-lose philosophy. As long as you are winning - it's fair - and when you are losing - it's not. Why does it have to be that way? It doesn't.

Most fights and disagreements occur because of an inflexibility to compromise and an unrealistic desire to always win. Furthermore, anything short of 100% is considered a loss rather than a win. That is the game of life, but who in their right mind would ever want to play a game with those kind of rules.

Maybe it's time to change the rules we play our lives by. I vote for making this a "win-win" world, what do you think?

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

June 22, 2005

How worthy are You?

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Jesus said to his apostles: "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 10:37-42 (NAB)

Are you worthy? What purpose does your live serve? What values do you live by? What is your life all about?

Simple questions but no simple answers. We sometimes think we know what the answers are, but frequently are only fooling ourselves. Often, our professed values and beliefs are not supported by and compatible with our actions and the way we live our lives.

How confident are you that when people see you day in and day out, that they could accurately identify the values and beliefs that you live your life by? If someone asked them how you would stand on some controversial issue could they accurately answer? Probably not, although I realize that would be expecting a lot.

But seriously, could they answer a less complex question about what are the foundational values and beliefs that you live your life by? If not, is that because you flip-flop back and forth? Or perhaps, because they don't know you very well, or because you don't put it out there for others to see, or what?

Perhaps you don't even know what values and beliefs form the core of how you live your life yourself. If so, you are not alone, but rather, have lots of company. Truly, that is not the best way to live one's life. It is difficult to choose direction and make decisions if one does not know what core values to adhere to no matter what and which ones to avoid, etc. Decisions become much simpler to make when one has some criteria by which to make them.

SO are you worthy? Maybe it is time to figure that out.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

June 29, 2005

Your Identifying Marks

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Brothers and sisters: You are not in the flesh; on the contrary, you are in the spirit, if only the Spirit of God dwells in you. Whoever does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit that dwells in you.
Romans 8:9, 11-13 (NAB)

If there were one most important quality or value that you should have to make you the unique person that you are ~ what would that be? What quality or value above all others marks you as the special person that you are? What quality if it disappeared today, would change you forever and not for the better?

We have many values, traits and qualities that make us each the unique person that we are, but some of them are more important than others. Some of them no one else ever sees or recognizes, others everyone sees, others only a very few select people ever see, but they are all part of the person that you are.

Some of those qualities or traits are ones that you may want to change or even eliminate. They are ones that get in your way or hold you back or do not serve you well. We all have those as well. Some qualities are such that they are extremely important to you, but you probably don't take the time and energy to nurture them and to make sure that they are maintained and flourish the way you would like them to. As a result, they diminish over time, get forgotten or set aside and take less significance in your life. The quality of your life suffers as a result.

You should know which those are that apply to you personally. It might be a prayer life or spirituality, it might be special intimate relationships, it might be a value such as integrity, or it might be maintaining your whole-person health (mind, body and soul). You know what it is for you, or at least I hope you know, because you are in trouble if you don't.

Yet, knowing is not enough. Knowing what it is won't do anything about making sure your balance remains intact and healthy. Knowing is an important step, but unless you establish some goals and action plans and prioritize them so that you will actually take the time to do the necessary actions ~ nothing will happen, except that the quality of your life will diminish or become stagnant.

Your life is your most important asset and investment. If you are not investing the necessary time, energy and importance into yourself, then your investment will produce very little for you or for anyone else. However, if you manage it wisely and invest prudently into maintaining your whole-person health in all areas ~ then the harvest will indeed be abundant and you will be able to produce an abundance for many, many others throughout your lifetime.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

July 6, 2005

Creation Waits for Your Input

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Brothers and sisters: I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us. For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God; for creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but because of the one who subjected it, in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. Romans 8:18-23 (NAB)

Good things come to those who wait. That is certainly frequently true, but it doesn't indicate how long you might have to wait. For some it is their whole life. Others seem to get good things all the time. What makes the difference?

I think the answer is written above. God reveals the glory of creation to each of us, but leaves it to us as to what we make of it. The above passage also says that creation awaits with eager expectation for what God's children will reveal. In other words, creation is waiting expectantly for us to do something. That is amazing, for many of us spend our whole lives waiting for something to happen first before we do anything.

Good things happen all the time. Some people don't wait for them to happen, they make them happen. Others wait and wait and wait ~ and nothing ever seems to come their way. Even when something does, they don't even recognize it.

There is a subtle difference of philosophy here. Some see the good in things first, no matter how tiny or insignificant it may be, and they take that seed of goodness and make it grow and produce in abundance. Others don't see the good until after it has grown so big that they can't possibly overlook it (although they frequently still don't trust what they see). Others see that same tiny seed of goodness, and couldn't be bothered because it is too little – they want much more and will just wait until something much better comes along.

Where do you fall in this picture? DO you have a win-win philosophy where you try to make the best out of everything rather than waiting for something better to come along? Do you frequently find yourself waiting for something to happen? Do you overlook blessings if they weren't what you asked for or expected or aren't "big" enough? Do you rejoice in each tiny seed of goodness that comes along and frequently find yourself out there looking for them and even producing a few yourself?

There is some goodness in every aspect of life – sure you may have to look harder to find it sometimes, or you may see it and not recognize it, or you might overlook it because you need to do something first yourself that you haven't done yet. You see, creation does wait eagerly for you to participate and to do 'your' thing.

If you don't do 'your' thing, life just won't ever be the same.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

July 13, 2005

So Many Possibilities

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

He proposed another parable to them. "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a person took and sowed in a field. It is the smallest of all the seeds, yet when full-grown it is the largest of plants. It becomes a large bush, and the 'birds of the sky come and dwell in its branches.'" Matthew 13:24-43 (NAB)

There is great potential possible in even the tiniest of things. People are notorious for minimizing their potential. We make all kinds of excuses for our perceived failings, our unfinished projects and plans, and the less than planned successfulness of our various endeavors.

Yet, the failure is sometimes not in not having the necessary skills and abilities, but rather, in lacking determination and the motivation to even begin. Frequently the most worthwhile projects are never even begun because we talk ourselves out of even trying before we begin.

The potential is there, just as in that tiny mustard seed, but unless it is planted and nurtured, it will never amount to anything. It is amazing how that tiny mustard seed produces a plant of such size and grandeur. Likewise, you are perfectly capable of producing results that would astound you – if you would just try.

No individual fully realizes what their full capabilities are – few even scratch the surface of their capabilities. They plug along with what they are comfortable with and with what they know they have been successful with in the past, but don't venture much further than that.

In other words, they keep their mustard seeds stored away in a drawer someplace and complain about their misfortunes in life.

What do you do with your 'mustard seeds'? Have you minimized them? Have you forgotten them or stored them away someplace? Are you even aware that you have mustard seeds?

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

July 20, 2005

Headed in the Right Direction

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined he also called; and those he called he also justified; and those he justified he also glorified.
Romans 8:28-30 (NAB)

We all have days where nothing seems to go right, but if you have more of those days than you are supposed to have, then maybe something is wrong. When most days seem to fall into this category, maybe the something that is wrong is you.

What I mean is perhaps you don't have the right goals and vision for your life and are working at cross-purposes to what you should really be working towards. Then of course things are going to go wrong and it is probably because someone is trying to tell you something and you aren't quite getting the message.

Sometimes we come up with some great sounding plans that just don't fit for who we are as people - they just aren't right for you, for who you are and what you stand for and your talents and abilities, etc. If that is the case, then no matter how hard you work at things, they probably just won't ever quite fall into place and every thing will be so much harder than they need to be.

On the other hand, when your plans and direction do fit - often things seem to almost fall into place, almost as if you don't even need to be there for them to happen. I said, almost. Really, when you are working towards goals and purposes that fit - YOU - then things happen so much easier. And then when things do get hard and difficult, you simply get more focused to find a way to make them happen - and they do.

That is what **Living your Life ~ Full of Spirit** ~ is all about - living in the fast lane and knowing that you are headed in the right direction. However, if you find yourself hitting roadblocks all the time because you happen to be going the wrong way on a one-way street - then it is time to stop and check your road map and start heading in a different direction.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

July 27, 2005

Separating the Loves of Your Life

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. Romans 8:35 (NAB)

So what separates you from the love of Christ, or any of the other loves in your life? You do, of course.

It's your values and beliefs that get in the way of the 'loves' of your life. It's your choices, decisions and judgments. It's what you think and the goals and plans that you make that determine what you do and not do.

So if you are stuck or not making the progress that you would like, perhaps, you need to reassess your goals and values so that you can identify the problem area(s). Or perhaps, you are not devoting the time and efforts to your already established goals and instead, are allowing other distracters to sabotage and steal your time and efforts.

The only way that the most important things in your life remain a priority and get the attention that you want them to - is for you to set aside the time and energy for them and to not allow anything or anyone to distract you from them.

That is hard to do because there are so many things to distract us and to get in our way. There are also many things that might need to be done that we either don't like doing, don't want to do, aren't good at doing, etc. and yet, they need to be done and so they occupy far more of our time than they deserve. It still comes down to you and how you manage your time.

It is important to periodically evaluate how you are spending your time and to identify those projects or areas that you might be spending too much time at the expense of something that is more important to get done that you never seem to get to. And yes, you will have to say "NO" to some things and some people who want you to do something that is not on your priority list.

That is also difficult to do - to say No - sometimes. But it has to be done. Sometimes it is easier to do when you can agree on some kind of compromise with the person that you are saying no to. Sometimes you can round up some other helpers and get the job done faster so you have time to do the things that you need to do. And, yes, round up some of those helpers to help you get your tasks done, too.

Decisions, choices, time, commitments, requests, obligations --- all getting in the way of the 'loves' of your life? Do something about it now, not tomorrow or the next day - right Now!

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

August 3, 2005

You Choose

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw how strong the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught Peter, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" After they got into the boat, the wind died down. Matthew 14:22-33 (NAB)

How many times has something sounded great and that it ought to be pretty easy, until you started to do it and found out differently? Things seem to roll right along until we lose confidence in our ability to cope with the situation, then things go wrong very quickly, usually in a very big way.

How many times have you talked yourself out of a good idea without even trying? Life is full of such moments and lost opportunities. Yet, we are capable of accomplishing so much more than we usually give ourselves credit for. Sure, there are those times when we go out on a limb and deceive ourselves only to find out we were overly zealous in our attempts, but it is more frequently the case that we underestimate our abilities.

The world is full of under-achievers as well as the over-achievers, but in reality, we were each meant to achieve at our full capacity, not over nor under, but at 'our' capacity. Since each of us has different capabilities, talents, skills, abilities, etc. - that capacity is different for each of us. That tends to make it difficult to accurately assess, because we tend to compare ourselves to others and what we see them doing. Therefore, we might over- or under-estimate depending upon whom we compare ourselves to.

We also tend to make the mistake of trying to do things the same way as we see everyone else doing it, which might be right for 'them' but not for you. There is seldom just one 'correct' way of doing something. Since each of us has different capabilities, it stands to reason that each of us might tackle the same task in slightly different ways. The amount of success that we each have depends greatly on how closely the approach we take matches our skills and capabilities. The greater the discrepancy, the more likely we will judge the results as being unsuccessful or a failure.

Furthermore, the greater the discrepancy, the more difficult we will find the task to be. When you attempt to do something by using the wrong tool, you will find it difficult or even impossible to accomplish that task. You might then assume erroneously that you can't do it. You would be wrong of course, because the fault was not within you but in your selection of tools. If you had attempted the task using the tools you had available to you (your own skills, and abilities) then you would most probably have been successful. You would also have succeeded much quicker and more easily than the energy and effort you exerted in your 'failed' attempt while using the wrong tools.

It is also amazing how much easier it is to deal with adversity when you approach it with assurance and confidence rather than with skepticism, insecurity and doubt. You have the tools at your disposal to approach it from either spectrum - the choice is yours.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

August 10, 2005

Opportunities Abound

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

For the gifts and the call of God are irrevocable. Just as you once disobeyed God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, so they have now disobeyed in order that, by virtue of the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy. For God delivered all to disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all.

Romans 11: 29-32 (NAB)

People believe in all kinds of things. Some believe that all things are pre-determined, that each has a destiny to fulfill, or that things occur according to fate, etc... And yet, the reality is that each of us has been endowed with certain gifts, traits, qualities, strengths, weaknesses, challenges, beliefs, values, etc. - and with these we go about the task of living our separate lives.

Some people have goals and agendas that they are striving to achieve. Some haven't given it any thought at all and just go about their lives dealing with whatever comes their way. Some are striving to improve the world in which they live and others are merely striving to get ahead and take care of themselves in the best way that they can.

You have been given gifts and a call to do your best with them in the time you have them. The choice about what you do and how you do them is yours to make. Your choices can and will take you in all kinds of different directions. Some will be good choices and some will not.

No matter where your choices lead you, it is never too late to make a different choice and start heading in a different direction. It is the wise person that learns from their mistakes and strives to correct them.

Your life has been filled with opportunities. Some you will simply overlook and be totally unaware of, others you will be afraid to attempt, others you will overlook as unreasonable, some you will eagerly attempt, some you will aspire to but not know how to approach, some you will dream about but never realize that you have already passed them up or wrongly conclude that they are gone forever.

How will you respond when the next one...

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

August 17, 2005

Start Tweaking

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi and he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" They replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"
Matthew 16:13-20 (NAB)

If you asked a dozen people, "Who am I", what do you think they would reply?

It would be interesting to see what people really think of you. You would have some pleasant surprises and might also be surprised at some of the negative or misleading things that might be said. What would you hope that they would say?

We spend our lives attempting to get somewhere, to accomplish certain things, to portray ourselves and to live according to certain values and principles. But how successful are you at achieving your purposes? To a certain degree, we never know for sure.

We can determine how well we have achieved our specific goals and plans, and how closely the choices and decisions we have made match our values and principles, but is that good enough? We frequently lack objectivity in how we view our results and ourselves. What others think about you does give a glimpse into a different perspective that lends a certain amount of objectivity.

To that end, what do you think other people say about you, or think about you and your efforts and results in this life? Are you achieving and living your life the way you want to and according to the values and beliefs that you desire?

There is always room for tweaking and fine adjustments that should be made. What areas of your life need a bit of tweaking to get you back on track or to increase your progress or to improve the results that you are getting?

To achieve those ends, you would be wise to spend a little time each day assessing how you are doing, where you are going and how to get there. In other words, check in daily to see where you should be doing a little tweaking and start tweaking.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

August 24, 2005

Duped Again

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

You duped me, O LORD, and I let myself be duped; you were too strong for me, and you triumphed. All the day I am an object of laughter; everyone mocks me. Whenever I speak, I must cry out, violence and outrage is my message; the word of the LORD has brought me derision and reproach all the day. Jeremiah 20:7-9 (NAB)

Who hasn't felt like someone had duped them at some point in their lives? Probably many, many times in fact?

Sometimes, you have in fact been duped, and at other times you just think you have, but in reality, you have duped yourself. It is not difficult to misunderstand a situation or a person, your motives and theirs', etc. It is amazing how wrong we can be at times. We can get ourselves so upset and frustrated over something that we just can't see things clearly. And the sad part is that we sometimes never see that situation clearly.

Life is full of moments like that where we see what we want to see and never quite get it right. It might be something so simple that we are the only ones that don't 'get it', but we just don't see it the same way as everyone else. Why is that?

We get notions in our mind and no matter what happens, we simply won't let go of that thought, or perspective, or point that we see as 'fact', etc. We hang on to it no matter what, sometimes in spite of some rather spectacular evidence to the contrary.

That can get you into trouble at times. If you are fooling yourself that you are in fact seeing a situation through the 'correct' eyes and think that you are right and everyone else is wrong - you might be right or you might be wrong. If you are right, how do you really know that you are? If you are wrong then you will get yourself into trouble. If you are right - then you still might get yourself into trouble if everyone else still thinks you are wrong and acts accordingly.

Life is full of choice points just like these. You have to decide what you will do about each one and go forward to the best of your ability. Basing your choices and decisions in a well-established system of values will help you to do this much easier. If you know what you firmly believe and what principles and values that you choose to live your life by, then it is usually easier to make good choices and to stick by them. I say that it is 'usually' easier, because nothing in life is so simple and straightforward that it just falls into place and the answer is clear and unquestionable.

But when you know what you are about and where you are headed, it is a great deal easier to get there.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

August 31, 2005

Life is ALL About Love

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no evil to the neighbor; hence, love is the fulfillment of the law. Romans 13:8-10 (NAB)

Many things in life are contradictory. Love your neighbor as your self has that contradictory flavor, because we are also taught not to be selfish. If we put too much emphasis on taking good care of ourselves, that is being 'selfish' – or is it 'loving' yourself?

There is a difference between loving yourself and being selfish, but the distinction blurs for many people. That mandate to not be 'selfish' has been drummed into our heads so many times, that anything that seems to be a pampering of self is seen as wrong. Under those unrealistic circumstances, loving oneself becomes meaningless (because it equates with being selfish), and if we truly treated others in that same manner that we treat ourselves—that would truly be wrong.

Yet, most people do love themselves even if they get mixed up about what being 'selfish' really is all about. Loving oneself means that you respect yourself, your values, talents, skills, knowledge, abilities, etc. and that you take very good care of yourself and all of these assets that have been entrusted to your care. Selfishness enters into the picture when you become so focused on yourself that you exclude everyone else in your life and don't care who you hurt or what you do as long as you take care of yourself in the process.

One could argue that such behavior is not really 'loving' yourself, because it is not really good for you or in reality – in your best interest to behave in such a manner. The point is that you are expected to love yourself and take excellent care of yourself and all the assets that you have been blessed with. Furthermore, you are expected to live your life well and with the sense of purpose and value to achieve the mission that you were also entrusted with—to treat all the neighbors in your 'world' or life in this same manner of 'loving' yourself.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

September 7, 2005

the Future is a Choice

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Peter approached Jesus and asked him, “Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often must I forgive? As many as seven times?” Jesus answered, “I say to you, not seven times but seventy-seven times. Matthew 18:21-35 (NAB)

It is not difficult to read the newspaper or to watch the TV or check the news on the Internet and to find instances that are ripe for the need for forgiveness. When people are victimized, forgiveness is often tooted as being desirable and even necessary for healing.

Many people when they have been wronged have difficulty letting go of the injustice that has been perpetrated upon them. It is difficult to forgive the offender.

Is it really necessary to forgive? Some would argue yes, others might say no, and still others aren't sure. One could ask when something evil has been done to you or someone that you know, how can you forgive that individual that has harmed you so badly? It is not easy.

Yet, to **live your life ~ Full of Spirit** ~ requires you to let go and move forward with your life. You might not necessarily 'forgive' what has happened to you, but you cannot let it stand in your way of moving forward with your life and not allowing it to continue to hold you back. For some, forgiveness is the only way that they can put it behind them, others might not forgive the person who wronged them, but neither do they continue to let it 'poison' them towards the rest of the world and towards their future.

Each of us has our own ways that we deal with and cope with Life's surprises, disasters and misfortunes that we happen upon in life. The important thing regardless of the trauma is for the person to move forward in some healthy way and to continue to live their lives with the good faith, trust and realization of the promise that God has made to each of us ~ that we are to ~ **Live Lives that are Full of Spirit** ~ no matter what happens in life.

If you are stuck or someone that you know is stuck because of something bad that has happened, then you must find a way to reconnect to the future, to reestablish some hopes and dreams to move you forward, to find reasons for continuing on with your life ~ the life that you were meant to live. That does not mean that you have to forgive and to forget or to pretend that nothing happened – that is not the least bit realistic. It also means that you must reconnect with other people who can assist you and be supportive to you along the way. Few will make it if they try to do it all by themselves.

You must find a way to look and move towards the future rather than continuing to hold on to the past and remaining stuck in the past and all the pain, sorrow and rage that might be linked to it. It is a choice that you make. That choice will determine your future.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

September 14, 2005

Spend it Wisely

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

‘These last ones worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who bore the day’s burden and the heat.’ He said to one of them in reply, ‘My friend, I am not cheating you. Did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what is yours and go. What if I wish to give this last one the same as you? Or am I not free to do as I wish with my own money? Are you envious because I am generous?’ Thus, the last will be first, and the first will be last.”
Matthew 20:1-16a (NAB)

That is not fair. That seems to be the battle cry that is heard over and over these days. And it is true, Life is not fair. But then, no one ever said that it would be.

It is easy to complain about just about anything, and most people spend quite a large portion of their time doing just that – complaining about things, about anything and everything. Everyone has an opinion and most seem determined to give it.

That is at the foundation of complaining -- opinions -- and everyone who gives one, thinks that theirs is correct and more important than anyone else’s. Which of course would be a problem if opinions were factual or even important, but since they are not, then there should be no problem. But there is.

People frequently invest a lot of emotional energy into their opinions. Rather than expressing emotion in more appropriate ways, we piggy back them onto opinions and then blast them out into the world upon any unsuspecting person that happens to be in the way. That’s not fair, of course not, but that is life.

I am sure that you have been blasted by others and have also done your fair share of blasting. Okay, so when is it okay and when is it not?

Remember that your opinion is what you think about something—it may be factual or not, it may be valid or not, it may be fair or not, it may be what you really think or not, it may be a value that you hold or not, you may understand what you are saying or not, you may be paying attention or not, it may be personal or not ...

In the end, you have to decide whether it is worth it or not and whether you are being reasonable or not. You have to choose and then stick by your choice, of course, until you decide otherwise that is.

Perhaps before you go off on something the next time, you should stop for a moment and look to see what is really going on before you jump on the “that’s not fair” band wagon. Of course, that is just my opinion for what it’s worth. Life is too short, spend it wisely.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

September 21, 2005

Yes, No, Maybe?

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

A man had two sons. He came to the first and said, "Son, go out and work in the vineyard today." He said in reply, "I will not", but afterwards changed his mind and went. The man came to the other son and gave the same order. He said in reply, "Yes, sir", but did not go. Which of the two did his father's will? They answered, "The first." Matthew 21:28-32 (NAB)

Knowing the 'right' thing to do and actually doing it is not always easy. Some know what they should do but allow old grievances, pride, or other things to get in their way of doing the right thing. Others initially say 'no' and think better of it and then do the right thing.

Life is full of such moments. They are everywhere throughout the life of a parent in dealing with their children (from infancy through adulthood), with teachers dealing with students, with adults dealing with coworkers, the boss and just each other in various aspects of life. It is a fairly common question that we ask ourselves daily, "what should I do?"

Probably even more frequent are those times when we are merely asking ourselves the question because we already know the answer but do not really want to do it—and we are just looking for a reason to opt out. Most people are pretty creative in those moments.

However, there really are times where the answer to the question of what to do is not clear or straightforward. There might not be a single right answer but several possibilities that are equally right or even no answer that initially seems right. How do you decide what to do?

The answer to that goes back to your values and the 'rules' that you live your life by. If you have taken the time to identify those values and rules or principles, then most of the time the solutions will more or less fall into place and the correct response will be apparent. You may not like that course of action or prefer not to do it, but the answer is pretty obvious to which possible responses match your values and which do not.

Frequently for many people, the problem lies most solidly in the fact that they simply have not taken the time to identify their own values and they are not clear as to what principles and rules they follow in living their life. In those cases, it is not surprising that they are a bit confused or baffled about the course of right action to take.

Where do you stand? Do you know what rules you are following in making decisions that you live your life by? Do you stick to them even when you do not want to or feel uncomfortable about it or when everyone else seems to be headed in a different direction?

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

September 28, 2005

It Is All About Getting There

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, make your requests known to God. Then the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. [Philippians 4:6-9 \(NAB\)](#)

Ask and you shall receive. Frequently we do not get what we ask for and instead we get other things that we never asked for. We become disappointed and frustrated because things do not seem to be going our way. Yet, frequently we are being unappreciative of the many gifts and blessings that we receive without asking.

Often times we have failed to ask for something that we specifically want. We assume that we have asked for it but we really have not made our intentions known. What I mean is that we may have vague intentions for something or other, but have never clarified it in our own minds; let a lone done anything directly to achieve it. It is no wonder that we get frustrated when it just does not happen.

To achieve things in life, it helps if we clarify what we want to achieve and then make clear plans and intentions for what we will do to achieve it. A timetable would help to give the proper motivation and incentive to achieve your goal in a timely manner and so that you have some idea about how well you are meeting your goals along the way.

One should also be grateful for the many unasked for blessings that come along and these are vast. When one is able to recognize and appreciate such unexpected surprises, then one can more clearly appreciate and value the baby steps that one makes towards one's identified goals. One can more easily accept the setbacks as well as the progress forward along the way and therefore, more greatly appreciate the final reward when the goal is finally achieved.

Not surprisingly, many of our goals are never attained. Some because they were never realistic in the first place, or we did not work hard enough to achieve them, or we changed course somewhere along the way, or we simply changed our minds and decided that something else would benefit us better. But there is still great value even in these unachieved intentions, because each of these contributes greatly to our lives. They truly are what life is all about. Sometimes the greatest reward is not in achieving the final goal but in the process of life that gets you there.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

October 5, 2005

Abundance and Choice

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

I know how to live in humble circumstances; I know also how to live with abundance. In every circumstance and in all things I have learned the secret of being well fed and of going hungry, of living in abundance and of being in need. I can do all things in him who strengthens me. Still, it was kind of you to share in my distress. Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20 (NAB)

Many people have had to live in humble circumstances and some have had the blessing to live with abundance. Do you know how to live with both?

Perhaps you have shared abundance from time to time and did not recognize or realize it. Frequently we overlook our blessings because we want something else instead. It is a common occurrence that we overlook those things that we aren't looking for.

Life is full of both moments. You should be prepared for both. Ironically, it is possible to live humbly in times of abundance and to also live abundantly in humble times. It is a matter of choice and perspective.

The abundance that most people receive is not what they had hoped for, so they tend to overlook it or minimize it. However, no gift or blessing is trivial no matter how inconsequential we perceive it. The gift of life is something we take for granted, but one day that too will be gone for each of us. The gift of love and friendship is abundantly available, but many go through life longing for it and somehow overlooking or avoiding it.

Are you achieving that in life that you desire? Is that which you have set your sights on within your grasp or does it somehow seem to always be just beyond your fingertips? What is the basis of your desires – are they seated more in humble circumstances or more in abundant terms? If you miraculously achieved your most secret desire – what then, would it be enough, would it still be important?

It is amazing how quickly things that one may have valued highly throughout many years of life, quickly becomes taken for granted and forgotten once it is achieved.

Humble or abundance – It is a choice and a perception, as well as a way of life that each of us shares.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

October 12, 2005

To Each As Appropriate

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Knowing their malice, Jesus said, "Why are you testing me, you hypocrites? Show me the coin that pays the census tax." Then they handed him the Roman coin. He said to them, "Whose image is this and whose inscription?" They replied, "Caesar's." At that he said to them, "Then repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God."
Matthew 22:15-21 (NAB)

Life is so full of responsibilities and obligations. It seems like every time one turns around that you owe someone something or someone is asking for something or someone expects something. It is not always easy to decide what to do, when to say yes and when to say no.

Frequently, you might really like to say NO but somehow manage to say yes instead. There are even times where you might really want to say yes but are already so busy that you have to say no. Our lives get messy and out of sorts that way. We find ourselves busily doing some things that we really don't want to do and wishing that we had time to do so many other things that we just never have time to get to.

It is difficult to decide which obligations are reasonable and that you should abide by, and which ones to simply not worry about and say No to and move on with life. And of course, when you do that, someone is usually there to hound you to try to get you to change your mind.

It is not so easy is it? Well, it does become easier if you have a clear idea in mind for what you value and if you have already set priorities for your time and how you want to live your life. The better you clarify these for yourself, the easier it will be for you to manage your time to make sure that you accomplish what is most important to you.

There is always someone handy who is willing to argue with you and try to convince you that your choices are wrong. It is easy to waiver or become confused, frustrated or to simply give in when you aren't crystal clear where you stand, what you are willing to do and not do, and so forth. Does it make you a bad person if you stick to your plans? No, it makes you someone who knows what you are about and determined to accomplish certain things in your limited life regardless of the distractions that come along. The distractions are everywhere; if you don't manage your life you will never accomplish anything.

You also won't know which responsibilities and obligations to focus on and which ones are merely a waste of your time and energy. There are some obligations that should never be ignored, and I think you already have an idea what at least a few of those are for you. So get busy if you aren't already.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

October 19, 2005

A Model for ALL

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

You know what sort of people we were among you for your sake. And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, receiving the word in great affliction, with joy from the Holy Spirit, so that you became a model for all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia.

1 Thessalonians 1:5-10 (NAB)

Wouldn't it be wonderful if you lived in a town where everyone was an imitation of you? Or would it?

If you were the model for the rest of the world, would that be a good thing or a bad thing? Well of course, it would be both. You have your strengths as well as growth areas. And no matter how wonderful you truly are as a person, it would be pretty mundane and boring if everyone in your town were just like you. Even too much of a good thing is really not so good.

And yet, you truly are a model for the rest of the world, or for at least some people in it - to your children and grandchildren, friends and their children, neighbors, co-workers, etc. There are many people that you interact with every day of your life and to each, you in some manner, are a 'model'.

What do you like about yourself that you hope others will see in you and use you as their model? What features do you see in others that you look to them to be your model?

You have many good features, strengths, skills, attributes, talents, and blessings that equip you to live your life well and fully. You have many growth areas as well that you can continue to tweak and improve upon. Some people think they have far more growth areas than strengths, and for some that might be true. However, all have strengths and many people do an inadequate job of recognizing and respecting their own strengths.

It is difficult to live life well and to achieve all that you can possibly do well with your time on earth if you do not recognize and use your strengths while improving and compensating for your growth areas. Life is all about balance, and striving to find a way to do your best in spite of the ups and downs and challenges that come your way.

You will have good days and bad days. The challenge with bad days is finding a way to make them better. The challenge of good days is to recognize them and make the best of them and to enjoy them. Every day should be enjoyable regardless of the challenges that they might present. Truly it depends upon you and what you make of them and how you avail yourself.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

October 26, 2005

Balanced Self-Presentation

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses. Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens hard to carry and lay them on people's shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to move them. All their works are performed to be seen. Matthew 23:1-12 (NAB)

Everyone likes to be recognized and to receive positive attention from others, but sometimes we overdo it. Some people put on airs or act as if they are much better than the others around them. It is usually not very comfortable to interact with such individuals who act so arrogantly and pompously.

On the other hand, many people minimize their own worth and act as if most other people are better than they are or are more important. This is not right either. No one should ever belittle his or her own value or worth. They are worth so much more and will achieve far less in life than they are capable of because of their lessened self-worth.

Either extreme is unhealthy and not good for the individual or for society at large. Balance in most things is the ideal to be striven for and to be achieved and maintained. The healthy individual strives to maintain that balance between overvaluing and undervaluing their own importance, value and worth to society as a whole. It can be a difficult balance to achieve and to maintain.

How are you doing in your own balancing act? Do you tend to inflate your own sense of importance and worth? Do you tend to minimize and undervalue yourself? Likely you do some of both depending upon the situation and circumstances that you are engaged in. But most people have one or the other that tends to be fairly characteristic of how they approach and interact in the world.

If you tend to inflate your worth, you probably ruffle a lot of feathers and achieve less because of the resistance and avoidance that you naturally inspire in others. If you minimize your worth, you again achieve less because many things that you are quite capable of achieving are never even begun because you tend to think yourself incapable or less capable of doing them and therefore, hold back or resist ever starting them.

Obviously a balance is the most productive position to be in. Such a realistic, honest and well-informed perspective can be difficult to achieve but certainly is well worth the effort. Some occasional inflating of self and one's ideas is crucial to developing new creative ideas and projects, which would never be inspired and started otherwise. An appropriate sense of humbleness and realistic truth about one's own worth and capabilities will help to keep you from overstepping your bounds and entering the realm of pomposity and arrogance. Just make sure you don't overdo that humbleness and get stuck in inactivity and limited productivity.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

November 2, 2005

Wake Up Your Sleepy Life

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

We do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you may not grieve like the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose, so too will God, through Jesus, bring with him those who have fallen asleep.
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 (NAB)

You aren't dead yet, but you may be living your life as if you are already half dead or perhaps have fallen asleep. We go through life with so little awareness sometimes. Wake up to the possibilities that you are missing.

Life is full of possibilities ~ far too many for you or I to ever take full advantage of, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't be more aware of them and to make better use of them than we have been. Your challenge is to **Live your Life ~ Full of Spirit** ~ and that means being fully awake and aware and willing to venture into possibilities that you wouldn't otherwise have considered.

It is safer to let most things just pass you by and to meander along or simply go with the flow. However, that won't get you to where you need to go or prefer to go or even where you were meant to go. **Living a Life Full of Spirit** requires you to actively take charge of the direction of your life and to actively seek out opportunities that will further the good that you can do in your lifetime.

Yes, I know you are already too busy for that. That simply means that you have to make time for the right things and change some of your priorities. You will have to start saying "No" to a few things and "Yes" to a few other things that have been too low on your priority list or not even on it up to now.

You will never have a better opportunity than right now to get started. Time has the reliable penchant of marching faithfully onward without waiting for you or I to decide whether we will join in or not. That is how we have missed so much already in our lives. So make the choice this very instant to get started and to get more involved in your own special destiny to **Live Your Life ~ Full of Spirit.**

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

November 9, 2005

Don't Bury It

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

A man going on a journey called in his servants and entrusted his possessions to them. To one he gave five talents; to another, two; to a third, one--to each according to his ability. Then he went away. Immediately the one who received five talents went and traded with them, and made another five. Likewise, the one who received two made another two. But the man who received one went off and dug a hole in the ground and buried his master's money.
Matthew 25:14-30 (NAB)

Most people would like to think that they are like the good servant who wisely invests and makes good on the blessings entrusted to them. However, too many of us are like the servant who buried his master's money and while he did not lose it, nor did he increase its value.

Many have been given blessings that they sit upon and do not earn anything from. Those talents and blessings remain dormant and merit nothing-almost as if they don't exist, although they do. How do you rank on that score? Are you a good steward of the many blessings you have been granted throughout your life?

Perhaps you have been too busy to pay attention to many of your blessings, or perhaps you have gotten too complacent and merely take them for granted. Or perhaps you don't even see them as blessings but rather as your entitlements. We make all kinds of excuses for the way we live our lives. Frequently, that is all they are - excuses.

You will never have anything more valuable than your own life. What have you been doing with yours? What remains to be done and when do you plan to start? What is holding you back?

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

November 16, 2005

Impressions

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Then the king will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.' Matthew 25:31-46 (NAB)

First impressions are very important. They can make the difference between getting that job or making a friend or getting a date and so forth. It all depends upon how you act, how you respond, how you speak, how you make eye contact, how you shake hands, how you dress, your body posture, your attitude and demeanor, your confidence, and so forth.

When you meet someone new for the first time ~ what kind of impression do you make? Is it important to make a good impression? Perhaps you wait for the other person to take the first step. Perhaps you follow the other person's lead. Perhaps you tend to avoid other people.

Regardless of your approach or intent, you do make impressions in everything you do and in every place that you go. What kind of impressions do you make? Do you want to make?

What kind of impression do you make to the poor and hungry in the world? Perhaps you only strive to make favorable impressions with people who are deemed 'worthy' of your time and attention. So what kinds of people do you deem worthy? Does there have to be something in it for you? Does there have to be the possibility of some future payback or opportunity for you? Does it pay to be 'seen' with certain people and not others? Are you willing to let your values slide in order to make a good impression?

Realistically, there are some people that it is easier to feel comfortable with. Some of the more uncomfortable to be around are the sick, dying, elderly, poor and indigent. For some, this group of people doesn't offer anything for them, there's no benefit. Others are uncomfortable simply because they don't know what to do or say or how to be helpful - even though they do want to be helpful. Others are simply too busy to take time to deal with someone who isn't on their agenda.

What's your story?

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

November 23, 2005

Prepared

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come. It is like a man traveling abroad. He leaves home and places his servants in charge, each with his own work, and orders the gatekeeper to be on the watch. Mark 13:33-3 (NAB)

Are you ready for anything? Part of being ready is being prepared. Being prepared means that you take excellent care of yourself – you eat right, exercise, sleep well, stay healthy, maintain friendships, and take care of yourself spiritually, emotionally, mentally and physically.

To **Live a Balanced Life ~ Full of Spirit** ~ means that you share the load. You share the responsibilities and duties with those who can do them as well or better than yourself. You do that at work and in your private life, too. That is difficult for most people to do. We are far too independent and sometimes more than a little misguided. Somewhere along the way we got this crazy notion that we have to do it all by ourselves. “It” being everything that we do.

That is not being prepared, that is not being balanced, that is not **living Life ~ Full of Spirit** ~ but that is being foolish and crazy. You can only do so much by yourself, but the limits are almost non-existent when you enlist the help of others and make yourself available as a resource to others as well.

Life is about living well, about maintaining and living your values, about helping others, about successfully fulfilling your purpose in Life. It is NOT about successfully being the ultimate ‘individual’ or about tooting your horn that you did it all by yourself. Sure, there are some things that you will do all by yourself, but most of Life does not need to fall into that category.

How is your balance sheet adding up on that score now? The Christmas season is one of the busiest times of the year for most people. If you want to **Live your Life ~ Full of Spirit** ~ it is time to do some tweaking and to get your life in order.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

November 30, 2005

Prepare Your Way

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

John was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist. He fed on locusts and wild honey. And this is what he proclaimed: "One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." Mark 1:1-8 (NAB)

You have been born and live your life ~ **Full of Purpose**. At least, that is the task that is your responsibility to fulfill. Aren't you glad you don't have to wear camel's hair and eat honey and locusts to do it? Or, maybe not all would consider that such a bad thing to do. Do you **Live your Life ~ Full of Purpose**? What does that mean? It means that you have been chosen to live your life to the best of your abilities and to do your best to create a better world for those you meet today and for those that will follow you tomorrow.

For each individual, there is a unique purpose that fits with their talents, skills, knowledge, abilities and resources. For each, there is a choice to make in accepting and committing to that purpose and in fulfilling it to the very best of your abilities. For each, there is a lifelong process of discovering and shaping that purpose. For each, that is what life is truly about.

There are many levels and facets to each individual's life. Some are parents, or married, or are adult children of 'older' parents, or are college students, or employed, or are bosses, or have volunteer responsibilities, etc. We are very busy people, and each of the many things that we do have a sense of purpose and should support the overall purpose for which we live our lives. Everything should fit somehow.

If something doesn't fit our purpose, then it is a distracter that should be eliminated. We are too busy and have too limited time and resources to be working at things that are at cross-purposes to our mission or goal in life. Yes, it can be difficult to determine whether something fits into the bigger picture of one's Life Purpose, so it can be difficult to say No to some things, when we really should do just that.

When you say 'yes' to something, you are also saying 'no' to other things. You don't have the time, energy and resources to do everything so some things will have to go by the wayside. When you say 'no' to something, it allows you the freedom to say 'yes' to something else. This is a necessary part of keeping one's life in balance.

Balance is all about making sure that the things that are important to you always have time and space within your very busy life. Those things that are most important to you are never left out because you are too busy doing less important things. If that is not the case, then you are in need of creating a better balance within your life.

In this busiest time of the year, there is never a better time to begin to maintain that delicate balance within your own life.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

December 7, 2005

With Unquenched Spirit

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise prophetic utterances. Test everything; retain what is good. Refrain from every kind of evil.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24 (NAB)

Most people go through life in a rather subdued manner ~ definitely with quenched spirits. It takes courage to try new things and new ideas. It takes wisdom and spirit to try new things, and then to throw out the bad and to keep only the good.

But those who go through life managing to not foreclose on new ideas and willing to dare new ideas and thoughts are able to approach life with a certain flexibility and adaptability that almost always serves them greatly. We were meant to live our lives just that way ~ **Full of Spirit**.

That doesn't mean that we should try anything and everything that comes along or give voice to every crazy new idea that pops into our heads. There is wisdom for a purpose, it is meant to keep us from getting into too much trouble. However, most people don't approach life with caution, they approach it with all barriers up against trying or considering anything but the most tried and proven courses of action. In other words, they are locked into living life in a fairly rigid manner.

That results in an endless cycle of trouble and difficulties, because life is anything but rigid. One has to be able to roll with the punches and to flexibly adapt to the surprises that come along. However, one should do that with adherence and respectful faithfulness to one's established values while maintaining a cautious wisdom and determination to persevere no matter what dire or startling circumstances may present.

People are not chameleons, but we often act like one, changing how we act according to what we think is expected of us in the moment, regardless of whether it matches our value system or not. That does not reflect living life ~ **Full of Spirit** ~ but rather, full of fear. It makes for less tension in living with people if we attempt to fit in, as long as we do so according to one's value system, never making allowances that are contrary to one's beliefs and values.

That should offer enough challenge to keep Life from getting too boring and mundane for most of us, and at the same time, open up a truly wonderful world of opportunities to **Live Life ~ Full of Spirit**.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

December 14, 2005

Respond to the Call

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Luke 1:26-38 (NAB)

How often do you receive some startling news about something seemingly impossible that you are being asked to do? Probably more frequently than you would at first believe.

We are asked to do all kinds of amazing things each and every day of our lives. Most people never even remotely consider complying with most of such requests. That would simply be unthinkable and that is just what we do ~ not think about it. We ignore the request, or say no, or say, "I'll get back to you" (and never do), or say, "I'll think about it" or whatever we can think of to put off the moment and then forget all about it.

Most people are used to that and do it themselves, so it is a game that we all play as part of life.

But some of those missed opportunities could have literally changed your life ~ and you will never know how. However, one thing is certain ~ you will continue to be showered with new opportunities throughout the rest of your life. How will you respond the next time? Or the time after that? ...

It is something to think about. Frequently in life, the most important messages are ignored, never heard, overlooked, forgotten, interrupted, or overruled by seemingly more important (or at least more demanding) tasks ~ and life goes on...

... Sometimes for the better, and sometimes for the worse because the opportunity was ignored. You are responsible for how you will choose to respond today, tomorrow, and in all the tomorrows to come.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

December 21, 2005

Join in the tidings of Great Joy

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone. You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing, as they rejoice before you as at the harvest, as people make merry when dividing spoils. For the yoke that burdened them, the pole on their shoulder, and the rod of their taskmaster you have smashed, as on the day of Midian. Isaiah 9:1-6 (NAB)

This is a special time of the year. Some dread it and some look forward to it with great anticipation. It is a very busy and stressful time that is full of shopping, parties, decorating, wrapping presents, and so forth. It is a time of the year when we are reminded to recognize and honor in a special way all those people that we love - all those people that we perhaps take more for granted the rest of the year.

It is a special time of the year when many make a special effort to be more charitable, in attitude, sharing, understanding, and in giving monetarily to those in need. While such responsibilities are with us each day of the year, it is helpful to have traditions that remind us of our responsibilities and to remind us to share our blessings with those around us.

Would you take the time to do so if we didn't have the Christmas season each year? Some would and others wouldn't. Many people argue that the true meaning of Christmas gets lost in Santa Claus and the commercialization of Christmas, and to some degree that is true. But the true message of Christmas is one of rejoicing, of hopefulness, of peace, of giving and sharing, etc. The Savior is born and the world will never be the same again.

We all need to be reminded that no matter what evil and bad things are occurring in the world, that we have cause to rejoice and to hope for peace and love and to remember that we each have responsibilities and obligations to further that work. Many of us would forget to do that if we weren't reminded - we just get too busy and too wrapped up in things.

I hope that during this special season of the year, that you take some time to examine your life to see if you are spending your time doing the things that you value and if you are using your blessings in ways that further your values and the responsibilities that we all share and are reminded of during this Christmas Season. One of the positive aspects of the commercialization of Christmas is to look at it as a tool to help us do what we should be doing anyway and to make it more fun and enjoyable in the process. For children growing up, it is one of the most powerful ways that values are shaped and formed-values that would never likely be established if there were no Christmas. It has its negative aspects as well, but there is no need to dwell on those.

Merry Christmas! It will be what you make of it.

God Blesses you!

Carpe Diem cum Spiritu

Seize the Day with Spirit

by Michael A. Hinz, Ph.D.

December 28, 2005

God Blesses You

Live your life to the fullest and best of your abilities.

The shepherds went in haste to Bethlehem and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child. All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds. And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart. Luke 2:16-21 (NAB)

I wish each of you and your families a truly Blessed Christmas season. May the coming new year be a great one for you, full of blessings and may you Live your Life ~ Full of Spirit.

The above passage seems so appropriate during this special season as it heralds tidings of great joy and wonderment. I hope that, like Mary, the Carpe Diem has offered you some points to reflect on in your heart and helped to shape your life in a special way as a positive challenge to you to live your life **full of spirit**.

For many, this past year has been full of challenges and tragic ordeals, as well as many blessings that perhaps too many of us have taken for granted and too quickly forgotten. Life is full of ordeals that we seem to hang on to too deeply and to never forget. But life is also full of blessings and good things that should never be taken for granted nor forgotten.

The things that we hold dear and hang on to shape our lives. If you gloss over, skip over, or take for granted the many blessings in your life, you will have an overly negative and gloomy attitude about life. That also means that you will not be **living your life ~ Full of Spirit**. Or at least, not full of the right kind of spirit. It also means that you will miss untold numbers of opportunities that have been showered down upon you for you to take advantage of in shaping the world into a better place for you and for everyone else.

Life is too short to overlook opportunities to enjoy it more and to make it and you a better place both now and for the future. It is good to reflect upon the challenges and the blessings that come your way and to incorporate them into the principles and values that guide the way that you live your life.

I have enjoyed being a small part of your life and joining with you in your struggle to **live a Life that is Full of Spirit**.

As always...

God Blesses you!