



Abundant

We create a spiritual life by replacing doubt with trust

By **Melanie DewBerry-Jones**

As a frequent speaker on spiritual topics, I have given much thought to how audiences and readers can make those quantum leaps forward. In my speeches, I try to avoid explaining the value of spirituality or even the “how-to” of being spiritual—mainly because I’m still figuring it out, just like my audience.

The moment I attempt to justify the value of living a spiritual life, I’ve invited doubt to stand next to me onstage. The instant I engage in the “how-to” of a spiritually dynamic life, I am intellectualizing a way of being that the mind’s logic cannot fathom. Inviting listeners to acknowledge, value and build on what they already know about their own spiritual experiences is far more important than intellectualism.

Spirituality cannot be strategized. We think that if we understand how something works, we can apply it to our lives to get certain results. Only then does it have value. The truth is that most of us know the “how-to” of a spiritual life; we just don’t believe what we see or what we know. It’s odd, really, when you consider how much evidence we require of spirituality.

Spirituality is like an automobile. Like so many mechanical things in life, we don’t really know how it works. We may know some basics—if there’s gas, oil and a key, the car will run. Our expectations, though matter of fact, are almost subconscious. Spirituality can work like that.

How many of us believe we will reach our destination even when it’s vague, unknown, yet also very cool? Let’s put it this way: Is your attention on what you don’t believe will happen? What you don’t have? Your expectations create the ride and the destination you’ll reach.

Expectancy is not entitlement. Entitlement is

arrogance. It’s acting as though you deserve something without personal application of energy toward that desire. Expectancy is knowing in a clear way that this world works according to principles that will result in your best interest and that of everyone else.

Rather than looking for answers to the how and what of life, you can simply expect life to be working to fulfill your desires. Having abundant expectancy without needing to understand how it all works frees you from controlling the process and places you squarely in acceptance that the process is occurring in each moment. The minute you look for a plan to make life happen your way, Elvis has left the building. The sense of spirituality that flows through you (when you allow it) has just been pushed out to make room for reason.

You may have figured out that life isn’t logical, and that trying to make sense of it all is wasted time. Good! You have the basics. You know that your reality is generated by your thoughts, and that your choices dictate your quality of life. You know this on a level deeper than thought and logic. You know that miracles are happening right now and in every moment of now. You know stuff—use it!

Returning to the car metaphor, we drive these vehicles because they get us to our destination faster than walking. With the power of the Internet, we can download maps and feel informed as we head out for our destination. A life empowered by spirituality is similar. Instead of Yahoo! Maps you have an internal GPS, a God Planning System. You tune into your GPS by meditating and praying, and as you do so you are grounded in your soul’s truth of who you are, apart from commercial or societal dictates. In divine communication,

Expectations

you now know things on a cellular level that you didn't know before, it feels good and it will get you where you want to be faster than not listening to your soul.

Allow me to be clear why intellect can't work without your spiritual epicenter calling the shots. We may have a vision for what we believe is our destination. As we head down the road, preparing to make the right turn in achieving our grand goal, our internal GPS calls to us and directs us to go back, turn left, or stop. It doesn't make sense or follow a sequential order, intellect may argue about it, and yet these mysterious redirects allow for miracles! As spiritually directed people, we heed these redirects as blessings and important components of a spiritual life.

You may think you are heading to a board meeting to decide on funding. On the way you stop for a quick cup of coffee that turns into a twenty-minute impromptu meeting with a stranger who becomes the funder you thought didn't exist. Perhaps your lover dies. Yes, even painful events steer us away from what our mind has conceived as our path and destination. But the spiritual self has a meta-view, a universal view that our minds cannot comprehend. The Universe doesn't punish us with what we consider to be painful events. It gives us what we need to achieve things our minds can't conceive.

Pain is a teacher if we are willing to be its student. It teaches us the lessons of compassion. Pain provides a window into someone else's difficulties. You can move beyond your individual pain to feel into pain on a global scale. When you allow yourself to tap into the shared experience of pain, your heart expands. In this, we become aware of our interrelationship to each other, and caring can emerge. Either the world revolves around you, or you are included in the larger ongoing spiritual evolution. Your ability to move from pity and self-despair into

compassionate love is the difference between giving up on life and allowing yourself to be of service.

The quality of "abundant expectation" works for all of life's possibilities, not only the ones we like or think we need. Even with the best of maintenance, a car will break down. We all know this can happen yet we become disappointed and distraught when it does. The purpose of these mechanical "breakdowns" is to allow us an opportunity to learn how to accept what we consider "bad" in the same way we accept what we consider "good." It all just *is*. Those good times have an expiration date; so do the bad ones. This does not mean to deny the feelings associated with "bad" times, but suggests not giving them so much space.

There is an implied trust we hold for our cars and other mechanical devices in our lives. We think we understand how they work and that generates our trust. However, trust isn't about knowing it all. Trust believes—despite what we don't know. We give more faith and trust to our cars than we give to our life experiences! It is in our experience that knowledge begets great wisdom, yet we ignore what is "under our own hood"—those encounters of spirit that we could hold as evidence for trust and the unconditional love of the universe.

I challenge you to form an expectancy of spiritual greatness of self. Allow your spiritual GPS to lead you into making choices from a spiritual perspective. What would change in your life if you woke up believing that the day will unfold as you desire? There is joy in this abundant expectancy because it means that you are in alignment with the best ally you could ever have:

your Self. •

“Pain teaches the lesson of compassion.”

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