

Introduction

If you've ever spent time closely watching young children, I'm sure you've noticed they move through their day with remarkable clarity of purpose, and self-awareness. They know when they're hungry, thirsty, or tired. They know when they need a hug or need to be left alone. They cry when something hurts, or walk away when things are no longer fun. They laugh freely, and sit in wonder, gazing at the smallest bug or the magnificence of a star-filled sky. We were all like that once. For many women however, the vibrancy of childhood has been pushed aside for the serious matter of being a grown-up.

I believe you were never meant to change. To grow wiser as you expand what you know, but never to lose the clarity and enthusiasm of childhood.

It's clarity that provides the basis for the abundant health and wellness you desire. The reason is simple: every moment you are given messages and signals guiding you towards the health, happiness, and success you were meant to have. Most of these messages come from within. They're

in the subtle, internal voice or feeling that tells you something isn't right, or in the body's scream when it isn't happy with how it's being treated. These signals are sparked by life experiences, and are there to teach you, grow you, and show you the scope of your potential. To fully understand the meaning in these signals, you need to be able to look at your life authentically and honestly. From this viewpoint, you will gain understanding about what you need to do to enthusiastically enhance your health.

VividLiving was created after many years of studying, observing, and being thrust head-first into life's most delicate moments. As a paramedic, firefighter, and educator, I've been privileged. I've shared happy tears as new human life came joyously into this world, shared final moments with those whose day it was to say goodbye, and fought to save others, who knew it was not yet their time to go. For years I witnessed pain and chaos, hurt and death. Yet, one of the biggest tragedies was seeing people whose choices and environment left them feeling powerless, and without influence. The control and manipulation of others had overwhelmed them. They lived by reacting, merely surviving moment to moment.

I began to pay attention to the differences I noticed between those who often found themselves in a place of illness and desperation, and those who seemed to slide through life without a care or worry. It became obvious that circumstances made little difference to well-being. In fact, some of the most vibrant and joy-filled people had experienced the most difficult situations. The difference was in the sense of self, each carried with them.

Some people clearly knew what was important to

them, and they made choices that deliberately enhanced their lives. These people often described themselves as happy and successful. Of course, sometimes they slipped, or life knocked them over. But they got up, dusted themselves off and with a smile, kept on going, taking all they had learned with them. These people did not define themselves by their illnesses or their problems, but by their strengths and accomplishments.

On the other side of the spectrum, I observed people who felt completely disconnected, not believing they had any real authority over their lives at all. They reactively did what they'd always done, because they didn't know they had a different choice. In some cases this was because they'd come to accept terms and conditions set by others, without questioning if these boundaries were right for them. In other cases it was because they felt like victims, or victims-in-waiting, as the world was full of things to fear. Illness, pain, or problems were always just around the next corner. Sometimes this drove people to a place of apathy. They came to believe that if they shut out or stopped caring about the world, perhaps it wouldn't notice they were there. For those feeling this disconnection, life was an everyday struggle. Enthusiasm was gone and with it the vibrancy of life.

Many people swing somewhere between these two extremes. They glide through some parts of their life with strength and finesse while other, more difficult parts, are overlooked or neglected altogether. They know they're capable of greatness in some areas, while in others they feel their life is out of control.

It became clear to me, the only way to control all aspects of your life is to make authentic and conscious choices - always - in every situation. When you can consistently and

comfortably make choices that serve the very best within you; you gain mastery over your life.

So that sparks the questions: *What is authentic to you? Who are you really? What is truly most important to you? Are you as healthy as you know you can be? As happy?*

A further question is: *How do you make authentic choices when you have to consider others? Your family, your job, your responsibilities... Would making authentic choices be selfish? Would it hurt other people?*

These questions and many, many others will be answered for you soon. The book you hold in your hand will not only show you how to reclaim your life and improve your health and well-being, but it will do it in a way that allows the best of you to shine. Throughout the process it will spark more questions for you, as you learn about your authentic self. Yet, this time, you will have a wider range of answers as you tune in to the wisdom that lies deep inside you.