

ABCs of Life:

How to Live More Fully from the Inside Out

By Paula Constantino

Have you ever wondered why some of us get more out of life than others? What makes the difference between living fully and just getting by?

Our mind and spirit actually may hold the answer. Our *attitude* – *how we view life* – can make all the difference; followed by our *beliefs* about ourselves – how we have been programmed by our life experience; and our *commitment* to our passion – what is *really* most important to us.



Simply put, the *ABCs of Life* are to have...

- A-** Abundant, Open, Positive Mental **Attitude**
- B-** Unshakeable, boundless **Belief** in ourselves and what we can do [regardless of our past trials]
- C-** Consistent **Commitment** to our passion [what fuels our inner self] and to our vision of unlimited possibilities.

Looking at ourselves from the inside out means taking a long, hard look at who we really are, where we really want to go and how best to get there.

We are all “transitioning” in some way as we amble through life... constantly growing and evolving as perpetual works in progress.

One of our goals is to find ways to channel our inner selves to create synergy, sharing our expertise with the others. *This is how we can enhance our individual life from the inside out ... to live more fully in the present moment..*

The Power of Thought

We have been programmed from our childhood to view life based on our own personal experiences and our reactions to them. Our minds are very much like our computers... and like our computers, they too can be reprogrammed and updated.

The old adage that we are what we think is so true.

We actually do have the ability to create and edit our own thoughts – basically writing the programs for our own minds. Harnessing this capability is a major key to living a fuller life.

As the creators of our own internal programming, we can choose to edit our thoughts. When a thought pops into our head, we can choose to hold onto it or to let it go. Our thoughts and ideas are the building blocks of our experiences and our world.

When we use building blocks of integrity, creativity, compassion and courage and choose generous, positive and constructive language, we gradually move toward our fuller life. We are all works in progress –evolving each and every moment of every day.

To a fuller life, we also need to strive to stay focused on the *present moment* – not wasting our precious time and energy thinking about the past [it's finished – we cannot change it]... or worrying about the future [it is not here yet].

It's called the "present" because it is truly a gift – to be savored and enjoyed - not to be squandered either on worry about the future *or* on past regrets.

We also recognize that no two of us can ever see anything in life in *exactly* the same way as anyone else sees it. We each view life from our own *unique perspective* [that is a product of our heritage, upbringing, environment...].

Each and every perspective or aspect of our thought process is as unique to each of us as each of our own fingerprints - no two can ever be exactly the same.

Instead wasting our time trying to be "right," we need to focus on *actively listening* to where others are coming from and how we can best combine our unique perspectives... so that everyone comes out ahead.

That is how we achieve true fuller life. Our minds are like parachutes... effective only when really open.

Abundant Attitude

Since we can edit our thoughts, as we strive to develop and maintain an *open, abundant, positive attitude*, we dismiss or let go of negative, self-defeating thoughts as soon as they surface.

We, in turn, choose to focus on thoughts that propel us forward – those that align with what we love in our lives, our passions, visions, goals... those that make us feel good about ourselves and others. *We focus on all that we have in our lives.*

As we share and give generously of ourselves, we achieve great rewards with truly open exchange of ideas, concepts and views. We cultivate mutual relationships that blossom... sharing happiness, serenity, harmony.

When we are *abundant in our exchange of ideas* - truly open and receptive to the flow of new and differing concepts and opinions - we can *create synergy* - the magic that occurs when two or more minds come together... creating greater concepts than any one individual alone could ever imagine.

As we entertain thoughts of abundance and generosity, we speak and act in thoughtful ways building meaning relationships – *transformed by the renewal of our minds.*

As we cultivate an attitude of gratitude for both ourselves and others and as we continue to develop this abundant attitude, we can then begin to focus on our inner beliefs or core values that define our perception of ourselves.

Boundless Belief

Since a lot of our inner beliefs are programmed in us from childhood, we need to examine those that move us forward and begin weeding out those that hold us back... keeping us from being all that we can be.

We can start by taking inventory – our core values, our passion, our dreams, our goals...

- What is really important to us? [no it isn't just money or security – look deeper]
- What gives us a sense of purpose?
- What truly gives us joy?
- What would we be doing if money were no object?
- Where do we want to be in lives in five years? Ten years? Twenty years?

As we can begin by developing our boundless beliefs by having a vision of unlimited possibilities... and once we assess where we are and where we would ideally like to go, we can begin building a roadmap for our beliefs and where we want them to take us.

Often, scheduling a quiet time during the day [usually first thing when we wake up] provides us time for daily [at the minimum weekly] examination of where we are in our lives and where we are headed.

Would we venture out on long trip without a map [or at least a GPS]? – Shouldn't we be doing at least that much with our lives? Making notes to and for ourselves helps move this process along... as long as we maintain our flexibility. Remember... A journey of a thousand miles begins with that first step.

Focusing on where we want to go is more critical to fuller life than getting caught up in the minutia of how we actually are going to get there. We are then better prepared for any detours along the way. We can then just step back and find another way to get there.

We can achieve fuller life when we have an unshakeable, boundless belief in ourselves and what we are doing. Our vision of “can be” keeps us motivated and taking those steps needed to move us forward.

Often our true passion consists of making a difference in the lives of others – being someone “with heart.” *Our passion and purpose can propel us to wherever we really want to be or go... especially when we remember to take others along with us.*

Consistent Commitment

Once we've identified our passion and purpose, we move on to next phase – being and remaining consistently committed to focusing on achieving our goals, our passion and our vision of unlimited possibilities.

We need to create a written plan, a picture map or any other device or combination of devices that resonate with us at the time... but we want to be able to visualize what we want and to feel it deep inside... to truly make it work for us.

One of the best ways to stay committed is to outline and categorize our goals in writing and/or visually [can use audio or video too – whatever works]:

- 1) Short term - 1 year or less
- 2) Intermediate – 2-5 years
- 3) Long Term – 10 years or more.

As the saying goes, we need to plan our work and work our plan... but we also need to incorporate time to renew and pamper ourselves, have fun, embrace life and enjoy all the other good stuff that enhances our lives.

In seeking a fuller life, we need to have the serenity to accept and let go those things that we cannot change; to have the courage to change the things that we can change; and to have the wisdom to recognize the difference. [Paraphrased from the Serenity Prayer]

Life is too short to waste time trying to change things that are not within our control. We can acknowledge their existence, and then move on with what we can change and what really counts.

In essence, we are what inside we believe that we are. *Likewise, we can be whatever we set our minds to be.*

Living Life Fully from the Inside Out

This is just a brief, wide-sweeping overview of some of the tools that we can use to achieve a fuller life from the “inside” – our thoughts, ideas and beliefs – “out” – sharing our passion and purpose with others for true prosperity for all concerned.

Success or true prosperity can be viewed as the experience of having plenty of what we want or need in our lives – material or otherwise. Each of us experiences life differently – coming full circle back to our unique thoughts and ideas and the power of our minds.

So as we navigate the waterways of life – like water, we need to follow the path of least resistance – not letting any of the rocks, fallen logs or other debris along the way keep us from reaching our desired destination.

We really can do whatever we set our minds to do – we can achieve a fuller life from the inside out by....

- Cultivating an ***abundant attitude***
- Nurturing our ***boundless beliefs***
- Reaping the fruits of our ***consistent commitment...***

All while communicating with integrity and building synergistic relationships for the success of all us... Can we do it? Yes, we can!

Paula Constantino is **Founder of Women's Support TEAM** – a web-based resource helping women achieve more success with less stress. Our WS TEAM provides more than 180 women Mentors who share their expertise... fostering the development of exchange of information and synergy. To learn more check out website at www.womenssupportteam.com.

Our TEAM is also Giving Back with our not-for-profit – ***1000 Women Can Change the World***. We can do this by inspiring, enlightening and empowering women worldwide with practical, useful information that is easy to access, to understand and to pass on to others. Be part of this movement at www.1000WomenCanChangeTheWorld.org – You too can make a difference!