

Military Ezines by Kathie and Holly

Follow Your Dream While You Follow the Military Volume 2

by Kathie Hightower & Holly Scherer
jumpintolife.net

By subscription only! Welcome to your next issue of Follow Your Dream While You Follow the Military (formerly called Jump Into Life!)

You are receiving this newsletter because you requested a subscription — or because we thought you might be interested based on our interactions with you before the ezine was even an idea. Unsubscribe instructions are at the end of this newsletter.

Please forward this e-zine to other military spouses you know who want helpful information to create a life that works within the challenges that military life sometimes throws us.

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Thoughts on Sept. 11

Like you, we were both devastated by the events on September 11. We were blessed by not having any family member involved, but do know people who did and feel deep grief and sympathy for them. And, of course, we all now face possible personal involvement in the events that may transpire as a result.

Not too long after that date, we were scheduled to speak to military spouses at Ft. Stewart, GA. The workshops had been scheduled months earlier. Holly and I found ourselves wondering, “How can we do these now — we created these workshops in more ‘normal’ times. We think ‘normal’ times for military spouses are traumatic enough — with long deployments and constant moves and the kind of work hours their spouses experience. But can this stuff help in this extreme national trauma?”

The Ft. Stewart ACS officer, Lucia Braxton, had no doubts. “This is exactly what we need right now; I wouldn’t dream of canceling.” And she was right. Our programs focus on choosing to live fully and

authentically right now, no matter your circumstances, to pay attention to daily joy, to take care of yourself so you can take care of others. The events of September 11 were a giant wake up call for all of us — to not wait, but to live fully now. The self care things we teach as the foundation for everything are exactly the kinds of things that are getting us through the trauma and helping us to move forward with our lives.

I found, personally, that after spending three solid days in trauma and grief — crying often and uncontrollably, suffering with headaches and nausea — a number of things helped me move on: focusing on the things I could control rather than the things I couldn’t control, such as: eating right again, drinking more water and less coffee, turning off the TV so I didn’t immerse myself continuously in horror and sadness, getting outside in nature, doing my daily yoga and deep breathing — and for our family, renting a funny video that Friday so we could laugh and forget for a short while at least (that finally helped us all sleep as well.)

The following newsletter was ready to go out September 12. We didn’t feel ready to send it then. We do think it’s more timely now. We hope you are taking steps to nurture yourself and your family, living in the moment as much as possible rather than wallowing in thoughts of “what might be.”

Energy Tip, Use Your Nose

Last issue we told you how much drinking water impacts your energy level. Hope you’ve discovered how true that is and have your water bottle handy as you read this. Take a sip while you read on.

Use your senses to increase your energy. Studies on aromatherapy prove that it works. Use your nose. I keep a bottle of peppermint essential oil in my travel kit and on my desk (available at health

food stores). When I need a spurt of energy, I open the bottle and take a whiff and a deep breath. It works. (I also know that just taking a pause and a deep breath has a positive impact on your stress and energy levels so there is a double benefit here). Sucking on one of those popular strong mints like Altoids or Fisherman’s Friend has a similar effect.

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Happiness Research – What it means to you

The September 3 issue of U.S. News & World Report has a cover story on “How to Make Yourself Happy”. Holly & I are “happy” to report that all the things we cover in our four-hour workshops are included

in the article. What’s interesting to us is that I started our research on this subject —for myself— back in 1988. Holly & I intensified that research in 1992 and found this stuff out through reading and testing things personally. We started sharing the information in workshops in 1992. This article says the real research (with millions of dollars and 60 scientists mind you) started only 3 years ago. Hey, we could have saved them some money!

But the good thing is that this mainstream research, dubbed “positive psychology” by the American Psychological Association, gives the things we say even greater credibility. Proof!

So we are going to share what they found in this and future newsletters. A key finding is that “far from being the sole product of genes, luck, delusions, or ignorance, happiness can be learned and cultivated.”

As Sonja Lyubomirsky, a psychologist at the University of CA-Riverside says, “You have to commit yourself every day to doing things that make you happy.” That’s why we share the daily simple joys in each workshop and newsletter issue.

One key they identified in the research was to find the right goals and pursue them. That’s the core of our programs. And our favorite starting point (and mind you, it is just a starting point) to do that — to figure out what you want, is the Ideal Life Exercise. So, if you have been in one of our workshops, have you taken the time to do this? If not, why not today?

Here’s what you do. Send everyone off to the movies or find a quiet spot (a library is one possibility) and sit down with a notebook or sheet of paper. Write down, in great detail, your absolutely ideal life — if everything were perfect, what would that look like. This is dreaming here — and DREAM BIG!

Include things like:

- What would you be doing, both for work & play?
- Who would you be involved with on a daily basis — and what would those interactions/relationships look like?
- What kind of characteristics would you have? (i.e. powerful, self-confident, playful, dramatic, outrageous, calm, childlike?)
- What kinds of clothes would you wear? How would you wear your hair?
- Where are you living in this perfect place? Describe your environment — outside & inside your house — in great detail.

Once you have that description, you’ll find there are ways to start working towards what you want — and to add in some of the items right away — And the research shows that your joy will come from the fact that you’ve identified what you want and that you are taking action towards it. So start today!

Adding Daily Joy –Simple Rituals - Kathie

I have simple rituals to start my day on a good note. I’ve been doing two things for quite a while now. Simple but they make me happy. I read the daily page in Sarah Ban Breathnach’s Simple Abundance. (Mind you, I have been reading this every day for three — or is it four? — years now). I guess that means I’m a slow learner, but I continue to be inspired. And slowly but surely, I apply the lessons to my life.

I also keep angel cards in a box on my desk. Each day, I pull a card at random and put it in a fun little clip attached to a purple cube — to keep it in front of me. These cards just have one word on each. Words like light, peace, patience. I use them as a bit of a meditation and focus. Today’s was “Sisterhood.” Sure seems appropriate as I’m working away on this newsletter for my sisterhood of military spouses.

Books that Have Changed my Life — Kathie

I just stumbled on a book at our PX bookstore that I just had to have. For the Love of Books by Ronald B. Schwartz, has 115 well-known writers share their answer to the question: What books have left the greatest impression on you and why?

Holly and I thought that would be a good section to add to this newsletter — books that have changed your life. Of course, there are so many. For me, a few immediately stand out.

Women & the Blues by Jennifer James is one that I read in 1988 when I first started my “What will make me happy?” search. I wasn’t unhappy, but I wasn’t happy either. James is a counselor and this was full of just the right thoughts & exercises for me at the time. One that I continue to this day is my annual “birthday review” where I give myself the gift of my day to review my year& my goals, and to come up with a plan for the coming year.

My all-time favorite for life change has to be Barbara Sher’s Wishcraft. That got me started working to create what I want in life.

So...what books have changed your life? Write in and share and we’ll send you a free Joyful Living booklet in thanks. And you just might help change someone else’s life.

Joyful Parenting — Note power - Holly

My twins just started preschool. I put a note in each of their lunch boxes. “Mommy loves you & misses you & will see you when you get home.”

I started this when my kids were four, when I first had to be gone from home, traveling to give Joyful Living seminars for spouses dealing with deployment, a group I care deeply about after my own experiences as a “single mom” of infants when my husband deployed to Kosovo for nine months when we lived in Bamberg.

I made up a note a day for each of them. Simple thoughts like:

- I hope your day is filled with rainbows.
- You are my Sweetie Pie...my Buddy.
- Thank you for helping Grandma & Grandpa.
- I’m so proud of you.
- Can you see Mommy smile when she thinks of you?

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You get the idea. I use fun-colored markers and stickers and draw smiley faces on them. And I end each with “I love you! Mommy!”

Each morning Grandma put one card next to the children's cereal bowls for them to open as soon as they ate breakfast. Thus, starting their days out on a positive note – literally!

Now I get my husband to do the same when he has to be gone TDY. It adds a special moment to each day and helps keep them connected.

Do You Have a Dream?

As part of our research for the Follow Your Dream While You Follow the Military book, we are collecting stories of women who have done just that — created a life, a program, a business, a career that allows them to pursue their passion as they live this military life. We'll share some of these stories in future issues. Do you have a dream to share? Either one you want help with or a success story to inspire other military spouses? Email us at kathie@joyful-living.com (and you'll get a free Joyful Living booklet in thanks for writing.)

Fun Products

While we work on our Follow Your Dream While You Follow the Military book, we have some other products that can help you create and live your dream! To order any of these call Kathie tollfree at 866-569-5695 or email or fax in an order— see contact info at the bottom. And, yes, I can take Visa or MC.

Creative Living Audiotape Set: (2tapes,120minutes) -on the joyful living concept & goal achieving tools, tips & resources) \$10

Your Enchanted Life: A Journal of Discovery & Delight (a play book full of exercises & action steps) \$18

Simple Joys: Little Things That Make a BIG Difference (a pocket-size book with one idea per page) \$6

Joyful Living Booklet (similar ideas in a booklet that can mail in a #10 envelope) \$3

Magic Rainbow Glasses (see the good in Everything) \$6

A Follow Your Dream While You Follow the Military Workshop at your post/base?

We do four-hour workshops for military spouses. (These have been called different things in the past — Joyful Living, Creative Living, Jump Into Life — we've finally settled on what it's really About — Follow Your Dream While You Follow the Military.) We'd love to do all day sessions or 2-3 day retreats someday too. We have LOTS of information to share.

Here's what other military spouses are saying: “Wunderbar! I have gained worthwhile & valuable information on how to turn my dreams into reality. I wish I had a seminar like this to attend 15 years ago.” –Gwendolyn A. Williams “This was the best thing that happened to me in Germany!”—Alicka Ampry-Samuel

If you know someone who hires trainers for your base (often the Family Advocacy Office or ACS), send us a name and address and we will mail a full information packet. We'd love to come to your location.

Forward this Newsletter

Feel free to forward this newsletter to other military spouses. We are also happy to have you use any of the articles in your newsletters providing you ask us first and then provide us with a copy for our records and celebration!

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