



Savoring Life's Pleasures

My week has been filled with pleasures. Spring cherry blossoms. Dancing with a three year-old friend. Making my favorite grilled-cheese with onions and tomato sandwich. Breathing fresh air. Talking with a client. A brilliant sunset. So many pleasures to savor!

However, there was a time, not so long ago, when I might not have noticed much of this. Life's demands can fool us into thinking there's not enough time to enjoy our lives, take in pleasure, and savor what's good and sweet. In reality, enjoying our lives is essential, gives us energy and renews us.

If you've ever eaten a carton of chocolate ice cream in one fell swoop as I have, you know that not all pleasures are healthy and wholesome. Fortunately, there is no limit to the number of pleasures that *are* good for us and even help us thrive.

Here are a few possibilities for savoring life's sweetness.

Your Senses – What can you see, smell, touch, hear or taste *right now* that is pleasing?

Nature – What aspects of nature please you, either because it's right in front of you like the sky, a snowflake, a tree or a blade of grass, or because you can imagine it?

Memories – What memories give you a sense of satisfaction and pleasure?

Qualities – What human or animal qualities are pleasing, e.g. courage, humor, generosity, resilience, determination, a dog's jubilation, a horse's wisdom, a kitten's warmth?

Ideas – What ideas give you pleasure, for example, a speech that moved you, a scientific equation that boggles your mind, a concept that amazes you? (I take pleasure in thinking about Bernoulli's Principle which explains, in part, how airplanes stay aloft. I don't understand it, but it gives me pleasure anyway.)

Your Journey – When you think back about your own amazing life journey, what gives you pleasure, e.g. a milestone, an accomplishment, a turning point, a joyful moment, a highlight?

Mental Pleasures – What mental activities give you pleasure – e.g. solving a problem, being creative, cooking a recipe, reading a book, building something, organizing something?

Emotions – What pleasurable emotions can you access right this very moment, for example love, caring, joy, wonder, relief, understanding, letting go of something painful, appreciation?

Social Connections – What social connections bring you pleasure, e.g. a sense of caring, being cared about, being with friends, being part of a group, dancing, emailing or texting, playing sports, having a conversation, seeing justice done, hanging out with a friend?

This is just a start – the possibilities are indeed endless. What life pleasures can *you* savor this very moment? This hour? This day? This week?

As you go through your days, experiment with intentionally noticing what's good and what brings you joy, wonder or a sense of well-being. Marinate in those feelings, even if just for a few seconds and let yourself truly appreciate the pleasures of life, knowing that doing so is actually good for you *and* good for the world. Enjoy!