

# Patrick's Ponderance:

## Life Is But a Dream...

A few days ago I had the chance to greet a co-worker in the morning. I said to this fellow, "What's happening today?" His reply was, "Oh, just livin' the dream!" to which I asked, "Are you living the dream or dreaming to live?"

Now, I'm sure everyone has heard these phrases spoken in just such a way but on this day it set me to pondering the real meaning behind these words.

For me, living the dream is having a life rich in love, low in drama and full of gratitude. I'm quite sure that many others reading this story would say that they have a deep desire to indeed live this type of dream but how do we go about it? How can we manifest such a lovely life for ourselves when we have so many obligations to others? How can we make this happen when we always seem to be just one step ahead of the bills, and struggling to afford the car we just bought that's a bit beyond our budget. And what about the relationships we're struggling with. Perhaps that's the most challenging situation of all. How can we possibly live a dreamy life when our kids are out of control, the wife is a nag, the neighbors are rude, our boss is a tyrant, the job is full of half-wits, the husband is an abuser, the in-laws are...you get the point.

It's about now that I can hear all of the new-age thinkers saying to themselves that happiness is a choice and all you have to do is change your mind about these situations. They will advise that it's simply a matter of choosing to be happy. Do I believe this way of thinking? Is it practical? Is the solution this simple? Well, if you're asking me then my answer is "Yes". I truly believe that the solution is that simple but I also have to add that for most of us the journey to get there may take quite a bit more work.

When I think about how to live my dream the first step I must take is to temporarily forget about living my dream and I'll tell you why. Setting a goal, or having expectations of an outcome project my thoughts into the future. When this occurs I deny myself the experience of living in the present moment. Many times we're not just thinking about the future but we worry about it. We may even be terrified of it. When we spend most of our energy in the future we're caught up in a non-reality. The future does not exist. There is no energy in the future that manifests any type of reality in our present moment. You cannot go to the bookshelf and grab a piece of the future. You can't hold it in your hand. You can't taste it on your tongue or hear it rustling in the breeze. It holds less density than a ghost. Every new day pushes the future one day ahead. The pursuit of it is hopeless. The real truth is it only exists in our minds.

As I delve into this topic a bit more I have to ask myself why would we spend so much time worrying about the future? I can't help but come to the conclusion that it's fear that keeps us trapped. Nothing more and nothing less. We have been conditioned from birth to worry about nearly everything. It seems we're always caught up in fear worrying if we're making enough money, will we find a mate, what's for dinner, or any of a million other things each day. All the while we have this fantasy of what it will be like some day when it all falls into place and we can finally live our dream.

When I started my journey of increasing my awareness I have a distinct memory of standing in the bathroom one day and saying to God that I just wanted to be happy in life. I stated that I didn't care what I had to go through to get there. I only wanted a life that was peaceful, full of love, and without drama. As I sit here now looking back on that statement of my dream I must say I had a fair amount of courage to allow the forces around me to shape and mold my life of drama into one of peace. I knew in those early days that I had to surrender to the guidance of my higher self and be okay with releasing control of the outcome. Little did I know at the time that to find my dream I would have to lose a 22 year old job, get divorced, sell my beloved home, get rid of most of my possession, move to a new city, live with someone for six months because I had nowhere else to go, and find new friends all within 10 months.

What I would also like to say is; to find our dream we need to realize that we are the creators of our reality. We have to own up to the fact that we have put ourselves in relationships that aren't working. We choose to stay with a job that's draining us. We choose to spend beyond our means and we choose to fight with the neighbors. I challenge you to look around at your own life and recall all the situations that are bringing you pain. What is the common denominator here? For me, I made choices that were not for my highest good. I didn't understand that I was indeed the creator of my life experiences. No one ever took me under their wing to teach me these ideas so I had to learn them through trial and error. More times than not...through pain.

If you take a few moments to study the behavior of the people around you, you will soon see a pattern in the way their lives progress. They often live with the pain of negative choices but they forget that they are free to make new choices that serve their higher good. How strange that we feel it's easier to live in a self-made misery for a lifetime instead of making changes that bring about our dreams.

Esoteric thought says that the first step toward happiness is to practice gratitude for everything in your life. Good or bad. Be grateful for all events and situations you have drawn to yourself. Know that there are lessons to be had in every moment. When you begin to practice gratitude in earnest something unexpected happens. You begin to release yourself from material things. You'll discover that the pursuit of "things" was simply a way to temporarily buy happiness.

Second, stop projecting your thoughts into an imaginary future. I used to be the type who would dread going to work on Monday and just put in my time until Friday. Then on Friday I was already dreading Monday. What I finally realized was that I spent all my time wishing my life away with no gratitude for the present moment. After a dozen years or so I wised up and changed my mind. Peace began to follow.

Step three is where things really get exciting, and that is; put energy toward making changes. If the job is a bore then start looking. If your girlfriend is a drama queen then set her free. If you feel your husband is holding you back then it's time for some honest conversation. If you don't put forth effort toward your dream it's like saying to the universe that you're okay with the way things are. So often I hear folks speak negatively about the mate they have chosen. Instead of ending a dead relationship they spend their time complaining to their friends. My advice here is; if you chose to live with a situation you have chosen without making changes then stop complaining. Accept the mate for who they are without trying to change them and be grateful. Period!

Once you find peace in your present moment you will indeed learn a new love for the life you're creating. Now it's time to bring back your dream. Hold a vision of it in your heart and set it free on the wind. You will no longer have to chase it because it will always find you if you remember to practice gratitude and enjoy the journey to your dream. Be okay with making changes and if the dream no longer fits your desires be free to change that too.

Thank you for sharing in my dream,  
Patrick