



*By A. Carter*

*I don't know much  
about being a  
millionaire, but I'll bet  
I'd be darling at it.*

*Dorothy Parker*

## Inspired Living After 50

What does stepping into fifty look like? As I journey through my first year of my fifth decade I'm beginning to ask a lot of questions. I feel as if I am on the cusp of puberty uncertain of the dramatic changes that I know are in store for me. I've heard stories. I've read, I've imagined and now the adventure begins.

*"All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt." — Charles Schulz*

It's funny how we all have self images burned into our psyche. The not real and the real collide in my brain like a kaleidoscope shifting and splintering until I'm not quite sure who I am anymore. And I think it's important to know. Don't you?

Adventures are far more intriguing when shared, so come along with me on the first dip of an amazing roller coaster ride called life, filled with love and lots of misadventures. It's a space for inspiration, joy and recognizing perfect imperfection in every day inspired living.

Life is an adventure and you never know where it will take you. So, my very dear and new friends, expect the unexpected because that's

*Life*

Make a plan.  
Watch it change.

Years ago I began a New Year activity. Bet you thought I was going to say resolution. Nope, toss that out of your vocabulary, instead envision the year ahead, focusing on things that bring you joy. Creating memories is at the top of my list. I do that by traveling. And, if I'm very, very lucky, I get to do that with people I love.

On the cusp of every new year I begin by making travel plans. I've spent weeks in Europe with my son, played in Hawaii with my daughter and granddaughter, kicked off a new year in the Big Apple with a girlfriend, and played tourist in my own backyard.

Travel puts things in perspective for me. It shakes me out of the norm. It gives me something to plan for. I read somewhere that part of enjoying a vacation is the anticipation. I believe that's true.

The world is wide open. Where do you want to go?

*My travel plans* \_\_\_\_\_

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*January*

*“When preparing to travel, lay out all your clothes and all your money. Then take half the clothes and twice the money.”*  
*-Susan Heller*

*I want to live in a  
world where butter is  
beautiful and the universe  
embraces danishes.*

Love is in the air.

Did you know that for every language there is a word for love? But the meaning of love crosses so many boundaries and morphs depending on who said it, the context it was said in, even the enunciation can change the meaning. There are feelings to consider (so many FEELINGS). There are relationships to consider (commit/don't commit/somewhere in the middle). Let's just agree there is a lot to consider to this very simple word L O V E.

I love the fact that the Greeks have 6 words describing love. Which one is your favorite?

1. Eros – sexual passion
2. Philia – deep friendship
3. Ludus – playful love
4. Agape – love for everyone
5. Pragma – longstanding love
6. Philautia – love of the self

My favorite love language \_\_\_\_\_

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# February

*“But let there be spaces in your togetherness and let the winds of the heavens dance between you. Love one another but make not a bond of love: let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.”*

*- Khalil Gibran*

*Emotions are experiences  
that burst into your  
awareness, temporarily  
spinning you about, then  
whirling away...*

*Dont Let Them Hijack Joy*

Who loves to read? I've been immersed this week in one of my most indulgent past times – reading. I almost had forgotten the pleasure I get from losing myself inside familiar pages, reading them over and over again, but always feeling new. Rediscovering favorites on my bookshelf has sort of derailed my plans to purge the shelves. Instead the books open on their own accord drawing me inside their worlds of adventure.

Little Women

Peter Pan

The Dragons of Pern

The Game of Life and How to Play It

Do you have favorite books? Old friends from childhood or new friends that have taken up residence on your shelves? Share them here as a reminder when your looking to escape to other worlds.

*My favorite books* \_\_\_\_\_

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*March*

*“There is more  
treasure in books than  
in all the pirate's loot  
on Treasure Island.”  
- Walt Disney*

*Now and then it's good to  
pause in our pursuit of  
happiness and just be happy.*

*Guillaume Apollinaire*

“I just want to go home,” Miss R said longingly. She was tired. It had been a long day.

HOME.

Home has as many meanings as there are people. But what is true for me, is that Home is a place of love and serenity. It is an anchor for my soul as well as for my weary body. Home rejuvenates my mind, body and spirit. Home is my sanctuary.

What does it mean to you?

Home means \_\_\_\_\_

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*April*

*“Flour and butter,  
cream and sugar,  
words and images —  
all the ingredients for  
a rich, tasty story.”*  
— Rona Simmons,  
*The Quiet Room*

*You are altogether  
beautiful, my darling.*

Do you ever feel like just when you think things are going your way, roadblocks show up derailing all your hard work? What do you do? Seriously, would love to know your strategies.

I read a book a long time ago, *The Game of Life and How to Play It*, published in 1925, by Florence Scovel Shinn. This book introduced me to how powerful thoughts and words are. I learned about affirmations, which as God usually does, happened during one of my most darkest periods of life, my divorce. I honestly believe that God provides exactly what you need exactly when you need it most.

I whole heartily recommend affirmations, prayers, and gratitude. These are easy, low calorie treats that will lift you up in ways that chocolate cake will never do. Add a long soak in the tub to the mix and you have a wonderful relaxing recipe for joy.

My affirmation \_\_\_\_\_

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May

“In gratitude, I  
create wonderful  
things with great joy  
and expectancy”  
- affirmation for us

*Don't worry about  
the problem -  
Worry about the  
solution*

What nourishes your soul and recharges your body? A few of my favorites that cost nothing, but brings me high value emotional returns:

Pajama days! There is nothing better in my world than spending a lazy day at home with nothing scheduled. Bonus points if you disconnect from technology.

Sharing a hug with your favorite person. Kids grow up. Collect those hugs while you can.

Connect with others. An unexpected card in the mail, a text message just because, or leaving a positive comment on social media. Life is about connection.

I've shared three small things that bring me joy, now it's your turn. What three little things nourish you?

*My joy-filled nourishment* \_\_\_\_\_

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*June*

*“At 50 I find letting go of things that don't matter is the first step in discovering things that do.” - Me*

*Find what makes  
you happy.*

What makes you happy?

Is there something that brings you yellow filled happiness like a dozen colorful balloons sparkling against a crisp blue sky? Today take a minute and think of just one, tiny little thing that makes you happy.

Happiness Exercise:

1. Stop.
2. Write it down.
3. Now go do it.

July

*“The art of being happy lies in the power of extracting happiness from common things.”*

*- Henry Ward Beecher*

*My happy exercise* \_\_\_\_\_

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*To be yourself in a world  
that is constantly trying to  
make you something else is  
the greatest accomplishment.*

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

As a grownup, do you ever find yourself drowning in an endless list of grownup things to do? Days pile up haphazardly into a string of dull monotonous moments. August is the perfect time to shake things up. It's time to remember how to play.

If you've forgotten how to play find the nearest small child and pay attention. Soon you will be sharing belly laughs while hanging upside down on the monkey bars or racing on a bike, the hot summer air whipping in your face or running through sprinklers with an orange pop cycle melting in one hand.

Summer is in full swing and that means it's time for play.

Even for grownups.

*August*

*"Hanging out  
with a child  
teaches me the  
meaning of fun."*

*My favorite playtime activity* \_\_\_\_\_

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*When nothing  
goes right...  
go left!*

When Life boils over what do you do. Some days pots boil over, meetings run long, parking tickets flutter on the windshield, and a scratchy throat turns into a full blown cold.

Hello, Life!

But even with these small daily mishaps I am mining the day's moments for precious gems of happiness. I firmly believe if you look hard enough, you will find a bit of sparkling brilliance amongst the grit... somewhere. It's time to get an attitude of gratitude. Are you with me?

# September

*“Sometimes we should express our gratitude for the small and simple things like the scent of the rain, the taste of your favorite food, or the sound of a loved one's voice.” - Joseph B. Wirthlin*

*Attitude of gratitude* \_\_\_\_\_

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*Beauty is the lover's gift.*

*William Congreve*

Embracing silence is a beautiful thing. I find that to recharge, to find my center, I need to slip into a bit of welcoming silent solitude. Giving myself permission to embrace a quiet evening in bed, surrounded by things I love is a favorite way to recharge.

My over stimulated body needs this healing, silent time to reframe the day's accomplishments. It allows me time for reflection. It makes me a happier person. And it gives me the boost I need to dive, head first, into another very active day giving my best to some pretty fabulous, people like you.

And that's a pretty good pay off.

# October

*“Become slower in your journey through life. Practice yoga and meditation if you suffer from 'hurry sickness.' Become more introspective by visiting quiet places such as churches, museums, mountains and lakes.” - Wayne Dyer*

*Give yourself permission* \_\_\_\_\_

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*My soul's desire is the  
voice of God.  
Listen.*

Blessed, grateful, thank you. These words have become a litany, a prayer of sorts, that continue to see me through my days. Are you more fearful or courageous as you age? It's just me and Fear getting cozy.

And God.

Having faith that I am not alone in this messy life reassures my crazy self. I pray. And pray some more. I know that God has caught me more times than I can count as I have taken leaps into the unknown, my heart beating out of my chest, and my dear friend, Fear, hanging on for dear life.

Maybe we are not meant to kick Fear to the curb. Maybe fear is here to remind us that life is worth taking the leap for.

*My leaps of faith* \_\_\_\_\_

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*November*

*“You are blessed not because you work hard, but you are blessed because you do right and treat other people right.”*

*— Ryo Magupe*

*Strange and wonderful  
magic is unfolding.*

We took my granddaughter Christmas shopping to buy gifts. I love watching her select presents for other people. She picks a black bag for her mommy "because her mommy likes black" and a glass-eyed, stuffed doggy for her dad because, well, I never did learn exactly why. It just made her happy.

Her eyes light up in delight when choosing presents, her smile radiant. It's been fun to see her joyful giving. It's a lesson in joy. I think we could learn a bit more from children.

This is one of the reasons I love Christmas. It's all about joyful giving. It's all about love.

Lighting candles, I send prayers and blessings to you, my family, friends, and the greater collective. I pray that love finds you no matter where you're at.

December

*The gifts of lovers to  
one another are, in  
respect to love, nothing  
but forms; yet, they  
testify to invisible love.*

*Rumi*

*Sending you love & happiness* 