

INNER GIFTS

Inner gifts all tied up with strings

Julie Andrews, the actress, once sang ...”brown paper packages tied up with strings, these are a few of my favourite things.” You may have inner gifts, talents and areas of expertise and personal qualities that you perhaps keep a little too “under wraps” or perhaps you are hiding your inner gifts with too much string and wrapping paper around them – not allowing you or others to unwrap the parcel and discover and receive the gift inside.

“Birth” day presents

On the day you were born you, or at least your parent(s), were given gifts. You, just by being you however, were also gifted uniqueness, a purpose and a whole string of inner gifts to play with in this world. Can you imagine your parents tossing away the snugly rugs, nappies, toys and clothes that they were given to celebrate you entering this world? No of course they wouldn't. So why have some of you decided to toss your own unique gifts with the bath water or decided to keep them in the cupboard unused or given them to the second hand thrift shop? What inner gifts, qualities, aspirations and desires have you given away? Why?

Unused gifts or only brought out on special occasions

Have you had occasions when you have received lots of gifts but you haven't used half of the gifts you were given for some reason? What inner gifts do you have that you are not using? Why do you keep your inner gifts wrapped, unused or only use or enjoy them occasionally? Perhaps you don't

- Recognise your gift(s)
- Think that you are good enough.
- Think you have the good stuff just as others have – albeit different and unique combo
- See the internal beauty rather than the external wrapping
- See an avenue or opportunity to use your gift
- Risk sharing your gift without fear of being hurt, damaged or misused.

Many people who are not sharing or opening up their talents, gifts and skills describe that they feel stifled, frustrated and very ineffective. Their creative juices solidify, their energy gets zapped and their mood gets low. What happens in your body when you don't use your gifts? How is your health affected? What happens to your confidence? What are you still not reaching your potential in? What is an inner gift that you would like to develop and foster even further? Who do you need to support you in this?

You prefer someone else's “present”?

Have you ever received a gift which you felt a little disappointed with? Do you catch yourself telling yourself you are not good enough or that you wish you came wrapped as a different “present” or had someone else's. If you feel you are “lacking” something or feel like people have a better “present” than you have, use this in the positive. Look at how you can learn it, claim it, find it, feel into it and develop some aspect of who they are, as in fact these qualities are reflections of who you are anyway and aspects that you could develop and use more often. More importantly focus on and start appreciating your own God-given talents, positive aspects of your personality and the strength of the essence of who YOU are.

Gifts in disguise or a booby prize

Sometimes other people are put into your life for different reasons. You may wonder when the “going gets tough” whether such people are a gift to you or more like a booby prize. More often than not, those difficult people are gifts in disguise. A friend challenged me recently to be grateful to people in my life who I find “a pain in the neck” or “bring me grief”. Why? Because they draw out in my certain resources, emotions and even reflections of myself, that are a gift to me if I truly wish to develop and become the essence of who I truly am.

Similarly transitions and times of crises can also be gifts in disguise to you because they allow you to draw from your reservoir of inner gifts that are within you but which may not have been drawn upon before to that degree. They are your gift of “growth”.

Gift voucher

If you could buy anything you wanted to make you feel more complete, what would that be? If you were given a gift voucher to be able to purchase any inner gift that you wanted, what would you choose? Do you know that you already possess that gift and you just haven’t noticed it on your own personal shelf? Why don’t you go shopping in your internal shop and enjoy it, play with it, nurture it, use it, develop with it. What would you be doing, being and feeling? How different would your life look?

Variety of gifts – no double-ups

When you mark special events, thankfully you typically don’t receive the same gift from each person that is guest at that special occasion. Imagine having 50 people at your birthday party and receiving the same pair of socks or same perfume from each guest. The “giver” purchases or make presents for you that reflect something of them, but also reflects something that they see in you. Similarly each person who is in your circle of influence is sharing their personal “gifts” with you. Thank goodness that we are all made so differently otherwise we would not actually receive the breadth of life experiences that could be made available to us. Your gifts are unique to you. Treasure that and treasure the fact that the people around you can offer you a variety of experiences, different wisdom and different skill sets. We are here to complement each other, not be clones of each other.

The perfect gift or is it the thought that counts?

No matter how skilled we are at something, there is a use for what we can do. Sometimes we feel we have to be the “master” at something (ie. be the perfect present) before we get cracking and share it around. The perfectionist trait often gets in the way here. I know for example that when writing this resource, that many times I questioned the value of it and the expertise or lack of expertise I had to complete it and for it to seriously impact people’s lives. The lesson that I gleaned is that we often fail to recognise the enormity of our skills and our wisdom when it is sitting in our lap.

Heirlooms

Giving of ourselves is not typically an expensive gesture – in fact it is usually free. The gift however has priceless value when you consider what impact the sharing of you has on others and on the world and their gift to you. So whether our gifts are large or small, intricate or rather basic, it’s the thought (Intention and commitment) that counts – start giving and receiving!

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Inner gifts

Inspiration - inspire me

Your inner gifts are best unwrapped, rather than left unused, on the special occasion of your “birth” day and every day thereafter.

Reflection – reflect on me

- What do I notice in myself (and in my body) when I am doing what lights me up and sharing my inner gifts?
- What reasons do I give for hiding my gifts or standing “out” of the limelight? What do I wish to do now?
- If I were to die tomorrow, what qualities, values and skills would I like to be acknowledged for, that I am still not reaching my potential in?
- What specific inner qualities do I wish to develop? In what ways might that change my life?
- What events in my life have kept me hiding my gifts / allowed me to discover my gifts?
- Who has been instrumental in encouraging me to share my talents and skills?
- Who are envious of and who do you aspire to? What can I learn from them and how can I use that comparison positively?
- What gifts have people in my circle of influence shared with me over the years? How have I benefitted? How have they benefitted?
- What have I been taught (directly or indirectly) about aspiring to great things?
- How am I being a person of influence?

Action – act on me

- Thank people who have been your encourager, motivator, mentor...
- Write a “pretend” eulogy for yourself describing your positive qualities. Develop those qualities and role-model them to your family, friends, colleagues...this week.

- Think of someone or some event that you have allowed to “squash” your gifts or put you into hiding. Forgive them. Forgive yourself.
 - Choose one gift you have that you have been hiding to some degree for awhile and take a leap of faith and find one way this week to express it or develop it.
 - Think about someone you aspire to. Reflect on that person’s values and inner gifts. How can you learn from or emulate that person in your daily life. Do it!
 - Buy or make yourself a gift this week. You may also want to give one away as well.
 - Gift your body some good nourishment this week. Pamper yourself on the outside and the inside.
 - Write down your own ideas and insights for acting on.
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- Email your specific action ideas to share with the Janelle community to janelle@janellefletcher.com Subject line – Inner gifts feedback Your ideas and insights can help others enjoy a far greater life!

Affirmation – affirm me

- I confidently use and share my inner qualities, skills and talents.
- I am perfect as I am in my own uniqueness.
- Write your own.

Having done some reflection and taken some action, send your personal success story to janelle@janellefletcher.com Subject line – My success story. You will be entered into the monthly draw to win an individualised coaching consultation with Janelle.