

A child stands on a flat, reflective surface, holding a large bunch of colorful balloons. The background is a vibrant, abstract landscape with swirling colors of blue, purple, orange, and yellow, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall mood is hopeful and aspirational.

# A fulfilled **life**

NOTES. IDEAS. SUGGESTIONS

## CHAPTER 1

How can you make  
**a difference?**

## How can you make **the difference?**

Some say the world is bad, not because there's too many bad people, but because the good people don't do anything.

You can make a difference! This chapter will offer you some ideas about how you can change something within you, as well as within your circle of friends.

## Don't live just **for your sake**

In our Universe there is a very important rule: no one lives just for their sake. The light particle that doesn't light others goes out. The water that stops flowing gets spoiled. The plants that no longer provide perfume are left without pollinators. The people who live just for themselves become dissatisfied, grumpy, unhappy.

You can't do things you don't believe in for a long time. That means that you'll have to decide to become a good, valuable person. Appetite comes with eating, so start today. Smile to people, reach out to someone, be encouraging and compassionate, and everything else will follow in your soul.

In order to be a valuable person, you need to have quality friends. An old saying goes something like this: "Tell me who your friends are, and I will tell you who you are." Good friends will always have your back and encourage you to make healthy decisions, maintain your values, and get involved in worthwhile activities.

A good person is also a giving person. That means opening your door to the homeless people, sharing your food with the hungry, giving your clothes to the poor, visiting the helpless, and so on.

You can start saving a bit of money every month and surprise those around you in thoughtful ways – a flower, a sandwich, a card. Every good deed is rewarded with a smile.

The best activities are done together with friends or family. On your next meetup, suggest doing a charitable action together. The more, the merrier.

## Practical ideas

Here's some ideas and suggestions for those who want to make a difference around them.

- 🌱 Defend someone who's mistreated!
- 🌱 When you hear a bad joke, express your disapproval!
- 🌱 Share your appreciation of a positive online article through a comment!
- 🌱 Print a T-shirt with an inspiring message!
- 🌱 Show you appreciate your family's good deeds!
- 🌱 Write a thoughtful Facebook comment to everyone in your newsfeed!
- 🌱 Write and publish on the internet an article about the beautiful part of the world you live in!
- 🌱 Take 5 impressive photos of nature and post them online!
- 🌱 Promote high-quality websites in your social network!
- 🌱 Read a book about a valued person!
- 🌱 Learn meaningful proverbs and share them with your friends!
- 🌱 Learn a beautiful proverb in another language and promote it among your acquaintances!
- 🌱 Suggest a beautiful idea to a friend and help him realize it!
- 🌱 Listen to a weary person!
- 🌱 Listen to an elder's story! You will learn so much from their experience, and they will appreciate the company.

## CHAPTER 1

- 🕒 Help an older person carry their bags!
- 🕒 Help an older person cross the street!
- 🕒 Together with your friends, help an older person with gardening or household chores!
- 🕒 Offer to babysit for a big family!
- 🕒 Write a secret encouraging message for someone and hide it in a strategic place!
- 🕒 Produce a short video about a human quality you consider important!
- 🕒 Organize a surprise birthday party!
- 🕒 Organize a healthy meal for your neighbors!
- 🕒 Stop buying things you don't need for one month and donate the money you end up saving to a charitable organization!
- 🕒 Buy medicine for someone who can't leave their home!
- 🕒 Offer to tutor a child struggling in school!
- 🕒 Read a beautiful book to a blind person!
- 🕒 Visit the retirement home and offer to take the elderly on a short walk around!
- 🕒 Visit a stranger in the hospital and bring them a small gift!
- 🕒 Send an encouraging text to a number you don't know!
- 🕒 Call a lonely person and catch up!
- 🕒 Pray for a friend who's in trouble!
- 🕒 Offer a glass of water to a thirsty person!
- 🕒 Offer a CD of good music to friends!
- 🕒 Offer a precious book to a stranger!
- 🕒 Give a gift to a person you find annoying!
- 🕒 If there's a foreigner or refugee living in your town, help them adapt by talking to them about the beautiful landscape of the area.
- 🕒 Spend an hour every week doing something good for those around you!
- 🕒 Do a good deed and make sure the recipient never realizes where it came from!

# Conclusion

We were first loved by God. All the beautiful things we do are just replies to His love. A truly good person doesn't do good things for a reward, but because they realize they've already received so much, and all they can do is share their happiness around.

## CHAPTER 2

# How to have **healthy relationships?**

## How to have **healthy relationships?**

You have enough wisdom to know that love and family are not guaranteed to last forever. You might have friends who fell in love, got married and then divorced. Many others struggle to keep their relationships alive. You, however, want something better – not just to avoid the pain of heartbreak, but to experience real, lasting love.

The following is dedicated to those who think seriously about love.

Don't give up on your optimism! Nor on your dreams of wearing a white wedding dress! Despite the difficult times we live in, it's not impossible to develop beautiful, happy relationships. But don't fool yourselves – these things don't just happen, they're not just a matter of "luck".

## How can you know who is **the right person for you?**

It's very easy to fall in love. Most of us fall in love several times throughout our lives. It's possible to fall in love with the wrong person. This should give you pause for thought. In the right circumstances, you can fall in love with almost anyone.

It's not easy to figure out the right person for you. Each of us has different needs, past, passions, dreams, ways of thinking.

Let's take a hypothetical example...

*He* goes away to college without any plans of getting married. Then he meets *her*, who's beautiful and interesting. She has a boyfriend at home. But since it's not so fun to be alone, they start dating. The

more time they spend together, the more they enjoy each other's company. Then summer comes and she goes home, back to her old boyfriend.

When the two return to college after the holidays, they pick up where they left off. Without their knowledge or intention, they grow even fonder of one another. She has broken up with her boyfriend back home. Unfortunately, she is less emotionally stable than he'd prefer. So what should they do – stop or continue? They decide to continue and they get married. But when she returns home and sees her ex, she becomes a bit confused. She breaks up with her husband and gets back together with her ex. After a few months, they get married.

With this example in mind, please pay attention to the following. Don't imagine this could never happen to you. Don't start dating someone just because you're feeling lonely! It's very easy to pretend you're just friends and that nothing will happen between you. This assumption is wrong. Things can always evolve in any direction.

Another important factor to consider is whether or not it's healthy to start a relationship with someone who *needs* you. It can feel very nice for another person to need you, but this dependency can create problems in the long run. A happy relationship needs two happy people.

The best relationships are those where the partners have previously solved all their issues before starting something. This means they're able to focus on sharing love, instead of selfishly asking for more than they can give.

## What are your chances of **not repeating history?**

Studies show that a happy, healthy relationship has more chances of lasting when the partners have similar ages, values, education,

religious beliefs, and personal interests. It's true that opposites attract, especially when it comes to personality, but when the goal is to establish long-term stability, it's the similarities, not the differences, that keep a couple together.

The basic principle is as follows: any difference implies an additional effort to adapt, which means consuming additional energy to overcome the differences. It's much easier when both partners have the same preferences. They don't need to discuss or argue incessantly to find a compromise that will, most likely than not, not satisfy anyone. That can easily become tedious - for some more than for others. Eventually the situation will devolve to the point where the two partners stop communicating altogether and only one of them makes the decisions. This is how frustrations occur.

Let's look at some examples of possible differences.

### Age

Maturity is more important to happiness than age. There are 40 year olds more immature than kids. Wisdom is vital to a successful relationship. The high school and college years tend to be more chaotic. Relationships created at these ages don't tend to last long. If you add to that a precarious financial situation, problems will quickly start to pile up.

The age difference is also a factor that influences and can affect the relationship. If there's too big an age gap between the partners, not only will there be huge differences in interests and friendships, but there will also be a tendency to treat the younger person as less responsible. Choosing to marry when you are still in high school or college can lead to conflicts, down the road, which boys - generally less mature than girls - are less able to manage. Remember that age is not about the number, but about the level of maturity.

## Values

If you're serious about the relationship, don't take any further steps before you meet your partner's family. Spend some time in their home to see things you couldn't otherwise observe, then ask yourself, "Can I accept their different values?"

Let's take an example.

*He* comes from a family where the father was the head of the family. His word was law. The mother was an excellent housewife. She was closest to the children. The father rarely had time to play with them. He knew his father loved his mother, though they never displayed any signs of affection in front of him.

*She* comes from a family of huggers. The father was gentle, kind and always available. He had a warm relationships with all of his kids. They could always confide in him and he would always make time for them.

When visiting *his* family, she has a revelation. There are so many differences between them! Her family always had guests around, while his home is almost always empty. Her family's door was always open, but his had a more rigid schedule. She is not against the idea of him being the head of the family, but she expects them to discuss things equally and find solutions together (as things were done in her family). Instead, he realizes that he'd rather she stayed at home, instead of working. And so on...

What do you think about this situation? Fortunately, both of them want and manage to adapt to each other's values. But this is not always the case. This doesn't mean one's values are superior to the other's. They're simply different.

## Education

When we talk about education, we're not referring to the number of years spent in college or of degrees obtained. The more educated a person is, the better they are at learning about themselves

and the world. It also means they have a clearer idea about their expectations in life and relationships. Being more educated also means being wiser. The ideal scenario is to grow together.

## What qualities should you look for in a long-term relationship?

### Optimism

We know many wouldn't have started the list with this quality, but our advice is to find someone with a sense of humor. It's hard to live with someone who is always grumpy and negative. Happiness springs from a satisfied heart. Be wary of those who are only happy when you're around. It's hard to be responsible for someone else's happiness.

### Consideration

How does your partner treat their family? Do they care about everyone's needs or are they only interested in their personal needs? These things rarely change over time. If the person you want to be with for the rest of your life doesn't pay attention to the needs of others, how can you be sure that he'll pay attention to your needs?

### Self-control

We all experience anger, but the way we express it is extremely important. Beware of people with a violent history! If it happened

once, it will happen again. On the other hand, getting the cold shoulder is equally undesirable. So ask yourself: "Is this how I want to live for the rest of my life?"

### **Problem-solving**

Life throws many problems our way, and a lazy person, who is used to procrastinating things indefinitely, is not the partner you can solve problems with for the rest of your life.

### **Trust**

Some people are born liars. They lie without even thinking about it and without any real reason. It's impossible to build a stable, lasting relationship with someone who's not trustworthy.

### **Accountability**

Use the following questions to detect unreliability: Does your partner finish what they started? Do they choose to finish their projects or prefer to party instead? Do they have a stable job? Do they notice what needs to be done – and do they take care of it? Do they offer a helping hand? Are they punctual? Do they always look for excuses to get out of chores? Think! How responsible are they?

### **Acceptance**

True love is unconditional love. You are loved and accepted as you are, no matter what you look like, what you eat, etc. It's easy to love a person for their positive traits. Ask yourself if you also love what is not beautiful - habits, weaknesses, etc.

## Desire to grow

Relationships are never static, and the spousal one even less so. Make sure the other person is as willing as you are to learn and change when changes are needed.

## Do you enjoy life **alone**?

This question might sound weird, but it's necessary. A very effective way to scare off people who might be interested in you, or, instead, to attract the selfish people with ulterior motives, is to display your interest – or even desperation – to be with someone.

Avoid being solitary! Join a group! It's an excellent way to meet people. Even if it's not so easy to get involved, remember that most feel exactly the same. Make friends! So many people waste so much of their lives because they are afraid to make friends!

The worst thing you can do is pity yourself. Take part in activities you enjoy! Do the things you've always wanted to do. The goal is to feel good in your own skin. Then you will have the strength to give and receive fully in a stable relationship and, especially, in a happy, lifelong marriage.

## CHAPTER 3

# How to overcome **a crisis?**

### How to deal with **depression**?

We all feel sad sometimes, and that's normal. Sadness is part of our nature, but being depressed, which is a mental health issue that lasts for a long time, is not the same. But what is depression?

Depression is a common mental disorder that causes people to experience loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, low energy, poor concentration, and other mental or physical symptoms.

Maybe this definition describes a present state you find yourself in, or perhaps it describes a past experience. Perhaps you've never gone through something like this. But I have. I can tell you that you end up feeling like no one understands you, like everyone is against you, and you can't see a way out. Depression is a vicious circle that doesn't let you see the full half of the glass, which only further complicates your life.

You may ask yourself: "What can I do in a situation like this?"

I recommend what always works for me. Focus on how you can help others. Are there needy people in your town? Help them! Stop focusing on your present situation, and try to see instead how you can serve someone else going through hard times.

If you feel that social engagement isn't really your style, you can keep in mind other suggestions that address the spiritual side of life. Open the Bible on one of Joseph, Daniel, Moses or David's scenes or even on some of Jesus' episodes. Reflect on their lives

and try to understand how they made it out of their difficult circumstances. You'll most likely discover that, for all of them, the common denominator was God. Prayer was the main factor that helped them solve their problems and overcome their weaknesses. Maybe you don't feel comfortable interacting with other people, but you can definitely kneel before the Heavens and share your burden with Jesus. Talk to Him as if He didn't know your life, and be as detailed and honest as you can!

Once you have unloaded your emotional burden, you can meditate on Jesus' life. He has lived through suffering and mockery, even though He didn't deserve any of it. Do not end your prayer without asking God for guidance, peace of mind, and, above all, deliverance from the mist that's surrounded you. After praying, look in the mirror, try to smile, and say, "When life gives me lemons, I'll make lemonade."

## What to do when **I feel abandoned?**

The feeling of abandonment is one of the most painful things a person can experience. For most people it's hard to feel alone, so they search for the company of others. You probably have a group of friends you care about and who make you feel appreciated for the many qualities you have. But what about when you feel like even they can't understand, what else is there to do?

Here's one way to get rid of the loneliness. Take a pen and a sheet of paper, and start scribbling! Write a letter to God, detailing the situation you're in. You can describe the situation from whatever perspective you want. You can be honest about your darkest thoughts and fears. Don't forget though that you're writing to God, so please make sure you use the right language. You can write as