

50 ways to fall in love with your life

Gay Walley



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GAY WALLEY

50 WAYS TO FALL IN LOVE WITH YOUR LIFE

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INTRODUCTION

How to Have Eros are 60 ideas and ways to keep your “juice” going, keep you feeling passionate and renewed with enthusiasm for life, even with “all the slings and arrows of misfortune” that beset us daily. These 60 ideas are tonics and pick-me-ups to keep you enthralled with life and ensure you are enthralling to others.

1 SPEND TIME WITH OLD FRIENDS

Old friends feel like family. They have known you throughout all your life and your many ways of being. There have been times when you have frustrated each other and disappointed each other. But there have been times when you have given to each other whatever you can. Shared homes together. Shared piano teachers. Listened to each other complain about work or lovers. Picked each other up from doctors. You know how each other has wrestled with one's temper or passivity. Whatever it is, you have shared your lives together. So give yourself that feeling of comradeship and trust and bask in how that makes you stronger, more present in the world. Old friends are wealth and joy. They are there for you and you are there for them, and that is a gift too. You get to give as they do, and that is shared eros.

2 LOOK AT THE WORK YOU DO – WHATEVER IT IS – AS JOYFUL SERVICE

All work has its limitations. You may not make enough money. Or the people you work with might take advantage of you. Or perhaps are not handling their work as you would like them to. But the way to steady your mind about your work is to get into your own right attitude. Which is that you are providing a service and you are meant to provide a service – both to your boss and to your client – and whatever indignities you go through are part of providing a service. If you see your work as giving, you will lighten and let go of sadness and sorrow. You will focus on the opportunity in your work to make others happy which will in turn raise your joy and ebullience. You will bring your lightness and sensitivity to your work. So be thankful for this wonder of being in the world, and sharing what you do well or are learning to do well with others. There is an expansiveness that will take over and enhance your energy, which is creativity and eros.

3 ELIMINATE WHAT IS WASTING YOUR TIME

What is wasting your time is bringing you down without your knowing it. The fact is what is wasting your time is keeping you from what enlivens you and brings texture and joy to your life. Women often are “there for everyone” and that can mean they are not there for themselves. Really look at your life and what you can stop doing that is not adding to your life. It might be saying yes to too many people’s demands, it could be trolling the internet mindlessly, it could be television, whatever it is for you. Sit down and look at your schedule for the week. Are there many commitments that are draining you because they are not relevant to your core nature? Could you be using that time to feed yourself with art, or with laughter with true friends, or with nature, or with your loved ones? Swap out what is not wholesome for you for what is. Treat your time as valuable, and as something you want to use to replenish and nurture your inner soul.

4 FREE TIME DOES NOT ALWAYS HAVE TO BE FILLED

Ever consider booking some time alone for yourself? Most of us live such demanding lives that it may require putting it on your calendar. And don't make plans for that time. Instead, try a walk without your phone or, god forbid, an afternoon! Or try taking a walk without a destination. Or try curling up with a book. Or just see what you gravitate to and that will tell you what your highest value is that you are not making enough time for. Open yourself up to free time and see how you naturally will feed yourself with what you need for your inner life to help you grow in areas that perhaps people, places and devices are distracting you from. This practice will bring tremendous fluidity and creativity to your life. You will also encounter new parts of yourself that will excite you and this is eros.

5 HIRE SOMEONE TO DO THE LITTLE THINGS YOU DON'T LIKE TO DO

Do this so you can do the things you do like to do. It doesn't have to be for lots of money. But if you find you are procrastinating doing things you don't like or don't know how to do, then hire someone and get it done. This is another way of freeing time for yourself. For instance, there are people who clean closets and organize offices. There are people who help you learn social networking, people who develop websites. People who coach writing your first novel. Whatever it is. Get help to get jump-started on something that has been dragging you down. Take care of business that is gnawing at the back of your mind. Having a physical checkup. Calling someone who can help you move a project forward. Be proactive in areas that can help you, rather than only being proactive in helping others or your employer. Doing so will empower you and give you the joy/eros of knowing you can take care of yourself and be the agent to bring happiness into your life.

6 KEEP AN OPEN MIND TO THE NEW

Having eros is enthusiasm, pleasure, vibrancy. This most likely can only be achieved through being open to the new, to adventures and to learning new things. A new place or vista that you let a friend introduce you to. A new piece of music. Following up on meeting a potential new friend, someone who reached out to you. Letting someone introduce you to a new show. Spending the day in a museum if you never do. Going to the sea on a whim. Following a whim if you never do. Saying yes to what life offers you. If someone passes you their business card to get to know you, get in touch. If someone emails you with a new idea, consider it. Eros is in expanding your feeling/intellectual life. Eros is in new experiences and opening your life up to unexpected gifts. As Woody Allen said, half of life is showing up. You never know what is in store for you unless you step toward it. If you can count on yourself to say yes to the new, there will indeed be unexpected help, unexpected love, unexpected discovery of new parts of yourself. All of which can lead to joy.

7 TAKE A BATH AND SOAK

There is something about being in water. It is purifying. Soothing. You will be being good to your body. You will be spending quiet time. You can read a good book or meditate, or just soak and let your mind roam free. It will make you feel renewed, rested, and nurtured. And there is power in knowing that you can nurture yourself without spending money or having to go out to get something. It will heal your joints, and just be a private, special immersion in warmth and quiet for yourself.



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8 LISTEN TO MUSIC AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE

Classical music if you like it. Music that does not have words (although sometimes do that) so your mind can relax and, rather like a bath, feel a sort of “being held,” this time in music. Let the notes wash over you and through you and keep you healthy and juicy. Music will soften you and raise your level. It takes us away from the smallness of our own problems. Music reminds us of the eternal, and one is carried on the alchemy of the notes to a vibrancy of purity and attentiveness. We are one with beauty and our mind soars with it, even if it is only in the background. Our souls resonate with it.

9 GIVE OF YOURSELF, BUT NOT TOO MUCH

It is good to be connected to life and to respond to others and to share. But it is also good to take care of yourself. So do what you can for others, make connections, be there, but also make sure that you are taking care of yourself economically and health-wise. Have quiet time. Make sure you have time for what you need to do for yourself. Do not give yourself away so much that you become unhealthy or broke! On the other hand, if you can make friends and loved ones happy and have the opportunities to do so, then do it. Be there for people as much as you can, but remember that your schedule comes first (except, of course, in emergencies). If you need time to study or work, do it. Then see friends. You will be more present if you have taken care of yourself first.

10 DON'T EAT A LOT

Eating sparsely will keep you not only slender, but also keep you alert. Food is a drug too and can be a way not to feel. We stuff something in our mouth rather than feel hunger or a craving for what we really are craving. Better conversation? More free time? More sovereignty over our life? Touch? Whatever is beneath the desire to eat too much, if allowed to come to consciousness, is something we can feel and heal and change so our lives are more full of eros. We all have to eat, but keep it simple. Vegetables, fruits, fish. Try and eliminate too many sweets and breads since they are not good for your metabolism. Birds eat many small meals and fly all day. Eating heavy meals will just make you fall asleep. Eat lightly, healthily and enjoy a feeling of wellbeing. When you feel healthy and slim, you will feel more erotic and more available to engaging in life.

11 LOOK AS ATTRACTIVE AS YOU CAN

Dress expressively. Wear a scarf to enhance a dress that you think is drab. Only wear clothes that suit you. Give away clothes that don't flatter you. Wash your hair. Keep it well cut. Wear shoes that are attractive. Wear lipstick if you like make up. Why? Because you will feel more like yourself, your best self, and people will respond to you as if you have eros. Show eros in your plumage. A soft sweater. Something that enhances your best qualities. Not overtly sexual but something that keeps you in touch with your own femininity or masculinity. Smell good. Make your hands pretty, your feet. It is a way of celebrating beauty in general, and saying thank you for beauty. We all have beauty, it is up to us to enhance it. By a bright smile, a skirt that swishes when you walk, beauty that makes you feel free. It should be beauty that is effortless, and a dash of self-expression. Add that to when you get dressed.

12 READ LITERATURE THAT INSPIRES YOU

Choose books that lift your spirit, either in their themes or language or in how they inspire you. That speak to those parts of you that are your highest values. If you do so, you will be making yourself younger, in renewed vision, in new thoughts, in being re-righted in areas that might be getting you down. These new ideas or inspirational lives or guiding thoughts will feed you and replenish your energy and give you hope in areas you do not expect it from. So don't only read thrillers (well, I can see if you are reading this, you are already a seeker) or magazines, but find work on philosophers, lives that have overcome obstacles or poetry or fables that can give you a lift when you feel weakened. (We all do.) Look to spiritual work for insight and that renewal will transmute into eros.

13 SPEND TIME WITH PEOPLE OF THE OPPOSITE SEX

Even if they are not your lover, the difference will remind you of eros. The different concerns, the way that the other gender looks at things. You will feel your own sexuality, the tension in the way we use language differently, the different ways we handle our bodies, and our mutual desire for contact and love. Being with someone who could or could not be a potential love interest, keeps you in touch with your own sexuality and your own femininity/masculinity. Dress for that dinner. Go somewhere that you enjoy, almost as if it could be a date. Let the beauty around you infuse you. Be interested in the other and let the other be interested in you. It will keep all the juices alive.

14 IF THERE IS AN AREA OF YOUR LIFE NOT GIVING YOU SELF- RESPECT, STUDY IT

You may rationalize whatever area is not giving you self-respect, and tell yourself it doesn't matter or it is necessary, or there is no choice. But it will still gnaw at you and make you sharp with others and yourself. Don't do this to yourself. Clean up the area where you know you are being shady – flirting where you shouldn't be, short changing someone in some way, not being totally honest, not facing your finances, or your health. Write down what is bothering you and study it. You will be breaking through your denial and something inside you will shift toward correction. Clean it up and see how it frees you in your psyche, and how you naturally will feel lighter, have self-respect and new doors will open for you. New doors are eros manifesting itself.

15 AVOID THE PHONE

I meant speaking on the phone when it interrupts what you need to be doing for yourself. Don't let others pull you from your work or responsibilities. Don't spend all your time checking your phone and not focusing on being here, now. So many people reach out to distract themselves from their own chaos. You don't need to engage in that. Of course be there for loved ones, but manage your time so that you have time to work, read, walk, see the world around you. If you care for yourself in this way, you will feel more alive and in charge of your own life, which is a form of eros.

16 LEARN SOMETHING NEW

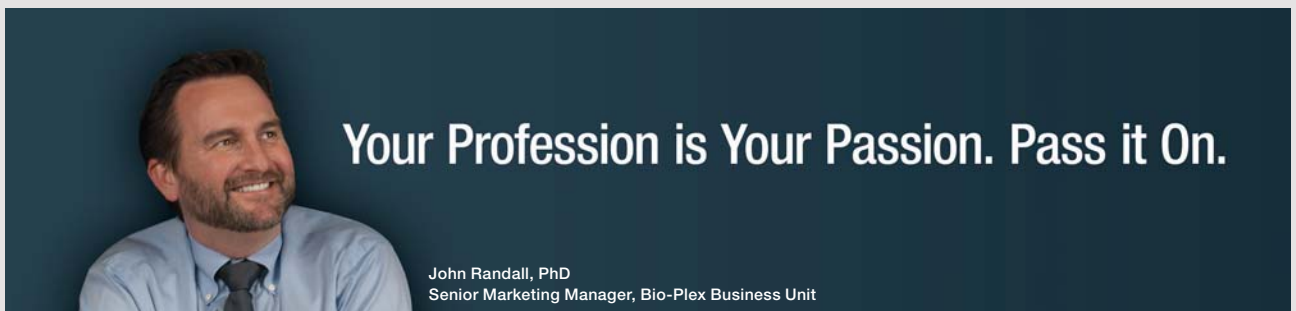
It can be studying the piano, writing, golfing, taking a history course, philosophy course, language course, whatever it is, open yourself to the new. It will make you feel young and excited. You will meet people living different lives and that will feel young and exciting. You will challenge yourself and have to overcome inner blocks and that is young and exciting. It will make you a more interesting person when you meet other people. It will open doors to new interests that are offshoots of what you are studying. If exercise is tonic for the body, learning something new is tonic for the mind and being. An adventurous and open mind is eros.

17 IF YOU LOVE SOMEONE, BE WITH HIM OR HER

Even if it is not perfect, even if not all is as you want it, still being in the presence of someone you love will be healing and softening for you. It will feel alive, full of eros. Even if this person does not give you everything you dream about but tries, be with him or her and enjoy the feeling of love and admiration you feel with this person. Enjoy the hope of connection, enjoy giving to the other. It will keep you in emotional shape. It will keep you flexible, and keep your compassion alive. It will not make love a tit for tat event, but one where you get the pleasure of wisdom of just enjoying being with another on life's terms, not your terms.. It will strengthen you and give you self-respect that you are not giving into the child within you who says I want everything NOW, but giving into the adult who can give without immediate recompense.



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18 TAKE WALKS IN THE SUN

Sometimes just walking and going places you don't normally go to, participating in the theatre and joys and strivings of other scenes and lives will inspire you. Just sitting down in the sun, in the middle of your work day, and having a coffee or eating popcorn will fill your soul with what is eros. You will see there is beauty (cost free) everywhere and that humanity is striving everywhere. There are poorer and richer than you. There are younger and older. If you live in the country, you will encounter new trees, new vistas and the walk will not only get your body moving, but will also let your mind know that there are always possibilities for the new, if we are willing to go even a little bit out of our comfort zone.

19 EAT AND DRINK WHAT YOU LOVE, EVEN IF IT IS UNCONVENTIONAL

It will make you feel free. Enjoy your meals. It is sensual. We worry about our weight so skip the bread, or the fattening foods that you will pay for, but allow yourself rare foods you love. Oysters. Duck. Quinoa, Artichokes, yogurt with fruit and nuts, something that is a treat for yourself. It will bring out the child in you, the child who is not interested in denying oneself but is interested in celebration. Eros is a continual dialogue with joy so be good to yourself and give yourself (mostly) healthy treats. It means you are loving yourself and telling yourself you are worthy of happiness.

20 BE IN CONNECTION WITH PEOPLE

There will be times that your energy is down, and you don't have a lot to give others. Let others feed you then. They may be flying high on energy and can infuse you with their enthusiasm and love of life. Be around creative and successful people. They will raise you up and make you feel full of love, which is eros. Let others give to you when you are down. And you be there for others when their energy is down and yours is up. Stay in the connection of bucking each other up and exchanging what it is to make life feel good. Don't cut off from people when you are down. That is precisely when they have gifts for you. So be good to yourself and give yourself the gifts of friendships and others who can rally around you just when you need it.

21 TRY TO ACCEPT LOVE

Sometimes you may not feel love in your heart but someone else does feel love for you. Don't run away, engage in that love. Perhaps it will grow. Don't be negative. Open your heart and soul if you can. Let others love you when you are having trouble loving yourself. You may be needing some quiet time, time for yourself, where you can come to yourself, and see things once again from there. That is where the eros is, where you are yourself and fully present, feeling that you are living the life that you are meant to live. Not feeling uncomfortable. But while you are uncomfortable, let others love you till you return to yourself. Accept others reaching out and care. Accept their solicitations. Accept that you are loveable. You are.

22 SOMETIMES YOU WON'T FEEL EROS AND IT WILL TAKE EFFORT

Stay away from people who bring you down. It could be you want something in your life, such as a job, or acceptance, or offer that has not come through. The slowness of your desires being fulfilled will feel like rejection. But it may be that what you want is not right or you need to be thinking about how to open new doors. You may be stuck in some way and need to look at what is draining you and study it in a new way. How can you accomplish what you want but using a different method or strategy? This is what you must focus on. Write down what it is that is getting you down and then write creative solutions to that problem. There are always solutions or positive steps you can take. Once you feel on the track of these new steps which may mean reaching out to new people, you will feel the joy of eros running through you.

23 YOU NEED DAILY EROS IN YOUR WORK

Are you doing what you love? You may believe part of work is not being happy in your work. That's why they call it work, you say. But it is not true at all. You are supposed to feel vitality and excitement in your work. Because it has meaning and what you do brings good into the world. You are using your special talents to make something that people need. Those are the feelings that you can have. So if you are not having those feelings, think about your special gifts. What inspires you. Then tell yourself you CAN make money doing what you love. Look into it. You may not start making money right away but, in time, you will. Your other job will feel much easier if you are secretly working on your dream. You must put yourself in the environment of what you love, where other people are doing similar work, and then take it from there. You will get ideas. You will begin. Stay with it. If you are doing what you love, it won't feel like working.

24 BE PATIENT

So much of life requires this. Patient about meeting your mate and then patient with your mate when you meet him or her. Patient about monies coming in. Patient about bringing your dreams and aspirations to fruition. Most of us are less versant with patience because of technology. We think everything should move at the pace of our texts and emails but relationships, deals, projects and decisions don't move at the same speed as devices. If you are feeling drained and unsettled as you "wait," know that while you wait, something is working itself out. Other people's fears, decisions, strategies and efforts. In the end, you will get what you want in the way it is meant to come to fruition.

25 STOP WORRYING ABOUT GETTING OLD

There's nothing to be done about it and aging comes with its tendernesses and its own gifts. For example, one has more appreciation for beauty and each other and time feels more precious. One feels more appreciative of every moment and all those who grace it with you. One has more compassion and understanding of what others go through. Yes aging comes with health and other difficulties. But it is precious and most of us can still do meaningful work – be it our own or philanthropic. One can still feel part of everything by staying engaged. So act young, not by wearing a miniskirt or dating someone half your age, but by making sure you take advantage of every way you can to have enthusiasm for life.

26 USE NATURAL BEAUTY AS YOUR EROTIC DRUG

For me, a beach or being in beauty resuscitates me and makes me feel eros throughout. I feel erotic, in love with life, and enthusiastic. I feel there is incredible abundance and opportunity everywhere. I feel free – I could move to this beauty if I really wanted to. I feel part of gloriousness, and want to celebrate and love. So make sure every month (if you are a city person) you go to beauty. It may be a park in your city or it may be outside of the city. It may be a river vista, it may be the ocean. Go where there are colors and quiet. And drink it all in. It will renew every cell in you and make them vibrate with joy.

27 LISTEN TO MAHLER, BEETHOVEN OR MILES DAVIS

Mahler is more serious but will resonate with your emotional life. Beethoven will lift you. Miles Davis will swing you. Music gives voice to your inner yearnings, your deepest parts. The parts of yourself that pray or dream or imagine. The parts of you that tingle. The parts of you that want to move in delight. If your feelings are stuck, music will slowly shift them. So if you are feeling a lack of eros, turn on some music and let it wash over and through you. Your body will be renewed as you listen.

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28 TAKE UP AN INSTRUMENT OR DANCE

I play the piano, not well, and in fact for no one else but for me. I do it to learn a new way of “reading” and a new discipline. I sometimes, like exercise, do not want to practice but, when I do, I feel better and more has been developed inside of me. I tend to play only music I am interested in and that gives me a feeling of pleasure (eros) and a sense I am being good to myself. I like to listen to what I am playing. The same for exercise. There are classes I take which are weight bearing and jumping up and down and I could live without these but need to do them, yet sometimes I change it up to a dance class and that feeds my sense of beauty as well as gives my body a chance to tone and be healthy.

29 BE COMPASSIONATE TO OTHERS, AND TO YOURSELF

You will hear difficult stories. People recovering from sex and drug addiction. People who were raped. People who are just getting older. People who know they have to change their lives but are frightened to do so. Every day will be full of these stories. If you can come from healing and love, then these experiences will be transformed to experiences that will enrich you. You will be engaged in turning difficulty into intimacy and light. This is eros. In fact, it is your connection to eros, to goodness and joy and beauty, that will do the transforming. Most of us, to recover from something, can only solve the dilemma by moving to what energizes us, toward what we believe in and what will feed us in a deep way. So be that person who lights the way for others, and for yourself, when you are low and need some guidance.

30 STAY CLOSE TO YOUR FRIENDS, THE ONES YOU LOVE

Your friends are your gold. They will be a source of solace, joy, and open your mind to new abundances. Books. Ways of living. New ways of looking at things. So nurture those relationships. Be there for them and let them be there for you. Keep the river of love flowing between you. Engage in activities together. Make the time for lunch or a visit. Accept them. Keep things joyful. Share with them your victories and losses. That connection is a connection to life so engage in it and it will keep you feeling full of eros and in tune with the sea of humanity.

31 GIVE YOURSELF BREAKS DURING THE DAY

Even if it is to buy a face cream or get a coffee, give yourself these treats. Give your mind a break from worries or dealing with the challenges of work. Take a second for yourself. Walk if you can. Have a conversation with someone that is not related to work. Buy a gift for a child. Forward something that will make someone laugh. That keeps a flow of love and excitement running through you. Usually those breaks will have something to do with beauty so they will infuse your cells with a type of flower, so to speak.

32 DON'T FOCUS ON MONEY BUT DON'T IGNORE IT

We can't live without it, sadly, but it should not be our reason for being. That said, we do have to deal with the reality of its demands. The way to do that is live by your beliefs. Some people believe in living as if they have money when they don't and this is the life that makes them feel best. Some feel much better saving as much as they can. It depends a lot on what you have seen and probably on how you were brought up. Some people are drawn to luxury and some are not. But whichever way you like to live, Pay your bills. Accept gifts. Give gifts. Pay attention to your work. Always be doing something to enhance your income, if you need to. There is no sin in working a lot if you need to. It is better than being mired in debt. Work at what you love to pay your bills but work hard so you do pay your bills. Give yourself affordable treats and be willing to change if you have to.

33 THINK POSITIVELY

I know it can sometimes feel delusional but what else can we do? We have to keep trying as much as we can to accomplish our goals and it takes not giving up on our dreams and desires. You know in your heart if you will accomplish your desires. You will if you put your best efforts toward it. Keep irons in the fire and keep giving your best. Something will come of it. Don't keep your mind focused on what is not happening, but keep it focused on what you are doing so that good things will happen. Stick to your knitting and keep your eye on where you want to be. Don't let a day go by that you are not moving towards that.

34 BE GENEROUS

It is a way of expressing gratitude for life and all the abundances we have received. It will make your time on this earth meaningful. It will make others happy. It will be a way of being in dialogue with life. It will make other people feel safer in the world. It will relieve pain, yours and theirs. It is a way of living, a way of ethics. Most religions say to help one's neighbor or the stranger or the widow, and to some extent, we are all those people so when we help another, we are helping those parts of ourselves. Make being generous a philosophy for you. And never miss an opportunity if you are able to. This does not have to be in money. It can be in spending time, in listening, in making a visit to a sick friend, in sending a surprise book to someone. Whatever it is, be on the alert for ways you can be there for others.

35 KEEP ON GOING

Sometimes loneliness or no rewards for your efforts coming in will make you feel you are all wrong, which is the opposite of eros. Difficulties with people will have the same effect. Someone will say something to you that will feel unkind. The only answer is to go back to your to-do list and live it. Throw yourself into your duties and something will come of that. It is all we can do and that is the eros with which we meet each other. We all get thrown off our course, either through a common cold, or our computer breaking down, or a loved one's insensitivity. We have no control over these happenstances except to keep on keeping on and staying focused on what we know are the right activities we need to be engaged in. Getting back on track will seemingly get all of it back on track. The computer will get fixed or a solution found, your loved one will come back to you in some type of non verbal apology, your cold will go. Keep on going when it seems the vicissitudes are against you.

36 FACE YOUR WORRIES

They are usually much worse in your mind than in reality. Confronting the truth will lead to realistic solutions whereas ignoring them can lead to magical thinking. Optimism is good, blindness is not. Often we don't look at our problems because we don't want to change. But often those changes can be the best thing that ever happened to us because we took care of ourselves and those changes can open us to new adventures and to being in the right place. In addition, we often hide our worries because we think we might be a burden to people. But if we are open and truthful with people we trust, people will offer guidance or consoling words that will give us hope. It can change the whole picture. So be open about your worries first with yourself, where you write them down, and really wrestle with solutions. Then discuss your solutions and ideas with friends or family and see if they will stimulate even more interesting options for you. You will find yourself encountering the new in yourself and the new in life and that is eros.

37 LAUGH WITH FRIENDS

Choose a place you like to go to. Then pick friends who like to laugh and ask them to come with you to this place. Being there and being with people who face life with wit and perspective in that wit will revitalize you and strengthen you. It will make you forget your woes. It will be cleansing and keep you in the mood for joy, first, and creativity (which is what wit is). So one way to keep your “juice” flowing, is to be around people who make you laugh and whom you make laugh. It will feel like a celebration which is eros.



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38 REACH OUT IN LOVE

Sometimes you will think you are “nudging” the person you love, but in reality you are showing you care. Don’t be frightened to show love. Err on the side of being loving. It will come back to you. It is a philosophy of a way to live. Spread love. It is not humiliating to show you care for someone even if they don’t reach out as much as you do. That does not mean you text incessantly or not give them space to have their own feelings, but it does mean you send a loving email or make a loving call from time to time as a little gift. When you are confused about a relationship of any sort, the solution is always to choose to be loving. When in doubt, love. When in confusion, love.

39 KEEP YOUR APARTMENT TIDY. BREAK DOWN AND BUY FLOWERS SOMETIMES

You're worth it. Make your home a place that reflects your soul. Keep your favorite books around. Keep your favorite music on. Keep pictures up that make you happy and remind you of what means something to you. When you enter your home, you should feel supported by it. It is you and the place where you are fully yourself. Bring your interior out into the exterior in your home. Make yourself visible to yourself and others.

40 DON'T GIVE UP ON YOUR DREAMS

They can be hard to bring to fruition. They don't materialize into reality without many years and much effort. But never stop believing in them and trying. The reason? It is the fiber of you and the juice of you. Live your dreams as if you have already achieved them. In other words, be your dream. Your dream(s) may not ever bring success, through no fault of your own, but even the living of them is successful living. You can represent that standard for others, the standard of to thine own self be true, and that itself is a gift to the universe. Don't abandon yourself. If you don't, others won't.

41 TAKE CHANCES ON OPPORTUNITIES

Sometimes you may get an offer to do something that you have never done before and you can't quite see where it will lead. But the offer has merit and does involve your talents. So take it! Sometimes those very unexpected, unusual offers open doors. Say yes to life, in other words, as much as you can. Open doors. Be flexible. Listen to other people's suggestions and see what resonates. If you make a move, the world shifts a bit too and unexpected gifts lie in store for you. You cannot see them now, but they are there, beckoning. They come in the form of unexpected email requests, new friends, ideas that old friends suggest to you, random possibilities that come to your mind as you walk or drive.

42 EXERCISE

Indoors and outdoors. The expression, “sound body, sound mind” is true. You will feel better and stronger. Studies show you will live longer and feel and look younger as you age. It will make you feel more sexual. It will give some routine to your week. It will teach you about pushing yourself. It can be at a local Y. It does not have to be expensive. It can be walking, running, swimming, whatever it is. Make whatever you do physically easy for you (nearby) and pleasurable. And vary it. Go hiking when away. Or try horseback riding when traveling. Something to feel new muscles in your body. All that movement will revitalize your cells and circulate fresh blood.

43 FLIRT

What does that involve? Dressing well so you look your best all the time. Smiling. Meeting the moment with positive energy. Seeing another person with full intensity and curiosity. Being interested in another person. You may not want to be lovers but just the engaging in teasing and creative interplay will awaken your desire and make you feel desirable and this is the essence of life. To play is often confused with eros. The unexpected laughter, the dazzle of wit, an exchange where two people make the moment more alive, more full of surprise and connection.

44 GIVE A NEW LOVER A CHANCE

If you are single, you will meet people of all walks of life. You may think, he or she's not my type. This person makes a good friend, only. But you never know what someone will be to you. That's why it's good to spend time with different kinds of people. Some may become business contacts or associates. Some may become close friends. And one may become your mate. Be open. The key is always being open and not judging. Let life happen and meet each new person with an open heart and open mind. There is something to learn from everyone.

45 ASK FOR WHAT YOU WANT

Not demand, but ask. There is a Chinese poet who writes, “Ask until there is nothing left to ask.” Asking shifts energy. Asking means you are not powerless and can be your own agent and take care of yourself. Asking means you trust the other. Asking is engagement and intimacy. Others learn what it is you truly desire and they may not be able to deliver right away but they will mull about it and somehow get as close as they can to giving it to you. People are more understanding than we believe them to be. So ask and be surprised when you get a positive response when you least expect it. If you get a negative response, then you have learned valuable information. Knowledge helps you be realistic about what doors are open and what doors are closed and then you can be inventive in your solutions. Inventiveness is eros.

46 READ, READ, READ

Reading opens worlds to you as well as excitement and inspiration. Most novels are about people overcoming something they are wrestling with, either inside themselves or outside themselves. Non fiction books teach us about the world and how people manage there. All of it enlightens us and will give us ideas. Plus language itself is sexy. Language is a tool of seduction. Someone who speaks well is seductive. If you read a lot, you will naturally speak well.

47 GET OUTDOORS

The world is beautiful. Go to your calendar and book a hike with yourself. The smells, the vistas, the exertion all will bring your senses alive and joyous. If you do your hike with a friend or lover, all the better. You are sharing in this beauty. If you are not near trails or cannot arrange a weekend to be somewhere in nature, you know where there are great walks near you. Take one.



The advertisement for Factcards.nl features a dark grey background with a light blue logo consisting of two squares. Below the logo, the text 'Are you working in academia, research or science? And have you ever thought about working and moving to the Netherlands?' is displayed. Five colorful cards are shown, each with an icon, a title, and a page number: 'Arriving' (yellow, 33), 'Living' (green, 50), 'Studying' (red, 51), 'Working' (orange, 101), and 'Research' (purple, 50). To the right, a light grey box contains text about the website's offerings and a blue button labeled 'VISIT FACTCARDS.NL'.

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48 WORK HARD

There is no escaping that anything achieved takes effort. One has to push oneself. Oddly that drive and exertion is very enlivening. As the Japanese samurai said, Take rest after death. Push yourself. There will be times that you don't want to go over that project one more time, but you have to. In the end, your efforts and tenacity will come back to you. So push yourself and don't worry if people think you are crazy. It is none of their business. Stick to your standards and your vision. Make your project reflect who you are and your own intelligence. It is not about them.

49 LET YOURSELF FALL IN LOVE

Fall into it. Being in love is one of the joys of living. And whomever you fall in love with, whether it is requited or unrequited, has something to teach you. Usually we fall for the very traits in someone else that we would like to incorporate into ourselves. And we find, by falling in love, we start to transform and begin to have those traits. We exchange our best selves with each other and begin to add to our own being that which we admire in the other. This is one of the gifts of falling in love, among the joy of being timeless together.

50 ONE CAN FALL IN LOVE WITH A PLACE, TOO

That will happen many times in your life. One can go to a place and one's heart beats faster for just loving it. It speaks to your soul. It is the kind of place you feel alive in. Sometimes you can move somewhere and slowly come to see its beauty and fall in love slowly. It is such a marvelous thing. A place is like a love affair. Arriving in a seacoast town can stimulate feelings of freedom and poetry. Arriving in a vista where a river meanders by can bring you close to a need for tranquility and silence. Be open to all those feelings and let them become part of you.

51 TAKE A DRIVE WITH SOMEONE YOU LOVE

It is a most intimate time together, sharing the sights and being in your capsule and talking or being silent together, in motion. Like sharing a womb, and sharing love of each other and the world around you together. It is a time when you can ad lib together, decide to stop to look at a wooden bridge, or stop to go into a bookstore or have lunch, or both privately be taking in the dappled sun on the road. It is a time of being in the world together, while both having each other's undivided attention, and at the same time celebrating the beauty of the world around you.

52 GIVE COMPLIMENTS

That always makes people happy. Share them when you hear someone make one about a friend or loved one. Pass on anything that will make another person happy. Know that it is your job to be loving at all times. People love to feel special and admired. It gives them strength to face their challenges since so often we are very hard on ourselves. And giving a compliment enriches the complimenter as much as the receiver of compliments. You are giving a gift.

53 PLAY MUSIC FROM YOUR YOUTH

It will make you feel young, like going in a time capsule. Immediately you will feel you are in your twenties and start to move like you are in your twenties. Your young eros will just emerge right away. Your kookiness, dancing around, singing along, turning into a rock or soul star, will emerge. Those old songs will resonate in you and make time past, time present and make you forget your current woes. You will be in the celebration of music.

54 SLEEP CLOSE TO SOMEONE YOU LOVE

Sleep naked and entwined if you can. Give your partner a backrub before bed. Care for your loved one. Listen to his or her troubles. Tell them stories. Be close. It will do wonders for your blood flow, health, and wellbeing. It will relax you and make you feel less alone in the world, less up against it and it will do the same for your partner. Feeling another's leg in the night or arm or chest will strengthen both of you.

55 TELL SOMEONE SOMETHING THAT IS BOTHERING YOU

In fact, tell as many people as you trust what is bothering you to get insights that might help you. In areas where we are worried or stuck, our minds are not as creative as in other areas. Creativity is eros and where your creativity is bogged down, is where you need the most help. Help is nothing to be ashamed of. So open up about an inner worry and let others help you and share with you their creativity. They will feel as if they have accomplished something by helping you and you will feel as if your burdens are solvable, even if you have not cottoned onto a solution. You are on your way.

56 PLAY, PLAY, PLAY

That is the essence of eros. Play with a child, make up imaginary tales. Play with friends where you laugh. When you get a chance, bring lightness to life. Play with yourself by imagining things you want and letting yourself envision scenarios that might come true. That, in reality, is what déjà vu is. You already saw these events in your mind. Look at life as an event to enjoy. Play with co-workers. Make each moment one that is full of love and wonder, as children do. One where you are fully absorbed and present and in the moment. Not worrying or projecting or making decisions, but where you are just yourself there, playing, ready to have your imagination captured by the sound of a bird or the rustle of trees.

57 NEVER GIVE UP ON LOVE AND ROMANCE

No matter how old you are or how difficult life is. We each have a divine spark in us and someone will be electrified and grow through contact with our spark, intelligence, particular beauty and capability to love. So if your lover left you or you are alone, make the effort to be open to love. Just by being in that receptive mode, love will find its way to you. People will see the vulnerability and joy in you and want to be around you. Then keep your heart open and let whomever enters open new doors for you.



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58 TRUST FIRST AND FOREMOST YOUR INNER WISDOM

If something is getting in the way of your joy, take a walk, sit on a bench and listen to your inner voice. It knows what is right for you and it will bring back your joy. Your inner voice/mind is full of creative ideas, full of eros. You just have to let it open up. So give it a chance to speak. Sometimes it sounds when you write out what is in your heart. Sometimes it sounds when you are in nature. Give it a chance to give you the answers you need. It has the true ones, the ones that will not let you down, not rationales, but ones that are of your true self.

59 STAY THE COURSE

We hurt our knee. Our phone dies. We get colds. Our PCs crash. We have less money than we thought. Our lover is insensitive. It can knock the joy (eros) out of us, but instead, take the anti-inflam drug (you have no choice), be patient with it, accept that it will pass, endure through the ordeal of technology hell, it too will pass. You will lose things all along in your life, objects and people that you thought you could not live without, but you will find that the essence of eros is ever-renewing. Hemingway lost a suitcase of all his work (before PCs) but just sat right down and got back to work. That is all we can do. Stay being who you are, in love with the beauties and magic of life, and eros will build a home in your soul and be a place for you to always come back to.