

7 secrets of a joyful life

Wayne Dyer's feel-good guide

By Glenn Plaskin

You need to take
time to get quiet,
to go within.

HOW DO WE CREATE THE LIVES WE dream of? To many, the way to prosperity and emotional contentment is dogged determination and sheer resolve, which is the approach prized by super-achievers driven by discipline and hard work. The logic? The more single-minded we become, the greater chance we have of success.

Not true! Psychologist Wayne Dyer, Ph.D., author of 22 self-empowerment books, describes a new approach to fulfillment in his latest book, also a PBS TV special, titled *The Power of Intention: Learning to Co-create Your World Your Way* (Hay House).

Rather than trying to control the world around

Contributing editor Glenn Plaskin lives in New York.

us, Dyer believes we can allow our natural abilities and positive traits to emerge by tapping into what he calls the Power of Intention: the capacity for joy, creativity and kindness built into each of us.

"Intention is not something you do," says Dyer, "but rather a force that exists in the universe as an invisible field of energy—a power that can carry us."

Where is this field?

"Where is it not?" exclaims the 63-year-old, speaking from his home in Maui. "A caterpillar, a tiny acorn, an apple blossom all have intention built into them. That caterpillar becomes a butterfly, the acorn a giant oak tree, the apple blossom an apple. Intention doesn't err. The acorn never turns into a pumpkin! Every aspect of nature has intention built in.

"In my body, intention grows my fingernails, it beats my heart, it digests my food, it writes my books—and it does this for everyone and everything in the universe."

Dyer says that he was inspired to write his new book the day he realized that "accessing the power of intention relieved me of so much of the seemingly impossible work of striving to fulfill desires by sheer force of will."

Since that defining moment, Dyer, always an optimist, has welcomed only positive intention into his life: "When you call my cell phone, you'll hear this message: 'This is Wayne Dyer, and I want to feel good! If your message is intended to do anything other than that, then you've got the wrong number.'"

We asked Dyer to share some concrete ways to tap into "the power of inten-

tion" in order to produce more inner joy and harmonious relationships.

FC: What is intention?

Dyer: It's the difference between motivation and inspiration. Motivation is when you get hold of an idea and don't let go of it until you make it a reality. Inspiration is the reverse—when an idea gets hold of you and you feel compelled to let that impulse or energy carry you along. You get to a point where you realize that you're no longer in charge, that there's a driving force inside you that can't be stopped. Look at the greatest athletes, musicians, artists and writers. They all tap into a source.

FC: What is that source?

Dyer: Some call that source God or soul or spirit or consciousness.

FC: What if you are not religious?

Dyer: It has nothing to do with religion. I'm talking about a source of energy that lives within each of us.

FC: Tell us about what you call the Seven Faces of Intention: creativity, kindness, love, beauty, expansion, abundance and receptivity.

Dyer: All seven are expressions of what I imagine that source to look like. First, the very fact that we exist is proof to me

Psychology

Continued from page 59

that the nature of that source is creative at its core. And there isn't a person reading this who does not have a gnawing sense inside that there's something they're here to do, something creative.

I always say: Don't die with your music still inside you. Listen to your intuitive inner voice and find what passion stirs your soul. When you do this, you're also tapping into another face of intention: love. If you're doing what you love and loving what you do—whatever it is—you can make a living at it!

FC: But fear stops people.

Dyer: Yes, it does. In fact, Marianne Williamson has

written that there are really only two primary emotions in the universe, love and fear. So anytime you're feeling anxious, insecure, worried, angry or resentful, you've left love and entered fear.

FC: How can we counteract that?

Dyer: The most profound and important thing a person can do to erase fear and access the power of intention is repeating these five key words: *I want to feel good!* This is the same thing as saying: I want to feel spirit, I want to be in harmony with the source of well-being.

FC: Repeating those words will make a difference?

Dyer: It's been proven that the thoughts we

choose have everything to do with our emotions. I can tell you that a commitment to feeling good can take away a stomachache, fear, depression, sadness, anxiety—you name it. Any stress signal is a way of alerting you to say the five magic words: *I want to feel good.* This is your intention to be tranquil and stress free—and it's a way of connecting to spirit.

FC: Do you know anyone who has mastered this?

Dyer: Just watch babies. They're in a constant state of love. How could they possibly be so joyful? Because they're in harmony with the source. They have no resistance to being joyful—unlike adults. You didn't come forth into this

world to suffer, to be anxious, fearful or depressed. Remember, your thoughts, not your world, cause you stress. And you can change your thoughts.

FC: In fact, you say that one of the fastest ways to transform fear into love and tap into the source is through another face of intention—kindness.

Dyer: Absolutely true. Choosing to be kind is also a choice to make the Power of Intention active in your life. The beneficial effects of kindness on the immune system and the increased production of serotonin have been proven. Conversely, unkindness weakens the body and puts us into a state of dissonance. So extend acts of kindness; ask for nothing in return.

FC: Is this realistic for non-saints?

Dyer: [Laughter] We're all saints! That's the whole point. We all have built into us this intention, the capacities for kindness and creativity and beauty. It's a matter of perspective. As Einstein said, "The single most important decision any of us will ever make is whether or not to believe that the universe is friendly." It's your choice.

FC: But it's a pretty violent, messy planet, isn't it?

Dyer: It is. But for every act of violence and messiness there are a million acts of kindness and goodness. It just depends where you look. And when I look around at virtually anyone or anything on the planet, I can see another face of intention—beauty.

FC: In an effort to practice kindness, you recommend viewing every human encounter as a "holy relationship," the ability to celebrate and honor others, no matter who. But what about

Eight ways to tap into the power of intention and feel great every day



1 Make meditation a regular practice in your life. You need to take time to get quiet, to go within, and from this silence make conscious contact with the source of intention. You're already connected to everything that you perceive as missing from your life; go within and realign.

2 Become conscious of the foods you eat. Foods high in alkalinity such as fruits, vegetables, nuts, soy, nonyeast breads and virgin olive oil are high-energy foods and will strengthen you, while highly acidic foods such as flour-based cereals, meats, dairy and sugars lower energy and will weaken you.

3 Retreat from low-energy substances. Alcohol, cigarettes, caffeine, sugar and virtually all artificial drugs,

legal or otherwise, lower your body's energy level and weaken you.

4 Become aware of the energy level of the music you listen to. Some rap music—filled with profanity and messages about killing, for example—is an energy drain, while music that has a more soothing impact on the soul has been proven to be beneficial.

5 Become aware of the energy levels of your home environment. Make your home a nurturing, cheerful and peaceful environment.

6 Reduce your exposure to low-energy commercial television. Children see 12,000 simulated murders on TV before their 14th birthday! Television news puts a heavy emphasis on the bad and the ugly, leaving out the good.

7 Enhance your energy field with photographs. Every photograph contains energy. Carry and display photos taken in moments of happiness, love and receptivity.

8 Become conscious of the energy levels of your acquaintances, friends and extended family. Choose to be in close proximity to those who are empowering, who see the greatness in you, who feel connected to spirit.

Psychology

Continued from page 60

when you encounter people who are irritating, rude or even destructive?

Dyer: Generally, I try to stop myself from getting frustrated. I'm not a hundred percent successful, but I'm a thousand times better than I used to be. Anyone who's angry, nasty or rude is really offering a plea to be loved. I play a game with myself, trying to convert them from what I call low-energy emotions that drain us—frustration, irritation, anger and impatience—into high-energy emotions that sustain us—love, caring, kindness.

FC: How do you do it?

Dyer: By asking that surly waiter or harried airline clerk something about themselves or by expressing empathy. "Where are you from? It must be tough standing on your feet for eight hours." Anything to let a person know that, in that moment, I'm thinking more about them than about myself. And you know what happens? Instantly you see a smile.

FC: So paired with kindness would be another face of intention, what you call receptivity. No one and no thing is rejected?

Dyer: Exactly. Whenever you have a thought that excludes or judges anyone else, you aren't defining them. You're defining yourself as someone who needs to judge others.

FC: But don't we all judge one another?

Dyer: Yes, we do. But doing that less is one of those things we want to practice. Anytime I judge another harshly, I always find myself feeling worse.

FC: So when you're feeling offended by others....

Dyer: Remember this

rule: Stop taking yourself so seriously! Get your ego out of the way and connect back to kindness—that from which you came.

FC: In your book, you write that a controlling ego is intention's enemy.

Dyer: Ego is the part of us that believes: I am what I have. I am what I do. I am what others think of me. All this is just an illusion. The problem? If you *are* what you *do*, then who are you when you don't do it any longer? If you are what you *have*—then when you

understand scarcity—something that it is not! People pray: "Please give me more..." Or, "Please heal me." If you do this, you'll only attract more scarcity into your life. You can't think about what's missing in your life, what you don't like, or what "they" want for you.

FC: What's the difference between will and intent?

Dyer: Will is the idea that I'm going to *make* this thing happen. Intent is inspiration—allowing it to take place. I don't say that

make it Good. The two words are interchangeable.) It just means allowing this divine source of kindness, beauty and creativity to be the dominant force in your life—whatever you're doing. I truly believe that God writes all the books and builds all the bridges. Sure, I sit down for six or seven hours a day with my pen and pads—but the message moves through me and I just *allow*.

FC: And when we're able to align ourselves with the

When you see yourself as a piece of God, then you see yourself as connected to everyone and everything.

no longer have it, you no longer have any value!

The truth is that we are all spiritual beings. And when you see yourself as a piece of God, then you see yourself as connected to everything and everyone.

FC: In that heightened state, you write that we're more likely to tap into the faces of expansion and abundance.

Dyer: Absolutely. We need to connect with the image of an expanding source—one which never becomes stagnant or gets tired of growing and improving. And when we see there are no limits to our potential, we can tap into abundance knowing there's more than enough.

FC: So often, it seems people don't believe there's enough to go around, so they pray for what's missing in their lives. Is that helpful?

Dyer: Not at all. The biggest mistake we make is asking the source to un-

will is bad. But it's the work of the ego—believing that we are controlling everything—rather than surrendering to the source energy that is greater than any of us. In my children's bedroom, I framed this message: "Good morning. This is God. I will be handling all of your problems today. I will not need your help, so have a miraculous day!"

FC: But if you let God handle everything, you'd never bother to go to work, pay your bills or do your laundry.

Dyer: That's not true. God goes to work with you and does the laundry with you too. There's no place that God is not.

FC: But you can't just wake up in the morning and do nothing.

Dyer: It's not about doing nothing. In the recovery movement, they call what I'm talking about letting go and letting God. (If you're uncomfortable with the word God, just add an *o* and

power of intention, how will our lives change?

Dyer: I think you'll experience calmness where there used to be anxiety. You'll leave others feeling energized, so people will want to be around you. You'll start seeing miracles showing up—the right person, unanticipated abundance. You'll feel like you're collaborating with the universe instead of it working against you.

FC: Finally, you write that, "Your job is not to say *how*—it's to say *yes*!" What do you mean?

Dyer: I mean that the answer to *how* is *yes*! When you say yes to life, you attract divine guidance. When you're inspired, you're collaborating with fate. Everything starts working for you.

FC: You say that *yes* is the breath of creation.

Dyer: [Laughter] All you have to do is watch a flower beginning to bloom. That is the breath of *yes*! **FC**