

Phil is a contemporary mystic, a man whose life is a living commitment to spiritual service. I am honored to know him.

—from the Foreword by Caroline Myss, author of *Defy Gravity*



THROUGH  
GOD'S  
EYES

Finding Peace and Purpose  
in a Troubled World

PHIL BOLSTA

## SEE EVERY MOMENT AS A GIFT

This sample chapter is from Phil Bolsta's book,  
*Through God's Eyes:*  
*Finding Peace and Purpose in a Troubled World*

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# THIRTEEN

**SEE EVERY MOMENT AS A GIFT**

*You cannot avoid paradise. You can only avoid seeing it.*

—CHARLOTTE JOKO BECK

## SEE EVERY MOMENT AS A GIFT

When you surrender to Divine Will with unwavering faith and trust, every moment becomes a gift.

*The Master gives himself up to whatever the moment brings.*

—LAO TZU

## MAKING THE SHIFT

All it takes is a shift of perspective to recognize and appreciate life's gifts, even when—especially when—what you are experiencing seems like anything but a gift.

*Though outwardly a gloomy shroud,  
The inner half of every cloud  
Is bright and shining:  
I therefore turn my clouds about  
And always wear them inside out  
To show the lining.*

—ELLEN THORNEYCROFT FOWLER

Caroline Myss urges her readers to develop “symbolic sight,” to probe beneath the surface of experiences so they can better understand how life events are woven into the tapestry of Divine design.

*Discovery consists of seeing what everybody has seen and thinking what nobody has thought.*

—ALBERT SZENT-GYÖRGYI

Interpreting events, relationships, and challenges symbolically, rather than literally, helps you perceive the deeper meaning of life experiences.

*Every now and then a man's mind is stretched by a new idea or sensation, and never shrinks back to its former dimensions.*

—OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

Every event has a purpose; sometimes you get to see the reason, sometimes you don't. The scope of your symbolic sight is relative to your level of consciousness.

*Experience is the toughest teacher because she gives the test first, and then the lesson.*

—UNKNOWN

Unplug from the need to know why something happened and trust that behind the event is a message of Divine empowerment. As soon as you make that shift, the message can be delivered.

*The universe is like a safe to which there is a combination. But the combination is locked up in the safe.*

—PETER DEVRIES

Developing your symbolic sight opens wide the gates of wisdom. But beware: Approach these gates with humility and reverence or they will slam shut as quickly as they opened.

*If you forget your feelings about things of the world, they become enlightening teachings. If you get emotional about enlightening teaching, it becomes a worldly thing.*

—MUSO KOKUSHI

## ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE

Look beyond the illusory “negative” aspects of an event and you may discover the golden nugget of Divine wisdom lying just beneath the details.

*Everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it.*

—CONFUCIUS

Seek to find beauty in everything you look at and you will find it. Invite beauty into your life and your life becomes more beautiful.

*Why do some people always see beautiful skies and grass and lovely flowers and incredible human beings while others are hard-pressed to find anything or any place that is beautiful?*

—LEO BUSCAGLIA

Accepting whatever life delivers to you with humility and gratitude naturally leads you to act more positively in every situation, which in turn produces more favorable outcomes.

*Things turn out best for the people who make the best out of the way things turn out.*

—ART LINKLETTER

Every ordinary moment is bursting with extraordinary opportunities to reinvent yourself. The only thing stopping you, the only thing that *can* stop you, is the self-imposed limit of your imagination.

*A day dawns, quite like other days; in it a single hour comes, quite like other hours; but in that day and in that hour the chance of a lifetime faces us.*

—MALTBIE D. BABCOCK

The beauty of reframing even the most challenging of moments as a gift is that doing so is a gift in itself. Even if the “divine purpose” you identify is wildly off the mark, the act of searching for meaning and purpose raises your consciousness, which ultimately leads you to live your life with more meaning and purpose.

*It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see.*

—HENRY DAVID THOREAU

Granted, such an exercise is unthinkable in the wake of tragic events. At such times, we must go deeper into our faith and turn to our loved ones in the hope of finding some measure of comfort and healing.

*Don't think that the person who is trying to comfort you now lives untroubled among the simple and quiet words that sometimes give you pleasure. His life has much trouble and sadness, and remains far behind yours. If it were otherwise, he would never have been able to find those words.*

—RAINER MARIA RILKE

In this way, even if only a sliver of light penetrates our darkest moments, there is light nonetheless; and where there is light, there is the gift of hope.

*Two men look out through the same bars:  
One sees the mud, and one the stars.*

—FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE

## FRESH APPRECIATION

In time, viewing every moment as a gift orchestrated by Divine Intelligence becomes ingrained in your consciousness.

*The happiest man is he who learns from nature the lesson of worship.*

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

No matter where you are, no matter what the circumstances, you see the hand of God at work.

*Whoever does not see God in every place does not see God in any place.*

—RABBI ELIMELECH

THROUGH GOD'S EYES

Look at the world through God's eyes and the beauty and majesty of a falling leaf will leave you breathless.

*We look too much to museums. The sun coming up in the morning is enough.*

—ROMARE BEARDEN

The sun has risen every morning since the world began; yet if we were fully present and our vision were pure, we would greet each sunrise with rejoicing.

*Where others see but the dawn coming over the hill, I see the sons of God shouting for joy.*

—WILLIAM BLAKE

Walk through nature and listen as the meadows, trees, and birds serenade you with the celebratory song that echoes joyously throughout all creation.

*Where is the fountain that throws up these flowers in a ceaseless outbreak of ecstasy?*

—RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Some of life's greatest gifts lie hidden in unpleasant obligations, waiting for you to activate your symbolic sight and greet them with reverence rather than reluctance.

*If you begin to live life looking for the God that is all around you, every moment becomes a prayer.*

—FRANK BIANCO

You need not look far for examples. Washing a sink full of dirty dishes may mean you have enjoyed a night surrounded by loved ones. Paying the bills could mean you have been blessed with a source of income to provide for your family.

*Most human beings have an almost infinite capacity for taking things for granted.*

—ALDOUS HUXLEY



Expressing gratitude for such opportunities as they occur adds depth and meaning to even the most mundane tasks.

*This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.*

—PSALMS 118:24

Similarly, frustrations and disappointments with loved ones can be reframed as opportunities to foster empathy and intimacy.

*Change the way you look at things, and the things you look at change.*

—WAYNE DYER

Instead of allowing your buttons to get pushed, set aside your fears and respond with love. A less-than-stellar report card is an invitation to deepen your bond with your child through extended study sessions. A maxed-out credit card sets the stage for a breakthrough discussion with your spouse about values and unfulfilled emotional needs.

*The more sand has escaped from the hourglass of our life, the clearer we should see through it.*

—JOHANN RICHTER

## A TIMELESS, ETERNAL REALM

Savoring little moments throughout the day does not slow down time; it just feels like it does.

*We do not remember days, we remember moments.*

—CESARE PAVESE

Slipping a loving note in your child's lunchbox or squeezing your spouse's hand during a movie makes your heart sing and also brings you closer to God. Why? Consciously adding love to the world puts you squarely in the present moment; and that is where God lives.

*Love is the ultimate force at the heart of the universe.*

—DEEPAK CHOPRA

The present moment has no duration; in a flash, it is gone, and yet all of life is contained within the borders of the ever-changing now.

*The passage of time, though absolute and inescapable, is more a function of psychology and perspective than a physical reality.*

—TOBY JOHNSON

The present moment is the only moment you have ever had, and the only moment you will ever have.

*My friend, the sufi is the son of the present moment:  
to say tomorrow is not our way.*

—RUMI

The present moment is both ephemeral and infinite; it exists outside of time, which means presence is a timeless state of being.

*If past to future is on a horizontal line, then the present moment is not in time, but a vertical movement transcending time.*

—OSHO

Timelessness is your natural state, and the present moment patiently waits to welcome you home.

*You would measure time the measureless and the immeasurable.  
You would adjust your conduct and even direct the course of your  
spirit according to hours and seasons.  
Of time you would make a stream upon whose bank you would sit  
and watch its flowing.  
Yet the timeless in you is aware of life's timelessness,  
And knows that yesterday is but today's memory and tomorrow is  
today's dream.  
And that that which sings and contemplates in you is still dwelling  
within the bounds of that first moment which scattered the stars  
into space.*

—KAHLIL GIBRAN

Through its link to the Divine Mind, the present moment is a portal to infinity and life everlasting.

*If we take eternity to mean not infinite temporal duration but  
timelessness, then eternal life belongs to those who live in the present.*

—LUDWIG WITGENSTEIN

Step into the stillness, the timelessness, of the present moment and you will be perfectly positioned to view the world through God's eyes.

*One instant is eternity; eternity is in the now. When you see through  
this one instant, you see through the one who sees.*

—WU MEN HUI-K'AI

Your capacity to be fully present expands dramatically when you stop identifying yourself as a time-bound human being separate from others, and start experiencing life as a timeless spiritual being at one with all creation.

*There are three words that convey the secret of the art of living, the  
secret of all success and happiness: One With Life. Being one with life  
is being one with Now. You then realize that you don't live your life,  
but life lives you. Life is the dancer, and you are the dance.*

—ECKHART TOLLE

It is your intuition that is your lifeline to Spirit, to the ever-alert, ever-present observer within you. Deepak Chopra describes this “observer in the midst of observation” as “the timeless factor in every time-bound experience.”

*Just as a person can watch through a screen a crowd of people in front of him, without himself being seen by them, so the soul through the screen of intuition watches all its thoughts.*

—PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

The timeless, eternal realm of the present moment is so saturated with Spirit that the ego, forever bound to the material world of space and time, is, by definition, barred from entering.

*God himself culminates in the present moment, and will never be more divine in the lapse of all the ages.*

—HENRY DAVID THOREAU

The ego looks only to the past or the future. Your past perceptions, memories, and experiences, after all, are the source of the ego's body-bound identity.

*Yesterday and tomorrow are humanity's downfall. Today you may be aroused toward God. But yesterday and tomorrow pull you back.*

—REBBE NACHMAN OF BRESLOV

It is your future that is the ego's favorite destination, because if *you* have a future, *its* survival is assured.

*To be identified with your mind is to be trapped in time: the compulsion to live almost exclusively through memory and anticipation. This creates an endless preoccupation with past and future and an unwillingness to honor and acknowledge the present moment and allow it to be. The compulsion arises because the past gives you an identity and the future holds the promise of salvation, of fulfillment in whatever form. Both are illusions.*

—ECKHART TOLLE

## ANCHORED IN THE PRESENT

While being fully present is a goal worth striving for, it is *how* you live in the moment that matters most.

*Let your life lightly dance on the edges of Time like dew on the tip of a leaf.*

—RABINDRANATH TAGORE

Abide in the *now*, surrender to Divine Will, and your thoughts, words, and actions will naturally align with that which is right.

*Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things which matter least.*

—JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

Melt into oneness with the Divine Mind and you gather the entirety of the Universe in your loving embrace. Distinctions of self and Self drop away as if they had never been.

*All that is, is holy.*

—ANCIENT WISDOM

You are serenely centered yet intensely aware that every moment is imbued with infinite depth and power.

*Look at everything as though you are seeing it for the first or last time. Then your time on earth will be filled with glory.*

—BETTY SMITH

Stay anchored in the present moment and you will know the joy of living a life without limits.

*Everything you wish to eventually achieve, you can have right now, if you don't refuse it to yourself. And this means taking no notice of the past, trusting the future to providence, and living now in union with faith and justice.*

—MARCUS AURELIUS

You are fully present in those moments when love and joy consume you and bliss is your only option.

*Time is a factory where everyone slaves away  
Earning enough love to break their own chains.*

—HAFIZ

In those transcendent moments, there is no past, there is no future, there is only the welcoming embrace of eternity.

*“Why aren’t you dancing with joy at this very moment?” is the only  
relevant spiritual question.*

—VILAYAT INAYAT KHAN

How do you practice being present and mindful, especially when juggling your daily obligations demands all your mental energy? *Pay attention to what you are paying attention to.*

*The moment one gives close attention to anything, even a blade  
of grass, it becomes a mysterious, awesome, indescribably  
magnified world in itself.*

—HENRY MILLER

When your attention wanders and you feel pulled in multiple directions, your awareness is fragmented and your happiness is compromised by the stresses of past events and the weight of future expectations.

*We do not rest satisfied with the present. We anticipate the future  
as too slow in coming, as if in order to hasten its course; or we  
recall the past, to stop its too rapid flight. So imprudent are we  
that we wander in the times which are not ours, and do not think  
of the only one which belongs to us; and so idle are we that we  
dream of those times which are no more, and thoughtlessly  
overlook that which alone exists. . . . The present is never our end.  
The past and the present are our means; the future alone is our  
end. So we never live, but we hope to live; and, as we are always  
preparing to be happy, it is inevitable we should never be so.*

—BLAISE PASCAL

Certainly, it is useful and often necessary to look at the past (for analyzing) or the future (for planning). As long as you maintain acute awareness, your mind and spirit remain fully engaged in the *now*.

*It's okay to glance backward, just don't stare.*

—STEPHEN M. POLLAN AND MARK LEVINE

Dive joyously into the boundless depths of the present moment, and the past and the future will serenely bow before you.

*Yesterday is but a dream, tomorrow is only a vision. But today, well lived, makes every yesterday a dream of happiness, and every tomorrow a vision of hope. Look well, therefore, to this day, for it is life, the very life of life.*

—SANSKRIT PROVERB

## A RUSHING RIVER

When you walk into the present moment, the scattered imaginings of your anxious mind fall away and life unfolds effortlessly and harmoniously.

*When you live fully focused in the present, instead of always in plans and efforts for the future, things begin to flow to you from that very future, it seems. Full awareness from moment to moment seems to put you in the cosmic flow where things happen without pushing.*

—ELISABET SAHTOURIS

The less you resist what life has given you, the greater your presence. That does not mean that you stop trying to change things for the better; it means accepting that you cannot change what has already happened.

*Now is a rushing river. There are those who would hug the shore, but there is no shore. Push off into the stream. Hold your head above the fray. See who else is in the midst of things, and celebrate.*

—NATIVE AMERICAN WISDOM

Living in the rushing river of the present moment requires diligence and will power; it is all too easy to get swept away by the crosscurrents of daily living.

*The golden moments in the stream of life rush past us, and we see nothing but sand; the angels come to visit us, and we only know them when they are gone.*

—GEORGE ELIOT

Let regular occurrences and daily rituals—a ringing phone, brushing your teeth, starting your car—serve as reminders to return to the *now*.

*This moment deserves your full attention, for it will not pass your way again.*

—DAN MILLMAN

When you are fully present, fears and worries evaporate and you are “in the zone,” operating at peak capacity.

*Present-moment living, getting in touch with your “now,” is at the heart of effective living. When you think about it, there really is no other moment you can ever live. Now is all there is, and the future is just another present moment to live when it arrives.*

—WAYNE DYER

You are authentically being who you are, and on the fast track to becoming all that you are meant to be.

*All that you are, you are right now. All that you can be, begins in this moment. Now is a great place to be. For when you live it fully, with love, with gratitude, with purpose, anything is possible.*

—RALPH MARSTON

With the clarity of higher consciousness, you honor every moment as sacred, and recognize every act of concentration as an act of consecration.



*The art of life is to live in the present moment, and to make that moment as perfect as we can by the realization that we are the instruments and expression of God Himself.*

—EMMET FOX

When you inhabit the present moment, life is always fresh and new and brimming over with opportunities for adventure.

*The passing moment is all we can be sure of; it is only common sense to extract its utmost value from it.*

—W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

Indeed, the present moment is laden with gifts. Resolve to unwrap each one with anticipation and gratitude.

*Whatever the present moment contains, accept it as if you had chosen it. Always work with it, not against it. Make it your friend and ally, not your enemy. This will miraculously transform your whole life.*

—ECKHART TOLLE

Look beyond the present moment for life's treasures and you will find only pale imitations.

*The value of moments, when cast up, is immense, if well employed; if thrown away, their loss is irrevocable.*

—PHILIP LORD CHESTERFIELD

Defer the peace, joy, and contentment available to you *right now* and you defer life itself.

*A life uncommanded now is uncommanded; a life unenjoyed now is unenjoyed; a life not lived wisely now is not lived wisely.*

—DAVID GRAYSON

## A GIVING HEART

Appreciation of the moment naturally expresses itself through appreciation of others. You recognize the fragility of life on this earth and vow that you will not leave any words unspoken with those you love.

*If you had an hour to live and could make just one phone call, who would it be to, what would you say . . . and why are you waiting?*

—STEPHEN LEVINE

A grateful heart is a giving heart. As awareness of God's presence grows, so too does generosity of spirit.

*Do things for people not because of who they are or what they do in return, but because of who you are.*

—RABBI HAROLD S. KUSHNER

As your heart expands, so does your capacity for joy, empathy, patience, and respect for others.

*We can only be said to be alive in those moments when our hearts are conscious of our treasure.*

—THORNTON WILDER

Every step toward enlightenment deepens your appreciation for the unique gifts, hopes, and dreams that every individual brings to the world.

*Your neighbor's vision is as true for him as your own vision is true for you.*

—MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO

Look at every person you meet through God's eyes, and you will view every encounter as a reminder to be kinder.

*Wherever there is a human being, there exists the opportunity for an act of kindness.*

—LUCIUS ANNAEUS SENECA

Touching another's heart through kindness is one of the most precious and wonderful gifts you can offer.

*To touch the soul of another human being is to walk on holy ground.*

—STEPHEN R. COVEY

Knowing that God is working through you to let others know that they are loved and cherished changes you, makes you better, and brings you to your knees in humility and gratitude.

*Kindness can become its own motive. We are made kind by being kind.*

—ERIC HOFFER

## WHOM SHALL YOU BLESS?

Sharing the joy in your heart through kindness to others is the equivalent of sending a thank you card to God.

*When a person does a good deed when he doesn't have to, God looks down and says, "For this moment alone, it was worth creating the world."*

—THE TALMUD

The more you consciously practice kindness, the more you unconsciously become kinder.

*Perfect kindness acts without thinking of kindness.*

—LAO TZU

Each act of kindness naturally leads to another. There is nothing so satisfying as making someone's day.

*You cannot live a perfect day without doing something for someone who will never be able to repay you.*

—JOHN WOODEN

When you feel guided to perform a kindness, act on it at once. Wait too long and circumstances may fan the flames of remorse.

*You cannot do a kindness too soon because you never know how soon it will be too late.*

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Whom shall you bless with your kindness? Whoever is in front of you and in need of your compassion. They have crossed your path for a reason.

*Since you cannot do good to all, you are to pay special regard to those who, by the accidents of time, or place, or circumstance, are brought into closer connection with you.*

—SAINT AUGUSTINE

You may never know how your simple acts of kindness—a friendly smile and greeting, carrying someone's groceries, offering a few quarters to an exasperated driver at a parking meter—touches others' hearts or restores their faith in humanity.

*The world needs all of our power and love and energy, and each of us has something to give. The trick is to find it and use it, to find it and give it away, so there will always be more. We can be lights for each other, and through each other's illumination we will see the way. Each of us is a seed, a silent promise, and it is always spring.*

—MERLE SHAIN

Your kind words and actions may prove to be life-changing—and perhaps even life-saving—to those whom society considers invisible or irrelevant.

*Seek to do brave and lovely things which are left undone by the majority of people. Give gifts of love and peace to those whom others pass by.*

—PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

When you are kind to another, the message you deliver is: *You are worthy of receiving special attention.*

*Everyone has an invisible sign hanging from his or her neck saying, "Make me feel important!" Never forget this message when working with people.*

—MARY KAY ASH

It is not the act of kindness itself that touches people, it is the caring, the love, the compassion that accompanies it.

*They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel.*

—FREDERICK BUECHNER

## THE KARMA OF KINDNESS

Your kind gestures may inspire others to act in kind, and perhaps set off chain reactions of good will that karmically circle back to you.

*One of the most difficult things to give away is kindness—it is usually returned.*

—CORT R. FLINT

Before your kindness returns to you, it will gladden hearts, uplift spirits, and energetically connect you to countless others who would have otherwise remained strangers.

*Start some kind word on its travels. There is no telling where the good it may do will stop.*

—WILFRED GRENFELL

Though your kindnesses may fade into the mists of time, they will live on in the hearts and souls of those who were fortunate enough to be graced by your generous spirit.

*On that best portion of a good man's life,  
His little nameless unremembered acts  
Of kindness and of love.*

—WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Kindness is the greatest legacy that you can bequeath to the countless generations yet to come.

*A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots spring up and make new trees. The greatest work that kindness does to others is that it makes them kind themselves.*

—AMELIA EARHART

Kindness, by definition, requires humility, purity of intent, and a willingness to put another person's needs before your own.

*Humility must accompany all our actions, must be with us everywhere; for as soon as we glory in our good works they are of no further value to our advancement in virtue.*

—SAINT AUGUSTINE

An act of kindness tainted by your ego's desire for recognition or reward will karmically backfire faster than you can say, "Look how thoughtful I am."

*Verily the kindness that gazes upon itself in a mirror turns to stone,  
And a good deed that calls itself by tender names becomes the parent  
to a curse.*

—KAHLIL GIBRAN

When your intent is pure, you become a channel of Divine love, and your every act of kindness is imbued with God's grace.

*Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.*

—REV. JOHN WATSON

Ultimately, we are all messengers. Let kindness be the message you deliver to the world. From this moment forward, consider yourself an emissary of the angels.

*You may be the only Bible somebody else reads.*

—MARK TWAIN

## THE KINDNESS CHALLENGE

Your life as an earth angel will begin when you learn how to think with your heart as well as your mind.

*The prudence of the best heads is often defeated by the tenderness of the best hearts.*

—HENRY FIELDING

Of course, no matter how kind you are, others may be having a bad day. Or a bad life. Let their rudeness serve as a good reminder to never treat others that way yourself.

*Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible.*

—HIS HOLINESS THE 14TH DALAI LAMA

Indeed, this is why many people enter your life, to challenge you to look through God's eyes, transcend human pettiness, and serve as a channel of Divine loving energy.

*Let no one ever come to you without leaving better and happier.  
Be the living expression of God's kindness; kindness in your face,  
kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness in your  
warm greeting.*

—MOTHER TERESA

Even if those people walk away scowling, the love and light you sent them is helping them in some small way to heal.

*Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them  
to become what they are capable of being.*

—JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE

Choose kindness, and you are acting selflessly in ways that serve God and all the world.

*What sunshine is to flowers, smiles are to humanity. They are but  
trifles, to be sure; but scattered along life's pathway, the good they  
do is inconceivable.*

—JOSEPH ADDISON

Choose to be anything but kind, and you are acting selfishly in ways that serve only your own ego.

*In a controversy the instant we feel anger we have already ceased  
striving for the truth, and have begun striving for ourselves.*

—BUDDHA

Think, speak, or act in a mean-spirited way and you harm yourself as well as others. When meanness takes up residence in your heart, peace and kindness are evicted and God is barred from entering.

*Nobody appears inferior to us when our heart is kindled with  
kindness.*

—HAZRAT INAYAT KHAN



You cannot begin to grasp the meaning and purpose of life until kindness has touched your soul and softened your heart.

*Kindness is more important than wisdom, and the recognition of this is the beginning of wisdom.*

—THEODORE ISAAC RUBIN

## MYSTERIES AND MIRACLES

Welcoming every moment as a gift provides revealing glimpses into the mysteries of the Universe.

*A mature sense of wonder does not need the constant titillation of the sensational to keep it alive. It is most often called forth by a confrontation with the mysterious depth of meaning at the heart of the familiar and quotidian.*

—SAM KEEN

Slip any random moment under a metaphysical microscope and you will find that it contains the DNA of God's master plan.

*Life will give you whatever experience is most helpful for the evolution of your consciousness. How do you know this is the experience you need? Because this is the experience you are having at this moment.*

—ECKHART TOLLE

You would then understand why every thought you think, every word you speak, every step you take is an outright miracle cloaked in the guise of an ordinary moment.

*Our true home is in the present moment. To live in the present moment is a miracle. The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green Earth in the present moment, to appreciate the peace and beauty that are available now.*

—THICH NHAT HANH

This awareness presents a thought-provoking choice. You can view ordinary moments as miracles or miracles as ordinary moments.

*The invariable mark of wisdom is to see the miraculous in the common.*

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Your perspective depends on how you define “ordinary.” The higher you elevate your consciousness, the more naturally you behold the ordinary as extraordinary.

*Miracles . . . rest not so much upon faces or voices or healing power coming suddenly near to us from afar off, but upon our perceptions being made finer, so that for a moment our eyes can see and our ears can hear what is there about us always.*

—WILLA CATHER

Of course, you also view the extraordinary as ordinary. No matter how complex a situation may appear to our human eyes, the manifestation of Divine Will is effortless and instantaneous.

*There is no order of difficulty in miracles.*

—A COURSE IN MIRACLES

Look through God's eyes with purity of mind and spirit and a deeply rooted sense of unity with all creation, and all becomes clear.

*The deep thinkers of all ages have therefore held one principle of awakening to life, and that principle is: emptying the self. In other words, making oneself a clearer and fuller accommodation in order to accommodate all experiences more clearly and more fully. All the tragedy of life, all its sorrows and pains belong mostly to the surface of the life in the world. If one were fully awake to life, if one could respond to life, if one could perceive life, one would not need to look for wonders, one would not need to communicate with spirits; for every atom in this world is a wonder for the one who sees with open eyes.*

—HAZRAT INAYAT KHAN

What once would have wowed you as metaphysical magic now simply elicits a smile of reverence and gratitude.

*If you learn what this world is, how it works, you automatically start getting miracles, what will be called miracles. But of course nothing is miraculous. Learn what the magician knows and it's not magic anymore.*

—RICHARD BACH

The word “miracle” defines an event that transcends the natural operation of the Universe, which implies that we have an exhaustive understanding of Universal Law.

*Miracles are not contrary to nature, but only contrary to what we know about nature.*

—SAINT AUGUSTINE

Yet each new generation of scientists continues to unearth startling new discoveries—not only about the world around us but also about the world within us.

*As Western science would put it, coherent human emotion, which occurs when what we are thinking, feeling, and expressing are all in alignment, produces a chemical change in our bodies, and that chemical change has quantum effects that extend beyond our bodies and bring about changes in our physical world—and now it's no longer a “miracle.”*

—GREGG BRADEN

Ultimately, a miracle is nothing more than a shift in perception. It is simply God manifesting another aspect of God. God can do anything because God is everything.

*Miracles in fact are a retelling in small letters of the very same story which is written across the whole world in letters too large for some of us to see.*

—C. S. LEWIS

THROUGH GOD'S EYES

Viewing every decision, every conversation, every incident as an occasion for insight and growth deepens your wisdom, expands your capacity to enjoy life, and inspires you to seize every opportunity to create, achieve, and become.

*To me every hour of the light and dark is a miracle,  
Every cubic inch of space is a miracle.*

—WALT WHITMAN

When you live every day of your life viewing every moment as a gift, you become a gift to the world.

*If perchance you see no reason for giving thanks, rest assured the fault  
is in yourself.*

—WABASHA

**SEE EVERY MOMENT AS A GIFT***Living the Lesson*

At thirty-four, I was unemployed with a wife and twelve-year-old daughter to support. I didn't have highly marketable skills and was feeling more desperate by the day. Two months after I lost my job, my tax guy told me I needed to make a \$2,500 payment to the IRS in thirty days. I was already heavily in debt and had no idea how I was going to pay that month's rent, much less the looming IRS bill. I had to repeatedly remind myself to breathe.

A few weeks later, my dad asked me to meet him for lunch. We lived seventy miles apart so we met at a Wendy's in Monticello, a town halfway in between. We sat down and, without question, without judgment, he handed me a check for \$2,500. I was stunned. I knew he couldn't afford to give me so much. As I sat there, blinking back tears, he told me he believed in me and that he loved me. It was the most unexpected, generous, and loving gift I had ever received, and it deepened the already strong bond between us.

Fast-forward nearly six years. I asked my dad to meet me at the Wendy's in Monticello at three o'clock. He hadn't a clue why. We sat down, and I thanked him again for that day and told him how much his loving gesture had meant to me. Then I handed him a check for \$2,500. It was his turn to be stunned. He tried to thank me but was too overcome with emotion, so much so that he lowered his head to the table and began sobbing. Tenderly, I leaned over and kissed the top of his head. The gift of that moment remains one of the highlights of my life.

I am now grateful for those dark days of no job and no money. Enduring such a stressful period, with fear gnawing at the pit of my stomach for days on end, was a small price to pay for such beautiful moments of love, grace, and redemption. My dad is gone now, but the memories of those lunches at Wendy's continue to nourish me and feed my soul. Even if I were in debt the rest of my life, I'd still consider myself the richest man on earth.

## SEE EVERY MOMENT AS A GIFT

### *Self-Reflection Questions*

- How can I shift my perspective so I can notice the gifts embedded in every life experience?
- How would my life change if I interpreted situations symbolically rather than literally?
- How has the correlation between positive thinking and positive outcomes affected my life?
- How can I become better at discerning evidence of God's handiwork in everything I observe?
- What would happen if I reframed ordinary moments and disputes with loved ones as opportunities to celebrate my life and relationships?
- How can I learn to be more mindful of the present moment?
- Which of my everyday rituals can serve as triggers to remind me to live more consciously?
- How does being fully present help me live more authentically?
- If I only had an hour to live, what would I say to each of my family members and friends?
- What is one thing I can do in the next hour to make someone's day?
- When I am kind and generous to others, how am I also being kind and generous to myself?
- What is the message I am delivering to others by the way I live my life?