



## **Manifesto Musing**

### With Love

Once a month I attend a Peace Meditation group with some neighbours whose mission is, at its most simple and profound, to meditate on the notion of world peace. It is a group without any other agenda and is secular and inclusive.

We each are invited to lead the reflection in turn. My turn is next month. I have chosen to reflect upon my personal manifesto which is the way I found inner peace. Each of the sentences has my guiding precept for an intentional life, as created through responding to the seven steps of our book, *My Manifesto: a compassionate guide to reveal your best life*.

“I replenish myself and navigate all that life presents with love, including self-love.” For too long, I did not deeply understand that in order to be able to give love, I must first give it to myself! There are many reasons why self-love did not come readily to me. Suffice to say that with my lived experience, I now understand the paradox. A check in with myself, an attunement to the level of my ‘bucket’ is a wonderful starting place for my day. When the level is low, I do the things I know fill me – rest, movement, quietness. When it is high, I reach out to my community of friends and neighbours to see what I can offer.

“I deeply value authenticity in all my interactions and see the bravery I need to live in integrity.” Coming from an upbringing in which I tried to please, navigate the patriarchy, and process which parts of the religious doctrine I inherited, served me, I tended – and it is still my default – to hide. I kept my views to myself if they differed from those in positions of authority over me. To intentionally live in integrity, bravery, (a Courageous virtue), is so important to me now.

“I allow myself the right to construct the meanings by which I live.” The permission I have granted myself has come with the awareness raised by my immersion into the wellbeing precepts that Justin has introduced me to, and which we have distilled in our book for you. The person who hid and was ‘taught’ not to question, now constructs her meaning. It is truly liberating.

“I aim to continue to grow spiritually and to contribute my ideas to the world.” My spiritual life is living my personal manifesto life intentionally. Within our 7-Steps, we are guided to become aware of our character strengths, which as Charlotte Ostermann writes are “The truest thing about us – not the worst thing – and that we should live into that goodness: (quoted page 82, *My Manifesto*). I am confident if I live into that goodness and stand up for what I believe in, framed by an overarching philosophy of service, that I am being my best spiritual self. If others see me and want to emulate me in living *their* personal manifesto lives, that is the ripple Justin and I aspire to.



“I am a human being with all the complexity and flaws of every other human being; I release myself from trying to be more”. ‘Perfectionism’, ‘failure’, and ‘mistakes’ needed to be reframed for me to ‘being enough’, and ‘learning’. The old terminology with the paradigms they represent are reductive and stunting. Our common humanity is both our vulnerability and our greatest connector.

“My hoped-for role is of a leader, who has lived a full life and is prepared to share the benefits of what I have learned.” My leadership is of the ‘let’s walk each other home, leadership.’ (many of you will recognise in these words the essence of a Rumi quote as given to us by Maria Sirois in A Short Course in Happiness After Loss.) If my insights help you, I am delighted. And if yours help me, thank you for sharing them.

“I wish to create a community of care throughout my immediate family, my community, and the society of which I am one.” Within the safe harbour of this community of care, in which *you* all belong, I have my mooring.

This is the reflection I will offer to the Peace Meditation group. Through it, I hope to encourage them to create their own way to live within their strengths and values.

I wish it for you too, dear manifesto mate!

With love,  
Sue