

The little human who could

THE LITTLE HUMAN WHO COULD

By

ROBIN ROBERTS

Copyright © 2015

The little human who could

FOREWORD

You were not placed on the planet to fill in an empty space. There is a reason you are here, a purpose to your journey. You were given life as a gift from someone who loves you beyond anything you could imagine. Life is not a heavenly lotto ticket where you have one chance in a million of being happy. It is a gift waiting to be unwrapped so the beauty it contains can be revealed to all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Little Human Who Could

How to avoid being eaten by the fear monster

Dear God

Other Books By Robin Roberts

About the author

The little human who could

THE LITTLE HUMAN WHO COULD

What about me?

As the world speeds up and people rush to catch up, don't you want to stand in the middle of the chaos and shout, "What about me?"

The feeling of being invisible is overwhelming; you want to be heard and have someone listen. However, it is like being in the middle of rush hour on the subway, with everyone wrapped up in their own world and too busy to notice you standing there.

What about you?

*Don't you deserve a life of happiness,
abundance and joy?*

Absolutely, but you won't get it waiting around for someone else to do it for you. We all have a little bit of God within, and we all have the power to create. Yet we keep tugging on the shirt of the Universe, seeking attention and yelling, "What about me?"

Everyone at some stage will struggle against the tide, feel like they are drowning in their circumstances and wonder if things will ever change. No one is immune to the ups and downs of life.

So what about you?

Have you reached the point where you feel lost, unimportant and forgotten? Do you want to scream, “What about me?” If so, take heart; you are not alone. As tough times land on the doorsteps of people all over the world, the words “I was lost but now am found” are gaining a new meaning.

I think I can. I think I can. I think I can.

It is not for lack of trying that people stay where they are. It is frustrating for someone who tries very hard to take one step forward and then ends up taking two steps back. Nothing hurts more than feeling like a failure or being judged as one.

Often the ruler we used to measure ourselves by is borrowed from someone else. Expectations are carried forward from childhood or placed upon us by peers and partners. It is impossible to measure up to someone else’s expectations, and if by some miracle you do, all you end up with is what someone else wants for you, not what you want.

We are all like the little train chugging up the hill to the words, “I think I can, I think I can.” The top is in view, the other side beckons, then wham—something or someone comes along and back down to

the bottom we go. Yet inside there is this 'will' to keep going, to try again, to believe anything is possible.

Some of us can harness it and make the extra push which gets us to the top of the hill and some of us cannot. And then there are those who put on the brakes and start sliding backwards and eventually their lives end up looking like a train wreck. Everyone starts off like the little train saying "I think I can" but it is when ego jumps aboard and starts whispering "maybe you can't" that many of us become derailed.

IT SUCKS TO BE ME

It sucks to be me...

“Good morning Pooh Bear. If it is a good morning. Which I doubt.” Eeyore.

When the world is out to get you, your self-talk goes something like this:

“Nothing good ever happens to me.”

“People like me don’t get breaks.”

“If only I had parents like his.”

“I can’t do anything about it now.”

“I don’t expect things will change anytime soon.”

You get the picture; like Eeyore we have already decided what the world will look like before we have even stepped outside.

So Why Bother?

Really, why bother? You cannot fight against fate or a world which is out to get you, so why not accept your lot in life and walk towards the end of it?

You have to play the hand life dealt you; there is no point fighting the inevitable.

It's easy to give in and walk through life moaning about all the things wrong with your life. But you have to wonder why you stay where you are and accept your life the way it is.

Here are the top 5 reasons people don't change their lives:

They fear change

They fear failure

They fear the unknown

They do not believe in themselves

They do not have the necessary skills or tools

I am probably not telling you anything you don't already know. And I doubt whether repeating what you have read in countless self-help books is going to shift your mindset. But here is something you may not have heard, and it's the reason you need to bother.

You leave this earth having made an impression; you leave a mark, as they say. Everything

you do and say impacts someone, somewhere, whether you know it or not.

Your journey on this Earth counts no matter who you are. It's the little things which everyday people do which pass unnoticed that change the world.

Creator didn't place you on the planet to fill in an empty space. There is a reason you are here, a purpose to your journey. You were given life as a gift from someone who loves you beyond anything you could imagine. Life is not a heavenly lotto ticket where you have one chance in a million of being happy. It is a gift waiting to be unwrapped so the beauty it contains can be revealed to all.

WHY BOTHER?

Because you are worth the effort and you need to value yourself enough to try. You need to honor the gift you have been given.

Be the change

“Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself” Leo Tolstoy.

It's true: most of us look outside of ourselves for the answers to our life situation. If only this would happen or they would do that, then my life would get better. Sorry to burst your bubble, but fairy godmothers waving wands and old ladies with magic beans are the illusion we call fairy tales. I could go all New Age on you and say if you do these 10 easy steps life will miraculously change, but you and I know it takes a little bit more than a coat of paint to make a house weather the storms of a lifetime.

There is work to be done, and only you can do it. Okay, so not what you want to hear, but rarely is what we want to hear what we need to hear.

What you have to understand is life is full of challenges, and they don't go away simply because you have converted to Buddhism, become a born-again

Christian, joined the circus or got rid of that no-good-for-nothing husband.

Life is, as they say, full of ups and downs and will be until your last breath.

The misconception perpetuated by the new spiritual movement is you can somehow prevent stuff from happening. But while some may think they can walk on water, reality is you can't escape your humanity.

You can change your life, the way you look at it, what you bring into it, where it is headed and so on, if you want to, if you are willing to and if you are prepared to do the work required. There isn't any magical thinking involved, no universal laws to be followed and the new age police will not chase you down if you have a thought unbecoming of an enlightened being.

You are, and always have been, Master of your own destiny, and now is a very good time to take the steering wheel and head in a different direction.

FEAR

'It is a miserable state of mind to have few things to desire, and many things to fear.' Francis Bacon.

Change is scary. Why? Because we fear that which we do not know. It is human nature to fear the unknown; it is how we were brought up. Weren't there always monsters under the bed and boogie men in the dark out to get us? Most of us want to know what will happen before it happens or before we take the next step.

It's why psychics are so popular at the moment; everyone wants the security of knowing that if they take a risk, a chance, everything will turn out okay.

People stay where they are not because they like it there but because they are frightened of doing something which will put them in a worse position than they are already in.

Who hasn't heard the old saying, "Better the devil you know"? Women stay with men who beat them; people stay in jobs which make them unhappy. Why? Because they fear what lies on the other side may be worse than where they are. Often we hear them utter things like, "You have to make the best of

a bad situation,” or, “You make your bed, now you have to lie in it.”

Change can be scary but it doesn't have to be fatal.

Change can bring you to a place you have never been before but sometimes all you need is a little time so your eyes can adjust to the light.

Change is not the enemy out to get you but the Angel tapping you on the shoulder saying it is time to get moving and get on with it. The comfort blanket of familiarity we cloak ourselves in is like a security blanket which we should have long outgrown. Yet we drag it along with us because it gives us a false sense of security. You cannot protect yourself with sameness and the only thing to fear is fear itself.

HOW SELFISH ARE YOU!

We are taught at a very early age to become saints, to give of ourselves and ask for nothing in return. Anything else and we are either selfish or egotistical. No wonder we don't take a step towards ourselves and what we want in life. Newsflash: it is not selfish to nurture yourself; it is selfish not to. Why? Because without a full cup we have nothing to offer others.

Ever see a single mother so emotionally drained she has no time or energy left to give to her children? Or a father so overworked he is too tired to play?

When you are selfish, life revolves around you and no one else matters. But when you are self-nurturing, you are making sure that what you give to others, you are also giving to yourself.

It is your light which leads the way for your children.

It is your light which gives friends hope and brightens up the lives of those around you. You need to let it shine.

We are taught to be selfless, to be martyrs, but ironically it is stepping into our greatness which lifts

others, not stepping away from it. And we cannot become all we were destined to be if we do not honor our bodies, minds and spirit.

It's not rocket science but common sense you cannot give to others that which you do not know how to give to yourself. Think about it.

LETTING GO

‘These possibilities came not only from searching for something new, but also from unlearning or forgetting what had gone before. In that moment of emptiness, the mind is open to a new possibility.’ Michael Jones.

We have to let go of what we are holding onto before we can move forward. Old beliefs, attitudes, ways of looking at things, behaviors, regrets and grudges are the anchors which keep us where we are.

If you want to know how attached to things you are, answer these questions:

Are you influenced by the opinions of others?

If others disapprove of what you say or do, do you get upset?

Do you handle criticism well or do you take it personally?

Are you able to remain calm in a conflict or do you become a slave to your emotions?

Do you look to others for approval and discard ideas if you do not get it?

Are you able to handle someone having an opinion which is different from you or do you persist until they see it your way?

If you answered no to all of these questions, go straight past Go to enlightenment. But if you answered yes to any of them, then chances are you are not very good at letting things go.

Sometimes it is necessary to have a spiritual spring clean and start asking yourself things like:

Does this belief, behavior or attitude still serve me, or is it a case of me continuing to do the same things and getting the same results?

Is doing this or thinking this getting me what I want or keeping me where I am?

Is this mine or does it belong to someone else?
Example: Is this what my parents wanted for me or what I wanted for me?

You have to empty the cup before you can fill it.

WHAT DO I WANT?

“The first step towards somewhere is deciding you are not going to stay where you are.” ~ Author Unknown ~

Have you ever tried to give up smoking or lose weight and haven't been able to because, deep down, you don't really want to throw the cigarettes in the bin or give up the double-dipped chocolate cookies?

You can fill a page up with New Year promises, but if you do not want to change or commit to change, the list will stay as it is with nothing crossed off. You have to want it or it won't happen, which is why it is a very good idea to know yourself pretty darn well before you embark on any journey.

Why do marriages fail? Because those involved did not know themselves well enough or were not really honest with themselves about what they wanted out of life.

If you want to be a farmer and you choose to be a used-car salesperson because it gets others off your case or brings in the bacon, then chances are you are going to be unhappy.

If you become a used-car salesperson so you can buy a plot of land to farm, that's moving towards what you want.

If you want peace and tranquility in your life and you choose to take a meditation class because it gets you out of the house and away from the kids, chances are your life will still be chaos when you get home.

If you take a meditation class so you can learn stillness and then have a clear mind to make better decisions, that's moving towards the life you want.

When you are real and honest about what you want then you can make sure that's what you are moving towards. I mean how can you take the first step, be inspired or passionate about something if it's not really what you want?

How many times have you committed to something when you really wanted to say, "No, I don't want to do that," and how much effort did you put into it?

I will point out there is a difference between doing something we don't want to do for a higher good and doing something we don't want to do because we don't know what else to do or we are too

The little human who could

afraid to do something different or we don't want to
disappoint someone.

ASK YOURSELF “WHAT DO I WANT?”

We are very good at knowing what we don't like and what we don't want, but rarely are we able to articulate what we do want.

You cannot move towards something if you don't know what it looks like or where to find it.

If you want to be successful, you need to define what success means to you.

Is it having more or being more? Is it more about having people notice you or respect you?

If you want to fulfill your life purpose, what does this mean?

Is it being of service, helping others?

Is it achieving a goal or building a dream?

If you want to be happy, you have to figure out what makes you happy.

Is it spending time with family and friends? Is it creativity or giving to others?

If you want a different career or job, what type do you want?

Do you want to work with people or children?

Do you want a hands-on position or a leadership role?

You have to work with core truths; anything else will see you end up back where you started.

You have to throw out other people's expectations and the rulers you may be measuring yourself by. You have to recover childhood dreams and decide if they still fit, whether they can be renovated or if they should be left behind with other things of youth.

No one else knows you better than you. No one else can see inside your soul and hear your heart song but you.

Grab a pencil and start writing

I want to be...because...and being...to me means...

CREATION

“To accomplish great things, we must not only act but also dream, not only plan but also believe.”
Anatole France

A child can turn a cardboard box into a castle, a fort, a racing car or a kingdom, all because he/she does not get stuck in the realities of what it is but looks at what it has the potential to become.

Obviously you cannot ignore reality but you can accept it, learn from it and create a new reality.

To begin the process of creation though you have to get a handle on what you have to work with or your realities. If you have bills, little money and a relationship you are unhappy in those are realities which you have to face and accept before you move on.

An alcoholic doesn't stop drinking by ignoring the fact he/she is an alcoholic. A workaholic doesn't find more time to spend with family by ignoring the fact he/she works 20 hours a day. A food addict doesn't lose weight by ignoring the fact that their cupboards are full of fast foods. Before you can fix it, you have to acknowledge it exists in the first place.

A child at first sees the cardboard box for what it is; then imagination and creativity kick in. If I turn it this way, color this or cut that, then this is what I will have.

The child does not look to the parent and go, “What do you think I should do?” or “What do you think this should be?” The child does not think about what the box looked like yesterday or what it could look like tomorrow, only what it could be today.

The only moment you have to work with is today. You can plan for tomorrow but you always do the work today. So each day has to be a commitment to a step. A lot of people give up before they have even started because they overwhelm themselves trying to fit everything into impossible time frames.

It’s okay to take it one step at a time or one day at a time. This isn’t about anyone else and what they think you should be doing and when you should be doing it. This is about you; I mean, weren’t those the words which started this to begin with: “What about me?”

So here you are with your plan—your daily to-do list. And you can see the picture of what your life could look like, but then your ego mind throws you a curveball. “You don’t really believe you can make this happen, do you?”

The little human who could

ROADBLOCKS AND RESISTANCE

'Nothing will ever be attempted if all possible objections must be first overcome.' Samuel Johnson

Don't think you are the only one who doesn't like change or who is resistant to it. The moment you shift, the status quo changes and when you look at your life often others are forced to do the same. And chances are good they don't really want to or alternatively are not ready to.

Every action will create a reaction; it's the way it goes.

So what can you do?

Well, you could throw in the towel, give up or lose sight of the bigger picture; these are common responses when things don't go as you expect them to. You could crawl back into the security of the familiar and cloak yourself with, "It really wouldn't have worked anyway." Or, and here's a radical thought, you can hold onto the belief

THIS TOO SHALL PASS

Here's the secret (although I dread using 'that' word): look back over all the unpleasant things in

your life, all the bad memories or horrible events, and know with absolute certainty they indeed did pass.

If you have ever given birth, you would know the pain of creation, yet you would also understand the beauty of it.

Moments slip by and become the past; they do not stay, and this is what you have to hold onto when you meet resistance to the changes you want to make in your life.

THIS TOO SHALL PASS

But people's reactions to your decisions are not the only thing which will cause you to rethink; there are going to be other roadblocks as well.

**THERE IS NEVER A BETTER TIME TO
BEGIN THAN RIGHT NOW**

'I have been impressed with the urgency of doing. Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Being willing is not enough; we must do.' Leonardo Da Vinci

If you do not have action to go with the words, you only have words. If you say it and don't do it, all you are left with are good intentions. Like I said at the beginning, there are no good fairies and old women with magic beans; if you want it, you are going to have to work for it. Sorry to burst your New Age bubble, but if you sit on the couch pondering how to change your life but never get past the pondering, then you will still be sitting on the couch in 20 years' time. And the only thing which will have changed is your waistline.

We all want the easy solution, the quick fix, the bottled hope; no one wants to sit with reality and look into the mirror of self-reflection. I wish I was a Guru, but I am not. I wish I was a Prophet, but I am not. I simply see in you the God-given ability to become the Creator of your own life. I see in you someone who was born with a seed of greatness planted so deep within that nothing can shake it loose.

I see in you endless possibilities and unlimited abundance.

I see in you someone who has not met their true self. My only wish is that you could see you as I do.

Know I believe in you—not because I want to feed you a line of B.S. to look good, but because when I believe in you, I believe in me, because we are one.

So now the time has come for you to leave the cocoon of the familiar and spread your wings and fly. This is not my journey so I know not where you are headed but I know one day your story will inspire someone and they too will be able to say

“I was lost but now am found”

[Review The Little Human Who Could](#)

HOW TO AVOID BEING EATEN BY THE FEAR MONSTER

PART ONE

An endless stream of advice threatened to drown her. It jumped out from newsstands, spewed forth from self-made gurus with book deals and well-meaning friends with good intentions. What the world needed, she surmised, was an everyday guru, someone who didn't have the secret or know the way.

Yes! Yes! Yes! Yes! It was an epiphany of orgasmic proportions. Bethany donned her (\$5.99 on special) PJs with the huge pink flowers and yellow polka dots, slipped on ugg boots, which to the untrained eye may have looked suspiciously like roadkill, and started to write...

"Tales of an Everyday Guru: How to avoid being eaten by the Fear Monster."

"The fear monster lurks in the shadows, feeding on insecurity and self-doubt. It has big scary teeth which drip with sarcasm and can puncture even the biggest of all dream balloons."

Bethany knew all about the fear monster. It was there last Christmas when she asked her boss for

a raise. It stood right behind her the day she confronted a friend about money borrowed, and it tried to prevent her from stepping forward to help an old man who was being bullied by some teenagers.

“The fear monster doesn’t discriminate. It will eat the rich and the poor, the black and the white, the gay and the straight, the Christians and the Atheists. And it doesn’t feed at any particular time of day or night, which means you will never know when it will bite you in the butt.”

This is the irony, Bethany thought. No self-respecting, self-made guru will ever admit to being stalked by the fear monster. I mean, who is going to buy a book from someone who, on the odd occasion, still looks under the bed for monsters? My God, the drama of it all—to be caught wearing our humanity. It would be almost as bad as being caught wearing underwear bought at the local thrift store.

“So how does one recognize the fear monster? Is it big or small or fat or tall? Is it blue or brown or square or round? Is it invisible to the naked eye or hairy and scary like the things our mothers told us lurked in the shadows of the night?”

Hmmm... that’s a good question. Bethany shoved another mouthful of warm popcorn in her mouth, a good portion of which tumbled like

snowflakes onto the floor. It went unnoticed in the moment.

“The fear monster is often revealed when we begin to stretch ourselves and shed the comfort blanket of familiarity. Women stay with alcoholic partners because they do not believe they are capable of creating a life beyond what they now live. Fear tells them stories like “better the devil you know” or “no one would want someone like me” or “he will change one day.” People stay in dead-end jobs because fear tells them things like “You are too old to learn anything new” or “No one wants someone who can’t do this or that.”

Fear is a story we tell ourselves so we never have to take a risk, take the next step or believe in ourselves. The fear monster is also a bit like God. No one knows for sure what God (substitute Buddha, Goddess whatever works for you) really looks like but everyone has a sense of what it feels like to be in his/her presence. The fear monster is no different. We all know what it feels like to have a sense of fear.”

For Bethany fear was her heart beating faster than a teenage girl texting about the cute guy she met at the mall. Fear was the thought she might fail and the thought she might actually succeed.

Fear was taking the next step or waiting for the other shoe to drop. Fear was all about the unknown and having to shed the comfort blanket of familiarity she had wrapped herself in. Fear was sweaty palms and wobbly legs.

It was hyperventilation and words which jumped from her mouth having no rhyme or reason. Fear was letting go and saying goodbye. Fear had more disguises than a Russian spy.

“The fear monster is not a figment of our imaginations. It is very real. Some of us are more prone to attracting it into our lives than others. But even the most positive, self-aware, saintly, enlightened and educated gurus will encounter the fear monster during the course of their lifetime.”

Knowing all of humanity was being stalked by the fear monster gave Bethany hope. The knowledge you are not alone is the rope you hold onto when it feels like you are.

“When the fear monster attaches itself to you and starts to feed like a tick on a dog on your irrational thoughts, then it creates what is known as a phobia. Isopterophobia is the fear of termites; Omphalophobia, the fear of belly buttons; Coulrophobia, the fear of clowns; Autophobia, the

fear of being alone or of oneself; and Dendrophobia, the fear of trees.”

“The list of phobias is long... very long, and while we may chuckle at anyone being scared of a bellybutton (although old men in Speedos with beer bellies may qualify as terrifying), the truth is the fear monster comes in many shapes and forms.”

Bethany scanned the list of phobias showing up on her laptop. Achluophobia—fear of darkness. Tick. Oh God, yes, how many times had she been told as a child the boogie man would get her if she went out into the dark? Catagelophobia—fear of being ridiculed. Tick. So many dreams gathering dust because she feared being laughed at. Maniaphobia—fear of insanity. Tick.

Anyone who has ever had a relative diagnosed with dementia or any neurological disease could relate to this one. Okay, so now she was beginning to develop a phobia of having phobias. Definitely time to shut the laptop off.

“Fears do not have to make sense for them to be real, nor do they have to be based in reality. This is a very important thing to remember. No one wants to be thought of as crazy. Battling the fear monster is hard enough without adding your mother’s “it’s all in your head” to the list or buying into your boyfriend’s

“suck it up, princess!” The fear monster is real; whether anyone else sees it is irrelevant.”

Fear, Bethany concluded as she sucked the life out of a Pepsi Cola, is the Universe’s way of letting you know there is a bigger picture you are not seeing. But the loophole was the bigger picture wasn’t always going to be the one you would have painted. Creator may have sketched out a far different fate for you.

“The fear monster isn’t one for dieting; it will feed on any thoughts which cause confusion, indecision and insecurity. It will chew them up and spit them out at you. Monsters aren’t particular about manners; they don’t care whether they make a mess of your life. They don’t lose sleep over your lost dreams. No fear monster I know has gone to therapy to work through feelings of remorse after stopping someone from having a life of abundance. And as far as I know, none subscribe to Doctor Phil’s Twitter updates.”

Like a two-year-old on a Halloween high, the iPhone on the table started vibrating. With no desire to share this night with anyone or anything, Bethany switched off its life-support button. She wished it was this easy to switch off the thoughts which fed the fear monster. “Of course it is,” 30-day experts would claim, and there would be 100,000 Google search results which backed them up. Bethany could hear

Yoda in his quiet voice stating, "Have no fear have you then see not the real you think I."

"Fear Monsters are not like the 'just add water sea creatures' we all ran out to purchase as children. They are born out of the circumstances and events which shape our lives. Our ego mind picks out a thought, marries it with a belief and hey presto a fear is born! A fear monster can be inherited, passed down from generation to generation, usually without anyone having noticed.

They grow very quickly and have suction caps on their feet which prevent you from shaking them loose."

"Okay, so this might be a slight exaggeration. However, if you have ever encountered the fear monster, you would know getting rid of it is akin to convincing a store salesperson you really don't need another credit card. Some fear monsters we outgrow as we begin to gain more knowledge about the world and our place in it. Some we carry with us all of our lives."

Bethany remembered the birth of her first fear monster. She would have been about 4 years old.

The night covered everything in a darkness only owls could see through, and there she was

wanting to dive headfirst into the unknown. But what she wasn't expecting was, "The boogie man will get you if you go out there!" Seriously, Boogie Man, how gullible did her mother think she was?

One toe dipped into the darkness, but it was too late; a fear monster had been born. Three seconds later, 4-year-old Bethany was under the bed covers with every light in her room burning brightly. That was then, and this was now. Now she was an adult capable of rational thought... Bethany caught sight of the night light in the corridor. "Oh well," she sighed. She never claimed to be an enlightened guru, but an everyday one still figuring it all out.

"So what circumstances and events bring forth the fear monster? Change would be high on the list. Change pushes us out of our comfort zone, exposes our insecurities and takes away the security blanket of familiarity we have clung to over the years."

"When change comes, the fear monster is hitching a ride, hoping to feed off those insecurities and feelings of self-doubt. When people lose jobs, when their partner of 20 years walks out the door, when businesses fail, when natural disasters occur and life as we have known it ceases to exist, the fear monster is there waiting. It's waiting for the moment

when you will crawl back into your shell like a turtle wanting to protect itself from the outside world.

Everyone hopes their marriage will last forever, everyone hopes their job future will be secure, everyone hopes they will age gracefully, and everybody wants the safety and security of knowing what is happening in their lives and when it is happening.”

Bethany's mother battled the fear monster when her husband of thirty years walked out the door into the arms of a woman young enough to be his daughter. Change came swiftly and without warning. Everything which had been became everything which was no longer. What happens when your once-loving partner, who swore to love you for better or worse, has a midlife crisis, decides he/she does not love you anymore and, in the blink of an eye, ups and leaves?

For the women who left the workplace to raise a family, this means loss of income and financial security. For others, it means loss of identity, for who are you if you are not Mrs. Somebody?

Some find friends stop calling and out comes the age card because now your age is a neon sign saying who will want you now. Bethany thought back to those first weeks after the door closed behind her father. Her mother was so close to being eaten by the

fear monster you could see the imprint of her foot on its tongue.

“Being made redundant or being fired means, in some cases, losing the ability to support ourselves and those we care about. We start to fear having our homes taken from us, we begin to fear judgment from our partners and peers, and the more we give in to these fears, the less we can see a light at the end of the tunnel. The fear monster stalks us, looking over our shoulder at every choice we make and every choice we fail to make.”

“Change takes away our answers and pushes us to find new ones. The fear monster whispers in our ear... it’s all falling apart... can’t teach an old dog new tricks... you can’t compete with the youngsters. It breathes life into old negative beliefs and strangles hope with the ghosts of mistakes past.”

Bethany loved her job in retail. She was a people person who drew smiles and compliments from every customer conversation. Her days were organized around this adult commitment; there were daily rituals and familiar patterns which gave security and comfort. And if, for some reason, this large piece of her life was taken away, if things changed, then she too would have to battle the fear monster. Oh, she could pretend she hadn’t glimpsed it in life’s rear-view mirror—a lot of people did—but then people who bury

their heads in the sand tend to get bitten in the butt by monsters. This was a well-known fact!

“If you want to see how quickly a fear monster can grow, throw some change into the hat the Universe has left at the curb. However, change also brings to the table the unknown, and the unknown has a lot of fear attached to it.”

“Most of us have a need to know everything will be okay. And when the Universe shakes its head and goes, “What guarantee? Didn’t you read the fine print?” we are left not knowing what the future holds for us.

It is why we still have old school psychics throwing out one-line predictions. We all want a crystal ball to squash the fear monster and make the unknown known. You may leave the child behind but once you know the boogie man may be out there you will always want someone to turn on the lights so everything can be seen.”

Bethany thought back to the day Aunt Mary dragged her off to see a psychic. The word dragged was appropriate because “Iron Chef America” was on, and one does not disappoint the chairman by missing an episode! Aunt Mary, however, insisted on having a witness to the things which were about to be revealed. Bethany remembered the psychic being a strange little

round woman with flowing black robes. She looked like one of those Halloween decorations you stuck on the window. Aunt Mary hung on every word this old woman said, eating up the predictions which tumbled out as if they were meth-coated candy.

A trip over water within 5 years, an accident in the family, money within 2 years and, yes, she would grow old and be happy. My goodness, no wonder Aunt Mary looked thrilled; her whole life lay before her, and all she needed to do was sit back and wait for it all to happen. Bethany knew this was the allure of the psychic: they were the ones who turned on the lights and made the unknown known. She shook her head, trying to dislodge the memory, then continued to write...

“The fear monster causes intelligent women to date toad after toad, not because they are looking for Prince Charming but because they would rather hold hands with a toad than embrace their loneliness. They buy into the myth ‘you are no one unless you have a special someone.’ The fear monster will slip into your life when relationships change, friendships end, marriages fail and when families burn bridges. And in moments when no one can be found and silence becomes an unwelcome companion. Loneliness feeds our fears: I am not lovable; I will never be loved; I will never find happiness.”

Bob was a toad. A big-bellied, hairy-backed toad and her mother's first boyfriend after her marriage ended. We are told to love our soul mate's warts and all, but Bethany still believed a toad was a toad and slimy was slimy. The fear monster blinded Bethany's mother to Bob's habit of clipping his toenails at the dining-room table. It closed her eyes to the empty beer bottles and foul-smelling burps which lingered like a skunk's trail. Bob filled the house with sound and said all the things he knew her mother wanted to hear. Bethany's mother believed Bob to be the knight who would defeat her fear monster. What she didn't realize was that fear monsters are assigned one human each, and only that human has the power to starve the fear monster to death.

"The media feeds fears, especially the growing-old one. Advertisements for anti-aging creams remind us we are not getting any younger, and while they may claim to make you look younger, they cannot make you younger. As we get older, what we haven't done starts to overshadow what we have done."

"The fear monster reminds us of our mortality and scares us into believing our dreams will never be realized."

It stands behind us when we look in the mirror and chuckles when our midlife muffin top wobbles. It

points out the wrinkles which are starting to resemble a roadmap of life's challenges. And when we start looking for the brown hairs in the gray rather than the other way around it falls to the floor laughing."

Bethany was thirty-five, childless and, as her relatives pointed out every opportunity they got, 'not getting any younger.' And while she didn't buy into the 'women have use-by dates' myth, the pressure was there. The odd thought popped up, creating a little niggle of insecurity, and in the corner of her eye she could see the fear monster grinning. One day, after discovering a crow's foot, she went and got Botox injections. Her face became a stretched-out canvas of human skin. Did it make her any younger? No. Would it stop her growing old? No. Would she ever be able to move her eyebrows again... only time would tell.

"Perhaps the most common monster foods are the fear of rejection or ridicule. It is every child's worst nightmare to be teased, bullied, demeaned and laughed at. And none of us want the 'it's not you, it's me' conversation. When we fear rejection or ridicule, we allow the fear monster to talk us out of stepping into our higher self. The fear monster gets great delight from popping our dream balloons."

"It loves the sound of a deflating ego and wants nothing more than to push us further and

further into ourselves. We cannot avoid rejection and ridicule. There will always be people who 'just aren't into us'. There will always be bullies who need to make others feel less in order to make themselves feel more. And those who become butterflies will always be at the mercy of the jealous grubs that never develop wings."

Bethany touched the strands of hair, neatly trimmed and layered, which fell upon her face. Her last haircut cost \$70, and it was worth every penny. Her mother used to cut her hair as a child. If you can call putting a bowl on a head and cutting around it a haircut! She could still hear the taunts of the other children: "Who mowed over your head?" The day the bowl broke was the day Bethany started believing in God. As for rejection, there was the boyfriend who dumped her via text message, the 'your book proposal sucked' letter, the 'we don't think you are suited for this job' phone call and so on.

It is hard not to develop a fear of being rejected or ridiculed, particularly if you experience these things constantly. Bethany brushed away the memories of the past and continued on...

"Fear Monsters like people who think trying and not succeeding is failing. They devour feelings of inadequacy. A popular bedtime story for baby monsters is "I think I can't, I think I can't, the story of

the little human who couldn't." Society puts pretty ribbons on those who win and try harder badges on those who lose."

"No one congratulates the person who nearly made it. We do not want to let down our parents, disappoint our partners, face public humiliation or not measure up to our peers. The fear monster encourages us never to risk and reminds us daily of failed attempts and dead ends which have taken us nowhere. When you go to sleep, it will sit beside your bed and read you the story of the little human who couldn't while playing videos in your head of all the times you have tried and failed."

It was a typical summer's day with all the clichés. The sun was shining, the water glistened, the sky was blue and there stood Bethany in front of her kayak, waiting for her turn to become the next Columbus. The eyes of all her grade-eight classmates followed her every move. Push kayak into water.

Get into said kayak. Grab paddle. Start to paddle towards the horizon; so far, so good. Start to wobble; okay, don't panic. Start to tip; okay, panic! Completely tip over, water going into lungs. Any second Grandma Joan would be coming back from the grave to help her to the other side. Wait, that's not Grandma Joan but Principal Haggard! Oh gross, he is kissing her: stale smoke, this morning's cake from the

staff room, bad—really bad—old person’s breath. Her classmates did not care if the principal was performing lifesaving mouth-to-mouth; all they knew was his lips were touching Bethany’s.

It was humiliating enough to almost drown in three feet of water but to have to endure weeks of being called ‘Haggard’s honey’ was torture. The fear monster would remind her of her classmates’ laughter every time someone suggested a water sport of any kind.

Eventually she got the courage to try again, but for a long time she always made sure there was a handsome, young male with nice breath in close proximity.

“What do we fear? Almost everything! Think you are alone in your fears? Then think again. Somewhere in your community there is a person trying to work out how to walk on water so they do not have to get in an airplane.

Somewhere there is a young man who wants to ask the cute waitress out, but because he’s been dumped before, all he does is sit and stare. Somewhere there is a person throwing up in the staff washroom because they have to ask their boss for a day off.

Somewhere an expectant mother is reading 200 'how to be the perfect parent' books. Somewhere someone is being tapped on the shoulder by the fear monster, and they, like you, are doing the best they can not to be eaten."

Bethany admitted to owning quite a few self-help bibles on how to overcome your fears. However, they all assumed she would become an enlightened guru by the end of the book. And while she did have her Gandhi moments, she knew most things in the life of an everyday guru could only be overcome one step, one day at a time, over the course of a lifetime.

The one thing which pissed her off more than anything else was the 'expert' who thought telling her that her fears were irrational was a good idea. Really! Had they been talking to her mother? Did her ex-boyfriend share her tweets? Did she need to rethink her Facebook privacy settings?

Irrational? How dare they! As if she didn't have enough to do battling the fear monster without having to add another person to the 'people who think I am insane' list.

The sky may not have fallen on Chicken Little, but that's not to say it couldn't have. "My fears," concluded Bethany, "aren't irrational; they're simply an outcome of having a highly creative mind."

“Anxiety is fear which is future-oriented. It’s when we fear not being able to control what happens next. Panic, on the other hand, is being reminded of something we fear and having an immediate physical response. The fear monster will play a home movie two seconds before we are about to take the great leap of faith. When we are two steps up the ladder, we will see images of broken bones and remember our fear of heights. When we are about to board our plane, we will see the news story which ran last week about pilots falling asleep in the cockpit and remember our fear of flying.

The fear monster likes to mess with our minds simply because it can. It will create a whole heap of anxiety without blinking an eyelid. It will remind us of our mortality while we are waiting for the test results to come back. When we start to feel in control, it will list off all the things over which we have no control. The fear monster will eat us up and spit us out because it knows all humans have the capacity to fear, and most of us at some stage have been taught there are things we should fear.”

Bethany thought reality television was something everyone should be very scared about. But she wouldn’t go there.

As for anxiety and panic, they were the twin sisters who came through the door shortly before her

mother arrived for a visit. If the capacity to fear is human nature and fear is learnt, then everyone should stop beating themselves up every time they felt anxious or panicky. Bethany concluded we all needed to cut ourselves some slack sometimes.

If we are in a plane and the engines suddenly fail but we land safely, who is going to go, 'Oh well,' and leave it at that? Most mere mortals, the next time they step onto a plane, will have a fear monster on their shoulder waiting to remind them of the time they almost didn't make it. And yes, it would be nice if we were all fearless, but the world wasn't perfect and neither was she. Better to own her humanity and grow into awareness and understanding with each step than to play pretend guru.

"To recap, the fear monster is scary, possibly with big white teeth and a gooey, sticky, fear-stained tongue. It is not particular about who it hangs around with, and it will eat you up if given the chance. It doesn't discriminate, so it will stalk the young, the old, the females, the males, the straight, the gay, the black, the white, the healthy, the challenged, the blue-collar, the white-collar, the brave and the cowardly.

It will feed on our fears and encourage them. It will tell us fear monster stories...remember the time you did....and this happened. We battle the fear

monster when we are lonely, when we are afraid of failing or being ridiculed or losing something we value.”

“We battle the fear monster on the day we send our children off on their first day of school or college. Women face off with the fear monster when they discover their first gray hair or wrinkle. Men do when they see younger versions of themselves surrounding them in the workplace. Old people see the fear monster in nursing homes, and young people see it in exam rooms.

So really, it doesn't matter who you are, how old you are or where you are on this planet. The one thing you can count on is we are all going to come face to face with the fear monster at some stage in our lives. We are all humans having a very human experience; you are not alone, and you don't have to pretend to be an enlightened being because we are all simply everyday gurus doing the best we can with what we have in any given moment.”

Bethany yawned. Was it midnight already? She should be tucked in bed dreaming of lotto wins and swimming naked in the sun. And yes, she knew winning lotto was not a good retirement plan, but it kept the bed bugs away. She threw her pen down and padded like a contented kitten to the bedroom.

The little human who could

Tomorrow the everyday guru would return, ready to
take on the fear monsters of the world!

Part Two.

Bethany awoke to a Saturday morning full of promise. Rain melted down the windows providing a comforting buffer to the world outside. The coffee was made unlike her bed. After a hearty breakfast of toast and peanut butter she retired to the living room sofa and picked up where she had left off last night.

“We now know all about the fear monster, but what effect does it have on us? In what way does it change how we look at the world and our actions? Firstly, the fear monster can cause us to rush into things we later regret. It is the hand in our back which pushes us into action before we have thought things through. We can also get caught up in the fear monster’s stories and wrapped in elaborate ‘what if’ scenarios. The fear monster distorts the way we look at the world and our place in it. It causes us to hide rather than seek, shrink rather than grow, but more importantly it stops us being the person we were born to be.”

Bethany pondered her words. She remembered turning 30 to the sound of her biological clock ticking and rushing into one unhealthy relationship after another simply because she feared never being able to have children. As for what-ifs, they were scattered all throughout her life.

What if I don't graduate, what if my mother marries Bob, what if my boss fires me because I asked for a raise and so on. If I do this thing, then this other horrible thing may happen. Better to stay where I am than risk taking the next step.

Fear, Bethany concluded, is a cage of words and thoughts which keeps us from stepping into the world Creator built for us.

“So how does one stop oneself from being eaten by the fear monster? Surely there must be some 30-day miracle cure out there. A New Age pill to be swallowed three times a day to keep the fear monster at bay. It's true, you can Google up a cure in 10 seconds; however, chances are good it will be a temporary fix at best. Everyday gurus understand it's a one-step, one-day-at-a-time process.

It is not fancy, it is not complicated, but it is highly effective. They also know they have to find the tools which work for them, and this may involve a lot of trial and error. So as you read on, remember to take what fits for you and throw away the rest. Knowledge is something gained through experience, and while the words of others guide you, they are only words until you give them power and meaning.

Bethany learnt many years ago to look at the words of others (no matter which form they came in)

as being just that: the words or perceptions of someone else. Workshops, courses, books, magazines, blogs, television specials—it doesn't matter; they are all based on someone else's experiences. We can borrow the tools of the neighbour, but this doesn't mean we will be able to build the dream he did. Maybe we will need some different tools in addition to those ones. Or maybe we will need to mix and match until we find the right combination for us.

Yep that is the message of an everyday guru Bethany decided. Let us share the tools we have amongst ourselves but let us not consider ourselves to have failed if the tool we pick up today does not work for us. We will always have the opportunity to pick up another one tomorrow.

“To battle the fear monster, you have to start by accepting your present circumstances and reality. You cannot change what you do not acknowledge; the pink elephant in the living room which everyone seems to want to ignore is going to squish you sooner or later. Standing in your truth is not about judgment or shame or guilt; it is about creating an authentic life of depth versus a shallow life based on illusions and deception of self.

Sometimes you have to admit you do not shave your legs in winter, have a tendency to pout

when you do not get your own way and always do the opposite of what your Mother tells you to do.

Sometimes you have to admit the nightlight you have in the corridor is not so your cat won't be scared."

"Sometimes you have to admit the reason you don't go in elevators is not because you are on a fitness kick. Sometimes you have to accept you are afraid of the dark, you are scared of small spaces and clowns remind you of serial killers. You cannot change what you do not acknowledge. If you see the fear monster out of the corner of your eye, then you need to own up to it."

Fears aren't easy to fess up to, especially when you are meant to be a grown-up. In the spare room where Bethany slept when she visited her mother, there hung a picture of a clown.

For years the spooky painted eyes stared down at her while the creepy, upturned mouth whispered her name. Clowns were actually Chucky dolls in disguise. True fact!

Then there was the small fear of spiders she developed after her best friend's brother dropped his pet tarantula inside her shirt. And she couldn't leave out the fear of losing her job and having to move back

in with her mother or maybe she should classify this as a nightmare!

“This too shall pass... time does not stand still. If you look back upon your life, you will find many instances where life has thrown you a challenge and, guess what, you managed to make it to where you are now. This will not be the first time you and the fear monster have done battle. Think back and remember an event where you drew on all your skills and courage and overcame what seemed then insurmountable odds! We tend to forget how resilient we are. The fear monster is nothing new; it has been with us since the day we first learnt there were things and people to fear. Yet despite this, here we are, all grown up. So somewhere along the line we must have won a battle or two.”

It is easy to forget, Bethany thought. Every new fear we give birth to feels like an only child. Yet she knew there were many battles which had been fought and won over the years. She was not a novice knight but a battle-weary one who learnt and grew with each new experience. In moments of self-doubt, she took a breath and said out loud, “I have been here before and survived, and I can do this again.”

Had she not gotten through her parents’ bitter and messy divorce? Did she not overcome being teased at school and dumped by the guy who

promised forever-afters? And when her co-worker was promoted ahead of her, did she not go back to study and get a better-paying job at a new company? This too shall pass—simple but true words.

“Fear monsters don’t like to share their feelings; it’s considered a sign of weakness. Their favorite party trick is to keep everything inside until they burst.”

“Some humans like to compete with the fear monster to see who can last the longest without coming apart at the seams. Of course the fear monster always wins. The irony for women is we are stereotyped as emotional beings, yet we are taught to suck it up and keep going because we have to be there for everyone else. This strength we have, this ability to keep going even when we are falling apart, is also our greatest weakness.

What we keep inside will manifest as physical ailments eventually. Stress, anxiety and emotional turmoil increase the body’s workload, and eventually something will give. It doesn’t pay to avoid or neglect your fears, emotions and feelings. You must acknowledge them, feel them and then resolve them before letting them go.

To avoid overload, here’s a little tip: find a friend you trust and make a date for coffee and cake.

Say up front, “I need to vent. I don’t need you to fix anything, rescue me or give advice; I just need somebody to listen.” Then talk about everything and anything which is bothering you or upsetting you. Get it off your chest and you will feel so much better. You don’t have to act upon these emotions and fears, but you should acknowledge them before they grow bigger and start to create imbalance in your life.”

Bethany knew firsthand about the human Angels—known as best friends—that Creator placed on this earth. She used to be someone who kept all her feelings inside because she didn’t want anyone to see she was less than perfect. She never talked about her fears to anyone, preferring not to risk being laughed at or made to feel stupid. Which, it turned out, was a stupid thing to do! She remembered telling Jane about her fear of clowns and, to her surprise, Jane’s response had been, “Me too!”

We forget our friends are human and many are going through the same things we are. Bethany knew how very unpleasant bursting at the seams was. It left you with a bigger mess than what you started with. So once a week she got together with Jane to vent, talk and divulge. They didn’t try to fix, solve or rescue each other. They simply brought whatever was worrying them into the open.

“Fear monsters like people who try and overcome all their fears in a day. They sit and cheer them on. It is unrealistic to think a fear you have held onto for a lifetime can be let go of in an instant. The truth is, baby steps are highly underrated. Nothing builds confidence more than a step, then a pat on the back, and then a ‘well done me.’ It doesn’t have to be an all-or-nothing scenario. If you are afraid of elevators, start with going in and out without going up; then the next time you might go up one floor. Then two, then three—little baby steps. Reward yourself if you succeed. Well done me; I think I deserve a new book! If you are afraid of being alone, start by taking yourself on a date to the movies; then maybe next time you can join a community group.”

Fear, as Bethany knew firsthand, could cause even the sanest, most rational person to leap across the ravine despite the fact there were stairs.

And yes, jumping might seem like a quicker way to get to the other side, but there is nothing wrong with taking the stairs. Bethany remembered the time she decided bungee jumping would be a good way of overcoming her fear of heights. It never occurred to her to start with a stepladder and go up one step a day. No, far better to attach oneself to a giant elastic band and jump a thousand feet into the raging river below. She did it, but it didn’t cure her fear of heights.

True, she was not concerned about being a thousand feet up as she plummeted. Instead, she was worried about having a heart attack or having the cord wrap around her neck and strangle her and/or wetting her pants. Baby steps, Bethany concluded, will get you where you want to be. You do not need to put yourself in all-or-nothing scenarios.

“Fear Monsters like to keep you in the dark, because they know nothing feeds fear more than the unknown. Knowing makes us feel safe. So it follows gathering knowledge would be a powerful weapon against the fear monster. As a child there were lots of things which were scary to us but the more we experienced and the more knowledge we gained the less scary our world became.

Mentors were a good source of knowledge. Bethany had sought out the advice of older, wiser friends on many occasions, people who had been there and done that.

And there was nothing wrong with a ‘Google’ every now and then either. Therapists were good for bouncing thoughts and feelings off and giving us the knowledge we need to move forward. But the best source of knowledge is experience; once you have done something and discovered it wasn’t as bad as you thought it would be, then it’s easier to avoid the fear monster.

“Fear monsters want you to believe it is in your best interest to crawl back into the darkness where you can be safe from the world. They are big believers in comfort zones. They want you to believe there is everything to be gained by staying where you are. So what if you don’t get to do new things? They aren’t all they are cracked up to be. The fear monster wraps its arm around you and tells you things like, ‘You wouldn’t like it anyway,’ or, ‘It is better this way.’”

There was an occasion last year when Bethany was invited to a friend’s wedding; the only problem was that it involved sitting on a plane for 14 hours.

Being in the air over the ocean without a parachute wasn’t her idea of fun times. To overcome her fear, she started writing down all the things she would gain by going and all the things she would lose by not going.

This was her best friend’s wedding; it would not come again. If she went, she got to have a break from work. All her other friends were going, so she would feel left out staying behind. If she went, she could catch up with people she hadn’t seen for a while.

In the end, she wasn't prepared to lose out because of her fears, so she grabbed as much courage as she could (and Valium) and boarded the flight.

“Fear monsters are not averse to dragging you into the past or pulling you into the future. ‘Oh, I did that before, and look how well it turned out,’ or, ‘If I do this, then I just know these 1,000 horrible things will happen.’

Bottom line: the future doesn't even exist yet, and you have no way of knowing how things will turn out. With careful planning and the gaining of knowledge, things can change for the better. As for the past, when we know better, we do better. It's like when you take the training wheels off a child's bike; yes, they may fall a couple of times, but they soon learn to put their feet down, balance and create new experiences.”

Bethany's ego mind had a tendency to pull her into the future, creating all sorts of what-ifs... but she simply talked back to it with, “But what if that didn't happen, and what if I actually did enjoy myself and everything was okay?”

To keep herself in the present, she developed a mantra which went, “Just for today I will...” Past experiences were thought of as lessons to be learned, not anchors to keep her where she was.

“The fear monster is always hungry and on the lookout for insecure humans to feed on. It can creep up on even the most positive of people and be incredibly hard to shake off once it has a hold of you. But there is hope, and there is always a way to win the battle. Do not think for a moment you are alone or that having fears makes you inadequate or less. Millions of people all over the world battle the fear monster each day: some win, some are warriors in training, and some simply need a few more weapons in their belt. The fear monster is not a figment of your imagination, and you do not have to pretend that it does not exist. In fact, bringing your fears into the open and talking them over with someone is a very good way to keep the fear monster at bay. You are an everyday guru, a divine child of the Universe, and you can overcome any challenge life throws at you... even a fear monster!”

The End

Bethany looked out the window at the sun setting. Another day in the life of an Everyday Guru was about to come to an end. What adventure would there be tomorrow? Only time would tell...

DEAR GOD

Bethany sipped slowly on her Starbucks latte because one does not guzzle something which costs you more than you can earn in an hour. It was a lazy Saturday afternoon, and she was inspired—on a high, mainly caffeine-induced, but what the heck. She began tossing around ideas. What if there was an Angelic Newspaper called ‘The Daily Halo,’ and what if, instead of a Dear Abby column, there was a Dear God one? Because who hasn’t, on some occasion, gone, “Oh my God!” or “Dear God, what now?” or “God help me.” What if there was a mailbox where humans wanting answers could drop a note to God and read the response in the following week’s ‘Daily Halo’? Bethany thought back to all the times she had looked to the sky for answers.

Dear God

“If my life is predetermined, how do I know exactly what my purpose is?”

Signed Bethany

Dear Bethany

Everyone has a purpose for being here. Humans have the ability to make choices and this is the key.

The choices they make take them down certain roads and while the final destination may be already determined the road they take to get there is not.

There is not one life purpose but a whole lot of possibilities which end only when we take our last breath. Mother Teresa reached a point where a choice was put in front of her, and she chose not to walk away but to treat the dying. It was a fork-in-the-road moment which could have gone either way.

Humans all have such moments and there are people who were faced with the same choice as Mother Teresa but took the other road and walked away. You ask, what is your life purpose?

It is to follow your heart and make the choices which lead to the greater good of all and the planet. And your life purpose is to find happiness and fulfillment.

When you focus on life purpose as something you MUST achieve, you lose sight of the purpose of life, which is simply to live with happiness and compassion for others. When you find that THING which brings you great joy and inspires you, then you are able to bring joy to others and inspire them. And this is what it is all about: doing what you do best to the best of your ability.

Some people are meant to teach, others are meant to build, some are meant to heal, others are meant to fix, some are meant to create and others are meant to support. And during your lifetime, you may step in and out of these roles, creating a new life purpose with each phase of your life. I hope this helps.

Sincerely God

Dear God

“Is there such a thing as a fairy tale relationship?”

Signed Bethany

Dear Bethany

Love is not this single entity which overcomes all, despite what the glossy magazines tell you. In fact, love comes with a few sidekicks: respect, communication, integrity and acceptance, to name a few. It has depth, layers and a foundation it is built on. Humans tend to step into romantic love relationships without understanding that life is a rollercoaster; it has dips and peaks.

What this means is the beautiful face you look into this morning may turn into a runny-nosed, sneezing, coughing, germ-laden body tomorrow. Those wonderful pecs which are the envy of all your friends may, at some stage, turn into a beer belly. There are no life guarantees with looks and bodies. Illness and old age all play a part, so there has to be some greater depth for relationships to stand the test of time. There's a certain amount of freedom when you know you do not have to measure up to an invisible ruler, when you know you are loved for who

you are no matter what the world brings to your doorstep.

Loving someone requires skills. A garden doesn't grow simply by standing there admiring the blooms. Love is not one thing; it is many things. It's the face you look at across the room which sends shivers down your spine when you are 20, brings a smile to your face when you are 40, a glow within when you are 60 and reassurance and comfort when you are 80.

It's the hand which held yours on the day you were married. It is the hand which held yours when your parents left this world. It's the hand which held yours when the storm came, and it's the hand which held yours when no one else was there. It's the moments of anger when nothing is going right and you start blaming each other, and it's the moments of understanding when you come together to solve the problem. It's the arms that wrap around you and the smile which embraces you when you need it most. And the patience, acceptance and compassion which come when you deserve them the least.

Love is not a moment but a lifetime of moments. Soul mates are not born; they are created.

And relationships are built day by day, moment by moment. Love needs two willing souls; it needs two people who want to grow and flourish together and will help each other step into their greatness. Love is two separate halves which retain their own identity but come together as one to walk through life. It isn't always pretty, isn't always comfortable and isn't always what you expected, but it is always worth it in the end. Fairy tales end, but true love lasts forever. Keep the faith...

Sincerely God

Dear God

“Is life supposed to be difficult?”

Signed Bethany

Dear Bethany

Some days it's hard not to think so, but life is like a rollercoaster: there are periods when you are on a high and then times when you are hanging on for dear life. Here's a little life tip: when life seems difficult, go back over your life and find another time when you were feeling stressed and challenged. Bring this memory forward. Then remind yourself how you have had other difficulties in your life before and have walked through them. Then say out loud, "This too shall pass."

Sometimes life appears difficult because we focus on what we do not have instead of what we do have. I can tell you right now the things you take into the next life are those you carry in your heart. When you are finding it tough and your ego mind is throwing up a whole heap of 'glass half empty' thoughts, go for a walk; change what you are doing. A simple change of environment will often work wonders!

But back to your question: “Is life supposed to be difficult?”

My answer is life is just life, and no one is immune to it. There will be difficulties, but there will also be joy; there will be sadness, but there will also be laughter. There will be highs, lows and periods of stability and calm, and this will continue until the last breath moment.

My tip would be to be careful not to slip into a mindset of ‘my life is difficult, therefore it will remain so forever.’ Try this Self Mastery Affirmation instead: ‘Amidst the earthquakes of unexpected situations, the hurricanes of unreasonable behaviour, when fortune strikes against me I remain unmoved, knowing that finally all will be well.’ Child, you are not being tested but challenged to step into the divine greatness which resides within you.

Sincerely God

Dear God

“Am I healing the right way?”

Signed Bethany

Dear Bethany

There is no right way to heal; what works for one person may not work for another. Some people work through their ‘stuff’ quickly while others need more time. Some people are going to do it on their own, while others are going to need professional help. The one thing I can tell you is beating yourself up for not doing it ‘right’ isn’t going to help you, nor is having a whole heap of expectations of what should be happening. Take a breath, then exhale; remind yourself of the divine miracle of greatness you are.

A few things to contemplate:

All healing will take time; there are no shortcuts.

Before forgiveness comes acceptance. Realities have to be acknowledged.

If someone hurt you, then remember you don't have to forgive the action/behaviour; you are forgiving the person.

Be gentle with yourself. Become your own best friend. Speak to yourself with kindness and compassion. If your ego voice becomes an inner critic, quieten it with your best-friend voice.

Seek the help you need. Pride is a roadblock. I put Earth Angels on the planet for you to access, and it makes no sense whatsoever not to use whatever resource is available to create the life you want.

Allow yourself to be vulnerable; let those who love you in.

It is an honour for people to care for those they love, but they won't be able to do that if you are not open and honest about your emotions and what is happening for you. But again, I repeat, there is no 'right' way to heal, so don't add an extra burden by placing judgments on yourself. Be gentle with yourself...

Sincerely God

Dear God

“How do you hold it all together when things start to fall apart?”

Signed Bethany

Dear Bethany

The main concern here is the belief that there is something or someone bigger than you out there. A bigger picture, so to speak.

There are a lot of things you will not understand about this world. There will be a lot of people who drive you crazy and a lot of situations which are completely out of your control.

The best you can do during such times is:

'Let go and let God'

It is about believing someone or something out there has a plan you might not see right now. It is also the realization you don't control much except your own thoughts and actions.

When people get angry or frustrated and life isn't going the way they want, it's time for them to let go and let God.

When you cannot create a shift in people and situations, no matter how hard you try or what you do, it's time to let go and let God.

It's not a religious thing; it's a faith thing. It doesn't matter who you are; everyone needs something or someone bigger than themselves to believe in. I know when your friends say, "Here, let me help," it's like a burden is lifted. I know when you go, "Okay, Creator, I gave it my best shot; now I am handing it over to you," a burden is also lifted.

Try it. When you are angry and want to shake some sense into someone who isn't listening, take a breath and say, "I let go and let God." When a situation is making you stressed out and there seems no way out, say, "I let go and let God."

When we hold on tight, no one can take the load and carry it for us. We have to let go for that to happen. We have to trust; we have to have faith—not only in that 'something or someone' but also in ourselves. When the high-heeled 20-year-old cuts in front of you at the supermarket checkout, let go and let God. When the impatient driver toots his horn 20 times behind you, let go and let God. When your partner disagrees with everything you say, no matter how you word it, let go and let God.

When nothing you do or say changes people, situations or things, "let go and let God." Don't hang on; let go. It's the only way a shift can occur. Ever tried to get a broken toy off a child who is determined, right or wrong, not to let go?

That's exactly what we do every day when we refuse to let things go. So the next time you feel the blood pressure rising and the emotions starting to flood your body, trust, have faith and, above all:

Let go and let God

Bethany, remember, sometimes things need to fall apart so they can be rebuilt again, better and stronger.

Sincerely God

Dear God

“I have had a lot of bad luck and trauma in my life. I cannot seem to find any happiness anymore. What can I do?”

Signed Bethany

Dear Bethany

People can forget how to be happy. I know this sounds strange, but often when your life is full of chaos and life events are constantly challenging you, it is easy to slip into a mindset of “what next?” and you start anticipating the next bad thing. And with each new life situation you deal with, your ego mind starts developing a belief system which perpetuates the ‘my life is full of unhappiness’ mindset. And there is a myth out there which says happiness and sadness cannot be in the same room together. This is totally not true; joy and laughter are God-given instruments of healing. So what can you do to relearn how to be happy?

The easiest way is to do one thing every week which makes you happy. It does not have to be big or expensive; it may be as simple as coffee with a friend, a long bath or taking an hour to yourself to read a good book. It could be a double-coated chocolate ice cream, a walk in the park or watching

your favourite television program in your PJs. But you must commit to doing at least one thing a week. Then, after a while, you can start to share things you like with others. Get a group of friends together and go see a movie. If you like cooking, bake a cake for the elderly neighbour down the road. If you like crafts, start a craft group, or if you like books, a book-reading club.

The more you experience things which bring you joy, the more you will start to remember other things which have, in the past, brought you happiness. And best of all, you radiate energy which will make those around you less miserable as well.

So make a happy list, stick it on the fridge or put it in your back pocket to remind you of things which make you happy, and you will be amazed how differently the world will look in a few months. I hope you find your happy place.

Sincerely God

Dear God

“I watch Oprah all the time, and I wish I could be like her. Is there something she knows I don’t?”

Signed Bethany

Dear Bethany

You have no business being anyone else but Bethany. You may not be perfect and enlightenment may elude you, but you weren’t born to be Oprah; you were born to be you.

I think people get confused between great people and greatness. Being a poor imitation of someone else is not greatness; it is sameness. Adulation fades as soon as the next best thing comes along, and when you get off your soapbox, the crowd disappears.

You need to ask yourself, “What is this seed of greatness Creator planted within me, and how do I manifest it, honour it and step into it?” The answer comes not in the form of Oprah’s book club but in little ways which may seem insignificant yet are profound and meaningful.

Your greatness is the hand you extend to others which lifts them into their greatness.

Your greatness is the 20 minutes you take out of your day to let your partner talk about theirs.

Your greatness is the seat you give up on the bus for the elderly woman.

Your greatness is the hug you give your adopted granddaughter after she has fallen.

Your greatness is every kind act and word you speak in any given moment of the day.

Greatness is the ability to let the divine light of unconditional love within shine. Greatness is when one lives an authentic life of self-acceptance.

Greatness is when you can look at yourself in the mirror and be okay with the person staring back at you. You can get caught up in the superficial layers of fame and recognition, sometimes to the point where you beat yourself up for not being, earning or achieving enough. I am not sure when being a compassionate, caring person stopped being important and being a wealthy, enlightened one took over, but it's about time greatness got an overhaul.

When The Secret was revealed, it appeared to make people believe what they possessed wasn't enough, that there had to be more, and if they didn't have it, then they should be out there manifesting it.

Bottom line is, often we lose sight of what we do have, or we don't have the insight to see what is right in front of us. Happiness is not something everyone is taught to see. Greatness is being who you are and being happy being who you are. The other stuff is simply the trimming, not the filling.

So the next time you give out a smile or reach out a helping hand, know you are stepping into your greatness. Don't beat yourself up because you aren't someone else. The people to be in awe of are those who keep going when everything is gone, those who step back to allow someone else's light to shine, those who are the encouraging word or the helping hand which helps others step into their greatness and go on to achieve the accolades and the fame. Every child ever born has the seed of divine greatness within them; you simply need to start recognizing it in yourself and others. Be you, and be the best you that you can be!

Sincerely God

Dear God

“I know I am a bit hung up on the Oprah thing but I just want to be as successful as she is!”

Signed apologetically Bethany

Dear Bethany

People measure success in different ways: monetary, academic, career, possessions and so forth. Society tends to lean towards how high up the ladder you climb or how close to perfection you get. But success is living the life you were born to live, whatever this may end up looking like.

When people go off on tangents and start measuring their lives with someone else's ruler, this is when they get into trouble. Then they start looking at success as something they can pin on their shirts to say they are worthy of society's admiration. If you can reach the last breath totally convinced you have done what I put you on this earth to do, then you have been successful. What this looks like will differ from person to person.

If you want to know what you want in this life, ask yourself what you want to be remembered for when it ends.

*Do you want to be a fond memory in
someone's heart?*

*Do you want to be the voice which changed
history?*

*Do you want to be the father/mother you
never had?*

*Each person will answer differently and there
are no right or wrong answers.*

Are you successful?

Are you happy?

Are you living the life you were born to live?

Are you manifesting your dreams?

*Would you be at peace if you were to take your
last breath right now?*

*Ask the questions you may be surprised at
your answers.*

Sincerely God

Dear God

“Why do I keep attracting the same type of men/women into my life, usually ones who don’t treat me okay?”

Signed Bethany

Dear Bethany

You tend to attract that which you focus most on, so if you are always saying how you attract people who treat you badly, then it’s time to look at what beliefs you hold in terms of what you deserve out of life. It may also be time to look at the beliefs you hold about relationships. For example, do you really know what a healthy relationship is meant to look like?

It’s hard to find one or build one without this knowledge. When people keep getting into relationships which end badly, they tend to look at the other person as being to blame. However, everyone you meet is a mirror of your own self-reflection. If you keep bringing aggressive people into your life, you have to ask: is this a reflection of my own lack of assertiveness?

If you bring controlling people into your life, you might want to ask: is this a reflection of my

inability to make choices for myself or my lack of trust in my ability to make good choices? Or is it that I am not willing to take responsibility for my life and my choices?

When you begin to see a pattern developing in terms of your relationships, then it is a good idea to step back for a moment. Everything has to start with self and work outwards.

You need to look at others as a mirror. What lessons are they teaching you? What do you need to work on? What beliefs do you need to change or throw out the window? Then you need to make sure you have a very clear idea of what 'healthy' relationships are meant to look like because often people grow up believing their parents' dysfunctional relationships are 'normal' when in fact they are anything but, and then they carry these unhealthy beliefs about what relationships look like into their own relationships. Most of all, you have to work on your own self.

Do you need to build better life skills or work on your self-esteem?

Do you need to learn how to make better choices, take responsibility for your own happiness or find out what it is you really want in your life?

And maybe the most important lesson is to learn to be okay by yourself without anyone in your life. Because when you can be alone with yourself without the need to bring someone in to make you feel fulfilled, then you are more likely to attract someone who is on the same path. Love will find you when you learn to accept and love yourself as the divine miracle you are.

Sincerely God

Dear God

“I avoid confrontation because I do not want people to think I am mean. How can I make people like me and still stand up for myself?”

Sincerely Bethany

Dear Bethany

No one likes confrontation. No one wants to be seen as the villain. No one wants to have to walk through debates, arguments and the stress of having their viewpoint challenged. But the thing you will learn is it does not have to be personal. Someone else having a different opinion, view or perspective is not a reflection of whether you are a good person or not; it simply means they see things differently.

The problem is it is hard to stay in your adult when confronted; your inner child wants to jump up and say, “He started it first!” It is hard to listen and hear someone when they are pulling apart what you have said. It is harder still to admit, “Hey, I got it wrong.” Most relationships struggle when it comes to conflict and confrontation, which is why people tend to address every issue except the one which is truly bugging them.

Here are a few things to help:

Be willing to be wrong

Be flexible just in case you have to shift your position

Be willing to listen as well as speak; open your ears as well as your mouth

Be okay with people not agreeing with you; reach for a compromise rather than an all-or-nothing outcome

You are not going to avoid confrontation, but it does not have to be a big drama. It does not have to end in tears or angry words or hurt feelings.

The bottom line is, don't be afraid to have a voice. Confrontation is a growth curve for all involved. You cannot live an authentic life if you are always sidestepping the issues.

You have to be able to work through and let go of things; otherwise, they will become an anchor keeping you from moving forward. Yes, some people are not going to like you, but guess what? Some people don't like the Pope, the Queen, the Dalai Lama or me either, and it's okay. You do not need to be liked; you just need to know your words, actions and deeds align with an intent of highest good for all involved.

The little human who could

Sincerely God

Dear God

“How do I find balance in an ever-changing world?”

Signed Bethany

Dear Bethany

Technology may have come to save people from themselves and to make everything easier, but in reality it has only increased the speed with which they do things. What used to take 20 minutes now takes 5. The flip side, however, is people are now expected to fit more into their lives than ever before. They are working longer, harder, traveling more, staying home less and eating out more.

Families are ships which pass in the night, each member with a timeline of activities to be completed. With all this activity comes more reactivity: extra stress, less time, more commitments. Emotions are riding high; people are burning out, tuning out or, sadly, looking for a way out. So how does one find balance in a changing world?

Firstly, by recognizing that balance is not the same thing as time management; you can have a perfectly planned day and still feel like the world is collapsing around you.

Balance has very little to do with time and more to do with peace of mind.

So throw out the BlackBerry; it is not a miracle cure-all for not enough time in the day, nor is it the modern-day version of the new Messiah. I did not decide to give it to you instead of the stone tablets I gave Moses.

You can attempt to make more time, but what good is a moment if it is filled with emptiness and forgotten when the next one comes along? People strive for the elusive moment which appears to last forever—the first kiss, the birth of your first child—all moments in which time plays no part, for it stands still, a silent partner not noticed until the moment is let go of. Time is a concept of a society structured for doing rather than being.

Balance comes with the ability to simply be, without expectation, without the need to be doing, without the need to be somewhere else. At your most balanced, ‘stuff’ is something to walk through rather than something to react to, and life steps become a natural progression rather than an act of aggression where anything which stands in your way is gruffly pushed aside. So take a breath, stop what you are ‘doing’ and figure out exactly what this moment holds for you. Moments should not be links in a chain

of acts which take you to the end of a lifetime and leave you wondering where the years went.

Moments are the gift each breath brings us; they should be unwrapped, treasured and used to bring peace, joy and love into our lives.

To find balance, find self—not the ego self but the divine self, the peace that encloses your body and gives you a knowing that, no matter what, everything is going to be okay. Don't make time; take time to not do but be with the things and people which bring the most joy into your life. Get to know who you are at your core level. Have a spiritual spring clean; throw out what doesn't serve you anymore and bring in more of what does make your life brighter, happier and more joyful.

When you have a peace within—a knowing, a faith, a belief in yourself and the knowledge there is something bigger than all of you out there—nothing will throw you off balance. People have the mistaken impression balance is being able to fit everything in and make everybody happy. Not so.

Balance is the combination of the spiritual, the physical and the emotional, or the body, mind and spirit triangle. When you have mastered all three, then you have balance, but if any one of these is not being attended to, it throws the other two off.

*It may also pay to heed the words of Gandhi:
“There is more to life than increasing its speed.”*

Sincerely God

Bethany could imagine Angel Michael tossing onto the table a bunch of letters and then shaking his head.

Then she could hear Angel Gabriel say, “Her again?” And while God didn’t have a column in the Daily Halo, Bethany was sure if she closed her eyes and had faith, her questions would be answered. God, she determined, was the inner voice of wisdom we often ignored because our head and heart knew better. All we needed to do was close off the chaos of our world and listen and wait... for the words to come...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Robin Roberts is an Australian Psychic and Medium currently residing on Vancouver Island, off the coast of British Columbia, Canada. Over the last 30 years, she has sought to bring what she terms 'simple wisdom' into the lives of the people who come to her. She hopes through her writing to lead people to the corners of their souls so they may rediscover the people they were born to be. As a Psychic, she offers a unique perspective on personal transformation and the challenges facing all of us.

Find out more at robinrobertspsychic.com