

# Celebrate the Journey

## Embracing each moment of your true authentic life

**M**any of us are in transition. We're reinventing our work life, retiring, empty nesting and treading into new identities. We leave the known world only to step into vastness and unfamiliarity. The philosopher Nietzsche, probably in middle age and no doubt in the midst of a major transition, allowed this: "It takes chaos to give birth to a rising star."

We live in a society where only "big success" is acknowledged. We don't recognize the small steps. We don't pay witness to the stumbles. Yet, it takes outrageous courage to be in the middle of your journey. The middle is where it's at, baby.

Maybe you're growing a new business, writing the book of your dreams, or healing from a necessary divorce. These are the times when alligators are nipping at your feet, the rain keeps beating down, the moon is fading, your mother is calling, and you wonder if you are going to age in poverty with hopes that never come true. Yep, these are the moments that need celebration.

These are the times when we need applause and ribbons and massive hot fudge sundaes and witnesses to our magnificence. These are the times when we must love ourselves through the hunger and exhaustion. These are the times when we must celebrate the courage, power, belief, and stubborn pluck it demands to keep lurching and wobbling forward.

Do not reject yourself for not being "there" yet, wherever "there" is for you. You are on the path, and the path begins wherever you are, when you embrace your life with honesty, patience and compassion.

Don't accept the measurements of those who uphold flawed and obsolete standards. Do not borrow knowledge from the ones who do not dare. The ones who dare

absolutely know the pain of being in the middle of things. If you're life is unsettled, imperfect, unpredictable, wild at the core, stuck, or yet to come together...congratulations! You are one of the awakening tribe. You are in the stream of being alive.

The middle of things is where change takes place, where the great big barge of how things have always been turns around in the ocean and goes a new way. It's slower than a long red light, but it doesn't take forever. Those middle moments are our ashrams, boot camps, graduate schools and launch pads. They are anything but useless, empty or ordinary.

Don't hesitate to truly celebrate the experience of being in the middle of things. Begin by writing yourself a letter of congratulations or buy yourself a small token of appreciation at this juncture, a totem of support. While you're at it, celebrate someone else who is in the middle of their evolving life, as well. We all know someone in the midst of a break up, a layoff, an illness—someone whose circumstances are pushing them to a new and uncomfortable edge of being.

Best-selling author and Buddhist nun Pema Chödrön says: "To be fully alive, fully human, and completely awake is to be continually thrown out of the nest. To live fully is to be always in no-man's-land, to experience each moment as completely new and fresh. To live is to be willing to die over and over again." And Deepak Chopra, physician and New Age author, tells us to look at times of process as "pure potentiality." Remember, those "pure potentiality" times are when we make our life's most significant choices. It's where we craft, envision and realize our true authentic lives.

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