

NEWS YOU DIDN'T KNOW YOU NEED

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Carla Cotropia



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Carla's Thoughts of the Month

Obsession of the Month

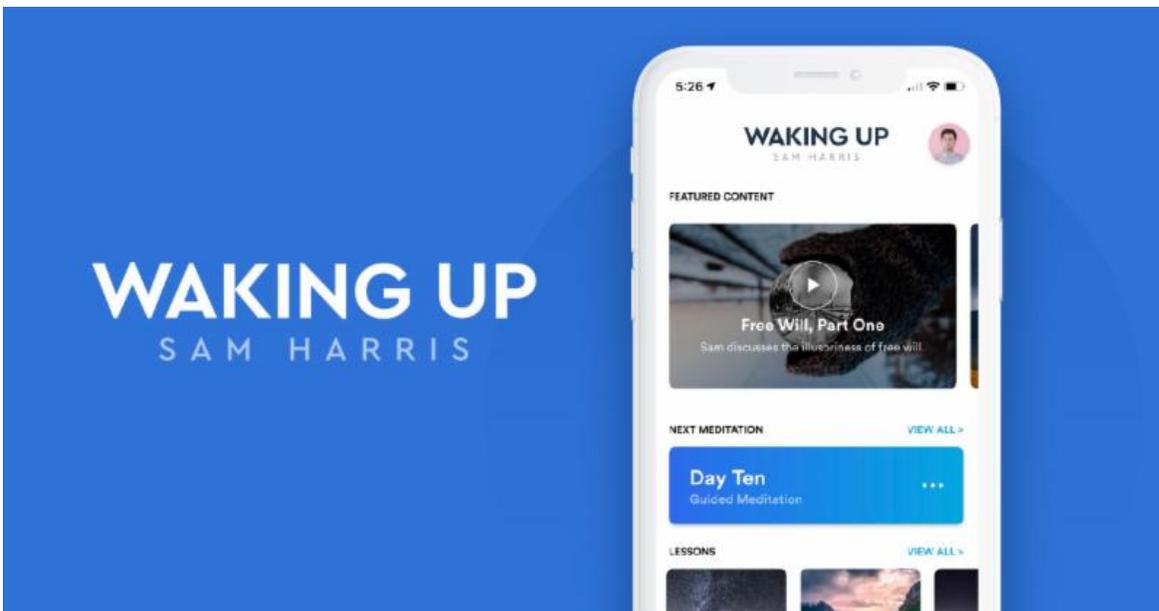
Juicing Celery!

Here are some photos of me buying celery for the week. The grocery checker was concerned about my sanity.



App of the Month

Waking Up - By Sam Harris



He is very good if you need a mood lift! Available for iPhone and Android.

PISS AND VINEGAR AND OTHER MEANINGFUL PHRASES - Carla Cotropia

Have you ever wondered how phrases originated? Take the phrase, "Full of Piss and Vinegar." I use this phrase to describe someone who is feisty. It isn't a negative, rather I like to think it is a compliment. Today I will wake up and have a healthy dose of piss and vinegar. So where did it originate?

According to phrases.org.uk the earliest citation to "Piss and Vinegar" is found in the 1936 John Steinbeck novel *Dubious Battle*: "Listen, mister, London said, "them guys is so full of piss and vinegar they'll skin you if you show that slick suit outside." The phrase was used again in the novel of *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Piss and Vinegar

During the 1920s, vinegar was used to mean vitality and energy. "Wind and piss" meant empty talk or full of bombast. So it became "pep and vinegar" or "piss and vinegar." Being "full of piss and vinegar" also referred to sailors drinking a snout full of cheap alcohol and becoming "rowdy and boisterous."

Piss

I have been known to use the phrase, "I am pissed off" and we know what that means. In England, they use the phrase "piss up" to indicate a drunken celebration. The English also use "taking the piss" to mean someone who is behaving in an unacceptable way. "They are really taking the piss now." Piss can mean (1) "pep and vigor", (2) it can mean "mad" (pissed off) or (3) "piss up" can mean drunk or (4) "taking the piss" could mean "going to the bathroom" or (5) "behaving badly". I think I have seen enough of the word "piss."

Trash That Won't Burn

I like the phrase-"Trash That Won't Burn." I made this one up to refer to something really bad. I grew up in the country on a farm. We had a big barrel behind the house, and that is where we would burn our trash. There was no garbage pickup in the country. So as a kid, I would be charged with taking the trash to the barrel. And it was obvious that there was some trash that just "wouldn't burn." Later in life, this came back to me as jargon to mean-that is some really bad shit/stuff/thing. It is "Trash That Won't Burn."

Wrongo Bongo

This one is courtesy of our friend Mary Alderson. It is a nice way to say, "You are wrong." "Wrongo Bongo" just rolls off your tongue and is fun to say.

Up and At 'Em, Atom Ant

This is a phrase I use on myself in the morning when I don't want to get up. You may be thinking, "What in the world is she saying that to herself for?" And this would mean that you don't know about the cartoon ant that was created by Hanna-Barbera in 1965. Atom Ant had the ability to fly at superspeed and had incredible strength. He was invulnerable. His catchphrase was "Up and at 'em, Atom Ant." I tell myself this, and it works. I am up and off to attack the day.

You Can Do It If You Try

A simple mantra to repeat to yourself when feeling low or small. Just remember, you can do it if you try or put another way, never ever give up.

Be Your Own Kid

My sister tells her three kids this when they are subjected to peer pressure or just mean kids at school. "Be your own kid," means be yourself, no matter what others think of you or want you to be. Actually, this is a good mantra to tell yourself is you fall into the judge yourself trap. Be Your Own Self.

On Gratitude - Carla Cotropia

I know being grateful is suppose to make you happier. I wrote a blog about this which is below, Happiness Brings Success. This Happiness blog concerned writing down everyday things you were grateful for even if it is just a good cup of coffee. Well, you can guess what happened. I did it for a while, then like most of my good intentions, it went by the wayside. Then I discovered the waking up app by Sam Harris. He has a short clip that discusses gratitude.

Sam's version is much easier and can be accessed at any time. It goes like this. You remind yourself that many many people in the world are suffering with big issues like poor housing and limited food and water or they are spending their days not knowing if there will be a coup or military takeover. Next, you think about the people that have just been informed they have a terminal illness. With this knowledge, you can be grateful that your problem is Houston traffic sucks or the Starbucks line is too long, or the person next to you is talking on their phone as if you care to hear what their day is about.

So with that comparison, you should feel much much better!

Happiness Brings Success and Don't let the Birds Overhead Make a Nest in Your Hair - Carla Cotropia

I am reading a fascinating book and have to share. The book is The Happiness Advantage by Shawn Achor. Achor has an intriguing principal about happiness and success that is backed up by loads of research. Traditionally we have been told that if you work hard, you will become successful and once you are successful, you will be happy. Achor says the research shows over and over again that this is faulty thinking. Actually, it works in the reverse. People that are happy are more likely to be successful, prosperous and healthy. In other words, happiness comes first, then success, not the other way around.



Hmmm. How do we change our attitude to be "more happy"? According to Achor, there are specific steps to do so. First, recognize that you have a choice on how you view things. Whenever something "bad" happens, you can choose to believe one of two ways.

One way is to believe it is a short-lived event and "things will get better." The other way is the "woe is me approach." If you chose the "oh well approach" rather than the "why is everything terrible happening to me approach" you will be able to recover and move on much more rapidly.



Many lawyers burn out and suffer from depression. According to Achor's book, lawyers are 3.6 times more likely to suffer from major depressive disorders than the rest of the employed population. Why? One reason is the way we are trained in law school. If you are writing a contract, you are supposed to imagine everything that could go wrong, then write a clause that covers that contingency. Litigators are trained to look for weakness in the other side's case. In short, lawyers are trained to look for the negative. This is fine except when it seeps over into our personal lives. Cross-examining your kids or spouse is not a recipe for a happy home life.



Wire Your Brain to be a Positive Thinking Spam Filter



There is a famous study where psychologists were doing a research project and asked volunteers to watch a film of a basketball game and count the number of times one team passed the ball ([Watch Video Here](#)). About 25 seconds into the video, a person in a full body gorilla costume walks straight through the action, traveling from right to left across the screen for a full 5 seconds. 46 percent of the people that viewed the video completely missed the gorilla. They missed it because they were so focused on counting the number of passes. Their brains just filtered it out.

Likewise, our brains get bombarded with many different items during the day. Many of those items, sights, and sounds are filtered out. If you are programmed to see the negative, you will miss a lot of the positive things happening around you. You can reprogram your brain by writing down three things that happened that day that you are happy about. Those three things can be as mundane as 1. had a great hamburger for lunch; 2. it rained yesterday so now I don't have to water the yard, and 3. the line was short at Starbucks. Doing this each day will reset your brain to "notice" the good things around you. You can literally train your brain to have a positive thinking spam filter.

3 Happiest Moments

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Using Adversity to Grow

One study discussed in Achor's book concerns the Post Traumatic Growth Syndrome. We all know about Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome, but there is also Post Traumatic Growth Syndrome. It has been proven that adversities give us an opportunity to grow. Psychologist Richard Tedeschi and his colleagues studied Post Traumatic Growth Syndrome. In their study, it was shown that something good can come from a struggle with something very difficult. Post Traumatic Growth Syndrome provides an increase in spirituality, compassion for others, openness and overall increased life satisfaction. The phrase "what doesn't kill you, makes you stronger" is true. What makes some people have a Post Traumatic Positive Growth Syndrome and others a Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome? Again it is a positive mindset. The same traumatic event can be viewed by one person as hopeless event and by another person as an opportunity for change and growth. The results of the same traumatic event can be very different. The reasons some people have positive growth and others have continued debilitating stress is based on their individual mindsets. The Positive Growth people saw adversity not as a stumbling block, but as a stepping stone to change and grow. Growth is change and change is friction. Friction can be painful. But looking back after a painful event, many people can truthfully say they are better off and happier.

Don't Sabotage Your Success with Negative Thoughts

Another point in Achor's book is that it takes three compliments to offset one negative one. You can sabotage yourself and your coworkers with your words. An example given is where the employee is about to give a project presentation to the client, and his boss says, "Don't blow this, we really need this account." What that boss has done is to put failure in the employee's mind. It would have been much better if he had said, "Did you watch the game last night? Wasn't that a great one!" The point is that putting a positive thought in your mind before a performance guarantees the likelihood of success much more than saying a Debbie Downer comment.

Words of Wisdom from my Mother

My Mother used to drive me crazy with these comments when I was little. Now I see the wisdom in her words. Two of her favorites were:

1. Just because the birds fly overhead, doesn't mean you need to let them make a nest in your hair. (Probably my resentment for this phrase had something to do with my hair problems as a teenager).
 2. Don't meet trouble head-on. (Prompted by my obsessive worries as a kid about not fitting in).
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Taking Steps To Settle Cases 2 Sneakers @ A Time

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