

Playing The Game Of Life

**A
little book
about
attitudes & life**

**by
David Bromfield**

An Attitudes and A Path With Heart Publication

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**A
little book
about
attitudes and life**

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First Edition rev 5, June 2003

First Printing June 2003

Second Edition rev 1, November 2008

Second Printing November 2008

International Standard Book Number 0-9811087-1-1

Attitudes and A Path With Heart

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Dedication

To everyone who searches for a better way of life.

Please pass along this book to anyone you feel may benefit from reading it.

What Is A Path With Heart?

When Don Juan was talking with Carlos Castaneda about finding a path through life, he explained it this way:

“Look at every path closely and deliberately. Try it as many times as you think necessary. Then, ask yourself, and your self alone, one question. This question is one that only a very old man asks. My benefactor told me about it when I was young and my blood was too vigorous for me to understand it.

Now I understand it. I will tell you what it is. Does this path have a heart? If it does, the path is good. If it doesn't, it is of no use.”

Am I Already Following A Path With Heart?

When we ask ourselves this question, we quickly discover that no one else can define for us exactly what our path should be. Instead, we need to allow the energy and seeking of this question to vibrate, or resonate, within ourselves. Then, from somewhere inside, the answer will come, along with a new and deeper understanding of the question we have asked. By listening for even a brief moment, we will know if we are already following a path with heart. We will also know if we are not.

Can I Speak To My Heart Directly?

Yes, you can. Most ancient cultures already know, and practice, this. We can actually talk with the heart as if it is an old friend. We have gotten so wrapped up in our daily, busy lives and needs that we have lost the art of taking time to strike up a conversation with our hearts.

What Will I Hear From My Heart?

When we ask it about our present direction in life, we must look at the set of present values we have chosen to live by. We must take an honest look at what we put our time, our creativity, our strength and our love, into. This needs to be done without idealism, exaggeration or being

overly sentimental. In short: Does what I am presently choosing to do, reflect what I most deeply value?

We will certainly never hear words of criticism from it, while we will hear words of love and encouragement.

Is Following A Path With Heart Hard To Do?

It all depends on what we understand as hard. In order to see the preciousness of life, we have to pay attention to it. As the energies of presence and simplicity begin to surface more and more, then this brings our path alive as we express ourselves more and more.

On the other hand, remaining in pain, being afraid of life, living in survival mode or worse, takes constant attention and huge amounts of physical, emotional and mental energy. It takes years off our lives, and makes the years that we have left seem like a total burden.

What Is The Bottom Line?

Ultimately, each of us has to choose as to what we are willing to do. I believe there is nothing more wonderful than the opportunity to heal, grow and become the individuals we really are.

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Introduction

Hello and welcome to this edition of *Playing the Game of Life*. In these pages, I want to introduce you to the most fascinating journey on the planet, and the most fascinating person making the journey. This person is, of course, yourself! It does not take long to see that the voyage and voyager are one and the same.

My life has been transformed by the steps I took, the landscape I crossed and the inner riches I discovered. All I did was follow the ideas I am briefly presenting to you here. Like you, I am an ordinary person and I've achieved extraordinary results - just by putting one foot in front of the other.

I share these ideas and thoughts with the belief that you already have all it takes to be as serene, successful and prosperous as you want to be. Remember, you are whole, complete and perfect just as you are, even if you presently believe otherwise. Life is all about attitude, and attitudes can be changed.

Chapter 1 - Is Life a Game?

The Answer is all in the Attitude

William James, the father of American Psychology, said “Change your attitudes, and you will change your circumstances.” Years ago, I did not have much faith in his point of view. This is no surprise, since I knew nothing about the power attitude plays in the way we experience the world. We may reasonably ask “What is attitude?” Webster's Dictionary describes it as: “Posture,” or “A mental position.” You may think “Okay, it is a mental position - so what?” Well, I discovered this often ignored and disregarded subject of attitude is the cornerstone of our happiness, or lack of it.

So I ask you, is life a game? Let's pause and look at the meaning of the word “game.” Webster's says it is a “Contest played for sport or amusement according to rules.” Hmm, this generates more questions. Who decides the rules? What if one person plays for sport and another for amusement - that could cause misunderstandings. And where is it written that life is the deadly serious affair that some of us make it out to be. As for the rules, who made them, and where are they written down? A lot has been written about the way “rules” differ, and yet have similarities between different cultures, but lets leave the theory to the academically inclined.

Other folks like you and me, have things to do, places to go and people to see. Suffice it to say that one's attitudes to oneself, to others and life in general makes or breaks the experience of living. There is a serious side to life and a light-hearted side - perhaps feeling happy flows from enjoying a nice balance of the two. It is possible to meet our responsibilities while having a song in our hearts. As with any game, it is the spirit and intention that makes it enjoyable or not.

Attitudes and Play Dough

Remember as a kid experimenting with play dough? That squishy stuff you were totally in command of? Another good example is potters' clay. The stuff is pliable, squishy and fun to mold into shapes. When the time is ripe, the molded object is "fired" in a kiln and there it is, your prize creation! The analogy being that the substance of our minds - thought - is as pliable and moldable as potters' clay.

When we are children, our minds are wide open to each and every possibility. We have no way of knowing truth from fantasy, fact from fiction. We trustingly (even against our instincts) believe what we see, hear and experience. Thus we are silently molded on the inside by forces from the outside. Then, through long habit, or a strong emotional experience, what we have come to believe as truth is "fired" in the kiln of our imagination. An attitude is born.

This continues throughout our early years. One time for our good, the next time for our undoing. Attitude after attitude is formed, based on our acquired beliefs, with each one becoming a brick in the house of our self-concept. Attitudes are how we feel about ourselves, other people and the events of our lives. For most of us, our attitudes are a hodge-podge of fact and fiction, sometimes running contrary to each other. Perhaps you have on occasion hopped from one foot to the other striving to make your mind up between two equally attractive choices. This is due to the clash of two opposite attitudes about the same thing.

It is possible to examine and change your attitudes by looking at the thoughts that created the attitude in the first place. Your attitudes make or break your life experiences rendering them enjoyable and fulfilling, or boring, fearful and debilitating.

You Deserve the Best

You deserve the very best of everything that life has to offer. You really do. No matter what it is, you deserve it. Health, wealth, love, self-acceptance, peace-of-mind, you deserve it. Try this experiment. Go look in the bathroom mirror. Peer into the eyes of the individual you see there, and say "You deserve the best!" While you are still looking at yourself, get a feeling for what is happening in your abdomen.

Whatever feeling you are experiencing, that is your attitude about deserving coming to the surface. It signals your beliefs about self and how deserving you feel. Attitudes have their home in the unconscious mind, and feed your imagination 24 hours a day. They never sleep, get tired or need a day off. Imagination has been described as the Scissors of the Mind, and it spends its time creating the experiences of your life.

Consider for a moment how imagination and attitude are related. For example, many people fail to lose weight even when they desperately want to. In their conscious minds, the decision has been made to slim down - however no one clued them into the roles imagination and attitudes play in the overall plan. These folks want to lose weight in their conscious minds, while remaining anchored to a secret vision of being overweight in their emotions/imagination. Remember, the internal vision is all-powerful.

Our physical living conditions, our friends, the jobs we have and so on are all reflections of our attitudes. We might say the circumstances of our lives are our thoughts condensed into physical reality - the invisible made visible, as it were. If you want something which you presently do not have, you can find it by learning to change your attitudes. Even the seemingly physically impossible has been achieved with commitment, patience and persistence.

Chapter 2 - Who Is In Charge?

Puppet or Person

In a course I took, the instructor asked “Who thinks your thoughts?” At the time I considered this a silly question. He went on, though, to explain that while we all create and think our own thoughts, we often do not take responsibility for this constant creating. This is especially true when it is about painful, unpleasant or fearful issues, which is when we have the very human tendency to put the cause of our discomfort on someone or something else. We tend not to look at our own thoughts or actions as the source.

Have you ever watched an expert puppeteer working the strings of a puppet? That little creature dances, moves and sings as though it has a life of its own. Fascinating. Lots of us grew up in abusive environments, witnessing and experiencing blame and recrimination. From these experiences is created the impression that one person could “make” something happen in another person. So in effect, a person one minute, puppet the next.

We are not puppets; we are each one of us a unique individual. You have your unique talents, gifts and way of being in the world. It is your birthright to enjoy a good measure of peace, love and prosperity in your life. By learning to take emotional responsibility for your thoughts and consequent feelings, a current of personal power and freedom is created. New attitudes can be born.

Who Holds the Strings?

Whenever an Hawaiian native needed their health tended to, they would pay a visit to the Kahuna, or healer. Tradition has it that the Kahuna would ask “Who is wrong with you?” rather than “What is wrong with you?” Maybe these Kahunas knew a thing or two about human nature that we do not. A lot of us give our power away to other people and don't even know we are doing it. This is what

we are doing when we find fault outside ourselves to explain away our own unhappiness and frustration.

So while it is true we hold our own strings, the subject of who seems to be pulling on them from moment to moment is worth thinking about. Ultimately, of course, we are doing it all ourselves. It is fascinating to start unraveling the skein of tangled up feelings called your attitudes. All of the threads lead to the most amazing places; to wondrous parts of that inner universe known as “You.”

Pulling Your own Strings

Wayne Dyer wrote a great book called “Pulling your own Strings.” In it he placed emphasis on taking emotional responsibility for ourselves. And learning to pull your own emotional strings is what this boils down to. Consider this: you have at this moment every tool, resource, gift, strength and skill you will ever need to create lasting happiness in your life. No matter how preposterous this may sound, you already have it all. The secret is learning to put it all together into a working system for your own benefit and that of those around you.

Henry Ford remarked “Believe you can, and you will, believe you can't, and you won't.” He went to say that “Obstacles are what we see if we take our eyes off the target.” These words were said by an ordinary person doing extra-ordinary things with his life. His success was not due to luck, the stars or some streak of special-ness in him. There are no special people in the world, only ordinary people like you and me.

Success is the outcome of patience and persistence in the face of all obstacles to your desired goal. Whatever you want to do with your life, if it is humanly possible, you can do it. If you can dream it, you can achieve it. Consider your dreams to be fish in the ocean of life. Follow them with perseverance and see where they lead you.

Chapter 3 - Where Do I Begin? Right Where You Stand

The journey you want to take is stretching out in front of you. Look down at your feet, the road you stand on stretches forever. It goes to bed with you at night, it gets up with you in the morning. Wherever you go, it goes. Another name for it is “Your Life”. There are steps to improving your life through making the inner journey just like there are steps in the physical world. In the physical world, we move our legs to get around. In the inner world we move our minds to get around. It can seem quite dark inside when we first take a peek.

Consider the darkness to be unawareness. That is all there is to it. There is only you in there. Imagine your attention to be a spotlight, and as you shine it around inside yourself at your thoughts you start seeing bits and pieces of your attitudes you did not know were there. It will be both fascinating and freeing to those who will risk looking into the so-called darkness.

The human body is very wise. It has an ageless wisdom all its own, and if you learn to listen to it, it will slowly reveal its secrets to you. Your body knows where you need to go, how to get there, and the steps to take. Acceptance is a big part of being happy in life. It is easy to feel disconnected from our bodies, especially when we are anxious, afraid or have other uncomfortable feelings. So part of beginning the inner journey is striking up an acquaintance with your body.

The details of the journey, the steps to take, are contained in the constant thoughts you have of what you “could” do for your happiness. These are the thoughts with the guilt or shame attached to them. We all know what is good for us, and what we need in order to be at peace and settled within. Yet we tend to put them off to one degree or another in fear of hurting, disappointing, or

inconveniencing someone else important to us. Whether you are 19 or 99, you are standing on the edge of your own path-through-life.

A Path-With-Heart

Another expression for healing is coming home to your heart. This is the one place, sadly, out of which many of us have quite firmly locked ourselves. Since there is only you inside your body, you are both the evictor and the evicted. Knowing this gives you the power to let yourself back into your heart whenever you want to. Even if you haven't locked yourself out of your heart, you can find more heart for yourself by making some simple shifts in your attitudes.

There is not much heart in our western way of life. While living in a technology rich, financially abundant world has its advantages, there are a number of disadvantages as well. One is the impersonal nature of our society. We end up feeling fractured and distant from ourselves in particular and from other people in general. It is up to us, then, to create some heart for ourselves by treating ourselves gently and accepting ourselves as we are, faults and all.

Treading a path-with-heart is not difficult. It is actually quite a simple process, although at times it is not easy. Be careful not to confuse simplicity with ease. The simple things in life are often the most profound. It is not a straight and narrow path either. It may well wander all over the inner landscape of your being - or take you straight to the heart of the matter.

Inner Guru or Outer Wizard?

There are no shortages of teachers, guides and gurus in our information packed world. You do not need an ongoing diet of teachers, guides and gurus to find happiness. The one teacher you need is already inside you - you are your own best teacher.

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A real guru is not someone we actively seek out as a means of enlightenment. In fact, we could search our whole lives through and not find one, no matter how deep the longing. A real guru appears when we give up the struggle to “make it happen,” and surrender to the higher wisdom that runs the universe in all its splendor. This higher wisdom is present in your body as the “Life Force.” This is the same force that imbues your body with such knowing wisdom of what is and is not good for yourself. Trust yourself and look inside for the answers. Then trust what you find.

Chapter 4 - How Do I Begin?

One Step at a Time

There is no rush. There never was and never will be, no matter how urgent the task may seem. Have you ever seen the tide rush in because it was a few minutes late, or watched the sun shoot up into the sky like a rocket because it slept in? No, of course not. There is a cosmic schedule, and everything runs along just like it ought to. Since we are, each of us, a part of this cosmic schedule, our lives run along just like they ought to as well. Granted, this schedule is typically at odds with the way we believe events “should” unfold. Again, those beliefs can be changed, and to our advantage.

The only rush is in our heads. And the more I ponder this, the less inclined I am to try and explain exactly what this “rush” is. Adrenaline? Ego? I don't know. It's 6.30 in the evening as I write this. I have worked all day and now I get the urge to write. I think I would rather be vegging out in the chair. That isn't happening though. These words want to be expressed now, and they come from that place in me which is connected to somewhere beyond time and space. So I let myself surrender to the cosmic time schedule and choose to write instead of vegging. In the end I am glad, because this is when I feel the cleanest, fulfilled, and look forward to seeing what will emerge next.

So take your time on your journey. Time is an intimidating word in our culture. There is no need to be obsessed with cramming as much into each moment as you can. By giving yourself time you will move along the journey faster, smoother and easier. You will find that what used to be a hassle will be approached with a new attitude. Give life itself with its natural cosmic forces an opportunity to help you out.

Keeping Your Balance

A student asked his Zen master where he would go once he (the master) died. The master roared with laughter and replied “Go? there is nowhere to go, I am already here!” Our culture places great emphasis upon thinking rationally. This either-or point of view creates the mental illusion of two separate places existing as “here” and “there.” Perhaps the process is best described as saying “here” is where you mentally are, and “there” is where you would mentally like to be, such as happier, calmer, richer etc.

To put it simply, “there” does not exist. Only “here” does. Sure, here and there exist as separate places in the physical world. I am in British Columbia, Canada. Where are you? Mentally though, only “here” exists. As Yogi Berra pointed out “No matter where I go, there I am.” So wherever you are physically located at this moment, this is “here” for you. It is also the only place you can be mentally, also.

We have been taught to split our thinking up into past, present and future. So while you are living in the present, your thoughts can be in the past or the future. By believing there is more than one place to be, we often feel in the wrong place at the wrong time. The result is confusion, unhappiness and a sense of frustration. This is why a guru will teach his students to “Be here, now.”

A wise saying goes “If you don't want to fall down, avoid slippery places.” How do you know if a surface is slippery or not? By listening to your body. Body is very wise, and has access to wisdom many of us have lost touch with. Body wisdom comes naturally and can be called “balance.” In your mind's eye, see someone riding a bicycle. Two separate forces are in play at the same time. Centrifugal force pushes the rider one way, centripetal force pushes him the other way at the same time. The

result is balance. As long as the rider is moving, he or she stays upright.

The same principle applies to your path-with-heart. As long as you are willing to travel forward into the next adventure by moving through the present situation, then balance will be there for you. All with no effort on your part. You can be as scared and confused as you like, or need to be, all that is required for balance is the willingness to travel forward. And even this does not take any effort after the first couple of experiences because you soon realize there is an extra dimension of reality at work here. You are getting help, guidance and support from some invisible source inside of you.

Taking Baby Steps

Have you ever watched a baby learning to walk? She hauls herself up onto her feet, hangs on to the support to steady herself, gathers her resources, then launches herself off into space. Away she goes. After a few wobbly steps, gravity interferes. Okay, no problem. She simply folds her legs under herself and flops down onto her bottom. She reverts back from what she is trying to what she knows. Sounds like wisdom to me. Perfect balance all the way. While she is learning a new kind of balance, she is using an old way to help her keep her balance, while she learns. Isn't natural growth wise? We were all children once, and that precious inner child is alive and well inside each of us. So is the natural wisdom that goes with childhood.

That precious inner child gives you the gifts of the richness and wonder to life. Whenever you admire a sunset, drink in the magic of a spring morning, feel magnetized by the turning of the tide – this is the child inside you making his or her presence felt. You can trust this presence, even if your feelings right now are tumultuous, unpleasant or even scary. It is okay, most kids are scared of the dark to some degree or another. Just take a quiet mo-

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ment, breathe in deeply, say to yourself “It is all okay, it really is” Then breathe out just as deeply. Do this as often as you need to. It can be very calming, yet gives you energy.

So take baby steps. Take giant baby steps if you feel so inclined. Any kind of steps are okay, as long as they are steps. They are your steps. As a Buddhist text suggests: “Treat yourself as you would your own, only, child.” You are a beautiful, unique, priceless human being. Treat yourself kindly, and with love and respect as you would your own, only child.

Chapter 5 - Where Am I Going?

Transformation, not Destination

You are going to happiness, peace, contentment with your lot. This journey does not have a physical destination. It is all about the journey, not about the destination. Remember our brief discussion earlier about “here” and “there”? Your place in the universe is unique, as unique as you are. No one is as qualified to answer your questions as you are. The secret is learning to start asking yourself questions and to trust the answers. Your answers. Lots of things happen to stunt our emotional growth. Some are just tricks of nature, some accidental, and some are perpetrated by our own and others thoughts and actions. Believe in the goodness inherent in the journey, and before long you will be living the goodness in yourself.

In my work as a personal growth coach, the question I am most often asked is “How do I do it?” The answer is both simple and complex. It is simple if you allow events to unfold as they need to, in accordance with the cosmic time schedule I mentioned earlier. This takes trust. It is complex if you want or need to stay in control of the situation on a moment-by-moment basis. In this case, then you will experience complexity and confusion, to the degree you try to control it.

Of course, allowing events to unfold takes a certain level of trust and flexibility. It is quite simple to find this level of trust if you know how. Think back to the worst situation you tried to control. Remember what a complete, utter, dismal and heart rending flop it was. Replay it in your mind's eye. Can anything be worse than that? Consider this - since life knows when to bring the tides in and out; and to spin the sun up into the sky, could it be smart enough to figure out what you need for help and assistance?

Heartfelt Answers

The word “heart” has a couple of meanings in our culture. The well known one of being a physical organ that pumps blood through our bodies. “Heart” also means feelings, warmth, love, and seat of the soul. “Heart” is the entry point into a different dimension of life, in which feelings are the reality, rather than physical phenomenon. Walking your path-with-heart taps you into this source of energy, healing and wisdom. Even when the present moment outcomes are scary or unpleasant operating with “heart” awareness can keep you coping with trust in your current and future inner strength.

Only you can provide yourself with heartfelt answers. You know who you are. If you do not believe this, go look in the bathroom mirror and take a long look into your eyes. The feeling of discomfort you may experience is the phase-shift between who you think you are and who you really are.

I have learned over time, to trust in the flow. Usually this happened as a result of being unable to control or direct a situation as I believed it “should” unfold. It has become easier and more fulfilling to let go of that kind of control, allowing myself to listen to the “heart” of my experiences.

Journey, not Arrival

Growth and peace are all in the journey, in how we live our lives now and in the contentedness we yearn for and can experience. By examining our thoughts and listening to our feelings, we raise our awareness about attitudes we have formed over time. By paying attention to our physical bodies and mental thoughts we can choose to transform the way we think, feel and act in the world.

This e-Book is not about theories, it is about introducing you to what is available to you in terms of happiness, both from life- in-general and yourself-in-particular. I

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have only one wish for you. This is for you to be as happy, peaceful, contented, fulfilled, satisfied, calm, radiant, healthy, loved, loving and giving as you could ever be. I am happy if I have added to your life in any way at all.

May every blessing be yours,

David Bromfield

About The Author

David is a numerologist, metaphysical teacher and personal life solutions facilitator for personal growth.

Through his workshops, books and private sessions David has assisted many people to discover and use the full potential of their own creative powers of self-healing. A life changing event in the mid 70's led to his desire to assist people become aware of their healing potential.

He has the outlook that, no matter what happened to us in the past, we have the capability to heal and grow.

David says: "I learned to depend on an energy greater than myself which I call 'Infinite Spirit.' Its presence in my heart and mind have made it possible for me to reach beyond the walls of my comfort zone again and again and know I will grow. The two experiences of birth and death are the fundamental facts of human life. Whatever happens in-between is up to us. Happiness is no more guaranteed than is unhappiness. It all depends on the choices we make."

He blends technique, knowledge and insight into an atmosphere where self-transformation happens.

David is blessed with the ability to combine the sometimes confusing worlds of metaphysics, spirituality, psychology and healing in ways that leave no one untouched.

His straightforward approach shows people how to come home to themselves.

