

10 Ways to Get Inspired

Where do you draw inspiration from? Is it from someone in your life who's touched your heart and soul?

Has listening to a [TED talk](#), watching a movie, reading an inspirational book or quote helped lift you up? Or, has remembering how you successfully navigated a big challenge shown you what's possible for you?

Here are ten concepts taken from the essays in Robert Holden's book ***Shift Happens! How to live an inspired life starting right now!*** that we can all draw on for inspiration:

1. **Choose the highest thought:** Every day you make a thousand choices. Most important of all, you choose what to think. And, every day the world shows you your state of mind. Life comes right up to your face and says, "*This is what you are thinking - have a nice day!*" The good news is that you are free to change your mind whenever you want. When you shift your thinking, the world shifts. This is because the world is an effect of your thoughts. In every event, encounter, or situation, cultivate the habit of asking yourself, 'What is the highest thought here?' Be still for an instant, lay aside everyday thoughts, delete the ego, release your fears, jettison your judgements and make yourself available to your higher wisdom. Inspiration goes wherever it is made welcome.
2. **You can have whatever you want!:** 'When I was 25 years old,' Holden explains 'I went to listen to a talk given by a Indian holy man touring Europe entitled *You can have whatever you want!* He began with *'It's God's joy to give you everything. Know that you can have whatever you want. Be still, and know who you are.'* That was it. The holy man's assistant then told us we would each receive an individual blessing called a *Darshan*. He gave me a most precious gift that day. During the blessing, he looked into my eyes and asked: *'Who are you?'* It took me several responses before I understood. He was asking me to look past my labels, my self-image, my learned self, and who I *thought* I was, so that I could see the truth of who I really am. With great compassion, he encouraged me to win back all that is infinite, immeasurable and eternal. Every moment of your life you are deciding 1) *who you are*, 2) *what you want*, 3) *what you can do*, and 4) *what you deserve and what you don't*. In effect, you're creating a self-image, an opinion of yourself. Your self-image then creates your reality by underwriting what it deems is possible and not possible, i.e. your self-image contracts how much success you can have, how much happiness is 'realistic', how much peace of mind is okay, how much love is acceptable, and how much abundance is possible. You choose your self-image and thereby you can choose your life. Stay open to your true self, alive to new choices and possibilities. Relax for a moment. and be willing to let go of every 'I am,' i.e., I am a woman, I am a man, I am a mother, I am an accountant, I am not creative. Then, do the same with 'I can't' - I can't believe it, I can't change, I can't find love. Peel away and undo every 'I am' and 'I can't' to reveal your true self.

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3. **There is nothing wrong with *who you are*:** Certainly, your perception and your thinking can be off and you can make poor choices, such as, you can choose to see flaws in yourself that no one else sees or you can invent a story of how bad you are. Give these strange ideas all of your power if you want, but *who you are*, your true self, remains whole, worthy and well. Shift happens whenever you practise *unconditional* self-acceptance, give yourself a break, choose kindness instead of judgement, forgiveness instead of self-attack and laughter instead of condemnation. Life always gets better when you treat yourself better. Try this powerful exercise: make a point of looking for the good in everyone you meet. See the light in their eyes, their faces, their smile and their presence. Above all, teach no one that there is anything wrong with *who* they are. As you offer this light to others you will strengthen it in yourself.
4. **What are you waiting for?:** Do you ever find yourself sitting in life's waiting room, killing time, waiting for happiness, for love, the green light or waiting for your bridge to appear? What are you really waiting for? Courage, permission, your turn, zero risk, the right moment, a sign or a guarantee? The WAIT problem is a common block to happiness, love and success. Happiness awaits you. Love awaits you. Success awaits you. They await your choice, your acceptance, a sign from you, a 'yes' from you! The WAIT problem is really a disconnect between what is truly possible and what you will let yourself receive. Symptoms of this problem include limbo, lack, feeling stuck, no flow, no synchronicity, procrastination, overanalysing, no energy and no inspiration. Exhaustion, illness and failure happen because people wait to achieve success first before they meditate, rest and balance their life. The perfect antidote to waiting is willingness. Willingness harnesses the power of intention, trust, faith and commitment. Willingness inspires readiness and with readiness all things are possible.
5. **True assertiveness is a 'Yes':** Rather than just saying 'no' to what you don't want, practise meditating and saying 'yes' each morning to what you do want. 'Yes' is the key to intention. It is the key to choice, purpose and assertiveness. When you are struggling, say 'yes' to greater ease. When you are afraid, breathe with it and say 'yes' to help. Say 'yes' to whatever you want - love, balance, happiness, even miracles!
6. **Don't sweat it!:** My mother watched me as I tried to work myself into an early grave. Several times she sent me cards with the same message: *'Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.'* - MATTHEW 6:28 - 9. 'Nice message', I thought, *'but doesn't she realise that she has already sent me this?'* The pattern of my life was work, work, work, exhaustion ... work, work, work, exhaustion. I was in a sweat, and there was no space for inspiration, no chance for miracles, and no time for joy. Today, let go of the belief that you need to work hard for everything. Swap effort for inspiration. Ease up on the struggle. Focus on a relationship or goal you are trying too hard at. Give up trying to 'make it happen' and make way for unconditional guidance and unconditional success. Commit to ease. Believe in effortless accomplishment. Allow for the possibility of a better and easier way.

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7. **Beware of "I" strain:** From a distance, the independent person cuts a striking pose. To be independent looks like power, freedom and true strength, but it isn't. Independence is no strength, it is a wound. Independence is inspired not by love, but fear, and not by wholeness, but aloneness. Independence is the ego's attempt to be it's own god. The independent person always runs out of juice. How do you know if you are being *dysfunctionally independent*? Here are a few tell-tale signs: you are exhausted, because 'superman' and 'superwoman' insist on being self-sufficient; you never ask for help - you are too proud, arrogant, scared and anal to accept help; you get a 'fail' for receiving - you never let anyone give to you. The key question is, when did you decide to become so independent? What are you afraid of? Who hurt you? Who let you down? When did you lose your faith? But, don't answer these questions by yourself - that would be being *dysfunctionally independent*! Be open to some additional help and insight. Shift happens when you stop flying the flag of independence. There is a better way than independence. Give yourself some time today to make a list of your 'team'. By that, I mean everyone and everything that might potentially be a source of strength and inspiration. Let people in. Let yourself be nourished and given to. This is true strength.
8. **Exhaustion means there is a better way:** When exhausted, vision pales, purpose is clouded, worry reigns, thinking is muddled and there is a downpour of aggression, frustration and pain. Self-attack is high as you conclude 1) you are powerless and 2) there is no opportunity for change. Vision can, however transform miraculously with enough rest, healing and help, so that what once looked like a dead end now becomes a way out, i.e. *opportunity is nowhere* becomes *opportunity is now here*. Exhaustion is an opportunity. It is a sign to reconnect to your heart, to end sacrifice and to drop the ego. It is a prompt to heal, be nourished, receive and be open to a better way. When exhausted, you have come to the end of a road, and now it's time to go another way.
9. **The world has finished with your past, if you have:** Every time you let go of the past, you step into greater freedom and greater creativity. You enjoy more energy. You feel more alive. You attract more opportunities. And you are ready to experience a future unlike your past. Unless you let go of your past, there will be no mystery about your future. Your life will be like the movie *Groundhog Day* where every day is just like the one before. The members of your cast may change but your story will essentially stay the same. Shift happens when you can affirm 'The past is over' and 'Now is new!'
10. **Shift happens - when you let go!** The best things in life happen when you dare to let go. Any pain or struggle is a signal to relax and let go. Pain and struggle are signs that you are holding on to a fear, judgement, expectation, doubt, or some other self-limiting thought. They are signs that your best thinking isn't working for you. Pain and struggle are evidence that a better way will reveal itself to you if you will first let go. The beauty of letting go is, you stop thinking! When you let go, you clear your mind, you make space, you open up, and you receive inspiration. Every day make space for something other than your own everyday thoughts. Make space for something higher. Relax. And when you feel calm and centred ask yourself these two questions: 1) What shall I let go of today? and 2) What shall I open up to today? Listen. Be guided. Let yourself go.

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