

Thoughts of Love



HAPPINESS IS...

- ...having a wonderful home with lots of joy, peace, and love.
- ...having inner peace to be able to provide spiritually, physically, and emotionally for my children, as well as to better myself educationally to help myself and others.
- ...just getting up in the morning!
- ...having the freedom of making choices in life.
- ...when someone suddenly understands something difficult.
- ...being able to spend time with my wife, knowing that I am loved and cherished by many people.
- ...being a part of the team and being a team player.
- ...being able to see my children have fun.
- ...when my family sits around in front of the TV with popcorn and water and watches a family movie.
- ...having a loving, honest relationship with those around you. Happiness is having those around you believe in your hopes and dreams even though sometimes you have a hard time believing in yourself.
- ...a never ending process. If you choose to set goals, go for them and achieve them. Happiness is what you make life to be!

ABLE Class, Live Oaks

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|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Alondra Johnson</i> | <i>Maria Thomas</i> | <i>Dorothy Jones</i> |
| <i>Debbie Shepherd</i> | <i>Lynette Overbey</i> | <i>Gary Burnside</i> |
| <i>Kelly Bond</i> | <i>Jin Hui Dulle</i> | <i>Lisa Smith</i> |
| <i>Tonya Charles</i> | <i>Art Massengill</i> | <i>Sheila Pittman</i> |

MY FORMAL INVITE

Got the meal hot, got the bevy on chill
Come prepared tonight. It's getting real
I've been waiting a long time
And now you're mine
I've been wanting you girl now I got my wish
Swimming in the timeless currents of true bliss
Destinies interchanging with each kiss
After dinner showing you pleasure unparalleled
In an ocean of love we both fell
But first let me sit you down with the candles lit
Usher in the background
Let's see how hot it can get
If it sounds good girl, you got my number
Just hit me
Tonight just me and you
Come have dinner with me

Michael Brown

THOSE EYES

I look into your eyes and wonder
What God must have been thinking
When he created you.

Those brown sharp eyes
With a million mad men
Looking back at me with nothing but love.

Love for me and only me
Those eyes.

Allena Norris

FORBIDDEN LOVE ...

Often times I find my mind wandering
To the deepest, darkest part of my heart,
To the one place no one can enter,
To the one place where our love is bound
In the chains that hold it from the light.

How I long each day to be with you.
It consumes my very being.
It consumes my every thought.
How I long for the day that I can
Proclaim my love for you to the world.
With each moment I spend in your arms, my love grows.

No, I dare not let these feelings slip!
The damage would be too irreparable,
The pain too much to bear,
The war I would surely lose
Against the one whose wrath we would incur.

So for now, these feelings must stay locked behind
The door in the deepest dungeons of my heart but
Soon, my dear, the day will come when the key shall
Unlock the door and our forbidden love shall be free.

Jose Plaja

LOVE

Love
Wonderful, Beautiful
Caring, Liking, Thinking
Innocence, Smile, Tear, Guilt
Terrible, Worst
Hatred

Mona Achkar

WHAT YOU HAVE DONE

Dear Love,

You were the most wonderful thing to me. You did things for me that anyone else could not do. You made me feel on top of the world. I remember those times we spent together. They were so good. As we got to know each other very well we became best friends. We got together and we hung out every day. But the truth is, the first time I met you, I fell in love.

As days, weeks, and months went by, you began to change me. You were all I cared about. I even let you come before my children. I became hurt in many ways from being with you. I stopped eating, sleeping, or caring for anything but you. I gave you all of my money and sanity. I started becoming more depressed every time I was with you. And still you were all I thought about. When you were coming next and was I going to get the money to see you again. But even still, I did whatever to satisfy my need for you. You controlled my every move. All I wanted was you.

Then the time came when I had to choose between you or my family. I had to get my family back. I was ready to leave you. You beat me up so bad. Mentally and physically, I couldn't take any more. I had to leave you alone.

So, I decided to tell someone about you, and that I did. The first few days were really hard without you. All I did was shake, sleep, and eat. All of my family knew about you and they just couldn't believe it. What really helped me stay alive was my higher power. If it weren't for Him, I don't know where I would be.

That was one of the best things I could have done for myself – getting you out of my life. I got to know who I am. I talked about my relationship with you to other people who have had the same problem in their lives. I am not the only one.

I feel so much better about myself now. I have almost all of my family back. We are all doing so much better now. I have never felt so good about myself and in some ways, I can thank you because I would have never gotten to know me for who I am. But I'll never take another hit of you again. I don't need your abuse in my life any more. I will stay as far away from you as possible. I hope you have a better understanding about how I feel about you and what you have done to me.

Yours Truly,

Your User

About The Author

The letter I wrote was a note to the one thing I have done in my life that I'll never forget – my drug addiction with cocaine. It really destroyed some time in my life. But today I'm all together – and I'm still alive. I hope for anyone who may have a problem with drugs that this could help you in some kind of way.

Elizabeth Haddad

MY DREAM MADE REALITY

When I was seventeen years old, I had a wonderful dream of an older man dressed in a white suit and wearing a hat. He was riding a white horse. I didn't talk with him.

Since that time I always thought about that particular dream and hoped that some day I would meet that fellow.

In May of 1999, I was working as a nurse in my country of Peru. While I was working, a friend of mine came to visit me and asked me if I wanted to meet the right guy for me. I answered yes!

At that time, I gave her my phone number. After a few days, my phone rang and I answered it. What a big surprise! I got the call that I was waiting for.

Here I am listening to his soft and melodious voice. Subsequently, we had numerous calls back and forth. In this way, we were learning about each other more and more.

In September 1999, this man traveled to my country to meet me. I was anxious at the airport when I was waiting for him. I felt that my heart was beating very hard. When the plane landed, I felt that my legs wanted to weaken.

Then I saw him, and I was surprised. He was the man I dreamed of twenty-one years ago! Although we didn't spend much time together, when he had to return to the United States, I was very sad.

On his next trip to see me, we got acquainted. Our relationship blossomed like the roses in the spring time.

We were married in a single, romantic ceremony. We continue to enjoy each other very much. It seems like a dream come true. Now I am having the best time of my life, hoping this reality will last forever.

Gloria Meza

THE DEATH OF MY CLOSE FRIEND, JERRY

Jerry was a neighbor who lived two houses down from me. He was an older gentleman who was in his fifties when I first met him. As he got older, I would offer to cut his grass in the summer and clean the snow from his driveway in the winter. Then we would just sit and talk about different things, like his son, Jerry Jr., and daughter-in-law, Libby.

Libby could do no wrong in Jerry's eyes. She would always call him "Pops." She'd say, "What's up, Pops? How are you today?" Jerry was also a grandfather. He had two granddaughters and one great-grandchild. Jerry was proud of all of them. I came to find out that Jerry was also Italian and a devout Catholic, and he had faith in God. He would go on to tell me how his son graduated from Chaminade-Julienne High School. He would say how proud he was of his son.

Jerry would often drive up to Frisch's to get something to eat. Later, Jerry had knee surgery, and he could no longer drive to Frisch's as much as he had in the past. After the surgery, he still had a hard time with his knee. I offered to check in on him periodically. We would have a baby monitor, one at his house and one at mine. I could hear him if he needed me, but he couldn't hear me. Jerry could walk with a cane, but he also needed therapy. The therapist would come once a week as needed.

Jerry had a great sense of humor. I remember he would say, "Here she comes, that old woman." I would ask him, "What are you talking about?" He would say, "The therapist, and there she is again." She would have him move his knee up and down and have him walking around his house. His therapist would ask him, "How are you doing today? Can we do some knee exercises?" Jerry would say something like,

“Sure, go ahead and do it,” as if he wanted her to do it herself. He would even count for her.

Jerry was being “ornery.” He wouldn’t do anything that she asked of him. She would tell him, “You must be having a bad day. I will be back next week.” He would laugh as she was leaving. I would tell him, “Jerry, you must behave yourself.” He would make me laugh by saying, “Cathy, next week lock the doors when she comes. She will think that no one is home.” Jerry had no problems doing exercises for me. There were days it was hard for him to bend his knee or lift his leg. Later in the day I would have him kick a soft pillow across the floor.

Jerry was doing fine until he came down with dementia. This is a form of cognitive judgment motor coordination and memory impairment. He had trouble thinking, planning, and organizing. Things seemed to be getting worse for Jerry, like the phone. It would ring, and he didn’t know how to answer it, not knowing which end to speak into. Nor could he remember if he took a bath or not. It was at that time Jerry’s son asked me if I would be interested in being his father’s caregiver. I was more than happy to help in this situation.

At this point, his son told him what was going on with his father’s life. He knew that he could no longer do the things that he once did. His son told him why I was over there so much. I would be bathing him, feeding him, and making sure that he took his daily medication.

I would stay days and nights on end as he got worse. When I stayed all night I would sleep on the couch, and he would be in his bed. There were many, many nights he could not sleep. His son would call the doctor. They said that there was nothing that could be done. This is part of the dementia. His brain would tell him when it was time to sleep,

but it was not at the time that he was supposed to be sleeping. At this point my brain was telling me I was tired and that I needed to sleep even though he could not sleep, but he would not let me.

I would try to sleep on the couch, and he would yell and I would go running into his room. I would ask, "Jerry, are you OK? What can I do for you?" He would laugh and say, "Were you asleep?" Sometimes he would say "Get in the bed with me." I would tell him the couch was OK for me, and he would chuckle and say, "I won't bite." He would sometimes tell me that his butt hurt. I would soon find out why. He put his teeth in his pants. He would do this off and on. That was good old Jerry and a part of his humor.

Even at the worst of times, his sense of humor never left him. Jerry finally passed away at his home in his sleep. He died peacefully, surrounded by his family and me. He had told me several times he wanted to die at home. When he died on that warm August evening, I felt comfortable knowing he did not die alone.

Cathy Loikoc

