



SAVOURING

Enjoy the little things for one day you may look back and realise they were the big things. Robert Braunit

What gives you pleasure? For you, what are life's little joys? Good coffee, a glass of wine, kissing your loved one, a massage, a long bath, a telephone call with a good friend, playing hockey, reading a book, tickling your children. The list is endless and will be different for everyone.

My big question is: Are you still savouring each of these experiences so they give you maximum pleasure? Or have you, like most of us, become a bit blasé about them, gobbling them up in a frenzy, racing through them, squeezing them into your busy schedule, or not even doing them? When you savour you are being fully aware of the experience you are having and you are deliberately and consciously prolonging it so that you generate, intensify and extend your enjoyment of it.

Research on savouring is showing that people who savour their pleasures are more satisfied with their lives, are less depressed and more optimistic. The ability to savour the positive experiences of your life is one of the most important ingredients of happiness, but many of us don't "smell the roses" enough.

I am sure you have all had times when you have truly savoured an experience, and I am sure that it felt good.

- The time you slowly ate just one piece of chocolate
- The time you really noticed how good your partner looks
- The time you stopped in the street and soaked in the sun that had burst through
- The time you sat and remembered the smile your grandmother always had for you
- The time you laughed with your friends till you cried
- The time you and your kids sang at the top of your voices in the car
- The time when you and your partner reminisced over your wedding day

Savouring is a habit you can develop so that it happens more in your life. Over the next month experiment with savouring by doing one or more of the following:

- At the beginning of each day decide on one thing that day that you will consciously linger over a little longer – breakfast, coffee with a friend, giving your kids or your partner a cuddle, your shower, a walk in the garden... then do it
- Indulge each of your senses at least once a week – smell the jasmine in your garden, very slowly eat a bowl of great ice-cream, notice a view you see every day, listen to a piece of music that moves you...
- Sharing pleasures with others also enhances savouring, so this month plan to share a pleasure that you normally do by yourself with a friend - buy two copies of a new novel and give one to a friend so you can read it together, watch a favourite television program with a friend who also likes the show, arrange for a group of you to go for a walk at the gardens...
- Know what your pleasures are by making a list of them – I challenge you to come up with at least 15.
- Give thanks for your pleasures at least 10 times over the next month. At the end of each day record in a journal those pleasures you were fortunate enough to experience that day. Call someone and let them know how grateful you are about the pleasures in your life. Pause at the end of those experiences that bring you pleasure and say a silent thanks.