

Chris Platel Newsletter: *Opening Your Heart - Changing the Way You Love*
February 2009



Hello Friends,

I wanted to share some of my Valentine's Day thoughts with you; and I'd love you to think about how they might be relevant in your life as well.

As you know, a year ago, I started offering Voice Movement Therapy (VMT) to help people make significant changes in a new, fun, and creative way.

OPENING YOUR HEART

I started **opening my heart** more as soon as I heard about VMT. I knew instinctively that it was the way through to a new and different life for me. I experienced a lot of Open Heart Surgery (metaphorically speaking) when I began the VMT training. I re-visited issues related to my family of origin, and I have become so much stronger emotionally. I also explored my creative self in ways that I had not done as deeply, or ever, before; and I was thrilled to give expression to all of who I am...thus far! (Aren't we all just *works in progress*?)

What I discovered throughout this process is that **I like who I am even more now than I did before.** (And I really liked myself before.) So I have some thoughts for you to ponder.

Could you open your heart more, or is it fine just the way it is?

Who would you open your heart to more if you could? Your life partner; a particular child; your siblings; friend; boss; colleague; acquaintance; teacher; neighbor; the person at the check-out counter; the server at your favorite restaurant; the driver who cut you off; the President of your country (even if you didn't vote for him); your Minister; your Guru; the Universe; God?

Sometimes, before we can open our hearts to others, we have to begin loving ourselves more than we ever have before. I don't mean that we have to become selfish, and not care about others. Rather, we have to start giving the parts of ourselves that have been denied, pushed down, told to shut up, shamed, frightened, and essentially told to not exist... that it's okay to feel... to speak...to move...and especially to sing...and to dance!

Once we start loving ourselves more, we begin attracting opportunities to open our hearts to others in ways that we may never have before. The trick is to be alert to these opportunities because they sometimes come in unusual packages. I'll come back to this later. I promise.

CHANGING HOW YOU LOVE: EXPRESSING ALL PARTS OF YOURSELF

In the process of doing VMT regularly, I started creatively acknowledging parts of myself that I had buried. There's the infant who had hungered for her mother's comfort; the little girl who loved to sing and dance, but was too shy; the teen artist who was devastated when her art work was thrown away by her parents; the heartbroken teenager (and adult) who had many unwritten love songs in her. All these important parts of myself were unconsciously shut down to some degree or another; and that took its toll on me emotionally, and even physically.

Once I became more aware of these unconscious processes I worked hard to ensure that all my parts were being heard. Over the years I gave them free expression through many different therapy and wellness experiences, and some creative processes.

Then three years ago, when I started songwriting, I was amazed at how much fun it was to explore my feelings through my original songs. One minute I might recall a painful memory, and the next I am more excited about whether my lyrics rhyme, or if there is a better note or chord I could use.

I was even more thrilled when I started exploring and expressing all parts of myself through Voice Movement Therapy. The affects were, and still are, extraordinary. So I keep singing and dancing around the house, and sometimes in the garden, or on the beach. When I was in London last summer I even sang quietly to myself on the bus, the tube, the train, and while walking around the city, which felt great! I also do little bits of art work; and I keep writing songs. Equally importantly, I make sure that I spend time with people whom I feel close to.

Even our joyous self can be shut down by others because it may make them feel uncomfortable. Many people can't take in joy, because they were never allowed to express it freely. How many times have you heard parents telling little children to be quiet if they are talking, giggling, singing, or jumping around, especially in public? So we have to be alert to experiences that cut short our joy, and choose a different path.

LOVING YOURSELF MORE

One of the ways that you can begin changing how you love is by being open to opportunities to be more loving towards yourself. Take the time to get to know which parts of you have gone unacknowledged by others, and by yourself:

- * Do you care for, nurture, and express the needs of all the parts of who you are? Can you name these parts?
- * How do you give all your parts free expression? Do you take the time to be creative?
- * Who supports you in this process? Do you have a teacher, mentor, a best friend, a Life Coach, or a Voice Movement Therapist :) ?
- * Are you having any fun? If not, why not? Better yet, don't stop to ask why you are not having any fun, just create opportunities to have fun now!
- * Be alert to opportunities for creative expression and fun that come to you from unusual places. They will help you to open your heart towards people you may never have considered before.

Remember I promised I'd share more about how some opportunities to open our hearts may come in unusual packages? Recently, I did some VMT at a Juvenile Detention Center. It is a population that I have never worked with before. There were 17 male youths, and 2 female custodians.

Our session was one of the most wonderful experiences of my life. It was fun, exciting, loud, relaxed, tense, happy, quiet, soft, hard. It was everything I expected; and so much more.

The boys gave me immediate feedback: "Are you coming back tomorrow Miss Chris?" "Can you come back next week?" "Thank You." "God Bless You." One boy gave me an arms across his chest hug sign, that just melted my heart.

This experience confirmed for me what I already know. My job is to do all that I can to keep my heart open. As long as I dive deep, and release my fears, I can surface with more love to give. And when I do this through creative expression, I feel happier more quickly, and in a lasting way.

So I wish the same for you. Dive deep. Release Creatively. Surface with a Smile on Your Face and Laughter in Your Open Heart.

Special Valentine Workshop for Singles and Couples

OPENING YOUR HEART: CHANGING HOW YOU LOVE

Saturday, February 14 from 9:30 AM - 5:30 PM

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Fernandina Beach, FL 32034

Take this time. If you are single, give yourself a Very Special Healing Gift this Valentine. If you are in a relationship, treat your partner and yourself to a Unique, Life-Changing Experience...

- * **Heal and open your heart in a NEW, FUN, and CREATIVE way.**
- * **Achieve clarity and compassion in all your communications**
- * **Clear old patterns that may have blocked real intimacy and joy**
- * **Feel lighter and freer in you Spirit. Be the real you!**

We'll sound, move, and sing to ground your voice in your body, and channel emotions into creative processes such as writing, art work, and performance. Be ready for some pleasant surprises, a release of tension, and a lot of new energy and laughter! Here's what a recent client experienced:

"Wow! I feel like my DNA just changed." M.F., Life Coach

"Chris, now I know why you love doing VMT so much. I feel like I've had a life-changing experience." C.W., Teacher

Reserve your space now as group size is limited.

Contact Chris (904) 491-8676 or cplatel@bellsouth.net

Workshop Fee: \$99.00 - ***Pay by Feb. 10 and the Fee is only \$89.00!***

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*Life and Relationship Coaching *Voice Movement Therapy *Emotional Freedom Technique

