

# There Comes a Time in Every Woman's Life for DELIGHT!

## Excerpt

### **MAZELTOV TO YOU! AND ME!**

I Have a Job to Do – To Provide Joy!

Once you have a job to do, everything falls into place. At least that's the way it is for me. If I just have time on my hands with no particular purpose in mind, then the demons set in. Sometimes a host of characters come out to remind me of my failings, what I should have done, what I could have done. Other times I find myself in the middle of a familiar internal drama, experiencing feelings of loss, blame and disappointment that I've had for my whole life. A while back, receiving an invitation to my cousin's wedding in California evoked such an uncomfortable inner drama. What set me off was realizing that I didn't have any real reason to attend that I could think of. I was just one of many relatives, I didn't see myself as essential. That fact kept me from feeling entitled to spend the money needed to go to California, cancel an Enchanted Self workshop already scheduled for that weekend, cancel clients, etc. Sure, I'd see some cousins and we'd have the opportunity to spend a happy day together. On the other hand, I saw most of these cousins frequently at other occasions, closer to home.

Yet something nagged at me. I really felt bad, again and again I almost canceled my workshop. I wouldn't understand why for several years, until I attended another wedding, a religious one.

The most shocking moment happened immediately, as soon as I walked through the door. Complete strangers stopped me and said, "Mazel tov!" I couldn't understand it. They didn't know me. I didn't know them. I barely knew the couple who was getting married. In fact, I had come to the wedding as a courtesy, and to experience what a religious ceremony was like. "Mazel tov," I forced myself to say back because it seemed the polite thing to do, even though I felt almost affronted, and even a little offended to be addressed so almost personally by strangers.

Later when I described this experience to a friend who was religious, she smiled. "The celebration was for all of you," she explained. We're all connected; one person's happiness is another person's happiness just as one person's tragedy is another person's tragedy."

I didn't need to know the bride and groom well to be part of their shared milestone. Just by attending, I was acknowledging that a good thing was happening to me, and so I deserved to be congratulated. I wasn't simply an invited guest, but an active participant – a member of the community celebrating together.

What a profound insight! This is a very different orientation from the one I grew up with. Thanks to her explanation, I came to see the way I had been greeted as an affirmation of ties that connect us to each other. I also saw immediately why I had fretted so over my cousin's wedding years before! My heart had known what my mind couldn't get itself around at the time: I was essential! What an indescribably warming thought.

After the ceremony, the band began playing. It was time to dance. The women took their places on the women's side of the hall, while the men gathered behind a barrier on the other side. I usually enjoy dancing, and was eager to join in, but I was also anxious. At most weddings and Bar Mitzvahs, this is when I'd experience anxiety in the pit of my stomach, a queasy uneasiness. As the circle began to form, I'd stand with the others, wanting so much to let myself go and join

in, while worrying that I wasn't a part of things. That's when the old demons visited me, the ones who say, "Take a good look at yourself – you're too fat, too old, and you're trying too hard. Who's going to invite you to join in the dancing with them? Who would want to? Look, they all know each other much better than they know you. Look how much fun they're having. Look how awkward you feel. It's always been this way, since you were a little girl, the same old story. Some people just don't luck out. You never did and you never will."

Yet at this wedding, where I knew virtually no one, I was remarkably free from this anxiety. Though I expected them, the demons never arrived. Instead, I felt totally at ease and confident that no matter what I did I wouldn't be rejected, and indeed I wasn't. Women welcomed me. Whenever I broke into the circle I was given a helping hand and accepted in a very companionable way. We danced for a dizzying 40 minutes, then 50, without a break. And with each passing moment I felt more and more connected to everyone else in the circle. In fact, I felt so close to the other women that when I looked over to the men's side, I was almost shocked to see them there. "Oh yes," I had to remind myself, "they are here too, those MALES. They're so different from us, so harsh and manly; they move with such ferocious energy. They're nothing like us..." It wasn't that they repulsed me so much as that I had no desire to be with them. Nothing about them could seduce me to leave the circle of women enfolding me. I was simply in my own place with my own kind and I felt so good. I danced and danced, the good feelings growing inside me, until I felt as if I were incubating pleasantness.

The separate dancing and the feelings of pleasure generated by this wedding began to work their magic. I began to realize that I was at this wedding not simply because I was invited but because I had a purpose. And my purpose was to feel joyful. As I said before, having a clear purpose is like receiving a gift from the Great Divine. With purpose and focus, I'm sure of myself. I'm not intimidated or embarrassed; I feel strong. I know things will work out even if I don't know exactly how, and I'm imbued with a strong sense of my own dignity and status in life.

Recently I had the opportunity to hear a woman lecture about marriage. "Look at how joyful and full of joy (freilich) a bride is," she said. "On that day, you see the happiness of her connection to God, to the intent of her life, to her future husband. She's full of life. We are most happy when we're connected. What makes us sad is that we see the shadow, not the whole picture. The Hassidic way of teaching helps us to see the light. The light is connection. The light is the joy that comes with connection, the intent of connection."

"When you're not plugged in," another woman commented, "the motor doesn't work."

Last night I went to Borough Park for the wedding of a fellow whom I had never met. I barely know his mother who, is the neighbor of a good friend of mine. But I was included, and I was thrilled. I went to the wedding with a purpose. My assignment was to help provide joy, to help elevate all of us through the experience of joy. I didn't really need to know anyone else that well; I had a part to play, and I played it. I congratulated, smiled, and transmitted as much warmth and blessings as I could to all around me. And I was infused at the same time with those same feelings.

My personal "joy" infusion came during the dancing. I've learned that you have to dance for more than a few minutes to experience a "vibrational high." Maybe teenagers know this instinctively, and that's why they dance for hours at a time. Yet we seem to forget this as we grow older. At this wedding, I remembered. I stayed on the dance floor for ten, fifteen, twenty minutes. The time flew by. I began to feel relaxed, high and alive all at once. The infusion was working.

Full of renewed energy, I could have clicked my heels as I left the party at the evening's end. I drove home refreshed and uplifted. It's a great feeling to connect and belong. There's no way that we can become "plugged in" without becoming more charitable and kinder, without honing our ability to listen, to focus, to be there for others, to be there for ourselves. We need to be the kind of people whose motors are always running.

May we all find joyous ways to have purpose, plugged in to life so that our motors are running, set on "Joy."

### **Personal Assignment**

Imagine taking on a personal assignment to provide joy in at least three different settings. For example, you might take on the assignment of special birthday treats for every seven-year-old in your town.

- What would your assignments be?
- How would you do them?

Let your imagination run wild. Money, energy, time are of no concern to you. All you need to do is figure how you will "plug in" to joy, and share it! Let this be a fun assignment. Don't fret or worry. Ways of bringing yourself back to practical implementation will emerge over time. I promise they will!