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## Conversations with self-24

### I Feel Hopeful When...

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*Hope makes us feel positive about life*

*A famous painter once sat in his house on a bright sunny day with all the curtains drawn. A visitor asked the painter, "Why my friend, are you sitting in darkness?" To this the painter replied, "It is the darkness inside me and I am trying to get used to it."*

John Powell, a famous priest, often says, "Happiness is an inside job." Hope, likewise is 'an inside' feeling.

My teacher in school used to ask me, "What is life's greatest gift?" Not knowing the answer I asked him for help. He replied, "It is hope. It is because we have hope that we wake up every day expecting a positive outcome. Without hope we will soon perish."

Over the years that I have worked with people I have come to realise six elements that make for joy and build renewed hope:

**Certainty or sureness:** All of us want some certainty in our lives. When we are certain, we feel at peace and self-assured. Without some element of certainty we would flounder.

**Uncertainty or surprise:** Yet we also want variety. We want to be happily surprised by life that gives us hope and allows us positive anticipation.

**Significance:** I want to feel important and to be made to feel so. When I feel significant I am encouraged to make other people also feel significant and this gives me hope in the relationship.

**Growth:** I want to believe I am growing, for in such a belief is hope of a new tomorrow.

**Connection:** I want to feel connected with whatever I do, lest I feel lonely and forsaken. When I know I am connecting, I go into every connection with faith and hope.

**Contribution:** I want to feel and believe I am contributing, that I am not living off a free lunch nor am I a ship passing in the night unnoticed. When I know I am contributing I feel joyful and hopeful.

Without hope life would be painful and a drudgery. Without hope I would be like the school Principal in the story where a grown man says to his mother "I do not want to go to school today for no one likes me and I have no hope." The mother replies "Son, you will have to go for not only are you a responsible person but you are also the Principal." Without hope I will drag my feet, become listless and life will lose its meaning.

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