



# DANCE THROUGH LIFE WITH

# JOY!

31 Days of Inspirational Messages  
and Positive Affirmations to Guide You  
Along a Journey to Joy

By: Shate' L. Edwards

**Dance Through Life with JOY!:**  
**31 Days of Inspirational Messages and Positive**  
**Affirmations to Guide You Along a Journey to Joy**

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This book is dedicated to anyone who actively pursues  
God's best for their life.

May it change your focus so that you acknowledge the  
current blessings in your life, and may it open you up in  
preparation for the blessings to come.

Dance through life with joy my friend.  
Now you know the steps.

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*Dance Through Life  
with JOY!*

# Introduction

When you take a look at your life, what do you see? Do you see what you *want* to see, what you've *chosen* to see, or do you see a collection of reactions to circumstances you've encountered? If you're going through life simply reacting to a series of circumstances, then you're not living the best life available to you.

One of the great things about life is that each of us has the opportunity and free will to choose how we live. We each have a choice to merely exist and allow life to happen to us, or we can make choices to frame a life that's greater than even our wildest dreams.

I'm here to help you to choose the latter my friend. I'm here to be your partner as we dance through life together. Here to inspire more peace, purpose, and positivity in your life, I'm so honored to take this journey with you.

Take full advantage of the inspiration shared on the pages that follow. The pearls of wisdom and positive affirmations will support you tremendously as you awake each day and choose joy. If by chance you get off track, release any self-judgment and simply return where you left off. There is no time limit to experiencing joy. It'll always be there within you, eagerly waiting for you to tap into it.

***Finding JOY in the  
Present Moment***



## *Day 1*

***“Life is available only in the present moment.”***

**~ Thich Nhat Hanh**

There is fullness of joy available to us in each moment. It cannot be found in the past, nor does it lie in the future. Joy comes from seizing the very moment that we're in right now.

Let us begin our journey to joy by learning to be fully aware of each moment as it arises. Release the distractions of To-Do lists, stress, worry, regret, social media, and even personal thoughts. *Just be*. Be available to fully experience all that each moment has to offer.

**Affirm:**

**I AM FULLY PRESENT IN THIS MOMENT.**

## *Day 2*

*“The foolish man seeks happiness in the distance; the wise man grows it under his feet.”*

~ James Oppenheim

Time waits for no man, but *joy does*. Even so, waiting until circumstances have changed or goals have been reached to experience joy puts us at risk of never experiencing it all.

We are wise to grow joy under our feet because, in doing so, we are never without it. As we journey throughout life, whether we change courses or even fall defeated, joy will always be wherever we are. Be wise by planting seeds of joy in each moment so that it flourishes with every step you take.

**Affirm:**

**I PLANT SEEDS OF JOY IN EVERY MOMENT.**

## *Day 3*

*“It is only when the mind is free from the old that it meets everything anew, and in that there is joy.”*

~ **Jiddu Krishnamurti**

It is a well known spiritual principle that we can't put “new wine into old wine-skins”, meaning, we can't take old mindsets and habits into a new season of experience. Trying to put the new into the old causes damage, discord, and unease, all of which do not create joy.

As we journey to joy, release old ways of thinking as well as negativity from the past. Remember, the past is no more. Open your mind and heart to experience the joy of the present moment in this new season in your life.

**Affirm:**

**MY HEART AND MIND ARE OPEN IN THIS MOMENT.**

## *Day 4*

*“The present moment is filled with joy and happiness. If you are attentive, you will see it.”*

~ **Thich Nhat Hanh**

There is beauty all around us at any given moment. Yet, we often find ourselves too busy, too unhappy, or too unaware to acknowledge it. With our hearts and minds open in the present, we are able to witness all the beauty that life has to offer: a friendly smile, sunshine, a cool breeze, a warm hug, a heart-felt laugh, or the goodness of a tasty meal.

Today I challenge you to slow down and *experience* life as it's happening. Acknowledge the richness of the present moment, and you'll begin to acknowledge the joy that's there too.

**Affirm:**

**I SEE GOODNESS AND BEAUTY IN EACH MOMENT OF EVERY DAY.**

## *Day 5*

*“True happiness is...to enjoy the present, without anxious dependence upon the future.”*

~ Seneca

When we're holding on to the past, it can lead to depression. When we're worried about the future, it can lead to anxiety. When we're fully available in the present moment, it most certainly leads to more peace and joy.

While we can surely be healing from the past or be preparing for the future, we can only be living in this moment. Take a step towards experiencing joy by being fully aware of where you are in life at this moment, and choosing to appreciate this part of your journey.

**Affirm:**

**MY JOY IS IN THIS MOMENT.**

## *Day 6*

*“Don't put off 'til tomorrow what can be enjoyed today.”*

~ **Josh Billings**

It's human nature to withhold experiencing special things until they've been earned. Treats, as we've so named them, are only for the deserving: for the diet kept, the good grades, the new trick. But joy is not a treat to be earned. It is our birthright, our soul's desire, and is made available to us simply because we choose to experience it.

Maintain the discipline of your life without compromising your joy. Remember, joy is not an external reward like treats are, it comes from the true beauty of each moment.

**Affirm:**

**I ENJOY ALL THAT TODAY BRINGS.**

## *Day 7*

*“Be present in all things and thankful for all things.”*

~ **Maya Angelou**

There are times in life when doubling the effort will bring about the best results. Rest plus medication will ensure a speedy recovery. Eating right plus regular exercise will lead to a healthy body. In the same manner, being present in the moment plus being thankful will surely lead to joy.

As we end our first week together, take all the lessons we’ve learned about living for today. Continue your practice of bringing awareness to the present moment, and add to that a thankful heart as we continue our journey to joy.

**Affirm:**

**I AM THANKFUL FOR THIS MOMENT.**

***Finding JOY in  
Gratitude***



## *Day 8*

**“The root of joy is gratefulness...It is not joy that makes us grateful; it is gratitude that makes us joyful.”**

**~ David Steindl-Rast**

Joy can stem from many sources, and the key to unlocking it is our awareness. Just as we practiced bringing our awareness into the present moment, we must also practice appreciating the beauty of our lives just as they are right now.

Each day this week, I encourage you to write down everything for which you are grateful. The list can be as monumental or as trivial as you'd like. The point is to find gratitude and allow it to guide us along our journey to joy.

**Affirm:**

**I AM GRATEFUL FOR THE LIFE I LIVE.**

## *Day 9*

***“Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgivings, turn routine jobs into joy, and change ordinary opportunities into blessings.”***

**~ William Arthur Ward**

Having an attitude of gratitude means we are *choosing* to see the good in our lives, and from this acknowledgement can come an experience of true joy. No matter the circumstances in which we may find ourselves, it’s our perception of the situation that will determine our attitude towards it.

A thankful heart adds a rose-colored lens to our world view. I challenge you to bring your practice of gratitude into your most mundane activities, and witness the shift that takes place in your experience of them.

**Affirm:**

**I HAVE A GRATEFUL HEART IN ALL THAT I DO.**

## *Day 10*

*“If you concentrate on finding whatever is good in every situation, you will discover that your life will suddenly be filled with gratitude, a feeling that nurtures the soul.”*

**~ Rabbi Harold Kushner**

Feelings can be deceiving. At times they can propel us to action, but at others, we must act first before the feelings arise. The same is true for gratitude. Just as gratitude helps us to change our focus, so does changing our focus help us to experience more gratitude.

When you're not feeling grateful, take a look at your current circumstances, and consider the alternative. Acknowledge where you are, and find gratitude in knowing that while you may not have all you want, you surely have all you need.

**Affirm:**

**I SEE THE GOOD IN EVERY AREA OF MY LIFE.**

## *Day 11*

*“Joy is what happens to us when we allow ourselves to recognize how good things really are.”*

**~ Marianne Williamson**

Our perception of life changes when we can shift our focus from a self-centered view to one that’s centered on self in connection to God and others. When we recognize the infinite source of good that stems from our connection to God and also recognize that we are to use what we have in service to others, we can then find gratitude in where we are in our life’s journey.

Today, find gratitude in knowing that none of us is alone. We are interconnected both to God and to one another, which can help us see the good all around us.

**Affirm:**

**I AM GRATEFUL FOR MY CONNECTION TO GOD AND OTHERS.**

## *Day 12*

*“When you realize nothing is lacking, the whole world belongs to you.”*

~ Lao Tzu

Our perception effects the way we feel about our experiences, and it also effects the experiences we attract into our lives. Like attracts like. This means a focus on lack, brings about more lack, and a focus on abundance, brings more abundance.

When you have a grateful heart, you choose to see the good in your life, which in turn, attracts more good. Use the power of your thoughts to bring forth more goodness and joy into your life by choosing to have an attitude of gratitude.

**Affirm:**

**MY GRATITUDE ATTRACTS MORE GOODNESS TO MY  
LIFE.**

## ***Day 13***

***“Happiness is wanting what you have.”***

**~ Phyllis Reynolds Naylor**

Faulty perception leads us to believe that the grass is always greener on the other side, but wisdom tells us that the grass will be green wherever it has been watered. The same is true for life. Wanting the life we have is that much easier when we've put in the work to find the joy in it.

We can each build a life we want one step at a time. It begins with shifting our focus to appreciate where we are, for when we do, we'll always think our grass is greenest.

**Affirm:**

**I AM LIVING A LIFE THAT I LOVE.**

## *Day 14*

*“It is not happy people who are thankful. It is thankful people who are happy.”*

**~ Author Unknown**

An attitude of gratitude most certainly brings forth joy. Just as it's human nature to enjoy giving to those who are most appreciative of their gifts, so does more goodness gravitate towards us when we are thankful for the good we already have.

As we move forward to the next step on our journey to joy, always carry with you a grateful heart. Where there is gratitude, joy is nearby.

**Affirm:**

**MY HEART IS FULL OF GRATITUDE AND JOY.**

***Finding JOY in the Act  
of Letting Go***



## *Day 15*

*“Those things that are not within your control can often be the very things that set you free.”*

~ **Julianne O'Conner**

Have you ever noticed that when things don't go as you've planned, they sometimes turn out much better than we could have hoped? That's because we try to maintain control through our limited thinking when there's really a much larger life plan in the works.

Learning to release control allows the bigger picture for our lives to unfold. Trust that all things are working together for your good, and you'll free yourself up to experience the joy in every situation.

**Affirm:**

**I RELEASE CONTROL SO THAT MY GREATER GOOD  
CAN UNFOLD.**

## ***Day 16***

***“The primary cause of unhappiness is never the situation but your thoughts about it.”***

**~ Eckhart Tolle**

When we learn to let go, we're not always losing something. Letting go also puts us in a position to receive something new. While we may not always need to let go of a situation, there's always the opportunity to let go of a mindset and open up to new ways of thinking.

Remember that it may not be your circumstances that are the problem. The problem could very well be your thoughts about them. Let go of negative mindsets so you can open up to the joy that awaits you.

**Affirm:**

**I LET GO OF LIMITED THINKING AND EMBRACE JOY.**

## *Day 17*

*“The joy we feel has little to do with the circumstances of our lives and everything to do with the focus of our lives.”*

~ **Russel M. Nelson**

Embracing new ways of thinking will help us see the silver lining in our circumstances. However, even through acknowledging the silver lining, it can be easy to succumb to the weight of certain situations.

Let go of the stress and strain of your circumstances, and instead, bring your focus towards the good things in your life . Fix your eyes on the support you have in loved ones, the trust you have in God as well as the beauty all around you, and joy will see you through to the other side.

**Affirm:**

**I SEE OVER MY CIRCUMSTANCES TO THE GOOD THAT IS ALL AROUND ME.**

## *Day 18*

*“If you let go a little you will have a little happiness. If you let go a lot you will have a lot of happiness. If you let go completely you will be free.”*

~ Ajahn Chah

Creating a life we love doesn't mean that we're able to control how everything comes together. It only means that we're doing our part to manifest our heart's desires. We can only do so much, and the rest falls in line according to the bigger picture God has for our lives.

True freedom comes from the trust we spoke of before. It's in knowing that despite the circumstances, everything will be okay. Open up to your life unfolding in ways you may not have imagined, and find joy in the freedom of letting go.

**Affirm:**

**I FIND JOY IN LETTING GO.**

## ***Day 19***

***“Letting go gives us freedom, and freedom is the only condition for happiness.”***

**~ Thich Nhat Hanh**

Freedom means living life on your own terms. It doesn't mean we're free from responsibilities. It means we make choices according to our own vision for our lives and not according to the expectations of others.

Are you holding on to someone else's vision for your life, or are you living freely based on your calling? Kick the outside expectations to the curb as you will never find joy there. Instead, spread your wings, and free yourself up to become all that you were created to be.

**Affirm:**

**I AM FREE TO LIVE LIFE ON MY OWN TERMS.**

## *Day 20*

*“Joy blooms where minds and hearts are open.”*

~ **Jonathan Lockwood Huie**

It's nearly impossible to live a life of freedom without having an open heart and mind. In fact, opening up to experience life outside of our comfort zone actually leads to a lifestyle of freedom in the first place.

Stepping into uncharted territories may initially spark feelings of discomfort or even fear, but it eventually makes way for an incredible sense of pride and fulfillment. Let us open our hearts and minds to new levels of experience which will ultimately make way for new levels of joy.

**Affirm:**

**I AM OPEN TO STEPPING OUTSIDE MY COMFORT ZONE.**

## *Day 21*

*When I let go of what I am, I become what I might be. When I let go of what I have, I receive what I need.*

~ Lao Tzu

Our hopes, dreams, and lives are all living, “breathing” entities. They each want to evolve into something great. However, when we hold tight to our vision of how they should manifest, we stifle their growth and the potential for them to be as great as they could be.

As we continue our journey to joy, let go of what is, and allow what will be, to be. Hold on to your trust in the greater good, and walk in the freedom and joy you were destined for.

**Affirm:**

**I TRUST IN THE GREATER GOOD FOR MY LIFE.**

# ***Finding JOY Within***



## ***Day 22***

***“Until you are happy with who you are, you will never be happy with what you have.”***

**~ Zig Ziglar**

Often times, it’s easy for us to see how great others are. We can easily applaud the talent, style, intelligence, or strength of the next person, yet we may struggle to see that in ourselves.

As the saying goes, comparison is the thief of joy. To find true joy, we must see the beauty in ourselves. We must look within to where our inherent value lies. Recognize the greatness you bring to the table, which will allow you to see the greatness that is your life.

**Affirm:**

**I AM WONDERFULLY MADE.**

## *Day 23*

*“Everything is created twice, first in the mind and then in reality.”*

~ **Robin S. Sharma**

You are here because you've made a choice to live a life full of joy. You've surveyed your circumstance, got a vision for your life moving forward, and then took action towards making that vision a reality.

The very process that you're currently moving through is the process by which greatness is achieved. We are to always first go within for the vision, then take one step after another until the vision is realized. Look within for everything you need and want in life, and there you'll find joy also.

**Affirm:**

**EVERYTHING I NEED IS WITHIN ME.**

## *Day 24*

*“True inner joy is self-created. It does not depend on outer circumstances. A river is flowing in and through you carrying the message of joy.”*

~ Sri Chinmoy

Our life circumstances can never be a source of true joy. They are too unpredictable, often giving us moments of wondrous highs, while just as quickly pushing us to extreme lows.

True joy does not ride the roller coaster of circumstance. It is rooted in a source that is never-changing, and that source is within each of us. Don't be moved by the peaks and valleys of circumstance. Be grounded in the steady stream of endless joy within you.

**Affirm:**

**TRUE JOY IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO ME.**

## *Day 25*

*“Those who wish to sing always find a song.”*

~ **Swedish Proverb**

It is universal truth that we always find that which we go in search of. If you go looking for trouble, you'll find it. Go in search of a joyful life, and you'll find that too friend.

This truth teaches us to follow our hearts, for whether good or bad, we'll find whatever we've been seeking. As we draw near the end of our journey together, know that your quest doesn't have to end here. Continue to search your heart, and go after the fullness of life that you seek.

**Affirm:**

**I HAVE A THRIVING THIRST FOR LIFE.**

## ***Day 26***

***“Joy does not simply happen to us. We have to choose joy and keep choosing it every day.”***

**~ Henri J.M. Nouwen**

Your journey to joy does not end here. In fact, it is only just beginning. Just like with any other life journey, the destination is a moving target. We are constantly evolving as is our lives, and thus, our vision of true joy may evolve as well.

I challenge you to treat your journey like the dance that it is. The music may change. You may get tired. You may even mess up the steps from time to time. However, as long as you keep moving, joy will continue to journey along with you.

**Affirm:**

**I AM JOY.**

## ***Day 27***

***If you do not choose to be happy, no one can make you happy. And if you choose to be happy, no one can make you unhappy.”***

**~ Paramhansa Yoganandya**

The freedom of choice is a very powerful thing. Whether we know it or not, we are each living the lives that we choose to live. Whether that life is incredible or less than ideal, we've each made choices to lead us to this point.

With that in mind, make choices today that you will be proud to live with tomorrow. The same wisdom that moved you to begin this journey to joy, use it to choose joy each and every day.

**Affirm:**

**I CHOOSE JOY TODAY AND EVERYDAY.**

## *Day 28*

*“Joy cannot be pursued. It comes from within. It is a state of being. It does not depend on circumstances, but triumphs over circumstances.”*

~ **Billy Graham**

Although we've embarked on a journey to joy, we never had very far to go. The journey was not in the distance between us and joy, but rather in learning to overcome the choices and mindsets that stand between us.

As we've learned throughout this experience, joy is constant. It lies within us waiting to be called upon each day. It always shows up when we make the choice to see it, and it adds a power to life that otherwise would not be there.

**Affirm:**

**I DANCE THROUGH LIFE WITH JOY.**

# ***Journey to JOY!***



## ***Day 29***

***“Being happy doesn’t mean everything is perfect, it means you have have decided to look beyond imperfections.”***

**~ Author Unknown**

We are human beings living in a complicated world, which means we will inevitably face set backs, disappointments, and failures. Yet real joy doesn’t come from perfect circumstances. True joy is a choice that comes from within.

Although we can’t always choose which circumstances occur in our lives, we *can* choose how we respond to them. Instead of succumbing to the pressures of life, get over them by tapping into the joy the lies within.

**Affirm:**

**MY JOY IS BIGGER THAN MY CIRCUMSTANCES.**

## *Day 30*

*“Deep, contended joy comes from a place of complete security and confidence [in God] - even in the midst of trial.”*

~ Charles R. Swindoll

It's been said that there's a difference between happiness and joy. Some argue that happiness comes from external circumstances, where as joy comes from a much more grounded and spiritual source.

The joy we've cultivated throughout this journey is so much more than happy feelings. It's peace that exudes from trust: trust that we have all we need, trust in knowing that all things are working together for our good, and trust in our personal value and worth. Know that your joy comes from a place of peace.

**Affirm:**

**MY JOY IS ROOTED IN PEACE.**

## ***Day 31***

***Joy, rather than happiness, is the goal of life, for joy is the emotion which accompanies our fulfilling our natures as human beings. It is based on the experience of one's identity as a being of worth and dignity.”***

**~ Rollo May**

The routines of daily living make it easy to get stuck in a rut. However, getting caught up in the business of making life happen doesn't actually allow us to live. It forces us to merely exist.

Finding joy in the everyday calls for us to look within. When we look within, we are able to center in the present moment, find gratitude, let go, and choose joy. Let us let go of going through the motions yet failing to truly live, and instead, look within to discover fullness of life.

**Affirm:**

**THERE IS FULLNESS OF LIFE WITHIN ME.**

## About the Author



Shaté L. Edwards is a choreographer and dance professor from Houston, TX. She has a BA in Psychology, a MFA in Dance, and a lifetime of spirit seeking. Through *The Working Dancer*, Shaté uses dance to inspire others to experience more peace, purpose, and positivity in their lives.

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