Living Deeply: The Art and Science of Transformation in Everyday Life

Stimulating quotes and questions from this book:

The most fundamental change is within you; it is a profound shift in your perspective, where you direct your attention and your intention. This most essential change, the one from which all other changes spring, is a change in your worldview and your perception of what's possible. Transforming your consciousness may be the most important thing you can do for yourself and the world.

What constitutes a transformation of consciousness? What triggers transformation? How can we sustain the moments that move us beyond ourselves? And what impact do transformational experiences have on how we live our lives?

Across traditions, many of our research participants reported experiencing an ever-present sense of unity and connection, with both others and the broader world – a sense of connection, moreover, that grows stronger and stronger the more they engage in transformative practice. What changes result from such experiences? How do these experiences of deep connection impact who we are and how we view the world, at a core level?

Introducing

A Group Study Guide for Learning Communities to participate more fully in the SHIFT in Consciousness and make the most of this book's offerings.

Living Deeply offers ways to stimulate individual transformation, which can be heightened and increased with group dialogue.

Together we can

- chart and share personal stories and transformation points
- look and experience the stories and practices of the teachers
- work together to find the creative solutions for the New Story
- spread awareness and inspire our wider communities
- focus our Collective Efforts toward the IONS mission

You are heartily invited to join this major IONS effort in whatever way works best for you and your group.

TOGETHER, WE CAN SHAPE THE SHIFT.

This is the Year of Embracing Living Deeply at IONS

February **Book now available for purchase**. Go to www.livingdeeply.org for a link to Amazon.com. If you buy it this way, IONS gets a little income. Buy some for your group and save on shipping. The companion **DVD** is also available there or at Barnes and Noble.

Living Deeply free e-Learning program. There is a link to this course on www.livingdeeply.org Course features Chat Rooms, teacher videos, more.

Shift in Action is featuring *The Great Shift Campaign* at www.shiftinaction.org

-**Teleseminars** on Tuesdays and Wednesdays are currently underway

-**Tips for Transformation**

-**Commune Rooms** to share transformative stories

-**Events** featuring talks and workshops with Marilyn Schlitz and James O'Dea will be happening around the country.

March **The 2008 SHIFT REPORT** will be published

April **Check both websites for more events and teleseminars**.

May ***Shift* magazine** will feature *Living Deeply* material
SIA, Circle and above members will receive a complimentary copy

Onward **More events** around Transformation – maybe yours?

May is Expanded Awareness Month

Shift magazine will come out with its focus on ***Living Deeply***. This would be a great month to **do a program for your wider community** if you have that willingness and comfort zone. We can invite more people to set a strong **Collective Intention** with us for the Shift to happen.

- Take the message of this book and the work of IONS out and encourage the whole community to explore The New Story, maybe in a Conversation Café format – www.conversationcafe.org.
- Check out the Group EVENTS around the country on SIA. Let's share our resources!
- There are like-minded groups to partner with (churches, Interfaith organizations). Check out environmental groups such as Bioneers and Pachamama, or spiritual book groups.
- What about reaching out beyond the "choir" to other *seemingly* unlikely groups and people who are longing for a better world and teetering on the edge of wanting to do something but not knowing how to start, or where to find strong support. Some political groups might be ready to look at some creative solutions, maybe even a new story. Whatever is hot in your area is a place to go and weave in the noetic principles.
- How can you help your community to find its way out of the stress and fear of today's society and into positive and creative solutions and intentions?

Planning this event for the wider community – In March, there will be suggestions and tools offered to help you do this if you would like support. But no need to wait - Go ahead now. Go for it!

Learning Community Opportunities

This new Group Study Guide is an experiment designed for groups to explore the concepts of Living Deeply. We appreciate your participation. We are offering this flexible program guide as a suggestion and groups can choose to use the material in whatever way is appropriate according to schedules and desires. Please DO create your own way of using the material too! For example, some groups who meet frequently may choose to have individual members of the group take a chapter to review and present to the others at a series of meetings. The e-Learning program has good ideas too.

One opportunity here is for personal growth work individually and amongst the group. Another opportunity is for the group to become a social change agent by rippling out this work into the wider community to network with other groups and people – **the real life "from I to WE to ONE"**. This would help support the IONS intention to inspire more public dialogue and awareness around our mission.

We assume you have the book and hopefully you also have the companion DVD. It is helpful because it has an excellent introduction to IONS to use for the group and when you go out into the wider community. It also has an introduction to the book by Vice President of Research and Education, Marilyn Schlitz. The clips of the teachers/spiritual leaders offer practice ideas which are helpful and a nice contrast to the talking. The DVD provides a special opportunity for the group to be able to do the practices together before taking it home to practice in-between meetings.

The Group Study Guide - a three-session program:

Session One

- A way to start – Use the book's Introduction or the article from the 2007 Shift Report (which might have been nice to copy and hand out at the previous meeting as preparation). Alternatively, offer your own experience after reading it. Just opening a discussion on *"What is Transformation?"* and *"What is Consciousness?"* could take a whole meeting (or a lifetime).
- Chapters 1-2-3 offer great insights into the 'doorways to transformation" and *"preparing the soil"* for the transformation to happen. Once the ground has been laid, invite members to do their own Life-mapping. This exercise is described on pages 61-62 and can take about half an hour, more or less as time permits. Perhaps each person could share one such experience which might stimulate a pretty juicy and enlightening discussion.

Session Two

- Chapters 4-5-6 in the book offer many rich insights into *"what is a practice, and why practice?"*. You can show one or more of the practices offered by the teachers in the DVD section on Practices.
- Discuss not only the practices from the teachers, but also the ones used by members of the group to get to a turning point and/or to sustain the new feeling and way of being in everyday life.
- How do you embody and live the practice and your new way of being? *"Life and practice become fundamentally a seamless whole."* There may be such richness amongst the members of your group that future meetings could highlight their own practices for all to experience.

Session Three

- Chapters 7-8-9 speak to the changes which can result from such experiences. How do the ones described fit with your own experiences? How then can we move from the personal learning, these new ways of seeing and being, and apply them to the collective world transformation into one of love, peace and sustainability? How move from I to WE?
- What action might each of you or the group take to help the Shift along? What is your NEW STORY for our culture? Perhaps you could write your new story, design your new world, and set some affirmations/intentions around the central issues of concern to bring about manifestations.
- Page 206 has wonderful Take-Home Messages. Some people may want to continue this rich topic and form small study groups.

We trust you will have inspired conversations and will look forward to hearing about them in a "round up" opportunity late May. We will invite your feedback so there can be a lot of sharing among the groups about what YOUR New Story is, what insights were garnered, and how it went when you spread the awareness into your community. We also will ask for your feedback and suggestions to make this kind of program more useful in the future. Contact Shirley Freriks at sfreriks@mcn.org for details and questions.

THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF THIS EXPERIMENT – ENJOY!