

The Magic of Zero: The Art of Finding Happiness in the Land of Having

Christina Florence

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Having suffered through several adversities in her own life New Mexico author Christina Florence has written a slim self-help volume *The Magic of Zero* as a guidebook for others seeking “happiness in the Land of Having.” A clearly articulated blend of autobiographical anecdotes citations from other motivational authors and lists of her personal coping techniques Florence’s book—twenty years in the making—will appeal to readers searching for ways of focusing on positive thoughts to ward off the energy-absorbing negative ones. Florence’s experiences both good and bad have taught her that it is easier to change one’s self than it is to change others. But she says “It takes ninety days to change a thought.” Change takes time while one is “waiting for instructions” about what to do next. Florence found herself at “zero” with a failed dance career a 150000 debt-load from a bankrupt restaurant and a bad relationship before beginning her upward climb to become a successful life skills teacher and a happily married businesswoman. Her book is interesting as much for her accounts of her personal experiences as for the self-help advice that it offers.

Much of what Florence has to say has been said before but she adds a personal touch to concepts such as those of the “power of positive thinking” and the inducements of smiling. She notes that there are indeed ways to influence the exterior world and to modify behaviours and she advises that while “waiting for instructions” is an important concept in the meantime one needs to be “bold and brave in everything you do”—a kind of “build it and they will come” approach. She advises that focusing “on something that makes [you] feel happy for just sixteen seconds a day” can have life changing consequences. She notes the importance of understanding the meaning of zero and of the ego as well. She differentiates between “having” and “wanting” in this age of abundance and counsels that “If you focus on misery you just get more misery” whereas “If you focus on joy you get more joy.” From her background with EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique) studies she suggests practical applications for tapping points on the face chest and hands to affect a person’s emotional state. She presents the top ten prescriptions that changed her life and offers several transformational tools for bringing the Magic of Zero into one’s life including techniques for losing weight and exercises with the “magic mirror.” And while on the way to the Magic of Zero Florence recommends to her readers: “Be kind to yourself learn to love yourself and above all be patient while you apply these tools for the ninety days necessary to change your life.”

For many reading *The Magic of Zero* could be time usefully spent as a step toward personal change.

M. WAYNE CUNNINGHAM (November 19, 2007)

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