

## THE VALUE IN VINTAGE

Why do we like “vintage” so much? Is it the novelty of owning something that has a past, perhaps a great story or memory? Does it provide a personal memento or fondness that keeps us connected to a sweeter time, another love, a meaningful relative? Does the craftsmanship represent something we hold to be of quality and beauty that is no longer made in the same way?

When I think of vintage, several things come to mind... the rich flavor of a great wine; the fine lines of a well-designed car; the perfect taste of an aged cheese; the beauty of classic designer clothing; the craftsmanship of antique furniture; the attention-to-detail of a well-built older home. Vintage creates value in our things, yet I wonder how that applies to people, our relationships and what is really significant in our lives? Have YOU become better over time?

It seems to me that the problem with people, and our current world situation, is that we have forgotten who we are and what is important to us. We have traded in quality for quantity; disposed of anything or anyone who no longer suited our needs and “the bigger the better” became our fighting cry. Flash, glitz and ostentatiousness became the goal rather than appreciating what we already have. The focus for many people has been the acquisition of the right car or home, the building of a larger portfolio, sculpting the perfect body and belonging to the right social circles, and in the process, many have become not only personally bankrupt, but even worse, spiritually disconnected from themselves and starved for love and connection to others.

Remembering where we came from, learning from our past experiences and re-claiming our essence will assist us in being our best. When we re-instill qualities such as knowing our values, spending quality time with ourselves, seeking wisdom from our elders, staying in integrity with our words and actions, doing meaningful work, pursuing our deepest passions and getting to know others based on personality, ethical beliefs, and depth of character, we can begin to take bold authentic actions to re-calibrate a more meaningful life. Here are some tips on assessing your own history so that you can craft an empowering life story.

### 12 TIPS FOR VALUING YOUR PAST:

1. **Honor your past experiences** with reverence for what was beautiful and good- capture the fine memories in storytelling, journals, photos, videos, and celebrations.
2. **Explore your heritage.** Studying your past, your family’s descendents and your cultural connections may teach you something new about yourself.
3. **Seek wisdom** from the elders in our world and those who have gone before you.
4. **Let history inform you** by learning from your mistakes and becoming a wiser steward of your soul.
5. **Tell the truth.** Are you telling the truth or creating a better story than what perhaps existed?
6. **Don’t stay stuck** in your illusionary stories or harmful anger. If you do, seek help from a professional therapist or coach.
7. **Let go** of the unneeded old in order to make room for the desired new. Find the balance.
8. **Forgive, but don’t forget.**
9. **Expect chivalrous gestures.** You deserve respect. Good old-fashioned manners still matter. (After all, I am a southern Texas girl.)
10. **Remember the important people from your past.** Let them know you care, any day is good day to express gratitude, not just birthdays or anniversaries.
11. **Create Rituals** that generate your life’s archive and continue to bring you back to your core.
12. **Be fierce for you.** Re-claim and remember your essence.

### A COACHING EXERCISE TO ASSIST YOU IN RE-CONNECTING TO WHO YOU ARE:

1. Think about your family members, friends, spouse, teachers, coaches, bosses or spiritual leaders who have mentored you, taken a positive interest in you, modeled strong morals, ethics or other qualities important to you. Write a gratitude letter to them, sharing the character traits you admire most in them.
2. Next, write a similar letter to yourself, expressing the same individuality, consistent values, or other positive attributes that you recognized in others and believe you also have or strive to have in your life.
3. Finally, using the prevalent themes above, complete these sentences: “I was born at this time in history to ” and “I plan to take actions to live up to my best version of me.”

When you begin to take specific steps towards remembering who you really are, including your rich history and experiences, and creating a perspective that includes all of you, you will begin to live a more complete life, and will no longer settle for mediocrity, materialism or inauthenticity. The value in vintage is in bringing you back to your true self; and what better gift to give the world than the true, lovable, fantastic you.

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