

Worth More than Diamonds



Dr. Kris Heap

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4 STORIES TO REMIND YOU
OF YOUR INDIVIDUAL
WORTH

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*Dedicated to
Collin, Porter, Evan, and Lily.*

*You are worth more to us than all the riches in
the world.*

INTRODUCTION

Who am I and what am I doing here?

How important am I to the overall plan of life?

How can I feel better about myself?

These questions are asked by millions of people every day as they seek to find out who they are and what this life is all about. Sadly, many people think that the meaning of life is to surround themselves with more stuff. For this reason, they are constantly searching for more money, a bigger house, a nicer car, or more recognition. These things are all external.

The truth is that none of those things will bring you lasting happiness. True happiness comes from the inside. It is the natural result of many hours spent developing your character, making good choices, forming positive habits, helping other people, practicing your talents, and learning how to improve. When you do those things you will feel happy about life and about yourself; and when you feel comfortable with yourself, nobody can put you down.

This little book consists of 4 stories that will give you insights into your true worth, how to see the worth of others, and why the world needs you to be your best self.

My hope is that reading this book will remind you that you are unique, you are special, and you are worth more than diamonds.

The Microscope

Back in college I took a geology class because I was looking for an easy way to fulfill a science requirement. The class was interesting and not particularly difficult. After the first few weeks I was ranked #2 in the class and was certainly overly proud of myself.

One morning when we arrived at the classroom the door was locked. There was a sign on the door that said we would be assigned to specific stations that day based on our class rank. Below that was a list of the students, with a

number by their name indicating which station they would be at for the day.

Before long, the teacher opened the door and announced that we would be studying gemology that day. As we settled in at our assigned seat, I noticed that half of the stations had microscopes and other instruments for closely examining small stones. The other stations only had a pair of tweezers and a magnifying glass.

Since my station had the microscope, I assumed that all of the kids on my side of the classroom were in the top of the class and because we had worked so hard, we were given the extra benefit of superior tools.

The old professor moved to the front of the room and told us that we would be having a competition that day. He was

going to give each group some precious stones to evaluate. On the chalkboard he would write the average market price of each type of stone we would be examining. Our job was to evaluate the size, weight, cut and clarity of each stone and then make an educated guess as to its value. The team that came closest would be given extra credit points on the upcoming exam.

This almost seemed too easy! I knew from my recent experience picking out an engagement ring that most gems had microscopic blemishes and imperfections that affected their value. There was no way that the other team would be able to see them with only a magnifying glass. They'd just have to guess about the value

of each gem by looking at how “pretty” it was or if it “looked expensive.”

The challenge began and we started sifting through the small plate of gems. There were rubies, emeralds, amethyst, sapphires, and even a diamond.

I got even more excited about our chances at victory when I started to look through the microscope. With the enormous magnification I was able to see all of the tiny discrepancies in the stone that would decrease the value. Every stone had them, some bigger than others. There was no way the other team would see them. We had this in the bag.

We confidently submitted our estimated prices for each of the stones. I noticed that most of our estimates were

lower than the average price displayed on the board.

As expected, the “B team” had grossly overvalued their gems. Their prices for each stone were much higher than ours. It wasn't really their fault, they just couldn't see the imperfections!

We waited with smirks on our faces as the teacher began to unveil the actual price of each gem on our plate.

To our shock and horror, the gems were worth a lot more than we had estimated! In fact, we had guessed too low by about 50% in almost every instance! Not only that, the other team was within 5-10% of the actual values of every one of their stones! We had not only lost, we had been humiliated.

What happened?

The professor paused for a moment as the chatter and cheering died down, then he explained to us where we had gone wrong.

“The value of a gem is in the appearance to the eye,” he said “the way it sparkles, the way it shines. It is based more on how you feel when you see it. While it is true that a gem with less imperfections will tend to sparkle better, that is not always the case. Some of the most brilliant diamonds in the world look crystal clear from one side but if you take a microscope and look from another angle, you will always find an imperfection.

A gem’s value is determined more in the way that it sparkles and not so much in it’s imperfections.”

I was stunned and, I admit, a little angry. He had set us up! He played upon our pride to make us think we were better equipped and smarter than the other students. He led us right into his trap!

It really bothered me for a couple of hours until I realized the principle he was teaching. He was teaching me something important about life, not just about gems.

I was reminded that day that we all have imperfections, every one of us. That is what makes us unique. But often times we start to look too close at our imperfections or the imperfections of others. We whip out our microscopes and start analyzing every little microscopic blemish as though it were enormous. The more we focus on the imperfections, the less we can see the person's "sparkle".

In the end, it is really the way that you “sparkle” and “shine” that determines your value, not the size or amount of your imperfections. None of us are perfect but we are all infinitely valuable.

Here are some ways to avoid misjudging somebody’s value:

1. Avoid looking at people with a microscope to find their faults, blemishes or habits that you don’t agree with. When you do, you vastly undervalue them.

2. Many times we scrutinize others with a microscope and ourselves with only a magnifying glass. Stop it!

3. Many times criticize ourselves with a microscope and others with only a magnifying glass. Stop it!

4. Remember that a person's value is in the way that they shine in life! It is in the way they bring happiness to others, in spite of their own faults or imperfections.

We can all shine brightly and we should never undervalue ourselves or someone else.

Put away the microscope.

We are all designed to shine!

CHAPTER 2

The Parable of the Pearl

There is an ancient oriental legend that tells the story of a jeweler who found the perfect pearl. The pearl was so beautiful that the merchant wanted to place it in the proper setting. So he conceived the idea of building a special box of the finest woods to contain the pearl.

He sought these woods and had them brought to him, and they were polished to a high brilliance. He then reinforced the corners of this box with elegant brass hinges and added a blue velvet interior.

Then jewels were embedded in the outside. As a final step, he scented that blue velvet with perfume, then placed in that setting this precious pearl.

The pearl was placed on display and people came from miles around to see this perfect pearl. But as people walked past, they all seemed to comment about the beauty and workmanship of the box. The perfect pearl was barely even noticed.

The merchant was greatly saddened because his attempt to beautify and give value to the pearl had actually detracted from it and caused it to be hardly noticed.

This parable talks about your value as an individual. Because you are unique, there will never be another person exactly like you. That means there are things

that you, and only you, can offer to the world. You are infinitely valuable to the world around you.

You are the precious pearl.

However, we often times forget to be ourselves. We spend a lot of time “beautifying the box”.

What is the box? It can be a number of things. I like to think of it as anything we do to improve our social standing or how others perceive us. It could be the house, the car, certain hobbies, clothes, etc. Basically it is all of the superficial stuff we bring into our lives. We surround ourselves with these things because we think they are helping to display or add value to the pearl. We are building the best possible box to show off the pearl.

But what happens when we spend so much time and focus on the box? Before long, the box is all that anybody sees. It may actually be all that we see as well. We start to define the value of the pearl by the size, beauty, or value of the box. And when we start determining our own value by the beauty of the box around us, we start to forget who we are.

What's worse, everybody around us does not see us for the pearl anymore; they only see us as the box. Our value becomes linked to the box, and boxes have a tendency to rot and decay over time.

So do you spend your time polishing the pearl or building the box? Are you adding value to yourself as a person or are you accumulating things to make yourself appear more valuable to others?

I promise that any excessive effort or expense put into beautifying the box will lead to the neglect and tarnishing of the pearl. A precious pearl does not need a beautiful box to define its worth.

The pearl is valuable on its own.

You are the pearl.

CHAPTER 3

Crystals Within

A few years ago, my sons and I went on a hike that led to a hidden cave beneath the earth. The opening to the cave was small and it was a tight fit for me to make it in. As we explored the cave with our flashlights we found a number of round, grey rocks all over the ground. The rocks were rather plain to look at; very much the type you would walk right past if you saw one on a trail. But these were the rocks we had come to collect.

This cave was well known to some of the local residents as a great place to find

geodes. Geodes are rocks that look plain on the outside but have beautiful crystals on the inside. Geodes form over millions of years as water soaks through the air spaces in a rock and leaves behind tiny crystal deposits. Some of the most beautiful crystals in the world are found inside these geodes, yet from the outside they look like common, boring rocks.

On the surface some people may seem to be ordinary, perhaps quiet or shy. Many of us may feel that we look ugly on the outside. We may feel like we don't stand out or that we get looked over for others whose shine is on the outside. When we start to feel this way, we have to remember that what is on the inside is what matters most. Character counts.

Each of us has the ability to create something beautiful and special inside. We are not born with it, but we are put on this earth with all of the necessary elements to create that something special. Remember, God did not create the crystals in the geode, he created all of the elements that later became the crystals.

How do we create something beautiful on the inside? We work on building our character. We do the small things that make us better. We form good habits and develop talents. We take the time to learn and grow. We put off the short-term desires for the long-term benefits. We make other people's lives better.

Remember, it took millions of years for the water to create those crystals. Creat-

ing something beautiful on the inside takes time, effort, and faith.

The problem is that we often allow other people to decide what kind of rock we are. We take it to heart when other people treat us like common stones. They have no idea what is on the inside so they only look at us for what they see on the outside.

What's worse is that many of us start to believe those critics. We start to look at ourselves as common, ugly rocks. And when we think of ourselves that way, we start to act that way. We beat ourselves up mentally and begin to feel inadequate. We become more timid and closed off. We hide our talents, personality, and all that we have to offer the world. We al-

low ourselves to become a dull, boring rock.

It is important to remember that those people who look down on you or make fun of you are, in reality, shallow and unhappy with their own life. They are worried that there is nothing of value inside of themselves and so they try to make others feel miserable just like them. These bullies are some of the most insecure and unhappy people you will ever meet. They are scared that on the inside, they have nothing of worth.

You cannot listen to them! Silence that voice inside of you that says you are not good enough! God has created you to accomplish great things. He has given you everything you need to create a beautiful life inside and out. God did not

create you to be a boring, common rock.
He created you to shine!

Your mission in life is to grow and progress and put time into bettering yourself and the lives of those around you. When you improve yourself, you improve the world around you. If you are not working on forming the beautiful crystals on the inside, you are allowing yourself to become common.

A common rock has nothing to offer.

You are not a common rock.

Acres of Diamonds

There once lived, not far from the River Indus, an ancient Persian by the name of Ali Hafed. Ali Hafed owned a very large farm, where he had orchards, grain-fields, and gardens. He had money in savings and was a wealthy and content man. He was content because he was wealthy, and wealthy because he was content.

One day, Ali Hafed was visited by an ancient Buddhist priest; one of the wise men of the East. He sat down by the fire and told the old farmer how this world of

ours was made. He told all about the oceans, the plants, the sky and the rocks.

The old priest told Ali Hafed that a diamond is the most valuable stone on the earth. If Ali Hafed had one diamond the size of his thumb he could purchase the entire county, and if he had a whole mine of diamonds he could place his children upon thrones through the influence of their great wealth.

Ali Hafed heard all about diamonds, how much they were worth, and went to his bed that night a poor man. He had not lost anything, but he was poor because he was discontent, and discontent because he feared he was poor.

He said, "I want a mine of diamonds," and he lay awake all night.

Early in the morning he sought out the priest and when he was found, Ali Hafed said to him:

"Will you tell me where I can find diamonds?"

"Diamonds! What do you want with diamonds?"

"Why, I wish to be immensely rich."

"Well, then, go along and find them. That is all you have to do; go and find them, and then you have them."

"But I don't know where to go."

"Well, if you will find a river that runs through white sands, between high mountains, in those white sands you will always find diamonds."

"I don't believe there is any such river."

"Oh yes, there are plenty of them. All you have to do is to go and find them, and then you have them."

Said Ali Hafed, "I will go."

So he sold his farm, collected his money, left his family in charge of a neighbor, and away he went in search of diamonds. He began his search, very properly to my mind, at the mountains north of his country. Afterward he came around into Palestine, then wandered on into Europe, and at last when his money was all spent and he was in rags, wretchedness, and poverty, he stood on the shore of that bay at Barcelona, in Spain. There, a great tidal wave came rolling in between the pillars of Hercules, and the poor, afflicted, suffering, dying man could not resist the awful temptation to

cast himself into that incoming tide, and he sank beneath its foaming crest, never to rise in this life again.

The man who purchased Ali Hafed's farm one day led his camel into the garden to drink, and as that camel put its nose into the shallow water of that garden brook, the man noticed a curious flash of light from the white sands of the stream. He reached down and pulled out a black stone having an eye of light reflecting all the hues of the rainbow. He took the pebble into the house and put it on the mantel, which covers the central fires, and forgot all about it.

A few days later that same old Buddhist priest came in to visit Ali Hafed's successor, and the moment he opened that drawing-room door he saw that

flash of light on the mantel, and he rushed up to it, and shouted: "Here is a diamond! Has Ali Hafed returned?"

"Oh no, Ali Hafed has not returned, and that is not a diamond. That is nothing but a stone we found right out here in our own garden."

"But," said the priest, "I tell you I know a diamond when I see it. I know positively that is a diamond."

Then together they rushed out into that old garden and stirred up the white sands with their fingers, and lo! there came up other gems, more beautiful and valuable than the first.

Thus was discovered the diamond-mine of Golconda, the most magnificent diamond-mine in all the history of mankind. The crown jewels of England and

Russia, the largest on earth, came from that mine.

Had Ali Hafed remained at home and dug in his own cellar, or underneath his own wheat-fields, or in his own garden, instead of wretchedness, starvation, and death by suicide in a strange land, he would have had acres of diamonds. For every acre of that old farm, yes, every shovelful, afterward revealed gems which since have decorated the crowns of kings and queens.

What is the moral of the story? It is that you have incredible value right inside of you! You do not need to go looking for approval or accomplishment anywhere else but within. Many people

spend a lifetime wandering in search of something to make them feel valuable.

The great secret of life is that every thing you need to be happy, successful, and valuable are already right inside of you! You just have to take the time to stop and recognize those attributes and then spend the time developing them.

You've heard the saying, "The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence." It means that we tend to look at other people and think they have it so much better than we do. Yet, those same people are also looking at you and thinking that you have it so much better than them.

Who is right? Neither. The truth is that the grass is the greenest wherever someone has taken the time to water it.

Every one of us is given a piece of land, some seeds, fertilizer, water, and all the tools needed to produce a beautiful field of the greenest grass. Some people choose to use the tools they were given and some don't. Those who decide not to use them, tend to spend their life wandering around looking for a perfect green field that has already been planted, watered, and manicured to perfection. In the end, they find that they have searched for their whole life and never found that perfect field.

You were not meant to wander. You already have the tools, now put in the effort.

You have acres of diamonds within.

Putting It Into Action

Gems, pearls, geodes, and diamonds; they are all just cute stories unless they compel you to do something positive in your life. You may be thinking, “I get what you are telling me but what do I do now? How do I let my talents show? How do I begin to feel better about myself?”

These are really important questions. In fact, they are the same questions that millions of people ask themselves every day. Luckily, there are three easy things

you can do that will help. Just remember, they will only work if you actually do them!

#1 – PICK YOUR NUMBER

Did you know that every one of us is walking around with an invisible number stamped on our forehead? It is always a number from 1-10 and it just sits there above our eyebrows throughout the day.

Whether or not you actually see the number someone is wearing, you can tell what it is from a mile away. The 1's are those people who are always grumpy. They never want to participate. They complain all the time and never give a good effort at anything. They criticize

and gossip about other people. They are the people nobody wants to hang out with.

The 10's are the positive and uplifting people in the world. Sometimes they are outgoing, sometimes they are quiet, but they are always the people who build other people up and make the world a better place. They give a good effort at everything they do. They smile. They are kind and look for ways to serve others. These are the people everybody wants to have as a friend.

We are all wearing a number somewhere between 1 and 10 every day.

Who decides the number?

You do! Every morning you get to decide what number you will have on

your forehead that day. When you get out of bed, you can decide to be a 1, a 10, or somewhere in between. If you decide that the day is going to be miserable and nothing will go right, you may as well grab a marker and draw a 1 on your forehead. If you decide that no matter what, you are blessed and you are going to make it the best day ever, draw the 10.

Like I said before, everybody around us knows what number we are wearing even though it is invisible. They can tell from a mile away. And the number we choose will both determine how we feel and how we are treated all day.

So, if you get to choose the number you wear, why on earth would you ever choose to wear anything but a 10?

It seems like a silly question, but many of us start the day with the decision to just be a 3, or maybe a 5. Why? That seems like a really dumb way to start the day, doesn't it? It's like we're telling the world that we don't want to be happy and we don't want to be treated well.

You were born to be a 10. Make the decision to be a 10 even when you don't feel like it, and soon enough you will turn into a 10.

#2 - YOU GET WHAT YOU GIVE

In the computer world there is a saying, "Garbage In, Garbage Out." It means that a computer doesn't give good results

or bad results on its own, it just does what you tell it to do. Whether the results are good or bad depends on what the operator told it to do. If you give it good instructions, it will give you good results. If you give bad instructions, you get bad results.

Life is very much the same. If you give a “10” effort, you will get level “10” results. If you give a poor effort, you will get poor results. Think about that time you procrastinated studying for a big test and then had to guess on half of the questions. What kind of score did you get? Garbage in, garbage out.

The same principle applies to just about everything in life. If you treat other people like they are a “10”, they will

treat you the same way. If you treat people poorly, they will treat you poorly.

The paradox of this principle is that the more you give and add value to others, the more valuable you start to feel. You will feel the best about yourself when you are helping other people feel good about themselves. The great Zig Ziglar once said, “You can have everything you want in life if you will just help enough other people get what they want.”

As you go through your day, make sure you give your best effort. Give the people around you the “10” treatment and you will start to be treated like a “10”. What’s more important, you will start to feel like a “10” on the inside.

You can replace “garbage in, garbage out” with “good in, good out.” Give the world your best effort and it will return wonderful blessings to you.

#3 – TALKING TO YOURSELF

It is typically not a good idea to talk to yourself out loud, especially in public. But we all talk to ourselves internally every single day. You’ve probably never thought much about it but the conversations you have with yourself are probably the most important factor in developing and recognizing your self worth.

What do I mean when I say you talk to yourself? Think about the thoughts you have when you first look in the mir-

ror in the morning. Do you think about how good you look or do you focus on that new zit or the bags under your eyes? Do you tell yourself how excited you are for the day or do you think about how much you hate Mondays?

What about during the day? Have you ever had thoughts like these:

- I'm not popular so I can't talk to those people.
- I always say the wrong things.
- I'm fat.
- I'm ugly.
- People don't care what I have to say.
- Nobody would notice if I wasn't around.
- I'm not good enough.

These are words you would never dream of saying to another person but for some reason we think it is okay to say them to ourselves every single day.

Guess what happens when we talk to ourselves like this; we start to become exactly what we are talking about. We start to act unpopular. We start to act ugly. We stop talking because we think we aren't interesting. By our own choice, we become not good enough.

Wake up! You can't talk to yourself or think about yourself one way and then feel and act the opposite. If you want to feel valuable and become more valuable, start telling yourself how valuable you are.

Here is what one of my mentors taught me to say out loud to myself every morning:

“I am happy, healthy, and wealthy. I get what I want because I deserve it. And I always do what I ought to do, when I ought to do it, whether I want to or not, no excuses. I’m a 10. I really am a 10! I walk like a 10, I talk like a 10, because I am a 10, and it sure feels good!”

I’ll tell you what, after I say those things to myself, I feel pretty excited about the day. I think and act differently. I walk with my head a little higher, I get things done, and I feel happier. But when I first started, it was very hard to do because I would look in the mirror and

start saying the words and have to stop because it seemed ridiculous. I didn't really believe that I was happy, healthy, or wealthy. I didn't believe I was a 10. I felt like I was lying to myself in the mirror

But a funny thing happened; the more I did it, the more I started to believe it. The more I started to believe it, the more I started to act like it. The more I started to act like it, the more I started to become it. Before long I could confidently say those things to myself and I could really see and feel that I was becoming all of them.

You will need to come up with your own list of qualities you want to claim (or you can borrow this one like I did.) Some of yours may have to do more with being popular, outgoing, courageous,

happy, organized, punctual, service-oriented, confident, etc. Whatever you think are the greatest qualities you would like to possess, write them down, post them on your bathroom mirror, and then read them out loud every morning and night. (Tip: If you have a spouse or roommate you may want to do it quietly.)

I promise that if you do this every day you will start to feel and act differently. You will start to become the person you are talking about. You will begin to let your true worth and potential shine.

You are already talking to yourself every day, now is the time to start controlling the conversation. If you talk to yourself like you are garbage, you will

become garbage. If you talk to yourself like you are the luckiest and most blessed person in the world, you will become just that.

Let me finish this book by saying that the world will value you only as high as you value yourself. You have to take your individual worth into your own hands. You were born with the potential to become great. Inside of you is a precious and unique gem that has value without equal. This gem has the power to change the world for you and those around you. But, too often, we allow life to bury that gem deep down inside the dark caves of our own self-doubt and fear. It is your noble quest to dig down, find it, and bring it out for the world to see, because

a priceless gem that is hidden in darkness
has no real value to the world at all.

May you be strong and courageous as
you discover that you really are worth
more than diamonds.

Quotes

“People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in their true beauty is revealed only if there is light from within.”

~ Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

“A diamond doesn't start out polished and shining. It once was nothing special, but with enough pressure and time, becomes spectacular. Be that diamond.”

~ Solang Nicole

“You are not what others think you are.
You are what God knows you are.”
~ Shannon Alder

“Sometimes the hardest part of the journey is believing you're worthy of the trip.”

~ Glenn Beck

“Your self-worth has nothing to do with your craft or calling, and everything to do with how you treat yourself.”

~ Kris Carr

“It is folly for a man to pray to the gods for that which he has the power to obtain by himself.”

~ Epicurus

“Wanting to be someone else is a waste
of the person you are.”

~ Marilyn Monroe

“Why should we worry about what others think of us, do we have more confidence in their opinions than we do our own?”

~ Brigham Young

“No one can make you feel inferior
without your consent.”

~ Eleanor Roosevelt

“It's not who you are that holds you back, it's who you think you're not.”

~ Hanoch McCarty

“If you hear a voice within you say ‘you cannot paint,’ then by all means paint, and that voice will be silenced.”

~ Vincent Van Gogh

“If you put a small value upon yourself,
rest assured that the world will not raise
your price.”

~ **Author Unknown**

“Thousands of geniuses live and die undiscovered - either by themselves or by others.”

~ Mark Twain

“Always act like you're wearing an invisible crown.”

~ Author Unknown

You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself
in any direction you choose.
You're on your own.
And you know what you know.
You are the guy who'll
decide where to go.

~ Dr. Seuss

“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.”

~ Henry Stanley Haskins

“If we all did the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves.”

~ Thomas Alva Edison

“A gold medal is a nice thing - but if you're not enough without it, you'll never be enough with it.”

~ From *Cool Runnings*

Notes

Notes

About the Author



Dr. Kris Heap is a dentist, motivational speaker, and author whose books and lectures help people develop a more fulfilling life. His personal mission statement is: “To make the biggest difference to the greatest number of people.” He lives in Mesa, AZ with his wife and 4 children.