

# [Meditation—a Rebirth.](https://www.elephantjournal.com/2015/05/meditation-a-rebirth/)



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If you asked my mom, she would say I was born on October 29, 1975.

But it wasn’t until December 15, 1999 at 9:12a.m. that I truly started living.

That was the morning I was diagnosed with breast cancer and thought I might be dying. Not knowing whether I would survive to my next birthday, I made a promise to myself that I would do all the things I’ve never done but always wanted to do.

My favorite quote from high school by Thoreau became my motto and every opportunity that presented itself I took just for the experience.

*“I went to the woods to live deliberately… to live deep and suck the marrow out of life… and not when I came to die discover that I had not lived.”*  
*~ Henry David Thoreau*

12 years later, I had everything I had wanted and wished for and still it wasn’t enough.

I wasn’t happy. I wanted more, more, more.

Opportunities and things to do on my life checklist such as playing the Star Spangled Banner on my violin for a Red Sox game, learning to dance, climbing Mt. Everest, writing a book, were endless. I couldn’t wait to finish one experience, so I could check it off and move onto the next.

My life had become a list where I was never quite present in anything I did.

I signed up for a 10-day silent meditation course as another thing to “experience” before I died. It was 10 days of pure torture, meditating for up to 12 hours a day with no outside contact, no reading, writing, emails or phone calls. It was physically and emotionally draining—like a boot camp for the mind.

I hated every second of every day. The misery was unlike anything I had ever felt and thoughts of escaping crossed my mind daily.

But on the 9th day, as I sat on my blue cushion, something changed inside me.

I don’t know how and I don’t know why, but I began sobbing. Tears poured out of me uncontrollably. They were tears of happiness because for the first time in 36 years, I felt a genuine and intense love for myself.

True, unconditional love.

I realized that I had been looking for external happiness for years, perhaps my entire life. I thought I needed constant outside adrenaline to make me feel alive, but I had never discovered peace and happiness within.

On this 9th day, I surrendered for the second time to something higher in my life, the first being diagnosed with breast cancer.

I once again made a promise to myself, but this time it wasn’t about gettingthings done.

It wasn’t about living big and accomplishing “more” but rather seeing the beauty in stillness and sometimes nothingness that I had come to loathe over the years.

It was a reawakening and a rebirth.

One of living in the moment, of being kind and gentle to myself and appreciating the small things once again, something I had somehow lost track of on my mission to “experience” life.

Ironically it was only now that I would begin to really suck the marrow out of life, realizing that happiness had never been external.

And it was only now that I would be able to find that true inner peace that I had been searching for all along.