Tips for Living Well

1. Recognize your need for renewal. It is necessary to stop, to pause, to renew.

2. Take time out to be alone and listen inwardly. Stay in touch with yourself. Listen to your heart, your gut, your intuition. Identify what is important to you and what it is you want. Make plans and choose actions based on your desires and priorities.

3. Take control of how you utilize your time and energy. Prioritize. Say “NO” to those activities you do not want to be involved in. Say “YES” to those things that add to your life, and are consistent with your values, wants and priorities. Less can be more.

4. Exercise. Regular exercise enhances physical and emotional health. If you are not on a regular exercise program, find something you enjoy doing and “start low and go slow.”

5. Water the seeds of happiness in your life. Do something each day that brings you joy. Identify what nourishes you, what adds to your life, what it is you love. Make time for these activities.

6. Modify or let go of excessive demands and unrealistic expectations. Examine the demands you place on yourself and others. Are they realistic? Remember, the task of humans is wholeness not perfection.

7. Create healing stories. Recognize your thoughts are just thoughts. They come and go like clouds in the sky. Step back from a story line that increases your stress. In many situations it is possible to drop “the story” or modify it to decrease stress.

8. Be on your side, not on your case. Deflate your inner critic and give energy to your inner cheering squad. Cultivate unconditional friendliness toward yourself. Meet yourself with compassion.

9. Live more in the present. Spend less time and mental energy ruminating over the past and worrying about the future. Focus your mind in the here and now. Practice present moment awareness. The present moment is the only moment we have for experiencing life.

10. Create and nourish a personal support system. Seek out the company of those you trust and with whom you can be yourself. Build relationships where caring is reciprocal.

11. Practice effective listening and self-expression skills. Never underestimate the power of reflective listening. When expressing yourself, use “I” language.

12. Break your routine. Do something out of the ordinary. If you always go to the same restaurant try a new one. Go to a concert or get season tickets to a theater. Take a class in something just for fun. Be a little unpredictable.

13. At the end of your day review what went well, what was positive or added to your life. Cultivate gratitude for the goodness in your day.

14. Stop and smell the roses. Remember, many riches of life are found in small things. Sometimes the conditions for happiness are right in front of us.
And a few relevant quotes...

"There are two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle."  Albert Einstein

"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow."  Melodie Beattie

"It's not the strongest species that survive, not the most intelligent, but the ones most responsive to change."  Charles Darwin

"Just to be is a blessing. Just to live is holy."  Abraham Joshua Heschel

"The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance."  Alan Watts

"I have come to appreciate how most of spiritual practice is learning to be kinder to one another."  Aldous Huxley

"Inside yourself or outside, you never have to change what you see, only the way you see it."  Thaddeus Golas

"We have a long, long way to go. So let us hasten along the road, the road of human tenderness and generosity. Groping, we may find one another's hands in the dark."  Emily Greene Balch, Nobel Peace Laureate