

The Checklist

It seems like everyone has a *checklist* or two. A checklist is a list of items that helps us to remember what we need to do. We check it off our list after it has been completed. We have a *checklist* of the things that we need to buy at the grocery store or things that we need to do when running our errands. We use *checklists* preparing for exams, taking our kids to the beach, preparing for school, going on vacation, cooking our favorite recipe, or working on a project at work. We are a nation addicted to checklists.

There are checklists and then there are the special “Checklists”. The more common checklists are those that we use in our everyday lives, like buying groceries or running errands. Our special checklists are like mom’s favorite china, to be used only for those special occasions like Thanksgiving or when special guests are coming for dinner. We have all used our special checklists at one time or another. Two obvious examples are finding the perfect mate and finding the perfect job.

The ideal or perfect job would be to work in a “certain” industry in a high paying position with a matching title; that requires little or no work, but where the people, including senior management, would see my brilliance and natural talents, and will fond over me and tell me that they can’t live without me. The checklist sounds and looks a lot like fantasy. What are my qualifications to get this “ideal” job? If I have no track record or skill sets, I will be luck to get an entry level position in the industry.

Our special checklist of our ideal mate would be someone who is sexy and good looking, like Angelia Jolie or Brad Pitt. It would be someone who made tons of money, who jet-sets around the world to hang-out with the beautiful people. Someone who can cook gourmet meals, gives great back rubs, and who will love me for what I really am - a poor, short dumpy homely person with bad skin and limited social skills. Fantasy or reality?

For any of the above to even remotely happen, the stars would really have

to be aligned and the heavens would have to open up in joyous songs and prayers. That's fantasy and it's not going to happen except in our dreams.

The reality is that for every experience that we wish to have, what are we prepared to do and what are we prepared to give of ourselves to make it a reality? Have we devoted the time and energy over the years to develop and hone our skill? Have we developed the experience and skills necessary to qualify for our dream job? Or did we just want to get the job based on our fantasy? When choosing our perfect mate, what are we offering and prepared to do to attract and to keep such a special person? What beliefs were involved that inspired us to create such a fantasy?

Special checklists are things that we wish or dream would happen to us. This wishing is based on our beliefs that we are somehow lacking or incomplete on the inside and need something from the outside to balance it, and to make us complete. We are under the misguided perception that the solutions to our unhappiness and pain are found outside of us. The truth is that there is nothing to fix. Nothing is broken. And only you can get rid of your pains, but then you may need a special checklist to do it.

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