

**Remember to H.U.M**



**Human Upswirl Manual**

**By Aunt Darlene**

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**Dedicated  
to my nephew, Mackenzie, and  
his Grandma and Grandpa Kent,  
and any person who dares to H.U.M.**



Dear Person-In-Progress, remember to H.U.M.

Life is a grand adventure, and the only thing of value I can give you is my affection and support. I hope they enrich your life and remind you always that you are worthy and deserving of respect, happiness and harmony (even when you screw up).

These are the gifts my parents gave me and I give them to you unconditionally. This humane tradition is your inheritance and it is my wish that you share this gift of compassion, appreciation, and acceptance with the people you meet along your life path. Love and support is a gift that gets bigger and better with the giving.

The hardest thing about life is that you are not born with a manual attached to your big toe. As a person who cares about you I have done my best to replace the missing manual, the one that I dearly wish had been attached at birth. Mine got lost, we'll blame the stork, and I have a feeling yours got lost too. Not to worry, your aunt is looking out for you and I have created a replacement called, H.U.M – Human Upswirl Manual.



In life you generally have three directions: downward spiral, stuck and upward spiral. Even if you remembered to H.U.M every single day of your life you will have moments where you fall down, moments where you are lost, and moments when you flourish.

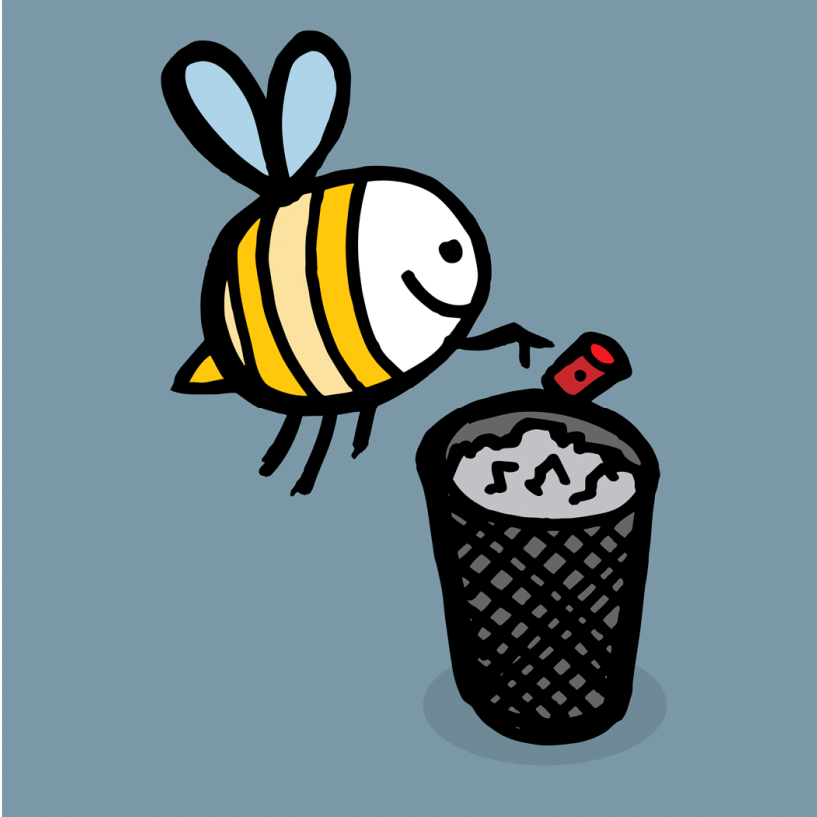
Humming is meant to help you find your way back to the upward spiral where you can thrive, discover possibilities, and take action to make your dreams, goals and intentions happen. The most important thing to remember is this is not about aptitude; **it's about attitude and taking small steps everyday to make your life better and more joyful.**



Remembering to H.U.M is not meant to be the ultimate answer guide. It is designed to give you strategies for success, to inspire, and to spark solutions.

This manual does not prevent heartbreak, anger or bad things. The adventure of life happens in these moments and the good ones too, so **embrace the gift of every moment with grace.** If you actually manage to do this you will be happier, healthier, and experience a life filled with heart, abundance and laughter.

**Your life is your responsibility.** For a while your parents will help you out, and overtime they will hand the reigns of your life to you. You're behind the wheel, you steer the ship, and you are the pilot of your destiny. It's up to you. If you don't like your life, do something to make it better.



**You are entitled to nothing.** Life does not come with promises or guarantees. The only thing you get is life, and even then you don't know the expiry date. You can choose to focus on misery or appreciation. Sucky things happen in life. The best way to find joy, especially on the worst days, are to find those moments of grace, they may only last 5 to 10 seconds, but in those few moments you experience your humanity, expand the heart, and catch a glimpse of the soul.

**You'll need to earn it.** The really good stuff in life - friendship, honor and respect cannot be bought only earned by supporting, celebrating and contributing, to yourself, to others, and to your community (that includes the global village). When your cup runneth over you can share the excess with others.



**Be curious, playful and most of all experiment.**

Every great discovery, every great success was made because someone was willing to ask a stupid question, experiment and risk failure.

**Consumerism is a scam.** Don't give in to consumerism, marketing or advertising (all of which can lead to greed). Consumerism works because it uses fear to make people feel less, like something is missing in life and then a product is provided to fill the void and supposedly make you feel better. Then you get home and realize that no product can make you feel good about yourself or your life because feeling good comes from the inside. Learn the difference between a need and a want. You need food, you want candy. You need shelter, you want a mansion. It's okay to buy a want occasionally, just realize the difference between a need and a want so when you make a purchase you can own your choices.

**Financial S.O.P.** Being financially healthy is simple. It comes down to the following three guidelines.

- **Spend less than you earn, live below your means.** This is possible because you really don't need most of the stuff you buy at the store or online. And once you're dead most of that stuff is going to be tossed out anyway.
- **Occasionally splurge.** It's okay to spend money and pamper yourself and the people you care about. One way we show people they are worthy is by spending money on them. So it's okay to splurge and go on a vacation, eat out, or buy a unique experience. And remember great life experiences are often free.
- **Pay yourself first.** Saving is a good thing. Save 8 months of income so when things get bumpy you have some cash on hand to smooth it out. Save for retirement, and save for the more expensive things you want to buy. (Lots of people and governments have gotten into trouble because of credit. Credit is good for a mortgage, and sometimes for school, and occasionally for car loans; otherwise credit can suck you into a downward financial spiral until you crash into the ground).

**Bonus!** Staying healthy pretty much follows the same S.O.P. Eat less calories than energy you use to move your body. Occasionally splurge on junk food. Exercise and healthy eating come first.



**Exercise and eat healthy daily** (this includes flossing and brushing your teeth at least twice a day). Your body is amazing! With your body you get to fully experience the wonder of the world. You can see beauty, hear harmony, smell diversity, taste aromas, touch textures, feel love, and have a



sense of humor. Your five senses, your emotions, your mind, plus your heart and soul, they are how you explore the world. Regular maintenance of your life vehicle, the body, is the best way to ensure you can embrace the life adventure. It will get sick and age, that's part of the deal, and death is how life ends for everyone.

**Your work is your joy**, whatever you work at find joy in it - whether you work in an office or at a hobby or simply work up a sweat. Find the joy in whatever you are doing. There is joy in cleaning your house (still working on this one), in helping others, or contributing to society by being employed. If you can find happiness while working you will find happiness every day. I wish I figured this out when I was going to school and doing homework.

**Skip the shoulds.** Don't let should's rule your life that is a path to misery. Make choices and own them. It's your life, your choices, and there is no manual (yes, that includes this one too). Make it up as you go along, life is more fun that way.



**Dance like a klutz, sing off key, ask stupid questions.**

Genuine joy, friendship and trust can only come from within. They come from the confidence to be yourself, whoever that turns out to be.



**Dog poop is a part of life.** Let me save you years of therapy and angst. Life is unfair. Bad things happen to good people. Your life will have dog poop moments and it will stink. Don't deny there is a pile of poop in your life. Instead take a moment to figure out how it can fertilize your life and help you grow. Then find the broom, scoop it up, and place it in the composter. Remember that sometimes you won't be able to find a broom or a composter, so find something else to clean it up with. You have talents; you have successes, remember what has worked in the past or what might work and get that poop cleaned up. And yes, dog poop is messy, and you and your clothes may get dirty, that's okay you have water and soap and you clean up afterwards. Then take a moment to enjoy the fresh scent of the soap and the miracle of being able to wash the dirt away and start the next moment clean.



**Life is like a garden.** You cannot plant every seed. You will have to make choices about what seeds to plant, nurture them while they grow, pull out weeds, and hope the weather works with you. These choices will lead to a harvest where you enjoy the beauty and scent of the roses, nourish yourself with the vegetables and fruits, and best of all share your bounty with others. The garden and the harvest are only possible because you made choices, worked hard, risked the weather ruining it all, and accepted blood will be spilt if you grasped a thorn. Remember that you can always change the garden and enjoy a different harvest.

**Strength is a many splendored thing.** Strength is not one solution every time. Sometimes strength comes from holding tight, and at other times strength comes from letting go. Sometimes courage is strength and sometimes strength is being a coward. Strength can be keeping your mouth shut or speaking your mind, holding firm to a truth only you can see or saying goodbye to a belief that no longer serves. What strengths you need will vary with every adventure. Listen to your inner voice and let it guide you, and most of all strength is admitting you made a mistake, or finding the strength to start anew.

**Everyone is imperfect.** I, your family and friends will disappoint you. You will disappoint them. Humans are imperfect. We make mistakes and can choose to learn from them or repeat them over and over again. Perfection is found in moments of grace, and to find those you have to take the time to notice and appreciate them. Moments of grace are often fleeting so you'll need to be ready and alert to the beauty, humor and harmony that exists in every moment.

**Listen, ask questions, forget advice.** One of the best gifts you can give anyone is to listen to them. Really listen to them, not with your ears, but with an open heart. Ask questions and help someone find their own answer. The only time to give advice is when you are specifically asked to do so. And even then it's probably better to ask questions and help someone discover they are capable of finding a solution.

**Remember to reach out.** We are not meant to be alone. Human beings are social creatures. We enjoy being with other people especially when things get rough. So when you feel alone, scared or lost reach out to family, friends and community resources. Whatever load you are carrying will be lighter if you share it.

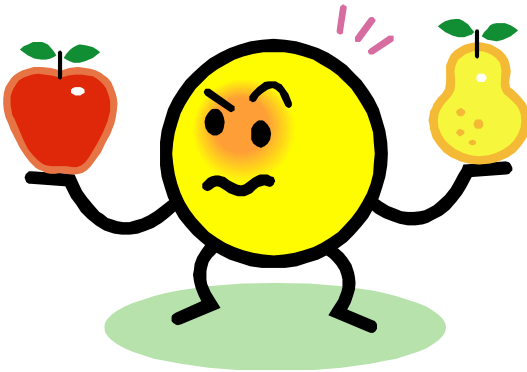


**Change is a natural part of life.** The only person you can change is yourself because the only actions and attitudes you can control are your own. Holding onto any life experience or moment can lead to suffering. Desire and attachment can also lead to misery. Want and appreciate what you have right now and know in the next moment it can all change, that's what makes life such an adventure.



**Forgiveness, Compassion and Acceptance are important.** Everyone is doing the best they can to navigate through life. Another person's actions would make sense if you could step into their world. Forgiveness is about letting go. It doesn't mean what the other person did was right, it just means you have chosen to let go of the pain and anger so you can move forward and experience joy, love and peace. Compassion is understanding no one is perfect, and every body makes mistakes. We live on ONE planet and to hurt one person is to hurt us all (this includes the planet). Whenever possible be supportive of other people. Accept where you are as the gift of the present and find how this location can offer goodness and moments of grace. And remember you can still take action to make your life better and more joyful.

**Comparing yourself is a loser's game.**



When you compare yourself to someone else there are only two ways it will go. You look up and feel inferior, or you look down and feel superior. You are simply you, a person who is always worthy and deserving of love, respect, and

humanity. Every person is a divine mystery to be appreciated.

**Live in the present.** You can't change the past; at best you can learn from it and move forward. You can't teleport to the future; only take steps today to make it better and more joyful. All you have is right now, enjoy the gift of the present, and see the beauty of this moment.



**Cultivate a sense of humor.** Life has funny moments. And at other times you'll need to work at finding the funny. Gallows humor will make even the darkest moments more bearable, if only for a few seconds. Life is easier when you can laugh at it and at yourself.



**Fear is an everyday part of life.** Fear can save your life when you meet a saber tooth tiger. Fear can sabotage when anxiety about normal life worries suck all the joy away. When you are scared admit it, noticing it is there is the first step to finding a better and more joyful way to live.

**Let your breathing lead you back** – to you, to your center, to peace. In the busy world taking time out to be present, to be still and to be quiet is a good thing. Turn off your electrical and digital devices and enjoy a cup of zen, the art of the pause. You can meditate while walking or cooking or sitting. What meditation does is help you open your heart to the gift of the present moment. Meditation is easy, because you carry your breath with you every where you go. You don't need to be a monk and meditate for an hour or more, you can mediate for a moment or ten. Anytime you need to simply turn your attention to your breath. When thoughts arrive, that's completely normal, simply return your attention to your breath. Keep your focus on your breath, be present as you breathe and meditate to give your mind and body a rest.

Okay, deep breath. Now I am going to find the strength to talk to you about some tough topics. Being healthy means having those difficult conversations, the ones that make you blush, scare you, and piss you off.



**Sex is wonderful when you play with the right person.**

Sex does not make you a man/woman/adult. No one becomes an adult the day they turn 18. It happens over time with failures and triumphs and learning how to succeed at life. Every single time you have sex you can create a baby, or get sick and possibly die from a disease. Sex with the right partner is about two people sharing something special and priceless. Whoever you choose, choose carefully and be safe about it.



**Religion is a forest.** Religion and spirituality can provide people to socialize with and a place of solace. It can provide answers to difficult questions. It goes very wrong when it proclaims itself as being the one truth. There is no one truth. Religions often ask us to be compassionate, to be loving, and to appreciate grace. We are all wandering the same forest - some people take one path and see certain landmarks, and other people take different paths and see different landmarks. It does not matter what you call the forest, or what path you take, what matters is the forest is there for all people, and that all paths walked are valid. The forest is always there, if you choose to visit, a place of serenity and wonder.



**Creativity is divine, the magic behind the universe.**

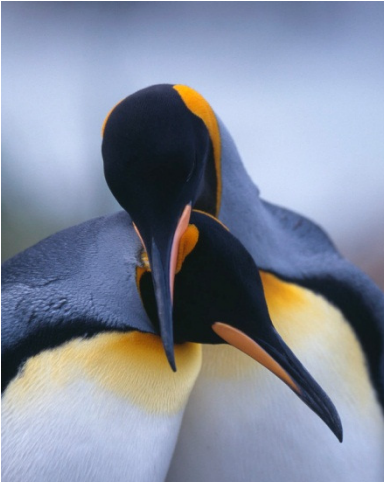
Anything that happens in life happens because of creativity. A tree creates homes for birds, branches, and oxygen. A flower creates leaves, petals and beauty. A rock can create a majestic mountain or a pebble. A person can create music, computer code, or a relationship to mention a few. Embrace creativity.



**Find your Guideposts – Support, Celebrate, Contribute.** You will get lost and stumble into darkness. Guideposts are the candles that provide light, that help you find the way out of the cave and into the sunshine. Find something to guide you – a piece of music, poetry, a picture, something that will help you find your center, your inner truth. My guides are three simple words – support, celebrate and contribute. And when night falls, and I’m scared and lost I ask myself: Does this support? Does this celebrate? Does this contribute?



**Express appreciation.** There can be no joy in life without appreciation. To feel joy you must notice goodness where ever and when ever it arrives in your life. It might be a kind hand, a cup of camomile tea, a beach at sunrise. These moments comfort, inspire and thrill. Savour these moments. Let people know when they have done something right so they can do it again. Words of appreciation and thank you cards remind people of their successes and abilities, and hopefully make the world a better place.



**Fine Print, Mumbo Jumbo.** I reserve the right to ignore, revise or contradict anything written. A few years, a few life experiences and my thoughts may change. That also means you can do the same. It's your life, your experience and you may discover different ideas.

I wish you much love, laughter and joy.

May life grant you good fortune, peace, and supportive relationships.

May grace always be a part of your life.

May your heart sing and your soul dance during your life adventure, and may the universe honor my wishes for you.

With love and support,

*Aunt Darlene*



## **Personal H.U.Ms**

A place to write down and remember ideas and strategies that swirl you upwards to possibilities and potential.









