

The Bushman's Gift

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Edited by Bradford Keeney, Ph.D.

My joy and happiness comes from the spirit given by the big God to the Bushmen. It is what keeps us alive. To learn this spirit you must live with us and come to our dances. That is where our spirit of joy comes to us. It is through touching one another that this spirit lives. We put our heads together, touch, hold, clap and sing. Some people are more timid so they only sit and clap, but they also receive this joy.

The secret of the Bushmen is the spirit of joy that we hold in our hearts.

Each day when I open my eyes and see the sun I am happy. Even when I think about the poverty and hunger around me, I am still happy. I immediately start the day with manageable things - looking for food and water for our children.

This is true for all Bushmen. We all think like this. Sometimes we feel sad about our needs, but it makes us grab our sticks and do something about it. We push our sticks into the earth and find a bulb to take a drop of water and let it touch the tongues of our children. We do what we can and we move forward... That is the Bushman's philosophy.

We live with the things we have been given. You can't get away from this truth. When you have the spirit of happiness it will always be with you every day of your life.

I can't give any direct advice on how to be happy. I can say that our women stand behind our men. When we support them, we are together, and we are happy. To all those people who live far away from the Kalahari, I say:

***Open your heart to others.
When you do so, you will feel our spirit.
It will make you dance
And it will make you happy.
And then you, too, will be a Bushman.***

Kaemme Teberi Ngwatle, Botswana

You need a good heart, mentally and physically, to be well. This is also necessary in healing others. The Bushmen of the Kalahari know each other's hearts. We also know the hearts of all the other people in the world. You must open your heart to have a good heart. There can be no jealousy or bad intentions inside you. You must go with an open heart to your neighbor and everyone around you. You must look after everyone. Open your heart and serve one another-this is our way. This is the key to healing.

Matope Saboabue Ngwatle, Botswana