



## June 2015 Health Notes by Evelyn Ames

### Feeling Lucky? Bring Serendipity to Your Life!

Serendipity is defined as luck that takes the form of finding pleasant or valuable things that are not looked for. It occurs when unexpected circumstances and an “aha” moment of insight result in a valuable, unanticipated outcome.

**Wisdom to spot opportunity.** Serendipity involves an element of luck that is out of one’s control but it also involves having the wisdom to spot the opportunity and act on it. For example, you notice an old friend on the street. What do you do? For serendipity to occur, you need to stop and talk, even though you may be in a hurry. And, you need to follow up on whatever was the outcome of the conversation. Psychologist, Rickard Wiseman, found that people who were in the right place at the right time were not “luckier.” They were just quicker to spot and seize opportunities. In other words, they had the wisdom to spot the opportunity and act on it.

#### Suggestions for bringing serendipity into your life!

- Change your environment to give some mental space! Go for a walk or bicycle ride; attend a concert; see a movie; watch children play in a park.
- Vary your routine! Travel to a new place. Participate in a community event. Bellingham has lots to offer, especially this summer (e.g., Bellingham Music Festival and Marrowstone and outdoor movies at the Village Green). Participate in WWURA’s informal dining, the bridge or book club groups! Enroll in an Academy for Lifelong Learning class.
- Be observant of “things” occurring around you. In other words, keep your eyes and ears open!
- Draw on your previous experiences to make sense of current events and to make links as to what you have learned in the past.
- Relax and “open” your boundaries to new foods and new ideas. Tastes change over the years. What you may have disliked as a youth/young adult may be tasty as an older adult.
- Go for it! Seek opportunities when something unexpected happens. Take time as well as the effort to capitalize on it.
- Think of each day as having the opportunity to make new memories! Dangle your feet in the waters of a river, lake or ocean.

“Some luck lies in not getting what you thought you wanted but getting what you have, which once you have it you may be smart enough to see is what you would have wanted had you known.” — Garrison Keillor, *Lake Wobegon*

Web: <https://winterautumnsummerspring.wordpress.com/2013/09/28/bring-serendipity-into-your-life/>  
[http://www.researchgate.net/publication/260608614\\_Making\\_my\\_ownLuck\\_Serendipity\\_Strategies\\_and\\_How\\_to\\_Support\\_Them\\_in\\_Digital\\_Information\\_Environments](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/260608614_Making_my_ownLuck_Serendipity_Strategies_and_How_to_Support_Them_in_Digital_Information_Environments)

