



Australian Government

**Department of Education, Employment
and Workplace Relations**



CDS

**Centre for
Disability
Studies**

Disability Employment News

Hello and welcome new and old recipients of this newsletter alike. Please be advised that not all of the information in this newsletter will be important to you but feel free to email shanesmith@med.usyd.edu.au if you wish some particular information related to employment, disability, support strategies, business specific information or something specific to be added.

Please distribute the Newsletter to those that you think would be interested in it.

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SOMETHING FROM POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY RESOURCES

[**A WORD FROM DR HAPPY**](#)

[**A WORD FROM KEN WARREN**](#)

[**POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY NEWS DAILY**](#)

The Good Life According to J. K. Rowling

[**The Good Life According to J. K. Rowling**](#)

By Amanda Horne

October 3, 2010

By Amanda Horne - Two weeks ago a very good friend wrote to me, "This is wonderful – perhaps some grist for your newsletter?" She included a link to J. K. Rowling's June 2008 Commencement Address, "*The Fringe Benefits of Failure and the Importance of Imagination*" delivered at the Annual Meeting of the Harvard Alumni Association. Although over two years old, the speech continues to inspire. My friend stumbled across the link in an article written just last month by a respected journalist, Leigh Sales, who responded to a question: "What would you read if you only had three months to live?" J. K. Rowling's speech made it into

[Sales' top 10](#). The Harvard Magazine has posted both a [video and the transcript of the speech](#).

Looking for grist for this month's article I noticed how much of J. K. Rowling's real-life experiences are mirrored in recent positive psychology research. It then occurred to me that a speech such as this must have already caught the attention of other PPND writers. Sure enough Caroline Adams Miller wrote a [PPND article here in June 2008](#), having attended the speech in person. She said, "*Although I knew she'd be entertaining, I had no idea how profound Rowling's talk would be, nor how tightly entwined her speech would be with the themes and message of Positive Psychology.*" I recommend Caroline's article, which summarizes the key themes in Rowling's speech.

In this month's article below, instead of repeating what Caroline observed in 2008, I share with you what inspired me.

Strengths-spotting

J. K. Rowling's speech was about sharing lessons learned. She had two key themes: the benefits of failure, and the importance of imagination in finding empathy. I wanted to discover what else we could learn from Rowling, so I engaged in bit of strengths-spotting and found that there are far more than just the two lessons. From Rowling's experience we learn that a good life involves many things including the following: (Ones in bold correspond directly to VIA character strengths.)

Determination

- **Humor**
- **Humility**
- Grit, determination, discipline (**Persistence**)
- Drive and passion
- A deep sense of meaning, purpose, being intrinsically-driven
- Intuition
- **Forgiveness**
- **Perspective**
- A clear sense of personal responsibility
- **Hope and optimism**
- Faith
- Friendships and relationships
- **Openness to learning and curiosity**
- Wisdom and strength
- **Creativity** and imagination
- Empathy and compassion
- **Gratitude**
- **Courage**
- **Love**
- Finding flow
- Having a growth mindset

In J. K. Rowling's Own Words

To give you a sense of some of what she writes, here are some of my favorite quotations from the speech about living well and wisely. (The subheadings are my interpretation.)

Reach for a growth mindset: “Talent and intelligence never yet inoculated anyone against the caprice of the Fates, and I do not for a moment suppose that everyone here has enjoyed an existence of unruffled privilege and contentment.”

Living life fully includes failure: “It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all – in which case, you fail by default.”

Empathy: “The power of human empathy, leading to collective action, saves lives and frees prisoners.”

Finding one's own path: “I was striking an uneasy balance between the ambition I had for myself, and what those closest to me expected of me.” “I stopped pretending to myself that I was anything other than what I was, and began to direct all my energy into finishing the only work that mattered to me.”

Hope: “Now, I am not going to stand here and tell you that failure is fun. That period of my life was a dark one, and I had no idea that there was going to be what the Press has since represented as a kind of fairy tale resolution. I had no idea then how far the tunnel extended, and for a long time, any light at the end of it was a hope rather than a reality.”

Humility contributes to happiness: “... personal happiness lies in knowing that life is not a check-list of acquisition or achievement. Your qualifications, your CV, are not your life, though you will meet many people of my age and older who confuse the two. Life is difficult, and complicated, and beyond anyone's total control, and the humility to know that will enable you to survive its vicissitudes.”

Courage and imagination: “Choosing to live in narrow spaces leads to a form of mental agoraphobia, and that brings its own terrors. I think the willfully unimaginative see more monsters. They are often more afraid.”

From the inside out: “Quoting Greek author Plutarch: What we achieve inwardly will change outer reality.”

Having an impact: “We touch other people's lives simply by existing...that is your privilege, and your burden.”

Failure is not always failure: Rowling explains how she ‘failed on an epic scale’ before her life turned around yet perhaps it's not failure at all “... rock bottom became the solid foundation on which I rebuilt my life.”

“I wish you all very good lives. Thank you very much.” (J. K. Rowling's closing

words)

Your favorites?

When you read Rowling's speech what resonates with you and why? What are your favorite quotes and what do they mean to you? Who would you recommend this speech to?

This article first appeared on [Positive Psychology News](#). To see the original article, [click here](#). To comment on this article, [click here](#).

Business News



Please find a link to [Australian Jobs 2010](#)

Australian Jobs 2010 provides up-to-date information about jobs, including a guide to the occupations and industries in which Australians work. It highlights jobs with good prospects and includes information at a State/Territory and regional labour markets level. Australian Jobs also incorporates sections which help readers access employment services, Australian apprenticeships and higher education.

There is relevant labour market data and may foster thinking about the broader considerations of potential labour supply over the coming 5 years or so.

[A Word From AND- Australian Network on Disability](#)

[Featured Business/es of the Month!!!!](#)



BNI or Business Network International is the answer. Take advantage of the world's best form of advertising... word-of-mouth!

BNI is the world largest referral based organisation in the world.

We offer members the opportunity to share ideas, contacts and most importantly business leads are replaced with qualified referrals.

Being active in BNI is like having up to 40 sales people working for you, because your fellow members will be carrying your cards and referring your business to people they meet.

BNI has groups of likeminded business people meeting weekly across Sydney.

If you would like to set up a no obligation free opportunity to see the local chapter of BNI in action and potentially meet some new business contacts.

Please contact:

Bob Greenup

Ph: 02 9191 0691

Or check out the website <http://www.bnisydneycbd.com.au>

JOBS!!!!

Would you like assistance or a person to come out and view your business for potential opportunities to add a staff member, how by working with a Disability Employment provider you may be able to increase productivity, look at the job creation or simply fill that job that you have available

If so contact:

Shane Smith
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shanesmith@med.usyd.edu.au

FAMOUS POPLER who have/ had a disability



Sir Isaac Newton - (4 January 1643 - 31 March 1727) A very important scientist who is responsible for founding the three laws of motion along with studies concerning Universal Gravitation. He studied many scientific disciplines but mainly stayed inside the field of mechanics. It is said that Newton had mainly discovered gravity by examining a falling apple, that would have been one of the major reasons for him to start his researches in the subject. Was thought by many a product of psychosis but he may just have been in his right mind.

Epilepsy is a common chronic neurological disorder that is characterized by recurrent unprovoked seizures. These seizures are transient signs and/or symptoms due to abnormal, excessive or synchronous neuronal activity in the brain.

Epilepsy is usually controlled, but not cured, with medication, although surgery may be considered in difficult cases.

Read more: <http://www.disabled-world.com/artman/publish/epilepsy-famous.shtml#ixzz11Xyr1Jpc>

Conferences and Workshops



The **NSW Major Projects Conference 2010** is the leading construction & infrastructure conference in the state with an anticipated attendance of more than 250 delegates. The conference will be a 2 day event which will focus on the significant investments being made by the government into major projects that are currently being worked upon as well as projects that are in the pipeline. It will cover areas of Housing, Education, Health, Urban Planning, Justice, Correctional Facilities,

Transport, Water, Energy, Urban Planning, Sustainability and the overall State Development.

Organized by: Expotrade Australia Pty Ltd

Website: <http://www.expotrade.net.au>

Contact name: Saumya George

[Calls for Expressions of Interest and Input](#)

If there is anything that you would particularly like to see in the Newsletter please feel free to contact Shane Smith at Shanesmith@med.usyd.edu.au

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The Disability News Archive can be found at:

<http://ndco.cds.org.au/index.php/disability-employment-news-region-1>

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No , Vol - Compiled by Timothy Hart the NDCO for North Sydney and Central Coast

The NDCOs for Region 1 and 3 are Hosted at [the Centre for Disability Studies](#)

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