

Carolyn Curtis tells **Kate O'Reilly** about some of the ideas behind her self-help workshops in Cork

# Help yourself to a new you

**"D**O you ever get the feeling that there must be more to life than all this? Where is the magic? Where is the joy? The truth is that if you are not happy with the way your life is now, you have the power to change it, simply by changing what you think," says Carolyn Curtis of Empowering Workshops in Cork.

Curtis teaches the ideas of American self-help author Louise Hay, and is also a Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) practitioner and stress management consultant. She says she has been inspired by the teachings of figures in the self-help movement to create a series of courses aimed at motivating and inspiring people to create the life they want by developing their own inner wisdom.

In Louise Hay's book, *You Can Heal Your Life*, she says people's beliefs and ideas about themselves are often the cause of their emotional problems and physical maladies. By using certain tools, they can change their thinking and their lives for the better.

Curtis says the *You Can Heal Your Life* workshop, which is based on Hay's teachings "will show you how to knock the walls of your self imposed limitations, so that you can discover your potential to live a happier and more successful life".

Curtis believes that if you keep doing what you are doing, then you will keep getting what you've got.

With this in mind she recommends taking the following steps to help you take that leap of faith and change your life for the better:

1.

The first step is to spend some time every day in silence (otherwise known as meditation) because this practice quiets and clears the mind.

It distances you from fears and tensions and brings you back to your true self. This practice also increases your creativity and energy, which are two very important aspects for creating a joyful life.

2.

Every day, or as often as possible, try to spend some time in nature. Go for a walk or sit in a garden. If this is not possible, then visualise it and notice how your energy is revitalised.

3.

Practise conscious deep breathing to release stress from your body and mind. As you become more aware and connected to your body, you will automatically release stress, leaving yourself feeling more relaxed and

therefore more energised. Otherwise you will burn up all of your energy with tension.

4.

Let go of your need for approval in order to feel good about yourself.

Imagine how freeing it is to live without requiring the approval of others in order to like and respect yourself. Regularly affirm that you love and approve of yourself just the way you are.

5.

Stop all criticism of yourself — remember, praise builds the spirit whereas criticism breaks it. Whenever you make mistakes, learn from them and move on.

6.

Know what you want in your life. I have noticed how people can always tell you what they don't want but rarely take time to ask themselves what exactly they do want in their lives. How can you create it if you don't know? Ask yourself if you had three wishes, what would you wish for? Make it a game. Make it fun. From then on only ever focus on what you do want in life, as whatever you give your focus to expands.

7.

Practice conscious visualisation. Create a



**HAY MAKER:** Carolyn Curtis bases her courses on the work of Louise Hay.

clear picture in your mind of what you want, make it as colourful as you can and focus on it often. That way you are opening your mind up to the possibility of creating what you want, and you will begin to notice opportunities, see things and hear things that you would not have noticed had your mind been closed to that possibility.

8.

Once you decide what you want, take some immediate action to act on that decision. Set goals and time line each one. This way you are turning your dream into a goal and your goal into a reality. Write them down and read them every day to remind you of your life direction. Stay committed to your decisions but open to changing your approach if you need to. With each decision you make and each action you take, you will find yourself becoming more courageous.

9.

Be your own supporter. Learn to support yourself in positive ways so that you can feel safe enough to move out of your comfort zone and begin creating the life you want. For example, ask for help when you need it, look after your body with good diet and exercise, notice what gives you energy and what takes it away, eg an early night versus a late night drinking alcohol, spend more time around people that encourage you to live to your potential and less time around those who have the opposite effect, feed your mind/spirit with inspiring books/cds, etc.

10.

Karma, or cause and effect, claims that every action generates a force of energy that returns to us. In other words, what we sow is what we reap. Therefore, when we choose actions that bring happiness and success to others our karma is blessed also with happiness and success.

Carolyn Curtis will hold a two-day workshop based on the work of Louise Hay, on Saturday, March 3 and Saturday, March 10 from 9.30am to 5.30pm at St Dominic's Retreat House, Montenotte in Cork, cost €185.

Curtis is also running an advanced two-day workshop on Saturday, April 14 and Sunday, April 22. A one-day meditation and relaxation course will take place on Sunday, April 1, also in Montenotte.

Further details from Carolyn Curtis on 087-6419912, or her website [www.empoweringworkshops.com](http://www.empoweringworkshops.com). For details on courses for managing stress in the workplace see [www.ctsireland.ie](http://www.ctsireland.ie).