



How to be Lovely: The Audrey Hepburn Way of Life

By *Melissa Hellstern*

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"Living is like tearing through a museum. Not until later do you really start absorbing what you saw, thinking about it, looking it up in a book and remembering- because you can't take it all in at once." —**Audrey Hepburn**

On many occasions, she was approached to pen her autobiography, the definitive book of Audrey Hepburn, yet she never agreed. A beloved icon who found success as an actress, a mother and an humanitarian, Audrey Hepburn perfected the art of gracious living.

More philosophy than biography, **How to Be Lovely** revisits the many interviews Audrey gave over the years, allowing us to hear her voice directly on universal topics of concern to women the world over: careers, love lives, motherhood and relationships. Enhanced by rarely seen photographs, behind-the-scenes stories, and insights from the friends who knew her well, **How to Be Lovely** uncovers the real Audrey, in her own words.

While she would have been the last to say so, Audrey Hepburn was an expert in the art of being a woman. **How to Be Lovely** imparts whatever wisdom and insight she found along the way to the millions who grew up, or will grow up, wanting to be just like her.

Published to coincide with Audrey Hepburn's would-be seventy-fifth birthday, **How to Be Lovely** offers a rare glimpse into the woman behind the mystique and the definitive guide to living genuinely with glamour and grace.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

A breezy but sometimes insightful read, this hybrid mini-biography/female empowerment manual goes down like a soothing tonic for the 21st-century woman attempting to juggle life, career, family and, if there's time, fashion. The waifish star and muse of Givenchy, Audrey could be quite the sage as well, turning out insightful phrases about working hard, living well and aging gracefully. Her simple, cautiously optimistic approach to life came as a result of her childhood in occupied Holland during World War II. The daughter of Baroness Ella van Heemstra Hepburn-Ruston, Audrey left Amsterdam for London as a teen to study ballet. Her dance aspirations, however, morphed into a Hollywood career. Hellstern arranges each chapter as instructive vignettes, with headings like "Be genuine," "Live without regret" "Listen well" and even "Get plenty of vitamin C"; these are followed by stories, anecdotes and quotes from Audrey and her admirers, and punctuated with b&w photos, both enchanting candid shots and glamorous stills. Enduring the challenges of womanhood-miscarriages, divorce and the balancing act of career and family-Audrey Hepburn exuded dignity and humility through her successes and failures. As Hellstern styles it, she ate what she wanted but still watched her figure, and devoted herself to global causes without becoming political. "I could never be cynical," Hepburn claimed. "I wouldn't dare. I'd roll over and die before that." 68 b/w photos.

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About the Author

An avid Audrey Hepburn fan, Melissa Hellstern is a freelance writer living in Chicago. *How to Be Lovely* is her first book of this kind.

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Introduction

When it comes to elegance and style, few women surpass Audrey Hepburn. She has become an adjective-ôso Audreyö-describing some ethereal combination of grace, elegance, charm, and wisdom.

While her clothing style remains a grounding influence on fashion, it is her character that is certain to withstand the test of time. Audrey taught us that being a woman is as simple as knowing who you are, and who you are not.

And somehow we suspected that if anyone would have the right answers, it would be her: ôAmazing the questions they will ask characters like us . . . the questions-all the way from what do I think of love or how does it feel to be a star, to enormous ones, even political, with as many prongs as a pitchfork. Here I am, an innocent little actress trying to do a job, and it seems that my opinion on policy in the Middle East is worth something. I don't say I don't have an opinion, but I doubt it's worth.ö

To the world, she represented all that a woman could be, and we wanted in. We still do. By looking at her words from interviews over the years, we may just find a new revelation or two, and certainly some we knew all along.

May the light she shared with the world shine on in the lives of those of us she continues to inspire.

Happiness

“The most important thing is to enjoy your life-to be happy-that’s all that matters.”

A happy life has been pursued in every culture, in every country, in every generation. But after all this time, there are still no rules for how to get it. And the more you try to pin it down, the more elusive it seems.

By now, we surely know that money can’t buy it. There are those who have very little and are very happy. And others who seem to have it all, but are not. Still, we all look for the next reason to be happy. What if it is not about what happens to us, what we own or where we live, but how we look at it?

Maybe those rose-colored glasses aren’t such a bad idea after all.

Attitude Is Everything

Once upon a time, Audrey Hepburn was a just a girl.

A girl who took ballet and dreamed of becoming the next Anna Pavlova. Who climbed trees with her brothers. Who read books in her room. Who often felt unsure in the world, but learned to get along. A girl who loved to be loved, just like the rest of us.

As she grew, there were the usual hardships we all find somewhere along the way. Disappointment. Frustration. Struggle. A dwindling bank balance. And some most of us can hardly fathom-overnight success, fame, miscarriages, studio execs, while the whole world watched.

Regardless of what life threw her way, Audrey was a person who sparkled. She never failed to remember what we too often forget-that life itself is a glorious opportunity.

“Pick the day. Enjoy it-to the hilt. The day as it comes. People as they come. . . . The past, I think, has helped me appreciate the present-and I don’t want to spoil any of it by fretting about the future.”

“Not to live for the day, that would be materialistic-but to treasure the day. I realize that most of us live on the skin-on the surface-without appreciating just how wonderful it is simply to be alive at all.”

“My own life has been much more than a fairy tale. I’ve had my share of difficult moments, but whatever difficulties I’ve gone through, I’ve always gotten a prize at the end.”

“If my world were to cave in tomorrow, I would look back on all the pleasures, excitements and worthwhilenesses I have been lucky enough to have had. Not the sadnesses, not my miscarriages or my father leaving home, but the joy of everything else. It will have been enough.”

“But what is happiness except the simple harmony between man and the life he lives?”

-Albert Camus

Listen to Your Mother Audrey’s mother, born Baroness Ella van Heemstra, grew up “wanting more than anything else to be English, slim, and an actress,” but her aristocratic heritage prevented such foolishness. Marriage and motherhood were on her agenda. The Baroness, as she preferred to be called, did marry. She also divorced because, as her friend so aptly put it, “she preferred that to taking a lover, like most.” Divorce was hardly commonplace, yet she stood tall as the single mother of two boys, Alexander and Ian.

Just a year later, she married Joseph Hepburn-Ruston. Together, they brought Audrey into the world. But it would be up to her mother to help her navigate through it.

“Being the daughter of a baroness doesn’t make you any different, except that my mother was born in 1900 and had had herself a very strict, Victorian upbringing, if you like. So, she was very demanding of us-of me and my brothers. ‘Manners,’ as she would say, ‘don’t forget, are kindnesses. You must always be kind.’ Opening the door for old ladies is just a routine so that you know she’s helped. And she was always very adamant about that.”

“My mother taught me to stand straight, sit erect, use discipline with wine and sweets and to smoke only six cigarettes a day.”

“I was given an outlook on life by my mother. . . . It was frowned upon not to think of others first. It was frowned upon not to be disciplined.”

“It’s that wonderful old-fashioned idea that others come first and you come second. This was the whole ethic by which I was brought up. Others matter more than you do, so don’t fuss, dear; get on with it.”

“As a child, I was taught that it was bad manners to bring attention to yourself, and to never, ever make a spectacle of yourself. . . .

All of which I’ve earned a living doing.”

“I can really take no credit for any talent that Audrey may have. If it’s real talent, it’s God-given. I might as well be proud of a blue sky, or the paintings in the Flemish exhibition at the Royal Academy.”

-her mother, Baroness Ella van Heemstra Hepburn-Ruston

Keep It All in Perspective

Ten-year-old Audrey was just feeling settled at her boarding school outside London when her mother packed up the family and moved to Arnhem, Holland. World War II was coming and only among her own neutral Dutch would her mother, now a single parent, feel safe. “Famous last words,” Audrey would later say.

Just days after Audrey’s eleventh birthday, the Germans stormed into town. In the years that followed, food and liberty became scarce and treachery lurked everywhere. Audrey would lose friends, uncles, and nearly both brothers.

When liberation did come-on Audrey’s sixteenth birthday-the family had escaped with their lives, but the memories would last a lifetime.

“Don’t discount anything awful you hear or read about the Nazis. It’s worse than you could ever imagine.”

“We lost everything, of course-our houses, our possessions, our money. But we didn’t give a hoot. We got through with our lives, which was all that mattered.”

“At times like this, you learn about death, privation, danger, which makes you appreciate safety and how quickly it can change. You learn to be serious about what counts.”

“Being without food, fearful for one’s life, the bombings-all made me appreciative of safety, of liberty. In that sense, the bad experiences have become a positive in my life.”

“It made me resilient and terribly appreciative for everything good that came afterward. I felt enormous respect for food, freedom, for good health and family- for human life.”

Expect Less

By the age of sixteen, Audrey knew much more than most. She had already seen the worst mankind had to offer.

Audrey noticed that during the war people were kind and generous. But once the liberation came, not everyone had learned the lesson. How easily we are able to forget what really matters when it comes down to it.

Audrey always knew just what she wanted in life: safety, food, and family. The rest was just icing on the cake.

“Being an actress just happened; I had no intention of it.”

“I’ve had so much more than I ever dreamed possible out of life—[no] great disappointments or hopes that didn’t work out . . .

I’ve accomplished far more than I ever hoped to, and most of the time it happened without my seeking it.”

Be Perfectly Human

Most of us never really knew Audrey. We knew Princess Anne, Holly Golightly, and Eliza Doolittle. In some ways, we made her into the ideal we all wanted her to be—perfect. An image that can be hard to live up to.

Audrey was one of us. She was as real as the girl next door, only smarter.

“Truly, I’ve never been concerned with any public image. It would drive me around the bend if I worried about the pedestal others have put me on. And also I don’t believe it.”

“People seem to have this fixed image of me. In a way I think it’s very sweet, but it’s also a little sad. After all, I’m a human being. When I get angry, I sometimes swear.”

CHARADE

“Cary and I had never met before we did Charade, so there we all were in Paris, about to have dinner at some terribly smart bistro. As it was early spring, Cary, who always dressed impeccably, was wearing an exquisite light-tan suit. I know I was thrilled to meet him, and I must have been terribly excited, because not ten seconds after we started chatting I made some gesture with my hand and managed to knock an entire bottle of red wine all over poor Cary and his beautiful suit. He remained cool. I, on the other hand, was horrified. Here we’d only just been introduced! If I somehow could have managed to crawl under the table and escape without ever having to see him again, I happily would have.”

Live Without Regret

For years, Audrey tried to balance her need for family with the world’s need to watch her onscreen, until one day she finally left movie-making behind altogether.

It was during the filming of *Wait Until Dark*, for which she would earn her fifth Oscar nomination, that it hit her. The long separation from her son Sean, now seven years old and in school, was just too much. She had to make a change. And change she did. In just under two years, she divorced, remarried, and gave birth to her second son, Luca. She also left Hollywood for home, not to be seen again on the big screen for close to ten years. It was the best decision she ever made.

“It would be terribly sad, wouldn’t it, to look back on your life in films and not know your children? For me there’s nothing more pleasant or exciting or lovely or rewarding than seeing my children grow up . . .

and they only grow up once, remember.ö

ôYou can only hope to get a combination of happy work and a happy life.ö

ôOne thing I would have dreaded would be to look back on my life and only have movies.ö

ôI never expected to be a star, never counted in it, never even wanted it. Not that I didn't enjoy it all when it happened. (But) it's not as if I were a great actress. I'm not Bergman. I don't regret for a minute making the decision to quit movies for my children.ö

ôI may not always be offered work, but I'll always have my family.ö

"

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Malissa Conlin:

What do you think of book? It is just for students because they are still students or the item for all people in the world, exactly what the best subject for that? Merely you can be answered for that concern above. Every person has distinct personality and hobby for every other. Don't be obligated someone or something that they don't desire do that. You must know how great in addition to important the book *How to be Lovely: The Audrey Hepburn Way of Life*. All type of book are you able to see on many resources. You can look for the internet solutions or other social media.

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