

Below are six samples from the
160+ pages of

Coffee House Wisdom

ENJOY!!

~~~ Robert ~~~

## RE-FRAME THE SITUATION

Season 2, Episode 8: The One With The List



Chandler: *Oh no! Two women love me! They're both gorgeous and sexy, my wallet's too small for my 50's, and my diamond shoes are too tight!!*



Season 4, Episode 13: The One With Rachel's Crush



Phoebe: *Personal shopping? What is that? Like where you walk around with snooty rich people and tell them what to buy?*

Rachel: *Uh huh.*

Phoebe: *That sounds great!!*



When Ross is faced with the anxiety of choosing between Rachel and Julie, Chandler offers an amusing perspective on things. Meanwhile, when Rachel is forced into a different job, Phoebe finds the silver lining that restores Rachel's joy.

One of Phoebe's most admirable traits is her ability to find a positive perspective in every situation. You can do the same without adopting a naïve state of denial. Choose to look for and accentuate positive elements in your daily life according to your values and preferences.

Such positive thinking is a phenomenon with proven benefits. Plenty of studies have demonstrated the psychological and physiological rewards: optimists generally live longer; have better marriages; earn more money; and so forth.

The key to enjoying those benefits is being involved. Staying engaged in activities breaks the negative cycle of obsessing about your concerns. It prevents you from brooding over negative circumstances or making mountains out of molehills.

It's true that some situations warrant genuine concern, and other matters may have no positive upside at all, but most

circumstances have at least some positive element that we can identify and build upon.

Since it is not always easy to think clearly in the midst of frustration or depression take the time now to make a list of the things that you really enjoy—activities that capture your attention and improve your mood. It does not matter what is on the list as long as it distracts you until you feel better. Pull that list out when you feel yourself turning excessively negative and pick an activity to improve your mood. While this may sound like escapism, it works. It gives your mind time to clear up so you can see your issues from a better perspective leading to more creativity in resolving them. Once your mood is improved then you can re-orient your focus as necessary.

Just to clarify: you don't have to force yourself to think positive thoughts. Rather, just make time to do the things you know you already enjoy. This alone will break the cycle of negative thoughts. Most importantly, this ongoing positive-feedback loop will become self-sustaining and spill over into other aspects of life leading to a greater sense of satisfaction and well-being.

So don't dwell on irresolvable conflicts, annoying people, or dissatisfying circumstances that you cannot influence for future change. Rather, strive to keep your focus on things that help you maintain a positive outlook and make time to stay engaged in things that you enjoy. This will bear fruit in every aspect of life.



**Thought:** Before getting upset, look for the silver lining. And if your problems overwhelm you, keep a list of activities handy that will help you renew your perspective.

## THE THINGS WE DO FOR LOVE... OR SEX

Season 1, Episode 14: The One With The Candy Hearts



Chandler: *How can I dump this woman on Valentine's day?*

Joey: *I don't know. You dumped her on New Years.*

Chandler: *Oh man, in my next life I'm coming back as a toilet brush.*  
(later)

Chandler (to Janice): *Look, there's no way for me to tell you this. At least there's no new way for me to tell you this*  
(later)

Janice (to Chandler): *You seek me out. Something deep in your soul calls out to me like a foghorn: 'Janice! Janice!' You want me. You need me. You can't live without me. And you know it. You just don't know you know it.*



Chandler remains caught in the vicious Janice cycle as Ross continues to pine for his ex-wife Carol.

Do you know someone who is continually drawn back to a particular relationship after it has failed? Of course it may seem better to have anyone than no one at all and it is easier to rekindle a former relationship than to invest the emotional effort in developing a new one. But if you remain in a relationship that you know won't last, then you risk missing a better relationship when it comes along. Additionally, you tend not to grow as a person and may not develop your own interests fully.

Being single may make us feel less fulfilled or significant but that is only because we accept that judgment from the world around us. When you are single choose to focus on your personal growth and the people around you (while you still have the luxury). Pursue hobbies and interests, take time to travel, and most importantly, increase your circle of acquaintances and the depth of your existing friendships. By pursuing your interests and enjoying your social life you will feel more fulfilled, less impatient, and appear more attractive to someone who suits you.



**Thought:** Want to abandon the past and find a better relationship? First know yourself. Then you will appear more desirable and you will better recognize the one who suits you.

## SPACE (It's not just the final frontier)

Season 3, Episode 14: The One With Phoebe's Ex-Partner



Rachel: *It doesn't mean that I don't love you.... But my work, it's for me, you know, I'm out there on my own and I'm doing it... and it's scary, but I love it because it's mine.*



When Rachel takes a new job, Ross finds himself feeling neglected. He wants to be a part of Rachel's life—her new job, new activities, and new friends. Rachel, on the other hand, is happy because this work is something that is truly hers. However, Ross's behavior is now beginning to suffocate her and choke off her individual development.

It may be difficult to accept but you don't have to be involved in every part of someone else's life in order to know them intimately and have a special bond. People need space to discover their selves, explore their interests and abilities, and develop personally and professionally. Don't be afraid of their life beyond the relationship. If anything, they are likely to become more fulfilled, more interesting, and more beautiful as a person.



**Thought:** If you love someone, let them be free to grow. If you really love them for who they are, then the end result should be even more to love over time...

## DON'T BE AFRAID TO SEEK ADVICE

Season 4, Episode 11: The One With Phoebe's Uterus



Monica: *The sex is gonna be great because you guys are in love.*

(later)

Chandler: *Alright, alright. I'll sleep with my girlfriend.*



Chandler and Kathy have been together for some time but still have not had sex. Chandler tries to put a romantic spin on it, but in fact he is intimidated and worried about his performance. When the first time doesn't go well, Monica teaches Chandler the seven erogenous zones. "Take your time." "Hit 'em all." "Mix 'em up." As she continues, she gets carried away, becoming aroused and ultimately climaxing while shouting "SEVEN! SEVEN! SEVEN!".

When Chandler follows Monica's advice, the result is clear: Kathy (entering abruptly and breathless – to Monica): "Oh! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! YES! THANK YOU!"

You never know where you might find good advice so don't face your problems alone—you are not the only one who has ever been there. While issues may seem overwhelming, problems are rarely as big as imagined. However, isolation can cause problems to fester as we magnify the impact, causing increasing anxiety. That is why it is so important to discuss your problems with others. Their insights can provide a clearer perspective and such brainstorming may lead to potential solutions you might otherwise never have considered.

Don't let fear or embarrassment hold you back. Tap into the knowledge and insight of others. Whether it is business or personal matters, take the first small step and talk to someone. As you ask around you will discover that others have good ideas and have dealt with similar issues. But they can't advise you if they don't know your situation. Hiding your problems only ensures that no one helps you.



**Thought:** The people around you have a wealth of information and experience, but they can't help you if they don't know your concerns.

## STOP THE MERRY GO ROUND – I WANT TO GET OFF

Season 4, Episode 9: The One Where They're Going To Party



Chandler: *You know what? We're not sad. We're not sad. We're just not 21 anymore. You know. I'm 29 years old damn it. And I want to sit in a comfortable chair and watch television and go to sleep at a reasonable hour.*

Joey: *Yeah, and I like to hang out in a quiet place where I can talk to my friends.*

Ross: *And so what if I like to go home, throw on some Kenny G and take a bath.*

Joey: *We're 29, we're not women!*



Ross and Chandler are all worked up because Gandalf the party wizard is coming to town, so when he doesn't make it they are supremely disappointed. But Joey revives them and leads the charge as they head out for a night on the town, only to realize that they are not the same people they used to be.

Poor guys – 29 and over the hill! The onset of age is a difficult realization for many but it need not be something to fear. Rather, it should be something to explore and enjoy. As you grow you encounter new interests and new horizons. If you didn't, life would get supremely boring.

Numerous studies have shown that happiness is independent of age so, if you feel challenged by the onset of your years, then try to re-align your focus. Look for new hobbies, new activities, and new friends – anything that will inject a fresh perspective into your life. You will soon discover that you have many latent interests that were never discovered or cultivated.

Life, in all its stages, should be embraced. Just because your activities may change, your passion or zeal does not have to. You can live a vibrant life and enjoy an equal or higher level of satisfaction as you mature.



**Thought:** Look age in the eye and laugh because you have no other choice anyway.

## REAL 'HEAT'

Season 5, Episode 17: The One With Rachel's Inadvertent Kiss



Chandler: *Just to impress Gary and Phoebe you want me to go upstairs and have sex with you over and over and over and I'm saying 'no' to this why? Get your coat!*

(later)

Monica: *Wasn't it a lot more exciting when we were, you know, all over each other all of the time?*

Chandler: *Oh yeah, that was great, that was really great. But to tell you the truth, I'm more excited about where we are now.*



In typical Monica fashion she is locked into a battle of relationship heat with Phoebe. She keeps trying to prove they are the couple with the hottest passion. But Chandler, in an ironic twist of events, becomes the mature, insightful one. He boils it all down for her: "To get past the beginning and still want to be around each other all the time? I think that's pretty incredible."

Yes, a healthy sex life is one of the keys to a lasting relationship. The positive effects have been confirmed in numerous studies where happy couples have countered the conventional wisdom that physical desire fades over time. The common factor seems to be a willingness to experiment and adapt to their changing preferences, thus keeping their sexual relations fresh, whether it be through new locations, novel positions, or... An added focus on returning to flirting and foreplay also helps to keep the passion fresh.

Even so, real passion stems from more than just sexual lust. It is a total desire for a person—wanting to be with them, wanting to see them fulfilled, and wanting to experience life through their eyes and through their soul. When you have that kind of relationship passion then the sexual passion will be unbelievable.



**Thought:** How do you measure real passion in a relationship? Is it just where and how often you 'do it'? Or is it something more?