



Fifty Ways To Spice Up Your Life!

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About The Author

Author, publisher and IT Consultant Chris Green started out as a computer operator before starting several successful businesses. He now concentrates exclusively on producing self-help and e-commerce electronic books to help people develop a better quality of life.

He is the author of:

Conquering Fear: A new, practical guide with little-known, easy-to-apply sure-fire techniques to help you overcome fear and control your destiny. Discover how to create the lifestyle you truly want; how to increase confidence and self-esteem and how you can make fear your greatest asset. The unique Conquering Fear program will reveal everything you need to know to eradicate fear and help you design the life of your choosing. For more information, visit <http://www.conqueringfear.net>

Conquering Stress: Stress, anxiety and depression are the plagues of the modern world. Every year, over 40 million US citizens suffer the misery caused by these painful illnesses. For many, the only solution is powerful, anti-depressant medications and for two-thirds of sufferers, these medications will not help them. After suffering a 5-year period of anxiety-induced depression, Chris Green conquered them using natural, highly-effective methods. If you want to eradicate these illnesses from your life for good without taking drugs, checkout his special website at: <http://www.conqueringstress.com>

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Introduction

We know that variety is the spice of life, and that if we do the same old things everyday, we can get caught up in a routine which can make life dull. We can feel as though we're in a rut, living a life lacking excitement and fulfilment.

If this feeling lasts for a prolonged time, deep unhappiness can set in and it can become so severe that we can enter into a depressive episode. Not good, not good at all.

Hi there, I'm Chris Green, welcome to my book "*Spice Up Your Life!*".

You're about to discover fifty exciting ideas for you to experience more happiness and variety in life. The ideas will help you to avoid repeated patterns of behavior, patterns that can become routine and lead to unhappiness. I call repeated patterns of behavior:

Walking the Wheel.

When I observe people behaving in a repetitive way, I compare it to the old practice in lunatic asylums whereby the inmates would all gather together and walk clockwise around a circular stone.

In the modern world, we engage in many repeated patterns of behaviour, patterns that contribute much of the dissatisfaction we can feel with life.

It's not going to happen to you! The ideas you're about to discover will blow away the dull routines and bring rich experiences into your life! So without further ado, let's get down to it.

But remember, they'll only work if you take action and try them!

Have fun and enjoy the ride...

Fifty Ways To Spice Up Your Life!

1. Indulge yourself. Relax in style. Have yourself massaged by a professional masseur or masseuse. It's relaxing, invigorating and addictive! Failing this, why not share a massage with your partner? Use scented candles for soft lighting and to give the room a relaxing fragrance. Play some gentle background music, make sure the room is nice and warm and relax! An excellent stress-buster and a great way of increasing intimacy in our loving relationships.
2. If you feel like you're missing out on a bit of excitement, how about learning to drive a racing car? There are many racing driving schools these days, use the Internet & Yellow Pages to find one that's local to you. Also, there are schools that teach rally driving, off-road driving and advanced driving skills. If you enjoy driving, this is an excellent way of improving your skills and bringing a bit of excitement into your life.
3. Read a biography of someone you admire. E.g. John F. Kennedy, Sir Winston Churchill, Hellen Keller etc. When you read a biography of someone you admire, try to identify what qualities they have that you'd like to have. What can you learn from their lives? The beauty of reading about such people is that you can learn so much from people who have been there and done something. I have 10 people whom I admire greatly. They're my secret support group. When I'm facing difficult situations in my life, it is to this group that I refer to in my mind. I ask questions like: How would they cope? What difficulties did they face and how did they overcome adversity? What can I learn from their experiences?
4. Vary the working week by taking different routes to – and from – the workplace. This is something that really used to bore the pants off me. I'd drive the same routes to and from my workplace everyday. I'm sure I could've driven those routes blindfolded. Monotonous is the only word for these journeys. So, to avoid this, can you find different routes?
5. Have lunch at a different time everyday. I lunch like this: 12, 1, 12:30, 1:30, 12:15. I also vary the duration, so some days I'll take 20 minutes to half an hour, and Fridays can be anything from 1 hour to 2 hours. It keeps things DIFFERENT. And try and vary the places where you take lunch. Take a walk around a park or the city, try new places for lunch, use the staff restaurant if there is one, I think you can see the idea. Please avoid taking a quick bite at your workstation everyday. It's very important to have a break away from the coal-face, even if it's just for 20 minutes.

- 6.** Shop at different supermarkets. Most people visit the same supermarket every week to get the groceries. Yet more routine. This is another good way of keeping things fresh. A good way to do this is to shop at your regular store for 3 weeks and try a different one on the 4th week.

- 7.** Learn a new language. French, German, Spanish, or Mandarin Chinese, whatever you like! A good way of doing this is to plan a visit to a particular country for a vacation and learn a basic level of the language beforehand. And when you visit the country and talk to natives in their language, even if it's just a few basic phrases, you will be guaranteed a warm, friendly welcome. It's also a great way of meeting new friends and it's a much better alternative to sitting in front of the T.V. all evening.

- 8.** A list of books to motivate you and bring positivity into your life. I've read all of the following and they have had an amazing impact on my life.
 - *"Awaken The Giant Within"* by Tony Robbins.
 - *"What Color Is Your Parachute"* by Richard Nelson Bolles.
 - *"Wishcraft"* by Barbara Sher.
 - *"Psycho-Cybernetics"* by Maxwell Maltz.
 - *"How To Stop Worrying And Live Your Life"* by Dale Carnegie.
 - *"The Consolations Of Philosophy"* by Alain De Botton.All available from www.amazon.com.

- 9.** Scoot off for a weekend somewhere for a bit of solitary peace. Take a notebook with you and jot down any new ideas for projects. Taking a solitary break is an excellent way to get away from the hustle and bustle of modern living so we can gather our thoughts together. I do this once or twice a year and it really helps me to make sense of things once I'm not "in the line of fire". I like to be near the sea when I go on a break like this, but you choose where you'll feel most comfortable. You could take one of the books listed above, too.

- 10.** Fancy a challenge? Why not enrol on a survival weekend? You can learn how to survive in various climates and challenging situations and when you've completed the course, you may want to organize a weekend break where you can put your skills to the test. Examples of courses currently available are basic & advanced outdoor survival, arctic survival, jungle survival, desert survival and special forces

survival techniques. The drawback is that you will need to have a good level of fitness as the courses are physically demanding, obviously. But what a way of finding out about yourself in a rough, harsh situation. Again, use Yellow Pages, the Internet, newspapers and specialist survival magazines to locate courses in your vicinity. A canny idea here would be to visit Amazon.com and search for outdoor survival books before booking a course.

- 11.** Do you want to make someone you love feel extra special? How about this for a great idea: hire a limousine for an evening. Book dinner at a nice restaurant, get dressed to the nines and don't let on that you've booked a limo. The surprise on your lover's face will be priceless! Most hired limos contain a bar and you can ask for a bottle of champagne to make it extra special. This is also a fantastic way to impress a new partner when going on your first "serious" date. There's one thing for sure – your new partner certainly won't forget the day they were chauffeur driven in a stretch limo thanks to you! It's great fun drinking champagne as you're being driven around town!

- 12.** Try as many different types of cuisine as you can. Italian, Chinese, Thai, Mexican, Tex-Mex, Cajun, Japanese, Korean, Turkish, Greek, Caribbean, Indian, French, British, Mongolian, Indonesian, Spanish – the list is endless. You could spend an entire year of Saturday night suppers trying something new. Watch your waist though! The idea here is to avoid the "it's Saturday so it's steak" situation. I know lots of people who eat particular meals on certain days. Steak on Saturday, pot-roast on Sunday, pork chop on Tuesday, Chinese take-out on Wednesday – this goes on week in, week out! Eating is one of the great pleasures in life. Why make it dull and predictable when there is so much variety available these days? Open yourself up to new experiences by trying a new dish from a different culture at least once a week and keep mealtimes interesting and enjoyable.

- 13.** Speaking of food, how about taking a cookery course? You can do a general course or specialise – Chinese, French, Indian or cake making and decorating, for example. Imagine how your friends and family will feel when you cook them a meal worthy of the finest restaurants?

- 14.** Culture your palate further and take a wine tasting course. "Yes, I detect overtones of the Mississippi and the ripeness of a hobo's sock in this feisty, full-bodied little red." Is that a perfect description of 90% of wines you get in bars or what?! I've attended a course on German wines where I met some great people, drank some fabulous wine, (hic!) and learned that there's a lot more to wine than I'd previously thought. Excellent. Unfortunately, I'm now undergoing

treatment for alcohol addiction...sorry, couldn't resist it! And I'm not, by the way!

- 15.** Do you fancy a change of image? Do you want to look great at all times? Then make an appointment to see an Image Consultant. These people are brilliant at matching your colors and styles and for around \$150 for a full day, it's well worth it. You'll find local consultants listed in Yellow Pages. I did this just after my relationship with my lover broke down. I wanted a change of image – a sort of new me if you will – and decided to visit an Image Consultant. What a transformation! I found that I'd been wearing all the wrong colors! When colors that were better for me were held against me, the difference was amazing. A very informative, fascinating day and just the ticket if you're looking to re-invent yourself.
- 16.** Treat yourself to a hot bath, and scent the room with candles and an oil burner. Have a glass of bubbly - or wine or beer or tea – add your favourite relaxing music and enjoy! If your bath is big enough, why not invite someone else? Resolve not to think about anything once you're soaking in the hot water. A music bath should be taken at least once a week. It's luxurious, it's cleansing, it's relaxing and it's darn good for your health. I cannot think of any bad points to this. Why not try it for yourself and see?
- 17.** Spend an entire week without television. Read, workout, study, create ideas for new projects, relax with music or visit family and friends and chat without the box being on in the background. Television is a thief of time and experience. And there's another problem with T.V. – it can dramatically affect our mood. We expose our minds to image manipulation via commercial advertizing, which can make us feel inadequate if we don't have certain possessions, and news bulletins, with their constant supply of crime, murder, disaster and tragedy can make us think that the world is a bad place. Try avoiding it for a week and see how much you miss it.
- 18.** Try an activity vacation. Go on safari, go skiing, golfing breaks, scuba diving, cookery weekends, abseiling, caving, music weekends, rambling, mountain biking – whatever you fancy! Details from travel agents, the Internet or holiday supplements in the weekend press. A good friend of mine owns a 750cc Suzuki motorcycle. His idea of a perfect weekend is to blast around racing circuits on said bike. If you have a passion for your hobby or pastime, why not indulge it to the max by combining it with a vacation?
- 19.** The Universe is infinite and fascinating. Find out for yourself by investing in a telescope and learning about Astronomy. Sky watching

is one of the most relaxing and amazing pastimes that there is. Joining an astronomy society would be a great introduction to the night-sky and you'll be meeting new people. A must read book to help you navigate around the heavens: *Nightwatch* by Terence Dickinson.

- 20.** This is the age of the Global Village. Interact with your fellow citizens by placing your profile on the Internet via MSN or Yahoo and chat live with the world! If you have a hobby, pastime, are looking for new friends, new lovers, new experiences and want to meet kindred spirits, you'll find them on the Internet no matter what your chosen subject is. If it's known to man, you'll find it online! The Internet is the finest resource we could ever wish for. Be a part of the world wide web and interact with your fellow citizens in cyber-space!

- 21.** Keep motivated by listening to at least one audio seminar a month. Contact Nightingale-Conant at www.nightingale-conant.com and ask to be placed on their catalogue mailing list. You can play the tapes in your car to and from work to make previously unproductive time productive. In particular, I recommend Tony Robbins and Brian Tracy. These are excellent for keeping your mind positive and focused, and will help to stop "weeds" growing in your mind.

- 22.** Schedule three 45-minute exercise sessions every week and vary your exercise to prevent boredom. Rowing, cross-trainers, bike, running, weights and circuit training should be mixed so that your mind and body don't get used to one particular form of exercise. Exercise is not only beneficial to our physical well-being, it also helps our mental health. When we perform vigorous exercise for at least 20 minutes, endorphins are released into the body by the brain. These endorphins are like "happy chemicals" and make us feel great. Win-win all around!

- 23.** Three tips to help maintain a youthful look:
 - Drink one litre of water every day. This will help your body to flush out harmful toxins.

 - Ditch caffeine and sugar, which can damage skin. Caffeine is a stimulant and can disrupt restful sleep and sugar, especially refined white sugar, has no nutritional value at all.

 - Avoid white bread. White bread is made with bleached flour. Would you take a daily sip from a bottle of bleach? Me neither. Eat wholemeal or wholegrain bread instead. White bread also causes the body to release more insulin into the bloodstream to combat the sugars in this highly refined carbohydrate. Wholemeal

and wholegrain bread are far less refined and result in far less insulin being released by our bodies.

- 24.** Give up dieting – it doesn't work – and adopt the 5 – 2 rule. For 5 days a week, eat fish, chicken, vegetables, fruit, fibre and drink juices and water. Omit fries, chips, red meat, junk food, dairy products, chocolate and alcohol. For two days, eat what you like, but in moderation. Combined with regular exercise, this is an effective way of controlling your weight. This is because we've now adopted an eating plan for life rather than chopping and changing between various diets.
- 25.** Try one of the following activities at least once a year:
- Visit a museum.
 - Watch a play.
 - Listen to live music.
 - Attend a motivational seminar.
 - Visit a fairground.
 - Visit a new country or city.
- 26.** Avoid getting into a rut. Change your job every three years. You'll face a fresh challenge and meet new people. What can happen when we stay in a job too long is we can start to feel stagnant. We feel as though we're not being challenged, and that the job is too easy. We're in a comfort zone. The problem is that as soon as we try and leave a comfort zone, our subconscious mind will fill us with fear. The fear stops us from moving on but the feelings of unfulfilment continue. Don't let fear stop you from growing. If you've experienced situations where you wish you'd have taken a chance but feel that fear held you back, then checkout my website at www.conqueringfear.net to discover how to handle fear so effectively, it becomes your greatest asset.
- 27.** Go for a ride in a hot air balloon. This is a great idea for a date with a new partner or a romantic surprise for your existing partner. A bottle of champagne adds a special touch to the occasion. And the views are breathtaking.
- 28.** Once a month, go for a swim, steam bath, Jacuzzi and sauna. You'll feel like a million dollars! Checkout your local gyms and health clubs. If you're lucky and live near a Turkish baths, make sure you use it!

Indulging in this type of activity is enormously beneficial for our health in a couple of ways. First, these activities are relaxing and the more we relax, the less stressed we are and the less stressed we are, the lower the chances of stress related illnesses such as heart attack, depression and anxiety. Secondly, they promote a feeling of well-being. We feel good about ourselves. They increase our confidence and our happiness.

29. Vary your eating habits. Breakfast, for example, tends to be eaten at the same time everyday and is of the same type. So make it different EVERYDAY. Here's how I do it:

- All fruit breakfast: Melon, banana, apple, berries.
- Tinned tomatoes on wholemeal toast. (Low fat and very healthy)
- High fibre cereal with banana and yoghurt.
- Bacon Sandwich. (Everyone's favourite?)
- Vegetarian: Cheese on toast, tomatoes, mushrooms and beans.
- English style: Eggs, bacon, sausage, tomato, mushrooms.
- American style: steak, fried eggs and hash browns.
- Croissants with spreads: chocolate, honey, jam.
- German style: black bread with cured meats and various cheeses.

I think that's enough for you to get the idea. I used to find breakfast one of the duller parts of the day until I varied it. Obviously, the above aren't carved in stone and I'm sure you'll think of your own choices.

30. Learn to play a musical instrument. One of the best stress busters, it also improves concentration. I've played the guitar for 20 years and I've yet to come across a better stress-buster. And the feeling you get when you master a piece is very satisfying. Visit a reputable music shop and ask if they can recommend a tutor for your chosen instrument.

31. Visit a major sporting event. There are hundreds of major sporting events around the world and seeing them is a tremendous experience. It's well worth the effort to see as many of them as you can. Here's some examples to get you started:

- Superbowl.

- The Indianapolis 500.
- A Formula 1 Grand Prix, especially The Monaco Grand Prix.
- A big race day, such as The Kentucky Derby, The Prix d' l' Arc de Triomphe, The Grand National etc.
- The Baseball World Series.
- The World Cup of soccer.
- A major athletics games such as the Olympics or World Championships.
- A major Golf tournament such as The US Masters, The British Open, The Ryder Cup etc.
- A motorcycle Grands Prix.
- A major tennis championship, especially Wimbledon, the most prestigious tennis championship in the world.

There are many others, but I think I've included enough there for you to get the idea. An extension of this is to support your local sporting events and visit as many different ones as possible.

32. Spend a night at the Opera or Ballet. The way to get the most out of this is to choose which performance you will attend and read-up on it beforehand. They can be very emotional experiences and the music is breathtaking. Stick to the popular ones and you won't go wrong. This is another good idea to surprise your lover. Add dinner to the experience, and maybe book a room in a good hotel if funds allow, and you have a very special evening on your hands. Well, it sure makes a change from a movie and a pizza doesn't it?!!

33. How about this for an unusual way of varying things: For one week, try and do as many things as you can think of with your weakest hand. Here's some ideas:

- Brushing your teeth.
- Drinking.
- Use your knife and fork the opposite way to normal.
- Eating with a spoon.
- Writing – VERY difficult!
- If you're brave – shaving!

- Painting.
- Playing games such as pool, golf, baseball, tennis etc.

Why do this? Well, it's a way of changing things and it can be fun. Also, if you master skills with your weakest hand you'll have doubled your effectiveness.

- 34.** On the spur of the moment, pack a small travel bag and drive off somewhere, or, better still, drive to the airport, find a deal and jet off somewhere. This adds a bit of spontaneity to our lives. And why not? An adventure doesn't have to be planned in minute detail for it to be a rewarding experience. Just take off somewhere and let events unfold as you go. The unexpected can bring the best out of us and bring tremendous excitement too. Just do it!
- 35.** How to spend a rainy Sunday: Watch a really good black and white film and cook a roast dinner with all the trimmings. Falling asleep on the couch afterwards is mandatory! I do this once a year as an indulgent treat. Try not to make it a habit! This is great if you can cuddle up with your partner and get to improve your relationship in the ways well known to lovers over the centuries, if you know what I mean!
- 36.** Resolve to study a subject or craft that has always interested you. Check out what courses are on offer at your local learning centres, colleges, schools and universities. Don't forget the Internet, too. Again, it'll get you away from that box of garbage called a T.V., you'll meet people, you'll improve your mind and you'll grow. When we grow, we get more fulfilment from life. The more fulfilled we feel, the more happy we feel. All it takes is for you is to go out there and do it!
- 37.** Do something that you've always considered, shall we say, decadent? A tattoo, ear-piercing, other body piercing, different hair-style, louder colours and a bolder dress-sense. None of these have to be permanent these days, and at least you'll have tried it!
- 38.** You are no doubt aware that the biggest killer of the 21st Century is going to be stress. In the modern world, we work longer and harder than ever in high-pressure environments. Family life is much more stressful, too. Raising children, maintaining a loving relationship, attending to our families needs and of course, not forgetting the pressure of managing the household budget. No wonder we're so stressed! It is vital that we keep stress at bay. To do this, we must master the skill of switching off, regularly. So, for at least 3 times a week, make time to relax. 30 minutes is enough. During this period,

you must switch off completely. Lie down, or sit in a comfortable position and let your whole body go limp. Start from the feet and work upwards. Feel each individual muscle relax. Let everything go. Empty your mind completely. Concentrate on breathing. I use the "*triangle breathing*" method. This is where you breathe in for 15-20 seconds, hold it in for 15-20 seconds, then breathe out, slowly for 15-20 seconds, then repeat. Incidentally, these techniques are also excellent for helping you get to sleep. They work for me, anyway. Other good ideas to bring more stress-busting relaxation into your life would be aromatherapy, yoga, thai-chi and reiki. Master the skill of relaxation and you will reap big benefits. And if you want to eliminate stress, or stressful illnesses such as anxiety or depression, from your life then checkout my website at: www.conqueringstress.com

- 39.** Create your own time capsule. In it, place a copy of your life story, making sure you fully describe all the good parts and minimize the bad parts. Include pictures of yourself, your family, your friends and any pets you've owned. You could also put in a couple of items you value: an old watch, a favourite old toy, a piece of jewellery, a favourite book, a diary, pictures of your favourite film or sports stars, whatever you feel will give your personal story. Mine contains a pair of my baby shoes as well as the congratulatory cards sent to my parents when I was born! A copy of any videos – either films or tapes you've made yourself – would also be good. Once you've made your capsule, seal it and choose a good place to bury it. You never know, archaeologists in the 25th century may find your capsule and discover valuable information on what life was like in the 21st century!
- 40.** Bring out the cowboy/cowgirl inside you and take part in a cattle drive, a horse drive or a round up. It's a life without frills so be prepared to live rough for a couple of weeks. But what an unforgettable adventure. To see what's on offer, go to Google and type in "Cattle Drive". There's plenty of sites to choose from with varying budgets.
- 41.** One day, you could be caught up in an emergency situation. Be prepared by learning first aid. You never know, you could save someone's life! Also, we all have little accidents around the home, and with first aid skills, you'll be the one to ease the pain! Another bonus: One company I worked for nominated me as a duty first aider and paid me an extra \$30 a month. First aid courses are held regularly all over the country. Use the local press and the Internet to find courses near you.
- 42.** Find a long lost friend or relative. A very good friend of mine recently met up with a good friend who he'd lost touch with and hadn't seen

or heard from in 20 years! They served together in the Navy and were able to find each other again by using the Internet. To say they were overjoyed to see each other again would be an understatement. There's lots of sites on the Internet to help you with this, but a great start would be www.reunion.com and www.friendsreunited.com. Type in "find old friends" into Google and you'll get lots more.

- 43.** Following on from the above, why not discover your roots and trace your family tree? Your local library will prove invaluable with this, as will the Internet – again! Type in "trace my family tree" to any search engine and start your research. Can you see just how amazingly powerful the Internet is and how it can work for you?
- 44.** It's funny but very few people travel around their own country. So here's a great idea for you: make it a "must do" to visit every state, region or county in your country.
- 45.** Learn how to mix cocktails and throw a cocktail party for your family and friends. It's also a good way to impress a new lover. Invite them round, make a selection of hors d'oeuvre, add some classical music and soft lighting and share a very stylish – and romantic - evening.
- 46.** Do you have an urge to tread the boards or be in a film? Why not join your local amateur dramatics society or become a film extra? Again, you'll meet new people, develop new skills, increase your confidence and enjoy some fantastic experiences. Beats staying in watching TV doesn't it?
- 47.** Some more great ideas to entertain people: learn magic tricks, card tricks or coin tricks. Good for parties and a great way to break the ice on first dates. People love things like this as they're fascinating, and it's also rewarding for the performer. It's a lot of fun too! Just go to www.amazon.com and search for "magic tricks", "card tricks" and "coin tricks".
- 48.** Make a pilgrimage to a place connected with one of your main interests. For example, music lovers could go to Memphis and visit Graceland, or travel route 60 through the land that gave birth to the blues. If you're religious, you could visit Rome or the Holy Land. If you have an interest in history, you could visit battlefields or go to a museum. If you want to have time to reflect about the mysteries of life you could go on a peaceful retreat. Other suggestions: Observatories, shuttle launch, The Whitehouse, datelines, the equator, the place or country of your family's origins, castles, nature reserves, national parks – I think you get the idea.

- 49.** Here's something I love to do for birthday celebrations which adds a nice creative twist to these occasions – themed gifts. I think of as many interests as I can about the person who's celebrating and generate a theme. Here's a couple of examples: When my friend Rachel celebrated her 27th birthday, "7" was chosen as the theme. Me and some other friends gave her gifts connected with the seven deadly sins and relating to her interests. Another friend had a thing for firemen, and the gifts included a toy fire engine, a hose-pipe, a bell and a calendar with pictures of semi-naked firemen. Guess which one she liked the best? They got their revenge though, the theme they picked for my 35th birthday was "child". I got a balloon delivered with the words "Chris is 5 Today", a clockwork mouse, a bag of sweets, a plastic beaker with my name on, a rubber spider and a badge saying "I'M A BIG 5" which I had to wear to the restaurant where we went for my party! Do you see how this works? You can have a lot of fun with this, and it helps to make the day more memorable for the birthday person.
- 50.** Try something outside your experience. What I mean by this is for you to confront something you find uncomfortable or even fearful. For me, leaving home to work in a place I'd never been to before was a bit of a challenge to say the least. But it changed my life for the better – dramatically so. Another fear of mine concerned the dentist. I was absolutely terrified of them. But when my wisdom teeth gave me merry hell for a week, I knew I had to go. I shook like a leaf and gagged throughout. Now, I go every 6 months without fail and am at ease. And my teeth are better. Not going for so long caused me to have 5 extractions. In giving in to fear, we do ourselves great harm. Please don't give in to it and let it rob you of happiness. Here's a list of one or two situations many people find terrifying. If any of these apply to you, I urge you strongly to confront them and defeat them. You will feel an enormous sense of achievement and satisfaction when you do.
- Flying. Recent events have left many people with a fear of flying, and many people have always been afraid of flying. Major airlines now offer courses for people who are afraid of flying and are worth taking if this applies to you. Travelling by rail and by road is FAR more dangerous than flying yet the same people won't even bat an eye-lid about travelling in these ways. It's all about how we perceive risk. Don't let an irrational perception of risk concerning flying deprive you of one of the best experiences there is. And as for the terrorists making you afraid to fly – why let them win? I'd rather die living my life my way than live in fear because of the threat of terrorism. If they stop us from enjoying our freedoms, they've achieved their goal. Please don't let them.
 - Swimming. I know a lot of adults who are terrified of water because they cannot swim. If you've yet to learn how to swim, it doesn't

mean you never will. There are many swimming classes for adults throughout the nation, and once you've learned, water will hold no terror for you. Great for improving confidence.

- Beliefs. Our beliefs in religion, spirituality, and morality can be one dimensional. We can take on a "tablets of stone" mentality by accepting whatever system has been taught to us during our formative years. It is very uncomfortable to have our beliefs challenged, but it can also be very enlightening. Take yourself outside of your experience by suspending your own beliefs and opening yourself up to differing views. For instance, I was raised in a strict Roman Catholic household. As I reached maturity, I began to feel very uncomfortable with some of the accepted theology. I began to look at other belief systems. I read about other religions, such as Judaism, Islam, Bhuddism and developed a big interest in philosophy. Not only did I look at other beliefs in God, I also looked at theories dealing with the non-existence of God. In doing this, I found my own way and formed an entirely different set of beliefs. Deeply rooted prejudices I'd held changed completely and I found out more about myself. All I can say is that when you open yourself to new theories, something inside you resonates when you find something you know to be right for you. It also develops understanding for others' beliefs, too. No bad thing, that.
- Human beings are born with 2 "hard-wired" fears. One is the fear of loud noise, the other is the fear of falling. This was demonstrated in clinical trials in Russia. A floor was covered with black and white tiles. In the centre, a recess of two feet was made, again in black and white tiles, and covered with perspex so that there was no chance of the babies falling into it. 20 babies were placed in the room and allowed to crawl around it freely. Every single baby who approached the center would stop, and feel the perspex glass over the recess. Despite being able to feel the perspex, NOT ONE baby would crawl over the recess. Isn't that an amazing experiment? Now, I have to come clean. I'm terrified of heights. I don't have a problem with flying, but ask me to climb up ladders and my legs turn to jelly. To conquer my fear of heights, I'm booking myself on an abseiling course. I have to conquer this fear because there is bridge I want to walk to the very top of to get the most amazing view. I know if I don't conquer my fear of heights, I'm going to miss out. Abseiling is, so I've been told by those who've done it, an excellent way to overcome the fear of heights. But I'm real scared about it. Just like I was when I visited the dentist when my teeth gave me no other option.
- Another idea to get outside your experience is to vary the way you celebrate annual holidays. For example, I always celebrated Christmas in the traditional way with my family at home on Christmas Day with presents and a roast turkey lunch. We

celebrated this way EVERY YEAR until I was 32. Then, we decided to celebrate with our neighbours who had booked Christmas lunch in a swanky hotel. We had a brilliant time, and my father, who unknowingly at the time was celebrating his last Christmas, said that we should've done this much more and that we would in future. Alas, it wasn't to be. Another magical Christmas came when I celebrated Christmas in the Polish manner. The Poles celebrate Christmas with a huge feast on Christmas Eve followed by the exchanging of gifts – to the children first – much singing, dancing and copious amounts of good quality vodka. I really liked bison vodka – called "Zubrowka" – but boy does it have a kick! One of the women dressed as an angel and the look on the children's faces when she appeared with gifts for them was absolutely magical. The feast contained lots of traditional Polish dishes – 6 full salmon, borscht, kapusniak, golabki, varschneki, pierogi (not sure about the spellings I'm afraid), and added to the experience. Other ideas would be to celebrate Christmas in the style of other cultures – South American, German, French, etc., travel to other countries – having a picnic on a beach in a hot climate, visit a snowy ski resort, or celebrate Christmas on a cruise ship or on a train travelling through beautiful scenery – are some more of my favourite ideas. Again, the goal is to get out of your usual experience. It's well worth the effort I can assure you. You'll find lots of ideas in holiday magazines and supplements in the press as well as your travel agent and not forgetting, the Internet!

For more information about dealing with and overcoming fear, please visit my website at: www.conqueringfear.net

And there you are! Fifty great ideas to help bring greater variety and experience into your life. Please give them a try and have fun!

"Good life, and not life, is the only life worth treasuring." - Socrates

My very best wishes to you.

Chris Green.

The End