



Your Guiding Light

the friend who helps with life's decisions

Everyone needs someone to turn to when there are difficult decisions to make, particularly if life seems to have dealt a cruel hand. I'm not talking about financial advice, or those choice selectors which list the best buys in property, cars, health insurance, etcetera. This is more personal: the times that would be made so much easier by hearing a few words of wisdom from someone close who knows us and would never steer us in the wrong direction.

Unfortunately, the ideal person may not always be there; perhaps they never will be again because they have already passed away. A sad loss such as this can impact severely on the young when they have relied heavily on a friend or relation who could always come up with the best way to resolve problems, especially those of the heart. The main thing to remember is that the memories of them are still there. They hold the essence of bygone times which were special and comforting; and recalling them is the link to your guiding light. They are there somewhere, at least the memory of their understanding and compassion. You trusted them once and accepted that they could see faults that you might not even have admitted to yourself. And they gave you advice that helped you through the hard times.

Sometimes, a person you regard as a mentor may still be alive and just a phone call away, which is good. Yet, even if they cannot be contacted, the wisdom they have already imparted can be recalled in an instant. You have a decision to make, an important one which needs to be right. Okay, what would your mentor have told you – what *did* they tell you when a similar situation occurred before? They would most likely give the same advice right now if they were there with you. As for those actions you are about to take, imagine your guiding light standing behind, looking over your shoulder. Would they approve of what you are about to do? If not, you would be untrue to their friendship by going against what you know would be their wishes.

There are those who are unfortunate enough never to have been blessed with a confidante. Role models can be a fair substitute. Sports and movie stars or heroes are often used as a template for the best way to dress and behave. Some, like Yoda in Star Wars, give advice to developing characters; but did Yoda ever insist on blind obedience? He offered his opinion, then left it up to Luke Skywalker in particular to take the path he believed was appropriate. When he made a mistake because his way wasn't the right way, the words of Yoda were there in his head; not criticising, but reminding Luke to take better notice in future.

With comments like that, you may be wondering if I'm living in a fantasy world. Perhaps I am, but this philosophy works for me. I do rely on people from my past as mentors, and my faith in them is generally rewarded; however, my never-fail mentor is more imaginary than a tangible reality. It is belief in something else, an abstract concept I suppose. Whatever, my guiding light watches over me and my family to help with decision-making. About to select a course of action, I consider my relevant knowledge on the subject, then determine to do the best I can to make my choice the right one. Should an obstacle appear that stops me in my tracks, my invisible mentor is trying to tell me something. So I look for a better way and redouble my efforts, still with the same idea in mind. When the second attempt falters, this is a sign that, although I may not be going in the right direction, I shouldn't give up just yet. A third barrier is the final one. It is time to look at the alternative options which might achieve my original goal by taking a different pathway altogether; or abandon the idea entirely and move on to something else. Eventually, I discover what my guiding light wishes of me.

I ask nothing of it, only that it stays to help and protect me and mine. I don't question why anything happens, good or bad, because for some reason it is meant to be. I know now that something other than my parents must have been caring for me from the time I was born; and I never doubt that it will continue to influence my life. Because of this, I try to contribute to, and live life adhering to those values and standards which the world holds dear.

You do have your own guiding light which will walk with you. All you have to do is respect that it knows better than you. Don't expect a free ride, certainly not a Lottery win. This is about faith in yourself and your ability to be the best you can be in every situation. As long as you pay heed to your guiding light, you will always have a special friend who will help you to be a good person.

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