



A Highly Sensitive Person working on her Life Goals

10 lifecoaching sessions

Chungmei Cheng

Hello dear reader,

I'm glad you are here to read about what life coaching can do for you. This document contains the writings of a woman in her thirties who has been coached by me. We agreed on 10 lifecoaching sessions. The sessions took place via Skype over a period of four months.

'Yes, during the last months, I found a job, I found a really nice flat mate, additionally, a good friend is now staying with me for a month and we both understand well, I found so many nice new friends, and perhaps there is even someone to share my life with soon. But it will take time to feel the real enjoyment about it.'

The above was her conclusion after 10 sessions. I hope her life story sparks a fire within you. Perhaps even show you a direction in life.

If you are interested in an introduction session, mail me with your coaching question, name and contact details: orchidoflife@gmail.com

Kind regards,
Chungmei Cheng

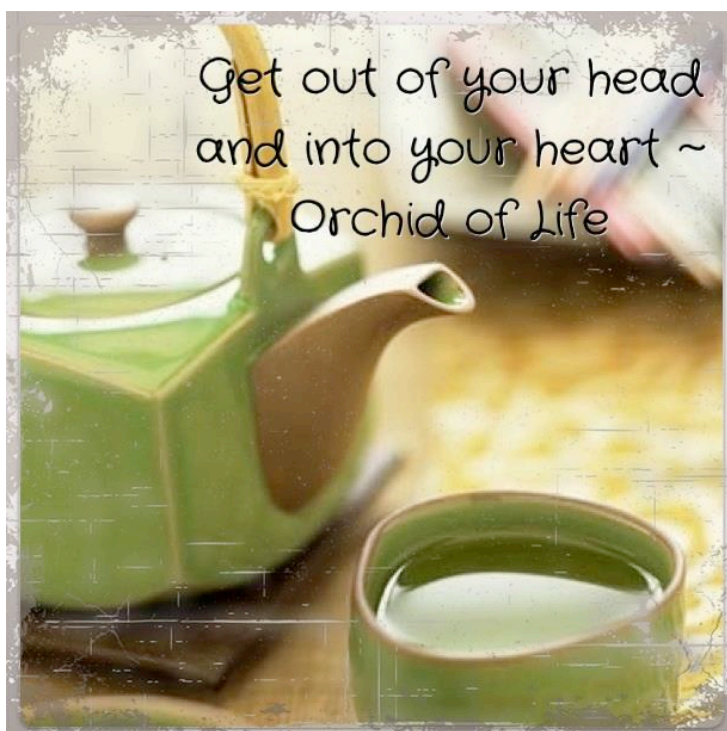
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Session 1: If you repeat an action it becomes true and manifest

When I met Chungmei again for my first session, we hadn't seen for years. One wonderful day I added her on Facebook and we got in touch again. The timing was a total coincidence, but it was about the right moment. Between us, there was a distance of 1000 kilometers, which we covered easily via Skype. When I started to talk to her I quickly got caught by her positive energy and her very open attitude towards life and the experiences of people.

To me, that felt like a memory of a long gone time. The negative thoughts were never that strong in me as now, as many annoying things had happened in my life. I think everyone feels down at one time or the other. But what if you feel that much down that you slowly start to forget about the positives, and how it feels to feel positively... I feel completely out of control to successfully organize my future, be it in job, career or partnership. That is the situation in which Chungmei has offered her help to me.

I am curious to see what she would do. I know she has a different approach towards helping people. A very positive one. One of the things she mentions very quickly during the talk is the spiral of negative emotions. "If you repeat an action it becomes true or manifest", she says. And yes, I am aware how often I came back to the same negative thoughts, not helping me to change even a bit of my situation but finally just ending up in complaining about the conditions I am in. My coach listens to me a lot and gives suggestions what to do. I am kind of empty inside, so there should be a huge amount of space to be filled up. What really annoys me is a good question as it can help me to focus on the real cause to get over. Chungmei suggests that I should emphasize my positive qualities and skills. I even get homework for doing this! So I am writing down what comes into my mind, all the qualities I can think of! Slowly the paper is filling... I note down my values... fairness, tolerance, harmony... and surely I will forget some of them, or I won't realize that some values and features of me are a good quality, which can be very helpful in my personal or professional life. If I see them clearly they might become even truer. However, I have the strong impression that other people don't see or realize it. Perhaps Chungmei might give me some idea in what way I can make them clearer to other people. And how better to use them in my life for myself, focusing on it and making me overcome all the hindrances I am facing now...

Session 2: I managed to say at least once 'NO!!!'

Me, the utmost loser.

This time, I know for sure that my coach will call me nothing but a “LOSER”!! Why all that... I was so much sure in the last session that I am a loser in life. No partner, no job, no future prospects, no family, but in a perfect late age to settle. Feeling betrayed for four years of life – just because a problematic highly complicated boyfriend cheated on me. He pretended long enough to be serious about the relationship. Well, to see, how all your friends seem to be happy with long-term partners, getting children, following a career... and you seem to be the only one who is left, who cannot even manage to start a new phase in life, of founding a family, of simply finding the right guy for it – this is hard. So I basically felt like a lost person in this world.

But being called a “loser” by someone else, not myself...? That seems so strange!! Chungmei’s warning was of course not meant that seriously. I just happened to have been so busy during the week before the session that my homework, an Internet research about intercultural training agencies, suffered totally. However, those who did not suffer were my friends... I had always time for them. Now, the problem with living in Berlin is, you can practically socialize 24 hours a day. There are so many interesting people and friends out on the street, and even if they are not, there are still your friends on Skype and Facebook, covering the whole planet from India to Montreal.

With this whole-day-socializing-Me, she was right to say “stop” directly into my face. Yes, I do a lot for my friends – but what do I do for myself, she asked. And my coach mentioned that I am too much ready to accept asymmetries in social relations in the sense of giving much more than others do, up to 200 % and even more. That made me feel like a tissue – cheap to get but of superb value!

Unfortunately, this combination of nice & helpful is truly dangerous because it can be exploited too easily. Therefore, she told me clearly that my next task would be – to take care of myself and practicing saying NO.... Means NO to friends when I don’t feel like going out; NO to people appreciating my services too much. How did I perform then? I managed to say at least once “NO!!!” to a friend who wanted to convince me to go out for dinner, in his area of course, which meant a lot of time to travel for me. But I didn’t manage to say “NO!!” to another friend whose nerve got stuck in his back, and barely being able to move, he called me for a helping hand. That’s why I again write my blog reflection in the last moment, deep in the night, like I write most of my applications. At least I am perfect in working up to the deadline!! My life seems so exciting. Like a soap opera, it contains new episodes full of surprising coincidences each week. Only, that besides this episodic stuff rather few things work out for me with a long-term prospect. Luckily, my coach brings up this painful subject again and again. So no chance to escape but just to work on it. Let’s see how my efforts of NO-ing will work out in the future...

After the session I felt left behind with some serious tasks forcing me to take care just of my own life. I sensed again motivation inside myself. But before anything else, for a while I just sat and enjoyed the warm sunny day. I thought back of the many smiles I exchanged during the coaching session with my so much positive opposite. Chungmei always has one special sentence for me, and hopefully it might even anchor in my mind: "That what you do, Antje – you do it for yourself!!"

Session 3: Drawing a line and taking care of myself

What happens if an emotional bomb bursts? How deep will the breaks in the wall be? How much dust will cover the ground? Which colour will it have? Emotional bombs burst and often don't even leave a trace. However, the explosion makes people run for cover.

A cloudy colour of dust is still extending to the last corners of my mind. Some days before, I was shocked to hear from an old friend that my former boyfriend who planned with me to settle for good actually never really had this intention – to settle... Means he didn't mind to cheat on me for almost three years. After hearing this, that all drama from him was just set up as a kind of performance to make me blame myself, my mind became numb and even cloudier. Only few people will be able to break through. Is Chungmei among them? I wish but still I have doubts. But well, let's try session number 3...

My coach brought up an interesting reason for my recent difficulties: She said I like guys with problems... I didn't need to think long to admit that she is right. Until now, I managed to attract all kind of complicated guys. I tried to imagine myself as a collecting pond for all the hopeless cases on this world. Guys spitting on me giving me a costly ride on an emotional roller coaster. Don't take this!, I have to listen from my coach. Spit on those guys, get rid of those Indian guys, and learn to draw a line, dear!! A stream of confidence flooded my numbness when I heard all this... Dear, you are a beautiful woman with writing skills! Wow, rarely anyone had ever said this to me before... the stream of positive thoughts increased... just since recently foreign guys call me hot chick... German guys never expressed this, and with them, you don't really feel as a woman...

Should I really follow Chungmei's suggestion of perhaps writing for an international magazine about my broad intercultural observations? And use the frequent explosion of my emotions to sharpen my focus and build an own base? I will think about it. But first, something very simple I have to practice: Drawing a line and taking care of myself.

To realize this part of my homework, I soon got a chance. Cause there was Adi. Problematic Indian Adi. He claimed to be my friend since one month. I came to him whenever he said he needed me because he felt bad. I had a soft corner for him and felt that someone needed me. It was a good feeling. Once, I was ill. Adi came to share – actually my cold! What a nice gesture. Except that we had been nothing but friends and he really didn't need to take the pain of making himself to get a resistant

cough. But finally, he succeeded and got ill, too. That very night after the coaching session, he told how horrible he would feel. And implied several times indirectly that none of his few Berlin friends would have time to take care of him. That's why he expected now me to join him. But it was already late evening, and I really didn't feel like joining him. I knew him and I didn't want to have another sleepless night, still being ill myself. The words of Chungmei freshly anchored in my mind, I rejected his phone call at 1.18am and dared to say "No, Adi, I need to do something for myself now." Well, immediately afterwards, he broke the friendship, called me an egoist and a racist. Just because I didn't want to come "to share his cold". I was shocked by his sudden emotional overreaction. But it was better that way. Now I didn't only feel free, I had found more time for myself and the feeling that I got some of the messages Chungmei had in mind for me...!

Session 4: I knew I had a problem with anger...

Sometimes the experiences of childhood do have a quite lasting impact on your life. You don't realize this as long as everything goes smoothly. But if things continuously go wrong, you suddenly become aware of it...

Never any of the sessions with Chungmei had tired me mentally like this single one hour. I felt like taking a nap immediately or at least stop my circulating thoughts by watching some nonsense serial like Gossip Girl. Well... how did we end up there? Chungmei usually is not a coach putting you down...

This time, we did something different, compared to the three sessions before. She sensed that something was wrong with me, something really really deep inside. Behind my desperately sounding wish of finding a guy to settle for good, behind my feelings of crying, my stubborn wish for revenge with regard to my former boyfriend in India who is going to marry soon... some common thing was underlying all that. Something with a taste of danger, ready to be released at any moment: ANGER. This emotion of anger resulted to be abnormally strong, as it had grown inside me for decades.

Right in those moments, I felt a pain in my chest. Additionally, I felt this so familiar suffocating pressure in my belly. What to do if you are caught in this emotional prison of your own body? I felt like crying. I always do when I feel likewise, as this is the way to release my emotions, and it is less strenuous to excrete sadness than anger. Only this time, my coach was the one who pushed me to do that! First step... locating your emotions. Oh my god, this compression of my belly, this pinching...no wonder I have a bad digestion in times of trouble!

I put the anger into my brain. I tried to imagine it. It took the shape of a huge solid rock just above me. I felt like standing close to a wall of the Grand Canyon although I had never gone there in real life... Nothing helped me to penetrate the rock. I climbed up a ladder and touched the brownish stone... just it didn't open up to me like the rock cave opened in Ali Baba and the 40 thieves.

Second step... breathing... to relax the anger... to calm down... Opened my eyes. Felt tired. Really strenuous session... How I do hate emotional management because it eats up the whole energy of your body!! A meditation anger session – how can meditation be so fatiguing?

My coach was now strongly interested in finding out the root of my anger. Root of anger? Well...I knew I had a problem with anger, but I never went to its base... But to find my own base anew, I agreed to go very far back, to find the experiences and emotions, which never were worked about. So much quickly we ended up in – childhood. I talked what I felt and saw that time... I talked about how other pupils always tried to annoy me in school for my good grades and because I didn't present any resistance to their activities...I was bullied, oh my god. It seems like a sticking pain in my life...

This time, after this session, I needed a time out... so much hard work to undergo all those memories and physical pains. Next session we will work on that, my coach promised me. I know, again I might feel this pain and desperation, but I have to face it. Looking forward to it, Chungmei...

Session 5: Ok, let's face it; let's face the anger

I knew that this session might turn out to be pure stress. My coach wanted to locate together with me my anger – a search why this emotion is so strong within my person. Like crying, feeling anger can make you feel totally exhausted... Actually, this is not bad! Because if you find yourself in a restless position, with anger, the body allows you to tire you out completely. Which means your soul and worries can finally find rest in total exhaustion...

Ok, let's face it. Let's face the anger – again! Chungmei is with me, I don't have to undergo it alone! I feel confident, as this can never be worse than what I already went through in the past. Closing my eyes, I thought about a social circle around me, and where to see my parents in it... they were standing to my right side, a bit away from me to my back... and there was someone else standing behind me, in a growing distance... my former long-term boyfriend.

And there was the anger. I felt it in my belly, accumulated anger since childhood. I was furious on all three of them. But the anger didn't feel so strong this time as my mood was quite good today...this helped me to focus on my task to come. My coach asked me where to re-position those three persons. I wanted to ban my former boyfriend from the circle naturally, as he doesn't belong to my life anymore like I don't belong to his. But my parents I wished so much closer to me, standing to my left and my right, arms linked with each other! I just imagined it, but I know, in reality, there would be so many hurdles to overcome the distance between us...

In this session, there was a lot of analysis. A lot about sitting with eyes closed, thinking, rethinking, imagining, reimagining... Feeling relaxed, just playing with the thoughts... focused on the future created from the positions of the past. Queen and

king moving forward, while some Indian pawn is thrown out of the game... In chess, I felt most close to the horse... with its unusual weird movement, two fields to the front, one to the side, weird just like me! An asymmetry, which always had fascinated me most in this game of pure strategy. It is the horse, which creates great chances for traps, to make the opponent finally fall. But shall I be such a great human manipulator like my former boyfriend was? Chungmei reminded me that the positive thing about this is, to keep a distance between the emotions of other people and your own. This makes judgment easier as you are less involved emotionally. But do I want to be like that? Perhaps part of it is worth considering...

In chess, there is no mercy. But in life, there is. Waiting to surface if given the opportunity.

Session 6: I am always searching the understanding of others

A kind of mirror

The good thing about mirrors is that they reflect your outer appearance directly when you have a look into them. It shows if your today's hair is in an anarchic or orderly mood, if the skirt fits you or not. But the bad thing about mirrors is that they unlike in the fairy tale Snow White don't take any responsibility to reflect your personality. Otherwise, we could be so clear about ourselves! And check daily how high the levels of joy or anger are, if thoughts are pure or not... But if there is no mirror, how can we perceive the reflections about ourselves, to gain clarity about who we actually are.

What helps is the fact that we are mere mirrors of others. How well did I start to understand other people by accepting that their complains about me being selfish, merciless, not cooperative, not understanding were a simple description of themselves and what their personalities subconsciously lacked. For example, if they showed jealousy towards my friends, and me it nothing but reflected their deep fears to lose in me their best friend or life partner.

Now this made me think after the last talk with my coach – do I do the same? Do I search in other people for reflections of myself?

It is the understanding. The quest for understanding, isn't it? Chungmei recently pointed out so clearly that obviously I am always searching the understanding of others. My expectation usually is to find understanding for my problems, character, and peculiarities in others. There are so many people in my life from whom I don't feel understood. My parents. My brother. My former boyfriend. A close friend of me who cannot deal with my occasional volcanic eruptions of sadness and tears. A potential life partner who misunderstood my leg-pulling efforts meeting his friends and felt hurt in his ego...

I could tell of countless experiences. But I guess the point I want to make has become clear – it is all about “misunderstandings”, a common word in my everyday life. And didn't I feel so often hurt because I had the impression that someone didn't

fulfill my expectations, didn't understand me like I wanted him to do?

My coach insists again and again that I should first understand myself better instead of looking for the understanding of others. I need to take time, to digest the mountain of emotions accumulated in the past, to pick up all the energies. I shall focus on who I am, how I WANT to feel. And I should get rid of my childhood family shit. And only then everything else will come, like love, life-partner, an appropriate job where I might feel well with...

Understanding oneself starts in having clarity about oneself. One step is knowing your personal goals. So I will right now sit down and think about them until the next session starts.

Session 7: Positive reformulation creates a change mentally

To what extent can we determine our life? It is this question my coach tried to explore in the last session. Sometimes you really need one person outside who points out the thinking patterns with which you are nothing but block yourself, your creativity, and finally your life. It successfully restricts you from achieving happiness...!

In my case, it was the incredible negativity of thinking and talking I had inherited from my mother. She complained about everything around, trees cut in the park, the cheap uncreative birthday presents of friends, or on a returning base about the choice of my boyfriends and friends what bad intentions they might have. Now, my coach is busy making me understand that perception of negative news change if just put in different words. Positive reformulation creates a change mentally, to discover a solution to a situation, or even to discover a possibility to become active – to CHANGE the situation! Well, this is what my parents never told me. They were so much involved into complaining that there was no time to search actively for a solution to a problem.

Chungmei chose to do the circle exercise (social panorama) with me. My anger and me again in the center. And how to transform this anger into a productive, not a destructive force, making me change the conditions of my life. I am always a bit afraid of this exercise because it demands that I get back to the past, think about the relations important actors on my stage of life had to each other.

She asked me to position my father in the circle, then my teacher, then my classmates. Where are they looking? I told her that the latter were looking at me from the front, the teacher just looking at them, having no eyes for me. He doesn't SEE me!!! My father is somewhere standing to my back, not being interested in me, his eyes turned towards the outside of the circle, bored, instead towards me. This is the situation being... And it sucked. Anger rose in me.

She asked me now to think about how I can change this. Oh no... thinking about changing a situation!! This idea caused an unpleasant feeling inside me. But what

other choice did I have? So I went for it. And just started to visualize a bit that my father would be at my side, protecting me from all the bothering of my fellow classmates. The teacher closer to me, recognizing my hurt feelings and me and scolding the pupils that they shouldn't annoy me that much. And finally, the pupils stopping to josh me due to the strong positions of my class teacher and my father. Developing respect towards me....

Session 8: Nothing is moving forward, change is so difficult

Nothing is moving forward, change is so difficult! Those thoughts seemed to be so deeply engraved into my mind when I talked to the last time to my coach that I found myself completely hopeless and felt a moment of regret for her.

We didn't talk for long. The summer she did what she had previously recommended to me – focusing on herself. While I did, what I shouldn't do – focusing on anyone but me. Trying to repair broken friendships, trying to forget guys whom I liked or even loved but who were not interested to be a friend or partner to me, trying to cope with the ego issues of some chauvinistic men. Not being able to work because this all disturbed me mentally so much. But did really “nothing” happen?

Well, if you just see the routine of your daily life you neglect your own moments of success, as rare as they might be. I got a job contract though it is only for some month, with really nice colleagues. I managed to solve the issue with my parents, another topic I was talking about with Chungmei for long. I found myself a fantastic socializing person even among Germans during the marriage of my brother, which was another very happy and pleasing event. I distanced myself not from all the complicated friends I know but from those ones who had not been good for my personal well-being. And I got to know so many people during the past days, good people, not the ones who pretend to be good and just turn out to be “friends of need” who throw you away in the end when they got what they wanted.

One thing indeed is different. I might not feel totally happy, but I do feel more stabile inside. A very small center of balanced gravity found its way alive. What will finally come out of it, I don't know, but I do not care much about this currently, as it “just feels good”. I learned a lot about myself, about my special way to be, as a member of the human minority population, which is hypersensitive. I spent hours to convince ignorant friends that hypersensitivity (hsp) indeed exists and that people with this phenomenon face so much different personal challenges in life than others.

Finding a center of gravity inside oneself is really a pleasure because it gives way to develop inner strength. I am looking forward to taste more of it...

Session 9: Can I determine my own life?

Who is in charge??!!

Can I determine my own life? Or am I just a kind of victim of the circumstances? Western liberal thoughts tell us that we are responsible for our fate and life ourselves. But what is in our hands and not? Sometimes it depends on our frame of mind how it reveals itself to us.

In our last session, after a break of some months, for the final time, my coach tried to set my frame of mind into a different direction than the usual one! So again I had a chance to create the mental map of life, visualizing the actors and situations...

Chungmei asked what would preoccupy me still now, after this long summer break. Well, people can last quite long in your memory, not ready to leave the space they occupy... My bosses... my former boyfriend... some other friends with whom I had some small problems over the summer...

Most of the hour I spent with eyes closed. Not like the other times when I saw into the eyes of Chungmei. This time, I had to focus – who was in which distance towards me positioned in which direction? And how did I want to change this? Where did I imagine those people?!

I had done this practice before. It took some courage to go into it. But this time, I managed very confident, and very quickly. “It is my boss who is out of the circle!” I said, my former boyfriend banned too! Never ever I wanted to see or hear or feel them again. They were out of my imaginary circle!

But two other people were not out – my parents! I just thought of them so much, I wished they would be so close to me! I imagined them there, besides me, knowing that the only way to achieve this in reality would be to compromise so much. As they were just themselves. No one was about to council or coach them. They had their own rhythm, their own ideas of life. It is just left to me to accept it.

This is the bridge from imagination to reality, from will to compromise. However much I love them, it won't change the love they will feel towards me. And there is nothing left to accept it. It is a mixture of desperation and being ready to accept the things as they are. The best chance of any world! A new kind of realism. Which will work out perhaps in the long term!

Session 10: It's an excellent basement you helped me to anchor

Of the impossibility of building a house starting with the roof

Chungmei, no, I am not lazy! I am just afraid to write a summary about the past months... Because it is strenuous! Every time you asked to me to write a reflection I had to touch the thoughts of past pain so directly, without any filtering.

Since we met again after years, since you started to coach me, I have been in so many roles: a whole- day-socializing-me, a hopeless loser, the owner of a permanent ticket for the emotional rollercoaster, a tissue which is cheap to get but of superb value, a naysayer, a bullied child, a person demanding understanding of others and a dreamer to change reality.

But after all, after all your “treatment” – is really something different now?

Well, people change their character, outfit and personality all the time. Even pain either slowly quits the mind or becomes a routine to feel. Now, in my case, I am still socializing a lot. But yes, I do take a lot of time for myself! I tell people online so often nowadays – sorry, I am busy, I can't chat with you right now... And I focus on work instead. I don't waste my energy anymore with useless people who just want to exploit me with their moodiness... Moreover, I don't think I am such a big loser anymore. Just a small loser. And according to some people, a cute loser. No, don't demand of me so soon to forget my former pretentious “life-partner” – his actions and those of his followers struck me so hard, it engraved itself so deeply into my mind, as it had changed my life so profoundly, and from the happy medium self-confident person I used to be I turned into someone still doubting about being able to work as a scientist after all.

Recently, I was in El Salvador to hold a talk in Spanish. Fully paid. During that week, my former professor in journalism offered me a PhD position back in Germany. A full scholarship! Am I not lucky? Didn't I finally get what I wanted, after 4 years of struggling for it? After being bullied and being unexpectedly unemployed for so long? I finally would have the chance to combine practical journalism work with scientific investigation. But yes, I am not happy inside. I can't make out the joy and the passion deep within me I used to have in moments like that years back. Because I still feel so bad about how those friends of my former boyfriend call me names behind my back STILL! Because this really still happens and they tell so cheap things about me, and the real bad thing is that people believe them!

What should I do then? Correct me, if I am wrong. I guess I should feel my core self more. The circle exercises you have done with me inspired me indeed. The imaginative exercises, even though I partially felt like needing a nap immediately afterwards because I felt so much exhausted from feeling too much.

This is what helped me most. And this is where many psychologists simply fail. I am tired of analyzing my self. Somehow it feels like it keeps me away from life, from

feeling the vibrating pulse of my surroundings. You followed a different approach, the one of making my emotional world tangible. I like that, as it shows me that there can be more than just my circulating negative thinking patterns. It made me understand that I might have the chance to determine part of my life myself...! Still it takes time for me to trust into my capacity to change reality. Yes, it is all in my mind...

I liked very much the non-cognitive approach where you focused as well on my emotional side. Because I am not someone who can just manage his emotions by the thoughts. I understood only now that I am hypersensitive being which means that I perceive anything more intensely than the average person on this planet. Which is a gift for creativity but as well a curse as it comes to emotional turbulences so quickly by overstimulation. I know how hard it is for me to regulate those emotions, I know now that many people just don't have the capacity to understand how intense my emotions can become. Therefore, I learned from you that I need to protect myself from it. And there is no discussion about it.

Yes, during the last months, I found a job, I found a really nice flat mate, additionally, a good friend is now staying with me for a month and we both understand well, I found so many nice new friends, and perhaps there is even someone to share my life with soon. But it will take time to feel the real enjoyment about it. It is an excellent basement you helped me to anchor – but I am still away from reaching the roof. Knowing what is behind me and supposing what is still ahead of me.