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Dear Benjamin Hoff,

I think that the tendency to analyze oneself is a very human reaction to coping with serious situations. When people go through abrupt changes in their life, it can instigate a great amount of introspection and self-reflection. I went through one of these periods of analysis in the beginning of this past year. I was suddenly out of a long term relationship of almost two years. Naturally, I found myself contemplating why things happened how they did, and wondering what I could have changed.

I had spent a large portion of my adolescent life devoting time and energy to a relationship that I suddenly found out of my life entirely. I had grown and experienced the world with this person, and I owed a lot of my perspective to the connection I had formed with them as a partner and confident. So much of my time had been given to this relationship I realized that for too long I'd been neglecting other aspects of my life for the sake of this person. I sacrificed time for studying, time for art and music, time for eating balanced meals, all in the name of optimizing the amount of time I had to talk to this person on a daily basis. I determined I needed to reevaluate my priorities and take some time to better understand myself. With the extra time I had on my hands, I decided to do some reading from my parent's library. The first book I chose, entirely by random selection, was *The Te of Piglet*.

After the first few chapters, my feelings of emptiness and lack of purpose had been replaced with a great inspiration. I had loved the characters of *Winnie the Pooh* as a child, so I felt compelled to look deeper into each of their allegorical significances. I took the Taoist philosophies you conveyed in the book to outline a plan for leading a more fulfilling lifestyle. I felt a reason to change and to grow, and saw what had felt like a crippling blow to my self esteem and quality of life as an opportunity to better develop myself as an individual.

I changed my diet to a healthier and more balanced meal plan to counteract the effects of the two McDonald's cheeseburgers I had been indulging in on a daily basis. I began pursuing my goal of learning to play the electric guitar more adamantly with a practice schedule and lesson plan. I started putting my technology away a half hour before going to bed, dedicating that time

to reading, exercise or meditation each night to minimize stress and help me sleep more soundly. I began writing more, I began making more art, practicing skills I had established and discovering new passions I hadn't before considered.

While *the Te of Piglet* is not in any sense a self-help guide, I found myself inspired nonetheless. I was particularly intrigued by the concept of Piglet as a virtuous character being as he is typically perceived as timid and meek. In analyzing the character, I was struck by how important Piglet and his ability to grow and improve upon himself while maintaining a strong sense of humility and sensitivity was. This was an ideal I decided to strive for. A model around which I wanted to live. And I can say without a doubt that I am in a better place now in my life than I have ever been before.

Thank you for your writing,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Remy Lucien". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Remy" and "Lucien" being capitalized and prominent.

Remy Lucien