



I Know I'm Here to Do Something Awesome
If I could only Work Out What It Is.

By Ann Andrews CSP

Life for all of us is a series of challenges. Even for the rich and famous there will be drawbacks - paparazzi following them everywhere; never being able to be seen in public for fear that their every move will be in the tabloids the next day; never knowing who they can really trust.

So perhaps NOT being rich and famous has compensations.

For us more ordinary people – working in a job with little stimulation so we can raise our children; pay the mortgage and fill the car with petrol is our most likely scenario.

Having worked with literally thousands of workers over the years, I know that the majority of people in our organizations feel the soul-lessness of the daily grind. Sadly, they don't see any way out of their situation, or even any way to grow and add value to the organization they work for. They feel they are tied because of the mortgage and their desire to give their children a better life than they possibly had. And that is very laudable but it is also very sad.

Fortunately, it doesn't have to be that way.

When I speak at conferences, I share with my audiences, what I call, the four stages of knowing.

1. LOGICAL – it's logical that I become an accountant because I am good with numbers and am an organized sort of person. And everyone, school counsellors, my teachers and even my parents urge me to follow this path, because it's safe and will provide a good income for the rest of my life
2. EMOTIONAL – yet in my heart I want to be an artist. At every turn I am told – no, no, no. You can't make a living doing that. Become an accountant and paint in your spare time.
3. PHYSICAL – I believe that if a person goes against their inner instincts, eventually they will get sick! Headaches, high blood pressure and depression are often the results of an unfulfilled person living an unfulfilled life.

4. SPIRITUAL (knowing) - trusting that if I do what I love, the rest will be taken care of. At which point I usually hear the chorus of BUTs. ‘Ah yes but, that’s OK for you to say – I have a mortgage.’ Who hasn’t? “I have children to put through college.” Who hasn’t? “I have responsibilities.” Who doesn’t?

Do you think your children would rather have a happy and fulfilled Mum or Dad, or one who is depressed and joyless and bitter and twisted?

It’s always easy to find excuses or to blame someone else – our partners, the government, our parents - whoever. It takes courage to follow your inner knowing.

If this is the only life we have, then surely it is our duty to make it the very best life it can be. To use the God given talents we know we want to use rather than the soul-less skills other people see as our road to safety and security and boredom and blandness.

Every single one of us has to take personal responsibility for our own lives and the situation we find ourselves in.

I’m not suggesting that overnight a person throws everything away. I am suggesting that people get really clear what it is they want to do (or be). To set a clear course for getting there – whether that will take a year or two or even five. And to get started.

My own journey was a classic. I was working As an HR Manager in a corporate environment on a salary to die for – and I was doing just that – dying. I would drive into work in the morning with tears rolling down my cheeks. I decided I had to get out. I had a mortgage and teenagers and was a solo Mum. But I also knew that if I stayed doing what I was doing, they may not have a Mum for much longer. I had those symptoms – headaches, backache, LOW blood pressure and the beginnings of depression.

And so I plotted my escape. I gave myself two years to be out of that place and in two years almost to the day I was. I saved every cent I could during those two years so that when I walked away I had the equivalent of 6 months pay stashed away. And even that wasn’t enough. We ended up having to sell our very flash house and down-trade to a much more modest home. But I was a happier person, a better Mum and I was setting out to do something I loved. A reward in itself.

It took me 7 years to get back to the level of income I walked away from – but the pay had never been my incentive. I just knew if I stayed in that environment I would die.

Did we have to make sacrifices? Of course we did. Did it have an effect on my children – yes I think it did. But I don’t think it actually did them any harm. I involved them in my finances and my decisions, and we became a team. My son was amazing – he was a far better shopper than me – he would scout out all the bargains and specials. I think it made my children better people too. It showed them that they too could make choices down-track. That they didn’t have to be stuck in a job they hated working for people they didn’t respect.

I absolutely, and totally believe that we have to listen to that inner voice.

Getting to where your heart leads you isn't always easy. It absolutely isn't a soft option. But living half a life isn't much of an option either.

I want to get to the end of my life and be able to say, 'That was a life worth living; I made a difference'."

And I leave you with this thought:

'Until you make peace with who you are, you'll never be content with what you have'

Doris Mortman

About the Author

Ann Andrews CSP is a team facilitator and the author of four books - Shift Your But, Finding the Square Root of a Banana, Did I Really Employ You? and My Dear Franchisees.

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