

CHOICES

SUMMER 2016

THE LEISURE ISSUE!

TAKE THE TIME
TO REVITALIZE
YOUR LIFE!

AN INTERVIEW WITH AIMMEE KODACHIAN

AUTHOR, SPEAKER AND LIFE COACH

THE ART OF LEISURE

SET YOUR OWN PACE,
DOING THE THINGS
THAT YOU LOVE



WHAT IS LIFE WITHOUT FUN?

ARE YOU LETTING LIFE PASS
YOU BY WITHOUT MAKING
TIME FOR FUN?



LEISURE IS VITAL TO HEALTHY LIVING

ALLOWING YOUR MIND, BODY
AND SPIRIT TIME TO RESTORE
AND REGENERATE



HOW TO RETURN FROM VACATION

SEVEN EASY STEPS FOR
ENSURING A STRESS-FREE
RETURN FROM VACATION

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FROM THE EDITOR

Does your life seem busier and more rushed than ever? Does it seem like there is never any down time for you? Do you realize that the United States is the only advanced economy with no national vacation policy? Many of us are suffering from “vacation deficit disorder.”

Even if we love our jobs and find creativity, success, and pleasure in our work, we also crave, desire, and need not to work. No matter what we do to earn a living, we all need to have more leisure time in our lives: time to take up hobbies; time to relax and do nothing; time to play.

People who know how to plan for, become involved in, and enjoy their leisure time will remain healthy longer. With better health comes better attitudes and better ability to handle the stressors in life. People who know how to relax revitalize their lives and use their imaginations to seek out adventure, happiness, and laughter.

You will be shocked to learn that you probably have more time for leisure than you realize. One of the problems is technology. While we realize we can't live without it and it can do a lot of things we can't do, we must be very careful how much time we spend on unwise activities. Technology has found a way to creep into every hour and every minute of our days.

How much time do you sit in front of a television or home computer? If you are like many Americans, you spend an average of 17.5 hours a week watching television and even more than that on-line. Want more time? Start by turning these off or at least cutting your time in front of them by half.

Spend time with the family playing a board game, bar-b-queing in the back yard, or inviting friends over. This seems to be a lost art. Only 38% of Americans entertain friends or family at home at least once a year.

Take time now for yourself and really enjoy this summer! You can do this.

You Are More than Enough,

OUR TEAM

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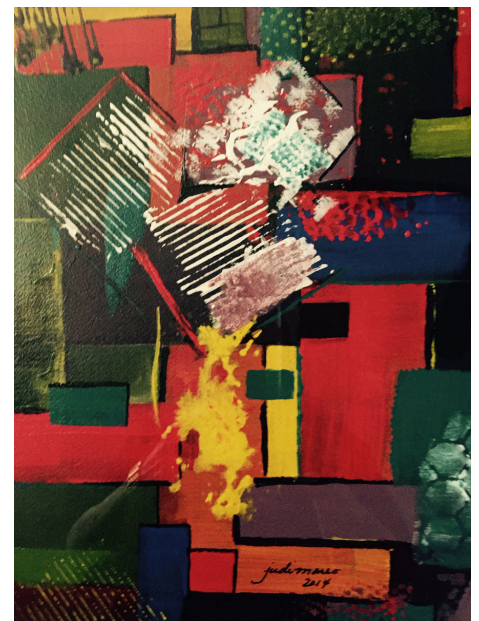
LEISURE IS A CHOICE

BY JUDI MOREO

Things happen for a reason! I have heard this said over and over throughout life. And while I'm sure there is a reason for things happening, I haven't always been sure they happen in order to get us to stop something or bring something else about. Oh, I believe we can learn something from most of the happenings in our lives, if we are willing. We need to understand that we are who we are, where we are, because of the choices we have made. Most of us made the best choices we could when things happened, dealt with situations with the knowledge and skills we had at the time. As we have grown, had more experiences, and learned more lessons, we have been able to make better choices.

I seem to always have been a workaholic. I honestly can't remember when I didn't work long hours, 6 to 7 days per week, often carrying work home at night, weekends...and even on vacations. And then, cancer happened. At first I couldn't believe it was happening to

me, but it did and it was very real. All of the sudden, the work didn't seem so important. Staying alive became my priority. One of the things the doctor recommended for me was to spend more time in "leisure." I wasn't even sure what that meant. Did it mean doing nothing? Did it mean lying by the pool? Did it mean picnics in the mountains? How could I do those things? Other



people worked during the week and couldn't do it with me. And how do you "do nothing?"

I even looked up the word "leisure" to see if I was understanding it correctly. The definition I found was "free time." Free time is the time to do whatever you want when you are not working. So, I was supposed to quit work and



then I would have time to do these other things? But, I liked to work and wanted to work. My doctor suggested I take art lessons, so I took off work, went to art class and discovered I have an incredible talent. That was exciting! He also suggested that if I felt I must write perhaps I should write about some things I love, so I wrote stories about my cat, my mother, my grandmother, my experiences and I found I loved that, too. Uh-oh, I found myself turning these things into real work...exhibiting the art and selling paintings; selling the stories and making a bit of money. It was no longer free time, was it?

What I figured out through this experience was that for me "leisure" is what is enjoyable in my life. The painting brings with it the time in class with other like-minded people who are painting for enjoyment and I enjoy my time with them. I started attending

PAINTINGS BY JUDI MOREO

FAR LEFT: Polar Bear, Acrylic

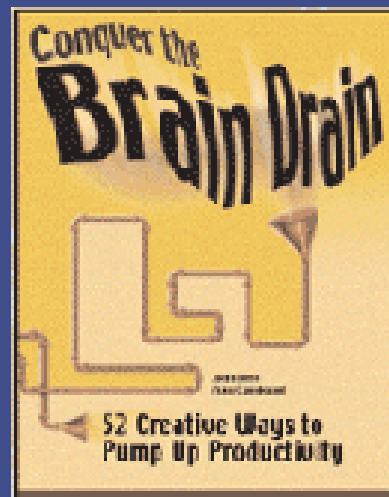
LEFT: Midwest, Mixed

ABOVE: Mother's Love, Acrylic



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Judi Moreo is the author of the award-winning book, "You Are More Than Enough: Every Woman's Guide to Purpose, Passion, and Power" as well as its companion, Achievement Journal. She is a Certified Speaking Professional who has spoken in 28 countries around the world. Less than 10 percent of the speakers in the world hold this highly respected earned designation. To contact Judi or book her for a speaking engagement, contact Turning Point International, (702) 896-2228 or judi@judimoreo.com.



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writing workshops in new genres and meeting interesting people as I tried out my skills in writing new and different types of material such as romance novels.

Leisure can be anything we choose! Just not work! Like any other journey we take, we will have the choice of the direction we will go and whether or not to complete the journey. Some days now, I paint just to enjoy putting the color on the paper. It doesn't have to end up looking like anything in particular. Other days I paint to make things look as real as possible. What I have found is that no matter what I am painting, it feels like meditation. I get in a "zone." And that, to me, is real free time. It frees me from the stresses of life, from aggravations, and challenges. It takes me to new places in my mind. It gives me quiet time, peace of mind, contentment, happiness, and even confidence. I urge you to consider what leisure means to you and then navigate your path wisely. You will be amazed at what you can accomplish that you never believed possible, all because you decided to use your free time for what you love.



Did my cancer happen for a reason? I know it did. I needed to stop and start in a new direction. Did I give up work entirely? No! Now, I make sure that the work I do is work I love. That way I have leisure all of the time!

PAINTINGS BY JUDI MOREO

LEFT: Soweto, Mixed

TOP: Contemplation, Acrylic

BOTTOM: Leopard, Acrylic

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THE ART OF LEISURE

BY MONICA ESPINOSA

“

What we do during our working hours determines what we have; what we do in our leisure hours determine what we are.” George Eastman

George Eastman was one of the founders of the Eastman-Kodak company which influenced both photography and filmmaking, both of which are important when capturing the moment and telling the story - whether through old school Polaroids in a family photo album or on Instagram or Facebook.

I was encouraged by my parents to take photos and explore the arts while in school and life, and to balance work and play. They actually had to remind me not to have my nose in the books all the time (yes, I was a nerd, but also athlete and actor), by saying, “Your job is to study and do well on exams but also to learn new things and take time to relax. You’ll have the rest of your life to work, so enjoy any free time.” I knew to value free time and to not only study hard but also make time to play tennis, film short videos, or dance with friends to Depeche Mode or OMD and relax. My mom and dad were also teachers who had summers off which was when we’d take our annual road trip or infamous family vacation.

My parents knew it was not only important to take in new surroundings, but also important to take time and go

outdoors to appreciate nature. We’d go camping at least once a year and “rough” it by sleeping in tents and not showering for two days, and going hiking and fishing at family reunions. There was also card playing, looking for animals but not skunks or bears, and late night storytelling and singing around the camp fire.

As we got older, my parents and brother and I kept the tradition of having an annual family vacation and recently visited my brother in Seattle. My family isn’t a big planning kind of family and instead opts for deciding what our main goals of the trip are, such as visiting a unique neighborhood or event such as the fish market and visiting with each other over brunch or dinner, and getting exercise by walking around, enjoying

good food, and taking in the local scenery - beaches, parks, museums or neighborhoods, but mainly unplugging from work and future activities.

This is the same kind of mantra I use when I go on trips for relaxation and leisure. I start with having a big picture idea of what I want to do and research a few things. Then after I determine where I’m going and staying, I tend to let my trip unfold organically and enjoy exploring places off the beaten path. Otherwise, one may miss out on meeting random strangers singing or dancing or practicing martial arts in the park or walking through a garden of beautiful dahlias with your parents and taking photos of precious moments with those you love.





Another key besides allowing yourself not to be too prescriptive, is to make sure the person you're traveling with subscribes to a similar style of having a broad and flexible agenda. Thus you know what the main areas you want to visit are, but make it more about the atmosphere and activities you want to partake in. This could be wandering around a large street fair or go shopping for a new dress or pair of funky shoes you can't get anywhere else, or laying in a hammock reading a mystery novel or soaking in the hot springs all day.

Also, be sure to remind yourself and your friend to be present and really enjoy each moment because you most likely will never be in that exact spot or circumstance ever again, so make the most of it, accept what is and if it is challenging or not what you expected, try and find something good in it. But, of course, safety first and know your surroundings and limitations.

This is what I had to keep telling myself when I was in Machu Picchu with my best friend and a few of her colleagues. Though I didn't plan the trip to be three long days and nights of hiking in both snow-covered mountains and then rocky and windy, foresty jungles of Peru, I learned that I had to accept bone chilling freezing nights and trust I would somehow get through it. Now I know that had I planned the trip myself, I'd have chosen to hike for one day and then take the train to the amazing but very isolated ancient civilization. But that's life, experience it and hopefully learn from it. It also makes for a good story.

The next trip my good friend and I went on was not roughing it for three days in Peru. It was more our style—enjoying time in Hawaii on a beach or reading a good trashy novel by the pool at sunset over a fruity drink, near a massage parlor, yoga class or spa. This to me is the art of leisure, setting your own pace,

and being comfortable in nature while enjoying the moment! Then, when you look back on what you've done, it will also make for a great story to tell future generations. (Like that one time your adventurous aunt or uncle hiked to Machu Picchu in three crazy days.) Ahh, such is life an experience— So go Live it!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Originally from New Mexico, Monica S. Espinosa is an indie filmmaker, writer, and eco-warrior who has acted, written, directed and produced more than 20 short films while living in Kansas City since 1998. She is a natural born leader and has served on the board of the Independent Filmmakers' Association of KC and the KC Women in Film and TV (KCWIFT.com) organizations. In recent years she organized KCWIFT "Herstory" month events including the 2013 curated event that featured a panel of local female film professors and showcased several female student films. Monica is a big supporter of diversity and the arts in KC and the country and believes that art can change the world. In her spare time, she works toward living a more sustainable life, plays sports, enjoys traveling, and following her favorite 80s bands on tour. *Photo of Monica courtesy of Nicholas Segura.*



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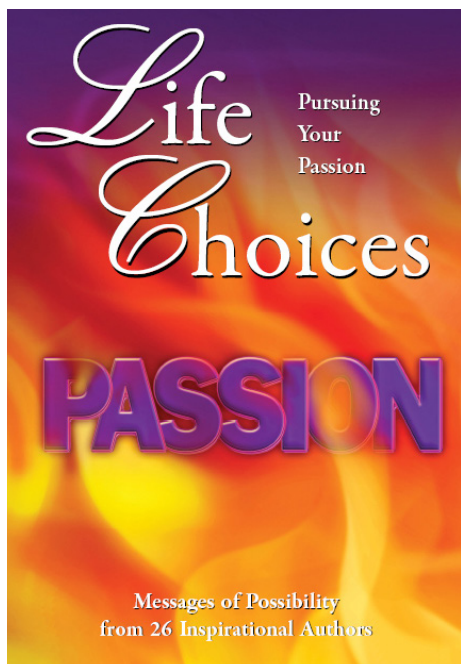
The Life Choices books are a series in which real people share their stories of overcoming obstacles, putting lives back together and following their passions to create successful, significant lives.

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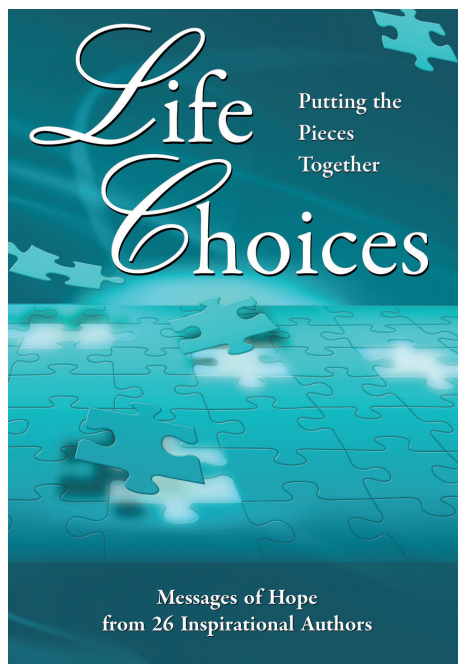
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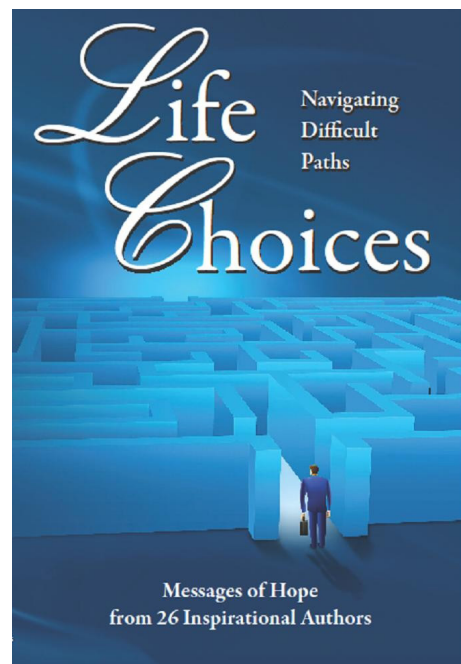
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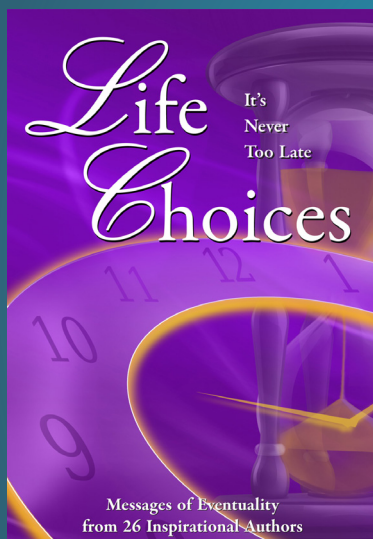
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This empowering collection of stories reminds us that we all have choices and the choices we make are what determine the course of our lives. The authors of these stories are real people who have reached into the depths of their souls to share their inspiring journeys when navigating the difficult paths of their lives.



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Within the chapters of this book, 28 authors tell their stories and share the lessons they have learned. Their enlightened knowledge can serve as inspiration for finding your own path to the understanding that it is never too late.

WHAT IS LIFE WITHOUT FUN?

BY JOAN S. PECK

I was exhausted and decided to regroup in my most comfortable chair. I had barely closed my eyes when I heard her sweet, little voice asking in a slightly, formal-sounding British voice, “What do *you* do for leisure?”

I couldn’t get past the first thing that flew into my head – the remembrance of leisure polyester suits of the 1970s with expandable waist bands in the style of safari suits or brightly colored entertainers suits that were the fad for performers known as “Hollywood suits.” It brought a smile to my face remembering softer times than what we as a society have created for our today. But, the question remained. What *do* I do for leisure?

“For leisure?” I asked trying to postpone a response, sounding somewhat ridiculous.

“Yes,” she answered. “You know, in your free time for enjoyment?”

“Well,” I responded. “To be honest, I’m going to have to think about it.”

“Ahh,” she said with a sad little smile, looking intently into my eyes.

I just stared at her in amazement. I couldn’t believe that I was actually having a discussion with a beautiful little

fairy, who wore a short, gauzy dress that fell from her bare shoulders only to end in an uneven hem that floated just below her thighs. She glowed with a special light and appeared to be about the size of a hummingbird. She leaned into my direct line of vision and fluttered her little wings in a mesmerizing way. “How is this possible?” I thought. “Where does she come from?”

Her delicate little hands reached out to touch each side of my face as she plunked a resounding kiss on my forehead and I immediately felt overwhelmingly sleepy. “I will return after you rest for a bit,” she said with tenderness. “Just relax and think about the question I asked you, okay?” she continued with some concern.

Even though I felt drowsy, my mind began to race with different scenarios

from the past where I could see myself as a younger woman laughing with delight at something that was being said by someone in the gathering of which I was a part. Remembering it, I could actually feel that sense of freedom, that sense of joy.

Next, came a flash of me swinging a golf club, then watching my ball sail through the air. After it landed, I was laughing saying, “Thank God! My ball missed the sand pit!”

“Lucky you,” announced one of my friends. “Saved again.” My fellow golfers chuckled along with me as we all headed to the next hole.

It became darker and I could picture myself at the office where I spend long, overtime hours working on business estimates and marketing plans while



completing projections. I could see that I was frowning while concentrating and my hair was out of control. The phone rang and I heard myself answer once again to whomever had called, “No, sorry, I am too busy to meet with you all. Maybe another time.”

It became even darker when I looked into the future and all I could see was me - all alone. I felt sad and unhappy, feeling like a failure. What was life without friends and fun? I felt a sudden jolt and it was as if a shot of pure energy flooded my body and I knew without question what I had to do.

I heard a loud smack as I felt a kiss on my forehead. I opened my eyes to face my mother, who had surprised me with a visit. “Oh, my! You’re all flushed! Are you okay?” she asked.

“I’ve never felt better in my life!” I announced as I jumped up and headed to the garage.

“What are you doing?” she demanded, trailing after me.

“What I should have done a long time ago,” I shouted happily, as I grabbed my golf bag and began to dust it off. “I’m going to call my friends and see if it is not too late to join them for a round!”

“Why, darling, what a wonderful idea!” she enthused, looking like the cat that had swallowed the canary.

As I turned to rearrange my clubs, I swear I saw my beautiful little fairy smiling and giving a thumbs up to my mother. I just shook my head in dismay. I must be losing it, I thought, feeling happier than I have in a long time. “Mom?” I called out.



“Yes, dear?”

“Did you see a Never mind, it doesn’t matter, Mom. I get it, now,” I said as she nodded in agreement with a satisfied smile.

“It is in his pleasure that a man really lives. It is from his leisure that he constructs the true fabric of self.”

Agnes Refflier



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Joan S. Peck is an editor and the author of short stories, spiritual books and a contributing author to two Life Choices books. Her newest book is ***Prime Threat – Shattering the Power of Addiction***, a book written with her son from the other side.

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**“Guard well your spare moments.
They are like uncut diamonds.
Discard them and their value will
never be known. Improve them
and they will become the brightest
gems in a useful life.”**

Ralph Waldo Emerson



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THE MONSOON BICYCLING IN BANGKOK

BY JAANA HATTON

It was unusually muggy that late morning. Ignoring the weather, I set out on a bicycle ride from our residence in one of Bangkok's suburbs. The housing compound was surrounded by fields, creating the illusion of countryside. Once past those thickets of tall grasses, there were narrow streets and even unpaved roads to explore, and I never tired of pedaling around the neighborhoods, watching the daily activity.

After three years in Thailand, I thought I had learned to predict the weather fairly well. There was not much change in it, anyhow. Either it was the dry season or the monsoon, when the rain and humidity were relentless. The day's accumulated moisture built up towering clouds, overwhelming the sky until it could no longer gain in elevation but had to reverse the direction. And downwards it came, with all the force of Niagara Falls.

At the first signs of the afternoon rain, people tended to stop their activities out on the streets and seek cover. Umbrellas were not adequate; the power of the beating water didn't stop at any flimsy nylon cover. As soon as the water hit the ground, it bounced back and soaked any unfortunate person from the feet up.

The showers were fairly short-lived, usually an hour or less. It was as if a bucket had been turned upside down. It poured with all its might and suddenly, it was over. Not a drop for another day or so. Nor was it desirable, as the sudden torrent caused the streets and yards to flood and transported filth.

Whatever I missed in my predictions that morning, I don't know. It was a sunny morning, despite the high humidity, perfect for an outing. So, off I went.

I had gone a good distance, maybe three miles out, when the clouds started rolling in. Not gradually, as they sometimes appeared throughout the morning, but they grew tall and dark within minutes. I hesitated – should I go on or turn back? I was enjoying the ride and wanted to pedal on, exploring the streets. But, it was beginning to look threatening up there in the sky. Reluctantly, I turned around and started heading for home.

I was no more than a mile from the house when the sky let loose the most horrendous rain. There was no gentle pitter-patter of the first alerting droplets. Water just started coming down like from a fire hose and I was soaked within seconds. My clothes stuck to my body, my feet were slipping on the wet pedals. I was on a stretch of dirt road crossing the fields, where the loose sand quickly

turned into messy mud. With wet dirt splattering into my face and all over my body, I pushed on. Whether I stopped or went forward, I was already a victim of the onslaught.

And suddenly, I started feeling victorious. Here I was, a middle-aged little lady on two wheels and a prayer, braving the elements and taking on the tropical monsoon in all its fury. I hit the puddles and ignored the mud flying in every direction. I felt invincible; a great conqueror of the elements and a



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jaana Hatton was born in Finland in 1960. When she was twenty-three, she met her American husband, Ronald, and they spent the next twenty-five years traveling around the world due to his employment with the US government. They now live in Wenatchee, Washington. They have two grown sons.

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sudden goddess of all things natural.

I made it home despite the dirt-splattered eyes and weary legs. The struggle had seemed like an eternity, but probably only lasted ten minutes. My bicycle hung heavy with caked-up mud. Undoubtedly, I looked no better.

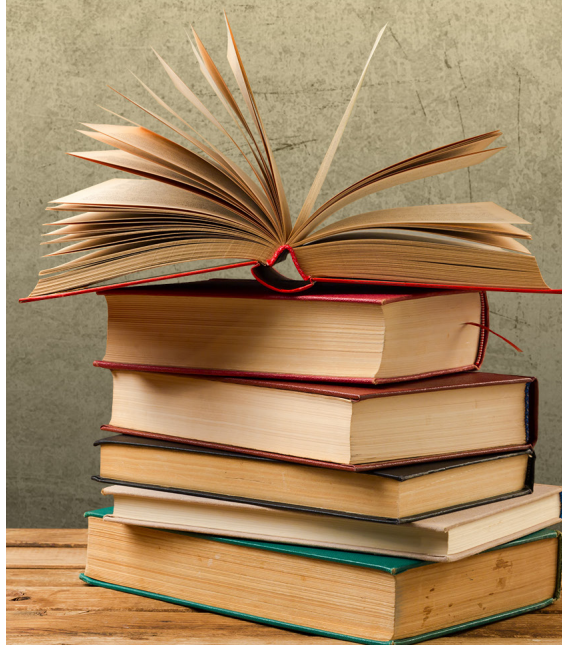
And yet, I felt glorious. What a ride! My body was beaten, but my spirits were lifted by that unexpected trial sent from the heavens.

And, what is the moral of the story? Life's circumstances can either defeat or empower you. Make the choice.



“Those who decide to use leisure as a means of mental development, who love good music, good books, good pictures, good plays, good company, good conversation - what are they? They are the happiest people in the world.”

William Lyon Phelps





CHOICES

WITH JUDI MOREO



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A *m I Going to be Okay?* is an American story with a universal message. Ms. Whittam traces her history in the form of stories about her all too human, and sometimes unhinged family; she throws a rope to the little girl living there, and in adulthood, is able to pull her out safely, bit by bit.

Her history is peopled with folks from a different time, a time before therapy was acceptable, 12 steps unimaginable and harsh words, backhands and even harsher silences can be spun to appear almost normal. She writes of a mother who would not or could not initiate love nor give it without condition, and a father, damn near heroic at times, abusive at others, a survivor with his head down and his sleeves rolled up.

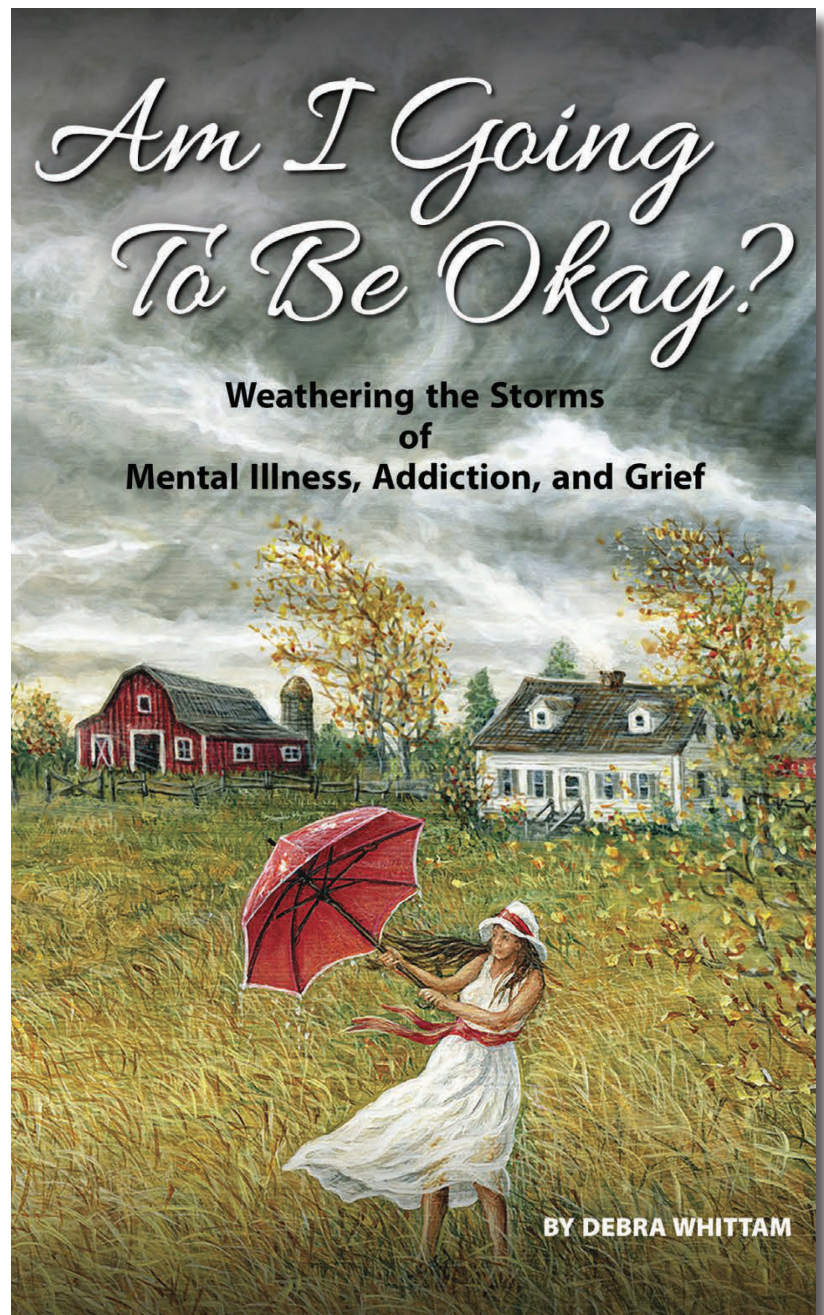
Ms. Whittam approaches her past with the clear-eyed, tough but sensitive objectivity necessary to untangle the shame from the source. She speaks of the people that affected her life so deeply with an understanding of their time and place in American culture; a family not far removed from immigrant roots when men carried their own water, emoted misplaced anger, and with fresh socks and food found on the trail, were confident, unflinching and at that same time tragically failing to the little ones they ignored.

Like many of us, details notwithstanding, Whittam responded by numbing, running and gunning. Alcohol gave her hope, soothed a crushed soul for a time and wrecked her on a train, until finally she had the courage to accept it wasn't working for her anymore. It was time to stop drinking and take inventory and accountability. It was time to accept, forgive and move forward. She healed where she was broken.

It is in the telling of this story that Whittam teaches us the difference between just surviving and surviving well; the importance of shared introspection and a careful eye on the wake we leave behind us in our actions. Her story is a guide to surviving abuse and addiction. It is also about witnessing and dealing with the shrinking faculties of aging parents in the unavoidable circle of life. Finally, she offers a realistic sense of hope, forgiveness and a life we can shake hands with.

AM I GOING TO BE OKAY?

REVIEW BY ERIC OESTREICH - ARTIST, AUTHOR, AND TEACHER



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- Mack Jackson Jr.



“Remember, what does ‘retirement’ mean? It doesn’t mean that you’re a couch potato. Leisure is not the same thing as rest. If you’re bicycling five miles a day, that’s leisure, but it certainly takes a lot of effort.”

Robert Fogel



AIMMEE KODACHIAN

AN INTERVIEW

BY JUDI MOREO

Aimmee Kodachian is an author, speaker, life coach, the founder and director of the “Aimmee Kodachian and the Experts” on-line TV show and Academy where she brings some of the top experts in the world to help you transform your business and personal life.

Aimmee has traveled a long road to success from her childhood in Lebanon, living through the Lebanese Civil War.

As a child, Aimmee wasn’t able to excel due to her severe undiagnosed dyslexia which caused her to often be bullied, made fun of by other students, and considered to be stupid by some teachers. This caused her to become shy and withdrawn. When the war began, she was only 12 years old. Her family lost everything and became homeless. She was faced with countless hardships including daily bombings in which she escaped death three times and lost many close family members. Needless

to say, she often experienced abuse and neglect.

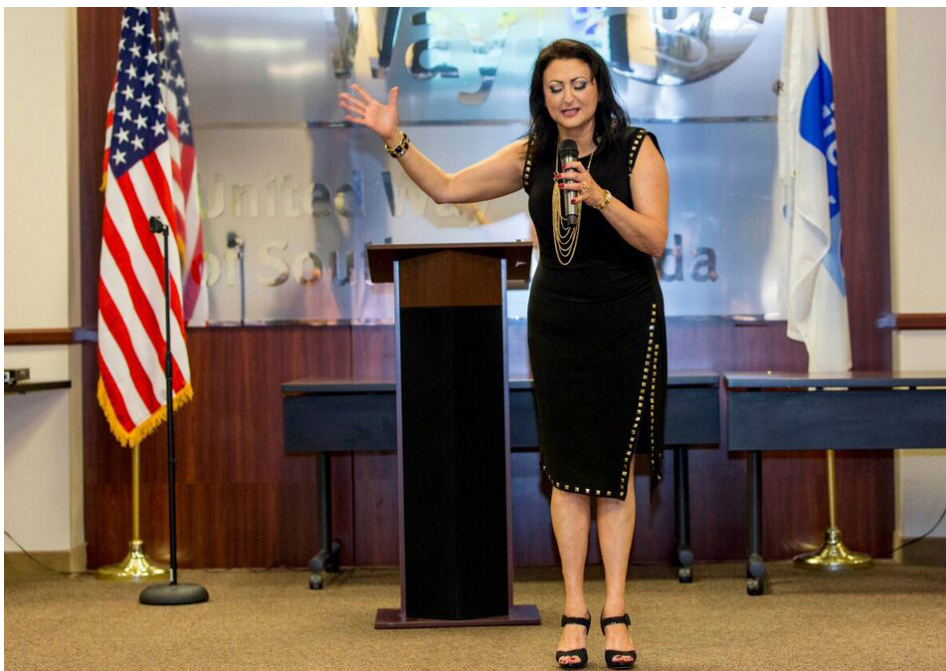
At the age of 14, her teenage life was taken away from her when Aimmee’s mother couldn’t take care of her and she was persuaded into an unhealthy marriage. She became a mother at the age of 15, giving birth to a beautiful baby girl who became Aimmee’s why – her reason for living. She became a single mom and was left with no money, education or skills and living in the midst of the war.

In 1988, Aimmee took the opportunity to come to the United States and start a new life. Soon after her arrival, she was told to go back to her country because “You are not going to make it here.” In her heart, she knew she had her “WHY” and her faith in God kept her going day after day.

After years of persistence and determination, Aimmee found the missing piece of her puzzle that was holding her back from moving forward and living her purpose. Soon after,

Aimmee became a business woman. She felt she was living the American dream. Here, she could be whoever she wanted to be...even an author although she only had a fourth grade education. She was so compelled to share her story that she wrote the book, “*Tears of Hope*” because she wanted to help other people realize they are not alone and see their lives in a positive perspective.

It was about a year and a half later when I met Aimmee for the first time and obtained a copy of her book. I was flying across country the next day to do a speaking engagement and took the book with me to read on the plane. Once I started reading, I couldn’t stop. The story is riveting. It was hard for me to believe that Aimmee could live through all that she had experienced and still be the positive, charming woman whom I had recently met. The book was filled with powerful insights and life lessons. It helped me realize that we all have a story...some of them more difficult to tell than others.



I recently asked Aimmee to allow me to share some of her story with you and she agreed. Following is the interview I had with her. This is a very brief snippet of what Aimmee is all about. I hope you'll get the book and read it. It will give you a different perspective on life and I believe you will walk away inspired, empowered and encouraged to take action towards your best life ever.

What made you decide to be a speaker?

I had no clue I was going to be a speaker. I wrote the book to inspire others. Then I was going to hide. I didn't think I needed to be in public talking about my life. The book was enough (so I thought!) I was a very private person. I never liked being the center of attention.

When I finished the first edition of my book, my ghostwriter said, "Good luck, you are just starting now." I thought, "What? I've spent a year and a half with you, writing the book and now, I'm just starting?" I had no idea what was coming next.

What was coming?

Radio stations called and I found myself being interviewed on syndicated shows.

Then, I started to get requests to speak at events. I realized that I couldn't just go and hide. Books don't have legs.

How did that feel?

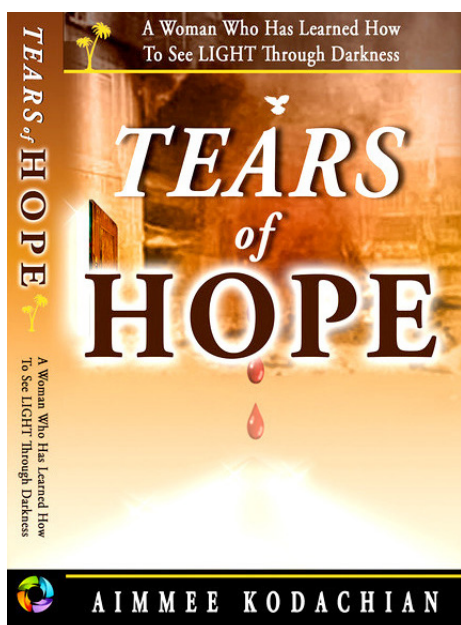
During the first interview, I started to feel anxiety. I had to talk about my story. The interviewer was good and asked strong questions. On the spot, I needed to answer. My English was not good. My grammar was bad. After the interview, I had a phone call from my daughter who said, "Mom, you didn't do so good. I could feel your fear. How are you going to promote your book?"

What was your answer to that?

"I'm going to become a speaker!"

She dropped the phone. After recovering it, she said, "Are you kidding me? You can't read or write and you found a way to write your book. I can understand





that. Now, how are you going to become a speaker when you couldn't even speak to promote your book?"

So what did you do next?

I had to promote the book. My responsibility was to step up and do what I had to do to deliver my message. I joined Toastmasters International. In fact, I joined four clubs. I went to all their meetings and even went to other clubs to practice speaking. I heard someone say you have to write your speech a hundred times before you get good. Since I don't write so well, I determined I should deliver the speech 100 times and I would get good at it.

How did that help you?

I found most professional speakers to be most helpful and encouraging, especially when they read or heard my story. Judi, you always believed in me, encouraged me, lifted me up and any time I needed guidance you led me to where I needed to go in my path to success in delivering my message. I also learned from Patricia Fripp and Darren LaCroix, as well.

What has been your biggest surprise as a speaker?

To learn that speaking is a business. I have seen and met many people who have a powerful message to share with the world, but unfortunately they couldn't continue with their mission because they were not able to accept the idea that they need to run and build their speaking as a career and business. It took me years to understand this concept. At one point, I had to make a choice either to give up or accept that this is the only way I would be able to continue to inspire and help people to shift their perspective of life through my message. For example, if a priest doesn't pay the rent for the church or keep food on the table, they will not be able to continue with their mission. Speaking is the same thing. If you want to inspire others and make a difference in the world, then you need to make sure you are able to stay healthy mentally, physically and financially ... and keep a roof over your head.

What else have you learned from this experience?

I have learned so much. At every level, there was a different learning process and a different mindset. I had to adjust my thinking 360 degrees. I learned there is a reason why things happen or don't happen. I learned that when we go into darkness, we must ride the wave. If we don't ride it the right way, we could miss the light.

What was your proudest moment?

There have been so many. As you know, I am dyslexic and have only a fourth grade education. To have become an entrepreneur, written a book, become a keynote speaker and having an online television show; these are major accomplishments for someone like me. After I deliver a speech or someone reads my book, when they write me an email and say that the book helped them or what I said touched their hearts and inspired them to shift their perspective and improve their lives; that is my proudest moment.





You have started an on-line Academy. Tell me why you did that!

As you know I always wanted to be a teacher so that I could help others learn without being ridiculed or feeling “less than.” It didn’t happen. However, life turned around for me and I have been given the privilege of speaking on stage and teaching others through my life lessons. Because of the book, I have had the opportunity to meet and learn from some of the top experts in the world such as yourself, Judi, who want to make a difference in the world and pay it forward by sharing the wisdom, experience, insights and knowledge they learned throughout their journeys.

The “Aimmee Kodachian and the Experts” on-line Academy is about transforming people’s business and personal lives in an affordable, effective and powerful way. This platform is giving an opportunity for anyone in the world who wants to improve his or her life even if they can’t afford higher education. See, college doesn’t teach

what our faculty members teach. In this Academy, you can learn how to start or market your business, how to write a book, become a speaker, dress for success, how to communicate more effectively with your employees and family and much more!

I made it so affordable that anyone can get access for less than \$10 US a month, the price of two gourmet cups of coffee.

What has been your biggest challenge?

I was faced with many challenges. Every time I had to read or write, which is very necessary for an author and speaker to do, I felt challenged. I also felt very uncomfortable every time I shared my story. I am a very private person and it is not easy for me to talk about my life and my experiences. I had to really work on seeing the value of how my story is helping others by sharing the insights and wisdom I learned from my journey.



Who influenced you the most in your life?

My father. He had great wisdom. In Chapter 1 of my book, I tell the story of how during a bombing in my country, my older brother, Robert, was killed right in front of me and of how my father taught me to go through the darkness to see the light. I was only 12 years old at the time. Even today, all these years later, every time I go through dark times, I remember my father’s words. They give me hope!

What is the biggest Ah-Ha or realization you have had about your life?

Everyone has hidden gifts, strengths, and talents. Unfortunately, outside influences, people’s words, and even our own internal fears can silence this power that each of us has. It took me decades to discover my true identity and voice. When I started to appreciate my gifts and uniqueness, I learned that “I don’t have to be perfect to be beautiful and powerful. All I have to do is be myself.”

Thank you, Aimmee, for sharing your story with us. As I told you before, your book is riveting. I couldn’t put it down. I believe it will help anyone who reads it to understand how fortunate we all are. There are so many lessons in your book.

To learn more about Aimmee, visit:

www.AKandTheExperts.com or
www.ReachingYourLight.com

Portraits of Aimmee Kodachian used in this article and on the cover courtesy of Vic Esquivel / SARVICStudios.com



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- Do you want to overcome your doubts and fears about your creative abilities?
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- Creativity Coaches help you get unstuck and move your projects forward.
- Creativity Coaches inspire you to push yourself to new levels of creativeness, innovation, and resourcefulness.
- Creativity Coaches help you build your confidence in your creative abilities.
- Creativity Coaches assist you in reaching higher levels of success.

Whatever your reason for seeking out a coach, Judi Moreo will help you acquire the skills you need to achieve your desired results. Your personally designed program will provide you with tried and true methods of getting from where you are to where you want to be in a positive and supportive atmosphere.

Not only will you receive feedback on your application of the information you are receiving, you will also receive the benefit of Judi's extensive background in leadership, management, image, communication, presentation skills, and service. Her insights and guidance will help you become who you want to be and realize your ambitions and aspirations.

Call **(702) 896-2228** or email judi@judimoreo.com today for your complimentary "Strategy Session". Together you will evaluate your current situation and set a strategy for achieving your goals within a realistic, workable time frame. Judi will work with you in-person, by phone, or by e-mail.



THE CHALLENGE TO UNDERSTAND LEISURE

BY DEBRA WHITTAM

Amy R. Hurd said, “Leisure is the unhurried ease provided from the cessation of activities; the ability to relax with no work required and no responsibilities.” Denise M Anderson commented that, “Leisure depends on a participant’s perception.” I love that phrase. The idea is that accuracy is based on each person’s perception and my perception of leisure is that it is about “time.”

Leisure is a state of mind for me to be free from demands and have unobligated time. There is also a definition of leisure that goes against every fiber of my being. “Leisure is when our feelings of compulsion should be minimal.” Not me. If there is freedom from obligations, client schedules and monetary responsibilities, I have the compulsion to travel and explore. It is completely compulsive, in the moment and fills me with excitement.

So, does that mean leisure is about time and activity? Is it a state of mind with as many definitions as there are people to indulge in it? In the book “Challenge of Leisure” by Charles K. Brighthill, 1960; he states, “The threat of leisure lies in our not knowing how to use it well.”



In an article I wrote for my blog at www.debrawhittam.com, “How Can I Know When I’m Doing Too Much When I Haven’t Done Enough?” I expressed that the inner struggle I have concerning sitting around, i.e. leisure, is that it is a total waste of my time.

Why would I lay back on a chaise lounge sipping on a champagne cocktail reading a romance novel? With 12 years of sobriety, that thought reminds me of the woman I was becoming back when leisure meant instant gratification. If leisure is not about sitting in a relaxed position, in a tropical local with abundant alcohol and reading material, then what is it? Doesn’t leisure include some mood/mind altering behavior? How can people calm their minds and focus on

fun if the workload that is pulsating on our heaping desks awaits us the minute we return from our leisure?

That very thought leaves many people uninterested in the idea of trying to get to their allotted vacation for the year. There is no time for it.

In a presentation by Cindy LaMont entitled “The Challenge of Leisure,” she states some of the problems and challenges of leisure is that it conjures up a state of spectatorship, of being unable to relax, being bored and ultimately being in a state of non-living.

No thank you. I want to be grabbing my already packed carry-on with my passport in hand, leaving the cares of the everyday life I’ve cre-

ated for parts known or unknown. There'll be no non-living for me!

When flying to my favorite places, either Paris or the Adirondacks, the promise of nature and history lure me more than anything else. New experiences in old familiar places could be what leisure means. I have always wanted to be free to go and do as I like. The word leisure, with what can be construed as fast paced, grueling demands of getting from one place to another with hoards of people attempting to do the same thing in the same crowded planes and trains, doesn't seem to fit my escape plan.

Nope, not leisurely at all. So, can leisure be equated with fun? Again, accuracy is based on the person's perception. There is no leisure in even defining leisure! This is exhausting.

I'm guessing that leisure must be what I do when I am free to do whatever I wish. That must have happened in my childhood or adolescence. Actually, no, it definitely did not. My twenties and thirties were filled with college, marriage and children. Very few memories of leisure, however, I do remember the progression of tolerance to the strongest forms of alcohol flowing during that time.

Or maybe leisure is something we happen upon in retirement. If you're like me starting another chapter in your life at a fairly later

stage demands too much to do to seek leisure. That does sound boring to me.

Why would I sit around with other people trying to find their form of leisure because they are no longer being useful and are without a purpose! Egads!

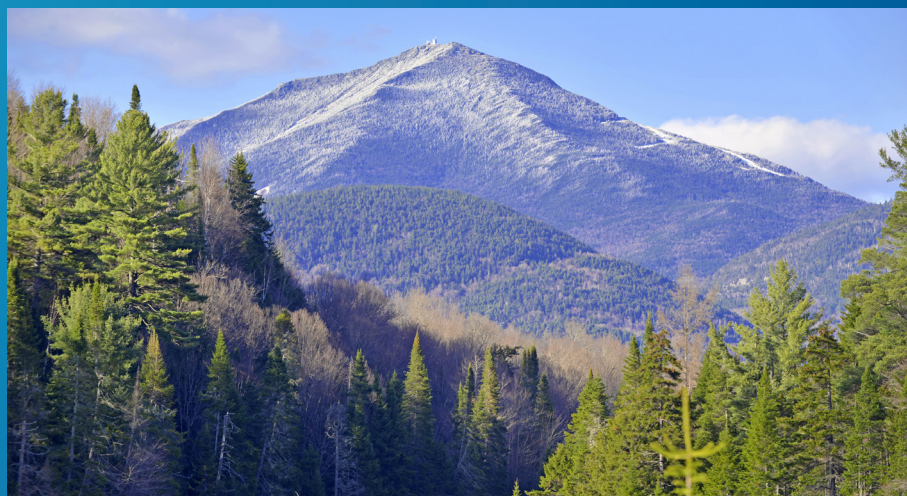
I will remain in the state of mind that leisure for me means freedom. I like the ability to choose my thoughts and actions according to the next exciting thing I want to do or pursue: the freedom to be active or be quiet and still; to be motivated by what comes from my inner wants and needs rather than from a place of pleasing others.

When I enter into the world of travel, fun and new experiences, my re-entry back to my everyday life is horrible. I will always need more leisure time to recover from my pursuit of it in the first place!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Debra Whittam is a licensed therapist in Pittsburgh, PA who is also in Recovery. She specializes in untreated mental illness, untreated addiction and unacknowledged grief. Running groups as well as doing individual work with her clients, Debra encourages others with her humor as well as her vulnerabilities. While Debra lives in Pittsburgh, she also has a cottage in the Adirondacks and spends time in Paris. Find Debra online at: www.DebraWhittam.com

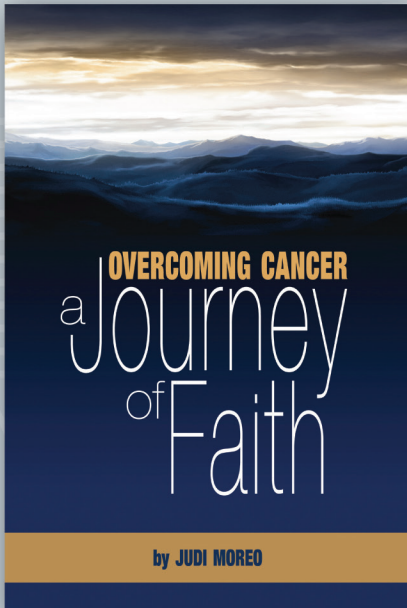


“The best intelligence test is what we do with our leisure.”

Laurence J. Peter

Award-winning author Judi Moreo knows what it is to travel the journey of cancer and shares that experience in this book.

Overcoming Cancer: A Journey of Faith



Through her personal story, inspiring quotes and practical suggestions, Judi shows us that cancer and fear are messages to us to make lifestyle changes. This supportive book can help the newly diagnosed cancer patient ask better questions, understand there are alternative and integrated treatments that can work and, most of all, maintain hope.

Even though traveling the cancer road was a rocky and difficult journey, it was also rewarding. The path through cancer requires enormous discipline, work, and change; yet it is filled with excitement, experiences and discoveries that can bring us to a new and better place if we are open to possibilities and focus forward.

"This book may help save your life or that of a loved one. Judi Moreo "gets it." She understands that the question is not "what kind of treatment do I undergo?" but rather "how do I heal myself?" Her personal experience with cancer taught her to recognize that recovery from chronic illness is often a recovery from an unhealthy life in many respects. With humor, grace and courage, she addresses the physical as well as the mental, emotional, psychological and spiritual needs for recovery in an easily accessible, practical way. Whether you are looking for help to reclaim your health from cancer or any other illness, let Judi be your guide."

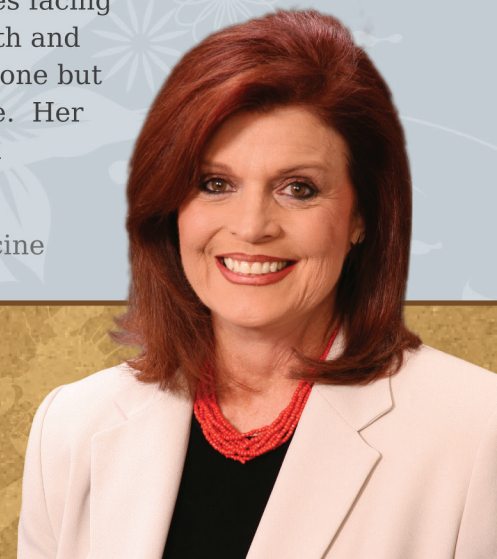
- James Sensnig, N.D., Founding President, American Association of Naturopathic Physicians; Former Dean, National College of Naturopathic Medicine; Founding Dean, College of Naturopathic Medicine, University of Bridgeport, Connecticut; cancer survivor

"This book is a must for those facing cancer and for those who have loved ones facing this fear-filled disease. Judi writes from the heart -- telling her story with truth and emotion. She highlights her course of action, not forcing her opinions on anyone but truly providing options to conventional cancer care that are sound and doable. Her recommendations for nutrition therapy and exercise are quite impressive and fact-based."

- Julie Freeman, MA, RD, LD, Licensed Nutritionist, Integrative Medicine

This Book and Others Now Available Online!

www.JudiMoreo.com





A LETTER

BY ROSIE GLICKFELD

M

y Dear Child,

I have noticed you are still beating yourself up over things that happened years ago. What a futile waste of time and energy. Could you have made better decisions? Of course, everyone could have.

Everyone does the best they can at that moment. Does berating yourself for things done and finished change anything? Heavens no! By now, in life's river, they have passed under many bridges and reached the sea. That is enough. Let them go.

Dear One, don't judge this day with the eyes of yesterday. You are given each day new and fresh. Don't mucky it up with yesterday's garbage, nobody else is keeping track; if they are, it's not their job, so not to worry. Leave it to me, I will deal with them. If you find yourself neglectful in duty, resolve to do

better today and do it. If an apology is needed, make a sincere one today and move on. With an adversary agree to disagree, and move quickly on. Always find forgiveness in your heart and give of it generously – to others and yourself. Do not barb the incoming arrow with self-righteousness, self-will or self-love, or take offense where none is meant. In this way, the arrow is deflected away from you.

Now is the time to focus on this very moment, right here, right now. Your job is a big one and full-time. Remember, no one can be a better you than you, so be the best you, you can be. Walk through this world with joy and grace, sowing loving kindnesses. Just be the blessings to others that I made you, and you will reap the goodness you sowed.

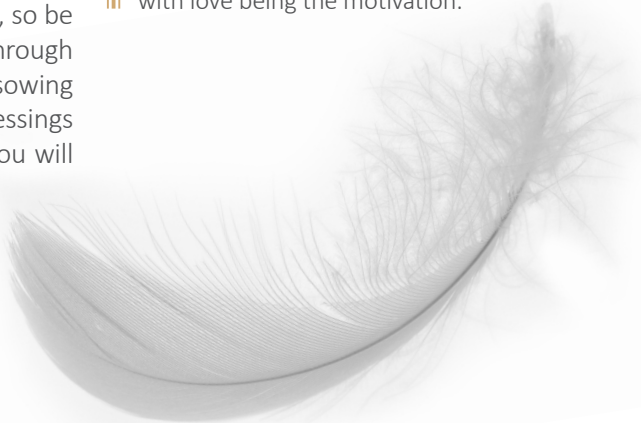
Have a long, beautiful, joyous life,

With tender love,
Your Guardian Angel



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rosie Glickfeld lives in Wenatchee, WA with husband, Larry, and daughter, Heather. After the breakup of a young, abusive marriage, she found herself a single parent of two children, and no way to support them. After four years she graduated from El Camino Community College, with a 3.89 GPA, and the means to support all of them. Through all of this, she learned many lessons in forgiveness and the importance of doing everything with love being the motivation.





Leisure is another term we use for “Recreation” and it is a vital part of healthy living. We truly need to cease working occasionally and allow our mind, body and spirit to re-create. This is the way nature restores itself. The regeneration is not just physical.

When our body does the same types of activities without leisure, we frequently incur “repetitive motion injuries”, for example: carpal tunnel syndrome. That is the result of using our forearms in only one pattern without adequate rest. Sitting at a keyboard or TV monitor for prolonged periods is a behavior that all of us experience. Experts recommend that we not only stand and stretch every 20 minutes or so, but they also recommend that we look away from the monitor and focus our eyes at varying distances occasionally. We are designed for a varying landscape, a changing terrain, and a continual mixture of challenges, not for just one eyes-to-screen, knees-to-desk posture.

What will happen if we don’t take breaks and mini-vacations and occupy ourselves with other endeavors regularly? Breakdown. Something will dysfunction.

“Those who don’t make time for recreation will be obliged sooner or later to make time for illness.”

- Author Unknown

Likewise we need to change the challenges our mind is focused on. Philosopher Kevin Buck says, “Without reflection there is no true learning.” Reflection is a state in which your mind is disengaged from its task and allowed to process what you know. I think of it as a time when we turn off the inputs: radio, podcast, TV, dialogue, even music...and allow our mind to

LEISURE IS VITAL TO HEALTHY LIVING

BY JIM CATHCART



Jim waves from the top of the hill.

simply settle into the quiet with no task before it. This meditative state lets the ideas find their mental file folders and make the various connections that make sense out of what we know. It is not enough to simply ‘know’ things, we must also understand them in context with all else that we know. That requires reflection time.

Personally I have always had two leisure practices that have served me

well. Starting in my late twenties I developed the habit of always having breakfast alone and taking a writing pad with me, not a stack of work items. Earl Nightingale said that this practice when focused on your one main goal will produce more ideas than you can implement. I’ve found this to be true. Most mornings you’ll find me alone at a coffee shop with my note pad, not my handheld device.

Another of my activities has been time on the road, or path or trail. When I go jogging or trail running I never take my earphones. I savor the silence. My desire is to allow my mind to focus on the road or trail without any external input. Doing this allows me to drift from thought to thought until something important to me comes up. Then my mind focuses on that issue for the balance of the run and great ideas often emerge. Though I hike with a large group of friends three times a week, I always run ahead of the crowd and get some open road ahead of me. I complete the hike before the others and get plenty of thought time on the trail. Then I gather with the others and enjoy their company.

When it is time to return to the trailhead I always run back alone and get some more thinking done.

Note: this is not focused, effortful thinking but rather it is leisure time where the thoughts simply emerge on their own. Then I quickly “gaff them with a pencil” as Nightingale used to say. He said, “Ideas are like slippery fish. If you don’t gaff them with a pencil they will get away.”

I’ve ridden motorcycles all over the world and will often go on a three day mini-tour of California where I live. Again I have no sound system to interrupt the flow, I just focus on the road and savor the leisure flow. I even wrote a song about it, titled “Riding Free”. Here’s a clip:

I’m riding free, got the highway at my feet.

No place to be and no schedules to meet.

There’s not a thing in this world to tie me down.



Jim on his Yamaha FJR1300 before leaving alone on a 3-day riding retreat to explore winding roads.

Two wheels below me and open road ahead.

90 miles to Little Rock, my roots and memories.

I’ll pause but new and winding roads are calling me.

My goal’s the ride not the place, I’m riding free.

Choose your leisure well. Don’t count your time at the gym with earphones or pounding music, that’s just another form of work. Find that quiet reflective state that you can access in short doses whenever you wish. It needn’t be outdoors but that helps. Let your mind, body and spirit do what they already know how to do to get you to your best. Chill, and listen to the thinking.

To listen to Jim sing “Riding Free,” visit GuitarMusicLive.com.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jim Cathcart is the author of 16 books, a Hall of Fame professional speaker and the creator of over 100 brief video lessons on Thrive15.com/acorn. His brief TEDx talk on How To Believe in Yourself now has over 460,000 views. View it for free at: www.choicesonlinemedia.com/believe



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FINDING PEACE FOR OUR SOULS

BY DELORES RAMSEY MCLAUGHLIN

Finding peace for our souls requires positive thinking. Positive thinking promotes action, creativity, hope, freedom and believing that the peace we seek will happen. Peace is defined as serenity, calmness and peace of mind (Webster New World, 2015).

Are you finding peace in your life? Are you experiencing contentment and happiness? What benefits are you gaining from leisure time spent in peaceful thoughts, attitudes and behaviors? Peace requires understanding and applying a sense of contentment through our attitude, behavior and inner self-worth.

Finding peace for our souls is a choice. You must choose how you view life, spend your quiet time, react to difficult situations and find peace for your leisure time. Your ultimate choice must become a commitment to how you find and maintain peace in your life. For example, when you take time off from work to vacation with your family but you do not have a good time because your mind wanders to the work left on your desk and the time sensitive assignments that were left uncompleted.

Leisure time without peace can be an experience but not an invigorating experience that benefits you as the individual who is involved in the event.

Also, leisure time without peace can be a waste of time. You must believe that

finding peace for your soul is a positive commodity to successfully enjoy life.

Here are some ways to embrace finding peace in your soul:

First, believe that you can't control everything and let go of things you can't control. Most people get upset when they make plans and unexpected situations occur and their plans have to take a back seat to what they expected. Getting upset and angry will not change the

outcome but does require increased energy and stress. Think about positive outcomes because of the unexpected occurrence. For instance, you met a new acquaintance because the car wouldn't start or the outdoor wedding was performed inside the most beautiful hall because of not being able to have the ceremony outside.

Second, leisure time is not worry time. The benefits of leisure time are positive thinking, reflection of where we are to





where we are going in life, hope, courage and a spirit of gratefulness. Hope encourages positive possibilities in the future by being proactive not reactive, courage is letting go of fear. Faith is believing that our peace in life will happen and experiencing it as we go through life. Gratefulness is being happy that you waited and accepting the good things that have happened to you.

Finally, finding peace for our souls is saying that we are deserving of a good life. Our attitude, behavior and our inner self-worth is relevant to finding the inner peace that we deserve in our lives.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Delores Ramsey McLaughlin is a motivational speaker who can inspire audiences from corporate to faith based. She has a gift of making the most serious topics become less intimidating and more accepting. The founder & executive director of “All Out Communication” and “Freedom-N-Christ Ministries,” she teaches effective leadership skills, conflict management, strategies to successfully pursue your dreams and how to bridge gaps between cultural and religious differences.

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MEET HARVEY

BY PAT TURNER

On April of this year (2016), my husband Joe and I were on our annual spring retreat to some place warm, which in this case was the island of Kauai'. During the winter, now that I no longer snow ski, I become a "ski widow". Joe has been a ski instructor for thirty-five years and I don't see that changing anytime soon. So a few years back he suggested we take a trip at the end of each season in recognition for my understanding and patience during these cold winter months while he is on the mountain at Mission Ridge, which is located twenty minutes from our home in East Wenatchee, WA.

Joe has a red head complexion so sun is not where he likes to hang out. Trips to Kauai' or Mazatlan, Mexico on alternant years is definitely just for me. I do have a very narrow window of opportunity to be away from home between skiing and golf, which I gladly take advantage of near the middle of April. I'm happy playing in the pool while he goes to the local golf course with clubs in tow, so now we are both enjoying ourselves. I'm really happy when he delivers a snack or cold beverage pool-side.

This brings me to Harvey. In September 1992 a category 4 hurricane, Iniki, ripped through the Hawaiian Islands. More damage was done than any other hurricane in the Hawaiian Islands since records began. As I understand when it hit Kauai' a number of chicken farms



were destroyed, turning loose these colorful chickens. Believe me they are everywhere, which gives a new meaning to "free range" chickens! You can hear the roosters any time of the day or night. They must be on Hawaii time. I was told by locals there are more chickens than people that inhabit the island now. Jokingly tourists are asked to take one home at the end of their stay!

I met Harvey at the pool one day. He was scratching in the bark among the flowers and making a mess on the pool deck. I tried to shoo him away when a guy spoke up and informed me the bird was a regular and his name is Harvey. I apologized and said I had just been rude to Harvey by trying to shoo him away,

and that I was sorry. We all laughed, and from then on I would just say "hi" and leave him alone to scratch away.

Observing Harvey, I started thinking about "life lessons" we could all learn from a chicken:

1. He is always moving about, and is very slim and trim.
2. Eating natural food makes his feathers all shiny, none of this processed food, except for the bread and crackers people sometimes feed him which they are asked NOT to do. He probably doesn't worry about what they say about "eating in moderation".
3. He doesn't stress over what to wear, and who cares if he has the same

feathers adorning his body every day, minus a few I'm sure.

4. No responsibilities to anyone resulting in hurt feelings.
5. No clock to punch or schedule to keep.

The next time you get stressed think about Harvey. Of course it will help if you are somewhere warm and lounging by the pool with a cold beverage in your hand. Now that's the way to lower ones blood pressure.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

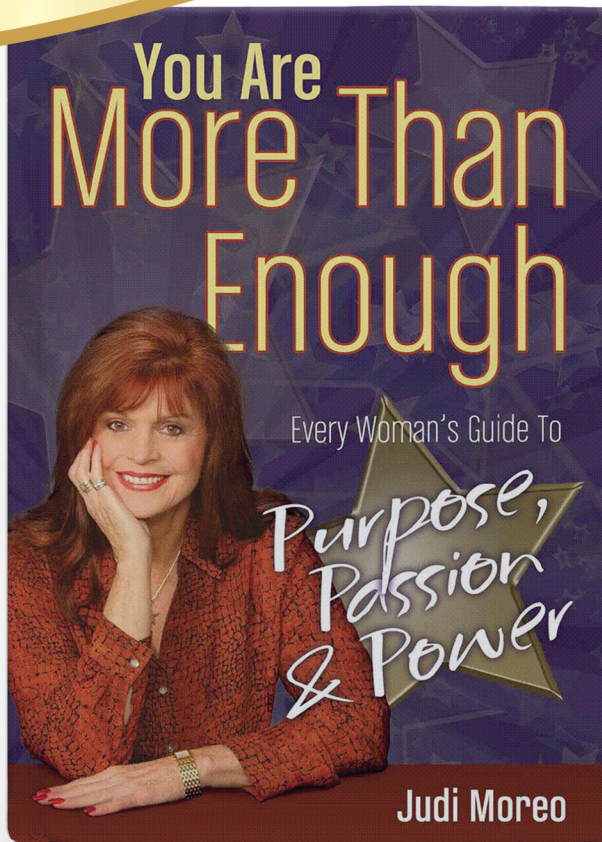
Pat Turner lives in East Wenatchee, Washington with her husband, Joe. She has been active at her local ski area, Mission Ridge, learning to three-track ski in 1966. She received her B.A. in education from Central Washington University and Fifth Year from the University of California Sacramento. Her first teaching assignment was in Placerville, California, then she finished her career in the Wenatchee, Washington area. She enjoys working out at the gym as well as riding tandem bike with Joe. Her travels include New Zealand, Tahiti, Mexico, and Hawaii. Pat also enjoys watercolor painting, writing, and hand crafts. You may contact Pat at: pturnerj2@nwi.net



**“Sometimes, the inessential
is essential.”**

T.L. Rese

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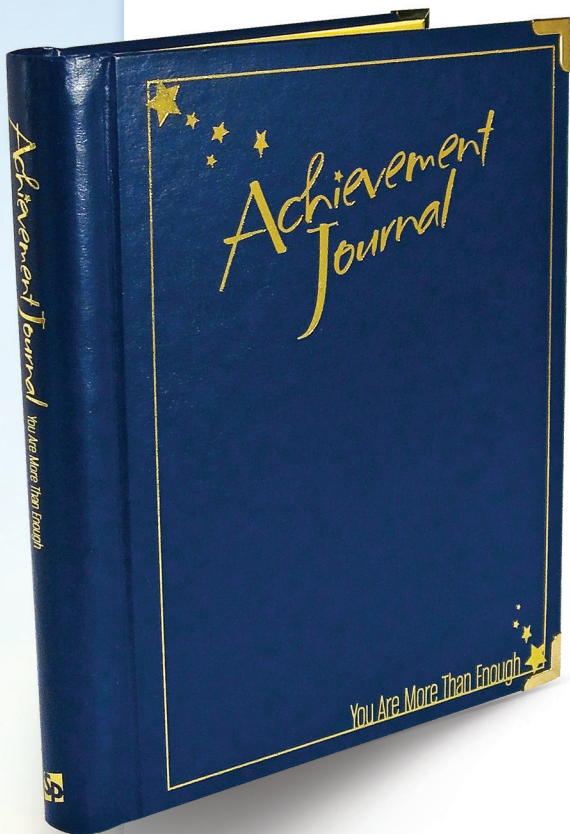
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HOW TO PREPARE FOR A STRESS-FREE RETURN FROM VACATION

BY AMBER DE LA GARZA

Do you yearn for a vacation but hesitate taking time off because you dread the state your business will be in when you return? You're not alone. This fear makes many of us have a bad attitude toward taking vacations. Vacation should be a permission slip to live carefree, slow down, and really enjoy life. The reality is your return to work could feel like getting run over by an eighteen-wheeler because of the hundreds of new emails and voicemail messages surely waiting for you. You do not have to return from

vacation overwhelmed though! These seven simple strategies will enable you to enjoy your time off, because they will ensure a stress-free return from vacation.

1. Set Expectations And Abide By Them

Set clear expectations with your staff and clients that you are going on vacation and do not break them. If you tell everyone you will not be able to return their emails and phone calls until you are back in town, stick to it! If you reply to even just one email or return one call while you're away, you

are asking for trouble. Don't set that precedent. If you do it once, they will expect you to do it again. Vacation over!

2. Change Your Voicemail

Let callers know you are out of the office and provide a date of return in which you'll be able to connect with them. Include instructions on who can assist them while you are away and how to get in touch with that person. Delegating your responsibilities for while you are on vacation will reduce the amount of calls you need to return and tasks you need to complete once back in the office.

3. Create A Vacation Folder And Email Rules

Set up a new folder within your email account named **Review Upon Return*. Then, create an automatic rule to forward all of your incoming emails to that folder. When pesky notifications sound that you have X new emails in

your inbox, the temptation to look is just way too hard. Use this awesome trick to eliminate the urge to read work emails while on vacation.

4. Turn On Your Out Of Office Auto-Reply The Day Before You Leave

It is nearly impossible to reply to all of the emails that flood your inbox right before you leave. Notify senders a day in advance of your departure that you are on vacation to set the expectation that you will not reply to their email until you return. If you wait until the day you leave to turn the notification on, you could find yourself responding to emails into the late hours prior to your vacation – just so you can depart feeling like you tied up loose ends and can now relax.

5. Stop Working the Day Before You Leave For Vacation

Ok, you can work but don't schedule any meetings or appointments the day before you leave because they give rise to new tasks to create, projects to research, and people to reach out to. The last thing you want is to produce a head full of new ideas demanding planning and solutions right before departing. Use this day for catching up only. Close open loops on projects and tasks so you can leave with a clear head.

6. Do Not Overschedule Yourself The First Day Back

The day you return also needs to be reserved strictly for catching up on current tasks and projects and responding to their related emails and voicemails. Again, no meetings or appointments. Taking on too much upon your return would lead to playing catch-up for weeks and negatively affect your productivity.

7. Process Your Emails

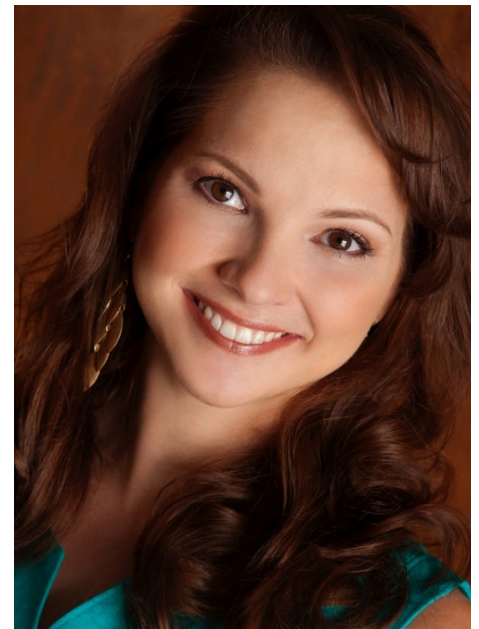
Do not return from vacation and *check*

your emails! Checking means cherry picking which emails to read and respond to. Instead, *process* emails starting in reverse chronological order (newest to oldest). Determine which action to take upon every single email between Delete, Forward, Reply, Schedule, or File and make your move. Instead of overwhelming you like checking emails does, processing emails aids you in creating an organized, manageable inbox.

All work and no play is harmful to the soul. Because you put so much time and effort into running your business, you have *earned* breaks from your daily work demands to go and refresh your soul. Taking regular vacations is key to improving your productivity, fostering renewed focus, and decreasing burnout. Don't turn down the opportunity to take

a vacation for fear of the impending doom upon your return to work. Enjoy your time off knowing with confidence you fully prepared yourself for a stress-free return from vacation!

Want more productivity tips and time maximizers to improve your productivity? Download my Free Time Maximizers resource at: www.TimeMaximizers.com



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

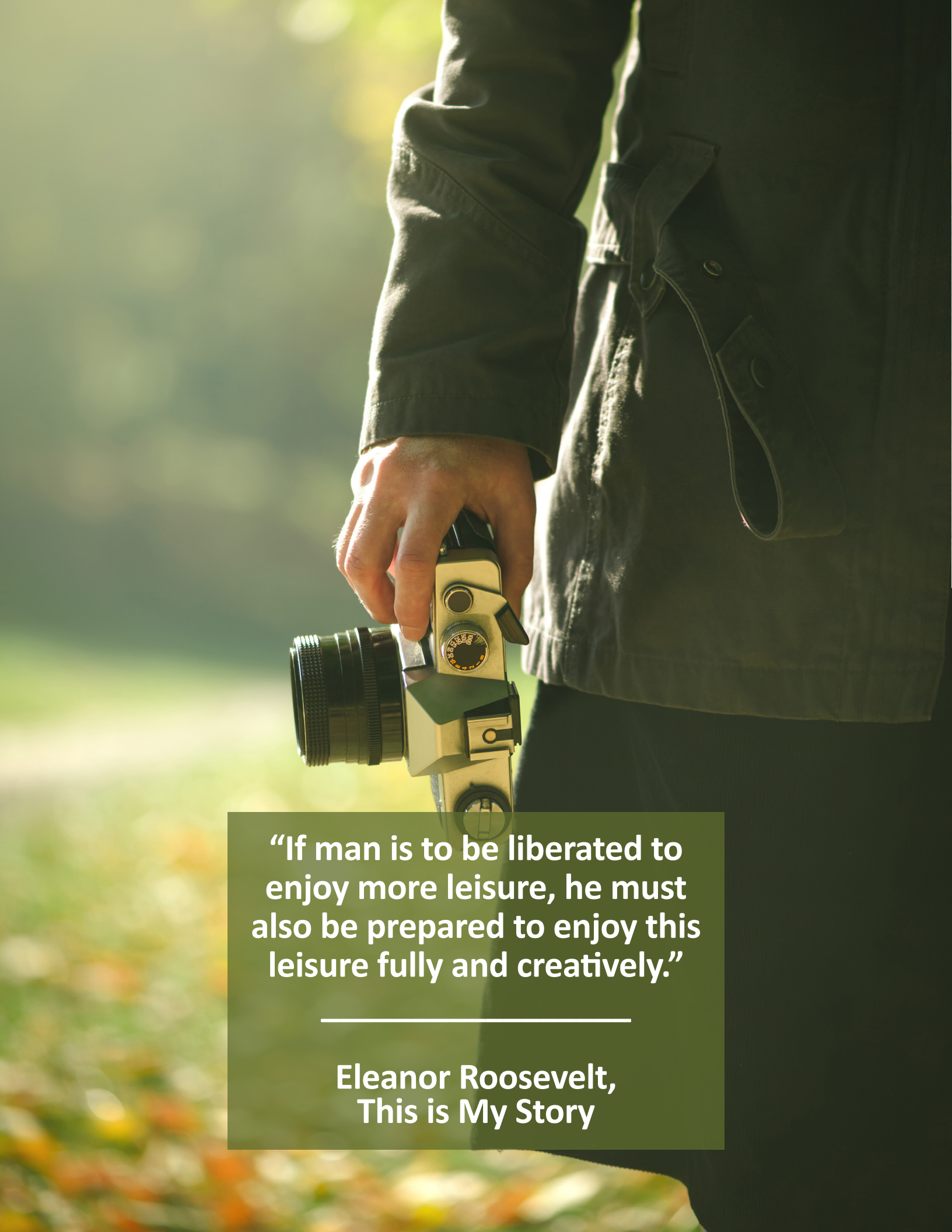
Amber De La Garza works with business owners who are eager to maximize their personal productivity to be more effective in life and business, meet their maximum potential, and accomplish their goals. For more information or to reach Amber: 702-527-2307 or Amber@TheProductivitySpecialist.com

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A close-up, low-angle shot of a person's hand holding a vintage camera. The person is wearing a dark, textured jacket. The background is a bright, out-of-focus landscape with green and yellow tones, suggesting a sunny day in a field or park. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows.

**“If man is to be liberated to
enjoy more leisure, he must
also be prepared to enjoy this
leisure fully and creatively.”**

**Eleanor Roosevelt,
This is My Story**



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—Kathie Slaughter, Retired teacher

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Marlene Livingston Curry is available for lectures and workshops based on her book *Resilient Survivor*.

EMAIL MARLENE
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MAKE LEISURE A PRIORITY AND LIFE STANCE

BY ANTHONY BURNSIDE

“

Leisure! I love that word. Just the mere mention of it conjures up visions of spending time at the beach with loved ones or friends, swimming and getting massages (I love massages)or traveling to far off destinations. I am a big believer in working hard and playing hard. Please keep in mind that leisure does not have to always mean taking exotic trips or any of the other iconography associated with vacations. With that said, life should always be enjoyed immensely alongside with working.

We need to endeavor to comprehend what the meaning of leisure really is. When we detach ourselves from the imprisoning confines of TV, phones, computers and the like, we quickly discover there is a whole new world which exists and is actually unfolding before our very eyes. Imagine what a person can experience during periods of being still? When we contemplate the nature of things, it is a look into life as it really is.

I was recently on a trip to San Jose, California, with friends. This is a very high tech 21st century modern city. I loved exploring San Jose, Fremont and all of the surroundings areas of Silicon Valley. I enjoyed talking to the residents and eating in the restaurants. While on this trip, we got invited to attend a show by the legendary rock star,



Prince, in Oakland, California, and later, my friends and I got a special invite to spend time with Prince at his after party in San Francisco. (My two friends used to work for Prince and were his longtime friends. I knew him from Hollywood and working with him at award shows.) I will always remember and cherish the time we all spent with him that night. We had no idea this would be the last time we would see him. Do we ever?

I felt equal joy at visiting Joshua Tree National Park on another recent trip and looking at the nature around me, the sky at night and experiencing the heavens without any light pollution. Living in this

modern tech world, we almost never take the time out to explore the natural world around us. We are so busy that we often miss what is important and vital.

Case in point: There was a robber who had hopped a train recently in the San Francisco area. The robber went unnoticed to the train passengers due to the fact that they were heavily engrossed in their smart phones and were not paying attention. They didn't see this guy at all. The robber actually had to formally announce that he was there to rob these passengers on the train. (This reminded me of a funny bank robbery scene depicted in a

“Leisure is the disposition of receptive understanding, of contemplative beholding, and immersion — in the real.”

Joseph Pieper

Woody Allen movie). This is a funny, yet sad story and it underscores the fact that we will not let go of our electronic leash and look up once in awhile to appreciate the view and relax. Twenty-first century zombie slavery, I call it. This advanced technology we have created has not made us any more free. It has only enslaved us. Everywhere I have traveled, I observed the same sight of people walking and looking at their phones, existing in their own unique solipsistic world, not even aware of their surroundings. It's sad.

This is where leisure can come into play. Engaging in leisure activities has been found to have positive lasting effects on your attitude and can even improve your health and well-being. Why wouldn't we want to engage in behavior that would benefit us?

We all know people who work very hard all of the time and almost never have time for themselves or their families and friends. These people who work constantly, then stress themselves into sickness, or even worse an early grave, never have fun. I once knew a man who worked hard at his job for 30 plus years and then the day he retired, he went home and dropped dead. Just like that, his life was over. Sad and true story. It is important that we live in the moment and for the moment.

Now, as for myself personally, when it comes to leisure or when I go on vacation (or vacay, as they say in Hollywood) to unwind, there is a special

bed and breakfast that I love to visit for relaxation near the Ozarks (I love natural beauty.) This resort, does not advertise and you can't find it online anywhere. Therein lies the beauty of this place. You only find it by word of mouth. This preserves the anonymity of the resort and its natural beauty. It sits on 100 acres and I sometimes relax by the swimming pool or go canoeing on the lake which is on the property and, believe it or not, the lake is called "Lake Anthony" (named after me, no lie, long story.) When I am in LA, I go to the beach, Runyon Canyon and museums. I also help friends with their music videos and attend film festivals (I love movies) for a moment of geek. I am also on a personal travel tour of presidential libraries. I was just recently in Simi Valley and I visited the Reagan Presidential Library.

I have also traveled overseas for leisure and on one of my trips to Europe, with my then girlfriend, I visited Paris and England. In addition to seeing the Louvre and other museums. I learned that the French have a very progressive view when it comes to leisure. In this country, you have a 35-hour work week, two hour lunches and you can even take off early for your weekends. I figure this is basically 30 days off a year plus 11 public holidays.... How do I sign up for this job? This is what I call leisure.

It is always important to take some personal time for yourself, to rest and recharge your batteries. Keep this in mind. Love yourself, go walk in a park or go help someone else. Take some art

classes. Go explore the natural wonders in your neighborhood or town, spoil yourself rotten with regard to taking care of yourself. No one will ever care about you the way you can care about yourself, if you only will. Instead of thinking of leisure time as extrication from your everyday routine, maybe think of it as the freedom to think about the elements around you and how you fit in it. Learn meditation, still your mind and commune with nature. Give yourself the privilege to experience the rewarding effects true leisure will have on your attitude and health. So remember, take the time to take your...TIME!



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Anthony Burnside is a security expert and close protection operative and has traveled the world with his work. He has conducted protection operations at the S.S.I. Conference at the prestigious U.S. Army War College for a former White House official and at the United States Air Force Academy. He has also provided protection for VIP's at worldwide events like the Golden Globes, American Music Awards, Grammy Awards, etc. In addition to his background in security, he is an actor, voice over artist, author and speaker and lends his talents to television, radio and the motion picture industry and has written for several national magazines and also for the *Life Choices* book series.

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CHOICES MAGAZINE
SUMMER ISSUE 2016

A FINAL NOTE FROM JUDI MOREO

Every privilege brings its corresponding responsibility. The privilege to make our own choices, good or bad, puts us in a very vital position.

Too often our choices are determined by our reaction to external circumstances without due regard to thoughtful decision. When we allow negative emotional reactions to direct our choices, we find ourselves facing consequences we don't desire. Using our power of logical thinking helps us make wiser choices which can create more desirable results.

There are worlds of possibilities, and yet many of us never see them because we are too busy. Take time and ask

yourself what you really want from this journey of life. Then imagine yourself living that life.

If you are to live the life you dream of, you must be specific about what you want. In his book "Psycho-Cybernetics," the author, Maxwell Maltz, tell us "A human being always acts and feels and performs in accordance with what he imagines to be true about himself and his environment." It is important for you to imagine the "being and feeling" of the life you want to live. If you will practice "imagining your new leisurely life" for a while, you will find you don't need to take any conscious actions because your subconscious will direct you to the choices which

will automatically begin moving you toward the life you desire.

The ancient philosopher, Marcus Aurelius, wisely said, "Every man's life lies within the present, for the past is spent and done with and the future is uncertain."

Choose to live each day with leisure and you will find that you can overcome your challenges and have a more satisfying, passion filled life.

You have the power to choose!

Judi