

## **You, On Purpose**

By Joanne Baskin, CPC, ignitus Solopreneur Coaching

Marcia Wieder (dreamcoach.com) in a recent article in Choice Magazine, referred to an interview she did of Dr. Mehmet C. Oz, where he described a medical term called 'apoptosis': "Apoptosis is when your brain believes you have outgrown your usefulness. This is most often experienced when people retire, get laid off, experience an empty nest, or when they have stopped dreaming. The brain sends a message to the body that it is no longer needed and people begin to mentally or physically self-destruct. What's the cure? According to Dr. Oz, it's passion and dreams."

Much research on successful transitions, especially at mid-life, speaks to the need to re-affirm roles and plan out new identities. Carl Jung identifies five main phases for this transition and in the last of these are 'reintegration and individuation': "Reintegration involves working out 'who I am' and becoming comfortable with that identity. This may mean that revising or dropping old roles for new. It may mean deciding that these roles should be expanded or deepened. It may mean becoming comfortable with new roles. Individuation in some ways is part of the reintegration process. This phase involves facing up to and accepting the undesirable aspects of our own character. It is only in accepting all parts of ourselves that we can become whole and complete."

In order to do this, time must be spent in self-exploration and openness to experimentation. If we consider both the life cycle and medical models, it becomes a matter of "life" to live with a connection to one's purpose or calling. This process is in no way limited to people in career transitions or in the stage of mid-life; it does, however, serve as a reminder that the time to live with purpose is *now* and the way to this is in *how* we live in *all* aspects of our life.

Melanie DewBerry-Jones is a certified coach who suggests the following questions to begin the self-exploration of one's purpose:

- What do you consistently attempt to give to others?
- What to others consistently seek you out for?
- What do others identify you as?
- What's the common denominator among the questions above?
- Look at your last job description, then write out the job description you'd love to have. Do they match or have you been doing the wrong job for too long?
- What are the seven truths that you live by?
- What motto or phrase would you put on a T-shirt?
- What part of you have you shrunk so as not to offend others?
- Do the people/communities you spend time with still fit your needs?

- When will you decide you can have it any way you wanted it?

In looking at the above questions, consider the many spheres of your life: your relationships, your work, your health, your finances and your spirituality. Are the identified "purposes" consistent across the board? Are there some areas that need more attention at this time in terms of aligning your actions with your values and purpose?

If this type of self inquiry is a new process, begin by simply "tuning in", by listening to what you have and what you want to offer. Become aware of the choices you are making and ask, "Is this bringing me closer to my life's purpose?" If the answer is yes, then your vision for work, love and life will become clearer!

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