

Fear of Losing Your Job

Every day the media delivers bad news on the economic front. Whether it's the auto industry, the financial world or the mom and pop stores that can no longer make a go of it, everyone seems connected to job loss somewhere in their circle of friends and family.

The worries during these times are insurmountable. Anxiety increases as we fear losing our houses, paying bills and supporting our families.

Twice in my life I have dealt with the worry of job loss. Once back in my corporate days and now as a result of the current economic hurricane.

Back in my corporate days I prided myself on being a leader, whether that was in a department, team or function. I've always had a pretty good knack at doing a job better than expected and easily climbed the ladder as a result.

I was paid well for my work. During the salary-freeze years I always received my yearly bonus AND double digit increases. I smiled quietly, knowing that I was one of the privileged few and kept my good fortune to myself.

I worked for one particular company for seven years, starting on the bottom rung of the ladder, and ended up a favourite of the executive team. I flew around North America working with dealers, representatives, architectural photographers and interior designers.

I can't even begin to count the number of times the president or CEO of the company took me aside, shook my hand and congratulated me on surpassing their expectations once again.

Then one day it changed.

A new president was brought into the company to run another division. The two presidents did not see eye to eye and within a very short amount of time, we followers found ourselves having to choose sides.

I chose the side I was aligned with all along. The side I trusted and knew. Unfortunately we lost.

The last seven weeks of my employment were brutally difficult. It's not easy going from the golden girl to the one left off the organizational chart at a company re-launch party.

It was hell wondering what was going to happen next and how this could have happened to me in the first place. I was a bundle of nerves and try as I might to get answers; no one wanted to speak with me.

Then one day something *in me* changed.

I let go of all the fear, anger and disappointment. I went in to work and sat at my desk staring at my blank calendar. You know your days are numbered when everyone is working sixteen hour days to stay afloat from the work load, but you have absolutely

nothing on your plate and no matter how many times you beg for a project, nothing comes your way.

I sat staring at the blank calendar and pondered how I had gotten to this place. I wondered if there was something I had done wrong.

Almost as if in response to my question, a peaceful, easy vibration flowed through my body and I realized this was *supposed* to happen to me. There was a bigger reason and a bigger picture I had not yet contemplated.

Difficult situations are merely opportunities to learn valuable lessons and move forward in our journey of life. We are meant to find contentment, peace and calm every single day. And we are meant to find meaning, love and abundance in our human existence as well.

This difficult time became my stepping stone for something better. Without it I would have continued on that path, never taking the opportunity to embrace a new and exciting next step in my life.

Within a matter of days I used my free time at the office to formulate a plan for my future. I was going to leave the corporate world, (but not until they walked me out ensuring I received my severance) and in place I would create my own consulting business.

Once that magical moment of realization occurred, I never looked back. The company did give me a severance and I sent thank you cards to the executive team for an amazing seven year run. Sure the last few weeks were difficult, but I could not overlook the incredible things I learned and experienced while being employed with them.

My consulting firm took off! Everything fell into place and clients quickly found their way to my doorstep. I had never been happier and in retrospect realized this new path I found myself on, was the best I had ever been on.

Then one day it changed...again.

The economy crashed. Clients were forced to make cut backs, which included the funds normally allocated to my consulting. Opportunities for new business became sparse and my workload started to shrivel. Bills were increasingly difficult to pay as money trickled in.

I sat in my office, staring at my blank calendar and pondered how I had gotten to this place. Knowing that this path was absolutely the right path for me to follow, back when I left the corporate world, I wondered why it had changed again and if there was something I did wrong, or should do differently.

Once again, that peaceful easy vibration flowed through my entire body and I *knew* this was *supposed* to happen to me. I was being pushed again, in the direction of something new.

The moment I acknowledged this change of direction, everything started falling into place. The concepts formed quickly in my mind and my heart beat with excitement every time I thought of the new path I would follow.

I could have stayed stuck, fearing the change, fighting the declining economy, worrying about how the bills would be paid. I could have hung on to hope that things would turn around and I would once again find success with my consulting firm as it was.

But to do so, would have denied the flow of life. I was being carried down the stream by a raging current and certainly I could have stuck the oars out and paddled like a mad woman in an attempt to steer the boat in the direction I believed was right, but it was so much easier, peaceful and calmer to just pull up the oars and let the current take me where I needed to go.

This is the lesson for today. Everything that happens in our human life serves a purpose. Especially the difficult and seemingly insurmountable challenges. It is during these times that the lessons before us are crying for our attention, and if we acknowledge them we complete the cycle and move forward on our journey.

Be careful not to stay angry, bitter or resentful of these challenges. This will only stop you from learning the lesson and from moving forward in your journey. Keeping these negative emotions alive merely keeps you stuck in the exact place you dread so much. If you don't like being there, why stay any longer than you have to?

So then, pull up the oars and let the flow of life take you where you need to go. I promise that as hard as it might be to believe, it will be better than you could ever have imagined.

Start by grieving what has died, left you or is now gone. With every loss, whether a human one, a job loss, an end of a marriage, a loss of a house, or an end of a dream, you are required to travel through each of the five stages of grief. They are:

1. Denial and isolation (when you desperately pretend there was no death, no end, no problem.)
2. Anger (when you hate everyone and everything that seems to have caused you to be in this position in the first place.)
3. Bargaining (when you spend your time saying 'if only I did this... if only I did that...if only they did this or that...')
4. Depression (that sad and debilitating time where you find it difficult to face the next day as you have no idea what it will bring.)
5. Acceptance (when you realize that this death did in fact occur, and you survived. That it's okay. It is here that you must acknowledge the lessons that were put before you so that you can not only accept the death, but move forward in your journey in a positive way.)

Although I would never have wished the crisis on anyone, this latest economic storm has brought me here. Launching www.TheLessonsOfLife.com, a place where people can be inspired and motivated. It has also brought me to my first non-business related book, *Death ... and the Lessons I Learned*. Writing and publishing the book has been a journey in itself, a path I would never have found the time to follow had I stayed stuck in fear of the economic crisis.

Everything happens for a reason. We may not understand that reason in the moment of panic, but when we calm our fears and look back at our lives, we realize that each and

every experience, good and bad, has led us to where we are today. And each experience was necessary.

Learn the lesson.
Complete the cycle.
Move on in the journey of your life.

Best of luck,
Louise

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