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Terri Trespicio

Stop Searching For Your Passion

Transcript:

The day I got laid off from my job at Martha Stewart¹ I was relieved. I loved the job. I really did but the relationship was over, and I didn't know how to end it and then it broke up with me. Don't you love when that happens? At the time I'd been also hosting² a radio show for the Martha Stewart brand on SiriusXM³ and then not long after that got canceled too.

- 5 With this idea that I had to know what I was supposed to do now, right, I'm to pursue this passion. It just bugged⁴ me. It always had and that's because there's a dangerously limiting idea at the heart of everything we believe about success and life in general. And it's that you have one singular passion and your job is to find it and to pursue it to the exclusion of all else. And if you do that, everything will fall into place. And if you don't, you failed.
- 10 The pressure starts really young and it goes your whole life, but it's perhaps most pronounced when you're graduating from school, right? Everyone says, "Wow, the world's at your feet, what are you going to do now?" And it's so intimidating, it's like picking a major⁵ for life. You know, I had a hard enough time picking a major for four years and I changed that once if not twice. I mean it was like just intimidating, right. And this compelling⁶, I mean this really, you know, forceful cultural imperative⁷ to choose your passion, it's stressful to me but it's not just me.
- 15 Everyone I talked to agrees with me. The woman who sold me this dress, I told her what I needed to dress for, what I was talking about and she said, "Oh my gosh, I really need to hear this talk because I just graduated from school, my friends and I, we don't know what we're passionate about. We don't know what we're supposed to do."

¹ *Martha Stewart*: amerikansk medie- og livsstilsvirksomhed

² (her) vært på

³ radiokanal

⁴ (her) irriterede

⁵ kandidatfag på universitetet

⁶ overbevisende

⁷ *cultural imperative*: (her) kulturbestemt nødvendighed

20 I'm leery of⁸ passion for a few reasons. But one of them is that passion is not a plan. It's a feeling and feelings change. They do. You can be passionate about a person one day, and a job, and then not passionate the next. We know this and yet we continue to use passion as the yardstick⁹ to judge everything by, instead of seeing passion for what it really is: the fire that ignites when you start rubbing sticks together.

25 Anyway, I was such a mess when I was in my twenties, such a mess, I was anxious and depressed and I had no life to speak of. I was temping¹⁰ to keep my options open and I was sitting around at night in my underwear watching *Seinfeld*¹¹ reruns, actually I still do that, that's not the worst thing in the world to do. It's fine.

30 But I called my mother every night crying and I was turning away perfectly good fulltime jobs – why? Because I was afraid. I was sure that I would pick the wrong one and get on the wrong train headed to the wrong future. My mother begged me, she said, "Please take a job, any job, you're not going to be stuck. You're stuck now. You don't create your life first and then live it. You create it by living it, not agonizing¹² about it." She's right, she's always right [...].

35 One of my favorite columns is a piece by "Dilbert" creator Scott Adams¹³. He wrote a piece in *The Wall Street Journal*¹⁴ few years ago about how he failed his way to success and one of his jobs was as a commercial loan officer¹⁵. And he was taught specifically: do not loan money to someone following their passion. No, loan it to someone who wants to start a business, the more boring the better.

40 Adams says that in his life success fueled passion more than passion fueled success. When I got my first job as a magazine editor, in publishing, I was thrilled. But I had to take a pretty big pay cut because at the time I'd been a catalog copywriter¹⁶ at a wig company. Laugh if you will, clearly you are and many many people did. But wigs paid and so I had to figure out a way to make some money. So a friend of mine invited me to a jewelry party and I said, what is a jewelry party? She said it's like Tupperware¹⁷ but with bracelets. I said, okay, got it, got it.

45 I went and I had the best time. I was there hanging out trying on jewelry and the salesperson's having a great time and I was like, that's a job. I could do that. I mean really she seems to be having a great time. Now I had no background in sales – unless you count girl scouts – and I was terrible and I had no passion for jewelry. I mean, honestly, my earrings cost \$20, combined, all of them, and then I was like I think I can sling silver jewelry to suburban moms, drinking
50 daiquiris. Yes, I can do that.

⁸ *leery of*: mistroisk over for

⁹ målestok

¹⁰ arbejdede som vikar

¹¹ amerikansk komedieserie 1989-1998

¹² fortvile

¹³ *Scott Adams*: amerikansk tegneserieskaber af fx tegneseriestriben "Dilbert"

¹⁴ *The Wall Street Journal*: amerikansk avis

¹⁵ *commercial loan officer*: erhvervskunderrådgiver

¹⁶ *catalog copywriter*: tekstforfatter på reklamekatalog

¹⁷ virksomhed, hvis produkter sælges ved private sammenkomster

And so I did it, I signed up, I became a Silpada Designs¹⁸ rep¹⁹ and I, listen to me, I was not setting the world on fire right away, really. I was so like awkward and afraid of selling, and then I got better, and I got better. And I started making some money. And I started getting really passionate about it, not just because of the money but because what I realized was people
55 wanted the stuff. They were happy to pay for it. I sold so much jewelry that year, I won a free trip to St. Thomas²⁰. It's true. I eventually let my jewelry business go because my career path shifted, but I was so glad that I did that because it planted an entrepreneurial²¹ seed I didn't know was there and that bears fruit to this day.

(2015)

¹⁸ *Silpada Designs*: smykkefirma

¹⁹ repræsentant

²⁰ *St. Thomas*: caribisk ø

²¹ iværksætter