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The Self-Care Minder – Doing What You Love?

By Jennifer Louden

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Can I tell you, frankly, how sick I am of the story that because we do what we love, we should always be jubilant, light hearted, blissed out, can't-wait-to-get-out-of-bed every-bloody-morning happy and content? Have you ever fell into this belief?

What a disservice this myth does to women like you and me and the two glistening creative souls quoted below—Carla Blazek and Kirsten Oppe.

Here is my claim: you can do what you love, for a living or a part-time living or simply because you love it, and you will still suffer. You can do what you love and you will still hit the same rough spots, doubts, and dark nights of the soul that you would if you weren't doing what you love, they will just be different ones! I would even go so far as to claim that those of us who are living our dreams are more susceptible to doubt and dark nights because we are more aware and often, by listening and pursuing our passions, we increase our overall evolution—which can certainly increase our dissonance and discomfort! I would also add that if we think we won't have days in which we hate our dream, we are declaring we won't continue to evolve, because life conditions are what helps us change and grow.

Here is a juicy and liberating idea I'm meditating on these days: What if, instead of thinking I'm wrong, off track, or screwing up when I'm uncertain, afraid, lost, don't know what to do next or aren't enjoying some aspect of living my dream, I held the interpretation that I am moving to a new level of development, that I am at my learning edge and the learning edge is never comfortable. I'm not screwed up, I'm evolving! Just think back to a time before you learned something significant. Were you feeling all light and happy and comfortable? Or edgy, irritable, uncertain, worried, fretful?

What if losing our way is a good sign? (Now, I don't believe it always is and next time I'll share guidelines for discerning when lost is good and when lost is a swim in the ole' river Denial or about biological or cognitive disconnects.)

Here's what Carla Blazek, creator of <http://www.zenamoon.com>, had to say about living her dream and the potholes she's fallen into along the way:

The Self-Care Minder – Doing What You Love?

"I know that I once believed that following my dream meant happily ever after.

Years ago, on Oprah, there was a woman who had followed her dream of making elaborate handmade dolls. Sitting in her beautiful antique-filled studio surrounded by mountains of lush gorgeous fabrics, with a look of serenity and bliss on her face, she said she was so in love with her work that 'every day was like Christmas morning.'

For years, I carried that metaphor as my idea of what following my dream should feel like [Jennifer's note: notice the word should, always a dead giveaway we are pushing ourselves out of our center and toward the outside world's dictates]. I believed that if I, too, was skipping along my Divine path of expression and creativity, there would be no hardships, no fear, no struggles. If I was doing it right

(whatever that means!), my days would be filled with vivid inspiration, crystal clear decision-making, fantastic feelings 'round the clock and a big fat bankbook to boot.

WELL:

Now I know this serene dollmaker was either fibbing — to herself or to Oprah's producers — or she'd been in business less than a year and was still in the honeymoon phase.

Falling in love with our work is like falling in love with a person. At first our world revolves around our beloved work. We eat, sleep, and breathe our work; talk about it incessantly. It is the answer to our prayers! We feel so alive! How did we ever live without this?

Moving through disillusionment has been a natural cycle in my relationship with my company zena moon. Some of my illusions lost so far include:

I will always feel passionate about what I do
When I follow my intuition, I will not make poor decisions or choices
Because I operate in integrity, I do not need practical safeguards (i.e., legal) to protect me
My fears will go away
My dream(s) will not change
Saying yes to business and customers is more important than saying no
I have to do everything by myself

I gave birth to zena moon, and she has a life and energy all her own. I've learned it's incredibly important to LISTEN to how I feel in relationship to her. And to listen to what SHE is telling ME!

I can now:

Say no when I'm resentful.

Schedule (and actually take) days off.

Pay attention to what brings me joy — What caresses my days? what drags me under?

Court fear! When I'm complacent, I'm stagnating — fear means I'm stretching and that is goodness!

[Jen's note: Yes! I agree! Fear can be a great sign that we are evolving, that we are at our learning edge!]

The Self-Care Minder – Doing What You Love?

Allow my dream to grow and change and develop in unexpected ways.
Invite, and allow, Mystery.
Practice surrender (I'm not in charge 24x7 and who wants to be!)."

Brava Carla!

A similar story from photographer and artist Kirsten Oppe about her fear of staging her next exhibit (<http://www.cafegutenberg.com/news/articleDisplay.php?UID=23>):

"Perhaps I forgot that even when one's path is one of bliss even when it starts out with that joyous burst of energy in the spark of an idea and the wide beaming smile of initial reactions to that idea..... it does not inoculate one against the actual work, the rub of the proverbial grinding stone against one's shoulder! Funny, but that knocks me every time! [Jen's note: There is that learning edge again! We need a more generative story about what is normal when we are creative, when we are learning, that it is normal to be lost, scared, bored, frustrated and that those experiences are not to be judged as a sign we are doing the wrong thing, not to be pushed away.]

When I first discovered my life's purpose many years ago, I thought everything difficult and painful (in that part of my life) had been resolved. From that moment of revelation onwards, life would be nothing but smooth and easy. I was so shocked to discover that on the other side of discovering one's bliss lie all of these challenges and stumbling blocks! I wonder if it's like this in marriage, too we (who are single) look so long to find that one, true special someone and then everything is supposedly going to taste like sweet marmalade from then on but I have a hunch that it is when we meet our 'true' match that the learning process really begins ... any blocks we ever had inside to love would come right up and meet us like the blow of a 2x4!"

Thank you Kirsten!

Does this all sound rather blatant to you?

Is this a syndrome you've never succumbed to?

Have you never said, "I'm scared/uncertain/don't know how, so maybe this means I shouldn't do it," (it could be: open the shop, write the book, speak to the board, say no to the job, say no to the man).

One of the most powerful ideas I've ever encountered is that learning isn't about information. Learning, to paraphrase consultant and author Fred Kofman, is the capacity to accomplish results that you were not able to accomplish before. The capacity to close the gap between your current reality and the reality you would like to produce. The closure of that gap, through the expansions of one's consciousness, through awareness and choice, through shifting how you see the world, and through taking in new information and applying it in action, is learning. He compares it to riding a bike more than reading a book.

We in the west are not comfortable with learning in this way. Our education system is all about finding answers. Our corporations and government mostly reward people who claim to know, even if that knowing is leading straight into the jaws of disaster. It is better to appear to know than to appear "stupid." Why is not knowing a sign of stupidity? I maintain it is a sign of spiritual brilliance!

The Self-Care Minder – Doing What You Love?

This comes into play so strongly in all areas of our lives but especially when it comes to our story about what should (there is that word again) happen when we are living our dream. It is as if we think we will have to cease being learners.

What a horrifying idea!

Jennifer Louden is the Comfort Queen, the best-selling author of the Comfort Book series, a certified coach, the creator of learning events and retreats, and the owner of [Comfortqueen.com](http://www.comfortqueen.com). She has appeared on numerous radio and TV programs, including Oprah. She's spoken to thousands of women in groups as diverse as the Canadian wilderness and a German bank. She mentors creative women all over the world. There are over 750,000 copies of her books in print world wide and in January, HarperSanFrancisco will update her first four books with new covers and updated resources. She's also a columnist for Body & Soul magazine and at work on her first novel.
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A Dog Day Care Franchise – Is it really worth it?

By Kelley Blackston

A Dog Day Care Franchise – Is it really worth it? by Kelley Blackston

When you take into account that there are over 68,000,000 dogs in the United States alone, you can see why many people consider taking advantage of a dog day care franchise.

However, before you even think about a dog day care franchise, please do a self evaluation and make sure you are doing it for the right reasons.

The Self-Care Minder – Doing What You Love?

A dog day care franchise is a tremendous responsibility. It requires a lot of time, a lot of effort, and a lot of resources.

Now, please understand that I am not implying that a dog day care franchise is not a wise choice for you. I am only trying to help provide you with some useful dog day care franchise information.

Here are some general questions to ask yourself before starting a dog day care franchise:

– Do I really love dogs enough to start a dog day care franchise?

Yes, I realize like many opportunities in life, you have the potential to make good profits with a dog day care franchise regardless of whether you really care for the dogs or not.

However, if you don't have a love and passion for dogs, your success with a dog day care franchise will more than likely be limited.

– Next, are you willing to foot the bill for all of the necessary dog day care franchise resources?

Yes, even a dog day care franchise that comes with all the necessary information and tools is still going to cost you. Especially, if you are renting a building for leasing land.

These are just some of the reasons why I encourage people to do their research before taking advantage of a dog day care franchise.

So if you've read this article and find that a dog day care franchise is still a viable opportunity for you then great!

I wish you nothing but success!

Kelley Blackston P.S. You may use this article in your publication, but the content and signature file must remain intact. Thank you. "Thousands Have Discovered This Little Known Secret To Making Money With A Dog Day Care -- Now It's Your Turn..." <http://www.startadogdaycare.com>



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