

Reinvent Yourself

You are a beautiful essence expressing your own unique genius. Yes, I said genius. And no, I don't mean like Albert Einstein. We each have something that delights us, that we enjoy doing and most times a yearning to share that with others in some way. And this essence that wants to break out leads you to reinvent yourself – many times over the course of your life. What do I mean by reinvent? To remake or to bring back. You can change your entire life one tiny bit at a time, you know. Is there one area of your life that you'd like to reinvent?

Career/work
Physical fitness
Friendships/relationships

Something might have popped in your head when I asked that question...and there's a good chance it was immediately followed by a "yeah but". Well I'm here to tell you that most of us have pretty big butts (and I don't mean the one you're sitting on!)

Let's talk about some of the obstacles that keep you from doing things you love and how to work around them.

Obstacle #1: Age. I don't care how old you are. If you are 60 and say you are too old to change...how do you think you'll feel when you look back at 80 yrs old and remember how old you thought you were at 60. There are many stories of folks who reinvented themselves at all ages.

Artist, Grandma Moses began painting in her seventies after abandoning a career in embroidery because of arthritis. An art collector discovered her paintings in a Hoosick Falls, New York drugstore window in 1938. In 1939, an art dealer exhibited some of her work in gallery in New York. This brought her to the attention of collectors all over the world, and her paintings became highly sought after. She went on to exhibit her work throughout Europe and in Japan, where her work was particularly well received. In 1956 she was paid \$1000 for a painting for President Eisenhower.

Yes, your body is going to age, but your mindset towards aging has a tremendous influence on how well you will age. Studies on longevity show that genetics have only a 30% influence on the length of our lives; the remaining 70% depends on one's lifestyle.

In the 1800's, 65 was established as the marker of "old" when the life expectancy was only 47. Life expectancy is pushing 80 today; 65 is just beginning a new chapter.

More people are living to 100 and older. When these centenarians are asked about how they've achieved such longevity, they generally mention four key ingredients: being optimistic and having a positive attitude; engagement...doing the things in life one loves and feels strongly about; being active and mobile; and, adaptability to loss and resilience. Learning to deal with and adapt to the difficulties of life...deal with it and the let it go.

Obstacle #2: Physical Ability. My father was a great admirer of Helen Keller, the famous deaf & blind author and world famous speaker. He had an opportunity to "hear" her speak...actually her speech was translated into sign language for the mostly deaf audience. My father is completely deaf –he spoke to Ms. Keller through finger spelling letters into each other's hands.

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She was the first deaf & blind person to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree. A prolific author, Keller was well traveled and was outspoken in her support for women's suffrage, workers' rights, and socialism. She met every US President from Grover Cleveland to Lyndon B. Johnson and was friends with many famous figures, including Alexander Graham Bell, Charlie Chaplin, and Mark Twain.

Her words: "I am only one, but still I am one. I cannot do everything, but still I can do something; and because I cannot do everything, I will not refuse to do something that I can do." I remember these words when I start to feel like what I'm doing is insignificant. Do what you love to do. Start now!

Obstacle #3: Time. Think for a minute. What would you do with five completely free hours a day – every day? Or how about three completely open days a week... every week. AND, a few weeks or months here and there throughout every year that were entirely yours to do with what you liked. You probably can't even imagine it!

You must free up time to go after your dreams or to even do nothing at all. The most authentic and creative side of you can re-emerge only when you have open time.

You probably spent much of the first 40 years of your life meeting other people's needs. Now is YOUR time. Move your desires to the top and let lots of other people's needs drop down your priority list.

I know...I know...I hear your "yeah butts." This does take courage. I can speak from experience, it gets easier. You learn to teach people what to expect from you by your words and actions. You don't have to do lots of explaining... if I have an afternoon blocked out for "me" time...time to just walk and sit by the harbor and "be" I can honestly tell people...no, I can't schedule you in that slot...I am booked. Ralph Waldo Emerson said "The greater part of courage is having done it before." So give it a try. Block out a space of time just for you. And let me know what ideas pop up for YOUR latest reinvention.

About the Author:

Ann Ronan, Ph.D. is an author, speaker, certified career coach and self employment expert, and vision generator.

Ann delivers smart, simple ways for people to acknowledge what they love to do and do more of it. Her articles, products, and books have motivated and inspired readers in numerous print and online publications. She regularly leads coaching programs, tele-seminars and live retreats, bringing the message to audiences internationally that living a passion-based life will bring prosperity and success.

She was recently selected from a nationwide search to be featured in Discover Your Inner Strength. The book features best-selling authors Stephen R. Covey (Seven Habits of Highly Effective People), Brian Tracy (Million Dollar Habits), and Ken Blanchard (One Minute Manager).