

Group exercise from the May 2, 2006 Women In Leadership Keynote speech by Shelly Barnes, VP of Technology with Arizona Tile.

I have 9 questions which will open your mind and may even surprise you as to some of your untapped desires and maybe even fears. Try a few of these exercises to help you to start focusing on your career planning and life thinking.

1. Write down your five favorite activities, the ones without which your life would feel empty. - No career choice is suitable unless you get to do your favorite activities at least weekly, and preferably, daily.
2. Write down the top three goals you want to accomplish in your career. Think experience, impact, contribution, money, recognition. - Your selected career must enable you to reach these goals.
3. List five things you'd like to do in your lifetime. - Your chosen career must allow the accomplishment of these dreams.
4. What is working well in your life right now.
5. What isn't working well in your life that you need to address.
6. Are you waiting for someone to let you be you or to make you feel complete – what if you weren't waiting for that person, what would you do differently?
7. What have you dreamed of since the first day you saw it
8. Name someone you know who is or has lived fully
9. What would you do if you had no fear

Robert Frost wrote... "Two roads diverged in a wood, and I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference."

So I leave you with:
Remove the Fear, Believe in Yourself, Take some Risks, and
Following Your Passions

A Gift of Authenticity for you my friend
Removing Fear, Taking Risks, Following Your Passions

As women, we have been programmed to be the good girl and to do what (society) deems right....to give, nurture, follow the beaten path, work hard, accomplish as much if not more than our male counterparts, love, keep in shape, look pretty, be polite, don't argue, keep track of everything, the list goes on and on. And guess what, we are all doing a pretty darn good job at it! But who truly have we become...who are we? Have we really gone after our dreams and accomplished the things that are truly meaningful to us, or have we put most of them on hold due to other obligations such as family, work, health, financial issues, and social acceptance.....and of course out of fear?

Outwardly, do we appear as though we have everything in balance and control, and that we have it all? Perhaps, but internally, do we really feel balanced, are we happy and content that we are living the life we really want...likely not.

When was the last time that you sat quietly with no other distractions or guilt, looking inward at who you are now, how you really feel about your current life, the path you are on, and if you are staying true to what and who you feel is authentically you?

My gift to you is to ask you to give a gift to yourself, and to take 60 minutes and go to that special place that makes you feel comfortable and allows you to focus on you, this could be a quaint coffee shop, your own bedroom, a hot bath, or on top of a mountain, whatever place is comfortable to you. Take at least one hour, take more time if you allow yourself, and go through the questions about you and your life and answer them as honestly as you can. Some maybe very difficult to immediately think of an answer since so often we are the least priority in our own hectic lives, so go to the next question and maybe something will get triggered in your mind.

The goal of this is to allow you to tap back into you, your heart, your soul, your desires, to take the time to focus on what's truly important and meaningful to whom you are. Life can get away from us, and yet it really is so very short and can be taken away from us without a moments notice. Are you staying true to your heart's desires, are you living a life of integrity and being the authentic person you want to be? What will help you to live more fully and go after your passions...hopefully some of the questions will start to help you to stop running on autopilot and living the life that you truly want to live.

Your answers are not intended to be shared with anyone, unless someday, maybe when we are all very old and grey sipping some wine you want to take out your journal and say remember when....

Enjoy, Shelly Barnes

Removing Fear, Taking Risks, Following Your Passions

Begin living your authentic life today

1. Write down your five favorite activities, the ones without which your life would feel empty.
2. Write down the top three goals you want to accomplish in your career. Think experience, impact, contribution, money, recognition.
3. List five things you'd like to do in your lifetime.
4. What's working well in your life?
5. What isn't working well in your life?
6. What are you afraid of?
7. What one thing do you want to accomplish before your next birthday?
8. What secret are you keeping that needs to be addressed?
9. What two things could you do for yourself everyday that would be good for you or bring you joy?
10. Are you waiting for someone or something to let you be you or to make you feel complete? If so, why do you feel this would make you complete?
11. What if you weren't waiting for that person or that one thing, what would you do differently?
12. List 5 things you thought you would have accomplished by now that you haven't.
13. List 10 things you want to do before you die.
14. List 5 things you loved as a child.
15. List one thing that you would love to learn, and make a plan to learn it in the next 6 months.
16. Make a list of all your unfulfilled desires.
17. Identify a dream you can accomplish within the next year.
18. What is your ideal city/town – and why?
19. Write 3 positive things you wish you had been told as a child.
20. Think of something that you've been told you aren't good at and do it.
21. What have you dreamed of since the first day you saw it?
22. Name someone you know who has lived fully or is living an authentic life, and ask them how they've been able to achieve this state of life.
23. What would you do if you had no fear?
24. What steps must you take to live with more authenticity?
25. Make a commitment to yourself to be you and to live the authentic, full life that you deserve to live!

