

Don't Give UP-On Overcoming

The Crucible: Overcoming With Head, Heart and Soul Aligned~

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Imagine going from a trailblazing career as the CEO of a successful multi-million dollar company, with a track history of achievement and excellence and all the social and financial capital you needed to live your best life, to being reduced to the most menial and

humbling of jobs.

Would you find it difficult? Would you find it impossible? What would happen if you woke up one morning to find everything that you had worked so hard to accomplish gone? What would you feel like if you did not have family, friends or a social net of any kind to support you in moving out of the black hole in which you fell?

My name is Irene Becker, and what you have read describes that tumultuous change that occurred in my life just prior to my 40th birthday. A change, and to most people a horrible life crucible, that took me from the world of having it all, to losing it all in what seemed like a blink. A change, a horrific act of violence and madness that catapulted me into a new world of the unknown, where I was forced to learn to build again from ground zero.

I had entered a new world where my singular focus was to show my two young children that from integrity, from values, from courage and from faith can come the power to heal a head, a heart, a body and to transform one's life, and one's world.

The wealth and success I had acquired came from many long hours of very hard work, and from a great deal of personal sacrifice. The destruction of what had been my life, the wealth I had once known did not start on that fateful night when my life was threatened and I fled with my children, \$100, a credit card and a book of psalms.

Because, "suddenly syndrome" is never what it appears to be. While it may make us feel good to think that the road to wealth is paved with overnight success stories, and we may think that the horrible life crucibles that take us to the depth of pain happen in a blink, they do not.

The seeds that we plant, are sewn every day in the way we live our life, the choices we make, the thoughts we think, the emotions we feel, the biochemistry that drives our bodies, and the environment in which we live and work.

The ability to live our best life has little to do with what we have, but depends on our ability to really excavate our true self, our authentic voice and use it to sing our best song, to listen to our higher self and know that we are living in alignment with our highest purpose.

While I had build great success and wealth, while I had accomplished so much, my true self, my authentic voice was unheard and hidden behind all that I had done, all that I had commanded, conquered and acquired. I had stopped listening to what I truly needed and wanted. Or, maybe I was never tuned into my real self. For getting up close and personal, getting naked with our true needs, our true desires is something that is perhaps the most difficult thing to accomplish in a world where we are socialized to strive for that which makes us feel powerful and validated.

In a world where more emphasis is placed on taking than on giving, on acquiring than on sharing, on accumulating rather than appreciating. In a world where we are so busy doing, that

we seem to have forgotten that the most important thing we can do is to BE at one with our true voice, with our true purpose, with the source of infinite love and goodness that can take us into the Light.

I believe that there is a voice in every man or woman that can be heard, if we try to listen. It is the voice of wisdom, the voice of courage, the voice of faith that transcends time, space and motion. It is the voice that echoes in all human beings, all religions and spiritual paths.

If we can reach past what is and reclaim our authentic voice, we are rich. And, if not we spend our days, our weeks, our months and our years in the illusion of living better when we are simply doing faster and more than ever before.

Lofty words? Think again. Last year the cost of executive stress to American corporations exceeded \$10 + billion dollars. The price that corporations paid for absenteeism, physical illness, mental illness, and accidents that were a result of stress among the best, the brightest and the highest paid and most wealthy of people. And, this insidious erosion of human passion, purpose and potential is not an American phenomenon, but one that the World Health Organization forecasts will be the major cause of disability in the world by the year 2020.

Will you be a stress statistic or a success statistic? And, what does success really mean?

The passion, purpose, potential and power we truly need will never be found in what we have, because it is a byproduct of who we truly are, when we realize that the greatest power that we have is the power of love. But, love starts in learning to love our self, not for what we have, not for our title, net worth or other accoutrements of success but for our true self. Loving our self for the unique qualities and flaws that make us human, that make us special, that form our unique

fingerprint.

Loving our self because we do not have to hide the power of our heart under a bushel, nor to do we have to march to a distant drummer. We can learn to hear the beat of our soul, the beat of our true knowing, the beat of love that once found can rekindle a fire on the coldest day, and heal, rebuild and restore a life, a body, a soul that has been racked with pain, with abuse, or with despair.

Love among the thorns is my story. It is a story of struggling against incredible odds to have it all, and losing it all. It is a story of how an act of madness, an act of violence that took me from the mountain of success to the valley starting my life from ground zero helped me to discover the greatest treasure of all. It is a story of change, challenge, horror, pain and great struggle that is all negligible in comparison with the gift of love, faith and courage that my children and I were able to **touch, to feel and to share.**

It is my hope, and my prayer that people who read this article will go on to find their true voice, to reclaim that unique spark of human goodness that is the only conduit to true greatness, success and fulfillment.

The formula for success and fulfillment is eternal and timeless. It will not be changed by the unprecedented velocity of change, challenge, competition or the chaos that we face in our life, our work, or our world. Create value for others, and you shall prosper. Create value for others and you shall achieve a sense of passion, purpose and potential that brings you to your greatest joy.

Today, at this very moment we each have the potential to move past the desire to receive for the self alone, to stretch out of the comfort zone and look at the people in our personal lives, our jobs and our careers, the individuals with whom we

share our lives and our worlds and ask...

Simply ask, "How can I make a positive difference? How can I express my best self, my highest purpose? How can I create value for another, because in so doing I will create a large ripple of peace and prosperity that can change a life, many lives or even impact the world."

Yours in service,
Irene

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