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THE BEGINNING OF THE BEGINNING!

*When you follow your bliss...
doors will open where you would not have thought
there would be doors; and where
there wouldn't be a door for anyone else.*

—Joseph Campbell

“How was your trip?” Chris asked.

“It was absolutely the best and most amazing experience of my entire life.” Janet replied.

“What happened?”

A perplexed expression came over her face.

“I must be flippin’ crazy!” she said. “I got so sick I could hardly move out of bed for a week. I fell off a mountain and almost got killed. I practically froze to death in the Himalayas, got kicked by a donkey and had to travel by myself in India, something I swore I’d never do.”

In spite of all this, Janet's trip to India was the best experience of her life. She met more than sixty "Saints," individuals revered for their wisdom and enlightenment. Of these, she interviewed more than forty for her upcoming documentary and book, *The Saints Speak Out*. She trekked to the source of the holy river Ganges, high in the Himalayan mountains, and she had some of the most profound insights of her life.

In a little while we'll tell you more about how Janet's passion created this life-changing trip and the remarkable experiences which came out of it, but first let's talk about the loves of *your* life.

Why are you reading this book? You must have a deep feeling inside somewhere that you have a personal destiny which is more or different than what you are living right now.

Or maybe you just want a happier, more fulfilling life.

We feel fortunate and grateful to have discovered how to live life immersed in our passions.

It's taken a while, over thirty years in the working world for each of us and much of that wasn't easy. We wouldn't be surprised if you know exactly what it feels like to work for weeks, months, or years doing everything you can to get yourself out of the 9 to 5, just getting by, living from paycheck to paycheck life.

Maybe you've attended seminars, or watched TV programs on making money in real estate, or in stocks, or in your own business. Maybe you've tried to make extra money in multi-level marketing, or selling things on eBay, or getting a part time job.

Maybe you know what it's like when yet another great plan fails, when that feeling of depression and discouragement rises up and overwhelms you, turning your insides out and making you wonder, "Is all this really worth it?"

We've been there too. We've discovered those feelings come up when you are not aligned with your personal destiny. And it can all change in a moment, as it did for Janet.

THE LIGHT GOES ON

Janet began her journey dancing under the streetlights as a child...

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I was only about eight years old at the time. I used to lie in bed at night waiting for everyone in my family to go to sleep.

I would then quietly sneak outside and enter my imaginary world. This was my favorite time of day. Underneath the corner street light, my world became a brightly lit stage. It was here that I revealed my deepest desires, always pretending the same thing: I was a beautiful, world-famous actress performing to thousands of ardent admirers. Into the quiet of the early morning, I would sing and dance with total abandon. There on my street corner stage, I felt truly alive and free.

Whenever my aunts and uncles came to visit, I always made sure Dad had me dance and sing for them. How my sister and brother hated me whenever my father gathered everyone in the living room for my Broadway show! At that moment, Mickey and Johnny would run out the back door in total embarrassment.

After all, I couldn't sing on key and I didn't know how to dance. Yet my love for performing in front of anyone far outweighed any insecurity I might feel in the talent department. Without a moment's hesitation, I would entertain anyone who came to visit.

When I was about ten, my dad and I had a talk about a dramatic arts school nearby called Pasadena Playhouse. My best girlfriend down the street attended this school, and I had been begging and pleading with my parents to let me go there too. Their reply had always been the same, "Sorry honey, but we just don't have the money for that sort of thing."

Now, when my Dad was finally making more money and agreeing to my long-standing request, I felt it was no longer in the realm of possibility. Brokenhearted, I looked at my father and said, "I'd love to go

Pasadena Playhouse, but it's just too late. I'm afraid I'm already too old." I thought since I was now older than Shirley Temple when she started acting, I had obviously waited too long and blown my chance at stardom. It puzzled me that my parents didn't recognize this fact as well! So, in that fateful moment, my fantasy world collapsed and I entered into a world of harsh, hard realities.

Neither my brother nor sister would ever be caught playing make-believe under the early morning streetlights. It was time I grew up and saw I was just too old for that sort of thing.

And that's where I was wrong.

I've always been gifted with the ability to connect heart to heart with others in almost no time. In the working world that has served me well as I was the top salesperson in virtually every job I took. Except the first one.

By the time I turned eighteen I had stopped dreaming and started living a rather uninspired version of "real life." There was never a thought about what I loved to do, hoped to do, or even wanted to do. All that was long forgotten.

When I needed a job, I just scanned the classifieds. My only questions were: How hard would I have to work, and how much was the pay?

In 1981 I started working for a technical recruiting company in San Jose, California, in the heart of Silicon Valley in its heyday, hunting for "disk drive engineers." My employer was enjoying huge success. There was a bell that rang whenever someone made a placement, and it rang many times each day.

Unfortunately, it never rang for me. I watched placement after placement being made, everyone congratulating everyone else, new cars and houses being bought, wonderful vacations being taken—while I just sat at my desk waiting for the clock to strike five. Every day I left work humiliated, angry, embarrassed, depressed, and broke. And every day

I was there, it got worse.

I was hired by an elite, profitable, twelve person company for a very simple reason: almost everyone who worked there was a friend of mine. When a vacancy came up in the company, my friends all agreed, “this is the perfect job for Janet.” And why not? I was known to all as a great connector, a networker, a communicator, a real dynamo of energy, someone who could get anything done.

What wasn’t known about me, however, was I had absolutely no “left brain,” engineer-like capabilities. It never occurred to anyone (including me) that I wouldn’t be able to communicate at all with prospective disk drive engineers.

One day I happened to see a flyer for a motivational course called “Yes to Success.” A strange awareness came over me. I knew I had to take that seminar. I had no hesitation about calling in sick.

The course leader for the seminar was a young woman named Debra Poneman, whose key point was the importance of “finding your passion.”

As I watched Debra teach the class, excitedly discussing ideas like time management and goal setting, I was less interested in what she was saying than in who she was being.

She was clearly living her passion—and it showed in her every word and gesture. Debra definitely appeared to be a truly happy person. There she was, the “ideal woman,” uplifting everyone not only with her profound understanding, but also with the love she radiated. At the same time, she was traveling the world, making money talking about what she loved, and doing it all so brilliantly.

Debra taught us when we saw a person who had something we wanted, we needed to move beyond envy or resentment. Instead, we should just tell ourselves, “That’s for me!”

I took that advice to heart as I watched Debra. Closing my eyes, I

silently repeated my new golden mantra: That's for me! That's for me! That's for me!

By a stroke of wonderful good fortune, I was able to drive Debra to the airport when the course ended. As we were waiting for her plane, she stared straight into my eyes and said, "What is your dream, Janet?"

Staring right back at her, I said, "I'm glad you asked! I was just thinking today that you should either hire me or move over, because I am going to be the most successful transformational speaker on the planet."

Just then there was an announcement that the plane was ready for boarding. Without commenting at all on what I had just said, Debra gave me a hug, turned quickly, and walked off. All I could think was, "She hasn't seen the last of me!"

Once I find the direction I really want to go, I'm the kind of person who can make changes very quickly. The next day I returned to work knowing my days as an uninspired drone were about to come to an end. One thought burned in my mind: How could I convince Debra to hire me?

Finally I came up with a plan I knew would impress her. At the end of her course, Debra passed out her schedule of appearances for the coming months, which included New York, Boston, Washington, DC, Fairfield, Iowa; and Los Angeles.

Somehow, I decided, I would get enough money, fly to every one of those places, and sit in the front row of each and every class. Whenever Debra walked into the room, she would see me sitting there and know I meant business—especially after the third or fourth course. The only thing I needed was enough money for all the expenses involved in following Debra around.

That night I met a friend at the local Transcendental Meditation® center I used to frequent. When she casually asked what I had been doing recently, I startled her by loudly and passionately declaring I had finally discovered my purpose on this planet.

I told her about my plan to attend all of Debra's classes.

The following evening, the same friend met me again at the TM center. As we were getting up from meditation, she opened her purse, showered ten crisp one hundred dollar bills on my head, and laughingly said, "Merry Christmas!" I just sat there with my mouth open. As tears came to my eyes, I thanked her for believing in me, and promised that very soon I would repay her incredible generosity.

I followed my plan, going from city to city to each of Debra's seminars. Finally, in Los Angeles, at the last seminar on her schedule, she came up to me and said, "OK, if I can't get rid of you, then I better make use of you. You're hired!"

Needless to say, this was a thrilling moment. I was on my way to my dream. However, as I sat through Debra's seminars, time after time, something much more important happened: the birth of The Passion Test™.

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