

## **Don't Let Anyone or Anything Define You ~ Except You!**

It's so easy to lose ourselves, our essence, amongst all the roles we play in our lives. We are first someone's son or daughter. Then we come to realize we are a member of a race, a community, a religion - or not, a socio-economic structure, an education, and eventually a job description. We acquire layer upon layer of costumes and masks to wear in order to perform on the various stages we play upon until we come to believe we actually *are* the actor we are portraying.

Then something happens that rocks the world we have created. We lose a job, our health or perhaps a relationship. We stop in stunned disbelief as the world we have created begins to melt in front of our eyes.

***"Everything in the Universe is subject to change.  
And everything is right on schedule!"***

These are the moments that define us. The moments when we have the real opportunities for growth, change and transformation. And this is the reason why we are here - to hone our Soul.

There are two quotes that I especially like, one from a mystic and one from a scientist:

Teilhard de Chardin, the great French philosopher and mystic said:

***"We are not human beings with a soul; we are Souls having a human experience."***

And Albert Einstein:

***"The problems that exist in the world today cannot be solved by the same level of thinking that created them."***

This is the core of my own philosophy of living. We need to live in both the world of spirit and of the intellect, bringing heart and mind together. This will in turn lead us ever inward to our Soul, with the ability to listen to that *"still, small voice"*.

We need to see beyond the trappings of the material world, to learn to live in it, but not to get so caught up in it that we forget:

- Who we are,
- Why are we here, and
- Where are we going?

Meditation is the key to remembering the answers to these age-old questions.

Meditation is both a science and an art.

The science encompasses both the ancient and modern techniques and technologies of training the mind and body to "go within".

The art is the doing of it. The act of putting yourself in posture, honoring yourself enough to allow 20 minutes a day to stop, breathe and go into stillness.

The challenge is that we in the west have become so driven, so goal oriented and so overloaded with sensory stimuli and information - that to actually STOP during our frenetic schedules and close our eyes and "do nothing" is anathema to us.

When in actuality it is the MOST productive thing we could possibly do in the course of our work day.

I realized this early in my career, as I was always in the most creative position within the companies with which I worked. As both a fashion director and fashion designer, my jobs always depended upon my being one step ahead of where my customer was - and to know where they would be years in the future in order to facilitate product development.

The ONLY way I was able to do that was through my ability to gather information by researching worldwide markets, reading everything I could get my hands on about the emerging fashion trends, colors and fabrics, and where my customer's "heads" were. What music were they listening to? What books and movies were they seeing? What were the trends in the stock market?

Then I would meditate, allowing myself, my brain and my mind to synthesize all of this information. Let it all go and allow it to come forth in new ideas and concepts.

It was only later in my career, when I progressed into larger and larger companies and got into smaller and smaller "boxes" that this ability became stifled, and I began to be drowned in minutia. Managers who micro managed and VPs who wanted countless reports in endless meetings finally stifled the creativity, as I no longer could find the time to stop during the day - until my body finally did it for me.

I have seen this same scenario in the hundreds of people that I have counseled and taught meditation to in the ensuing years since becoming a full time spiritual teacher and professional speaker. They come to me stretched beyond the breaking point - or know that they will soon be reaching it. Some of them came with arms folded to corporate talks because they "had" to be there. These are the ones I love the most -- because they are the ones who changed the most!

We are on the threshold of discovering a wonderful new world of doing business. Where companies that treat their employees as their most precious commodities, who build a consciousness of respect for all, give their teams the tools they need to tap the unlimited power of the mind/body/spirit connections and release the old command and control model to the emerging paradigm of cooperation and empowered employees will be the companies that not only survive - but thrive!

This is why I left my 20 year career and dedicated myself to the transformation of corporate America into "Conscious Capitalism"\* and adding my part to helping to change the world - one thought at a time!

\*from Patrica Auberdeen, *Megatrends 2010*