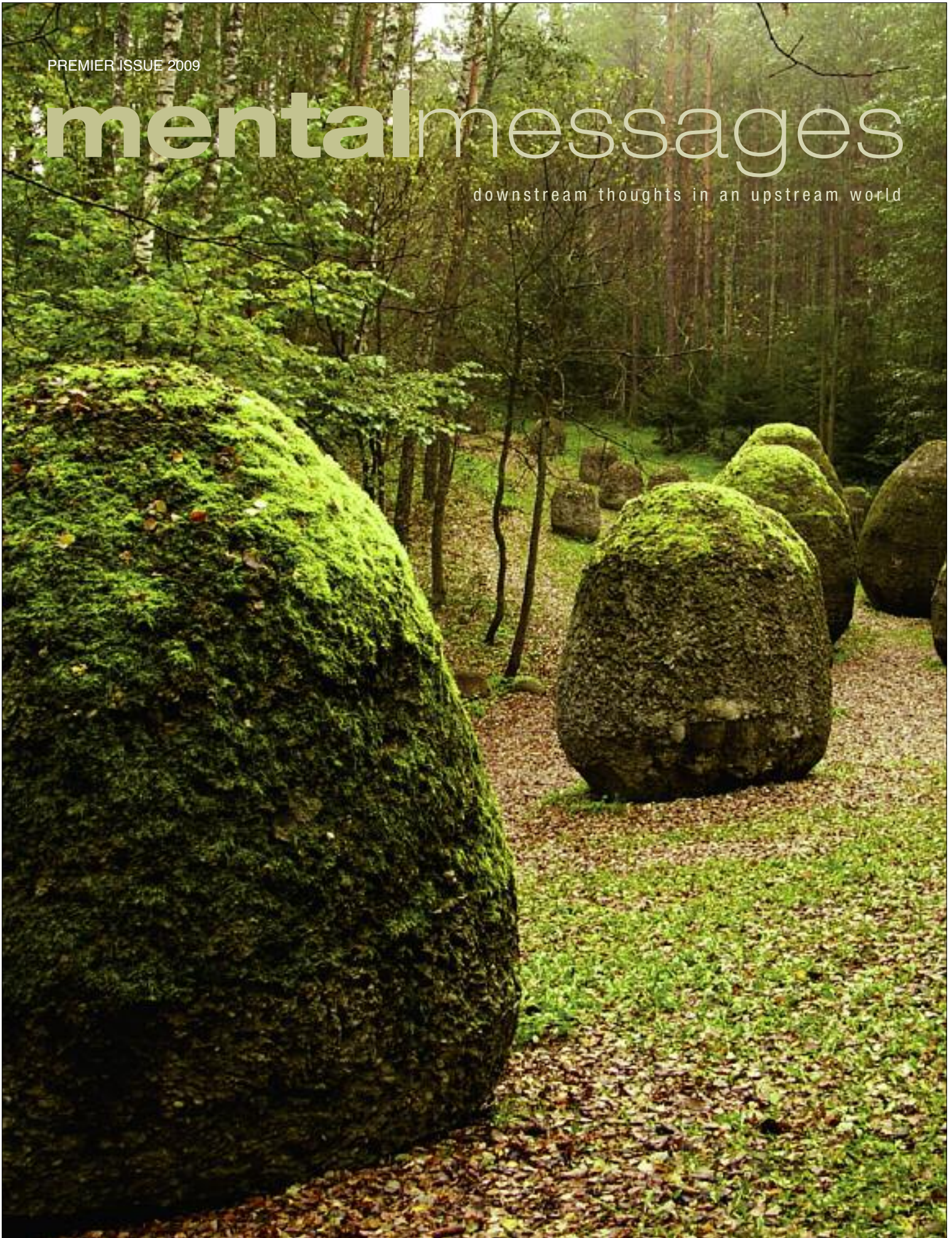


PREMIER ISSUE 2009

# mental messages

downstream thoughts in an upstream world



## welcome

It's an understatement to say that 2008 threw us for a loop, with many of us losing jobs, homes, investments, and the good ole life the way we knew it.

At a time when many of our lives have become less recognizable, there is a need for good stories—the practice of positive in, positive out. The kinds of stories that rouse our inner spirit and renew our faith in humanity. Even network news is catching on, adding positive stories into program segments. It's a good thing because America can't take much more of the doom and gloom news everyday.

In its infancy, Mental Messages was a small marketing and design firm with the tagline: "it all begins with the seed of an idea." All of our projects were conceived with a positive outcome at the root of every endeavor. They began with keeping the end in mind and eventually MM grew up into a real, live consultancy, with smart programs and inspirational products.

Some years later and feeling a bit stifled, my inner creative was feeling the need for an outlet. I had something to share with women my age, so I created the e-magazine, *Dormant Forces*, an aptly named publication of positive stories, touching accounts, and humorous tales to inspire and honor the unlimited potential within each of us. The magazine was distributed to a short list of friends and got rave reviews. But life, as it often goes, got the better of me and *Dormant Forces* did just that—it went dormant. (The moral here: be careful what you ask for, you just may get it!)

Well, delays have not been denials, as it now seems that my concept is just what the doctor ordered for 2009. Not being a traditional magazine with feature articles, topic targeted sections and traditional advertising, *Dormant Forces* has been renamed *Mental Messages*— as a new style publication for new times. It's been designed to read as a space between the notes, to view sensitive typography and artful photos, spread by spread, to inspire readers to pursue ideas that once were dreams, and to realize for themselves that what's most secret is most common. We all harbor fear and uncertainty within us, but we can overcome these roadblocks with some subliminal coaching and that nudge from within that sparks a flame and gets us excited about the wonderful things life has to offer. By bringing more positive influences into our lives, day by day, all things become brighter.

With this, we offer you Mental Messages.



kim jacobs, founder and editor





PREMIER ISSUE 2009

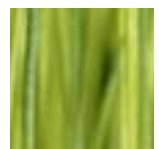
# mentalmessages

downstream thoughts in an upstream world

*Mental Messages is a life-affirming collection of stories, ideas, quotes, images and resources that awaken, inspire and honor the unlimited potential within us all.*

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— FOUNGING QUOTE —

ROW, ROW, ROW *your* BOAT,

GENTLY *down* THE STREAM,

MERRILY, MERRILY, *merrily*, MERRILY,

*life* IS BUT A *dream*.



ELIPHALET ORAM LYTE [ 1842 - 1913 ]



photo by stewart lewis.

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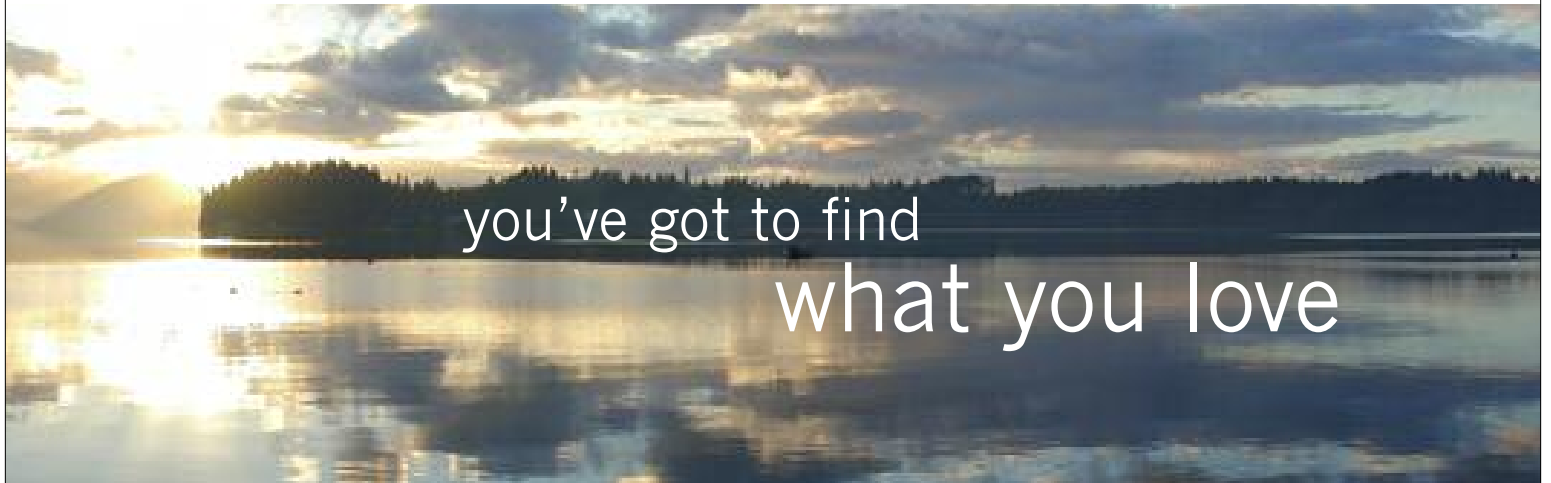
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STEVE JOBS



you've got to find  
what you love

I am honored to be with you today at your commencement from one of the finest universities in the world. I never graduated from college. Truth be told, this is the closest I've ever gotten to a college graduation. Today I want to tell you three stories from my life. That's it. No big deal. Just three stories.

# one

the first story is about connecting the dots

I dropped out of Reed College after the first 6 months, but then stayed around as a drop-in for another 18 months or so before I really quit. So why did I drop out?

It started before I was born. My biological mother was a young, unwed college graduate student, and she decided to put me up for adoption. She felt very strongly that I should be adopted by college graduates, so everything was all set for me to be adopted at birth by a lawyer and his wife. Except that when I popped out they decided at the last minute that they really wanted a girl. So my parents, who were on a waiting list, got a call in the middle of the night asking: "We have an unexpected baby boy; do you want him?" They said: "Of course." My biological mother later found out that my mother had never graduated from college and that my father had never graduated from high school. She refused to sign the final adoption papers. She only relented a few months later when my parents promised that I would someday go to college.

You have to trust in something — your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.

And 17 years later I did go to college. But I naively chose a college that was almost as expensive as Stanford, and all of my working-class parents' savings were being spent on my college tuition. After six months, I couldn't see the value in it. I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life and no idea how college was going to help me figure it out. And here I was spending all of the money my parents had saved their entire life. So I decided to drop out and trust that it would all work out OK. It was pretty scary at the time, but looking back it was one of the best decisions I ever made. The minute I dropped out I could stop taking the required classes that didn't interest me, and begin dropping in on the ones that looked interesting.

It wasn't all romantic. I didn't have a dorm room, so I slept on the floor in friends' rooms, I returned coke bottles for the 5¢ deposits to buy food with, and I would walk the 7 miles across town every Sunday night to get one good meal a week at the Hare Krishna temple. I loved it. And much of what I stumbled into by following my curiosity and intuition turned out to be priceless later on. Let me give you one example:

Reed College at that time offered perhaps the best calligraphy instruction in the country. Throughout the campus every poster, every label on every drawer, was beautifully hand calligraphed. Because I had dropped out and didn't have to take the normal classes, I decided to take a calligraphy class to learn how to do this. I learned about serif and san serif typefaces, about varying the amount of space between different letter combinations, about what makes great typography great. It was beautiful, historical, artistically subtle in a way that science can't capture, and I found it fascinating.

None of this had even a hope of any practical application in my life. But ten years later, when we were designing the first Macintosh computer, it all came back to me. And we designed it all into the Mac. It was the first computer with beautiful typography. If I had never dropped in on that single course in college, the Mac would have never had multiple typefaces or proportionally spaced fonts. And since Windows just copied the Mac, it's likely that no personal computer would have them. If I had never dropped out, I would have never dropped in on this calligraphy class, and personal computers might not have the wonderful typography that they do. Of course it was impossible to connect the dots looking forward when I was in college. But it was very, very clear looking backwards ten years later.

The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life.

## two

my second story is about love and loss

I was lucky — I found what I loved to do early in life. Wow and I started Apple in my parents garage when I was 20. We worked hard, and in 10 years Apple had grown from just the two of us in a garage into a \$2 billion company with over 4000 employees. We had just released our finest creation — the Macintosh — a year earlier, and I had just turned 30. And then I got fired. How can you get fired from a company you started? Well, as Apple grew we hired someone who I thought was very talented to run the company with me, and for the first year or so things went well. But then our visions of the future began to diverge and eventually we had a falling out. When we did, our Board of Directors sided with him. So at 30 I was out. And very publicly out. What had been the focus of my entire adult life was gone, and it was devastating.



I really didn't know what to do for a few months. I felt that I had let the previous generation of entrepreneurs down — that I had dropped the baton as it was being passed to me. I met with David Packard and Bob Noyce and tried to apologize for screwing up so badly. I was a very public failure, and I even thought about running away from the valley. But something slowly began to dawn on me — I still loved what I did. The turn of events at Apple had not changed that one bit. I had been rejected, but I was still in love. And so I decided to start over. I didn't see it then, but it turned out that getting fired from Apple was the best thing that could have ever happened to me. The heaviness of being successful was replaced by the lightness of being a beginner again, less sure about everything. It freed me to enter one of the most creative periods of my life.

## You are already naked. There is no reason NOT to follow your heart.

During the next five years, I started a company named NeXT, another company named Pixar, and fell in love with an amazing woman who would become my wife. Pixar went on to create the world's first computer animated feature film, *Toy Story*, and is now the most successful animation studio in the world. In a remarkable turn of events, Apple bought NeXT, I returned to Apple, and the technology we developed at NeXT is at the heart of Apple's current renaissance. And Laurene and I have a wonderful family together.

I'm pretty sure none of this would have happened if I hadn't been fired from Apple. It was awful tasting medicine, but I guess the patient needed it. Sometimes life hits you in the head with a brick. Don't lose faith. I'm convinced that the only thing that kept me going was that I loved what I did. You've got to find what you love. And that is as true for your work as it is for your lovers. Your work is going to fill a large part of your life, and the only way to be truly satisfied is to do what you believe is great work. And the only way to do great work is to love what you do. If you haven't found it yet, keep looking. Don't settle. As with all matters of the heart, you'll know when you find it. And, like any great relationship, it just gets better and better as the years roll on. So keep looking until you find it. Don't settle.

When I was 17, I read a quote that went something like: "If you live each day as if it was your last, someday you'll most certainly be right." It made an impression on me, and since then, for the past 33 years, I have looked in the mirror every morning and asked myself: "If today were the last day of my life, would I want

to do what I am about to do today?" And whenever the answer has been "No" for too many days in a row, I know I need to change something.

Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life. Because almost everything — all external expectations, all pride, all fear of embarrassment or failure - these things just fall away in the face of death, leaving only what is truly important. Remembering that you are going to die is the best way I know to avoid the trap of thinking you have something to lose. You are already naked. There is no reason not to follow your heart.

# three

my third story is about death

About a year ago I was diagnosed with cancer. I had a scan at 7:30 in the morning, and it clearly showed a tumor on my pancreas. I didn't even know what a pancreas was. The doctors told me this was almost certainly a type of cancer that is incurable, and that I should expect to live no longer than three to six months. My doctor advised me to go home and get my affairs in order, which is doctor's code for prepare to die. It means to try to tell your kids everything you thought you'd have the next 10 years to tell them in just a few months. It means to make sure everything is buttoned up so that it will be as easy as possible for your family. It means to say your goodbyes.

Don't let the noise  
of other's opinions  
drown out your  
own inner voice.

I lived with that diagnosis all day. Later that evening I had a biopsy, where they stuck an endoscope down my throat, through my stomach and into my intestines, put a needle into my pancreas and got a few cells from the tumor. I was sedated, but my wife, who was there, told me that when they viewed the cells under a microscope the doctors started crying because it turned out to be a very rare form of pancreatic cancer that is curable with surgery. I had the surgery and I'm fine now.

This was the closest I've been to facing death, and I hope its the closest I get for a few more decades. Having lived through it, I can now say this to you with a bit more certainty than when death was a useful but purely intellectual concept:

No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it. And that is as it should be, because Death is very likely the single best invention of Life. It is Life's change agent. It clears out the old to make way for the new. Right now the new is you, but someday not too long from now, you will gradually become the old and be cleared away. Sorry to be so dramatic, but it is quite true.

Your time is limited, so don't waste it living someone else's life. Don't be trapped by dogma — which is living with the results of other people's thinking. Don't let the noise of other's opinions drown out your own inner voice. And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition. They somehow already know what you truly want to become. Everything else is secondary.

## And most important, have the courage to follow your heart and intuition.

When I was young, there was an amazing publication called The Whole Earth Catalog, which was one of the bibles of my generation. It was created by a fellow named Stewart Brand not far from here in Menlo Park, and he brought it to life with his poetic touch. This was in the late 1960's, before personal computers and desktop publishing, so it was all made with typewriters, scissors, and polaroid cameras. It was sort of like Google in paperback form, 35 years before Google came along: it was idealistic, and overflowing with neat tools and great notions.

Stewart and his team put out several issues of The Whole Earth Catalog, and then when it had run its course, they put out a final issue. It was the mid-1970s, and I was your age. On the back cover of their final issue was a photograph of an early morning country road, the kind you might find yourself hitchhiking on if you were so adventurous. Beneath it were the words: "Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish." It was their farewell message as they signed off. Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish. And I have always wished that for myself. And now, as you graduate to begin anew, I wish that for you.

Stay Hungry. Stay Foolish. **mm**

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This is the text of the Commencement address by Steve Jobs, CEO of Apple Computer and of Pixar Animation Studios, delivered on June 12, 2005 at Stamford University.

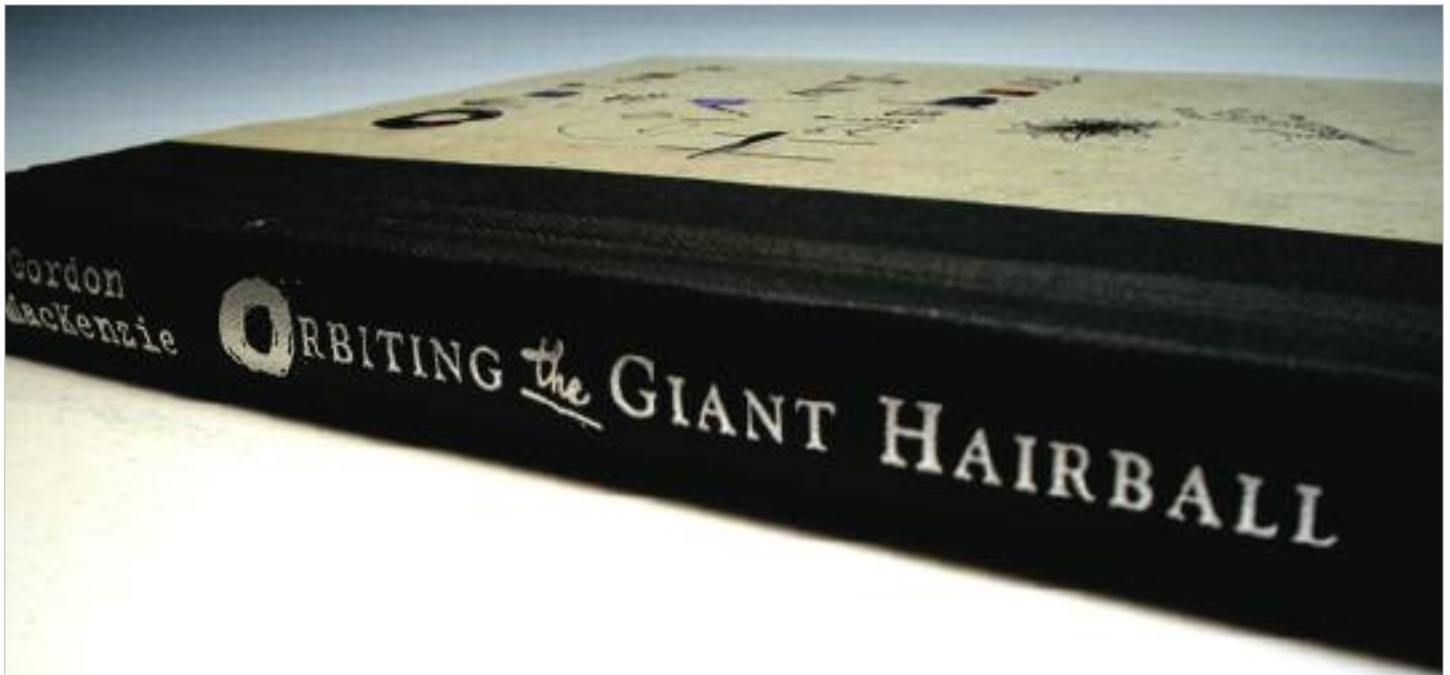
Steve Jobs is the co-founder and CEO of Apple Computer and was the CEO of Pixar until its acquisition by Disney. Considered to be a leading figure in both the computer and entertainment

industries, Jobs history in business has contributed greatly to the mythos of the quirky, individualistic Silicon Valley entrepreneur, emphasizing the importance of design and understanding that aesthetics is a crucial factor in product appeal. His work driving forward the development of products that are both functional and elegant has earned him a devoted cult following.

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photo by istockphoto.





Lessons on awakening and fostering creative genius

[amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)



"Rules of the Red Rubber Ball"  
find and sustain your life's work

[katalystconsultancy.com](https://www.katalystconsultancy.com)



# enjoy the journey

Designer Ann Willoughby explores the amazing power of collaboration. Her rules of the creative road? Make a place where ideas flourish. And trust the process.

ann willoughby

On a star-filled night in fall of 2002, I leaned against a 150-year-old hand-hewn timber beam at the Willoughby Design Barn. There before me sat 50 designers, scientists, writers and architects laughing uncontrollably, their mouths stuffed with Dubble Bubble, Tootsie Rolls and Necco Wafers.

Why on earth would these prominent design leaders from across the U.S. be acting like a group of five-year-olds at a birthday party?

Because Kevin Carroll, the masterful storyteller from Nike, was dancing around in the warm light of the copper and pine barn, throwing penny candy to a mesmerized crowd of onlookers “getting in touch” with their favorite childhood memories.

Dan Maginn, the barn’s architect, smiled at me from across the room while chewing on a Slo Poke. Dan and I had dreamed of this kind of moment throughout our three-year collaboration on the design for the barn. Here we were at the AIGA Boundaries conference in the newly completed barn, surrounded by some of the smartest and most creative people in the design field. There was only person missing: Gordon MacKenzie. But through Kevin and Dan I felt Gordon’s presence that night. What started seven years earlier had come full circle. It all started with a book.


## the creative paradox

When Gordon MacKenzie came bounding into our office in the spring of 1995, he brought a 6-inch-thick manuscript and a stack of rejection letters from just about every publisher in New York. In frustration, Gordon and his wife, Louise, had decided to use part of their life savings to self-publish his book, "Orbiting the Giant Hairball." We had agreed to design it. I had no idea what lay ahead.

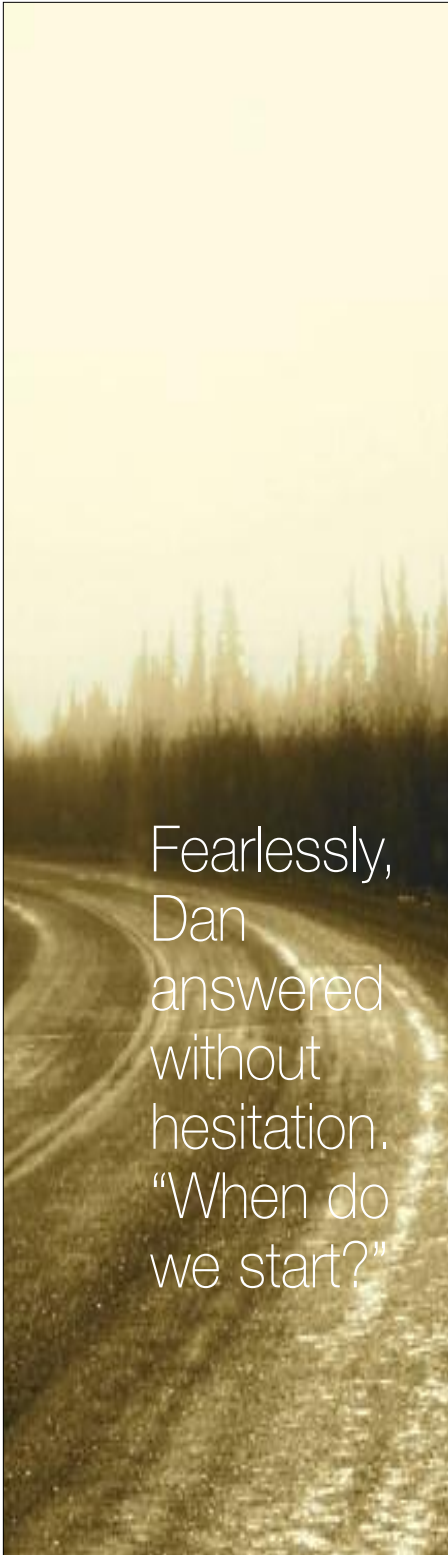
Gordon had worked for 30 years at Hallmark Cards, where he'd created a position of his own: Creative Paradox. A talented storyteller, writer and artist, Gordon's second career as a wildly successful speaker had taken him all over the world. His simple stories tapped into the creative yearnings of anyone working in an organization where procedures, policies and profits collided with personal growth and creativity. Now, after failing to find a publisher, Gordon had asked Willoughby to design a book that would combine his witty parables and serious message with the same vitality he brought to his presentations. It was a tall order.

Throughout the next few months, lead designer Michelle Sonderegger and I had lengthy conversations with Gordon about the project. We wrote a design brief. We determined the scope, budget and time line. We prototyped a few concepts, and it soon became apparent that this was not the typical designer-client relationship. From the outset, there were no clear boundaries among writer, designer and illustrator — or "galvanizers," as Gordon called us.

Once we chose a final direction, Gordon practically moved into our office and became a member of the Willoughby family. Normally we wouldn't work this way, but with Gordon it was more than OK. Gordon was full of enthusiasm and appreciated the design process. He loved ambiguity and relished the collaboration it took to work the process of working through a design and collaborating with the client had become more interesting than the through problems. Our friendships deepened as our mutual trust grew. Toward the end of the project, I believe we were all saddened as the final files were prepared for Stinehour Press in Vermont. For the first time, end product. Gordon had changed me, and our company, in a fundamental way that I was only beginning to understand.



I had no idea what  
lay ahead.



Fearlessly,  
Dan  
answered  
without  
hesitation.  
“When do  
we start?”

## the courageous architect

“Orbiting the Giant Hairball” began to impact my life and the decisions I made about family, work and friendships. After the book was printed I began to read and reread it, sometimes daily. On page 47 Gordon wrote, “Orbiting is following your bliss.”

I called Gordon. “I think I know what my bliss is,” I announced. “A barn.”

“Oh, yeah? Tell me about it,” Gordon encouraged.

“Well, not just a barn, but a place where people come to celebrate and learn. A place where one is inspired and the spirit soars.”

“Sounds like bliss to me. Any chance we could do some of my conferences there?” Gordon asked with sincere enthusiasm.

Gordon and I had become comfortable building on each other’s ideas, and soon there was a kitchen, bath and painting studio planned for the barn.

The next day I called Dan Maginn, a young architect I had met through my daughter. Dan had recently founded a new firm, el dorado, with four other architects he had met in a welding class. At the time, the el dorado portfolio included public art installations, workstations and one residence. I liked the way these architects thought, and their passion for design was apparent in everything they took on.

“Dan, what would you think about designing a barn?”

“On your farm?”

“Yes, but I have no idea where to put it, and it has to be, well, unlike any other barn in the world.”

Fearlessly, Dan answered without hesitation. “When do we start?”

I wasn’t completely prepared for what happened next. I was now the client, just as Gordon had been when he first came to Willoughby. But I was changed because of our experience with Gordon. I had learned how to be a better client and designer. I had also learned how to ask the right questions and to “trust the process,” as Dan and I reminded each other during the three years we worked together.

Fortunately, Dan was a natural collaborator, as Gordon had been, and we started the barn design without preconceived ideas about the final visual appearance. We developed goals and constraints first. Next we listed needs: a painting studio, a bathroom, a place to dance, dine and learn, a place for the tractor and a workshop for tools. Dan was an active listener and asked provocative questions. He taught me how to site a building and how to see the seasons, materials and light with a fresh eye. I pushed back at times, and so did Dan. In the end, what we created together was better than anything we could have imagined.



## the corporate catalyst

During the design of the barn I shared my experiences and plans with Gordon. He was elated and supportive. We talked about how his book and now my collaboration with Dan had changed the way I understood and approached design.

Then came the terrible news.

Gordon was diagnosed with bladder cancer in 1998. He visited the barn once, when the copper roof and siding were being installed. We talked about a lot that afternoon. He was getting weaker and had stopped traveling and speaking. That day he told me about a young man, Kevin Carroll, who worked for Nike. "I'd like for you to meet him sometime," Gordon said.

A few months later in July of 1999, I stood by Gordon's bedside with his beloved wife, Louise. Not knowing how to adequately express my gratitude and love for him, and his influence in my life, I promised Gordon that I would continue his legacy with the lessons from his book. He died that night, and three days later I gave his eulogy. Stacked in my almost-completed barn were several cartons of the remaining copies of Gordon's original-edition, handmade books, a gift from Gordon and Louise. Since then, I've given away almost all the books to people I thought Gordon might have liked.

I finally met Kevin Carroll in person at the HOW Design Conference in 2002. Bryn Mooth had asked me to come backstage about 15 minutes before Kevin went on to give the final keynote address in a cavernous roomful of more than 3,000 designers. Gordon had given this same keynote a few years earlier, so it was poignant to finally meet Kevin in this situation. There, in the dark corner of the side stage, I found a wonderful new friend.

In those first few minutes, Kevin and I mostly talked about Gordon and how his friendship had transformed each of our lives. In Gordon, Kevin had found a mentor and soul mate. They shared parallel roles in their professional lives, fostering creativity at two internationally renowned corporations. (Gordon's title at Hallmark was Creative Paradox, and around Nike Kevin was known as the Katalyst.) Gordon had encouraged Kevin to continue on with his work as a storyteller to entertain, enlighten and challenge business leaders to bring more creativity to the workplace.

I shared with Kevin the story of how Gordon and I had become close friends during the 17 months we spent designing his book. Before Kevin leaped onto the stage that afternoon, he asked me if we would design his upcoming book, "The Rules of the Red Rubber Ball." Immediately, I knew I had another chance to honor Gordon's legacy. At the time I had no idea what good friends Kevin and I were to become. Nor could I imagine the joy of our collaborative journey ahead. **mm**

Kevin's book and identity program was completed in 2004. The design has won many awards, including the HOW Perfect 10 in December 2005. "The Rules of the Red Rubber Ball" is now in its second printing and is being published and distributed by ESPN under a long-term contract with Kevin Carroll.



Ann Willoughby is president and creative director of Willoughby Design Group, a brand innovation and design firm in Kansas City. She is a former member of the AIGA National Board of Directors, and currently serves on the board of AIGA Center for Brand and the AIGA Center for Sustainable Design. Ann and her team developed the content and design for the new Strathmore Sustainability Portfolio. The firm strives to integrate sustainable practices into every project.

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photo by istockphoto.

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*816.561.4189*



studiomassaro.com



tips and tricks ... for hungry chicks!

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less on your waist, more in your wallet



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# when we were kids

According to today's regulators and bureaucrats, those of us who were kids in the 40's, 50's, 60's, 70's or even the early 80's, probably shouldn't have survived. Our baby cribs were covered with bright colored lead-based paint. We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors or cabinets, and when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets. As children, we would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags. Riding in the back of a pickup truck on a warm day was always a special treat. We drank water from the garden hose and not from a bottle. Horrors! We ate cupcakes, bread and butter, and drank soda pop with sugar in it, but we were never overweight because we were always outside playing. We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle, and no one actually died from this. We would spend hours building our go-carts out of scraps and then rode down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times, we learned to solve the problem. We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the street lights

came on. No one was able to reach us all day. No cell phones. Unthinkable! We did not have Playstations, Nintendo 64, X-Boxes, no video games at all, no 99 channels on cable, video tape movies, surround sound, cell phones, personal computers, or chat rooms. We had friends! We went outside and found them. We played dodge ball, and sometimes, the ball would really hurt. We fell out of trees, got cut and broke bones and teeth, and there were no lawsuits from these accidents. They were accidents. No one was to blame but us. Remember accidents? We had fights and punched each other and got black and blue and learned to get over it. No guns, no knives. We made up games with sticks, stones and tennis balls and ate worms, and although we were told it would happen, we did not put out very many eyes, nor did the worms live inside us forever. We rode bikes or walked to a friend's home and knocked on the door, or rang the bell or just walked in and talked to them. Little League had tryouts and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't had to learn to deal with disappointment. No lawsuits. Some students weren't as smart as others, so they failed a grade and were held back to repeat the same grade. Horrors! Tests were not adjusted for any reason or any persons. Our actions were our own. Consequences were expected. The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke a law was unheard of. They actually sided with the law. Imagine that! This generation has produced some of the best risk-takers and problem solvers and inventors, ever. The past 50 years have been an explosion of innovation and new ideas. We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned how to deal with it all. And you're one of them! Congratulations! mm



---

This was originally sent to me in an email and when I read it, it struck such a strong chord with me that I decided to produce it as a large scale poem which I then framed and gave to each of my family members for Christmas that year.

Since we decided to publish it for our premier issue, we have been unsuccessful in tracking down it's origin. If any of you know where this wonderful little gem came from, please drop a line to [shurngroup.com](http://shurngroup.com), as we'd love to give credit where credit is due.

Their aim was bold and far-reaching — produce a play that would let them meld their crafts, touch their community and contribute to a worthy cause. But it was their underlying belief in the importance of the relationship between quality food and a heartfelt effort that would sustain and propell them through their weeklong goal.

# food

it plays so many roles in our everyday lives

Food largely determines our overall well-being. It has the ability to stimulate our deepest memories, feed us physically and emotionally and for many, it has spiritual associations. The farming of our food, theoretically, is a seasonal affair that defines summer as a time of growing and producing. Fall, on the other hand, is a time when we prepare to rest and contemplate what we just grew, ate and experienced.

This being said let me tell you a story of what happened to me and some newly found friends after I was given the opportunity to cook for 30 professional theater people in a small lakeside community of New York, and the satiating affects that it had on all of us.

In mid July, an owner friend of the delightful little restaurant, “Relish,” asked if I’d be interested in cooking for his director friends, Brian and Melissa, and their theater cast for a week of rehearsals and the final production. “Of course,” I said, without hesitation. And so the journey began. My husband and I drove out to meet with Melissa to get a lay of the land and talk about the specifics concerning the project at hand. Her stone Dutch Colonial at the waters edge greeted us as warmly as she did. She gave us a tour of their recently renovated old mill home and the property it sat on as their home and grounds were literally the place she and her husband Brian have been hosting and staging productions of a Chekhov play, every summer for the last 3 years. What started out as a time of getting together for fun with some their closest colleagues has turned into a week long event that involves their local community and has expanded into financial support to artists in need.

At the root of this event were Melissa and Brian's wish to honor their friends "hard work at play" by providing **fresh, local, lovingly prepared, organic meals**. They noticed that a major element of this event had become the "food" and how they all came to enjoy and rely on the last meal of the day in many unobvious ways. It had taken on such significance in fact, that they wanted to honor it by having someone cook great food for them. This was their insurance that they wouldn't lose what they felt was their central goal of doing quality, successful justice to the Chekhov work of the week, *The Cherry Orchard*.

And this is what I do — I cook with organic, local, whole foods that are in season! Not to mention that I love the whole theater ambiance. I was hooked! The positive sense I felt coming into this adventure was confirmed. This project was right up my alley. Was I already under the Chekhov spell?

I ran home, re-read *The Cherry Orchard*, wrapped up loose ends for my private cooking clients, saw my dad through emergency surgery and flew off to a vacation in Ireland to then dream about menus and the upcoming community theater troupe cooking adventure that lay ahead of me.

When I returned, fresh and ready to go, I was able to get our local health food stores, farmers and purveyors involved. The Hungry Hollow Co-Op in Chestnut Ridge generously organized vendors to donate cases of fresh produce, gave a donation to Habitat for Humanity/Musicians Village in New Orleans and extended us a discount for our groceries. Back to Earth in New City also extended grocery discounts and plenty of personal assistance getting more cases of groceries into my little Honda than imaginable! Ron Rendes supplied us with the freshest cold water, **wild fish** and "Top Dog," Jay Dines, made it possible for us to have the best **grass fed** meats around. Everyone's help enriched our cause while we supported the principals of sustainable agriculture that render us local, **organic** foods. The relationships alone that were built during the process were huge, not to mention my first and very lasting impression of our Production Manager. She continues to rekindle my respect for vegetarian ideals each and every day and also reminds me of how effective people can be when working together towards a similar goal.

From the first day that I pulled in to start this job, I was met with a total sense of inclusion. I was right away showered with help and had lots of new names to learn and faces to remember.



My kitchen was a modest one, basically backstage to the front and back yards used for acts 1 and 3, 2 and 4 respectively. This location put me in a prime position to get help without even asking. It also had the merchandising/marketing effect of drawing customers in

that David's Cookies had in the Macy's Arcade back in the day! One of the many actors was so supportive and enthusiastic about the daily goings on in the kitchen that he would sniff his way happily though the hub and repeat the words "cook book!" every time he passed my way. He wasn't clowning around and his persistence really rang home to me. Because of his enthusiasm and the unwavering support I decided there

## We'd sit down together, toast our hearts out and eat, eat, eat!

will be a cookbook documenting our meals together in the "Cherry Orchard."

For 6 days, I played the role of personal chef to 30 actors in a very visible backstage kitchen. Sometimes I was there from 8 in the morning 'til ten at night and actually found it hard to leave as the site was so energizing! And I had such great help — whoever didn't have a line to rehearse or an orchard to cut down was always there for me! By 5pm, we set tables and served the meal.

Later that week, one of the musicians told me what it meant to him to anticipate the evening meal all day and then sit down and partake in it together. For him, the meal was a treat compared to what he was used to. And he was completely motivated creatively knowing that the evening meal would reward he and his colleagues by sustaining them through the many important tasks during their late night rehearsals. Lastly, after eating with complete abandon, he confessed that up until that week he'd always been a cautious and unadventurous eater due to a fear of food allergies. He was amazed and ultimately humbled by the realization that, in the end, he hadn't had a single allergic reaction to anything, just a big "ah ha" about eating instead! His being a musician inspired me to include a sound track of the performance with the cookbook I'm going to do. After all, years ago Laura Esquivel included a music CD in her book "The Law of Love" or better yet, when she dished up "Water for Chocolate!"

By the time the day of the performance arrived, everyone had been affected by what they'd eaten during the week. Whether it was the cherry pie on the very first night or the hand-made hamburgers, playfully assembled by the neighborhood kids for the potluck community picnic/intermission — everyone was satiated. There was





more than enough energy for their sets to be built, their lighting to shine, the costumes to take shape, the music to resonate within us, the actors to play hard and experience deeply and for the ax that cut the Cherry Tree to be swung to it's delightful conclusion.

Friends, neighbors and food purveyors had come together to feed and house the guest players. Despite the rain, community was promoted and preserved and we raised several thousand dollars for the Habitat for Humanity/Musicians Village in New Orleans. The smells and tastes of good food, the friends and memories, old and new, and the sensations of the Cherry Orchard story itself ... surrounding us everywhere, even in the name! It was a literal picnic!

What impressed me most was how well all the parts were played, how expansive the feelings of possibility and community can really be, how my many new acquaintances awakened me by extending their hands, mouths, stomachs and hearts, all stemming from the notion that food was to be center stage for this production. I now better understand my roll from this experience and how I can play my part more profoundly in the bigger picture called life!

It's very interesting to sit back, take a minute (or maybe even a season) to contemplate what lies dormant within each of us and then explore those potential forces coming from the place of our BEING. From my culinary perspective, there were so many forces at play that week of simply cooking for 30 not so complete strangers anymore. I didn't just feed them; we all fed each other and the various communities within our midst.

Awaken those mental messages my friends! **mm**



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Alicia Eaton Lewis lives in Nyack, NY overlooking the Hudson River with her husband, two daughters and their springer spaniel. With a design degree from Parsons School of Design, she is currently active as a whole foods chef. Her business, "inSeason," promotes the principals of seasonal organic produce, supporting local farmers and food artisans and promoting sustainable agriculture. Alicia may be contacted at: [AliciaLewis@optonline.net](mailto:AliciaLewis@optonline.net)

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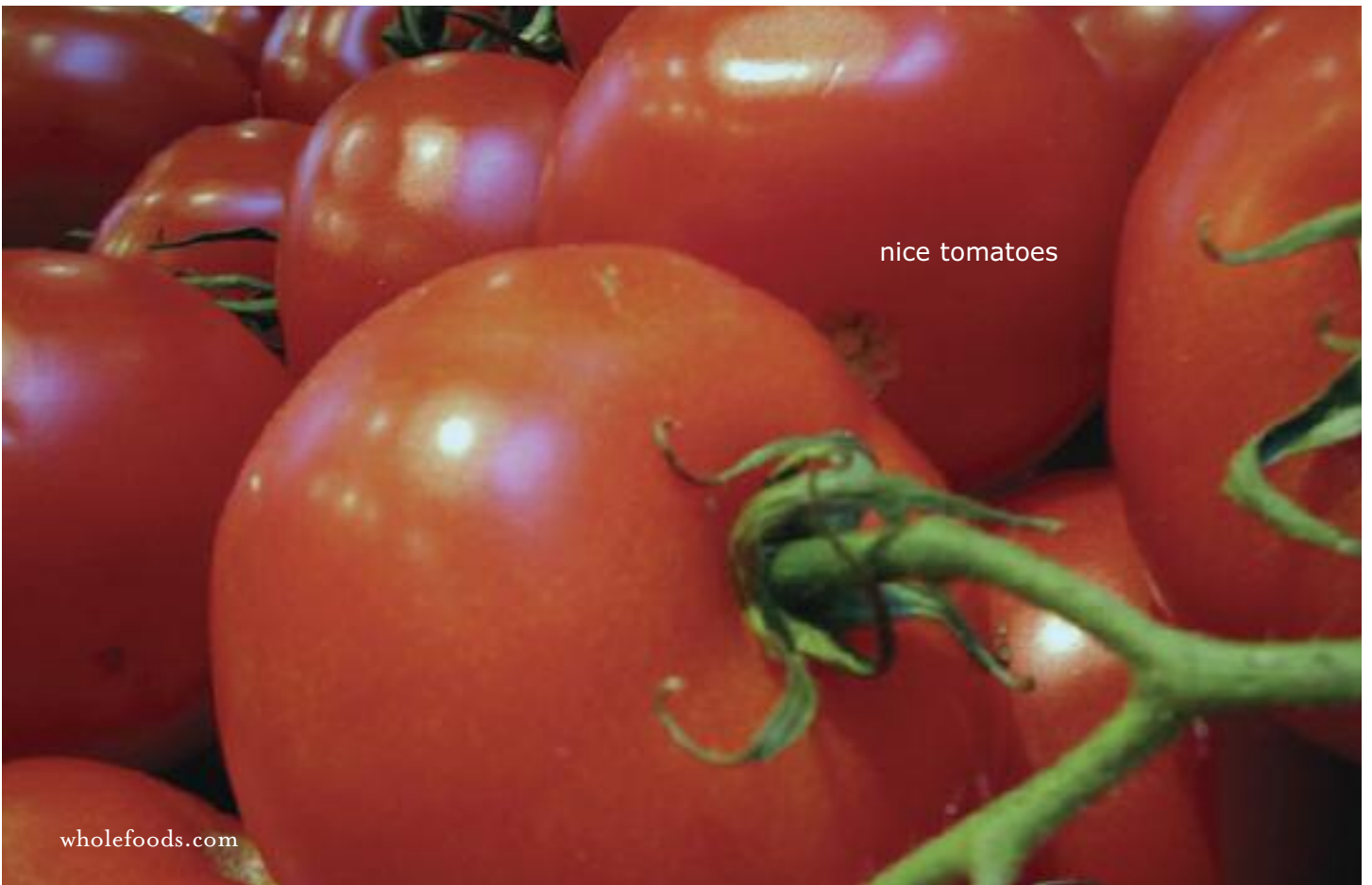
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## JUST A MEMORY AWAY

*When good news is “out to lunch” or you’re under stress, you should take a mini “mind” vacation. For me, my childhood memories serve as those short trips and they are also the most comforting, wholesome memories of all.*



### **the last day of grammar school in June ...**

began summer break and an eternity of fun, friends and backyard swimming pools and sprinklers. September and the 1st day of school was a distant future horror that never crept into my mind until that last hot week of August when my Mom started washing and ironing my white cotton blouses for St. Anthony’s grammar school. How sweet those days were when the only fear I had was getting a bad sunburn or a bee sting!

### **the most delicious strawberry ice cream ...**

chock full of strawberries, on a sugar cone ... “Bridget, do you want one scoop or two?” my Mom would ask. “Can I have three?” OK and she would pile it on and I would sit on the front porch with my friends and their cones and enjoy every cool bite. What bliss!

### **the neighborhood dogs ...**

for some reason I remember them. They were never vicious or threatening and we knew them all. Duchess, Rocky, and Duke. They would bark in the houses and backyards, letting themselves be heard. They became a part of the audio landscape along with the other comforting summer sounds.

### **our dogs ...**

during my childhood and teenage years, we first had Princess, a black and white cocker spaniel mix. Then came the “Rexes.”

**the first Rex ...** My brother Joey was an altar boy at our family parish. My mom, Virginia would walk him to church, stay for Mass and then they would walk back home together. One summer day, a beautiful German Shepherd mixed breed dog was sitting on the sidewalk across from the church, just waiting for something to break. After Mass, my mom inquired about the dog but he was alone. She found a thin rope, gently tied it around his neck and walked him to his new home. This was our first Rex. I remember the vision of my Mom, my brother, and Rex walking towards the house. I was so excited. After drinking and eating enormous amounts of water and food, Rex was home and we all fell in love with him. Rex was with us for about 15 years. What a run!

**the second Rex ...** Within one month of Rex’s passing, another German Shepherd mixed breed dog was hanging around our neighborhood. He was a clone of our first Rex and we knew we had to have him. So, my Dad, Joe, would place water and biscuits on the porch every day. The dog would drink, grab a biscuits and run down the street to a safe place and eat. This lasted for about

one week. But then we had him eating from our hands. We brought him in house in November. My brother was getting married that year. Me, Mom and Dad named him Rex and kept him. We had him for about 15 years as well.

Another great run!

### **playing outside from morning until dinner ...**

hopscotch or jump rope or going to swimming pools and sprinklers on the lawn. My favorite was the sprinkler on the lawn; the rare combination of running, sliding, laughing and getting wonderfully soaked.

### **my friend Rosemary ...**

we were the same age and went through grammar school together from kindergarten through 8th grade. The summers were especially interesting with Rosemary. She was a very talented piano player. In fact, she was a child prodigy. Each morning, she played classical music like Mozart, Beethoven and so many others for at least 3–4 hours. The neighborhood kids would wait for her to come out and play. However, in the mornings we were treated to mini classical concerts. I didn't realize how special that was, little concerts every day of the summer!



### **summer family picnics ...**

at least once each summer, we would have a picnic with my mother's side of the family. All my cousins from New Jersey and Long Island would come together and we were about 60 strong. There were so many cousins that it was hard to keep track. But it was fun and comforting.

### **my Mom would make luscious food ...**

fried chicken, sausage and peppers, barbecue spareribs and steaks, salads galore, and corn ... watermelon, brownies, lemonade and iced tea ... one dessert that stands out in my memory was baked by my mother's sister — Aunt Maya's — walnut glazed cake ... there was nothing better to end the best family gatherings!

### **my grandmother Nonnie ...**

my grandmother's name was Nettie but we called her Nonnie. We lived in a two-family house with her and my Uncle Nino. She was a really beautiful woman. She came to this country from Sicily with her parents when she was three years old. She raised nine children on her own and cooked, cleaned and sewed clothing to make ends meet. Such love and dedication. I love her and miss her.



I also remember my Nonnie's sisters, my great Aunts Jeannie, Minnie and Lena. To entertain them when they came from Brooklyn to New Jersey to visit, I would imitate Judy Garland singing in the Wizard of Oz. My Aunt Jeannie would pinch me on the cheeks and laugh and laugh at me. I can still hear her laughing and clapping when I would sing "Somewhere Over the Rainbow."

### **and the dinner call from my Mom ...**

sometimes meatloaf, sometimes spaghetti and meatballs, sometimes chicken cutlets ... it didn't matter...it was homemade, delicious and a call for the family to be together.

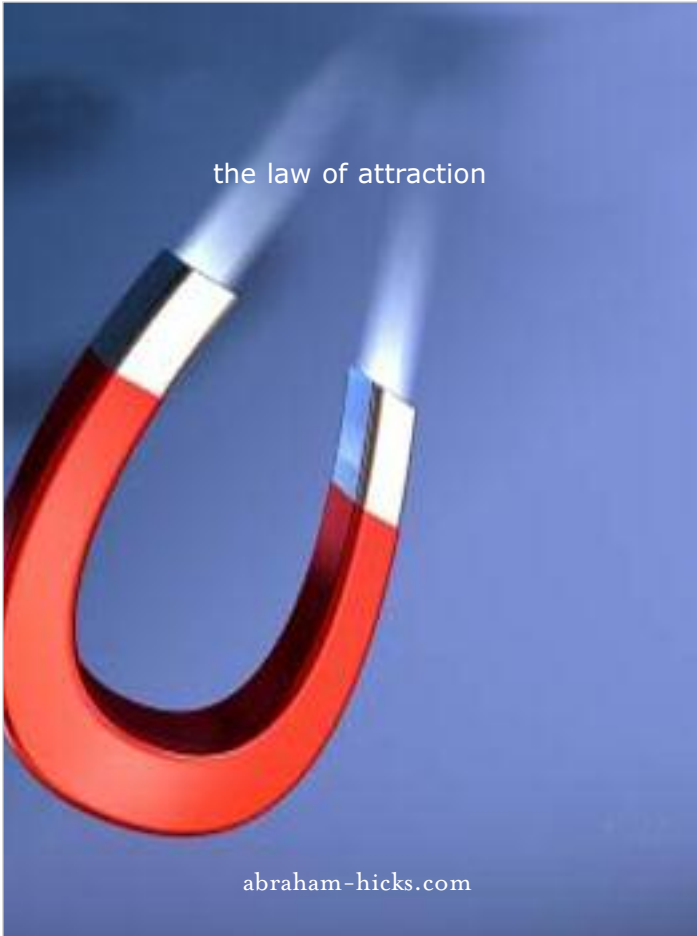
It is a cliché to "long for the past," but I'm sure I'm not the only one. My memories allow me to reflect on real moments of happiness and take a short respite from 2006. Memories of my college days, or Caribbean or European vacations, don't even come close.

I believe I was luckiest kid in the world. Everything was simple and sweet! I am fortunate to have such wonderful childhood memories. They were precious gifts that I didn't even realize that I was given. These memories and so many others are the foundations of my life. They are also a testament to my Mom and Dad, whom I love so much and miss every day since their passing. I had a rich childhood filled with love. I guess it was all about love, and loving memories of course, are the most important of all.

**mm**



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the law of attraction

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THE ALL HAS SPOKEN:

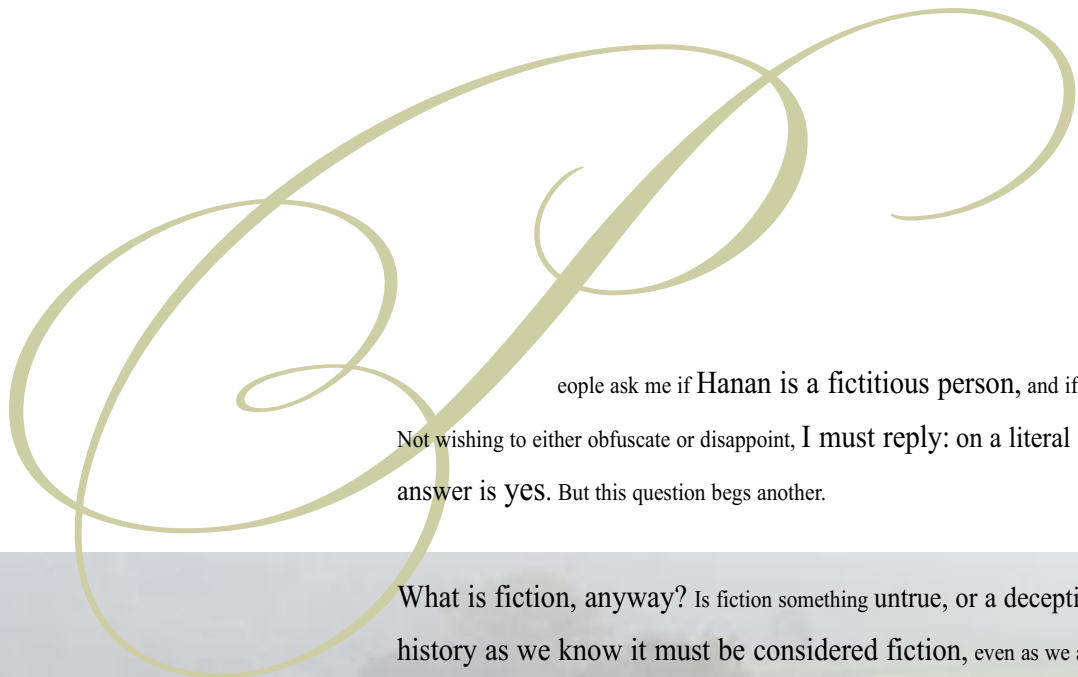
THIS IS MY JOB

“Five sleepless days and nights later I found I had midwived twenty-some poems, much of Hanan’s life-story and a sense that the Universe was not done yet”.

JEF BUEHLER

MM INSIDER SHARING: Early last spring, in an effort to come out of ‘my head,’ I shared with some friends my long desire to get involved in community beautification. A couple of days later, one of them handed me the name of the person in charge of a revitalization program on the state level. Talk about ‘ask and you shall receive!’ Upon meeting Jef, I sensed a strong connection. Then one day he asked me about a website for a book he’d just completed. Then it clicked! I never saw it coming. Who would’ve thought that I would be sharing spiritual philosophies with a State Director of a government program and that he’d be granting me permission to publish the translated poetry from a book of 14th Century Farsi that was channeled through him. That was how I came to learn about “Hanan Says.” And for the record, I’m I firm believer that all things happen for a reason. Kim Jacobs





People ask me if Hanan is a fictitious person, and if the works herein are fiction. Not wishing to either obfuscate or disappoint, I must reply: on a literal (and literary) level, the answer is **yes**. But this question begs another.

What is fiction, anyway? Is fiction something untrue, or a deception? If so, much of history as we know it must be considered fiction, even as we are taught to believe it and consider it almost sacrosanct fact. Ask the Taino natives of the Caribbean about their version of history around 1492 and it surely appears radically different than that of Columbus' fans then and now.

Try to define what is historical reality and fiction among the numerous perspectives of Jews and Palestinians, Americans and Iraqis, and even within America regarding current and millennia-old issues and conflicts in the Middle East. The conglomeration of subtle, pervasive and filtered ways of looking at reality Daniel Quinn so aptly describes in *Ishmael* and his other works as *Mother Culture* is very much at work here, yet is broken down to multiple Aunt and Uncle Cultures that further complicate matters of what is real – or not. Where you stand so often is tied to where you sit.

When that which I call “I” opened up to the intense flow of universal energy(?), spirit(?), God(?) and allowed it/them to enter my being and inform me about Hanan's life and what Hanan said during that life I had 3 choices: I could attempt to **fight it actively** (e.g., take sleeping pills, get drunk); I could **attack it passively** (e.g., distract and numb myself with work, TV, food, etc.); or I could **ride it out**, be with it and see what might happen. Five sleepless days and nights later I found I had midwived twenty-some poems, much of Hanan's life-story and a sense that the Universe was not done yet.

The contrast between what I thought was my path and *raison d'être* and the joyful, unnerving, exhausting and ecstatic experience of Hanan speaking through me was stark beyond description. **The only antidote was and is to keep hearing Hanan**, translating his words from 14th Century Farsi and writing them down. **The All has spoken: this is my job.**

I do not claim to know the ultimate truth of even my own history, let alone that of the global theater known as Earth. Yet, what if the expressions of experience and interpretations of life that coursed through me in the birthing of *Hanan Says*: are as true to me as their chosen vessel and recorder as an apple I hold in my hand? Their form and taste are real and equally there.

Is *Hanan Says*: fiction? To me, no: it is both real and does not matter. If the mingling of the Divine, the Universe, the All that arrived in this book through me (Hanan would say it was here all along) and your present life's stream of consciousness defined now as You results in inspiration, reflection or otherwise helps you see the nearness of your path and that of others then **that real truth supercedes** and means more than any literary categorization of this work.

I believe, more than anything that what Hanan Says: is valid both for his time, our present and the future. Equally, I believe that we all have inner voices, connected in some way to something greater, some source beyond our complete grasping and that when we listen to what comes, swimming so often against seemingly strong and surrounding currents of everyday life, we move closer to the specific path, to our purpose, to treating ourselves and others as seekers on that journey, and maybe, just maybe, get to follow the breadcrumbs to peek behind the curtain and see that which is not yet revealed. **mm**

WITH PEACE, LOVE AND GRATITUDE, Jef Buehler

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Jef Buehler is the State Coordinator of Main Street New Jersey and a Director in the New Jersey Office of Smart Growth, also serving as the administrator of the nationally recognized Downtown Revitalization Institute.

He holds an FCC license for radio, an International Teacher's Certification program for Kundalini Yoga and a PADI Open Water Diver certification and served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Dominican Republic. Currently, he is finalizing a book of his Sufi poetry.

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photos by istockphoto.

# *Hanan says*

Feelings go away  
Like ripples from a stone  
Thrown in a pool of water  
The larger we allow our pool to be  
The more space it contains to absorb  
Feelings we emanate

Trying to tighten that space  
Holding on and controlling our feelings  
Causes great waves of repercussion  
Bouncing back and forth off our shores and  
Turbulence in our hearts  
Delaying the return to placidness



It is the still pond  
That best reflects the true essence  
Of Heaven



# be careful what you ask for

KIM JACOBS

When I asked for submissions, getting my first response was so exciting. I was on my way! My wonderful friend, with the greatest sense of humor, so individual, and a cadence unlike anyone else, had given me just what I asked for — simply “something very Catherine.” I quickly opened the email and read the note that accompanied her submission.

I'm not so sure about this. This thing has nothing to do with that LOVELY ethereal, Zen like cover of that floral for the e-zine.

But I had some fun with something. I have these fonts that came with my Mac, and never updated. I'm sure there are many more. But I enjoy using color and fonts to write. It's not a new concept by any means, but it sure makes this dumb little treatise more interesting. If I knew how to add small illustration and picture icons I'd try that too. Now that is a book format that would appeal to me. It's just childish and irreverent enough to go with this tone. I can't bring myself to pretend to write seriously about these important things because laughing (and pharmaceuticals) are about the only thing that gets you through it. So, there it is.

So I opened the attachment and the visual hit me first. "How funny is she," I thought. "Such the creative that she even did hers in a layout!" She was asked to go outside herself and had her own sort of fun along the way. Great. And her submission was funny. So much so that I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. I loved it, but it wasn't exactly in keeping with the tone of MM. So, I quickly forwarded it to a comrade who needed a laugh. Then I re-read it and thought, "The first article for the first issue? How am I going to do this?" It simply wouldn't be a smart business move. So I e-mailed her back.

I read the article, which is absolutely hilarious!


I am, though, somewhat concerned about a premier issue with F\*#king references. Although they may be true, and very amusing, it will probably be taken the wrong way by potential advertisers.

I will keep this for later, as I'm sure there will come the time when readers will be more open to the color. So with the hope that the following doesn't hurt your feelings or ruin our friendship, can you keep doing the "irreverence" thing and still relate to life's silly moments that we all experience?

Give it a go, I know there's way more in there!


We spoke by phone, and I recalled a story she shared with me years earlier that I asked her to write. She wrote about it. And that is the article I published. Rather than letting her wonderful creativity lie dormant, my husband came up with the idea to create a blog for her that would embody her humor and irreverence in an ongoing format, available to all of us who know and love her, and for those wanting to get to better know her views on life, death, consumerism, whatever.

With that, we welcome you to visit [EYE OF THE STORM](#), a blog created to bring forth the musings and comments of Catherine Massaro, artist, wife, mother, creative and voice inside us all, but with her way of communicating. [mm](#)




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why politics,  
artists & children  
don't mix


In a previous life,  
as a previous wife

and mother of two grade school step children and  
my own little toddler of three, I was struggling to fit  
into my new environment.

I went from a second year art school student, to a quick marriage and gave birth within months to my little son. It was a ritzy neighborhood and I was one of many doctors and lawyers wives on our block. We were all stay at home moms and as the newcomer, I got roped into hosting a luncheon for a local woman running for some political position. Wanting to appear as competent and normal as everyone else (knowing fully well I was a fish out of water) I agreed enthusiastically to play hostess.

We had a lovely 4-bedroom, old Tudor style house and I started lining all the right things up for the luncheon. I bought and arranged flowers, hired a cleaning lady, made platters of perfect tea sandwiches, tiny cookies and had tea services and every trapping of civility and style meant to impress.





Our front entry opened on to our living room, and the landing that led up stairs. I had set the time to coordinate with the naptime of my toddler. So, he went down, and shortly after, the ladies started showing up. It was just a lovely thing. After a while, our guest of honor stood up and began her pitch on why we should vote her into office. She stood up with her back to the staircase and started in with her most sincere delivery. I had my back to the stairs as well; to be sure I could keep an eye on my guests in case they needed anything. As I watched the captive audience, I noticed mouths dropping and hands going quickly up to faces in a sort of mock horror.

Then quiet giggling started and my best friend and neighbor came rushing up to me and said, “You better turn around!”

All eyes turned to the staircase, where my toddler was making his glorious descent down the staircase, buck-naked save covered from head to toe with self-adhesive maxi pads. ‘Maxi Pad Man’ made his way down the stairs with a big sleepy grin on his face, beaming with pride. My first reaction was that of ... cool! He actually found a more entertaining use for those things than we women have used them for decades. Plus, it was pretty funny. Well, the look of horror on other’s faces told me I could be the only one in the room having that reaction. It was very similar, it seemed, to the reaction I had when he proudly took me into his room to show me his ‘decorating’. After discovering the staple gun in my studio, he went to work stapling everything he owned to his walls. And I do mean everything. Little Superman underoos, Star Wars figures, pillows, sneakers, tee shirts, books, the lamp shade off his lamp. I thought, (again) cool! At least everything was off the floor, and he really was sincerely proud of the effort. So, where was the real surprise when Maxi Pad Man made his way down the stairs in full feminine hygiene regalia? That’s my boy!

I really felt badly for that woman and her campaign. She was horribly upstaged by my weird kid, who continues to be weird, just not with feminine hygiene products. And my sad attempt to fit in backfired on me in spades.

That’s why politics, artists and children don’t mix. It’s also best to keep those personal hygiene products on top shelves. **mm**

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Catherine's bio:

"Two roads diverged...

birth\_Buffalo\_connecticutArtSchool\_  
wandering\_Miami\_KansasCity\_marriage\_  
Haiti\_Europe\_graduateSchool\_Utah\_  
Colorado\_Vermont\_Buffalo\_Canada\_  
diivorce\_Manhattan\_lost\_Buffalo\_  
KansasCity\_found\_marriage\_Dallas\_  
NewMexico\_Texas\_Nevada\_here

... and that has made all the difference."



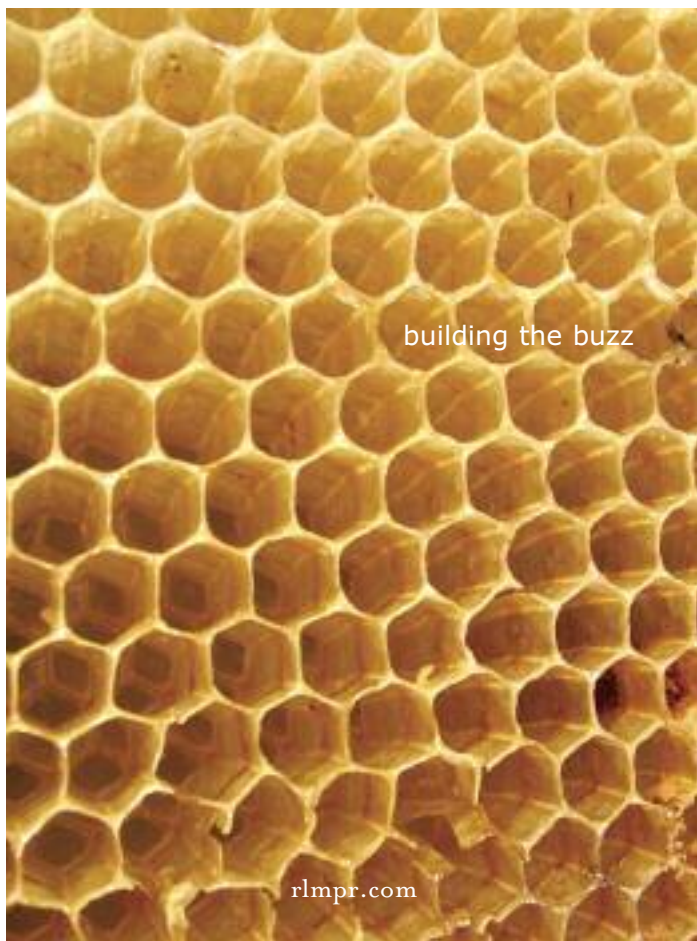
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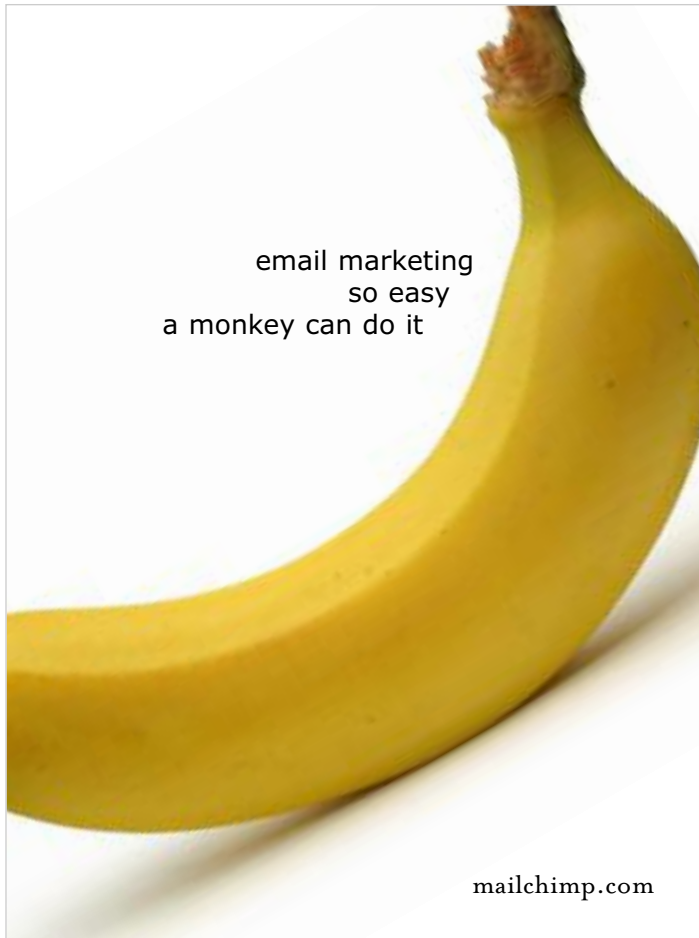
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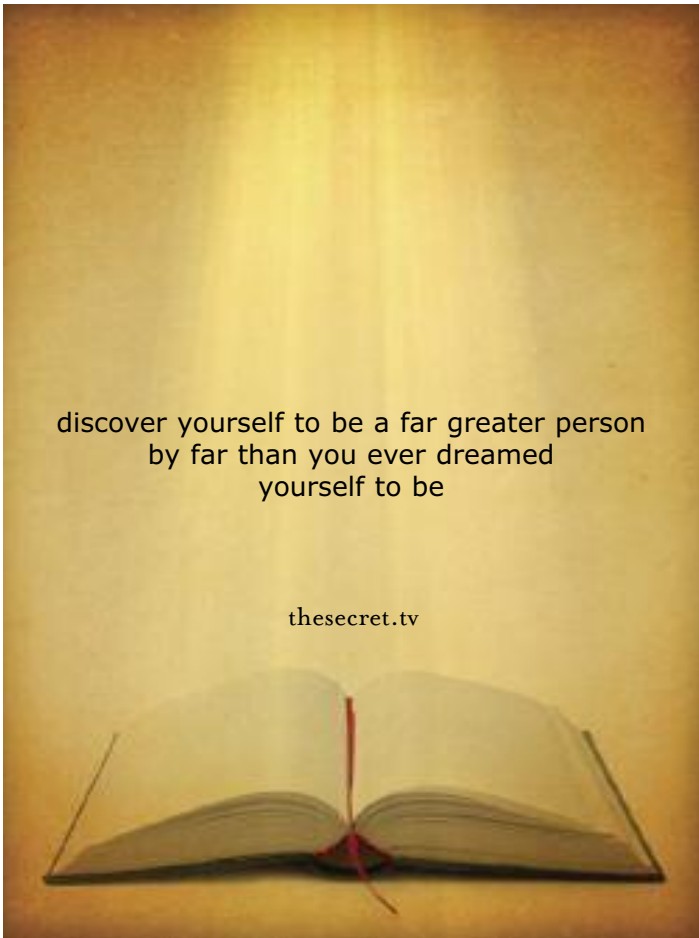
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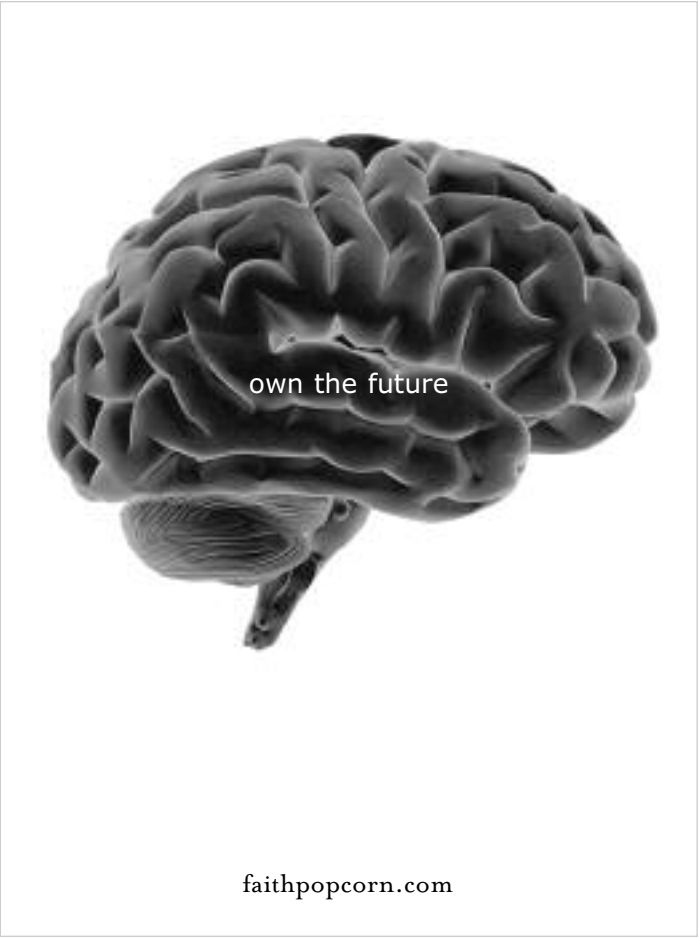
discover yourself to be a far greater person  
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jay jacobs

## FAIL TO PLAN

# { *and you will* PLAN TO FAIL }



**INSPIRED BY A TRULY LIFE-CHANGING PRESENTATION, I CRACKED OPEN MY LAPTOP EARLY THIS MORNING KNOWING THAT FOREVER MORE I COULDN'T AND WOULDN'T LIVE ANOTHER DAY WITHOUT A PLAN. NOT JUST ANY PLAN, NOT SOMEONE ELSE'S PLAN, BUT *MY* PLAN. A PLAN FOR TODAY WAS WHERE I'D START, AND THEN A PLAN FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE. THAT'S BEEN THE "MISSING NUMBER" IN THE COMBINATION LOCK OF MY LIFE FOR THE LAST 15+ YEARS AS I'VE LAUNCHED WAY TOO MANY GREAT IDEAS THAT STARTED OUT STRONG, BUT MANY TIMES HAVE PETERED OUT JUST AS FAST.**

A great idea without a plan is like an acorn without soil. Amazing potential... but dormant potential. You know what it can be, you can imagine it all day long, you can tell the world what it can be, but without soil, you know the acorns fate, unrealized potential.

When I was young, growing up in a family of entrepreneurs, I got my first personal development fix from Bill Bailey. A man probably not known to many, he was the founder of one of the original MLM companies called Bestline. My parents became distributors of his products and I became a motivational, inspirational personal development junkie at the ripe old age of 12.

And I still am. My parents bought Bill Bailey's tapes, Jim Rohn's and way too many others to remember. I'm still buying them. One of the earliest quotes I remember everyone sharing in the multitudes of tapes and books I've listened to was **"if you FAIL to plan, you plan to FAIL."**



It made sense. I understood it. I believed in it. But I can't say I've lived it. Then something happened to me when I heard Max Carey eliminate to at a business summit I produced for one of my clients. It was one of those moments that happen in your life when something just clicks and you just know it. It's the click you hear and feel when you hit that last number in a combination lock. You roll the dial to the last number, there's a little tightness, then it happens—CLICK—and the lock opens easily.

That's the sound I heard and the feeling I experienced while listening to Max share his story of what was really the secret behind what fighter pilots are taught in TOP GUN school. Obviously, he learned a multitude of criteria necessary to fly a fighter jet. But when a man tells you that the most important thing he learned in TOP GUN school was **"HOW TO PLAN,"** because every time he was strapped into that seat, his very life depended on it, the quote **"if you FAIL to plan, you plan to FAIL,"** became ingrained in my mind and etched on my forehead.

So I can't think of a better day than today to make this personal pronouncement:



It feels good just typing that. Try it. How will I plan? Easy ... I'll make a plan for the day, and a plan for whatever is worth investing my time in for advancing my life plan in that day. It's as simple as that. And how will I plan? How will I start? With a question: "What's my plan for today...for myself, for my health, my family, my wealth, whatever? Answer your own questions and your well on you way. And for leading, directing or collaborating with anyone on anything going forward, I'll always ask, "What's your plan?" That's my plan ... what's yours?

And one last thing: do yourself a favor – get and give the gift of Max Carey today at [www.maxcarey.com](http://www.maxcarey.com).

And thanks Max! **mm**

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so happy together

[starbucks.com](http://starbucks.com)

UPDATE YOUR  
*happiness*  
RESUME



"Inside myself is a place where I live all alone  
and that's where you renew your springs that never dry up."

- PEARL BUCK

With the downturn in the economy, violence and environmental challenges facing us every day, what makes us happy is often lost in the roar of uncertainty. All the commotion in our lives makes it difficult to hear the beating of our own hearts sometimes. We are so distracted by what's going on in the world around us that we aren't aware sometimes of what's going on inside us, and how days slip by, anonymous and almost unnoticed. We let go of renewing the springs that feed our own well of happiness.



Along with the crashing economic downturn and resulting job losses, you may be one of the many who are putting normal activities on hold while you focus your attention on finding a new job. You may be fervently polishing your resume to shine among the sea of job hunters. I know how arduous that can be. I've spent so many years of my life eagerly and aggressively listing new accomplishments to impress prospective employers, and then helping others create powerful resumes and cover letters when I opened my writing business.

One day, turning my attention away from pleasing others for a change, I decided to take stock of how happy I was and how close to attaining a high position of happiness in my life. So I began listing my "accomplishments" to see how I was measuring up. There I came face to face with how long it's been since I pursued pleasure merely for its own sake. I remembered long forgotten pleasures I enjoyed years ago that had faded in the limelight of obligations. So, I developed a new resume, my "Happiness Resume" that, updated regularly, lets me know if I'm staying in balance and making time to enrich my life, not just satisfy obligations to others.

This resume is not about what I do to put food on my table, it's about what I do to feed my soul.

I followed a standard resume format, but entered very unconventional information. I invite you to follow along and build yours with me; you may be surprised at the impact it can have on your life.

In the Heading, I started with my name (I just put "Jan"; "Janet" reminds me of being scolded me as a child. You should put what you like to be called). Then, instead of putting contact information where I could be reached, I put where I like to be found, my favorite place at the Jersey shore. List that special refuge you cherish; that secret garden, that mountain path, maybe your studio, a library, a golf course. And definitely don't list your phone number (or e-mail address).

Where a professional resume sometimes follows with an objective, I wrote my life's goals. I had a little trouble here because there is so much I want to do, but narrow yours down to what makes your heart peacefully sing. It could be improving your golf game, completing your novel or just being able to enjoy a glass of wine and your favorite decorating magazine when the kids are in bed. Maybe it's starting your own business, but if so, it's not something you're doing just for money. It is your bliss; it makes you feel in flow with that inner spring.

Next, list your education. I don't mean where you attended high school or the institution that bestowed your college degree. List life enrichment classes, creative arts classes, or studies you have pursued for you and you alone. Maybe flower arranging, sculpting, creative writing or music appreciation. It could be bowling lessons, but it's anything that has taught you how to enjoy an aspect of your life or brought you closer to what you listed as your objective. I'd forgotten the dance lessons I took with my husband and my intentions to try jewelry-making. I vowed to make time in my life for such pursuits I enjoy.

In a professional resume, you might next list Employment History. But on this resume, you are going to list Enjoyment History. Take stock of what you have done to nurture your spirit and enhance your enjoyment of life. Did you hike down the Grand Canyon or sail the Mediterranean Sea? Did you participate in a community gardening project or plant your own tomato patch your family feasted on all summer? Did you backpack across Europe or soak up the rays on your dock at the lake? Maybe it's taking time to meditate, or enjoy weekend entertaining to share your gourmet cooking talents. List

what you've done for your own enjoyment over the years, not just to please or impress others. This part of the happiness resume shows you if you've consistently made time for your own pleasures, or let them slip by.

Next, make a section for accomplishments. What have you done that has made you proud or ecstatic? You can list your children, but not their accomplishments. How about that cooking contest? Your prize roses? Getting your poem published or grabbing that part in a play? Maybe you attained citizenship or got your pilot's license. Maybe you celebrated an anniversary of volunteerism for a cause you advocate.

Resumes often include affiliations. Don't include professional memberships that merely advance your career. List what you participate in for your own personal fulfillment. Are you a member of the local garden club or downtown revitalization organization? An animal rescue group? Don't list your kid's soccer league, but you can list the Acting Guild if it is your avocation, not just your vocation.



Conclude your resume with references. I

listed friends I have known since high school who have laughed and cried with me through all phases of my life, new friends from my painting classes who encourage my artistic talents, and my yoga students who inspire and teach me something in every class I give. Think of those who share your interests and values, appreciate your talents and provide what gives you peace. List those who love you for who you are and nurture your spirit. Vow to cherish and feed these relationships.

When you're finished, review your resume with a critical eye. Do you have the qualifications to fill your life with the happiness you deserve? If not, where are the holes? What should you do to fill them? Are you able to separate your goals from those of your boss or your family? Reward yourself for your accomplishments by doing more of the same. Be sure you have a long and steady enjoyment history and you're feeding your soul with life long learning opportunities. Learn to identify with your own true talents, values and contributions to the universe, not just your career. I keep my resume dynamic, updating it frequently with new accomplishments and other steps I take to advance my spiritual health. I check it to make sure my life remains on course. Updating my happiness resume makes me reassess where I am spending my time and energy. I recognize what I'm doing to enrich my happiness and what I'm doing to merely impress or please others. I know that if I was to suddenly lose my job, but I have a successful happiness resume, that I haven't lost my identity or purpose, only my employment temporarily.



Don't let the roar of the future's uncertainty drown out the spring of happiness that bubbles inside you. You can help make your world, and that of those you touch, flow more peacefully by charting your

happiness and staying on course. Take a cue from Robert Louis Stevenson, who once said "There is no duty we so much underrate as the duty of being happy. By being happy, we sow anonymous benefits upon the world."

So, don't think of your Happiness Resume as merely taking time away from your hectic responsibilities to indulge yourself. It is your duty to keep your springs flowing, to reduce the stagnation of unhappiness in your world, and calm the tide of uncertainty that tends to sweep us away with its strong undertow. Maintain a source for your own spring of happiness, a positive current that will overflow into all of your life, and may even sweep others along while you track your progress and navigate your course for a successfully happy, fulfilled life. Expect success; anticipate abundance in your quest for happiness and you will not be disappointed.

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If you are interested in writing services, yoga lessons or a workshop on building your Happiness Resume, contact Jan at [pinkmoon7@comcast.net](mailto:pinkmoon7@comcast.net).

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R E A C H

The greatest danger  
for most of us  
is not that our aim is  
too high  
and we miss it,  
but that it is  
too low  
and we reach it.

MICHELANGELO

[1475-1564]



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