



Finding Your Noble Purpose

You may have heard the story of the three bricklayers who were busy working the same construction site. A passerby approached the first one and asked what he was doing and he replied "I am laying bricks." The second worker was asked the same question and he responded "I am building a wall." When asked the same question the third worker asserted, "I am building a huge, magnificent cathedral to which people from all over the world can come and experience serenity and peace as they worship their God."

Imagine these three guys plying their trade in the midday sun. Consider how laborious it must have been to be laying those bricks. It must have been tedious and frustrating to be building a wall in that kind of weather. Conversely, I can only imagine that it must have been invigorating and fulfilling to be building a huge, magnificent cathedral.

Elevate your thinking

It is clear to me that the third worker had moved beyond his job title and job function to find a higher more noble purpose in what he was doing. By elevating his thinking he was able to find the joy in his work and he became energized and excited about it. We spend 60% of our time working or preparing for work. The third bricklayer, unlike most of us, chose not to invest his time in a 40 hour work week just to pay the bills; languishing in a job that he hopes one day to retire from. By looking beyond his job function he was able to embrace it with passion and zest. For him each

brick laid was the precursor for something greater and nobler.

Glamour does not equal importance

In looking beyond his job title and job function, the third bricklayer was also able to see the important contribution he was making through his work. Now you may take issue with me describing laying bricks as important, but note that I didn't say that what he was doing was glamorous. I concede that in the grand scheme of things laying bricks would be nowhere near as glamorous as being the architect or the interior designer, but that's the danger you run into when you confuse "importance" with "glamorous."

As you work to achieve your goals and turn your dreams into reality there will be a myriad of mundane things you will need to do on a daily basis. None of them will be glamorous. There is a good chance that you will not receive any recognition for completing them. However, they are important since there is no way to realize your dreams without doing them and also because somewhere along the line, because you did them, you will be impacting lives.

Practicing our push starts three hours every afternoon during the week and six hours on a Saturday morning; lifting the heavy sleds and braving the elements; polishing the runners for hours the evening before a race are not glamorous tasks. They were simply a few of the mundane yet important things we had to do in order to get to the Olympic Games. Failure to do them would have resulted in us watching the Olympics in a little cottage in Negril while sipping umbrella drinks. Ultimately though, doing these things served a higher purpose by demonstrating to others that it is OK to dream big and to follow those dreams despite the inevitable obstacles in their path.

Our lives matter

It comes down to the fact that each of us must know deep down inside that what we do counts. In other

words, we must feel that we've done something that contributes to life. Our life's work must add value to life beyond ourselves by impacting others in a positive way. An article I read recently said "It doesn't have to do with your job description or the specifics of your work. It has to do with how you bring yourself to your work, regardless of what that work is."

We all want to leave behind some kind of legacy. It doesn't have to be grandiose. Nonetheless, each of us must know that we left a mark on the world and in some small way the world was better because of us. It is an incredibly satisfying and fulfilling experience to hear how our efforts on the Jamaican Bobsled Team have inspired people from all over the world to look beyond their perceived limitations, battle their inner fears and ignore the dire predictions of others to launch in pursuit of their dreams. This, I believe, embodies the whole philosophy of defining one's noble purpose - looking beyond the simple mundane act of pushing a cart down an icy chute to what that act signifies to those who are watching.

Developing a passion for what you do while committing to serve and contribute to others will help you identify your noble purpose and bring inner satisfaction. And as George Bernard Shaw so aptly stated, "True joy is being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one."

Keep on Pushing!