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Making a Life

Nobody has life figured out, and it's a journey full of obstacles and unknowns. The ability to draw on the experiences of others may be a powerful instrument for success and personal development. We may obtain important knowledge and perspective, avoid repeating the same mistakes, and find the strength and drive to keep moving forward by listening to the experiences of individuals who have overcome comparable challenges or succeeded in fields in which we aim to thrive. We have more knowledge and tools available to us than ever before, so we can seek out coaches and mentors, engage with online groups, while embracing a growth mentality and always bettering ourselves.

When trying something new or when unsure it is always best to ask people about their experiences. "When you see a problem you need to try to fix it. Burning bridges isn't worth it and does a lot of damage. Be polite, be yourself, and maintain a good reputation" (Fraizer). What Fraizer is saying here is that you need to maintain healthy connections with people. In some parts of life it is okay if you burn bridges and don't have the best reputation, but in a professional work environment it is often ill afforded. Another lesson can be seen by Bryan Stevenson, "I was uncertain about what I wanted to do with my life, but I knew it would have something to do with the lives of the poor, America's history of racial inequality, and the struggle to be equitable and fair with one another" (4). While Stevenson knew what he wanted to do with his life, he did not know how he was going to get there. There are many people in this situation everyday who just

need to ask the people around them for advice, seeking mentors and coaches is not that hard to do if you are willing to put the effort in.. Asking someone for help is not a sign that you don't know what you are doing, it is a sign that you want someone else's insight. It also shows them that you care and are willing to learn from them.

Asking people how they got into the job that they have can help you find what you want to do. "I would say looking at yourself, your goals and ideals, and striving for those. You have to work towards those goals" (Fraizer). Frazier said that he based his decisions off of what his goals and ideals were. If you base it on them then you won't have moral dilemmas and you won't question what you are doing. This can alleviate a lot of the pressure that can come with making large, life changing decisions. Stevenson also backs up this point by saying, "I finished my internship committed to helping the death row prisoners I had met that month. Proximity to the condemned and incarcerated made the question of each person's humanity more urgent and meaningful, including my own" (12). Stevenson was passionate about what he was doing because it lined up with his ideals and goals. This was also a major driving factor for him, it pushed him to get the work done and also to put the effort in to get a favorable result. He also learned about humanity and life from the people he was trying to help out. When you look at what other people are doing you can learn from them to improve your own life.

Learning from others can also help you understand how to make a meaningful and successful life. People want to do things that they have a passion for and they want to have an impactful change on their passion. In *Just Mercy*, Stevenson says that he "worked in a cramped circle of desks with two lawyers and did clerical work, answering phones and researching legal questions for staff" (7). You can learn from Stevenson that it is worth making sacrifices for things that you are passionate about. Stevenson did not have to work at a cramped desk and do

menial tasks, but he did it because he was passionate about his work. Because of the effort and time that he put in he made a notable difference and impact on the people that he helped. Another person that can be looked at when it comes to passion and affecting the people around them is Tony Fraizer. When asked about the differences he has made he replied saying, “I have shown people that not all leaders are assholes. The quality work I have done and the students that I have taught that have gone into every field.” This was after joining the Air Force, a career field that is not for the faint of heart, and he also became a teacher. Both of these jobs are extremely demanding, but offer the chance to make a tremendous amount of change. Teachers have the ability to inspire students for many years, some of Fraizer’s students have become pilots and some of his current students are becoming pilots. Without Fraizer inspiring these students it would have been unlikely that they would have gone into the aerospace industry. When we look at the people that have made a change in our lives we can see that they have often made great sacrifices but also have made an enormous impact. Looking at these people can help us make informed decisions about what we want to do with our lives and how we want to do it, without them we would be blind and unable to find our way.

A useful tool for both professional and personal development is learning from others. It makes it possible for people to acquire important ideas, viewpoints, and information that they may utilize to better their own lives and the lives of others around them. Since the combined knowledge and experience of others may be massively beneficial in navigating the ups and downs of life, it is challenging to achieve tremendous success by going it alone. Being open to new concepts, various viewpoints, and a variety of experiences is crucial for success and goal achievement. Without a desire to pick up knowledge from others, one can find themselves in a

rut without the skills or information necessary to handle the difficulties that life will eventually present.

Works Cited

Frizer, Anthony. Personal interview. 11, April 2023.

Stevenson, Bryan. Just Mercy : a Story of Justice and Redemption. New York, Spiegel & Grau,
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