

5 Steps To Building A Life You Love

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First, let me just congratulate you for taking steps towards truly loving your life and yourself! I also want to say thank you for allowing me to be a voice of encouragement in that journey! It is no fun to do it alone, so I say the more of us the merrier! As I entered this phase of life I felt unprepared for the emotions, questions and depression that came with it. Was it common? Was I normal? Were there others out there?

As a wife and mom of five kiddos, when I hit my 40s and the kids started becoming more independent, some going off to college, I discovered that I was really lost. It hit me that I was officially in my “mid-life” and I had no idea where I was going from here; if I had a purpose beyond being a housewife and mom, if it was possible, or if I even wanted to re-enter the work force. So many questions and as I looked around...so few friends! We had moved a lot through the years and I had found that over time I had become reclusive and not made new friends. I think it was more of a defense mechanism than anything else.

So, at the ripe age of 44, I decided it was time to rediscover me! It was hard. I had to make some very conscious decisions, and sometimes I had to force myself to move forward. My hope with this little guide is to give you some pointers that will help you on your journey to rediscovering you, so that it might be a bit easier than it was for me!

As we start, I ask only one thing of you. Commit to yourself that you will do these 5 steps for the next 30 days. There WILL be days that you wake up and the negativity, the fear; the depression will want to win the battle. Make a calendar. Set a reminder on your phone, whatever it takes. It takes approximately 30 days to form a new habit. Allow yourself to do this and just see how it changes things!

Step 1: No Negative Noise

Let's talk about the noise... that conversation that happens in your head. What are you saying to yourself every morning when you wake up? What about as you drift off to sleep? Here's a good one, when you eat that last slice of cake and then decide that the gym can wait for tomorrow! What do you say to yourself?

Girls, we have to learn to love ourselves again...and to do that, we have to get rid of the negativity in our heads!! Let me give you a little more background on me.

When I decided enough was enough, I had hit rock bottom. Now don't get me wrong...no one around me really knew. I had a good marriage, beautiful healthy kids and I could plaster a smile on when needed, do the things that had to be done to keep the house from imploding... you get the picture. But the voices in my head had me trapped. It was a DAILY battle with myself to get up, get moving and do the do.

Here are some of the things that I was telling myself.

You will never be good enough.

You are a terrible mother.

You will never be healthy.

You are ugly.

You have wasted your life.

You are fat.

I know...it sounds terrible when I write them down and read them. And these are just the tip of the iceberg. I was in bad shape, both mentally and physically. So the day I decided that I needed to change all of that, I decided

I had to change my mindset. There were several things that I did that helped me to shift from this negative mindset (which I honestly didn't realize I had developed) to a super positive one...so positive that my 11 year old thinks I have tipped the scales too far the other direction! Ha!

So, here are a few of the things that I have done to shift those voices in my head!

1. Journal – every morning, I spend some time writing down my thoughts. I allow myself to dump all of the good and bad onto the page, so that it isn't trapped in my head! Even just taking 5 minutes to do this will lift a weight off of your shoulders. If needed, do it at bedtime too!
2. Devotions - I am a firm believer in spending time in God's word. If this isn't your thing, I encourage you to either give it a try (the Psalms are a great place to start) or find a good book that gives daily encouragement.
3. Gratitudes - After I journal all of my feelings, I am careful to follow that up with writing down the things I am thankful for! It is amazing how your mindset begins to shift when you force yourself to think on the positive things!
4. Positive Affirmations – I admit, I thought this was a little kooky when I first started and I am pretty sure my sweet hubby thought I had lost my marbles, but this one thing has really helped to shift my mindset the most. Some days I write them out, other days I stare at myself in the mirror and I tell myself all of the good things about ME. I am beautiful. I am strong. I am a good mom. Even if you don't believe it yet, still say these things to yourself. Our mind operates more in the subconscious than in the conscious. We have to train it what to think, when we are on autopilot!

This did not just correct things overnight. It takes time to form a habit! Remember. Commit yourself to 30 days...no matter what, so that you can

form these habits! You didn't get to this place overnight and it isn't going to be corrected overnight either. Be patient with yourself!

Step 2. Listen and Learn

I don't know about you, but the more involved in being a wife and mom I became, the less I read, learned, soaked in things that would benefit me. I was always on the back burner. The kid's cartoons and snacks and dinner and laundry consumed me. There was no time for me! I have a degree, but it hasn't been used in years and would doubtfully be relevant with where I am in life now!

As much as I love to sit down and read a book, I still have a lot of responsibility on my shoulders, so I have found that a subscription to audible.com has become my lifesaver! I have Bluetooth headphones and can throw them on and multi-task with the best of them! There are still times I will pause and write things down, but I love just listening and soaking things in. I download a mix of books, some for pleasure, but mostly educational. I am learning how the 1% lives; how to invest in assets and have passive streams of income. I am learning constantly and I love it! It keeps my mind sharp and helps me focus on goals for my future! I am discovering that some of the most successful people that we know didn't even find their niche until they were in their 40s! There is hope!

I have also discovered the podcast world! There are SO many!! You will find several that fit whatever interest you might have. I try to listen to one podcast a day and at least 20 minutes of a book a day. It would be very easy for me to get sucked in and listen all day...but that would prevent me from taking the next 3 steps in this plan!

Before we move onto that, here are a list of just a few of my favorite books and podcasts! If these don't strike a chord with you, that's ok! I assure you there are plenty more out there!

Books:

BUSINESS

Secrets of the Millionaire Mind, by T. Harv Ecker

The Millionaire Next Door, by Thomas J. Stanley

Go Pro, by Eric Worre

Rich Dad, Poor Dad, by Robert T. Kiyosaki

Think and Grow Rich, by Napoleon Hill

Blue Ocean Strategy, by W. Chan Kim

PLEASURE:

Girl, Wash Your Face, by Rachel Hollis

Girl, Stop Apologizing, by Rachel Hollis

Before We Were Yours, by Lisa Wingate

Podcasts:

The Crazy Life (Yeah, that's mine!)

Mommy Millionaire (Cayla Craft)

Often Ambitious (Erika and Lindsey)

Step 3. Dare to Dream

We can spend days, weeks, even months soaking in the awe-inspiring stories of others. Writing, listening, learning...these are all good, but there is another element to really building a life you love...Learn to Dream.

I want you to take some time and really think about how you would answer the following questions:

1. If I could do anything I wanted, regardless of time or finances, what would I be doing?
2. If I could live anywhere I wanted, where would that be? Dream big! What does your house look like? Where is it located? Do you have multiple homes...or maybe none? Do you travel the world?
3. If there was someone or a group of people that I could help, with my time or money, who would that be?
4. What do I need to change to ensure that I can live out these dreams? Is my health where it needs to be? Are my finances in line with my age and my dreams?

I hope you really took some time to evaluate yourself here. This isn't meant to be a negative experience. It should become a positive one. I actually want you to learn to dream again!

When we are young, we are told that we can be anything we want to be, do anything we want to do. Somewhere along life's path though, the reality, the negativity of the world starts to creep in and we stop believing in ourselves and our dreams. We are "redirected" by "wise" adults who start to throttle our dreams and steer us into "reality". We start believing the lies around us. That this is all there is. You can't really be anything you want to be. We start to care what people think! The voices creep in and we settle...we stop dreaming.

So what sets apart the person who is living the life they have always wanted and the one that seems forever stuck in the rut of depression? They start dreaming and then they figure out how to reach those dreams!

Step 4. Go for Goals

This really goes hand in hand with step 3. We can dream all day about everything we want or hope for in life, but if we don't set any goals...the chances of us actually living out those dreams is small. Setting goals can seem overwhelming, but honestly if you break it down it is pretty simple!

Here is how I have set goals, both for business and life!

1. Define Success. I think this is huge. Success doesn't always equal money. Success might equal time with your family or giving more to a charity. What does success look like to you? At the end of it all, if you can look at your life and you have achieved your definition of success, than you have achieved what you set out to do!
2. Work backwards. As you set your goals, based around your dreams and what you consider to be success...you can then begin to work backwards from that goal to make it achievable. How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time!

You want to be debt free, including your house in the next 3 years. Let's say for you that is \$200,000. I know this seems ambitious, but hear me out. If you look at that big number...you have something to work from. 3 years is 36 months. That means that over the next 36 months you need to make \$5,555+ above your normal monthly expenditures to reach that goal. Break it down further. You need to make about \$1,400 a week to reach this goal. Break it down further. That is \$185 a day. You get the picture. So now you have a more reasonable goal...you can break that down even further if you want. How many hours are you willing to work each day to make that \$185? 10? That's \$18.50 an hour. Now I know this is very hypothetical and there will be

variables, but I want you to see is that ANY goal can be broken down this way and what that will give you is the 5th and final step.

3. Create a timeline. You can't just say I want to buy a new car...I mean you can, but then that's just a dream. When do you want to buy a new car? What kind of car do you want to buy? What smaller steps do you need to take to reach that goal? This will help you create a timeline.
4. Get a whiteboard calendar and post it. Make your goals visible so that you know what you are working for. Put post it notes on your mirror or around the house. Keep those smaller monthly or quarterly goals in front of your face!

Step 5. Always take Action

Although this may seem like an unnecessary step to write down, it is in fact the one thing that will stand in the way of moving you from a place of uncertainty and despair, to a place of freedom and truly building a life you love!

What can we do to make sure that we are taking the actions necessary?

1. Take action daily. If you are not consistent you will stay in the same place you've always been. You might take action for a couple of days...but like we talked about, that's not enough to form a new habit!
2. Take actions that serve your goals. If you are doing something and it is not helping you to move closer to your goals and dreams...take a step back and ask yourself why you are doing it? Is it out of obligation or guilt? Are you afraid to say no? Know why you are doing the things you are doing!
3. Take actions even when you don't feel like it. I promise there will be days like this. Days you don't want to journal or be positive or get out of bed. I have been there! Do it anyway! It will get easier and the sense of pride you feel when you accomplish another day of staying on track is incomparable!
4. Give yourself grace...this isn't really an action, but it is a reality. You will mess up. Don't beat yourself up over it, just get back up and keep moving forward. You only fail, if you don't get up and try again!

I hope that this has given you a starting point. A place that you can move forward from! You are not alone. There is a community of us out here that are all dealing with or have dealt with the same feelings that you have! Let's

be a community of women that encourage each other to greatness! Let's dream together for what I now consider to be the BEST season of my life!

Feel free to reach out to me through my email wendy@teamdavis.life

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Let's go build a life we love!