

# MAKE A DIFFERENCE

I recently went to the Jersey shore and was reminded of The Starfish Story adapted from “The Star Thrower” by Lorren Eiseley. A man went along the beach one morning after a storm. As far as the eye could see, the sand was littered with starfish the pounding waves had left stranded. They were sure to die in the hot sun. Then the man saw a child walking slowly down the beach, picking up starfish after starfish, tossing them back into the surf. When he approached the man asked, “Child, why are you doing this? There must be thousands of starfish out here. You can save only a few- what difference does it make?” The girl reached down and picked up another starfish. She tossed it back into the life giving water, then paused and said, “It’s going to make a lot of difference to that one.”

What is it that you were meant to do? How can you make a difference? As a coach and speaker I often meet people who are successful financially but lack passion in their lives. They let their dreams go because they believe they have to be practical and follow the path they “should” follow or that was expected of them. Finding your purpose in life and making a difference through that purpose sparks passion and energy. What are your gifts? Are you a writer who still hasn’t published a book? A

photographer whose photos are in boxes unseen by the public? An artist who is afraid of being judged by others? A speaker with a message that is still silent?

I recently met with Cheryl Richardson Best selling author and frequent guest on the Oprah show. I first met Cheryl about four years ago and she has been a wonderful role model as a coach and speaker. Her first book “Take Time for your Life” helped thousands of people by offering practical strategies they could use to take control of their lives. It became a New York Times Bestseller. Her latest book is called “Stand up for your Life.” It provides steps to help you develop the courage and confidence to fulfill your greatest potential. I believe as Cheryl does that we are all here to make a difference. What is it that you were meant to do? The first step to finding out is to develop a relationship with yourself. Really get to know who you are and what you think. So often we ask everyone else for their opinion and don’t trust our own thoughts and ideas. We lose the confidence we had as a child and hear all the negative comments and messages throughout our lives. It’s that inner critic that controls our desires and dreams. We here comments like, “who do you think you are?” and what makes you think you have any talent?” In

order for us to reach our potential and our own excellence we must silence that inner critic. We often still hear that negative voice that stops us in our tracks. Creating a supportive community is critical to moving forward with passion. Cheryl suggests joining a life makeover group which you can find on her website [www.cherylrichardson.com](http://www.cherylrichardson.com). These groups are designed to be a safe place where people can get the support they need. You can also create your own supportive community by sharing with a few good friends or business associates that you are planning to write a book, start a business or fulfill a life’s dream. Request their support and encouragement and plan to meet on a weekly or monthly basis for support. It is important to surround yourself with encouraging, positive people. Don’t go it alone.

As you go on this journey to find your true passion in life don’t be discouraged by the judgment of others. Many of us grew up worried about what the neighbors will think. And then it became what will our co-workers think or our friends. What really matters is what you think. Decide to make your personal development a top priority. As you make the use of your talents and gifts a priority it will become clearer what your life purpose is. As I said to a client recently, you know

a lot more than you think you know. What do you know that you can share? Start with one small action step.

How can you make a contribution to the world? How can you make a difference? Is it by throwing a starfish back into the ocean or by sharing your wisdom and talents with your community? . People often say to me, “this is going to sound stupid, but...” Nothing sounds stupid if it’s your dream. Use your unique gifts to improve the world.

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Published in  
Smart Business Now Magazine