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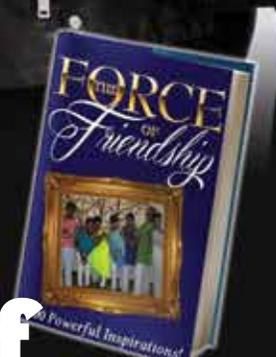
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# The Force of Friendship



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Dear Friends!

What an exciting issue this is for us! Not only is this our event issue that travels with us to Birch Run where we have our Passion & Empowerment Summit and Women's Expo but we have brought you a special cover, as well!

The Force of Friendship ladies gracing our cover celebrate their extraordinary friendship through the pages of their book, their lives and their never-ending mission to spread their expertise of the importance of friendship.

As we embark on our mission to continuously spread our passion of women empowerment and self love, we offer pages filled with articles to help our beloved readers find their passion! Make sure not to miss Deborah St. Hilaire's article on "What is Passion" and "Finding Your True Heart" by Mimi Matthews. Tarnesa Martin's article, "Unmasking the Pain", will help you drop the obstacles that are holding you back from your passion!

Are you ready to dig deeper, invest in the valuable relationships in your lives and chase your passion? We are and can't wait to bring you along as we embrace our positives and fuel our lives with passion!

Let's go!

Cheers!

Deb & Susan



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# W2W

## Women

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Women2Women Michigan magazine is distributed to subscribers via US mail. It is also available at every Women2Women Michigan event, chamber events, and women's organizations. It is professionally delivered by to over 400 locations with 25 outside vendor racks throughout the area including restaurants, hospitals, retail locations and medical offices in southeastern Michigan. Interested in hosting a distribution location? Call 810.694.2326 or email at [info@w2wmichigan.com](mailto:info@w2wmichigan.com) Would you like to subscribe? Subscribe online or email us at [info@W2Wmichigan.com](mailto:info@W2Wmichigan.com).

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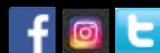


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## The Center for Hope Grand Re-Opening! October 27, 2017, 1pm-4pm

We would like to personally invite you to join us to celebrate the opening of our new and improved Center for Hope. In addition to the services we have always provided, we will now offer shower and laundry facilities for the homeless, as well as a Hamilton Health micro clinic offering basic medical education and services. As the community continues to combat economic issues and deal with water recovery, the Center for Hope will play a critical role in reaching those who need a helping hand toward a brighter, healthier future.



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***F***riendship can be the sweetest part of human relationships. It is a fundamental element needed for our deepest relationships to grow and last. However, the road to smooth friendships is not one for the weak-hearted. It requires understanding, love, investment, compassion, open-mindedness, boundary control, give and take and so many more things. Often times, finding true friendships can seem difficult. There is a special dance to the magic of friendships and once you learn the steps, the force of friendship that you will receive will be one of your most cherished relationships.

Meet six successful girlfriends celebrating three decades of friendship, Nora Shariff-Borden, Gloria Mayfield-Banks, Crisette Ellis, Caterina Harris-Earl, Sabrina Goodwin Monday and Andrea C. Scott. This amazing group of friends inspire each other. They love being with each other, traveling and seeing the world together all in the name of friendship. The ladies are originally from different areas but found each other in one place through their careers in Mary Kay Cosmetics, Inc. The ladies met and they fell easily in line with one another and their friendship blossomed.

Nora Shariff-Borden was born in Boston, Massachusetts and now resides in Stone

Mountain, GA. Her occupation prior to Mary Kay was as a nail salon owner and a fashion designer where she sold to specialty shops all over the US. She is married to Neil Borden, who is supervisor for Marta Transit Authority in Atlanta. They have six children between the two of them, plus 12 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Nora has been with Mary Kay Cosmetics for 25 years. She is a Senior National Sales Director, which is one of the highest levels one can reach within the company. Shariff-Borden is passionate about women becoming all that they can be. Dr. Gloria Mayfield Banks, described by many as “energy in motion”, is a woman of many accomplishments. She has a

# THE FORCE OF FRIENDSHIP

Harvard MBA and an honorary doctorate from the University of Maryland-Eastern Shore. She is a renowned motivational success strategist, a multimillionaire entrepreneur and a Mary Kay Independent Elite Executive National Sales Director. Growing up in a loving family in Detroit, Michigan, Banks was the third of four girls born to parents who were both educators. She is happily married to Ken Banks and they share four adult children and four grandchildren. Banks resides with her family in Baltimore, Maryland. Crisette Ellis is a native of Detroit, MI. She is married to Bishop Charles H. Ellis, III who is the Senior Pastor of Greater Grace Temple in Detroit, MI. They have two children, Kiera and Charles IV. Ellis is a graduate of Michigan State University where she received her Bachelor of Science degree

in Public Affairs Management. Ellis has achieved the highest position with Mary Kay as a National Sales Director. She is also the CEO of Affirmations By Crisette which is a lifestyle brand of motivational and inspirational products that encourage people to live their best life. She has also authored a children's book entitled My Future Is So BRIGHT. Ellis is also a philanthropist and

financially supports high school students who are interested in entrepreneurship through the Kristen Marie Scholarship fund that she established in memory of her deceased daughter. Ellis enjoys reading, writing, inspiring others and traveling the world. Caterina Harris Earl, originally from Fremont, CA, now lives in Brentwood, CA. Earl's passion is to empower others to help them find their passion and live their dreams. She is a powerful motivator and trainer. Earl is a college graduate with a degree in Political Science and Economics and a master's degree from USC in Public Administration. She has achieved the highest position with Mary Kay as a National Sales Director, her background is in nonprofit work in Oakland, CA, and Washington, DC. Earl is married to Dr. Anthony Earl, a Chicago Pastor and International Missionary and Church Planter. They share 5 grown children and 9 grandchildren. She has been self-employed since 1991 and works in full time ministry with her husband. She loves to travel the world, attend jazz festivals, and master every latest gadget. Sabrina Goodwin Monday was born and raised in Tulsa, OK. She now resides in Dallas, TX. She received her Bachelor's degree from Tennessee State University and holds a Master's degree from Boston University in broadcast journalism. Monday has been with Mary Kay for over 25 years, and has achieved the highest position in the company as a National Sales Director.

Collectively we realize that friendship is not one sided and that it is not about what we can or cannot do for each other. It is all about the unconditional love we have for each other.

She is married to Kenny Monday, an Olympic Gold medalist in the sport of wrestling, who is now coaching elite athletes. They have three children, Sydnee, Kennedy and Quincy. Monday enjoys reading, traveling and volunteering with young people. She and her family attend The Potter's House Church, with Bishop T.D. Jakes. Andrea C. Scott immigrated to the United States from the beautiful Caribbean island of Jamaica, West Indies, and grew up in the Bronx, NY. She attended the famed Music & Art High School in Manhattan as a vocal music major and went on to attend Temple University in Philadelphia, PA, where she majored in Jazz Commercial/Performance Music. Scott thought she was living her dream performing on stage until she found her true calling as a successful entrepreneur with

Mary Kay Cosmetics, Inc. She has been with Mary Kay since January 25, 1993, and currently serves as an Independent national Sales Director. She is single with no children and enjoys singing, traveling, mentoring women and having fun with friends. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and a proud member of Life Point Church in Jacksonville, FL, where she currently resides.

Friendship for these women is not a fluctuating nor contrived concept. It is a bond of sisterly love that carries the strength each needs to travel through life with the support and love necessary for all things. Throughout the more than 30-year friendship, the women have experienced all that life can bring. Successful careers, international travel, marriage, motherhood, divorce, abuse and death have touched their journeys. Yet, through it all, they remain a solid support system for each other and say their bond continually deepens as the years progress.

The focus on adult friendships and the impact they have on individuals and their involvement in society has been greatly under dressed. In a society where the idea of friendship and relationship building tools are emphasized on adolescents and teenagers, it is surprising at how the importance of adult friendships has fallen to the wayside. It is critical that we reassert the importance of building and maintaining life long friendships in our adult lives. Friendships are the essence of human bonds and how we best learn and grow to our fullest magnitude. Understanding this missing variable and having such a special, long-lasting friendship between six women led Nora Shariff-Borden to recommend to her girlfriends that they introduce their relationship to the world by forming The Force of Friendship. "The Force of Friendship was a vision given to me by God. I

went to my girlfriends and told them about the vision for us to tell the world about our amazing friendship so that we could inspire others to find friends that do for them what our friendship does for us,” comments Shariff-Borden. “What I love about having a friendship with these amazing women is that we inspire each other and travel the world together, all while bringing laughter and joy to each other’s lives. Our love for each other inspired us to write this book of inspirations, which we hope will inspire people everywhere, especially women, to live your dreams, own your power, and find friendships as meaningful and beautiful as ours.” The ladies decided a book would be a great vehicle for their message.

The Force of Friendship: 100 Powerful Inspirations (FOF) is a 100-page collection of quick and easily digestible daily affirmations written by all six girlfriends and covers such topics as faith, mindset, leadership, courage, success, belief, love, dreams, fears, and, of course, friendship. It is a book of inspirational thoughts and quotes that people can look to on a daily basis for encouragement. The book is unique in that you can really feel the love that radiates through the pages. Cultivated by the ladies with care and kindness, the pages hold their praises and prayers that helped each other grow in their friendship and their lives. The ladies understand how difficult it is to maintain lasting friendships in our fast-paced, technology enhanced world. Remembering to take time, even just minutes, to reach out to a friend just to say “hello” can make a difference in someone’s day. Why not give that to the people who stand by our side, through the highs and lows? By singing praise to our friends, lifting them up, shining a light on them, we raise ourselves. In turn, they see all the things that make us shine and remind us of the things that make us who we are as a person. The women of FOF show us how maintaining our close friendships rewards us in ways that cannot be contained in words but felt deep in our souls. So what is the exact formula that these ladies have found that make their friendship extraordinary? “Collectively we realize that friendship is not one sided and that it is not about what we can or cannot do for each other. It is all about the unconditional love we have for each other,” states Shariff-Borden. They all have their roles in the friendship that creates the magic flow that makes it all work. Sharrif-Borden describes her role as the girlfriend who holds everyone accountable. We all need that little nudge every now and then that pushes us back in our lane and helps us recognize where we need a little personal growth. The friends biggest lesson has been to master the skills of working together with 6 different personalities. This has ultimately helped them to work better with others outside their circle, as well. The group believes so deeply in the Force of Friendship because they know that it is impossible to get through



all the trials and tribulations of life without some phenomenal friends to help you along the way. They inspire even with their chapter titles, using simple words of power such as Mindset, Leadership and Courage.

In addition to the book, the FOF circle of friendship is conducting webinars and touring the country to help motivate and show women how to make friends, how to be a good friend, as well as how to nurture and cultivate good friendships with girlfriends that are free of cattiness and drama. Their recent “Rock Your World with Courageous Girlfriends” webinar provided insights on: developing quality friendships in a new city; balancing personal and business friendships; supporting a friend through singleness, divorce, and abuse; and comforting and supporting friends who are caregivers. They are excited about giving the world more of their continuously flourishing friendship! They plan on continuing to share the secrets of their sisterhood to all those who believe in the joy of friendships. As Crisette Ellis says, “There is a ship that seldom grows weary of the storms it encounters because it has been built to stand against the gust and tempest. For within its bowels it carries the most precious of cargo. FRIENDSHIP.”

For more information, visit [www.theforceoffriendship.com](http://www.theforceoffriendship.com).  
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# The Girl Who Stole My Heart

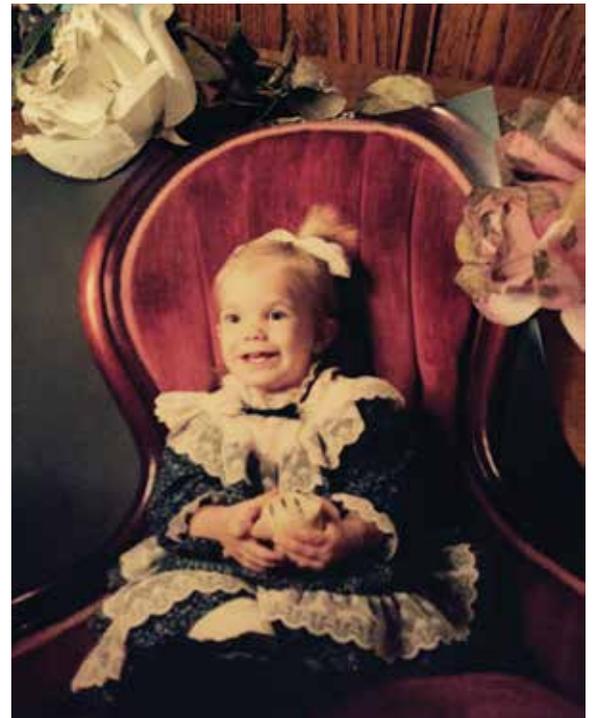
**W**hen I was a young girl, only 26 years of age, our daughter was born. She arrived on a hot June day, and she followed the births of her two older brothers. I will never forget my husband's voice as he announced, "It's a girl!" While I would have fallen in love with another baby boy, those words floated over me and into my heart where they remain today. *I had a daughter!*

Time has passed so quickly and I write this in the late fall of my life. The little girl, whom we named Maryhelen, is grown and an expectant mother of four. She is organized, beautiful, and confident. And she is still the girl who stole my heart. Whenever I have been ill or just down in spirit, she has been the consistent happy force in my life. Her phone calls, even the ones I can't answer, mean the world to me. I see her number on my phone, and I know that someone in the world cares about me. Recently I was admitted to the hospital, and she rushed to my home to care for our handicapped

son. This was extremely inconvenient for her, but she never once complained. She simply grabbed our grand-children and did what needed to be done. The stress and worry I had been feeling was immediately erased by her actions.

Someday soon, the winter of my life will arrive. No longer will I be the fast-paced, career-driven mother who never wavers – the rock upon which my large family leans.

I will be retired and living at a much slower pace with time to talk and hours to reflect upon my family and my life.



As I do that, I know that I'll be thinking that all of my children are precious and mean everything to me in a myriad of ways. But my darling daughter will continue to have a stronghold on a special place in my heart.

Is it because she is a female? Do women tug at their mother's hearts? Does her kindness and generosity make the difference? Or is it simply that she is a reflection of myself?

Whatever the reason, my life is whole and blessed and joyous because she lives. And no accomplishment I ever achieved in my career comes close to what it means to have her as my daughter. She is my golden medal, my PhD, and the pinnacle of my life's success. And no adjective, popular song, or eloquent poem will ever capture what having her as my daughter has meant. I have a daughter. And she stole my heart!



◀ *Helen Hicks is an award-winning administrator and motivational speaker living in the Detroit area. You can reach her at [helenk7306@hotmail.com](mailto:helenk7306@hotmail.com).*

# Helping Your Struggling Child Succeed in School:

## *Understanding educational accommodations for students with learning disabilities and mental illness.*

In my private counseling practice, I see a vast majority of children and adolescents who are diagnosed with a learning disability or mental illness. According to recent studies, approximately 20% of children and adolescents suffer from a mental illness. It is sad to see that most of these children struggle in school. Many find themselves with behavioral issues that result in suspensions or worst, being expelled from school. Even for those without behavioral issues, attendance, tardiness and low grades are problematic. As a result, these students suffer academically and socially. This potentially puts the student at a higher risk of dropping out of school.

Did you know that If your child has a physical or mental disability, she/he may be eligible for various services within your school district? Some parents are not unaware of the services available. Some of these services are covered under the 504 Plan.

What is the a 504 Plan? It's a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability and guarantees individuals with disabilities equal access to education. It is 504 of the rehabilitation Act of 1973. The 504 plan that list the accommodations a school will provide, such as audiobooks, note-taking aides, or extended time to complete test so that students with a mental health disability will have equal access to general education curriculum.



How can parents get information on the 504 Plan? If you think your child should receive services, submit a written request to the school asking for an evaluation to determine if there is a significant impact on your child's learning or behavior. Also request a copy of your school district policies and procedures.

For more information on this plan visit:  
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# Passion or Habit?

**W**hen we think of the things we know we should do, but do not do, we often let ourselves off the hook by claiming we just aren't passionate about it. I've come to believe one thing that separates people who succeed and those who don't are the ones who know that while some passions are natural, there are others that need to be developed.

We all know this to be true in some areas of our life. There are plenty of examples in all our lives of things we do, not because we like to, but because maintaining a regular habit of doing them makes life easier. We wash our clothes. We brush our teeth. We fill our vehicle with gas. We go to work. Sure, there are times we whine or even put it off longer than we should, but for the most part, we just do what we know we need to do.

Imagine if this were always the case when it came to our health! Of course that's not possible, right? There are just some people who love to exercise and hate junk food, right? They don't have to wait for motivation, because working out is their jam. Kale is their passion! Right?!

Wrong. Okay, maybe there are some strange exceptions, but I'd say that most people who are "passionate" about health and fitness weren't born that way. Their habits were developed either out of a desire for change (bigger than their desire to stay the same) or a necessity due to some health crisis.

So why do we easily develop habits in some areas while struggling so much in other areas? How do we consistently find the motivation to do things we don't even particularly enjoy, while other areas of our life Because the consequence is immediately evident! Standing in the closet to find you don't have any clean clothes left or running out of gas on the freeway are big motivators to develop consistent habits. When we clearly see where actions take us (or don't take us) we are more dedicated to performing them.

The reason why I think developing a passion for health and fitness doesn't come easy is because the benefits are not immediately evident. In the same way that learning to play an instrument beautifully requires hours upon hours of practice,

changing our physique or cholesterol happens slowly over a period of time. The passion develops over time, but here is the key; The passion is directed towards the changes that are felt and seen, not in the specific actions that got them there.

Do you see the difference? Waiting for the passion to work out is setting yourself up for failure. I'm sorry to break the news, but people who are "passionate" about fitness love zoning out on the couch with a pile of doughnuts and pizza just as much as anyone. They've just come to understand that success in an area is not about immediate feelings as it is about where those feelings will take you. Every action (or inaction) either puts you closer to where you want to be, or further away from it.

I challenge you to take those "I should but I'm just not passionate about it" areas and shift your perspective. Take some time to write down the big benefits that would come if you were consistent in them over the course of a week, a month and a year. Examine the things that often get you off track; stress, lack of planning, a negative influence, etc. and come up with possible strategies for dealing with them. Recognize that you aren't dependent on feeling passionate, but are in the process of developing a passion.

Some days will feel easier than others, but being excited about the long-term benefits are what will carry you through the days it doesn't come easy.



◀ Tamra Klaty is a health and fitness coach and certified instructor for CIZE Live classes. You can learn more about what she does at her facebook page at [www.facebook.com/DesignedHealth](http://www.facebook.com/DesignedHealth)

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Che Ko Tae-Kwon-Do	Home Zone	Sgt. Stephanie Shannon
Chocolate Moonshine	Jpin	Self Love Beauty
Coffee Beanery	Landaal Packaging	Sleep Number
ColorStreet	Le-Vel Thrive	Stacey Kimbrell
Compassionate Care Home Health Services	LightRx Face & Body	Sweet-N-Chic
Covenant Health Care	LipSense by SeneGence	Personal Success Programs
Cutco Cutlery17	LuLaRoe Duo	Tarnesa Martin
Creative Collections Gifts	Majestic Sky Link "a DISH Authorized Retailer"	The Oily Page/Young Living Oils
Damsel In Defense - Independent Pro	Mary Kay	Thirty One
Divalution, W4Divas	Miracle-Ear	Touchstone Crystal
Essential Bodywear Inc. The Bra Ladies	Modern Craft Winery-Little	Turtle Gloves
EmpoWORDment Cards	Monet	Willing Beauty
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# Essential Steps to Avoiding Cancer

**I** was shocked to find out that “about 5% to 10% of ALL cancers result directly from gene defects (inherited)” per the American Cancer Society. Let’s break this down, that means... Up to 95% of ALL CANCERS are NOT GENETIC! That’s ALL age, race, and gender. Why haven’t we heard this before? Because cancer is caused mainly by the cumulative consumption of toxins over time in our everyday products and lifestyle choices.

## Known Human Carcinogens (Environmental) Factors:

- **Lifestyle factors** (nutrition, tobacco use, physical activity, etc.)
- **Naturally occurring exposures** (ultraviolet light, radon gas, infectious agents, etc.)
- **Medical treatments** (X-rays, CT, PET, radiation, and medicines including chemotherapy, hormone drugs, drugs that suppress the immune system, etc.) PET/CT scan exposes you to about 25 mSv of radiation. Which equals about 8 years of average radiation exposure.
- **Workplace exposures**
- **Household exposures**
- **Pollution**



## Let’s Stop the Madness for Ourselves and Our Pets:

1. Read your labels, know what’s in ALL the products you purchase and use.
2. Avoid harmful chemicals you eat, drink, breath-in and put on your skin.
3. Avoid toxic chemical from candles, air fresheners, MSG, artificial sweeteners.
4. Avoid all plastic bottles, containers, cookware as much as possible.
5. Avoid or limit tobacco, alcohol, and unnecessary over the counter medication and prescriptions.
6. Eat organic and avoid GMOs and processed foods whenever possible.
7. Consume a well-balanced diet with protein, good fats, carbohydrates, plenty of veggies and fruits.
8. Drink ½ your body wt. in oz. of clean, filtered water each day.
9. Your Digestive system is 80% of your immune system, your daily bowel movement should be the shape and size of a banana.
10. Manage/reduce your stress and overcome fear.
11. Include Prayer and Meditation.
12. Control your thoughts- Stay positive.
13. Exercise for at least 30 minutes a day.
14. Maintain a healthy weight.
15. Have your Vitamin D and Hormones tested annually.
16. Supplement your diet with antioxidants, vitamins, enzymes and good fats.
17. Use natural cleaning products such as vinegar, baking soda, and Thieves Household Cleaner.
18. Test your home for radon, carbon monoxide and mold.
19. MRI and ultrasound exams are better choices when you can, they do not expose you to radiation.
20. Do your due diligence when researching, it’s your life! For a complete list of toxic chemicals visit [www.LivingChemicalFree.com](http://www.LivingChemicalFree.com)

For over a decade, I have taught that WITH KNOWLEDGE.... comes the opportunity to make a difference! Working towards an overall healthy body, mind, and soul are all key to a BALANCED LIFE! “Living Balanced: Healthy, Mind & Body Reference Guide” can assist you on that Journey!

► *Stacey Kimbrell is a Natural Health Professional, Chemical Awareness & Essential Oil Advocate, International Speaker and Author of Living Balanced. Stacey loves to provide a simple and practical approach to living a healthy, chemical-free lifestyle. Better health starts with removing toxins from your environment and making responsible lifestyle changes; for what you EAT, DRINK, THINK & DO! Stacey’s desire for you is to “Live with Hope & Zeal in all things.” To schedule an appointment or educational workshop 810.423.5721 [Stacey@staceykimbrell.com](mailto:Stacey@staceykimbrell.com) [LivingChemicalFree.com](http://LivingChemicalFree.com) [OurDailyDrop.com](http://OurDailyDrop.com) [LivingAnointed.com](http://LivingAnointed.com)*





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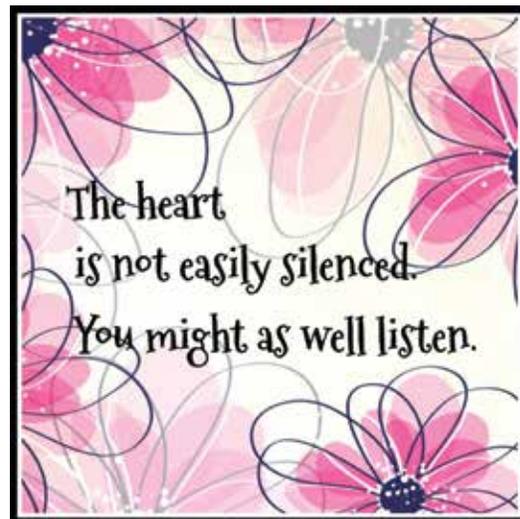
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## Finding Your

# “True Heart”



**H**ow long does it take us to begin choosing what is right and good for us, according to what our HEART tells us, and not because of the expectations of others and feeling like we “should”?

For some, like me, it takes years. I found that first I had to become acquainted with my heart, the one that had been speaking (and sometimes crying out) since I was little. The heart (also known as our spirit) which was placed there when I was created, but was often lied to, inhibited, and repressed because of other voices dictating and expecting.

Finding your true heart means discovering your authentic self. But how? I found a few things helpful.

1. **WRITE:** without filters and let the words flow, expressing how you feel about your life and relationships. I wrote words I would never say out loud. Of course you will want to protect yourself from prying eyes, so have a safe place for your journal. I learned this lesson the hard way.
2. **GIVE YOURSELF TIME AND QUIET** to listen to your heart. Identify the things you’ve done that make you happy and fulfilled. What have you experienced that makes you feel alive, like a surge of energy, or like you were “in your groove”? What is something you long to do with your life?
3. **IDENTIFY YOUR STRENGTHS.** Ask trusted friends what they see as your positive characteristics and things you are good at. Ask if and how you have helped them. For me, facing the chance of freedom with no idea how to pursue it or how to choose my path, identifying my strengths gave me confidence and direction. An excellent resource is the book *Strengths Finder* by Tom Rath which includes a code for an online test.
4. **BUILD ON YOUR STRENGTHS.** Absorb them into your being. As I began believing in my

abilities, even proclaiming them, my heart’s desires became clearer and opportunities opened up.

Our purpose can evolve to some degree during our life, but the core of who we are, our innate being, will always remain. During this journey of listening to your heart you’ll find that events, meet ups with people, or something you read will resonate with you, bringing clarity. For me, it took stepping out, knowing my strengths and walking in them. Saying “yes” to things that spoke to my heart and what I’d identified as my purpose (even when those things scared me!).

To accomplish the dreams we treasure takes perseverance and work. We have to learn about ourselves, grow, and pursue them. I have great confidence in you. You can do this—it’s important. And like “true north” your true heart will direct you, and quite possibly lead you to a fulfilled life.

► *Mimi Matthews believes in the power of words to change lives. She calls herself “Passionista At Large” because she is always on the prowl to encourage and empower, inspire and ignite anyone she comes in contact with. Mimi’s life experiences have given her rich material and wisdom to help others learn truth. You can read her life stories and uplifting posts on her blog <http://particularpassions.me/> and buy her encouraging and empowering words on unique cards and gifts on her Etsy shop here: [https://www.etsy.com/shop/EmPOWordmentCards?ref=hdr\\_shop\\_menu](https://www.etsy.com/shop/EmPOWordmentCards?ref=hdr_shop_menu)*



*The Birch Run Expo Center is pleased to present*



**the Ballroom** is a beautiful 4,800 square foot room with a bar, dance floor, gorgeous chandeliers and a retractable video screen for presentations. The Ballroom was completed a few months ago and has already hosted a dozen wedding receptions, numerous business meetings/luncheons, a Charity Casino night for the Old Newsboys, several Christmas parties, the Great Lakes Bay Regional CVB Annual Meeting and the Genesee County GOP Lincoln Day Event.



- Groups of up to 300
- Receptions, private parties, galas, luncheons, etc.
- Business Meetings (Breakfast, Lunch or Dinner)
- Food & Beverage catering options are available

**the LOFT** is a huge 12,500 square foot area accommodating groups of up to 400 and more. The Loft features a lounge area with a private bar, television screens, couches and cocktail tables in a contemporary setting with ample space for mingling as well as a banquet area for a more intimate and private atmosphere.

- Groups of 400+
- Large receptions, wedding services, business to business meetings, private events, proms, election night campaign parties, galas, etc.
- Food & Beverage catering options are available



# THE POWER OF

# Passion



**W**hat is passion? Why do we want, need or aspire to have? Why should it matter? What is synchronicity? Why should I be aware of it?

As I asked myself these questions, millions of ideas ran through the left hemisphere of my brain, while the right side screamed “pick one”. This time, I’m going to try to satisfy both sides...usually one side wins. The reason I’m allowing compromise is because one leads to the other...IF you pay attention...Synchronicity will lead you to your passion.

So, let’s talk about passion first. The dictionary says passion is a “strong and barely controllable emotion or an intense desire or enthusiasm for something.” Passion can be defined differently not only by as many people as you might ask, but by the same person at each different phase of life.

Here’s what I mean: When I was little, playing was the most important thing, then school. In my twenties, my passion was adventure. After I had my children, they became all-consuming, perhaps the strongest I will ever have. Raising them to be the best version of themselves was so vitally important that I knew no other. Of course, there was sexual passion, but that

waxed and waned. It was different. It never ruled me. True passion goes beyond lust but remains an unquenchable hunger that you seek to satisfy.

To me, passion is defined by what makes you feel most alive, what drives you, gets you up every morning and often keeps your brain active late into the night. It is what gives you purpose.

I have never known a time without it. Have you?

Why do we want passion in our lives?

Is passion/purpose driving you or do you exist to drive the passion and purpose of another? Have you ever defined what passion means to you? Do you have a purpose? Have you ever contemplated these questions?

Why is it important? This is the most poignant question, and answer, of all. It may not be necessary, during different life segments. You may need to rest and redirect after a great passion has come into fruition. Having a passion is probably not even important to

some. Living with passion may not be a priority. They live in a day to day world, doing what is expected of them, dwelling in mediocrity. Have you even known a person like this? They lack a luster, a twinkle, a direction. They have not allowed synchronicity to lead them to their life's purpose. They see no point in being dedicated to a cause or a purpose...they are happy to exist just as they are, and that's okay, as long as they're happy.

Really, there is nothing wrong with this. However, it is sad. I coach people that have lost their spark, but at least they had it, once. They know what it feels like to live with gusto. They miss it. Is this you? We need it to make our lives worth living. We are here for a reason. Our passion is inherently born to us. We just have to figure it out.

Lastly, why should it matter? It should matter because there is something inside of you that you are meant to accomplish, to teach or share. You need to discover what it is.

That brings us to synchronicity. It is defined as: The simultaneous occurrence of events that appear significantly related but have no discernible connection. We receive signals, throughout our lives that will lead us to find our passion/purpose. We are not taught to look for them. They float by, people we meet get forgotten, significant events go unnoticed. Sometimes, we see them in hindsight but wouldn't it be wonderful to see them in real time?

### **Finding your passion, through hints in life, let me count the ways:**

1. What did you enjoy playing when you were little? Did you like to draw, play doctor, nurse, or teacher? Are you doing some form of that now?
2. What makes you smile at the mere thought of doing it or being there?
3. What makes you feel alive, authentic and most powerful?
4. If money were no object, what would you be doing?
5. What do you dream about?
6. Do you have a cause that ignites your soul?

Once you have answered these questions, you can begin to make a list of how you want your life to look. You will learn more about who you really are, what you are meant to be doing and become aware of where your life path will lead. Don't be too hard on yourself, it will not happen suddenly. We are taught to squelch our imaginations. It may take time to retrieve yours. Begin by taking baby steps in the right direction.

To live with passion does not necessarily mean that your occupation has to align perfectly with your passion. I think a lot of people think they have it wrong if they are not earning a living by something they are passionate about. There are doctors who are dedicated to surfing. That is where their spirit comes alive. It does not make them any less a doctor. There are school teachers who are dedicated artists, plumbers who find contentment in yoga and football players who light up when playing with their children. They are living their purpose, their passion, their joy, just as much as the violinist in a symphony orchestra. Through a series of synchronistic events, people and sights, sounds and feelings,

they have found what thrills them. They make time for it. They live happy, fulfilled lives. You can too.

The point is, to find something that ignites your internal flame and make time to do it, align yourself by doing this for you, alone.

Ask yourself the questions above regularly. When you feel the weight of the world bearing down, go inside to discover what makes you come fully alive. This life, the one you are living right now, is such a precious gift. It does not last very long. Live it with gusto. Move through each day with passion. Live without regret...without "should haves"...no "could haves"...only "I did, and I'm glad".

Look around you. Be aware of the signals the universe (God) is giving you. They are happening all around you, every single day. Allow the synchronicity of your life's signs, people and events lead you to a path of a joyful, passionate, synchronistic existence. Only you can see it. Only you can do it.

I leave you with a quote:

"We do not create our destiny; we participate in its unfolding. Synchronicity works as a catalyst toward the working out of that destiny."

— David Richo,

The Power of Coincidence: How Life Shows Us What We Need to Know

...and a gift:

### **Our Deepest Fear**

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.

Our deepest fear is

that we are powerful beyond measure.

It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?

Actually, who are you not to be?

Your playing small does not serve the world.

There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

We are all meant to shine, as children do.

It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone.

And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same

. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

by Marianne Williamson

Be blessed.

► *Deborah St.Hilaire has been a women's empowerment/life coach since 2010. She can be reached for personal and group coaching, speaking engagements and retreats. [thedivalution@gmail.com](mailto:thedivalution@gmail.com) or 419.366.8091*



# FINDING YOUR PASSION AND LIVING IT

**I** was attending a Journalism conference in Los Angeles when it hit me- I was not cut out for following the structured rules of journalistic writing that were needed for writing news for a newspaper. At the time, I was a junior at Central Michigan University, majoring in Journalism. During the conference, I did some public relations for one of the candidates running for district representative of Sigma Delta Chi, the Journalism fraternity. As I worked on the campaign and promoted the candidate, I knew this was the kind of thing that would make me happy. I felt passionate about doing this type of work in my life.

Oprah Winfrey once stated, "What I know is that if you do work that you love, and the work fulfills you, the rest will come."

So how do you go about finding your passion and living it?

Figure out what you love to do and then work toward reaching that goal. Some people are lucky and realize what their passion is at a young age. (I have a relative that knew at the age of five that he wanted to work in an artistic field. Today, he is in his forties and has been working at a graphic arts agency since he was in his twenties.) Some people don't find their passion until they are much older. Take time to sit down and make a list of the things you love to do and what sets your heart racing. Then, start researching what you have to do to make your passion a reality.

Don't be afraid to take risks. If you want something badly enough, it means you are passionate enough to take risks that will eventually get you to your goal. We all are nervous when something is out of our comfort zone. But, inactivity is not going to get you anywhere. Jump in! The risk may be big or small, but unless you try, you will never know if you can succeed.

Surround yourself with positive people. How many times have you heard a successful person state that if it weren't for a family member or friend who believed in them, they never would have taken the chance needed to succeed? Having positive people around you who believe in you and your passion will not only keep you positive but they can help when the naysayers (yes, those negative nellies we all have in our lives) try to tear down your belief in your passion. Having positive people as your support system can make a world of difference.

Follow your own path- you can become what you believe! Passion isn't about wealth, it is about being happy in what you do, being fulfilled in your daily life. Giving up is not an option. Find what you are good at, what you love, and go after it. Life is way too short to be unhappy for 20 or 30 years.

In the course of my life, I have met people in many different careers. I am always fascinated and slightly in awe of those people who have such a passion for their work that you can see the excitement in their

faces and feel the enthusiasm when they describe a project they are working on. If you are doing something you are passionate about, you are going to be happy- inside and out.

Twenty years ago, I was working in television in Ohio. The job was filled with long hours, frenzied days and ever changing duties. I remember one Sunday night going in to the local Kmart and the clerk at the check-out lane was scowling, looking very depressed. I asked her if she was all right and she replied with, "I just hate my job." I remember walking out and thinking, "Wow, I can't even relate to that." I loved my hectic, creative job. Thinking about never taking the steps needed to make yourself happy and find your passion is just sad.

Always require more of yourself-never stop learning everything you can about what you are passionate about! I had an employee, we'll call him "Fred", who told me that he was at a convention years ago and struck up a conversation with a gentleman. They got to talking about a specific interest they both had, and because of Fred's knowledge on the new technical systems they were discussing, he was offered a job. Your passion can lead you to greater heights.

Being successful is only a small part of your life. Being happy is much bigger, and plays a much more significant role. Having a passion and attaining what you want from it can make your life happier and can help you to be more centered and balanced.

Believing in yourself and what you are passionate about will bring you greater rewards than you ever thought possible, and a satisfaction in knowing you have achieved what you set out to do.

Never forget that old saying, "If you believe it, you can achieve it." Go out and create the person you want to be-follow your passion!

▶ "Charlene A. Kowalski is the Director of Marketing/Customer Service for the Mass Transportation Authority. She can be reached at: [www.ckowalski@mtafint.org](http://www.ckowalski@mtafint.org)



# Happiness is.....

## Finding the Perfect Hairstylist, for You!



**H**ave you ever walked into a salon, maybe with a photo, and imagined how great you were going to look at the end of your appointment, only to leave unhappy, frustrated and maybe in tears? If your answer was yes, read on. If you said no than you are one of the lucky ones. However, for most of us (and yes that includes me too) somewhere between the shampoo and the blow-dry something went wrong. I call it COMMUNICATION BREAK DOWN. The operative word here is communication between you and your hair stylist. Just as we expect in any relationship, if you can't communicate with one another it's possible that the relationship will fall apart.

**RULE #1-** ALWAYS be open and honest with your Stylist. For example if you are a DIY hair colorist, tell him/her, particularly if you are getting a chemical service. If your hair stylist doesn't have all the facts than you can't expect the best results. For one thing, most store bought hair colors, lighteners, etc. can react very badly with professional hair color and lighteners. So PLEASE be up front about what you have done to your hair.

**RULE #2-** Ask your stylist how much the service will cost and how long it will take. Chances are if you do your own hair color at home and then you decide to let a professional do it, don't expect to get in and out in 20 minutes. Nothing good has ever come out of the HURRY UP method. Relax and make the extra time it will take to get the service done.

**RULE #3-** Before going for anything new; ask your stylist their opinion. Don't expect your stylist to just tell you, especially if this is your first time with that stylist. Most stylists can just look at your hair texture, face shape, etc. and tell you right away if that particular style is a no go or would look great on you. And remember, if your Hair stylist can't be

open and honest with you or is just a yes man, than find one who will.

**RULE #4-** Ask your stylist to show you how to style and care for your new hair. If you're going from curly to straight, for example, you may need some lessons on how to use a flat iron. If you've received a hair color service for the first time, you may require certain products to keep your hair in the best condition.

All in all, the most important thing to remember is that you and your stylist should be on the same page which will result in a happy client and a happy hair stylist. That is TRUE HAPPINESS!

▶ *Tami L. Sackett is a freelance writer and a hair and skincare expert with over 30 years in the beauty industry. She is always on the lookout for better products at a value price that keeps you looking young and feeling good. You may reach Tami at her email: [tlsackett@yahoo.com](mailto:tlsackett@yahoo.com)*



# The Time of Year...



**F**all and Back to School, what a great time of year! It almost feels like New Year as I set new goals for myself and my family as we get back to schedules, projects and plans for colder weather and more time spent indoors. I stay away from my personal fitness goals though (those I save for the New Year when I'm in kindred company). This is the time of year I like to spend time organizing and purging. This is the time of year I think about replacing and updating items we all need in our wardrobes - undergarments. School shopping technically kicks this off and I take this opportunity to replenish some bare necessities for everyone, not just the kiddo in our home. Besides, if I didn't make this an annual priority I imagine my husband would just ride it out until he was completely out of options.

Life is so much easier with new and nicely organized socks, tights, cami's and undergarments. It just feels incredibly good to have nice new undergarments and items that make dressing less stressful. This is often an overlooked part of our wardrobe essentials and we sometimes forget how important these items can be in terms of our comfort. Oh and let's not forget how key some shape wear pieces are to making us and our outfits look fabulous! We've all experienced a day with the wrong underwear, poking ill fitted bras or tights that just don't fit right! When working on building a wardrobe full of quality and classic pieces that can carry you through a day of events, it pays to also invest in the right bare essentials.

While taking stock, remember that our undergarments should be accommodating of the changing seasons in which we live. We are quick to switch up our closets when the seasons change but often neglect

our basic necessities. These items play a very important role in our body temperatures and overall comfort. This is great time to clear out all the items that don't fit correctly or for whatever reason don't feel right or make you feel great when you wear them. Spend a little time taking inventory and make a list of some key items that could make your wardrobe even easier to work with. This time of year is a wonderful time to boost your wardrobe of undergarments. Only you need to know what's holding it all together sometimes!

## Basic items to consider:

- Nude and black underwear - various cuts
- Nude and black bra
- Shape Wear as needed
- Nude and Black Cami's
- Trouser Socks for boots and flats
- Black Tights
- Liner socks for flats



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# “HELP ME PARK MY CAR BACK IN THE GARAGE BEFORE IT SNOWS!”

Before the snow starts to fall, here's some helpful advice in getting your car back into the garage. Since this is a large project, you should check the weather and ask for help. Organizing the garage can take a whole weekend. Start early! It's helpful to have plenty of snacks, drinks, and quick things to grab for lunch. Organizing your garage doesn't need to be boring. Play your favorite music! Here are a few things to help you succeed.

Ask yourself, “How do I want to use the garage?”

- Storage
- Parking – vehicle, lawn tractor, bikes
- Work Space
- Hobby Center
- Man's Cave

Create your plan?

- Measure and look at the vertical space.
- Do I need shelving and where can I place it?
- What items do I need closer to the door of the home? Where do I put that chest/fridge?
- What items do I use seldom/seasonally?
- Who uses the garage and do I want to create a station for each person?
- What kinds of items/categories will I find?
- Do I need to hire a handyman to handle installing garage storage cabinets, workbenches, garage shelves, hooks, baskets and more...
- Are there items to sell or donate?
- Do chemicals need to be locked up?

Then take everything out of your garage and place them into categories in your driveway. Here are a few examples of categories to use:

- Landscape
- Toys
- Tools
- Car
- Camping equipment
- Seasonal decorations
- Garbage/Recycling/Returnables

Then be brave and start with things you definitely want back in the garage and items that tend to be larger in size. Next you can bring in one category at a time and pace yourself. Set a timer and keep in mind how much



light you have of the remainder of the day. A few more tips are:

- Know the distance between shelves and to maximize your containers.
- Buy clear containers – easy to see and can re-use for any future projects.
- Label your containers, boxes, and Ziploc bags with a Sharpie marker.
- Wear your grubbier clothes and comfortable shoes, such as running shoes and not open toe shoes or flip flops. You don't want any tripping hazards.

Just a reminder that in October many cities have Hazardous Waste Day; In Livingston county please visit [https://www.livgov.com/dpw/Pages/household\\_hazardous\\_collection.aspx](https://www.livgov.com/dpw/Pages/household_hazardous_collection.aspx) and

Genesee County <http://gcmpe.org/hhw-electronic-waste-collection-notification-system/> for more information.

Good luck! Taking on a task like this may be daunting, but just think of how much peace of mind it will bring each time you enter your spruced-up garage.



◀ Betty Huotari is a professional organizer who services all of Southeastern Michigan. She can be reached at 810-348-1772 or [betty@logicalplacement.com](mailto:betty@logicalplacement.com). Betty publishes a free monthly newsletter. For more information please visit her website [www.LogicalPlacement.com](http://www.LogicalPlacement.com).

# Michigan Grown Apples- Blissfully Bring in the Fall Season

Michigan Grown Apples- Blissfully Bring in the Fall Season Being on staff at The Local Grocer has really changed the way I react to the change of seasons. Because I was born in the spring, I have always had an appreciation of bright sunny days and warm weather. Previously, when the signs of summer's end begin to appear, I would get nostalgic before it was even gone. Now that I work closely with farmers and local produce, my understanding of seasonality has deepened and I know that each season has some awesome new flavor to offer. Just a thought of Michigan's apple season and I am ready for a family outing to one of the many "U-Pick" apple orchards in the area. The physical activity filling up a basket with McIntosh or Paula Red apples in the brisk fall air and taking in the beauty of the trees decorated is a healthy and fun way to support a local business. And what is a trip to the orchard without warm doughnuts and sweet apple cider afterward? Michigan is the third largest producer of apples in the

country. There are more than 11.3 million apple trees on 825 family-run farms in Michigan. That means that almost everyone in Michigan has an apple orchard within a half hour of their home. Many of these orchards and nearby farmers' markets feature heritage varieties of apples. These heirloom varieties have great names and great flavor; try a Wolf River, Snow, or Cortland. If you don't have time to make it to your local orchard, pop into a local store for some of fall's finest fruits!

If you're like me and are working on increasing your daily intake of fruits and veggies, apples are the perfect place to start. Apples are very versatile. Enjoy them cut into slices and topped with your favorite nut butter, diced and added to a leafy greens salad or juiced. Eating them whole with the skin on is the most portable and the most nutritious. Being high in fiber and water content make them a filling snack, which when eaten shortly before a meal can help you to feel fuller and eat less.

Here is a quick recipe to try when you start to feel snacky between meals. Apple chips are a delightfully tasty alternative to potato chips that will leave your home smelling amazing!  
Baked Cinnamon Apple Chips

### Ingredients:

3 apples (perhaps Granny Smith, McIntosh, or Honey Crisp)  
ground cinnamon  
granulated sugar (optional)

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 200F degrees and line two large baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. Wash and thinly slice the apples. Spread the apple slices onto the baking sheets. Be sure not to overlap apples. Sprinkle with cinnamon and sugar (optional).
3. Bake for one hour, flip the apples over, and bake for another hour- hour and a half.
4. Turn the oven off and keep the apples inside as the oven cools down for 1 hour.
5. Remove from oven, loosen from parchment paper and the apples will crisp even more.

Store apple chips at room temperature in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

► Erin Caudell owns and operates *The Local Grocer* inside the *Flint Farmers Market* where she sells all natural produce grown at her farm in Beecher, MI. Learn more about the farm and the store at [www.TheLocalGrocer.com](http://www.TheLocalGrocer.com).





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