

by Barb E. Brown

“Following your heart's desire will lead you in the direction your spirit wants to go”
Oprah

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“Let yourself be silently drawn by the strange pull of what you really love. It will not lead you astray.” Rumi

Introduction



I'm Barb Brown and I founded Leaning Into Joy™ to offer training, workshops, products, and coaching to help people access their own inner wisdom, creativity, and joy. I help people transform negative emotions such as stress and anxiety naturally allowing joy to flow more easily. I am passionate about helping people discover health, happiness, joy, as well as their heart's desires. I had a counseling practice specializing in treating anxiety, depression, grief, and Post Traumatic Stress in a natural way. After 15 years in private practice I wanted to help people in a different way, meeting them as they prepare to step forward into their passions and dreams. So I transitioned from a counselor to a coach.

Before all of that, I worked in city government. That part of my career had it's benefits. I had a regular salary, medical insurance, paid time off, etc. but I wasn't passionate about my job and struggled with depression throughout my 20 years with the city. I knew I wanted something more and so I completed a bachelors degree in Criminal Justice as well as a Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology. My first career was really an accident, something I stumbled upon when I was 21 years old. It really didn't feed my soul but I was afraid to leave the security of working there, especially after almost 20 years. In 2004 I was laid off along with 50 other people. In 2005 I decided to follow my dream to use my counseling degree and open my own counseling practice. Along the way I've found clarity about my purpose and passion, finding my happiness and joy and living my heart's desire.

In this report, I will explore some powerful ways you can find your passion and ways to discover your heart's desire so you can experience more happiness and joy in your life. These ideas include looking at your life experiences including your passions and natural abilities, having a growth mindset and finding a mentor to guide you along the way. I hope you enjoy.

Life Experiences

My life experiences led me down the path. Good and bad, the things I experienced along the way molded me, directed me and formed me. Pushing me this way and that way. Sometimes life caused me to fall down and I got back up, learning from each difficult experience. Along the way I figured out what I liked and what I didn't like so much. Most of the time I leaned toward the good. I can look back now and see my winding path going back and forth, forward and back, slow and fast. And, I can see how the events in my life led me to right where I stand today. And I'm thankful for the good, the bad and the ugly. Because without those events I wouldn't be where I'm at today, and today, I'm in a pretty great spot.

I encourage you to take some time to look at your life journey. Review the highlights, including those wonderful memories that make you smile. And, review the difficult times and tragedies. Don't get lost there, just review. You might even consider writing down a timeline starting with your birth. Then, write down the significant events in your life to where you stand today. Can you see how some of these events shaped your life journey? Can you see where your path took a turn because of something that happened to you? Is there something propelling you forward or holding you back?

Our life events prepare us, teach us and change us. We need the bad right along with the good to offer contrast. There is a quote "life can make us or break us." Well it's never meant to break us. Life events are meant to teach us, help us grow, help us heal and guide us to our purpose. Don't let this world break you, let it make you! Choose to become the magnificent you you are meant to be.



"I am not what happened to me, I am what I choose to become." C.G. Jung

Passion

Merriam-Webster defines passion as *“intense, driving, or overmastering feeling or conviction, a strong liking or desire for or devotion to some activity, object, or concept, an object of desire or deep interest.”*

Some people know their passion and follow it without hesitation. And some don't know what they are passionate about and just live life where it leads. Sometimes we naturally fall into our passion. And sometimes we get a “great” job and stay because of the benefits but realize somewhere down the road that it isn't a passion.

Life is much easier when we are aware of our passion and can follow it. Sometimes we can become passionate about a job by trying out new things. For me, I completed a bachelors degree and masters degree while working at my job so I had an outside passion to pursue. I also joined special groups within the organization that I was interested in such as a cultural diversity commission, a “train the trainer” group, and I led the “new employee orientation” for awhile.

Passion intensifies your total experience of any moment and inspires you to bring your dreams to life. It prevents you from filling your existence with lackluster episodes of boredom. With passion, you can avoid the pangs of mediocrity and, instead, live the successful and fulfilling life you desire!

Have you ever found yourself admiring someone because of their zest for life? Their passion shines through in everything they do! Wouldn't you love to be the one everyone admires?

“Passion is energy. Feel the power that comes from focusing on what excites you.”

Oprah

Finding Your Passion

Here are just a few suggestions to find your passion

1. Having An Optimistic Attitude

An important part of a passionate mindset is having an optimistic attitude. When you think positive thoughts, the passion to pursue something with all your might comes easily.

On the other hand, if you're having second thoughts or negative feelings, it's hard to be passionate about it. If you give only 50% of yourself, you'll still feel 100% awful if things don't turn out the way you'd hoped for.

You'll find that you most often get what you expect. If you expect good things, that's the way events in your life usually turn out. An optimistic attitude leads you to make the choices that bring you what you desire.

Even when you're faced with challenges, if you're optimistic, you'll tend to discover the silver lining or find a workable solution. Optimism keeps you fired up and moving in a direction that makes you happy.

With optimism, you can find the opportunities in your challenges. When life hands you lemons, you can make lemonade – and like it!

“Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.” Helen Keller

You can foster an optimistic attitude by:

- * Using positive self-talk and affirmations to replace negative thoughts with optimistic ones
- * Meditating daily to visualize the life you desire and inspire yourself toward action
- * Asking yourself: Why not? What if it does work? How can I make this possible?

2. Step Outside Your Comfort Zone

In venturing outside of our comfort zones, we expand our horizons. Our own little world suddenly becomes much bigger, opening the doors to a vast array of new possibilities! With new possibilities come new opportunities and – you guessed it – new passion.

Outside your comfort zone, you'll be able to take actions you were afraid of, reach for dreams that you forbid yourself from working toward, and allow yourself the pride and joy of achieving the success you deserve.

Stepping outside your comfort zone will be uncomfortable at first, but, once you get used to doing it, you'll wonder how you could've kept yourself so confined within it before.

A good way to get acclimated to the change is to do it little by little. Try simple things like taking a different route to work or trying ethnic restaurants with new types of foods.

Think of life as a great adventure and wake up each day anticipating the exciting adventures of the day ahead. Each day, have a new experience to expand your horizon a little beyond where it was yesterday. Try one new thing, make one new call, meet one new person, and so on.

Soon you'll be used to new experiences and know that they usually turn out good. With your unfailing optimism, you'll be ready to take that leap of faith to re-kindle lost dreams and long-forgotten passions, and claim them with mighty action.

3. Give Thanks

Feeling gratitude for your blessings – and showing it – helps bring out your passion. When you feel greatly blessed, it's hard not to feel passionate about your life. It also attracts even more good things for you to feel grateful for.

When you awake, give thanks for all the good things coming in the day ahead. When you retire at night, give thanks for the blessings you received.

In between, say, "thank you," to everyone who brightens your day. From your child who gave you a hug, to the stranger who opened a door for you, let them know you're thankful for what they did.

Expressing your gratitude not only makes others feel better, and more apt to help you again, it also makes you feel better! It adds one more measure of joy to your day.

“Be thankful for everything that happens in your life; it’s all an experience.”
Roy T. Bennett

4. Take Action

Passion is incomplete without action. Become the most action-oriented person you know. Learn to take swift and decisive action to take advantage of opportunities. The only way you can make your dreams come true is by taking action. Otherwise, a dream is just a dream!

Rather than sitting around thinking how nice it would be “if...”, find a way to make it happen. Make a plan and go for it!

Instead of wasting time worrying about the scary "what ifs," make the best plan you can and then take action to bring the best scenario to fruition.

When a challenge arises in your path, seek a solution to get around it, and then take action to continue moving forward.

Action fuels your passion! You'll find that the more you take action to get what you want, the more passionate you feel about it.

5. Learn Something New Every Day

Another way to spark your passion is to acquire additional knowledge and develop new skills. In the course of learning about new things, you may find something you're totally wild about!

Here are some ways you can discover new passions:

- * Pursue a new hobby. Is there something you've always wanted to try? Now's the time!

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- * Take a class. Look into your community, district, or local library for interesting subjects.
 - * Travel. Whether it's in your own city or to a foreign land, this can lead to exciting passions.
 - * Read. Books, whether fiction or fact-based, give you views into entire new worlds.
 - * Surf the Net. You can learn about anything on the Internet: facts, news, and new ideas.

When you learn something new every day, you have a wealth of knowledge that keeps your mind active and processing new ideas. Rarely will you feel like you're stagnating. Instead, you're more likely to find a plethora of new passions you never knew existed within you.

6. Focus on the Present

One of the best ways to fill your life with passion is to live in the present moment. When you immerse yourself in the here and now:

- * The past and future are irrelevant
- * Worries are forgotten
- * Distractions are pushed aside
- * You achieve total focus on what you're doing
- * You catapult yourself toward your goals
- * Your journey is a parade of passionate moments



Living with total focus on the moment will take some practice because it's a different mindset than you may be used to. But practice makes perfect!

Follow these tips to help you experience present moment living:

- * Let your senses come alive!** Take time to stop and smell the roses. Enjoy the softness of your kitten's fur, the warmth of a loved one's caress, the delicious aroma of the pie baking in the oven or the coffee brewing in the morning. Take in the freshness of the air after a rain shower, listen to the pleasing harmony of the songbirds at dawn, stop and look up at the stars, and yes, enjoy the sheer beauty of a rose. You're never too busy to let these wonderful moments slip by unnoticed!
- * Heed the opportunity of this moment** Opportunities are all around you, each and every day. Keep your mind open to opportunities that can benefit you and take advantage of them while they're right there in front of you. Slow down, pay attention, and act on the opportunity before you.
- * Stay focused** When distracting thoughts try to take you away from this very moment, regain your focus by consciously asking yourself these questions:

Where am I? (Here)

What time is it? (Now)

What am I thinking about? (Only what I'm doing this moment)

These questions will help you put your worries and distractions aside. If necessary, tell yourself that you'll simply think about them at another time, but not right now. If you do this enough, you'll find that it becomes easier and easier to keep your focus on this moment.

“In today's rush, we all think too much — seek too much — want too much — and forget about the joy of just being.” ~Eckhart Tolle

Boosting Your Passion

Consider these strategies to help you boost your passion:

- * **Determine your priorities** When you know without a doubt what's most important to you, you can make choices and decisions with confidence. Choose the option which is most conducive to your higher priority and you'll be inspired to go full force with your decision.
- * **Live on purpose** Living on purpose is choosing your own life according to your priorities. Simplify your life: include in your schedule only those things which are important to you. Say no more often and yes more fully!
- * **Clarify your goals** Know exactly what you want and how you're going to get there. Divide your goals into achievable steps and focus on completing one step at a time. Rejoice as you achieve each step because you're one step closer to your ultimate goal. This will inspire you and build momentum.
- * **Believe in yourself** Nothing helps you go full-force like confidence. The first three steps above will help you gain confidence in yourself. Allow yourself to believe in you and you'll find the passion you've been seeking.

“Follow your bliss and the universe will open doors where there were only walls.” Joseph Campbell

Dream Big Dreams

An important strategy to create more passion in your life is to dream big. How can you even desire to accomplish great things if you limit yourself in your dreams? Bigger dreams carry with them greater passion! They get you more excited about the possibilities that await you, if you only take action to make them come true. So dream big dreams, and try out the techniques you've learned in this report to ignite your passions and bring you the life you've always wanted – a life filled with passion, abundance, success and your heart's desire!

"Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world"

-Harriet Tubman

Having a Growth Mindset

The Key to Success in All Areas of Life



One of the ways I've succeeded in life is by having a growth mindset. I've never stopped learning and never plan to stop! Just out of high school I found a subject I was interested in and went to college to learn more about it. It took me ten years but I earned a BS in Criminal Justice when all was said and done. Then I worked toward and earned a MA in Counseling Psychology. But it didn't stop there. I continued my learning taking certification classes, online classes, and a variety of workshops. I've studied a variety of techniques including EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization & Reprocessing), Brainspotting, NET (Neuro Emotional Technique), and EFT (Emotional Freedom Technique). Today, I'm a certified Nutrition Advisor, Certified Life Optimization Coach, Certified in Earth Center Healing in both Qigong and Somatic Archaeology, Certified in the use of Essential Oils, and I'm a SoulCollage® Facilitator. I've also studied a variety of topics around internet marketing. I love to learn and learning keeps me sharp and on track with my heart's desire.

"Develop a passion for learning. If you do, you will never cease to grow"

Anthony J. D'Angelo

A Growth Mindset



Having a growth mindset means you tend to take on challenges as opportunities to expand and grow rather than viewing them as setbacks or complete derailment. People who have a growth mindset believe that their skills can be developed and improved and that every situation is an opportunity to learn and grow. They tend to be more successful, worry less, achieve more and embrace life-long learning strategies.

Stretch Yourself

Have you ever heard a point of view or a perception that was astonishing and bold? Do you sometimes see how other people set the bar a bit higher, try new things, and work harder? Just because you have to work harder, does not mean you will no longer enjoy what you are doing.

Anyone who has made a medical breakthrough or achieved a higher goal has probably done so by working harder, trying new things, and stretching way outside of their comfort zone; and you can too.

In the world of personal development, it is known that your thoughts create your reality. When it comes to success in all areas of your life, there is a new knowledge. That knowledge is that mindset matters. If you can create a reality based on your thoughts, then you can create a life that is successful in all compartments of your life from intelligence to creativity based on the work you do with your mindset.

“My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style.” Maya Angelou

Are You Willing to be Open to Something New?

Are you willing to be open to explore new possibilities? Transformation is yours if you are willing to do the work and walk the walk. With practice, any new way of being becomes a habit. It's your choice whether you want to have a habit of positive growth or negative decline.

A Challenge is a Form of Growth and not an Excuse to Quit

When faced with a challenge, it is easy to spend time and energy focusing on the challenge itself. The thoughts you think, such as it being too hard or why does this happen to me can easily distract your energy from the task at hand. What would happen if you viewed your challenge as a way to grow and expand?

What if that new responsibility led to more money, a higher position, a transfer with a promotion or new and wonderful opportunities? This is how to view your situation from a growth mindset point of view.

If you have a deep subconscious belief that everything bad happens to you, then the chances are high that you invite roadblocks into your life. Sometimes it's easier to host a pity party than to come up with creative and intelligent resources to solve the problem at hand. What would happen if you viewed a roadblock as an opportunity for growth and to use your creativity to expand your knowledge and understanding?

In a growth mindset, this is what you would take on in viewing a roadblock as a way to stretch, grow, and improve rather than something to feel sorry for yourself about and an excuse to quit.

Do You Use Procrastination as a Way to Avoid Perfectionism?

Does the thought of not being good enough haunt you, so you procrastinate? What would happen if you were to approach a project or a challenge as an opportunity to expand your horizons or to re-create yourself as a master at the task at hand? A growth mindset will offer you the opportunity to change your perception, face the task head-on, and take it on with all the vim and vigor you could ever desire.

***“Start each day with a positive thought and a grateful heart”
— Roy T. Bennett, The Light in the Heart***

When Someone Else Experiences Success, Do You Feel Less Than?

If someone else experiences success, you have a choice. Either you can be happy for them and inspired by them, making you want to strive higher, or you can feel resentful or jealous. Many people choose to allow the success of others make them feel bad about themselves. However, it does not have to be that way. Let these situations inspire you rather than deter you.

Individuals with a growth mindset hold the belief that intelligence can be learned and developed and it is not just for the elite few. It is available to anyone with a desire to improve. The brain is trainable.

Do You View a Challenge as Fearful?

When faced with a challenge do you become overwhelmed and debilitated by fear or do you grasp on tight and face it head on? Your mindset will determine how you handle a challenge and ultimately what the outcome of that challenge will be as well.

People with a growth mindset know that a challenge is a way of doing things differently, thinking smarter and working harder.

Using Constructive Criticism

Criticism of any kind is thought of in a fixed mindset way, as though it is negative. However, constructive criticism offers a new model and method of teaching by showing what doesn't work and questioning what will work. By offering constructive criticism, it gives them the opportunity to figure out how to fix something in a positive light.

Developing a Growth Mindset

- * Never Stop Learning
- * Be Willing to Work Hard
- * Be Open to New Ideas
- * Face Setbacks as Opportunities for Growth
- * Seek Support (next section)

***“You can get what you want in life.
You must reach out with all your heart” Lailah Gifty***

In a fixed mindset point of view, you will want to learn as much as you can for the sake of looking good. Being intelligent means that you look good and others will be impressed by your intelligence. However, on the other hand, a growth mindset, will curiously and intriguingly inquire, ask questions, and want to learn more.

With a growth mindset, you will want to learn and will be focused on learning rather than perfecting the grade. A fixed mindset might view the A as the end of learning; that the ultimate goal has been reached. A growth mindset has no problem taking on more learning in exchange for the perfect grade.

Hard Work

In a fixed mindset, it is easy to fall into the trap of believing that if you have to work hard, you are not actually smart. A growth mindset will highlight that hard work and effort equate being the best you can be at something. A growth mindset will re-train your brain to connect to the thought process that hard work and lots of effort will equate to success. The more hard work you do, the more effort you put into something, the more success you'll attain.

The Ability to Face Setbacks

In a fixed mindset, you might view a setback as an easy way to make an excuse, run the other way, or blame someone or something else. In a growth mindset, you will view a setback as a way to work harder, to spend more time studying, or to take on more organized skills and practices.

Having a growth mindset is an achievable goal. If you want to opt in for a growth mindset, remember some important tips:

- * Work hard
- * Remember to take on perseverance even in struggle
- * Take on tasks that are more difficult so that you can re-train your brain to succeed
- * Keep your mind set on learning new things and continuing to do so in an effort to re-set your brain
- * Highlight what strategies for learning worked for you
- * Be honest about what strategies for learning work and do not work for you.

If you are an adult, that's great news. You can take on this advice and these practices and work hard to create a growth mindset. If you are a parent or a teacher, that's even better. You get the opportunity to help grow and shape a child's mind.

Think about the possibilities. Learning can be fun and rewarding and having a growth mindset makes life much more exciting and worthwhile. With a growth mindset, the possibilities are unlimited.

Find Support and Don't Be Afraid to Ask for Help

My life journey was enhanced by the support I received along the way. Having a support system gave me the strength to get back up when life knocked me down. Having a support system allowed me the opportunity to look at the obstacles in my life as growing experiences and not complete road blocks. Support, for me, included a variety of holistic health practitioners when I was sick. It also included at various times, a counselor, teachers, a coach and mentors. Don't be afraid to reach out for support when you feel lost, stuck or afraid.

A mentor is someone more experienced in a certain area who guides, leads, and teaches. A mentor can share their journey with you including the mistakes they made along the way so you don't have to make those same mistakes. A mentor can be a trusted friend or clergy member but don't be afraid to pay someone to mentor you. The guidance and instruction can be invaluable.

The word mentor comes from a character in Homer's The Odyssey. "Mentor" was a friend of Odysseus and served as a mentor to his son Telemachus. According to Merriam-Webster, a mentor is a trusted counselor or guide. A mentor can be a friend or someone you pay such as a counselor, coach, or professional in the area you want to learn more about. A mentor is a source of wisdom, teaching and support.

A mentor can help you clarify your goals, improve your skills, and enhance your performance. Finding the right mentor can be incredibly valuable by receiving ongoing support so you can reach success.

"Until we can receive with an open heart, we're never really giving with an open heart." Brené Brown, The Gifts of Imperfection

Why Seek Out a Mentor?

I wouldn't be where I'm at today if I had not enlisted the support of my mentors. Today, I still seek support in a variety of areas including my business as well as spirituality. My mentors challenge me to try new things and think in different ways, expanding my



perspective, opportunities and life circumstances. A mentor also acts like an advocate, coach, and guide.

How to Succeed With a Mentor

- * Be will to investing your time and financial investment with a mentor
- * Share your goals, fears, and struggles openly
- * Don't expect your mentor to solve your problems or do the work for you
- * Listen carefully and follow your mentor's guidance

A mentor can make a significant impact on your endeavors including your career, relationships and life. Make sure you find someone who you trust and who has the experience and expertise in the area you are looking for support in. Be open to new ideas and the suggestions offered. You will excel faster in life when you don't try to do it all yourself and trust someone to guide you who has already walked that path.

Working with someone can help you achieve extraordinary results in your life and help you identify your dreams and reach your goals and heart's desires. A mentor can help you live a life on purpose rather than on accident.

Summary

There you have it! A few ideas to find your passion and discover your true heart's desire. Look at your journey to identify the successes as well as your failures. Consider it all a valuable lesson. It's the way your life and personality has been shaped and formed. Life has taught you what you like and what you don't like. Go for what you like and what comes naturally as well as those things you are passionate about. Be open to opportunities for growth and chances to learn new things. Learn from experience, learn from set backs and seek new opportunities for growth. Never stop being curious and you'll never get bored! Last, don't be afraid to ask for support and guidance. Richard Bach wrote in his book *Illusions*, "You teach best what you most need to learn." You won't be a bother. A true mentor is someone who knows that their life is enhanced by working with others. And don't forget to dream big, live in a bold way and live whole heartedly. I wish you the best that life has to offer. And if you resonate with anything I've said here and want to explore it further please let me know and we can talk about working together to get you on the path to living your heart's desire.

Peace!

Barb Brown

Follow me on **Twitter** at <https://twitter.com/@barbebrown>
I'm also on **Facebook** at <https://www.facebook.com/leaningintohappinessandjoy>

Resources

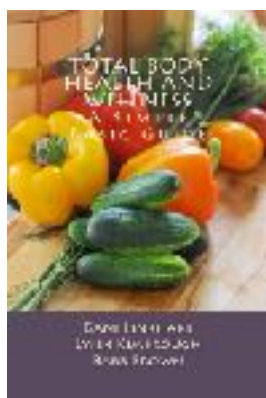
Are you curious about working with me? Feel free to set up a discussion by [clicking this link](#). There are many benefits of working with a coach. I invite you to claim your free [Life Happiness Survey](#) so you can determine the areas of your life you may want to explore. For more information about me please visit my website at www.LeaningIntoJoy.com.

About The Author



Barb Brown founded Leaning Into Joy™ to offer training, speaking, workshops, products, and coaching to help people access their own inner wisdom, creativity, and joy. She helps people transform negative emotions such as stress and anxiety naturally allowing joy to flow more easily. Her life experiences, as well as her education, has provided the perfect combination to become a powerful advocate to help others who struggle to find happiness and joy. She offers powerful and creative tools and rituals to help people navigate emotions without traditional medication and in the process shows them the path to living the powerful and magical life they are meant to live. She holds a Master's Degree in Counseling Psychology, was a counselor in private practice for 15 years, is a Certified Nutrition Advisor, Certified Life Optimization Coach, Certified Earth Centered Healer, SoulCollage® Facilitator and creator of Your Heart's Desire Coaching program™.

Also by this author:



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