

Finding work you were meant to do

Published in the *Therapist Directory & Guide*
by Nina Friedman



Are your thoughts on the job more about Friday Afternoon Club and weekend fun than on the job at hand? Do you feel bluesy Sunday morning, already resisting facing Monday? Have you been laid off and are dreading continuing with the “same old” but are scared and clueless about anything else? Do you believe that some job, any job (even one that’s “killing” you), is all that you have a right to expect in this economy? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, now is the time to find the work you are meant to do.

If you’re unhappy at work, have recently lost your job, or are re-entering the work force, there are often underlying issues that we will uncover. If these issues are left unknown and unaddressed, they will only arise again in your next “dis-eased” work experience. But with new awareness, you are empowered to act and choose differently. This gives your work life more vitality, and you more joy. The physical, mental, and spiritual symptoms of “career dis-ease” dissipate.

The purpose of work goes beyond making money, though that is distinctly a part. It is more profoundly to be able to contribute to the world in a meaningful way. So you might ask yourself, “If there was one problem I could solve in the world, what would it be?”. Sometimes looking back at your biggest childhood pain reveals a clue about how you would like to contribute. Another way is to imagine yourself at the end of your life. Thinking back on your life, what was the end result or accomplishments of your work that puts a smile of contentment on your face?

Here are some beginning steps to do towards finding your true work:

1. State your 3 most important work values - i.e. helping others, creativity, change and variety.
2. Identify the top 3 skills that you enjoy and do well - i.e. teaching children, counseling people in transition, inventing technological machines.
3. What needs of others or society do you desire to address - i.e. health, education, environment?
4. What results would feel great to know you have achieved- i.e. increasing children’s reading level at school; enhancing stamina, endurance, and speed of athletes; improving people’s awareness of nutritional alternatives to enhance their health and wellness?

Although these are a few helpful tips, it's not complete, nor is this easy to do alone. We tend to have many blind spots, black and white and limited thinking, and unconscious issues that hold us back. An objective and knowledgeable career counselor is often necessary.

I use a holistic, eclectic, comprehensive “inside-out” approach. With an attitude of open-mindedness/ heartedness, you will become clearer about all necessary aspects of your current “work self”. Then we can creatively and specifically define the work you were meant to do.

A bit of inspiration and counseling can help anyone find fitting work – passionate work, that increases your work potential, makes you grow, and more brightly shine your light in the dynamic world of work.

Nina Friedman is the CEO of Nina Friedman Career Services, a Boulder, Colorado based career counseling/coaching firm she founded in 1983. She has a Masters Degree from Columbia University and is certified in Gestalt therapy and Neurolinguistic Programming. More than 25 years, Nina has helped thousands of people in transition to better understand themselves, maximize their potential, and become gainfully employed with increased success, fulfillment and joy. Her background includes training with Richard Bolles, author of What Color Is Your Parachute?, and doing outplacement work with organizations, including Hughes Aircraft Corporation and Corporate Express. She has also worked on programs for career development within organizations such as IBM and Ball Aerospace Corporation, in addition to executive-level coaching. Nina has lectured on the topic of careers at Colorado and Naropa Universities, been interviewed on television and radio, written columns on career issues for the Business Plus section of the Boulder Daily Camera, and is a parent. She can be reached via email at nina@nfcareers.com or phone at 303.444.5158. For more information check out www.nfcareers.com.