

The Hero's Journey

MAKING MONEY DOING WHAT YOU LOVE

PARIS

PETER DE KUSTER

ARE YOU MAKING MONEY DOING WHAT YOU LOVE?

Attention all artists, musicians, filmmakers, designers, actors, bloggers, and anyone working in the creative economy – even if your chosen profession is not the most traditional one, cultivating and growing a successful, financially rewarding career is still your goal.

In *The Hero's Journey Making Money Doing What You Love*, Peter de Kuster provides you with stories of creative heroes in world cities on overcoming some of the specific challenges faced by right-brainers who want a career that is both satisfying and successful.

Creative professionals, entrepreneurs, freelancers, those thinking about changing careers midstream, and even creative people working in corporate environments need a set of skills that will turn their passion into a viable career.

THESE SKILLS INCLUDE:

- How to choose the career that best suits your talents.
- Setting realistic goals using right-brain techniques.
- How to avoid the pitfalls that ruin a creative career.
- How to schmooze your way to success.
- How to create a business plan when you are the business.
- How to be disciplined when you are your own boss.

When you find an outlet for your creativity in the form of a career, you'll discover a freedom in your working life that you can live with for the long term. You can follow your passion, build a brilliant career, and have financial security – if you know which skills to use. Let Peter de Kuster be your travel guide.



*"Travel in a worldcity and meet your heroes and heroines,
who earn their money doing what they love.
They will inspire you to create your own legend."*

Peter de Kuster
Founder of The Hero's Journey

INDEX

Introduction	The Hero's Journey Your Quest	6
Chapter 1	The Creative Hero	12
Quiz	There's no right answer!	18
Chapter 2	The Great Traits for Creative Heroes	28
Chapter 3	Motivated to be a Creative Hero	34
Chapter 4	Your Hero's Journey	40
Chapter 5	What's Your Story	50
Chapter 6	For Love And Money	58
Chapter 7	The Myths about Creative Heroes	68
Chapter 8	Test Drive Your Dream Job	78
Chapter 9	Life is a Pitch	88
Chapter 10	Be Your Own Hero	96
Chapter 11	Meet Your Own Hero	110
Chapter 12	The Tragic Creative Heroes	118
Epilogue	The Power of Your Story	144
Questionnaires	Heroes of Paris	152

'WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE PARIS!'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

INTRODUCTION

There is no such thing as a Santa Claus – and there's certainly no such thing as the perfect career. That's what many people really think, and it's sad, because there are plenty of rewarding, challenging and fulfilling career opportunities that allow creative people to use their gifts and be rewarded handsomely for their efforts. Those who settle for less than the best, simply haven't found the right job – yet.

You can have it all when it comes to a creative career – if you know how.

The fact is that most people hate their jobs. They would rather be doing something else – anything else. It doesn't have to be that way. What if I told you that you would never have to work another day in your life? Would you be interested?

When you find the right fit in a career, it no longer feels like work. You wake up every day excited about how you earn your living. This perfect harmonizing of your talents, skills, personality and work style creates a passion and a desire, as well as a feeling of contentment that is worth more than gold.

It can be yours, if you will read this travel guide of Paris.

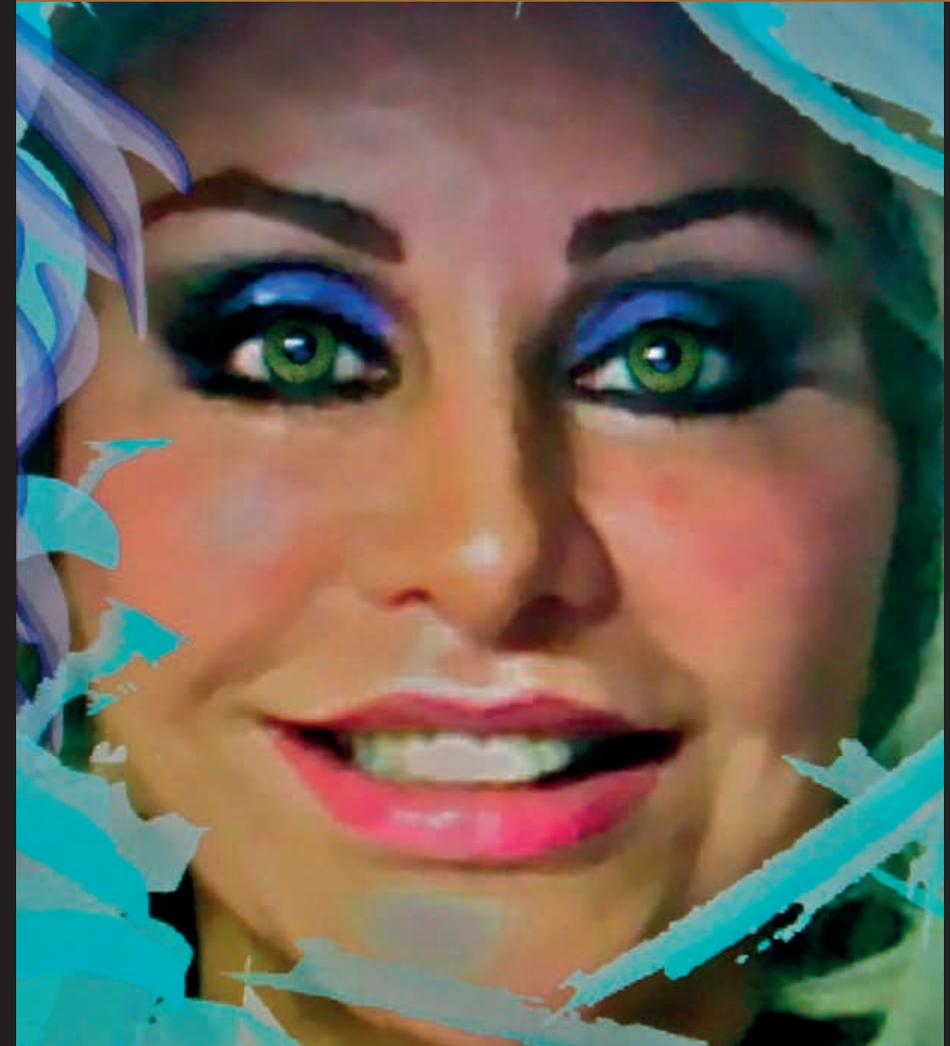
The challenge of this journey is, that the creative business is very different from other businesses. To get ahead, you sometimes have to zigzag to the top. Let the stories of creative heroes and heroines of Paris show you when to zig and when to zag, to make the most of the opportunities out there.

Using a map of Paris you embark on a journey, an adventure in search of yourself. The thing is, there isn't a golden (or orange) egg waiting for you, when you get to the spot marked 'X' on the map. The buried treasure is within you. The pursuit of the gold (or the goal) is the reward. Because, when it comes to a career, there is no 'there' there. It is all a quest. Enjoying the quest is what success is all about. This is the age of opportunity for the creative person. Innovation and ideas are gold. Ridicule and red tape are being replaced with respect and rewards for the clever and creative person. The business environment is changing, and changing for the better – for you. Are you ready for these exciting times ahead?

This travel guide of Paris will put you in a position to prosper. What parents, teachers and bosses might see as problems (sloppiness, habitual tardiness, short attention span, non-conformism), can actually be hidden assets in the search for work in a rewarding, interesting and creative career.

Intuition, emotion, divergent thinking, daydreaming, thriving on chaos, big-picture thinking, cleverness, open-mindedness and an ability to play and have fun are virtues in the right setting.

'HAPPINESS IS WHAT OCCURS WITHIN OURSELVES, WHEN WE DO OUR VERY BEST
TO FULFIL WHAT WE KNOW IN OUR HEART, IS 'OUR PURPOSE IN LIFE'.'
- ROXANNA BONILLA-GIANNINI -



Even so, it's not exactly easy to build a career in the creative business world. You have to be able to deal with rejection. It is a part of everyday life for the creative person. There is also that funny feeling that you don't quite fit in – and you don't.

An unconventional person with unconventional ideas, you are often seen as immature, temperamental, moody, difficult, distracted, irresponsible, and irrational. The truth is, you can be your wonderful self and still get ahead in the business world. This travel guide of Paris will help you manage your career using a whole-brain approach that takes advantage of the way you are, without forgetting the way the world works.

THE HERO'S JOURNEY

It's time to move on, move up, and move out with a new mission. *The Hero's Journey* is about taking charge of your destiny so that no idiot can control your fate.

Most books are very thorough, when it comes to identifying and informing you about the problems and pitfalls of a creative career. However, what they lack is the - 'What the hell am I supposed to do about it?' - part. I decided to make the Hero's Journey travel guides about real life heroes and heroines of past and present; with concrete tips, anecdotes and lessons to be learned from them.

New creative careers and enterprises are popping up all the time. There has never been a better time to strike out on your own. This is your time to shine as a creative person. The future looks bright. Many of the current trends favour your preferred mode of operation – self-reliance, zigzagging to the top, rapid change, multi-tasking, chaos, adaptability, intuition, training and retraining.

This travel guide of Paris will show you how to find your career niche, and then how to earn a living doing what you love. You will learn how to overcome the challenges the creative right-brainer faces, and how to make your nature and your creativity work for you. You'll learn how to market yourself even in a crowded marketplace, survive and thrive in the battlefield that is entrepreneurship. How to be your own boss and work for others, take the 'free' out of 'freelance', rise to the top without stepping on too many toes, and use your natural abilities to find a perfect pitch and harmony in your work world.

In reality, *The Hero's Journey* is about your life. There is a direct, undeniable correlation between your career and your life. It's less about what you do for a living than what you can live with doing. Finding fun and fulfilment at work spills over into the rest of your life. Without it, your health will suffer, your creativity will suffer, your performance will suffer – and so will everyone around you. You don't need to live that way.

If you are thinking about giving up on a creative career and getting a 'real' job, stop right there. When you settle for less than what's best for you, you instantly get less than you settled for. Don't sell yourself short. The regret will eat you up inside. Don't miss your chance - it may be right around the corner. Instead, get going and go for it – be bold. Use the strategies of our heroes and heroines to give you an advantage.

Don't let others push boulders in your path and fill your head with facts like 'most businesses fail in the first year', 'It's too competitive out there', 'there are no (dancing) jobs', 'you don't have enough experience or talent' or 'you have no agent'. It's bad enough that these insecure and misinformed people are telling you why you can't succeed. It's worse if you believe them. Don't let anyone talk your dreams down.



'I CREATED AN ONLINE MAGAZINE FEATURING REAL MODELS, THE "ENFANTS TERRIBLES.'
- STÉPHANIE DELPON -

This travel guide through Paris is for creative people in all walks of life – carpenter or composer, dancer or painter, poet or musician, philosopher or travel guide, magician or designer, architect or writer, actor or account manager. It isn't meant to apply to just the glamour jobs; regardless what kind of form your creativity takes on, you can apply these stories.

For everyone who tells you: 'You can't make a living doing that!', there are hundreds and thousands of examples of creative heroes and heroines, in all the cities of the world, who found a way to turn something they thought was fun and would even do for free, into a fulfilling life and career.

As your travel guide, I will help you to take your powerful creative energy and to harness it. And, you will beat the odds, making a living doing what you love to do. Your life will become a *Hero's Journey* story.

YOUR QUEST

Few people know what they want when they grow up, and even fewer creative people want to grow up. Maybe you won't discover your true calling until you test drive several dream jobs and work with some role models. Isn't it better to test drive them, using that incredible imagination of yours than to waste years on a dead-end-job? One of the key things you'll work on here is defining what you want to do (not for the rest of your life, but what you want to do now) and eliminating the careers that aren't a fit.

The choices that lead to a life of creative expression and financial security are here for the making. The catch is, that creative careers are often unconventional and in some cases completely uncharted. The challenge is that there are a million different things you could do.

The key to success in any career is clarity. Becoming clear about who you are and what you love is the first part of this travel guide through Paris. Then, how to get what you want is covered in great detail. It's hard work, but this is your chance to re-invent yourself. Don't let it pass you by.

'MY PASSION IS TO TELL STORIES. IN THE FUTURE I WANT TO WRITE BOOKS.'

- STÉPHANIE DELPON -



Here I am visiting Le Grand Palais.



'I'M REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO SHARING MY PASSION FOR COLLECTIBLE DESIGN WITH CLIENTS.'

- ELIZABETH CHASE ROCHETTE -

Chapter 1

'MY GREATEST PASSION IS DISCOVERING AND DOCUMENTING LIFE.'
- KRISTAL KENNEY -



The Creative Hero



The Creative Hero

For a creative hero, success can be tremendous. Not just in money, but in creative freedom. Look at the list of the highest-paid actors and entrepreneurs – they are all people who don't fit any mould, but they're also people who used that fact to their benefit.

You can do it too, in your own way, on your own time, reaching your own goals. Unwire yourself from the myths about creative people. Don't be afraid to look at your strengths and weaknesses. Face the fact that traditional business management, which is left-brain, logical and linear (not to mention rigid, boring, and counterproductive), doesn't work for you. It isn't much fun and if it isn't at least a little bit of fun, you're not going to do it.

It's that simple. If it's not fast, fun, flexible and easy, you are less likely to embrace it. Be willing to work within a system – as long as it's one that you create and one that works *with* you, as well as *for* you.

Creative people have an insatiable hunger to achieve, create, accomplish. They want to be recognized and heard, receive applause and take home awards. They desire change, to create a body of work, to earn and to make deals. Many people who don't know what they want actually want too much, too fast.

The key to success is, learning how to focus on what's most important. It's counterproductive trying to do too many things at once – nor is it good to focus on only one area of your life or work. One way to whittle it down (focus) and spread it around (multi-focus) is, to choose a top goal for each aspect of your life.

Take a good, hard look at who you are, what's your story and what you want out of life. Sometimes, having everything to be just okay, having an adequate job and a moderate life is the biggest tragedy of all.

'I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO MAKING NEW SINGLES AND MUSIC VIDEOS.
ALSO CREATING MUSIC FOR PUBLICITY/MOVIES AND PARTICIPATING IN DESIGNER PROJECTS.'

- HRISTA -

Take the time to find yourself, so you can live your life without getting lost and make good decisions, which will lead you to the success and the happiness you desire.

We are all born with creativity. What happens to us from kindergarten to college shapes how much of that creativity stays with us. Some, despite the best efforts of the school system and the corporate system to stamp out the creative spirit, slip through the cracks, creativity intact. You are still not safe. Ninety-eight percent of the people in the world are living the left-brained life. Society tends to reward the left brain (structure, status quo) and reprimand the right brain (chaos, creativity, innovation).

You can stunt your creative spirit with disuse. You cannot lose a talent, but your skills can certainly atrophy. Almost any job can be done creatively. Entrepreneurs must be creative to survive. Managing people can be done in a creative manner. Marketing, communication and sales, certainly involve a degree in creativity. Even distribution and finance can be a right-brained affair. What makes any career interesting, exciting and vital is the creative approach you take towards it.

People, who ignore their creative gifts in their careers, are frustrated and unhappy by midlife (or much sooner). Happiness comes from finding your greatest gifts and abilities and then developing, and using them, in the work you do.

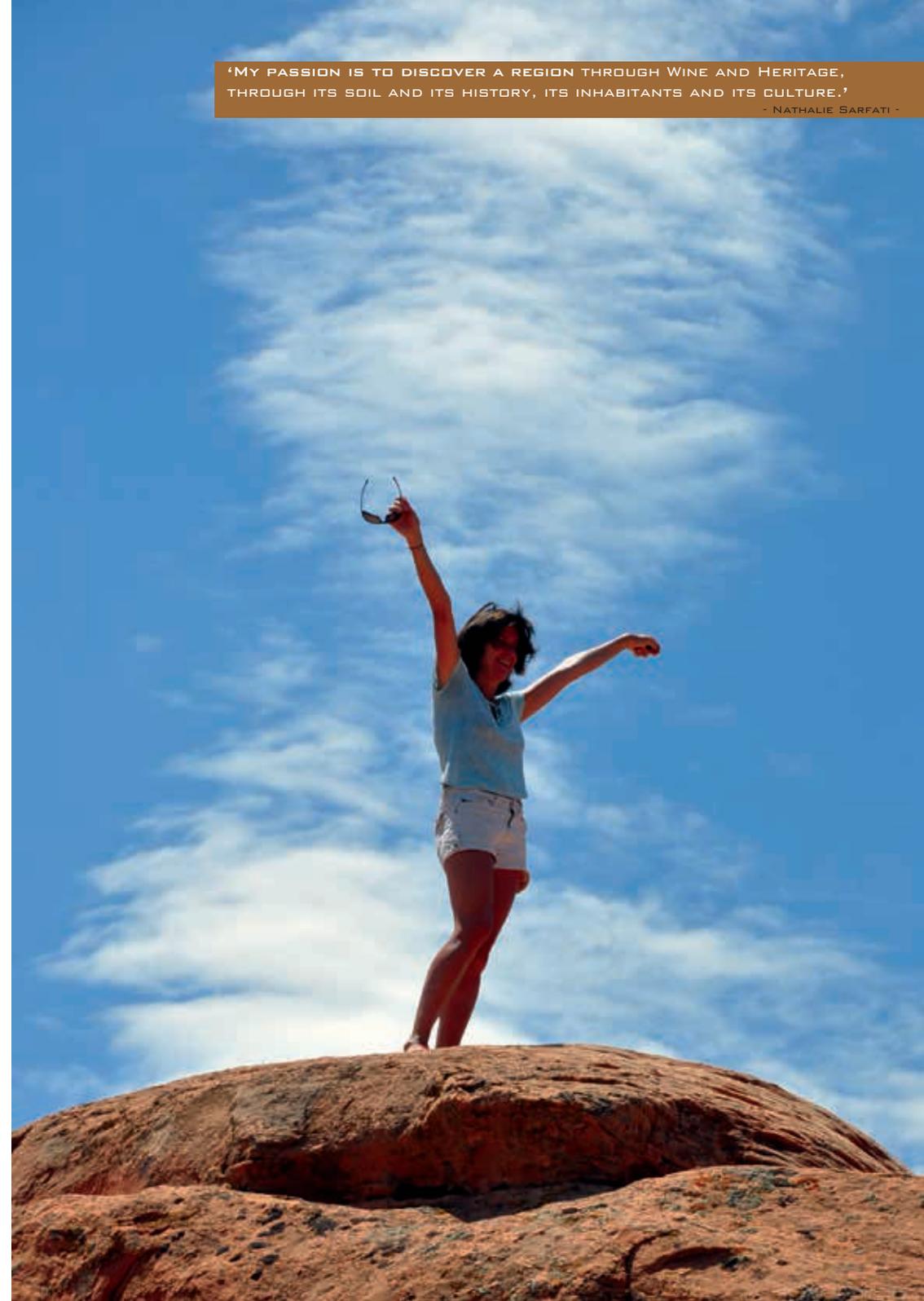
Creativity and creative careers involve a whole-brain approach, an interaction between the left hemisphere of your brain (the detail-oriented accountant side) and the right hemisphere (the big picture, artistic side). The right brain comes up with the ideas, and the left-brain implements them. Too much right brain and nothing gets done; too much left brain and life is dull and uninspiring.

As a right-brainer you are absolutely unique (and wonderful). There has never been anyone like you and there will never be again. Ponder that for a moment. Beneath all the self-doubt, guilt, fear, remorse, and distorted stories is a gem of a person who, more than anything, deserves to be happy, successful and fulfilled. To have a career that is challenging and rewarding. A career that fits like a glove and is such a joy that you would do it for free. But, is so valuable to others that you are well paid for it. And why not? You have found your place in the universe; you are making a contribution with your talent and creativity.

Once you understand yourself and what work you enjoy doing, you can work with your natural abilities and tendencies, rather than against them. It makes life much easier. This is something that is unique to you. It is what will work best for you. So, don't just breeze past the questions in this travel guide. Make the time to really give some thought to who you are, what you want to do, and what the best way would be to do it. I have always said that to find yourself you need to go on a journey. You need time for reflection, away from the hustle and bustle of your busy life, to open yourself up to new possibilities.

'MY PASSION IS TO DISCOVER A REGION THROUGH WINE AND HERITAGE, THROUGH ITS SOIL AND ITS HISTORY, ITS INHABITANTS AND ITS CULTURE.'

- NATHALIE SARFATI -



Quiz

'THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS TO BE IN HARMONY WITH YOURSELF.'

- NATHALIE SARFATI -



Enjoying Paris at the river Seine and Pont Alexandre III.

Do you honestly love what you do now? Are you excited to go to work on Monday? Do you go home happy? If you answered “no” to any of these questions, there is a better way for your beautiful mind.

The following quiz should give you an indication of where your natural tendencies lie – left brain, right brain, or whole brain. Answer quick and honest. Don't dwell on the answers, and don't try to figure out what I'm looking for. We are going to explore new worlds together in.

There's no right answer!

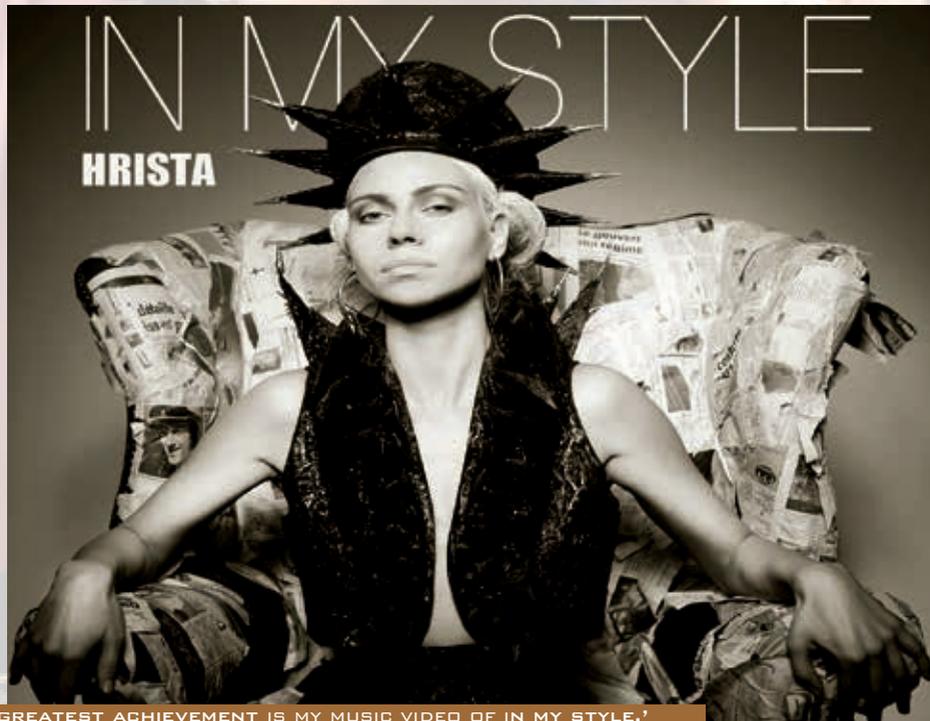
1. **When it comes to emotions,**
 - a. I can articulate my feelings to others well.
 - b. I am better at expressing my emotions through my creative work.
2. **I have always been told**
 - a. I'd make a great accountant.
 - b. I was a natural born artist.
3. **Success is**
 - a. closely related to annual income.
 - b. unrelated to the money I make.
4. **When trying to explain how I came up with an idea,**
 - a. I am able to put it into terms others can understand.
 - b. I feel like an alien from another planet.
5. **When I am working on a project,**
 - a. I am not happy until it's done.
 - b. I enjoy the process.
6. **It's a beautiful summer day, but I have work to do. I will**
 - a. get my work done first and then go to the beach.
 - b. go to the Lutetia and deal with my work later.
7. **When it comes to a big project, my strength is in seeing**
 - a. the worm's eye-view (details).
 - b. the bird's eye-view (the big picture).
8. **When my boss or client puts me on the spot,**
 - a. I say what I mean and mean what I say.
 - b. I tell him what I think he wants to hear.
9. **Joking around the water cooler, I've been compared to**
 - a. Philippe Starck.
 - b. Costes Brothers.
10. **When I have several unfinished projects going at once, I feel**
 - a. frustrated.
 - b. stimulated.



'IN THE FUTURE, I'D LOVE TO WORK WITH GREAT MUSICIANS.'
- SUZANNE FLENARD -

11. **When it comes to decorating my office,**
 - a. I find an arrangement that works and stick with it.
 - b. I rearrange everything at least every six months.
12. **Multitasking for me is**
 - a. doing two things at once.
 - b. talking on the phone, surfing on the Internet, sending an email, watching sports on TV, making faces to a friend and sorting through the mail, all at once.
13. **When I'm asked to bring something to a party**
 - a. I bring paper plates.
 - b. I have a new recipe I'm dying to try out.
14. **I'm more like**
 - a. Bernard Arnault (logical).
 - b. Coco Chanel (intuitive).
15. **After work**
 - a. I go home or I might go out with people from my project group.
 - b. I like to go to places where people from other projects hang out.

16. **Before I speak,**
 a. I think it through and censor it in my head.
 b. I say the first thing that pops into my head.
17. **I'm running late for an important meeting and a dear friend calls with a relationship crisis, I will**
 a. explain that I am in a hurry and I will call him back as soon as I can.
 b. say 'the hell with the meeting'. My friend needs me now.
18. **When it comes to solving a problem,**
 a. I analyze things from a logical perspective.
 b. I consult my 'gut' for an answer.
19. **My car is**
 a. practical and safe.
 b. stylish and fun to drive.
20. **I am best at remembering**
 a. names.
 b. faces.



'MY GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT IS MY MUSIC VIDEO OF IN MY STYLE.'

- HRISTA -

21. **Whenever there is a crisis in my life,**
 a. I retreat into myself and try to solve it on my own.
 b. I prefer to talk it over with others.
22. **In making decisions,**
 a. I tend to focus on the actualities.
 b. I tend to focus on the possibilities.
23. **I write with my**
 a. right hand.
 b. left hand.
24. **I am a natural born**
 a. learner.
 b. teacher.
25. **If I had two yearlong projects to choose from, I'd pick**
 a. an analysis of the company's past and future profit centres.
 b. working on the company's marketing materials.
26. **When I meet a prospective client/employer,**
 a. I will have a written list of questions to cover.
 b. I will talk off the top of my head, taking my cue from them.
27. **When I am learning a new software program,**
 a. I read the manual first.
 b. 'What manual?' – I figure things out on my own.
28. **I believe that**
 a. you can make things happen through sheer force of will.
 b. there's a force in the universe that brings things to you.
29. **I just met with a prospective client or employer whom I really connected with. When I leave, I will**
 a. shake their hand.
 b. give them a hug.
30. **If I could choose my working hours, they'd start at**
 a. 6.00 o'clock in the morning.
 b. 6.00 o'clock in the evening.
31. **My daily routine is most likely to be compared with the movie**
 a. Les Misérables (little variety).
 b. Le Comte de Monte Cristo (adventures every day).

32. **It's my birthday and my friends have thrown me a surprise party, I am**
a. embarrassed (I don't like surprises).
b. thrilled (I love surprises).
33. **When someone asks about my vacation,**
a. I give them names and places.
b. I describe in intricate detail how wonderful it felt to be away and I talk about all the things I have seen, the wonderful people I have met and how much fun it was.
34. **When I get the paper, I usually turn first to**
a. the business section.
b. the comics.
35. **While out to lunch with friends, I have an urgent call and ask them to order for me. They**
a. know exactly what I want, because I always get the same thing.
b. don't have a clue, because I am always trying something new.
36. **If the meeting is scheduled for 10 o'clock,**
a. I will surely be there 15 minutes in advance. I am known for my punctuality.
b. I will try not to be the last person to show, but how was I to know traffic would be that bad.
37. **If I lost my planner I would be completely lost, because**
a. my whole life is in there.
b. I'm sure that's where I stuck the little paper with the name and number of my client on it, which I needed to call back yesterday.
38. **My idea of organization is**
a. making a list of all the things that need to be done and then prioritizing them.
b. Playing with my Post-It-Notes, putting them on the wall in some sort of order.
39. **When I am working and the phone rings, I will look at it as**
a. a nuisance and let it ring.
b. a welcome break and answer it.
40. **My boss/client thinks of me like someone who**
a. keeps his/her nose to the grindstone.
b. walks with his/her head in the clouds.



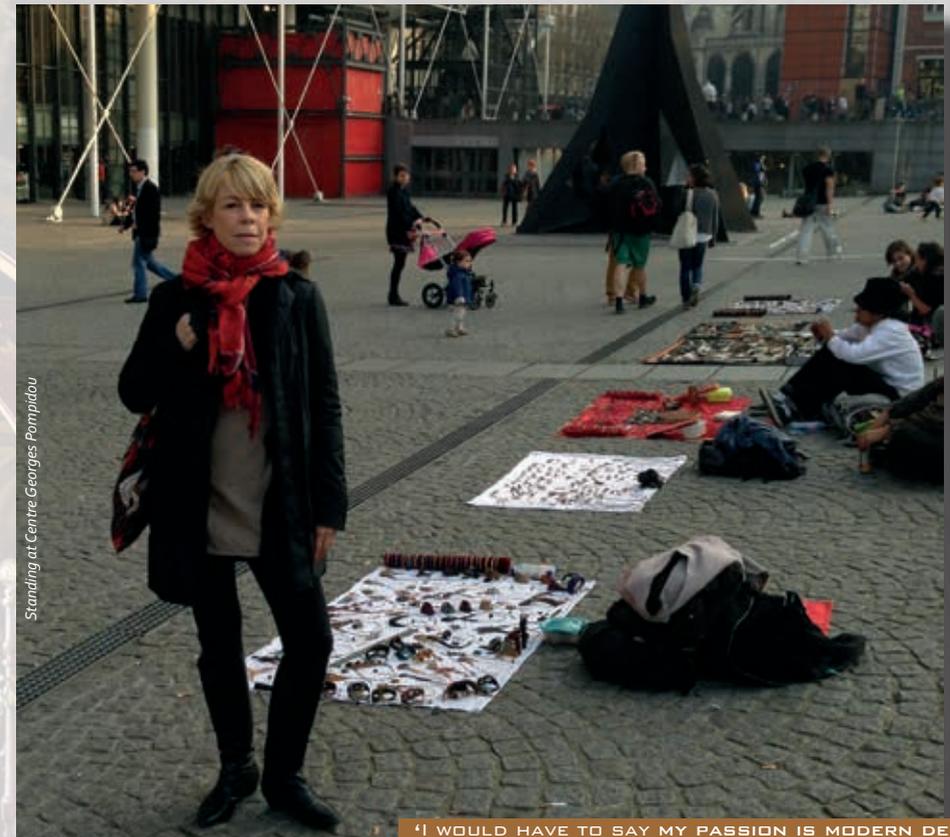
41. **I learn best when you**
 a. tell me what to do.
 b. show me what to do.
42. **If I were to be on a game show and my winning totalled 10.000 euro with the option to keep what I have or risk it all on one more question for double or nothing, I would likely**
 a. take the money and run.
 b. bet it all.
43. **If I were to clean out my desk, I would take the following approach:**
 a. Do it a little at a time until I am finished.
 b. Pull everything from the drawers and do as much as I can before pushing the rest back in.
44. **If I were to be offered a promotion that would involve moving to Hong Kong for two years,**
 a. I'd opt out because I don't speak Chinese.
 b. I'd be on the phone with my travel agent in two seconds flat.
45. **I'm ready to leave for work and**
 a. I know exactly where my car keys are.
 b. I go on a search-and-destroy mission until my keys turn up.
46. **When I log on to the Internet, I do it**
 a. with a plan and a purpose: get in, get out.
 b. without any plan, pausing to look at whatever catches my fancy.
47. **When researching a project,**
 a. I find as many books and articles as I can and read them from front to back.
 b. I ask someone for tips on the best places to look and skim those.
48. **If I were to inadvertently offend a co-worker, I'd**
 a. say nothing, hire a lawyer and hope the whole thing blows over.
 b. have a sit-down and discuss his or her feelings while apologizing profusely.
49. **When it comes to remembering all the things I have to do, I would**
 a. make a master list down to the last detail.
 b. have no clue. What was the question again?
50. **My office desk is organized in a way that**
 a. anybody could come in and quickly find what they need.
 b. I pity anyone who has to try to figure out my system.

Results of the quiz

In the quiz, **a** answers count zero; **b** answers count 1.

If your total is 15 or less, you must have bought this travel guide for somebody else and you're just going through the quizzes for kicks, because you're just a serious left-brainer. A total of 16 to 35 indicates a fairly balanced, whole-brain approach to the world, or a right-brainer who was working in the financial services. You will go far if you can learn to loosen up a little.

With a total over 35, you can consider yourself a right-brainer. A *Creative Hero*, with all the blessings and curses attached to it. If you came up with your own answer, even once, refusing to go with the choices offered, give yourself a star. You are a true right-brainer, an independent thinker, an original, and a creative hero.



Standing at Centre Georges Pompidou

'I WOULD HAVE TO SAY MY PASSION IS MODERN DESIGN.'
 - SUZANNE FLENARD -

Chapter 2

'I'M VERY PROUD TO HAVE STARTED MY OWN BUSINESS
TOGETHER WITH MY PARTNER SUSAN BOUILLER.'
- ELIZABETH CHASE ROCHETTE -



The Great Traits of Creative Heroes



'BEING AN EDITOR IN CHIEF IS ALL-CONSUMING.
IT'S HARD TO STEP AWAY FROM THE MAC OR THE IPHONE.'
- CHERE DI BOSCIO -

The Great Traits of Creative Heroes

While nobody uses only their right brain or left brain, most people who are creative tend to rely heavily on their right brains – the source of their creativity. Because of that, many of the following statements will apply to you.

Even whole-brainers (those who operate equally from both hemispheres) will recognize themselves in it, but are often tempered by the logical, stabilizing influence of the left brain.

The right-brainer is able to compare and combine two things that are not usually related. The creative mind is not limited by normal boundaries, and therefore, can see relationships that aren't obvious to others. The right-brainer sees abstract concepts and then is able to express them in concrete terms.

The right-brainer has a strong appreciation for art. The assumption is, that creative people always 'create' art. That is not the case. There are careers for people who appreciate the arts.

Right-brainers tend to have rich and vivid memories. Right-brainers are able to remember faces and places, but aren't so keen on names and titles. They retain images better than words. They remember themes and scenes from movies, but not the names of the actors or the director. The right brain remembers feelings – good and bad.

Creative people have the pioneering spirit that it takes to do things differently, regardless of the grief that they may take from (and give to) others. They are eager to go where nobody has gone before. The great unknown is more interesting and inspiring than the safe and secure. It is intoxicating to be involved with an idea on the ground level. The early stages of the creative process are magical, where anything is possible and reality is way off in the distance. (Then, the left brain enters the story and ruins all the fun.)



Dancing with my husband in St. Sulpice - Paris.

Right-brainers appreciate nature and have the ability to find beauty everywhere. Creative people desperately need to stop and smell the flowers. Or hear the sounds of the sirens. To keep in touch with life and beauty, their super sensitive senses trigger their creativity. Creative people respond to their surroundings. It is a blessing and a curse to be tuned in.

Being creative sometimes means, being lonely in a crowd. When I start talking about intuition and inspiration, with other than creative people, they stare at me.

Right-brainers welcome challenges. They are able to see the big picture and tackle problems on a total story scale. They use intuition, rather than facts and figures, to find new and better solutions. Although right-brainers may be in touch with trends, they're more likely to start trends. They are leaders, not followers. They are flexible. Passionate. When it comes to getting their ideas come true, they are relentless.

Right-brainers are open-minded and less prone to prejudice. People who are creative often have high ethical and moral standards. Gray matter thinkers, in a black and white world, often see more than one right answer and maybe even more than one question.

The Weak Traits Are Not So Weak

Right-brainers feel things more deeply than most other people do. That's why they create. To express what they are feeling through their work. Right-brainers are impulsive. That 'live for today' attitude and 'being in the moment' works for the storyteller within them. But, to succeed, they've got to give some thought to the future. There can be long-term consequences, when they play now and pay later.

Divergent thinkers often go off on tangents, and are frequently seen as scatter-brained. It's hard to concentrate, when you're not inspired or interested. It takes discipline to get started and stick with the business side of creative business. People who are creative can work harder than anybody if they find something that they love to do. They just have a hard time learning to love math, taxes, regular business hours, and client follow up.

Leaping ahead, seeing the big picture, those who are creative lose those people who want to take it step by step and see things in black and white. Sometimes, it makes them angry. Right-brainers spend a lot of time dealing (or not dealing) with frustration.

For right-brainers, all play has a purpose – it's fun. This attitude makes them seem immature. Left-brainers like rules, a purpose and a plan, even for play – and worse, they need a reason to do it. Right-brainers tend to be sloppy. Not disorganized, just not organized in a way an uptight left-brained person would like them to be. Many people who are creative feel neatness is a waste of time.

Right-brainers are particularly vulnerable to the 'they are going to find me out any minute' syndrome. They may be confident about their work, but not about them-selves. Insecurity often rules them. Alcoholism, drug addiction, depression – all are very real dangers for the right-brainer.

Although right-brainers aren't necessarily self-destructive, they are prone to overindulgence, which can lead to the same thing. Right-brainers' high ideals make them inflexible. People who are creative often expose a dark side to the world. Right-brainers procrastinate. Right-brainers don't like to be told how to do it.

As you can see, for every so-called negative trait of creative heroes and heroines, there is a positive side to it as well.

Chapter 3

'MY GREATEST PASSION IS TO MAKE BEAUTIFUL DRESSES.'
- ALESANDRA QUIQUERET -

Alesandra
PARIS



Motivated to be a Creative Hero



Motivated to be a Creative Hero

You must be self-motivated to make it. In any career you are the boss. If you don't feel like working for weeks at a stretch, nobody will shoot you. But, there is always a price.

The creative person works well in a relaxed environment. That could be a casual corporate structure, a close-knit company, or off alone. Freedom, individuality and being able to be yourself are serious issues for you, wherever you choose to work.

Being a creative hero is not limited to seeing things differently. It often manifests itself in style of dress or hair. Or, in the hours we keep. Many people who are creative are slightly different in basic rituals of daily life: you get hungry at different times, your sleep patterns may be different, you get bursts of energy at times when the average person is ready for a siesta. It pays to tune in to your body.

The more you can adapt your work environment and time table to your innate physical preferences, the more comfortable you will be. You'll find you have boundless energy when you're on a roll.

It's amazing the number of hours you can spend, the attention to detail you can muster, and the ideas you can come up with when interested. Conversely, if you aren't interested, it's almost impossible for you to focus, and you feel as if you are unplugged from your energy power.

Those who are creative are in constant need for input and stimulation. That is why a travelling lifestyle appeals to a right-brainer. It involves experimentation, meetings, multiple places, people, experiences they love, stimulation, visual input and variety.

The creative hero values learning and growth, as well as flexibility, freedom, self-expression and passion in work.

It is important to understand what motivates you. What your concept of success is. You may be much happier, when you work with and for the people you love, the materials and places you love, and the reward is exciting.

'I LOVE MEETING ALL THE HAPPY BRIDES AND LISTEN TO THEIR IDEAS, IN ORDER TO CREATE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL DRESS, FOR THE MOST IMPORTANT DAY OF THEIR LIFE.'

- ALESANDRA QUIQUERET -

The Creative Life

Judgmental people may complain about your short attention span, calling you scatter-brained, lazy, a slob, self-centred, cynical, impatient, and so on. It takes a toll on even the most secure, and some start believing in it. Don't let that be you. Fight back. Remember that you're special – one of 2 percent of the adult population. Remember that you see a bigger world than they do, and move on.

Being an unconventional person, in a conventional world, is a small price to pay for the joy of being a creative person. Wear it as a badge of honour. You are one of the chosen ones. Innovators, throughout time, have become under constant attack from critics. What it boils down to is fear and jealousy. They will never have what you have. They will never be what you can be.

There are a lot of risks involved with following a creative career path. Rewards don't come without risks, and it's fortunate that the right-brainer is build to be able to withstand the pressures. You have the option to sit at home and watch others living their dreams on TV. It's not a hard choice, but it's one you have to make.

To make it in the creative arts, you must have that fire in your belly, that burning desire to succeed. You must believe that no matter what the odds, no matter what others say, you will persevere. You will do what it takes. You will learn to do the business stuff, the networking, the bookkeeping and the planning. You will bounce back from rejection, depression, and obsession.

Because of disappointments, highs and lows and critics everywhere not everything will feel like a masterpiece (or will even be well received). In a way, that's good. You'll keep trying to improve.

Left-Brainer

- To do list
- Rule maker
- Life is a bitch
- Do it right now
- One-Track-Mind
- Make it profitable
- Better safe than sorry

Right-Brainer

- To be list
- Rule breaker
- Life is a journey
- Do it right
- Variety is the spice of life
- Make it beautiful
- Playing it safe is sorry



'ALL OF MY LIFE, MENTORS AND ROLE MODELS HAVE BEEN CRUCIAL TO MY DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH. MY SPIRITUAL MENTORS ARE MY PARENTS, DAISAKU IKEDA, MY HUSBAND AND, IN MANY WAYS, MY CHILD.'

- BARBARA WEBER-SCHAFF -

Chapter 4

'MY IDEA OF PERFECT HAPPINESS IS SHARING A DEEP, PROFOUND AND SILENT SMILE IN FRONT OF A BEAUTIFUL SCENERY WITH THE PERSON YOU LOVE.'

- ISABELLE DU PLESSIX -



Your Hero's Journey



Your Hero's Journey!

Life is not an accident or a coincidence. Through careful choices and persistent planning, you can control what happens to you. That sounds boring, doesn't it? It's not. We are talking about your future. Your hero's journey! The best way to deal with the future is to invent it. Create your own life story – your own legend.

If you live your life wandering around aimlessly, you're likely to end up in a sort of hell. If you live your life bouncing around, reacting to events and circumstances, you're giving up control over where you will go next. This is a hell of a way to live – it's stressful and frustrating, and not creative at all.

I believe that each of us comes pre-packaged with a reason for being; a hero's journey, a mission, a purpose. Unfortunately, there is no operating manual or helpline, to make it easy to figure out what that purpose is. However, once you figure out what your hero's journey story is, life is sooo much easier and better. It means that you are living on purpose. This translates in doing the right work, in the right environment, with the right people and using your talents and abilities in a way that benefits others, as well as yourself.

This purpose covers every aspect of your life, including having people to love and who care about you (but that's another travel guide).

You need a powerful story as a compass to navigate by, to aim for (your hero's journey). A storyline, a travel map, so you can plot out the best (and even most scenic route, if that turns you on) to get where you're going (your goals). You can get blown off course and explore new cities, meet interesting people, but you always have that hero's journey story to guide you back. That's what your hero's journey does for you.

When you aren't sure about what you should be doing with your life, it can feel like you're in free fall. For some, the rush of hurtling to the ground is exhilarating. Some don't even seem to realize that they don't have anything (a parachute), to stop them from hitting the ground.

'MY GREATEST PASSION IS TO ENTERTAIN MY FELLOW MEN AND WOMEN WITHOUT LIMITS, LABELS OR PREJUDICE, WITH INSPIRATIONAL CHARACTERS, MUSIC, LAUGHTER AND TEARS.'

- ROXANNA BONILLA-GIANNINI -

'TIME AND DURATION TO CREATE IS MY PASSION, TO EXIST IS TO CREATE.'
- FANNY LIAUTARD -



In the beginning, it can be exciting to go through life without a plan, a purpose, and a story. Many romantic tales have been spun about the vagabond life. Just remember that these stories are written by people, who disciplined themselves just enough to put pen to paper, and enough to sell their stories or art.

Being in control of your story means knowing what you want and working towards it. It means waking up every morning saying: 'I've got the best job in the world. I absolutely love what I do.' If you can say that, everything else in your life will fall into place.

Some people know early on what they want. They're the lucky ones. Most of us struggle for a while before we find our niche. That's okay. Enjoy the journey. Consider it a voyage of discovery with treasures on your way. Self-knowledge is a wonderful thing.

How to Find Yourself When You Didn't Know You Were Lost

Before you can figure out your niche in the creative scheme of things, you need to understand yourself, your strengths and weaknesses, your true desires and your personal definition of success. The following questions are designed to make you THINK about yourself from various angles. Answer them quickly. Put down the first thing that pops into your head (before your left brain has a chance to butt in). Don't analyze either the questions or the answers. Be honest – nobody has to see this but you.



'I WAS THE HAPPIEST IN MY WORK WHEN I WORKED WITH MY MENTOR, THE BEST YEARS FOR ME.'
- MYRTILLE DUPONT -

Personal

- What is your favourite time of year?
- What is your favourite hobby?
- What is your favourite getaway spot? When was the last time you went there?
- What social settings bring out the best in you? Worst in you?
- What is your best personality trait? Worst? How would your spouse/partner/best friend answer that?
- What would you like to change most about your personality?
- Are you a country person or a city person? Would you prefer a laid-back lifestyle or one that is frantic and fast-paced?
- Are you more comfortable competing against others or against yourself?
- Which is more you: safe and secure or reckless and risky?
- Which would you rather be: healthy and wealthy or healthy and wise?

My favourite place in Paris: at the Orangerie in front of Monet's Nymphéas (Water lilies).



'MY JOB IS UNBELIEVABLY FUN! IF WE DON'T HAVE FUN, WE ARE NOT DOING A GOOD JOB.'
- BARBARA WEBER-SCAFF -

Professional

- Do you want more or less travel in your work?
- Where would you like to go? Would you travel by land, air, or by sea?
- Would you like to do more or less public speaking in your work?
- How much money, as an annual salary, would make you feel successful?
- Do you prefer to work with your hands or your mind? Indoors or outdoors? With people or with things?
- Which is more challenging: dealing with difficult people or difficult problems?
- What bores you?
- What would you eliminate from your present job, right now, if you could?
- Do you like to be in charge? Or, do you prefer to be the power behind the throne?
- What do you like best about your work?
- If you could have anyone's job in the world, whose would it be?
- What is the most undesirable job you can think of?
- When do you prefer to work: morning, noon, or night? When would you rather not work? What days would you like to have off? What would be an ideal work schedule for you?
- What would you like to bring to work that you can't? Kid? Dog? Movie?
- Do you prefer to work alone or in a group? How much time of your day would you like to spend dealing with people, and how much time would you like to be left alone?
- How many projects can you handle at once?
- Do you prefer stretches where you work like crazy and then take a break, or do you like to pace yourself and limit your projects?



'MY GREATEST PASSION IS MY JOB. MAKE-UP AND ITS RESEARCH IS WHAT I LOVE.'
- LAURA NOBEN -

- Do you prefer to deal in concepts or projects? Which is more satisfying, the process or the product?
- What is the best description for the environment you would prefer to work in: at home, in a lab, in a book church, in a studio, outside, in an office, on the road, on a set, in a studio, in a tall building, in front of an office, or some other location or setting? Big city/small town, or small city/big town?
- List jobs you think you would enjoy doing.
- List jobs you think you could not and/or would not do.
- What skills do you like to use the most?
- What task or talent comes easily to you?
- Name something that is always a struggle to do.
- What type of people do you enjoy working with the most?
- Do you prefer to work at a fast pace or to pace yourself?
- Do you like every day to be different, or do you prefer to slip into a consistent and comfortable routine?
- What motivates you more, money or a mission?

Your Story

You have a life story (if you pay attention to it). Take a look at the story of your life thus far.

- Write your life story from beginning to end (As if you are very old and have already achieved all the things you want. Or, when you hear that you will die today, with an 80% certainty and regret what you haven't experienced).
- What is something that makes you say to yourself (and others): 'I'll never do that again!'
- Make a list of five heroic stories and five tragic stories from your past. Which was easier to complete?
- Look at your past life and ask yourself these questions. What do I wish I had done, but didn't do? What have I always wanted to do, but never got around doing them, yet?
- What are your most powerful memories from your childhood, teenage years and adulthood? Take a close look at these three memories. What do they have in common? What were the circumstances, the people involved, the tasks you were performing, the setting and the time of year?
- List your most rewarding life experiences (paid and unpaid). Are you still engaging in these activities? If not, why not? How can you bring these things back into your life?
- It is important to appreciate all the things that you have and all the things that you are. The more you appreciate all the things you have going for you, the more you love life. Make a list of all the things you are grateful for in your life. Start small: your health, a place to live, a car, money in the bank, people who love you.
- Tell a story about yourself on a perfect day. Put in as much detail as you can. Spend some time and thought on this one. Then pin it to where you see it often. This is where you want to live your future life. This is the story about where you are going.
- Tell a snapshot story of your life today. Do you like what you do for a living? Are you happy? Are you using your talents? Are you able to create? Do you enjoy waking up on weekly mornings? Is it good to be home?
- Do you have enough money? Do you have a goal for the future?

Chapter 5



From the movie 'The Three Musketeers'.

'DO YOU HAVE ANY PASSIONS YOU WANT TO RISK YOUR LIFE FOR,
LIKE THE THREE MUSKETEERS?'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

THE
**THREE
MUSKETEERS**

What's your story?



From the movie 'The Three Musketeers'

“WITH A GOOD STORY THE THREE MUSKETEERS ARE SYNCHRONISED IN THEIR ACTIONS.”
- PETER DE KUSTER -

What's your story?

When I ask most people what their story is, what they passionately pursue, they stammer: 'Who, me?'

- Yeah, you! -

Do you have any passions? You do? You have concrete pursuits attached to them? Just give me one passion you have, with a pursuit for this year. What's your story?

When I ask successful creative heroes to tell me one of their pursuits, they will say something like: 'I will earn 100.000 euro, with my writing, by the end of the year.'

This pursuit is stated in the positive (I will), is very specific (100.000 euro with my writing) and includes a deadline (by the end of the year). Bravo! Having a specific pursuit, with a deadline is the key to success.

You can make excuses or shorten quests, as being too rigid and linear for the creative person. Having specific, meaningful pursuits of passions doesn't mean having a rigid story that leaves no room to roam. It simply means that, right now, this is what you want.

Don't worry about limiting yourself. You can adjust as you go. It does mean that you're in control of your life, have thought about what the real issues are for you, and have a perspective on new possibilities that develop.

Bottom line: Unless you know exactly what you want in life and you can articulate it (on demand, in case we meet), you are just fooling around. You aren't serious about success and, frankly, you'll probably never achieve it.

Having a clear story about your pursuits empowers you. Having a clear picture of what you want drowns out the negatives and attracts the positive things, ideas, and people to help you reach them. A clear story creates focus and clarity, so you're not wasting your energy on dead-end jobs.

What happens without a good story?

Many creative people have no idea who they are, what they want out of life, where they are going, or what their passion is. Afraid to limit their options, their lives become a series of compromises and unplanned events. They are spinning out of control and feel powerless to stop it. They have zigzagged their way through life, trying this and that – As a phantom.

Lack of Directions

If you don't know what you want, you can waste a lot of time and energy going in the wrong direction. In the meantime, your career and personal life can get way off course.

Forced Compromise

You wake up one day and realize your life has been a series of compromises, a series of unplanned events. As a result, you are stuck in a job that you don't really like or that you aren't suited for – afraid to change.

Untapped Talent

Without a story, you can easily get caught up in the current of life, swept away by an endless stream of details. You always seem to be paddling against the current, in a battle between finding time to be creative and getting things done. Once you get off course, it can be very hard to find your way back.

Boredom

Not having a powerful story in life, a passion, a purpose for your talents and creativity, is the one thing most lacking in many lives. Without it life can become dull, empty, and uninspiring.

Powerless / Cynicism

I have heard people describe their lives, as if they were passengers in a car, watching life passing by, while looking out of the window. They feel powerless, and blame everyone and everything for their lack of success, time, happiness, finances or whatever. They blame the government, the economy, reviewers, traffic, competition, and so on. Until you take responsibility for your own success, happiness and time, you remain a victim.



From the movie 'The Three Musketeers'.

'WHAT HAPPENS WITHOUT A GOOD STORY? LACK OF DIRECTION?'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

Value Conflict

When your values and your achievements don't align, at best you end up with hollow victories. At worst, you become depressed, angry or resentful. If you value integrity, you can't afford to lie and cheat to get what you want. If you say you want to start a business, but you squander your start-up capital, it might be time to look at your values again. Maybe, you're just giving lip service to a value you thought you should have. Or maybe, your self-destructive behaviour has deeper roots.

Regret

Do you go zigzagging through life, jumping at any opportunity that sounds interesting or fun? After years of doing this, you're likely to realize that you have nothing to show for the past decade. This will leave you unhappy, unfulfilled, and unsuccessful – because you tried to live without goals.

With a good story ...

With a good story, you get a bird's-eye view of your life. An overview. Think of being in a balloon over Paris, soaring over the scenery, looking down. Everything seems so small, so clear. You get above the trivial details, about the self-doubt.

This kind of perspective allows you to do the right thing, at the right time, for the right reason in the right way.

Synchronicity

When you tell yourself a powerful story and pick a course of action, unexpected things start to go your way. Unseen forces in the universe begin to say: 'Yes!' People and resources come into your life to help. Or, you see them sharply now. It all starts with a clear story about what you want, your goals, your quest – one that you can understand and one that you can communicate to others. This works better if you have a real passion for your story. People pick up on your passion, your commitment. They want to contribute, to be part of your story, your excitement, so they offer money, time and their connections.

From the movie 'The Three Musketeers'.



'WITH A GOOD STORY THE THREE MUSKETEERS ENJOY WHAT THEY DO AND ARE HAPPY.'

- PETER DE KUSTER -



From the movie 'The Three Musketeers'.

'WITH A GOOD STORY THE THREE MUSKETEERS ARE MOTIVATED LIKE HELL.'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

Your story works for you

When you have a great story, your mind goes of searching for information and opportunities that can help. You will see your story reflected in the world outside. Why haven't you noticed this before now? Your brain, screens out information to avoid overload, which is essential to your survival and success. When you know what your story is, your mind works to incorporate that into what it lets into your consciousness. This can change your life very quickly. You may get lightning ideas, seemingly out of the blue. In reality, the brain is processing all kinds of input from the outside, mixing it with your goals or purpose and ... eureka!

You will be happier

Your stories allow you to really live. You can enjoy the now, and still look at the future. People, who are living their dreams, wake up in the morning, excited and full of anticipation. Don't you want to live like that? You can't wait to start the day, you're constantly stimulated, curious, and eager to interact with others, passionate about what you are doing, and you're working toward real fulfillment.

Your ability to have fun and enjoy life is tied into the stories you tell yourself and then others. When you know what you want, what you value and what makes you happy, it's easier to make decisions, which reduce stress. The directionless life is not the happiest to look back on.

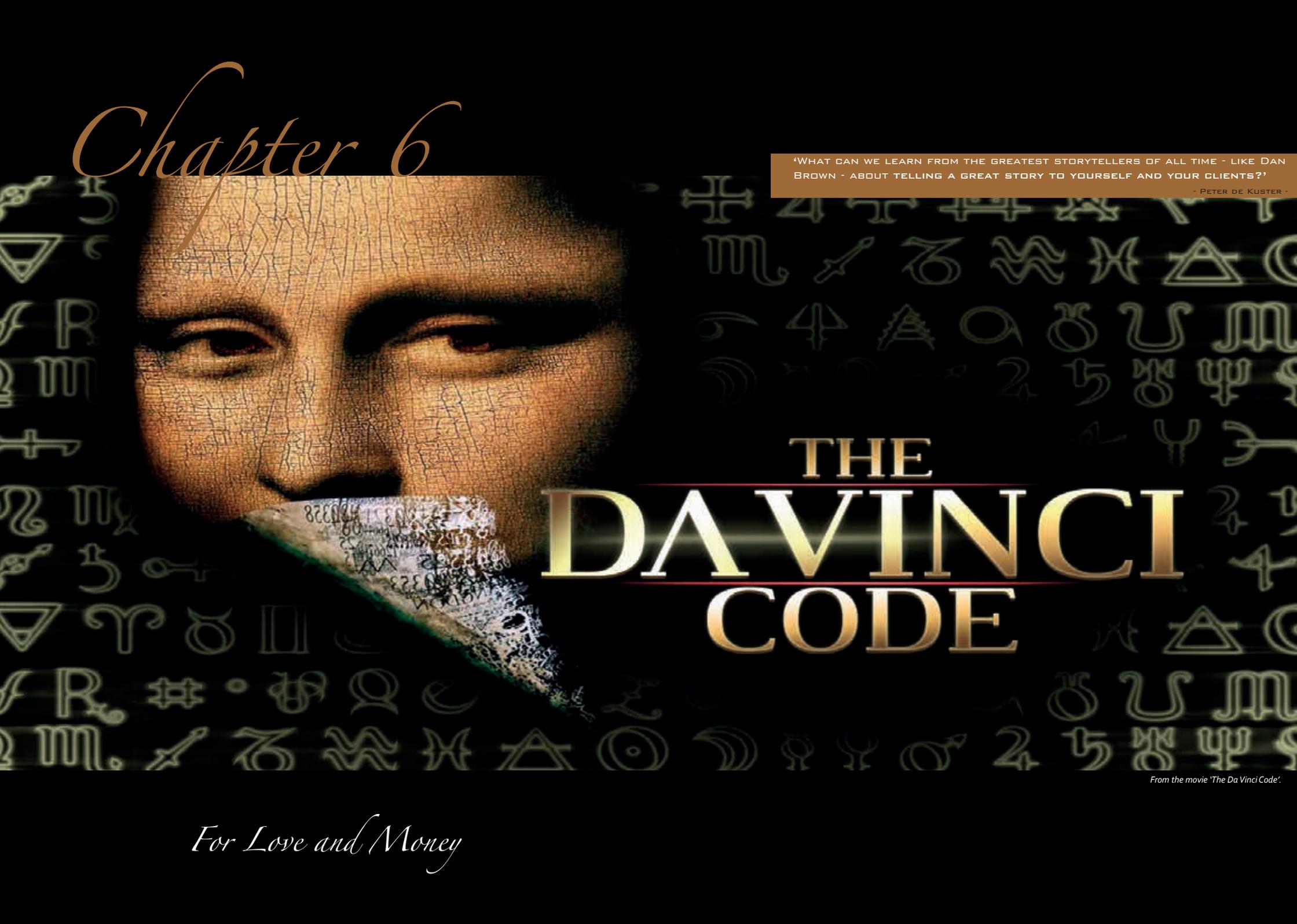
Motivation

We all need a great story that moves us, that we enjoy doing, and that we are good at. We need to feel useful. We need to help others, or belong to a cause larger than ourselves. We know we could help make this a better world, if only on a small scale. In this world of rapid change, people have a deep need to control their own fate; to tell great stories about yourself is the way to do it.

Chapter 6

‘WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE GREATEST STORYTELLERS OF ALL TIME - LIKE DAN BROWN - ABOUT TELLING A GREAT STORY TO YOURSELF AND YOUR CLIENTS?’

- PETER DE KUSTER -



THE DAVINCI CODE

From the movie 'The Da Vinci Code'.

For Love and Money

For Love and Money

I believe that when we do what we love – meaning we enjoy it and are good at it – the money will eventually flow, as long as we believe we deserve it and we ask for it and willing to accept it. But, creative right-brained people are usually not driven by money. They don't manage it very well and have some funny stories about it.

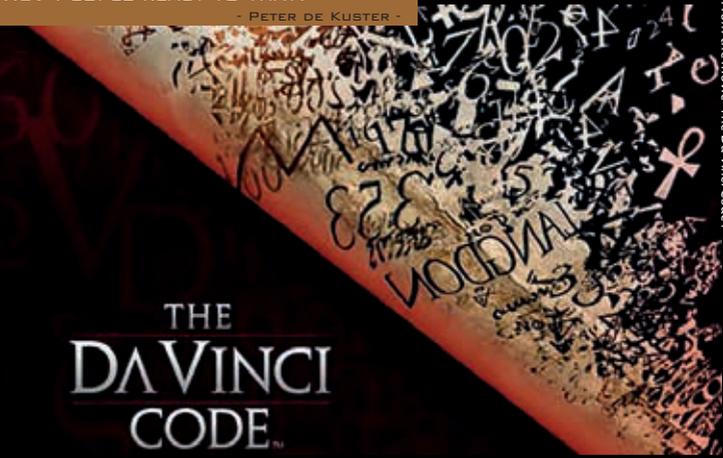
For instance, there are artists (Bohemians), who believe that they must starve to create real art and that they can't have a juicy income and remain honest and true to their vision. That, somehow accepting money for one's art is selling out and giving up some of one's independence.

Let's face it; money does buy freedom (as does a total disregard of it, I guess). I have had money and struggled. Money did not make me happy; it just created a whole new set of challenges. When I was broke, I found out that wasn't the answer either. The solution is to have inner happiness, so that you can enjoy your riches.

'WHAT'S YOUR HERO'S JOURNEY STORY? YOUR DA VINCI CODE?'

- PETER DE KUSTER -





From the movie 'The Da Vinci Code'

THE DA VINCI CODE™

If you're unwilling to live on the street (or with your mother), you need to consider money somewhere in your story. How to make money doing what I love? You can do that, by answering the following questions:

- What specific annual income do you need to live abundantly, not just comfortably?
- What are your minimum monthly financial needs?
- How much money would it take, to make you feel successful?
- What are you doing to pay off your debt?
- Where can you cut back?
- What are some other sources of income?
- What about part-time work?
- What are you unwilling to do for money?
- What negative stories do you tell yourself about money which holds you back?
- How does it feel to be broke?
- How does it feel to be able to buy the things you want, when you want them, and still have some left over for a rainy day?
- How much money (exactly) would you need, to be able to pursue your dream?

What's your hero's journey?

Your hero's journey, should you choose to accept it, is the overriding story of which to base your life and career on. This gives your life clarity and focus, without stifling or restricting you.

A hero's journey story is told to inspire you, not to impress others. It reflects your inner desires and values, as well as the directions for your life. It's a power tool and should not be rushed. It may be best to start by writing everything you want to be, want to do, desire to have and how you will serve others. Then, cut out the repetition and keep cutting it down, until it is no more than two sentences long.

Memorize this story, internalize this story and live this story.

Your hero's journey should include an inner goal, what it will take to please you, your deepest desires and dreams. You'll also want to include an outer goal, which is how you will serve others. This 'outer' goal is important, because it will usually point out how you'll make money by reaching you inner goal.



Your hero's journey story does not need to include your desire to have a Porsche, a beach house in the South of France or the best tables at the Café Flore, however...

Fill in the blanks: I would like to work in ... doing ... and to be known for?

This will help you focus on what's best for you. Not what's okay, good, or better, but what's BEST. This will keep you focused from day to day and year by year.

Having a hard time developing a hero's journey story? How about just a theme for the year? Make this your year to do something special.

Okay, I'm assuming you have come up with a hero's journey story or a theme. That's your goal. Now write it down.

Think about it. How badly do you really want this? Be careful what you wish for. Why do you want it? If you can establish the motive, than the means and opportunity fall into place.

- "Narrow it down. Be specific." -



From the movie 'The Da Vinci Code'.

'IS YOUR HERO'S JOURNEY STORY THE MOST EXCITING STORY YOU CAN IMAGINE?'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

Be honest. How many stories can you spin at once, before it all comes crashing down? Most people who are creative can and want to do many things. Perhaps you can do it all at once. More likely you can do some now, some later. If you want to be the best in one thing, you have to focus on that one thing and let the other stuff go. What's your style? What are you willing to give up, at least for a little while?

Tragic stories, tragic stories, tragic stories

Self-limiting stories hold back many creative heroes from reaching their goals.

Many people for instance, a great many indeed, have the dream of writing a book. I hear it all the time. Undiscovered writers. Yet, only a fraction of them, ever do it. It remains the elusive goal. I think it's more a case of wanting to have written, rather than do the writing. Unless you have a ghost-writer, a book will not write itself.

Besides. For most people, the goal is to sell a book. To sell a book, you first must write it (or at least a proposal). Commit it to paper, page by page. Well, that's the part that can be work. It's tough enough with a positive story...

Out of focus

Many creative, inventive and imaginative people have struggled with an inability to focus, at one time or another. The most successful have used this 'fault' to their benefit.

On the other hand, you can learn to overcome your inability to focus when it is important or when things challenge and interest you.

Focusing is not an easy thing to do. At any given moment, you have an infinite number of choices. The trick is to base your choices on your passion, where your focus is optimal.

You can better focus on using these techniques:

- Keep your story in front of your face.
- Make a storyboard.
- Make a game of it.
- Think of a positive story.
- Find a story partner.
- Talk to other people about your stories.
- Surround yourself with other people who are working towards goals.

Excuses for Not Having a Hero's Journey Story and Why They're Bogus

If you haven't already taken the steps outlined in this journey, you may recognize yourself in one of the follow excuses. As creative people, we can come up with some pretty clever rationalizations for not having written stories with missions, quests and goals. And they're all bogus.

I already have goals. Fair enough.

Are they written down? Can you spell them out? True great stories with quests – the kind that work anyway – are written down. As a result, they can be reviewed, revamped and recalled, inspiring your everyday actions and decisions.

I set New Year's resolutions every January and by February I'm back to my old ways. Goal setting doesn't work.

There is a big difference between the hero's journey goals and resolutions. One works and the other does not. Resolutions are often unrealistic and impulsive. You are initially excited about them, but there is no real commitment, so you're quickly discouraged and distracted. Written stories, on the other hand, involve some real soul searching. When you're doing what you really want to do, you're likely to follow through. One day, your statutes will be found in the Louvre!

Setting goals is overwhelming, complicated, and too much work!

This excuse really boils down to not knowing how to set goals. Read this travel guide and you'll start to learn a lot about yourself, which makes telling your great story easier.

I'm too busy living my life, man. Besides, you can't know what's going to happen in the future.

Live for today, we can all die tomorrow right? Wrong. You'll live a lot longer. That gives you a lot of life to live – with or without a great story you tell yourself, about yourself. Having a written story gives peace of mind, clarity of thought, and hope for the future. It motivates you, guiding your daily decisions so you can make the most of that unforeseeable future.



From the movie 'The Da Vinci Code'.

'DOES YOUR STORY HELP YOU ACCOMPLISH YOUR GOALS? SOLVE YOUR OWN DA VINCI CODE?'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

Written goals will make me boring, predictable and stifle my creativity.

Okay, write them in pencil. Change or refine them as often as you like, but get them down on paper first. Otherwise, you're likely to be bored, frustrated and stifled – the very things you want to avoid. You don't have to set your goals in concrete. But, if they're in sand, the tide can come and wash them away. Setting real goals involves self-knowledge, and self-knowledge alone can help you chart a better course.

I don't have time to write my story.

Make it a priority. Do what you can now, no matter how little it is. You'll be surprised at how little steps can add up. Being too busy can be a symptom that you're afraid to slow down and really take a look at yourself and make decisions about what to do when you grow up. Your life is frittered away on endless details and mindless errands.

My 'Hero's Journey' story? That's a big step for me.

Those excuses reflect to closely held fears; Fear of failure, fear of success, fear of change and fear of commitment. If you let fear get in the way, you'll always play it safe, never write a book, open that business or take your paintings to the art gallery show. That can lead to feelings of anger, frustration, depression and lack of motivation. The answer is to take smaller steps. Telling yourself a great story, about how you don't mean to make sweeping changes that you're not prepared for. You don't necessarily have to quit your job, you just need to take the first steps toward achieving what you want, or you'll never get anywhere.

Chapter 7

'MYTH: ENTREPRENEURS ARE BORN, NOT MADE!'
- PETER DE KUSTER -



From the musical 'Les Misérables'

Les Misérables

The Myths about Creative Heroes



The Myths about Creative Heroes

There are times in your life, when everything seems chaotic. You are in the full crisis mode, unsure of what to do next, unsure about everything really. What you think you need, is a vacation to escape your challenges or at least to sort things out.

The truth is, you need to get a handle on your life and get control again, to make some sense out of the uncertainty. You don't need a vacation; you need a hero's journey story. This will help you make it through the turbulence and come out on the other side, less stressed and stronger for it.

Even the most right-brainer needs some structure in his live. Yet, creative people resist traditional planning because they think it is too structured, too limiting. It doesn't have to be. In this travel guide you clarified your hero's journey story. Once you have a great story, you need a plot to help you reach it. The plot is more like a map. It has footprints to show you which steps to take and landmarks, which tells you when you are veering off course. And finally, a list of recommended provisions for this trip and the names of some guides or role models, who can help you get where you're going, quickly.

The starting point of your story is here and now. The goal of your hero's journey is to earn a living from what you love doing.

Once you get there, in Paris, you can do a whole lot of sightseeing in the Louvre and the Rodin museum, wander around and have a good time. From your new vantage point you may decide to set out for someplace new. Each time, the steps are the same: choose a destination, work out how to get there, and go.

'MYTH: ONCE I MAKE IT I'M SET FOR LIFE.'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

LON CHANEY / **MARY PHILBIN** / **A. GIBSON GOWLAND** / **RUPERT JULIAN**
NORMAN KERRY / **ARTHUR CAREWE** / **GASTON LEROUX**

The Great Myths

It helps to expose and explore some of the myths surrounding creative heroes, before you go any further.

Myth: Your career is your life.

Reality: The creative person changes careers, five to seven times, before they die on their job with their heels on. It's okay to be a job hopper in the creative arts. In fact, it's more like a project-to-project kind of jumping around. Even if you think you want to stick with one job or one company your whole life (Are you sure you are a right brainer?): it isn't possible anymore. End of story.

Myth: Work is a necessary evil.

Reality: When you find work you love doing, you'll never work another day in your life. Anyway, It won't feel like work. That is total actualization.

Myth: Follow the path of the hot careers and you will be successful.

Reality: Don't limit yourself to what is hot or popular. Follow your passion, your curiosity.

Myth: Once I make it, I am set for life.

Reality: A creative career is like a ride on a gigantic roller coaster. There is a slow and steady climb (which isn't much fun) as you pay your dues, work hard and make connections. Once you get on the top, you have just about a second to enjoy the view before you go plummeting to the bottom, ten times faster than the climb. Sometimes, that fast drop is your choice, sometimes it isn't. The momentum of it carries you back up the next. The point is, that creative heroes don't go on a steady uphill climb. But, unlike other professions, they offer a lot of thrills too.

Myth: I want my first job to launch the rest of my life.



Reality: If you're waiting for a job to start your life, stop waiting. First, you need a life; A sense of who you are and what you want to be. Then, you go looking for a job. Most people make a more lasting commitment to their second career, because by then, they have had time to figure out what they really want to be.

Myth: Changing your career will make everything okay.

Reality: While there is no doubt the right career makes life much, much better, it won't make you better. A career change is external. If you're unhappy where you are now, take the time to discover why, before you leap into another situation.



Myth: The most talented people get ahead.

Reality: Talent can only take you so far. Having a vision, a quest, a great story and the willingness to treat your career as a business – that's what gets you ahead.

Myth: Do what you love and the money will follow.

Reality: If it were that simple, don't you think everyone would be making it big time? The real message behind this myth is, that it is much more pleasurable to do what you love for a living. As a result of those factors, the money finds you. Hopefully before you are dead.

Myth: You have to be famous, to earn a fortune.

Reality: Anyone who has had any degree of fame will tell you it doesn't pay the bills. Being respected by your peers and adored by your audience is awesome, but there are plenty of people you've never heard of, who are quietly making millions. Fame is not the goal; it is a by-product of doing good work.

Myth: The more you make, the happier you'll be.

Reality: The more you make, the more you make. Money creates its own opportunities and challenges. Happiness depends on the way you earn your money.

Myth: You cannot start at the top.

Reality: Well. Actually, you can. Start your own business, and you will be owner, boss, CEO.

Myth: There is no such thing as job security any more for creative heroes.

Reality: Your job security is your talent and skills. Build on each experience, develop new skills and make key contacts along the way. Be willing to change, adapt, learn and reinvent yourself. Be a problem-solver and self-starter, innovative and productive. You will not only survive – you'll thrive.

Myth: It's too late to start over.

Reality: It's never too late to look for, and pursue, your passion. 'Over the hill' just means that there is another hill waiting for you to climb.

Myth: Everyone is out to steal my ideas.

Reality: Very few people have the intent, ability, follow through or malice, to steal your ideas. Don't let fear hold you back. Do what you can to protect yourself and your ideas, and then go out and spread your story. Make something happen.

Myth: When you figure out what your dream is, everyone will help you.

Reality: The sad thing is, that more people try to sabotage you than support you. Their insecurities and envy are their problem, not yours.

Myth: If you're all over the place, you've got a better chance of catching a big break.

Reality: Lack of focus is one of the biggest problems creative heroes have. In fact, I would say that focus is the difference between flourishing and floundering.

Myth:

Only anal-retentive left-brainers try to plan out their lives and careers.

Reality:

Even creative people need a hero's journey story – the art of a loose plot with a tight vision quest, which will last throughout the ages.

Myth:

Some people seem to get all the lucky breaks.

Reality:

You make your own luck. Behind all those 'lucky breaks' is a lot of legwork, preparation and planning. Being in the right place at the right time means putting yourself in a position to be at the right place (get out there) being prepared when opportunities arise – and having the guts to grab your chance when it comes. Opportunities are everywhere, but without a clear story of what you want, you may be passing up many 'lucky breaks' of your own.

Myth:

Entrepreneurs are born, not made.

Reality:

It's true, not everyone is cut out to make it on his or her own. It takes a certain type to be in business. But, creative people have many of the traits necessary to be successful business people. They also have some traits (like an allergic reaction to detail work), which must be overcome.

Myth:

They are simply not enough opportunities to make money with my passion.

Reality:

You only need one. Don't have a defeatist story, or you're already defeated. Somebody is going to get a book deal or record contract, or sell his or her software idea. Why couldn't it be you?

Myth:

The only real artists are starving artists. At least, they have some sense of integrity.

Reality:

Some creative enterprises simply do not pay well; no matter how many dues you pay. But, making money with your creative endeavours does not mean you're a sell-out. It means you're smart enough to find a market for what you do.

'MYTH: EVERYONE IS OUT TO STEAL MY IDEAS.'

- PETER DE KUSTER -



Chapter 8

'WHO IS DOING WHAT I WANT TO DO?'
- PETER DE KUSTER -



From the movie 'Hugo Cabret'.

Test Drive Your Dream Job!



Testdrive Your Dream Job!

Creative heroes like to pursue different paths at once. A title like: 'designer of happiness', 'inventor of great games', 'performing the art of love', or 'storyteller of my own life', can get you started on a career path while you're still exploring possibilities.

Don't get me wrong though. The more focused you are on what you want, the easier it will be to plan your career and the more opportunities will arise. If you can say you're a writer, or an architect, and define the unique medium you want to work in – like an enormous tower – you have an edge, a niche.

Make a choice now, and you have an edge over all those wandering generalities out there. You can remain flexible and take advantage of opportunities within your niche. You can go as slowly as you want, but knowing where you're going also lets you go faster if you want.

Right-brainers are big-picture people, but when it comes to detail (the devil is in the details), they get distracted. The possibilities are limitless, which makes the concept of planning a career overwhelming. The answer is to make a test drive in your dream job. Work together with your heroes and heroines, who are successful in what you consider your dream job.

Make the Most of Your Test Drive!

- Who is doing what I want to do?
- What steps did they take to get there?
- What could I do to follow in their path?
- Whom could I ask how they did it?
- What obstacles might I face along the way?
- How will I deal with those obstacles?
- What are some possible solutions?
- What are the decision makers along the way looking for?
- What do I have to do to meet those needs?
- What will I need to acquire along the way?
- Where is the action happening?
- Where will I have to go to give myself a better shot?
- Where am I now?
- What can I do to close the gap between what I want and where I am now?
- How can I build a tower from where I am to where I want to be?
- Who can help me to reach my goal?
- Where do I need to be to have the best chance to make this happen?
- What skills do I need to acquire?
- What am I selling?
- Can I make a living out of this?

- Who is my audience?
- How can I reach them the best? Get it to them?
- What's in it for them?
- How much do I want?
- How can I simplify the process?
- What do I need to do to support this?
- What steps do I need to take and in what order?
- What action can I take right now, today?



From the movie 'Hugo Cabret'

'WHAT COULD I DO TO FOLLOW IN THEIR STEPS?'

WHOM COULD I ASK HOW THEY DID IT?'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

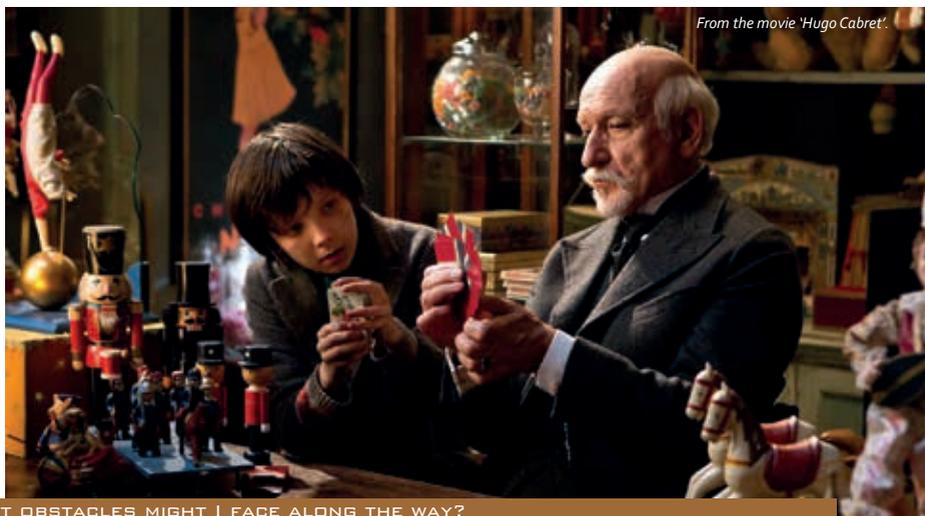
The Hero's Journey Tips

Money both helps and hurts, when planning a career. Too much, and you get soft and are unwilling to take any risks. Too little, and you can't function. Even so, that is the highest obstacle people throw out when it gets down to the nitty gritty of planning a career. How do I survive while I make my move?

How much do you need, bare minimum, to get by? What is your bottom line per month? Is there anything you can cut out, or lower that number while you get going? What is more important to you is time to work on your craft or a nice car, some sort of recreation or toys? Most people use material comforts to make up for lack of substance in their life, relationships or career. Is that what you're doing?

The up-and-down cycles, common to the creative career, can cause financial trouble if you don't plan them. As someone who goes from project to project, creative people have to be disciplined enough to plan for the droughts, by saving some during the boom time so they don't go bust when it gets tight. But, don't be so afraid of the downtime that you take every job that comes your way.

If you aren't willing to let go of what you have and go for what you really want, you aren't committed enough. And the fact is, the more you are willing to risk, the more likely you are to make it. It also seems that the less you care about and need money, the more it comes to you. When you get too involved in protecting what you have, it stifles your growth.



From the movie 'Hugo Cabret'.

'WHAT OBSTACLES MIGHT I FACE ALONG THE WAY?'

HOW WILL I DEAL WITH THOSE OBSTACLES?'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

Who is in Control of Your Future?

- 1. Success in a creative career is the result of**
 - a. dumb luck.
 - b. hard work and preparation, as well as being in the right place at the right time.
- 2. What is the best description for how you feel about the market for people who are creative?**
 - a. It's extremely competitive and there aren't enough good projects to go around.
 - b. Somebody is going to be hired, and it should be me.
- 3. Do you feel powerful or powerless?**
 - a. Others control my life.
 - b. My life is determined by my own actions.
- 4. Can you control what happens to you in the future?**
 - a. Yes, by taking the advice from fortune-tellers.
 - b. Yes, by setting a goal and making a plan to reach it.
- 5. How do you see your life two years from now?**
 - a. Why plan for the future when I could be dead tomorrow?
 - b. I will be able to support myself as creative hero.
- 6. The future of my chosen profession is:**
 - a. Just a minute. I call my fortune-teller.
 - b. I've checked it out, and my field is growing by leaps and bounds. I'll probably need to learn some new skills, though.



'WHAT ARE SOME POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS?'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

From the movie 'Hugo Cabret'.

Playing Against the Odds

- When you feel as though it is pointless to plan, because of the overwhelming odds against you, read about the projects of your role models. The enormous competition and obstacles they faced.
- Do you have what it takes? Imagine you are in a room full of people. Let's start helping some of them to the exits.
- Those who have no talent or training, please leave the room. (Hey, where do you think you're going? That doesn't mean you!)
- Remove all the people who aren't willing to sacrifice and pay their dues.
- Take away the people who don't have the fortitude to make it.
- Eliminate the people who don't believe enough in themselves.
- Remove people who sabotage their success.
- Gone, are people who have no story, no plan and who are wandering around aimlessly.

– “Now, look around.” –

There are still people there. But, there is room enough for you to participate in this great project. You are unique and with a great story and a plan. You can make a start and work your way to where you want to be.

‘WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO TO MEET THOSE NEEDS?
WHAT WILL I NEED TO ACQUIRE ALONG THE WAY?’

– PETER DE KUSTER –



Chapter 9

CYRANO

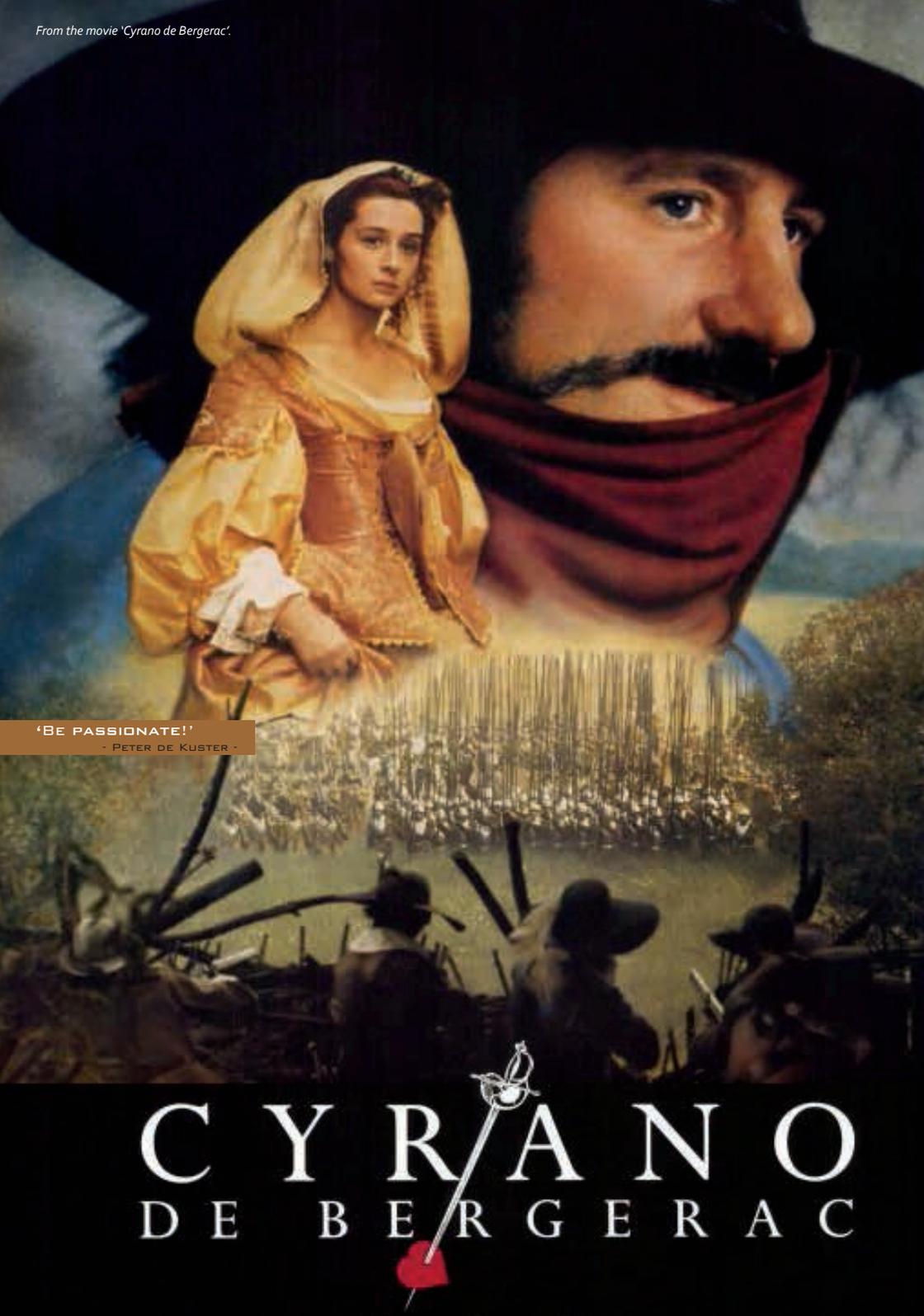
DE BERGERAC



From the movie 'Cyrano de Bergerac'.

'PEOPLE WANT WHAT THEY CAN'T HAVE.'

- PETER DE KUSTER -



'BE PASSIONATE!'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

Life is a pitch!

In the world of creative's it's all about the pitch. Many creative careers are dependent on being a good pitch person. It's part salesmanship, part stage performance and part public speaking skills, mixed in with a bit of magic. In some fields, being able to pitch is a matter of career life or death.

It's much easier when you know they need what you've got and how you can help them get what they want. Start by asking: 'Who needs what I have? How badly do they want it?' – The more you know about and are aware of the answers to these two questions, the less pressure will be on you, and the easier it becomes to pitch yourself.

How to Sell without Selling Your Soul

Selling your talent is tough. It may even be distasteful, especially if you don't believe in yourself. Many people who are creative defend their inability to sell as an unwillingness to sell out. Get off your high horse. I am not the devil, because I believe you have to get your story out.

As a creative hero you are always pitching your story, wherever you are, whomever you're talking to. You pitch your parents so they'll get off your back and stop talking about that other career. You pitch people you want to work for, and those you want to work for you. Your style is a pitch of its own, a demonstration of your uniqueness.

To get paid, to make a living, you have to sell. You don't have to lie, cheat, deceive, or wear a suit. To sell effectively, you must help people, heal them, entertain them and meet their needs. These are good things.

Don't treat selling as if it were beneath you. If you don't think you can do it, you can't. The sooner you accept that you have to do it, the better. Everyone sells something: stories, ideas, talent, skills, products, dreams, energy, and creativity. If you have something to offer, and you want to earn money for it, you sell. That doesn't mean you can't have fun with it.

Try to know the story of your client.

People like to do business with those who know what the hell they are talking about. Fill out *The Hero's Journey* questionnaire in this book with your clients! They will test you for sure. You need them to say 'yes' to your plan, tape, project, and promotion. You must motivate them. Find out what it will take to get them to say yes.

Don't get hung up on the first no.

People want what they can't have.

Sold out. Standing room only. Only available for a limited amount of time. I'm fully booked throughout this month, but I think I could squeeze you in the first week of next month; the principle of scarcity.

Shut up and listen.

Ask questions and let them do the talking. Don't ever ask a question to which they can answer: 'No!'



From the movie 'Cyrano de Bergerac'.

'DON'T BE DULL. DON'T GET HUNG UP ON THE FIRST 'NO!'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

Trust your gut.

Use your intuition to judge the situation, and react.

People buy from friends. Women especially.

So, make more friends, treat people like your friends. Borrow other people's friends. Keep in touch with friends. Get referrals, testimonials and leads – and work them.

Be passionate.

Being pumped will influence people more than what you actually buy.

Don't be dull!

Don't be desperate. Interject some humour, an anecdote, a personal story, an example. Entertain. Personalize it with your wit. Relax and have some fun.

Be ready to pitch on a moment's notice.

Have your verbal story ready to go. It should be so well rehearsed that it doesn't sound rehearsed.

Always have something to illustrate your story.

A demo, book, portfolio, picture. Carry them with you at all times.

Sincerity sells.

Don't be a phony. Be yourself. Always be sincere.

Persistence pays off.

No matter what you are selling, stress the benefits.

People are influenced by WIIFM (what's in it for me); Tap into that. What is their dream, their desire? Sell them on it.

Be reliable, so they will want to hire you again. Never miss a deadline.

If they say no, ask for a referral of someone else who might like what you have to offer.

Don't take 'no' personally.

If you don't get it, who did? Why? What did they do? What do they have that I don't? How can I improve?

Don't handicap yourself by saying: "I'm not a salesperson."

You can be whatever you want to be. Recognize a poor fit when you see one and back down gracefully. Give them an easy exit, and they may recommend you to someone else.

Simplify your story, so that it is crystal clear.

In general, you'll have about 30 seconds of someone's attention before they lose interest.

Energy and enthusiasm are catching.

You'll be more likely to make someone else excited, if you're excited first. (This works in many areas of life, not just in your career).

Practice and be ready.

For objections and negatives. Treat it like a game.

End with a call to action.

Put yourself in their shoes.

What would it take to get me to buy, if I were them?

Take the risk away.

Do it on spec. Consignment. Barter. Guarantee.

If selling yourself is a problem, get an agent.

An agent serves as a buffer. They cover their fees by getting you more money than you get on your own. Some will work for you on a contingency basis.

Don't be a whiner.

Shut up and do what needs to be done. Be a problem solver not a problem child.

Promises, Promises

There are two rules to keep in mind in your business career. First, when you give your word, always keep it. Secondly, don't give your word; or, not lightly anyway. Don't say you'll take care of it when it's one of the million things you already have to do. It's far better to under-promise and over-deliver.

If you stick with that simple rule you'll come out ahead, and still have time for a life.

Protect your reputation with your life.

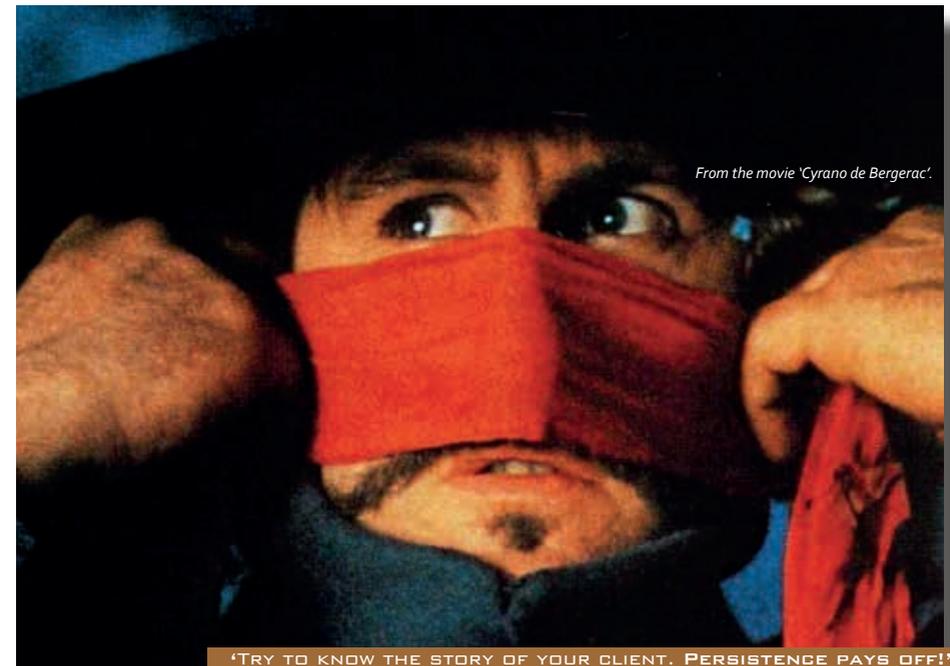
Don't put your name on anything you don't believe in.

Don't pass the buck.

Never say: 'That's not my job.' Or, 'That's not my fault.'

Be a doer, not just a sayer.

I believe we are judged by what we say, but, more important, by what we say we will do. Be known as someone whose word is gold, who gets things done.

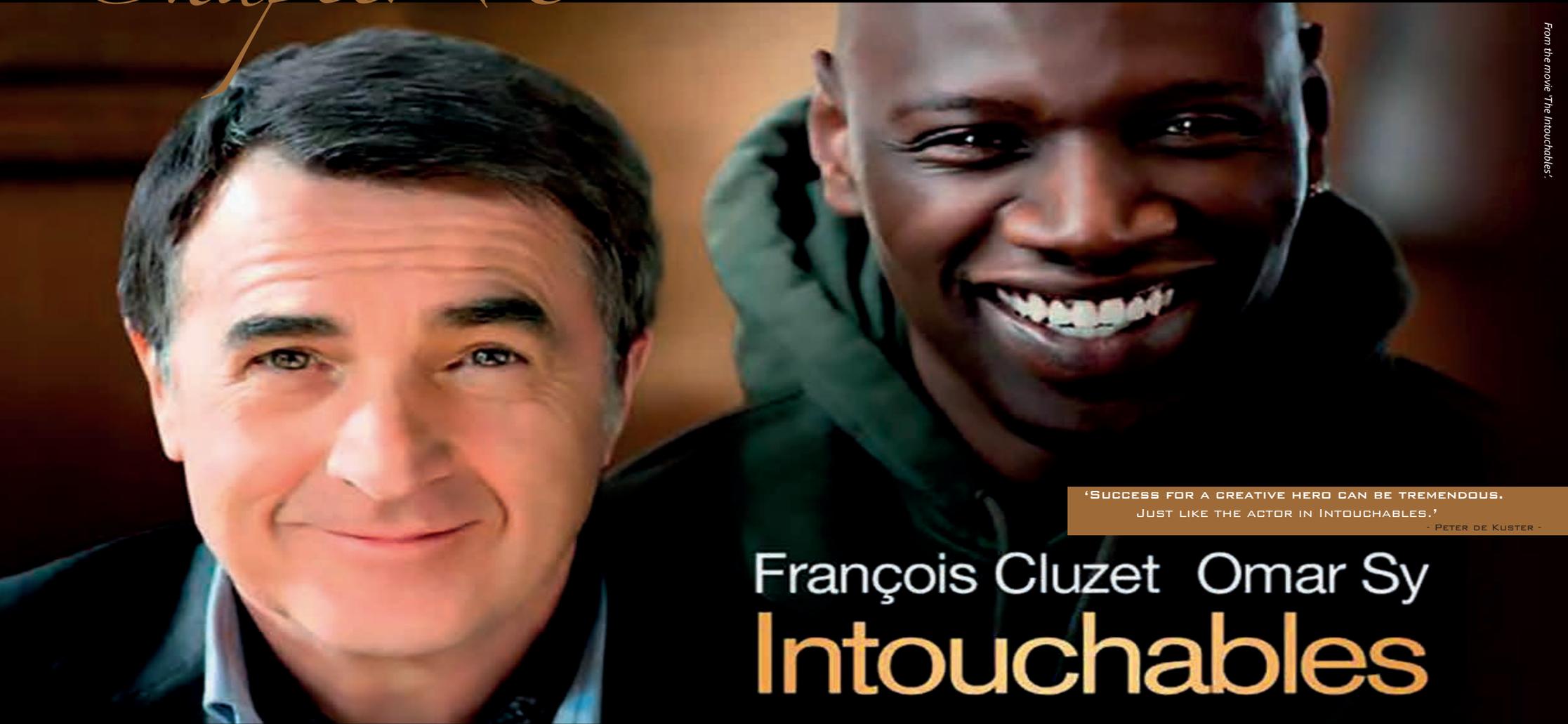


From the movie 'Cyrano de Bergerac'.

'TRY TO KNOW THE STORY OF YOUR CLIENT. PERSISTENCE PAYS OFF!'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

Chapter 10



From the movie 'The Intouchables'

'SUCCESS FOR A CREATIVE HERO CAN BE TREMENDOUS.
JUST LIKE THE ACTOR IN INTOUCHABLES.'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

François Cluzet Omar Sy
Intouchables

Be Your Own Hero



Be Your Own Hero

What many people see as faults and flaws in the right-brained person, are assets when it comes to working for yourself. Things like intuition, imagination and innovation are exactly the things needed. Don't fault yourself for not fitting into the nine-to-five world. Be glad that you have what it takes to work 'outside-the-box'.

Most creative people, who are self-employed, work over sixty hours a week. Why would anyone want to work long hours? It's because they don't want to do anything else. Your work is like your child, you want to take care of it, nurture it, grow it, and despite all the diapers you have to change (and what's in them), you love it.

Maybe you shouldn't marry your work, but it becomes a very tempting mistress. You have the freedom to make your own hours, pick and choose which projects you will work on (and which clients you will work with). You don't have some idiot telling you what to do all the time. You can make as much, or as little as you want. The only glass ceiling is the amount of work you are willing to do.

There's more. You control your own destiny. The rewards, which come from all that hard work, belong to you. You own your ideas. There is an unlimited income potential. It's both challenging and constantly changing; it's hard work, but you feel as if you are hardly working, because it is a labour of love. You set the priorities – you can work less and have more free time, or work more and make more money. You set the hours.

Working for yourself is great. Half of all marriages succeed. So, do half of all businesses. When the love is there!

'YOU CAN DO IT TOO, IN YOUR OWN WAY, IN YOUR OWN TIME, REACHING YOUR OWN GOALS.'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

Creative Heroes in Business

There are several misconceptions about creative people who may keep you from becoming self-employed. Although, there may be very good reasons why you should not attempt self-employment, these are not among them.

People, who are creative, are like children.

Wrong. You may have a childlike quality, but you are not childish.

You'd be happy playing all day long.

So, the creative person likes a good time more than the next woman or man, is that such a crime of passion? The creative often considers work as play, and I personally think, that's the best way to live.

You're defensive about your way of doing something.

This one may not be so far off the mark. You've probably had to defend yourself, most of your life. It might help you, to be able to prove that you know what you're doing.

You can come up with ideas quickly.

The creative process is a hero's journey. The constant pressure, to come up with inspiration on demand, can be wearing. You need time to conceptualize, to let ideas grow, to do your best work. Time management can help give you that time, even when nobody else will.

You don't care about business.

Just because you are creative, doesn't mean you don't yearn for success, for recognition, for financial security. And you actually have a natural gift in this direction if you learn to recognize and use it.

There's only one-way to be organized.

You can't handle that kind of regimented, structured and right angle style of time management. This is half-right. You probably can't and definitely shouldn't try to regiment your lifestyle, killing your creativity in the process. But, there are many ways to be organized and you're creative enough to find one that will work for you.

'IT'S THAT SIMPLE. IF IT'S NOT FAST, FUN, FLEXIBLE AND EASY YOU ARE LESS LIKELY TO EMBRACE IT.'

- PETER DE KUSTER -



From the movie 'The Internship'

Organized means:

Sterile, cold, dull, rigid, or inflexible. Wrong! It means being able to find what you need when you need it.

You better work under pressure.

What does that have to do with anything, except eventual heart failure, ulcers, or stroke? It is okay to turn up the heat from time to time, if you do so on your own terms, keep it under your control.

You were born disorganized.

Born with some sort of cleaning disability. That's 'ridicule'. You can organize yourself; it's just that nobody else can organize you. As long as you can function and those around you don't want to kill you, what's the problem?



From the movie 'The Intouchables'.

You're antisocial.

You do need your space at times. Working in hotels or at the Louvre.

You're a little crazy.

Foe? No! Maybe, just a bit off centre. Don't keep trying to judge yourself by irrelevant standards. It's a colossal waste of time.

You're stubborn.

Single-minded. Hah! You're more likely to have ten or twenty things going on in that incredible brain of yours. And there's nothing wrong with being incredible, when you know you're right.

You're absentminded and forgetful.

If you have ten things going in your mind at once, it's understandable that you lose one, every now and then. If you're totally involved in a project, it's not surprising that everything else falls by the wayside. I call it focus.

Do What You Love

The key to success for creative heroes is doing what you love. Turn a hobby into a business venture. Opportunities exist in the following career paths – and so many more. Even still to be invented – by you probably.

Photographer, designer, travel guide, fashion guru, writer, musician, artist, advertising man or woman, jewellery designer, editor, wedding planner, consultant, movie director, dancer, the list is rapidly becoming endless.

The key is to turn your talents and interests into a business, something you wouldn't mind working (or playing) on for fifty, sixty and sometimes seventy hours a week.



From the movie 'The Intouchables'.

Think Big, Start Great

Nearly everyone has a great idea for a business. So, what stops them from taking the plunge? They think you need hundreds of thousands of Euros in start up money. Many creative heroes of Paris did it, without any money.

When you start small, your mistakes are smaller too.

If you take it slow, you're not likely to burn your business down. And if you keep your 'must haves' down to 'needs' and 'can afford', you're more likely to survive any bad initial investments. You will make mistakes. Don't waste a lot of time worrying about it. Spend that time learning from your mistakes, and you're way ahead of the game.

There are other advantages to starting small.

Your business can be more flexible and offer a higher-touch kind of service in this high-tech world. Starting small also means that you need less capital. With a lower overhead, you keep more of what you make. Chances are that when you start small you will have to play all the business roles and learn to do it all. This will serve you well as you grow bigger and start to delegate.



“WHEN MY BOSS OR CLIENT PUTS ME ON THE SPOT...”
- PETER DE KUSTER -

The Lean Years Make You More Creative

The lesson that I've learned over the years is that lack of money makes you hungry and a lack of resources makes you more creative. The point is: you have to have a powerful story to tell yourself – your Hero's Journey story.

You have to believe in yourself. Hang in there and things will turn around. Stay positive and work hard. Have a goal and hang on to it, knowing that you will come out on the other side, stronger and better for taking on the struggle. You're making an investment in yourself and the future.



Business Stories and Business Plans

Every book I have ever read, on being self-employed, includes a chapter on business plans. Do you need one? My answer: 'No!'

What you need is a great business story! How do you like this answer?

The power of your business story moves you and moves other people (partners, employees, clients). Keep it short. The point here is, you will most likely run your business 'improviste'. So, keep it fairly flexible and use your intuition, rather than a bunch of numbers. I know this goes against conventional left-brain wisdom. But, I say: 'Write a great business story of one page, backed up with a plot of two pages, more of a global view than a street map of your business.'

I think that the two page hero's journey story is short enough that you will actually look at it now and again, after you write it and tell it again and again to partners and clients. I also believe, that spending two or three months writing a business plan is a waste of time, when you could be out doing business with clients.

The following is my short course on do's and don'ts for starting up a business.

Don't waste your time (and money) making everything perfect, before you begin. You are as ready as you'll ever be. Your idea of what you are and what you need is going to change with experience, so, don't lock yourself too tight at the start. Make it up as you go on your hero's journey.

Don't be afraid to spread your story out there.

Yes, people will copy you and steal your ideas. Let them spread your story, in a manner, that makes your business story stronger.

Don't leap before you think.

Partnerships are like marriages. Some last until death do them part; in others, the partners end up wanting to kill each other. The creative person should consider carefully before committing to a partnership. If the partners bring individual talents and skills that don't conflict, it can work.



'MULTITASKING IS FOR ME...'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

Do be aware of what works and what doesn't.

You'll have some ideas, or explore some marketing areas that just don't work financially, no matter how brilliant they seem at first. Drop the things that don't bring in the revenue. Cut your losses.

Do come up with a good name.

Brainstorm it, with as many people as you can. Try to keep it short – one or two syllables. Try to connect it with your business story, in as many ways as possible.

Do be your own niche.

Be your product or service – be your story. Live your story. Believe your story. Nothing sells like authenticity, like sincerity.

Creative heroes in Paris have often created multiple profit centres – multiple streams of income. Rather than focusing on a single source of income, the lesson is to develop several. This covers you during seasonal slumps, tough times and boredom (you can switch off from business to business or client to client). It also helps you spread the risk.

The miracle is to build your businesses, so that they support one another. You sell the same travel story in different markets, or different stories to the same market. You can sell books, give seminars based on your books or license others to do your seminars and market different products and services based on your books. Publicity from one promotes another.

*Build one miracle venture at a time, get it up and running and then move on.
And, become a legend in time.*

From the movie 'The Intouchables'.



'BE INSPIRED BY OTHER LEGENDS.'
- PETER DE KUSTER -



'SHARE YOUR LEGEND WITH OTHERS.'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

From the movie 'The Intouchables'.

Chapter 11



'IN MIDNIGHT IN PARIS, THE HERO MAKES A TEST DRIVE IN HIS DREAM JOB.
HE MAKES HIS HERO'S JOURNEY.'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

From the movie 'Midnight in Paris'.

Meet Your Own Heroes

'HE DISCOVERS IN PARIS HOW YOU CAN IDENTIFY, EXPLORE AND EXPERIENCE
YOUR DREAM JOB, AND HOW OR IF YOU WANT TO PURSUE IT.'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

Meet Your Own Heroes

Having to do everything yourself, limits your growth and your career. Control freaks struggle. If you plan to write, design, direct, produce, act, edit and publish everything, you miss out and you burn out. Even the most creative person can only be in so many places at once. More important, you can only be an expert in so many different things. Spread yourself thin, and things start falling through the cracks.

Your own Heroes!

The difference between successful creative heroes and unsuccessful creative heroes comes down to this: being in the company of other creative heroes.

It is wonderful, intoxicating and addicting to find people, who believe in you and want to see you do well. It is the antidote for your inner critic. Sometimes you can't see how special your work and your talents are, and you need people like the role models in Paris to support you.

You need their feedback.

When your heroes believe in you, they can push you beyond what you think is possible. Creative heroes help each other. There is an energy produced by creative heroes that you can tap into, without taken away by anyone.

Try to be around as many positive, creative people as possible, no matter in what field. You'll feel energized. Hanging out with others, in your own field, can be helpful too. You may get their overflow business, learn new techniques, find others to take care of your overflow or share responsibilities of a big job.

Mentors have been there, done that. Their experience can take years of your learning curve. They can teach. Point out the pitfalls. Attach yourself to their network. They encourage and support you when things are tough.

A mentor will not only point you in the right direction. They can help you see the light at the end of the tunnel, or open up windows of possibilities you never imagined before.

Look for a mentor who has something in common with you. And when you find a mentor, you do have to do your part. A mentor will help, guide and encourage. You must do two things:

Do the work.

A mentor's reward is seeing you succeed. Don't make yours feel, that his or her time and energy, have been wasted on you.

Shut up and listen.

Take notes. Accept your mentor's criticism and suggestions and try to use them, even if you don't always agree (and you won't always agree). A mentor is not God, but just someone who's already gotten where you want to go.



From the movie 'Midnight in Paris'

'MIDNIGHT IN PARIS OFFERS PROFESSIONAL, PERSONAL AND FINANCIAL PERSPECTIVES ON HOW TO TRANSITION INTO A NEW CAREER AND TURN YOUR DREAM JOB INTO A REALITY WITHOUT RISKING YOUR CURRENT JOB OR JEOPARDIZING YOUR FINANCIAL STABILITY.'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

Creative Heroes and their Mentors

Throughout history, creative people have relied on and benefited from having a mentor. Here are some past and present creative heroes and their mentors:

Student

Aristotle
Monet
Leonardo da Vinci
Dante
Woody Allen
Peter de Kuster

Mentor

Plato
Manet
Verrochio
Virgil
Hemingway
Joseph Campbell

The bottom line is: as long as you keep your eyes, ears and mind open, as long as you're willing and able to learn from mistakes – yours and others – you're using the 'mentorship-heroes-demo's-role models-test drive your dream job' concept to your advantage. There really is no downside.



From the movie 'Midnight in Paris'

'IN MEETING HIS HEROES AND HEROINES FROM THE PAST THE MIDNIGHT IN PARIS HERO GAINS A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF WHO HE IS NOW; WHAT FULFILLS YOU BOTH PERSONALLY AND PROFESSIONALLY.'

- PETER DE KUSTER -



'CREATIVE HEROES LIKE HEMINGWAY, GERTRUDE STEIN, TOULOUSE LAUTREC AND SCOTT FITZGERALD SHOW THE ASPIRING WRITER HOW TO GET FROM POINT A TO POINT B ON THE ROAD TO HIS DREAM JOB.'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

Rolemodels

Whom do you admire the most? What do they have that you don't? How did they get it? What steps did they take? Can you contact them? Can you ask them to make a test drive in your dream job with them as your mentor? You'll be surprised at how accessible many people are, and how receptive they can be. What would you ask them if you could?

If you can't reach them, you can still pattern yourself after them. I have done just that for my entire career. Joseph Campbell, Tom Peters, Benedikt Taschen and Richard Branson are my heroes and role models. I love to read how people got where they are.

Learning from others' success, helps you to follow, to pursue and to formulate your own hero's journey story. Success does leave clues. Read a biography as if it is the Bible. Highlight passages that inspire you. If they can do it, so can you. These are ordinary people who have done extraordinary things.

One warning: don't lose your uniqueness and don't compare yourself to your heroes. Don't get down on yourself because you didn't make it the same month and year they did. Your success is your own, with your own story, timing and happy ending. You may discover that you don't want what your mentor achieved after all. That might even be the most valuable lesson you learned from them.



'A MIDNIGHT IN PARIS PERHAPS SATISFIES YOUR OWN CURIOSITY AND LET YOU GAIN A DEEPER APPRECIATION FOR WHERE YOU ARE NOW IN YOUR LIFE AND YOUR CAREER.'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

Chapter 12

'SEX, DRUGS AND THE CANCAN.'
- PETER DE KUSTER -



From the movie 'Moulin Rouge'.

The Tragic Creative Heroes



The Tragic Creative Heroes

Sometimes, you are your own worst enemy. Nobody can sabotage your career, as well as you can. Why do creative people often become career kamikazes, who crash and burn? The right-brainer (that's you) is more susceptible to some of the pitfalls and problems that befall many people who are in business for themselves. It is important to be aware of the dangers that lie ahead in your career, and be properly prepared to slay them one by one, as they rear their ugly heads.

The Seven Deadly Sins

1. *Sloth.* Procrastination, a problem that leaves you a day late, and eventually puts you out of work. Failure to do what you say you will, when you say you will do it, will cost you clients, friends and lovers.
2. *Gluttony.* When you want it all, when you can't say 'no' to any job, you end up torching the candle at both ends, burning out – and hurting both your reputation and your chance for new business.
3. *Avarice.* When it comes to money, there never seems to be enough – and there are far too many ways to lose what you have.
4. *Pride.* A big head, egomania, complacency, selfishness, 'artistic' temperament, bad decisions, and bad behaviour, are very human side effects of success that can knock you from the top to the bottom.
5. *Lust.* Sex, drugs and Rock & Roll. Creative people are particularly susceptible to addictions of many kinds.
6. *Lack of discipline.* When you are all about the 'bored', 'lack of focus' and 'discipline', it is very hard to build a body of work or a meaningful career.
7. *Deceit.* Be honest with yourself, as well as to others. Don't settle for second best. Don't be afraid to dream – that's your strength. Share your dreams with others – that's your gift.

1. Sloth: *Too Little, Too Late*

There are several reasons why the right-brainers are susceptible to this disease. This include fear of success, fear of failure, and fear that it won't be perfect. There are many more reasons, but the bottom line is, that most of them are fears.

There are ways to deal with fear. You don't always have to face it. You can sneak around it, hand it off to someone else, and fool it. For instance:

Shuff it.

Do you work better under pressure? People who are creative are indolent by nature. Left to their own vices, many creative heroes' stories would die with them. Sometimes, you need a push, or the pressure of an impending deadline, to get you off the couch and into action.

Wait for inspiration.

It's a romantic notion that you wait around for an epiphany, that 'aha' revelation, and then work like mad to finish. That creates interesting headlines, but the successful artist works day after day through blocks, bad habits, urges, and distractions to create their stories. There is no perfect time to begin. Begin now.

Cut it up.

When you're facing a big project, start by cutting it into work-able pieces. First, it will give you a better overall view of what needs to be done and how everything works together. Secondly, it makes it less overwhelming to start. You negotiate the big show into small steps, not one huge leap.

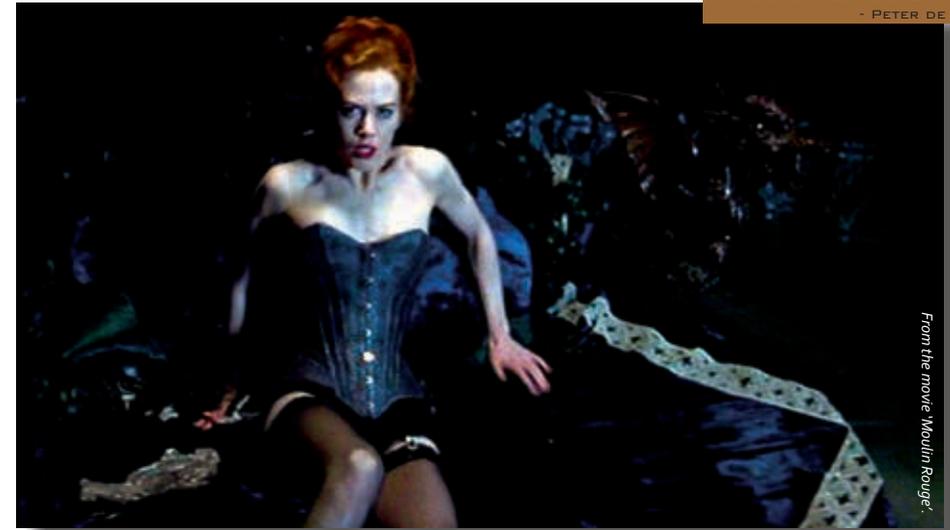
Take a trip.

You know, how just before a vacation, you can get twice as much done in half the time? You are on a mission. Set up a vacation right after a deadline. Use the extra energy that a pre-holiday provides.

Stop making excuses.

Story over matter.

Get into a creative story- and mindset, any way you can. Find a method that works for you.



'TOO LITTLE TOO LATE!'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

From the movie 'Moulin Rouge'

List the pros and cons.

Pros: Get things done, take proper steps to beat procrastination and finish in time.

Cons: Lie and cheat (and do time). Write down all the negative consequences of procrastinating a particular project.

Just do it.

In a creative career, you can't tell a client that you aren't feeling creative today. Very few people have the luxury of waiting for their muse to show up. Find ways to do the work. Develop a bank of 'starters'. Then use them.

Set limits.

Say to yourself: "I'm only going to work on this for 'five minutes'. You can put up with anything for five minutes. Just five minutes – that's all you need to get started. Before you know it, an hour has passed and you're on your hero's journey, in the zone, in your flow.

Minimize it.

A page a day keeps procrastination away. Set a minimum amount of work you will do per day. Make it minor. This works kind of like the idea of 'only five minutes'. Anybody can do a page! Usually it's hard to stop there... Don't blame yourself if you have a hard time doing that page. Write big. Include a picture. Have fun with it.



'CRASH & BURNOUT.'
- PETER DE KUSTER -



From the movie 'Moulin Rouge'.

Throw a kick-off party for each new project.

Give yourself a reward for just beginning. You usually reserve the reward until the end. Which, for someone with an impulsive personality, is too long of a wait. Give yourself credit for just starting.

Perfectionism is like a muscle cramp.

Just get it out. Don't worry about how perfect it is, or your creativity cramps up. It does not have to be perfect, the first time. Part of the fun is in the polishing.

Ignore it.

There is so much information out there. It can overwhelm you when starting your creative project. You start swimming in it, but then the undercurrent starts to pull you down. The answer is to tap internal wisdom. You know more than you think you know.

Don't be brilliant in the mediocre.

Let some things go. You will never get all your things done; your car clean. That stuff is just a renewable source of procrastination. Minimize it. Spend your time where it counts.

Make a movie.

You know that they don't shoot movies in sequence, right? You don't even have to begin at the beginning. Find an easy place to start. You don't have to do things in a linear manner. In fact, it's often better not to do things that way.

Find help.

Find a hero's journey companion. Brainstorm with others, to come up with ideas. Have someone hold you accountable. Delegate a portion of the project.

Force yourself.

This one is harsh. The longer you procrastinate, the harder it is to start. Oh, the guilt. You beat yourself up – you start thinking shoulda, woulda, coulda. Then, tension, anger, and jealousy raise their ugly heads. And of course, these results in wasting more time and making you feel worse about yourself. Eventually, you spiral down into procrastination hell. You are no longer in control. The only way out is to do something. Anything. Success breeds success. Action comes before motivation. Not the other way around.

Don't fool around.

There is nothing wrong with letting things simmer, until they reach a boiling point. You don't have to look like you're working to be working. People who are creative need time to allow their subconscious story to well up into their conscious, with new ideas combined with past experience. This is called inspiration. Although, you sometimes have to work without it, the real excitement in your work is to be found here. So, don't plan your days too tightly. Don't lock yourself in. Get plenty of sleep. Go for a drive or take a walk, heading nowhere. This is not the same as procrastination, and the distinction should be very clear.

The big difference between the two is 'energy'. Procrastination drains your energy, making it harder and harder to do anything at all. The creative process, even when you're not working directly on a project, is energizing. It brings you to life. Part of your job as a creative business hero is to nurture that creativity.

Creative heroes are creatures of habit. You probably think you prefer total freedom and chaos, but you need some structure to create. You need to have a working space, materials and a certain amount of uninterrupted time to create effectively. A ritual provides the framework to get things started (and completed) in time.

Clear your mind. Don't try to complete all of your little projects before you start – that's one of the worst forms of procrastination. Everything is more interesting than what you are working on when you are stuck. But, completing a few of them, sometimes gets you motivated to begin on your more serious stuff. It's been proven that ideas come to you when you are doing your rituals.

Set a regular time to start. You can train yourself to be at your favourite working place, the same way you can train yourself to be hungry at seven o'clock. It only takes twenty-one days to make a firm habit.

It's like going to the gym. Once you drag yourself there, get dressed and start your workout, the motivation starts to kick in.

There is magic in the morning (and in the evening!!)

No guilt throughout the day because you have been hanging out in a pub, if you get the job done early. Then, you can move on to the fun stuff. Give yourself permission to take time off if you get your work done. Three good hours of work is better than six hours of crappy time. It isn't about the amount of time spent working. It's about the quality of that time.



'DON'T FOOL AROUND,'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

From the movie 'Moulin Rouge'

Successful creative heroes have rigorous rituals. Poor themselves a strong espresso, go for a run, do some workout and start. The point is to relax and to mentally prepare for the coming dance.

Becoming successful, as a creative doesn't mean living the life of a bohemian. Actually, it does require discipline to practice, think and create. If you really want to make a career out of your creativity, you have to make some sacrifices, in order to produce something.

Meanwhile, enjoy the journey. You're much less likely to procrastinate if your work is fun. Be creative! If you're good, you can find a way to make even the yucky parts fun (or get rid of them somehow). If you can make the journey more enjoyable, the whole process is better.

Procrastination doesn't only paralyze your day-to-day work; it can ruin your career. You have to make your own breaks, take matters into your own hands.

2. Gluttony: Stress, Crash and Burnout

Not all stress is bad. The stress of an impending deadline can energize you ... or not. Take a quick stress test.

Do you:

- Like risk?
- Relish change?
- Work better under pressure?
- Feel energized after an all-nighter in which you finished a big project?
- Like to have a million things going at once?
- Live life as a drama, and if there isn't one, you'll create one?

If you have answered 'yes' to all of these questions, see your doctor – you're a candidate for a heart attack or a stroke. Some stress is good. All stress is bad.



'GLUTTONY.'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

Heroes

Our society keeps speeding up, as technology makes it possible to go faster and faster. Because of this, devices have actually added to the stress of people who are creative. It is theoretically possible to know more and do more, faster than ever before – but it's not necessarily the best thing. Know your limits. Don't overload your circuits and burn out.

*You need to recognize what gets to you,
and set your own limits.*

Share the work.

Even taking a vacation can cause stress. Handling all the details of planning a trip, when you are in the middle of a key project and you can't quite afford it anyway, can be stressful. That's when a travel partner, in your hero's journey, can come in handy.

Control interruptions.

When all day, you're on the telephone, on Skype or on your email, you can't get much creative work done. Limit this time and save a little sanity.

Get real.

Stress can come from unrealistic expectations. Trying to be perfect and to deliver perfect work, is a major one. Trying to make everybody happy is another. Admit you're not perfect and let some things go.

Make your to don't list.

Works like hell for me. Is it really necessary to do this? What is the worst thing that would happen if you don't do it? Can you live with that? Cut it. Cut back on what you feel you have to do.

Keep your promises.

The guilt causes more strain than whatever it was you were avoiding. Maybe you'll even learn not to promise things you don't want to do.

Save for a 'Less Audience' day.

Having an extra outfit to perform, in case of an emergency, can relieve a lot of stress. If you're constantly concerned that you are one bad month away from being a pauper, knowing you have a reserve puts your mind at ease.

Love your work.

Work, for which you are excited to get out of bed in the morning, is less stressful than work that you dread.

Live in the moment.

You can't live in the moment if you are always worried about what you have to do next, or guilty about what you should be doing or should have done. You'll never feel serene or satisfied.

Shit happens.

Leave room in your schedule for it. There will be storms that you cannot forecast.

Don't isolate yourself.

There will be times when things in your private life spill over into your work. When your life is falling apart, you have to try to keep it together at work. To do that, try not to spend too much time in isolation. Spend time with positive people, whom you can interact with and talk to about your problems.

Relax.

These are uncertain times. There is a lot of anxiety about the future and the pace of change. What if I told you, you'd be okay – would you relax? Okay. You will be fine. If you can come up with ideas and embrace your creativity, you have nothing to worry about. You are a creative hero!

The stories of the creative heroes of Paris show me that they have been able to manage stress effectively, in their lives. It's because they have three things in common:

1. They consider life a challenge, and not just one damn thing after another.
2. They have a hero's journey, a quest, a mission or a purpose in life, and are committed to it.
3. They feel like heroes of their own legend, despite temporary setbacks and obstacles, they have control over their lives.

One Life. One Story.

You need to have a life in your life. It feeds your creativity, lowers your stress and keeps you grounded.

Obsessiveness is a common trait of creative heroes, but there are good workaholics and bad workaholics. Achievement oriented workaholics, who work a lot because they enjoy their jobs, seem to thrive. The bad type of workaholic uses his or her job to escape personal problems.

My definition of a good workaholic is, that if you ask them: 'Is there anywhere else you would rather be, or something you would rather be doing?' – they'll say 'no'. Leave them alone. But, trying to avoid issues in your life by overworking is a tragic story. Eventually, you have to live your life and deal with your problems.



'ONE LIFE, ONE STORY...'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

They Lived Happily Ever After

What does it mean to live happily ever after? That depends on the person. But, I will say this: 'For the creative hero, it means spending time alone, engaging in playful activities and using your creativity.'

Your body is built to handle challenges, just not massive doses of it. When you have no responsibilities, no risks, nothing to do, no competition, and no challenges – you get bored. Your metabolism actually slows down – you get sluggish both physically and mentally. Sometimes, challenges add just the right amount of excitement; adventure and motivation that you need to get in the zone, to feel in flow and to have a happy and productive life. Balance between your urge for challenges and your ability to manage them is key.



From the movie *Moulin Rouge*

'THEY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

The Power of Energy

Cutting back on sleep, in order to get more done, is a guaranteed ticket for a burnout. It is also counterproductive. Skipping sleep plays havoc on your body and your brain. People, who are sleep deprived, pay the price in a lack of creativity and the inability to concentrate.

If you're tired during the day, start eating smaller meals. A big meal will send a lot of blood into your digestive system, diverting it from the brain and muscles, making you feel exhausted. Eating several, small and nutritious meals or snacks, will eliminate the problem. Your digestion will improve and you will less likely gain weight. Talk about win-win-win!

Fear makes you tense up your muscles, which leads to fatigue. You may also not be breathing properly, when you're tense. So, you're not getting enough oxygen.

There is a connection between depression and lack of sleep. You are grumpy, unmotivated and exhausted. The best way to get out of this cycle is to exercise. Exercise will tire your muscles, supply your brain with happy making endorphins and lead to a healthy night of sleep. The more tired you are, the more exercise will help.

Energy, your story, your hero's journey and your happiness, they are all related to each other. The stronger your sense of where you are going and why you want to go there – the more energy will be at your disposal. A hero's journey story allows creative heroes to use their positive energy to solve problems and to achieve goals. When they encounter challenges, they believe they will overcome them and don't waste their time and energy worrying about it. It will give them more time and energy to do something creative about it. Like creating their own legend.



From the movie *Moulin Rouge*

'THE POWER OF ENERGY'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

3. Avarice: Money Tragedies

How much money would it take, to make you feel as if you had enough? What would you do differently if you had that kind of money? Would you still work? Would all your problems be gone?

Actually, having money will not solve all your problems. It will make you feel good for half a second. You'll have a lot more friends, until it runs out. You'll have some new problems – investing, hiring financial help, and worrying about losing what you've got. Money will not bring you the peace of mind, the freedom or the sense of security that you probably think it will. You'll find out that you can never have enough. As you earn more, you spend more and after a while you can't understand how you lived on less.

You've undoubtedly heard the saying 'Do what you love and the money will follow.' – they don't say when. For the creative hero negative cash flow can be disastrous. People don't pay you on time, but you're expected to pay your bills on time or face hefty penalties, repossession, and loss of credit.

Even successful creative heroes often have to deal with periods of low income (everything's great until the show closes, and then it's months before you get another gig). The only way to deal with it is to go with the left-brain and start a savings program during the good times, to tide you over the slow times.

Most right-brainers don't want to deal with money. They don't want to worry about money – they just want to have it when they need it. The only way you will achieve this is to be yourself, the hero in managing your money.

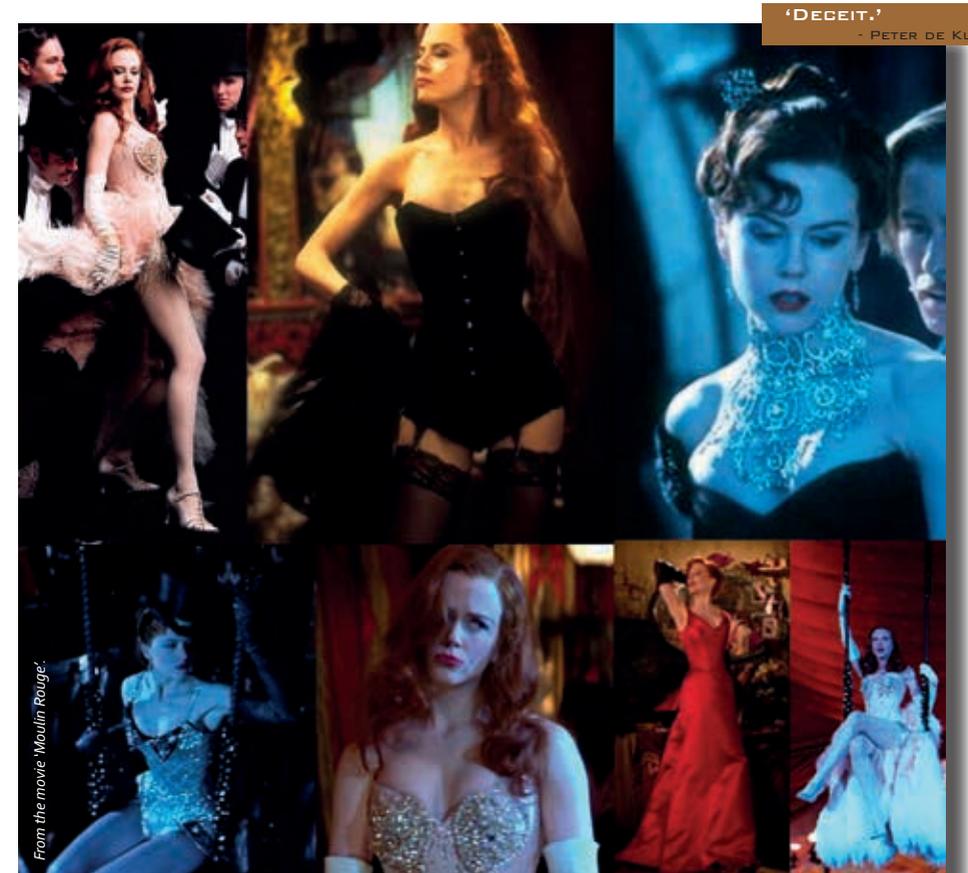


You deserve it

If you don't feel you deserve the money you make, you will find a way to sabotage your own success. If you don't feel as though you're making as much as you deserve, you're just like all the rest of us. Increase your rates.

Setting a value for your work is perhaps the most difficult part of a creative career. It pays to know your market, and to know where you stand in that market. What is the going rate in your area for what you do? Sometimes you can increase your income dramatically by moving into a better market.

Think about positioning yourself, the kind of customers you want, the kind of work you want, the amount of money you'll be satisfied with. Aim your marketing to a specific target and you're more likely to hit.



'VALUE YOUR WORTH.'
- PETER DE KUSTER -



From the movie 'Moulin Rouge'.

Your Hero's Journey in Money

Take the 'free' out of 'freelance'. Limit how much you're willing to invest in clients. Ultimately, people won't value your work, unless you place a value on it. I believe you should be paid for what you're worth and always over-deliver.

You want to get rich? The way to go is become self employed, make money with doing what you love to do and start offering more and more added value for your customers, in oh so many ways. Tell your story, and spread your story, via opinion leaders within networks of customers. Stories travel much faster when they spread your story for you. And they travel much faster within a network than between very separated individual customers, who never meet to talk about your story.

If you are worried about never having enough money, you never will. It's funny how that works. Fear prevents you from doing the things required to get it. Some risk is involved when it comes to making money doing what you love. Take a chance. Be a money magnet.

Be happy with spending your money. Don't spend money when you are depressed. Happy people spend their money wiser. Get more value out of it. Buy when the time is right. Read: when they have the money and the object of their desire is the cheapest.



'BE HAPPY, BE WISE.'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

4. Pride: A Fatal Flaw

Don't decide you're too good now, to do the things that made you a success in the first place. How many opportunities could you be missing out on? Take the way of your fascination, not the road of the 'great art'.

You don't always have to be the star. You just have to take the opportunities you have. Take a variety of projects that fascinate you. Be known for one thing if this is your signature.

Control the temptation to be bizarre. Many people feel that you have to get further and further out there, just to be different.

'A Big Ego.'

Runaway ego can ruin your chances for clarity and lead to poor decisions. You feel you are invincible; drunk with your own power. The Greeks called it hubris, the feeling that you're as good as the gods. In Greek myths, the gods usually got ticked off by that fatal flaw and proved them wrong.



'PRIDE!
- PETER DE KUSTER -

5. Lust: Sex, Drugs and Rock & Roll

Addictions kill talent. There are so many stories of tragic creative heroes in Paris, who lost everything to sex and drugs; and sometimes to the Rock & Roll or the wrong men and women. For every famous creative hero in Paris there are tens of thousands of gifted and talented people, who never had a chance to fall, because their sex, drugs or some other addiction kept them from realizing their potential.

Addictions often make us impotent as artists. You have to rise above these temptations. You don't have to be a drug addict to get yourself in serious trouble. Self-indulgence of the wrong kind, at the wrong time, can get you in trouble. Staying all night clubbing, before a big presentation or when you are on a deadline, can do it. Spending more than you have. Playing around with your partner. Speeding down the freeway. There are all kinds of self-destructive behaviour. It catches up with you.

Besides the obvious problems, addictions are expensive. It gets you drunk and you can have an accident that could cost you your life. It could cost someone else's life. It could cost you a relationship. It could cost you your business. I am no saint. I could party with the best of them. Drive fast over the roads. I decided not to make it a way of life. When I look back to my younger years, I realize I lost a lot of time.

What did it cost you lately? Missed dates. Lost clients. Angry friends. Broken love relationships. Many people are late, because they're afraid to be early. Plan ahead for things to go wrong. Leave extra time for bad traffic, finding lost items, changing your suit because a button is loose.

Think of your life as a great story. Let it be a comedy and not a tragedy. You don't need all that drama in your life. Being undependable is not cute in business. Be reliable. Things take longer than you expect them to. Give yourself some cushion. Not delivering your creative work in time will not only cost you now; it will ruin your chances for getting work later.

Respect other people's time. Constantly rescheduling is bad manners. There are people who depend on you, and when you screw up, they suffer. These people have mortgages, car payments, budgets and people to answer to. You won't last long if you let them down.

People pay a price for blind ambition and self-centred behaviour. Love yourself and love others. When you don't have time for kids, a partner or friends, reconsider your story. That's way they say it's lonely at the top. You don't need to end up with a hollow victory and a miserable existence. Don't be afraid or unwilling to help others, to be kind, to be generous. There is plenty of room at the top.



'LACK OF DISCIPLINE.'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

6. *Lack of Discipline: Lack of Focus*

Lack of focus can make you feel like a loser. Everyone is disappointed, because you have so much potential, but you are all over the place. You're not a bad person, if you like to juggle several things at once. It isn't an excuse for bad behaviour and never following through. It's just an explanation. The problem is, when you're going in six directions at once, you get lost, run out of gas, and end up nowhere.

Lack of focus can be the root, because of marital infidelity, frequent job changes, substance abuse, or car accidents. Your life is a roller-coaster ride. Although it is exciting, it has the potential to jump the tracks at any time. Spontaneity and variety are wonderful, but without a specific goal, they don't usually lead to creative work. Harness that energy with some discipline, order and direction.

The clearer you are about your hero's journey, vision, story, purpose and goals, the more that unexplained universal force brings things to you, and the more able you are to recognize them as opportunities.

You are just too talented – in too many diverse areas. Lack of focus will ruin you, for more reasons than you probably realize.



'STRESS.'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

From the movie 'Moulin Rouge'

Take this quiz: True or False

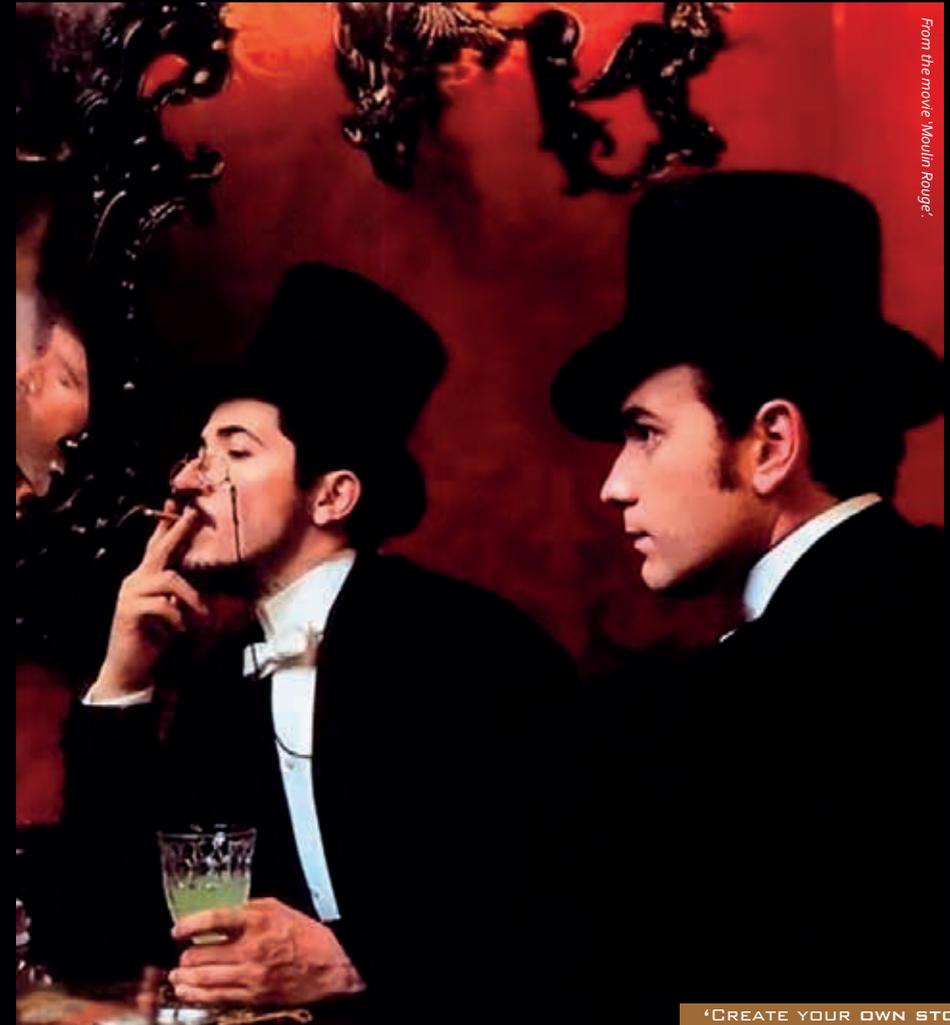
There are no right or wrong answers to these answers. No scores to add up; just things to think about.

- I find it hard to market my creativity, and myself, because I am into so many different things.
- I have a hard time choosing a career path, because I am interested and talented in several areas.
- I can't figure out what to do with my life, because I have a hard time making a decision, and when I do, I'm afraid I take the wrong one.
- I take big risks. Sometimes I reap the rewards, but mostly I pay the price.
- I am easily distracted.
- My mind tends to wander off in the middle of a project.
- I am impulsive. My failure to stop and think without considering the consequences has caused me problems in the past.
- I often rush to finish a task, so I can get on to the next thing, not doing my best work and making careless (and costly) mistakes in the process.
- I have so much energy; I sometimes find it hard to go to sleep.
- I am easily bored.
- I like to approach projects in a haphazard fashion.
- It often seems to others as if I don't care or won't try. But the truth is, that it takes twice the effort to maintain my motivation.
- I find it impossible to relax, so I take on hobbies or habits to fill the void.
- I tend to drift off when people are talking to me.

The Better and Best Story

I admire people who always knew what they wanted to be when they grew up. Not everybody however knows exactly what's the best thing to do at any given age. Concentrate on what brings you the highest reward both financially and emotionally.

You will have to make some tough choices, many times between the better and the best story. Pick the best story. Your hero's journey story!



From the movie 'Moulin Rouge'

Epilogue

'WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE PARIS!'
- PETER DE KUSTER -

we will always have paris

The Power of Your Story



'WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE PARIS!'

- PETER DE KUSTER -

EPILOGUE: THE POWER OF YOUR STORY

Do you ever feel as though your life is like being in a tragic story? Your business is not moving along as you hoped. Stay away from the tragedy. Use the power of your story. The story you tell yourself, about yourself and your business.

If you have tried all the traditional advice and you still can't find clients, you lose confidence and you become insecure about whether this is the right path for you. Don't tell yourself you're tragic, even if you feel like your business is sinking fast. Hang in there! If you feel like grabbing a life vest and want to get a 'real job' – don't. That would be the greatest tragedy of all.

This is the moment of truth. This choice to tell yourself, every minute of your day, a tragic story of your life and business, or a hero's journey story. The story you tell yourself is crucial. In Paris, you can find the stories of creative heroes and heroines who came before you, and all faced their own moments of truth. Like you are now. The designers, artists, writers, explorers, travellers... all of them told themselves a story, which made them stronger.

So, get yourself in movement and continue your Hero's Journey; in Paris and to other places. Let the stories of the creative heroes and heroines fuel you. Go ahead. Get mad. Life isn't fair. I know. And you aren't the only one out there who has faced these choices. Be inspired by the heroes of past and present, who have made it through the storms of life. Battered, but intact. They told themselves the story that they would survive and would live happily ever after. You can do it too.

What makes stories of creative heroes tragic? The "if they find me out" story. Feeling like a fraud is one way to capsize a creative career. You must tell yourself the story that you deserve good things and enjoy them when they arrive in your hero's journey. "The greater the artist, the greater the doubt", said Robert Hughes. It doesn't have to be that way.

Tell yourself a better story. Maybe you're on course in your hero's journey, but moving a little slower than you'd like. Maybe you should change course and head for a different destination. It isn't easy, but you must change to grow. You can do it. You must do it.

Everything will be fine. Cut out the tragic and 'what-if-ing' and get on with the work. Everything will be fine. It almost always is. Read the stories of the creative heroes and heroines. Take your time to do so in Paris. Don't believe me. Believe them. Tell yourself a great story that energizes you every day. Make plans. And start putting your plans into action. Pay attention to where you are now in your hero's journey and where you want to go. That's what makes great stories.

Kill the Inner Critic

Wherever you are in your hero's journey for creating the career (and life) you want, you must tell yourself an empowering story:

Trust yourself.

It's not called self-confidence for nothing.

Full steam story ahead.

Get out of your tragic story way.

You, and you alone are in charge of the story you tell yourself about yourself, in your head. This is one area where you are the CEO. The hero.

The Power of Your Story.

Prosperous people have powerful stories. It's really that simple. It does take time, to undo the negative stories you have had, all your life. But, the past is the past, and all you can concern yourself with now, is your present story. From this time forward, make an effort to see yourself as successful. Tell yourself happy stories.

Tell yourself happy stories.

The right-brainer loves to grapple with tragic stories, and sometimes sees things that need to be better, when good isn't good enough. You don't have to save the world, in one day. You're the only one who wants, or expects, you to be perfect. Know your limits. You aren't Coco Chanel (or, are you?).

The hero's journey is one of constant challenges and you will have to deal with hazards like setbacks, rejections and mistakes (all in one day); this comes with being self-employed. The secret is how to deal with these challenges – and learning to love dealing with them.

Making your hero's journey story a love story. About making your money doing what you love most (or, second most).

Your Story of being a Hero

Tell yourself your best story, about yourself. If, all you can focus on are negative outcomes, your possibilities shrink and eventually you will need to seek professional help.

The story you tell yourself about yourself, tragic or happy, manifests itself in your external world.

If you believe you're worthy of good things, you'll take a chance. If you are not willing to take a chance, you're not going anywhere. End of story.

When you undervalue yourself and your work in the story you tell yourself, so do others. So, when you lower your prices, you cheat yourself. The more people pay, the more they appreciate your work. You deserve to be paid well for your work. You deserve nice things. You must tell yourself this story and believe it. Because if you don't you will never have money – and when you do, you blow it away – your hero's journey story. 'My work is great. I deserve good things to happen to me. I deserve to be paid well for my work!' You feel better?

Envy is another story killer. Comparing yourself to others is unhealthy and ultimately meaningless. The best thing (and sometimes the most tragic thing) about being human is your uniqueness. Learn from mistakes of others, but don't make the mistake thinking that they are better or worse than you are. They are different. You are different. Exploit that fact and be happy about it.

From the movie 'Casablanca'.

ALWAYS
h a v e
P a r i s

'WE'LL ALWAYS HAVE PARIS!'

- PETER DE KUSTER -



Put Your Money Where Your Story Is

Another story killer is, the false story that there is too much competition, not enough money to go around, and no room at the top. Baloney! Use that imagination of yours. Find a niche. Fill a need. Create a space for your work. That's how you will succeed. It's a big world out there, with plenty of room for everyone. You just need to mark out some territory for yourself.

Get to know yourself, and the story you tell yourself, better. Enlist help. Look back at the story of your past – your past's accomplishments and your biography.

Spend some time reviewing your success. Many of us work so hard that we don't work on our inner story – our inner muscles.

Find people who believe in you.

Nothing happens until you take a chance. There is no success, without risk. There is no happiness, without risk, because you will not get into the zone. You will not get into the flow, without risk. You simply can't play it safe, and expect to have excellent experiences.

*As a creative entrepreneurial hero you must be willing to take risks.
Not reckless risks.*

But, be a daring hero. Do, what others are afraid of doing and you will succeed, where others have failed.

The theme of the hero's journey story is that the saying 'the stronger your story, the higher the reward', is true. When it comes to creative careers, big success comes to the bold; those who went for it, when they had the chance. It may not seem sensible to those around you, but it is what you must do if you want to live a life without regret.



Questionnaires



Stories of our heroes from Paris

who make their money doing what they love

I am Alesandra Quiqueret

Wedding and evening dress designer | Alesandra Paris
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What is my greatest passion?

My greatest passion is to make beautiful dresses.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

I am not looking for perfect. But, I am very blessed and happy to have the opportunity to do what I love and to have had the support of my family and friends throughout the years.

What is my greatest fear?

Fear is always a good motivator.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

I love meeting all the happy brides and listen to their ideas, in order to create the most beautiful dress, for the most important day of their life.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

Too imaginative.

What is my greatest extravagance?

Draping with the finest silk fabric and lace, without considering any budget!

On what occasion would I lie?

When the truth is unnecessary.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

The person who has the most influence on my work and in my life is my father. He is individualistic, strong-willed, focused, courageous and rebellious in some ways.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

Not having enough time.

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

Received thank you cards and photos from the brides.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

Maybe, to be less serious.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

To make the dream dress reality. There is a personality and a story behind every wedding dress that I have made.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

Interior designer.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

The bookshops, museums and library at *rue de Rivoli*.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

Chéz Georges at *rue du Mail*.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

La belle Juliette, in the left bank.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

People who are in love with dresses and weddings.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

Writing a book about the brides of *Alesandra Paris* and their weddings.

I am Anne Dufresnoy

Accessories designer | Bandit Manchot

www.banditmanchot.net | contact@banditmanchot.net

What is my greatest passion?

Hunt for well-made objects. Especially bags, small leather bags and fancy jewellery.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

I don't believe in perfect happiness, just in happiness!

What is my greatest fear?

To lose people I love.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

Work with colours and materials.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

My age!

What is my greatest extravagance?

To buy two similar styles of shoes at the same time, just in two slightly different colours.

On what occasion would I lie?

To spare myself pains in the neck!

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

They help me to move forward in my life.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

Money troubles!

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

In Madagascar when I was working with straw weavers.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

My lips!

What is my greatest achievement in work?

An easy way to hold a bag patent.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

Photographer.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

The area of *Belleville* for its old streets and exotic melting pot (and Ramadan cakes!). *Père Lachaise* cemetery is such a beautiful and peaceful place.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

Playtime (rue des petits hôtels) for Japanese flavour in French cuisine and amazing desserts. The original *Brasserie Flo*, for its vintage wood decoration and its oysters.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

Hotel Eldorado at rue des Dames. Each room has its own decoration with vintage furniture. And in the summer time you can have lunch in the beautiful garden in the backyard.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

Dries Van Notten.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

Find new product ideas for my collection *bandit manchot*.

I am Anne Liauzun

Freelance Fashion Designer

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What is my greatest passion?

Travelling, snooping for ideas and sharing.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

No frustration, no censorship and no shame.

What is my greatest fear?

Boredom and disgust.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

Comparing ideas, recover constantly in question the idea of lifestyle through clothing.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

Impatience.

What is my greatest extravagance?

Being myself!! Sometimes, I completely cut myself off from the outside world, by being in the moon about something.

On what occasion would I lie?

I cannot lie, but I can invent!

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

Don't understand the question model of fashion creator? - of garment?

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

Fashion clones, people who believe there are important for their trendy look. Brain globalization.

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

In creating Ballistic brand – The challenge of a new universe, everything to do.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

Being more shark spirit.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

Not yet written.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

The same, but elsewhere.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

No predefined place. Each piece of my city can inspire me depending to my state of mind.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

A small bar where they sing with a southern accent – my roots.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

Hotel on the corner of my street. So weird!

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

Agnès.b , or a group of inspired young people.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

Trying to work in Agnès.b society. Or create my own-corporation as BWGH.

I am Barbara Weber-Scaff

Director of Voice Acting | Ubisoft Motion Pictures/Normaal Animation
barbara.scaff@gmail.com

What is my greatest passion?

Professionally speaking, the performing art, in most of its forms, is my passion: music, theatre, film. On a personal note, my greatest love is my wonderful family.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

Perfect happiness, for me, is the realisation that you are with those you love, in a place you love to live, doing what you love, and making life for those around you better because of it.

What is my greatest fear?

My greatest fears are linked to losing or hurting my loved ones or people around me.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

My job is unbelievably fun! If we don't have fun, we are not doing a good job.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

Lack of discipline and air-headedness. Also, the trait of coming up with new words like 'air-headedness'.

What is my greatest extravagance?

Adopting a cat with a pedigree. He's worth it, though.

On what occasion would I lie?

I would lie to reassure someone that everything is going to be fine, even if it was clear that it's not going to be. I would also lie to save someone's life, if I could.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

Mentors and role models have been crucial to my development and growth, all my life, of course. My spiritual mentors are my parents, Daisaku Ikeda, my husband and, in many ways, my child.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

Show business is wonderful, but rather cutthroat in some ways. I hate having to tell someone that they were not chosen for a role, for example.

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

It's very rare that I have NOT been happy, though I do admit, standing ovations almost every night at the Folies Bergère for several years was a high point. I also absolutely adored working with Luc Besson, who runs a wonderfully tight ship, but am even more pleased now to have my little hand on the helm part-time myself now, working with the wonderful teams at *Ubisoft* and *Normaal*.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

I would like to be a better listener for my child, and to be less stressed, in general, in order to be a more reassuring, helpful presence in the family.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

I've had incredible luck in several types of endeavours: starring in a hit show which won a Molière award, and having a few modest recording successes, then moving into animation, and gradually taking responsibility for projects in that field as well. I am very proud of the work we're doing in *Rabbids Invasion*, which is signed for a second season on Nickelodeon in the US, my homeland.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

I would make a profession out of what is now just a hobby: become an artisan working in up-cycled and recycled materials, to promote environmental protection.

What is my most inspirational location, in Paris?

Like most people, I have several, but I especially love walking across the bridge, from the place de *Chatelet* towards the Left Bank, and passing the *Conciergerie*. It has always reminded me just how lucky I am to live in this city.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink, in Paris?

Again, after more than 20 years, I have several favourites, but one place I love is *La Petite Perigourdine* at *rue des Ecoles 39*, which has wonderful confit de canard. To drink, I love *L'Ecluse*, (the original), right on the quay next to the *Place St. Michel*, for a glass of really fine Bordeaux.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

It's been so long since I stayed in a hotel here that I don't remember!

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

I would very much like to work with American animation companies, as well as French. Specifically, it would be a dream come true to work with John Lasseter and Disney or Pixar.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

I am very much looking forward to working on the *Peanuts* animated series, with *Normaal Animation*, under the direction of Alexis Lavillat, and, as I mentioned above, Season Two of *Rabbids Invasion*! And finishing the recording and mixing of the album of *ANOTHER ROAD*, a singing group I founded that reworks the repertoire of the Beatles.

I am Chere Di Boscio

Editor in Chief | Eluxe Magazine

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What is my greatest passion?

Nature. Nothing makes me feel better than being on top of a mountain, breathing in Alpine air, or swimming in a turquoise sea surrounded by turtles and tiny tropical fish. But, we're destroying the beautiful balance of nature, and that frightens me.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

Being with those I love in a house by the sea, making a healthy lunch after a long run on the beach.

What is my greatest fear?

That, in the nearby future, there will be wars over access to food and clean water.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

The chance to meet inspiring and talented people.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

I often cancel appointments.

What is my greatest extravagance?

Given the damage it causes, I guess travelling.

On what occasion would I lie?

To keep someone calm. Or, to not hurt someone's feelings.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

I'd love to find a mentor, but in this industry, people are often too competitive to want to nurture others. That being said, I couldn't have gotten Eluxe off the ground without some truly wonderful friends who have helped me every step of the way.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

The hours are extremely long; being an Editor in Chief is all-consuming. It's hard to step away from the Mac or the iPhone. No matter how late it is!

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

I'm always happy when I feel I've made a difference, whether it is by helping a small brand grow, training an intern well, or feeling that Eluxe has changed someone's view on consumer culture.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

I've spent half my adult life at university, studying Arts. I wish I had invested some time studying Business too.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

As mentioned above, helping and nurturing talent and creating beautiful magazines.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

That depends on where I will be reincarnated. If it's here in Paris, it would be the same. If in, say, Burma, I'd like to be a Buddhist monk.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

In my neighbourhood in Paris (St. Germain), you can truly find inspiration around every corner.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

Anywhere that has healthy food and prohibits smoking, in and outdoors – very rare in Paris!

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

All the grand hotels are hard to beat, but *Le Crillon*, *Hôtel de Rothschild* and the *Ritz* stand out for me. For smaller hotels, I love *Hidden Hotel* and *L'hôtel du Temps*, two lovely eco-chic boutique hotels.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

Partnering with Livia Firth on a magazine or Stella McCartney on an eco-friendly collection would be a dream come true.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

Besides working on the next edition of Eluxe, I'm looking forward to foraging a partnership with 1.618 Sustainable Luxury, and am also excited about being a judge at the La Jolla Fashion Film Festival and the Luxury Lifestyle Awards in London.

I am Clotilde Swartley

Coach international trainer YOG'N MOVE | YOG'N MOVE
www.yognmove.com | clotilde.swartley@orange.fr

What is my greatest passion?

Sharing the art of Yoga in the modern world with a concept I created the YOG'N MOVE®. Inviting people to move throughout consciousness, through breathing, and getting them back into being fully alive.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

Being in harmony with my body, doing what I love in making a living, helping people feel good. A sense of global harmony and feeling connected to the spiritual world as well as the material world. And, being in balance with both.

What is my greatest fear?

Clearly, my greatest fear will be to not get to the point that I can live well from what I love to do. And I know I am the only person that could be the obstacle.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

Feeling so good on all levels during my classes and feeling the people evolving so quickly towards wellbeing and feeling more grounded in their body.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

Over the years, I have acted with too much wilfulness and in a too masculine manner of dealing with life.

What is my greatest extravagance?

To have the courage to mix yoga, dance, music, meditation in a class, mix modern and ancient art.

On what occasion would I lie?

To prevent someone from getting hurt.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

I don't believe my parents have been role models for me. I wanted to escape my family's system and from an early age on I went abroad. I left France for India, as I was 18 years old.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

Dealing with the business part, contracts with the people who promote Yog'N move etc.. But, I am learning to like it.

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

When I have at list 50 peoples in my class and have to bring the energy up together as a class.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

I'd like to be who I am on the inside today; on an emotional, mental and spiritual level and 10 years younger.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

To have 50 peoples in my class and together elevate the level of energy and YOG together as one big group.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

A doctor combining body, mind and spirit.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

Le jardin du Luxembourg.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

Le Restaurant George | Le Café Marly.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

L'hôtel Costes.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

I'd like to introduce my concept to the USA and Canada.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

Training the coach of the CLUB MED GYM.

I am Elizabeth Chase Rochette

Co-Founder & Partner | Artecasa

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What is my greatest passion?

Discovering beautiful objects whose stories give me some sense of connection with the culture, period, and intention of the designer. These are objects in which I detect a better, more interesting version of myself.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

Being with my family in a beautiful environment, such as our favourite little fish restaurant by the sea in Ibiza or the gardens of the Château de la Napoule in the South of France.

What is my greatest fear?

Losing track of how blessed I am.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

Connecting with people, who also come alive through the creative expression of functional objects.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

Getting upset before I know all the facts – it's often not as bad as I think it is.

What is my greatest extravagance?

Long weekend get-a-ways with my husband to Prague, Venice, Corsica, Barcelona – we love Barcelona! A new pink and green silk scarf for the spring that wraps around the handle of my little black vintage Kelly bag.

On what occasion would I lie?

I'm not saying I've never lied, but I can't say that I can give a truly good reason for doing it.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

Murray Moss's career and ability to clearly illuminate the profoundness that is possible to experience through design inspires me every day.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

Waiting for a response from a client or a vendor.

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

Right now, I am definitely the happiest I've ever been! But, I absolutely loved working at the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum under Barbara Bloemink as Curatorial Director.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

Patience and optimism – I can always use more of these two things!

What is my greatest achievement in work?

I'm very proud to have started my own business, together with my partner Susan Bouiller.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

The same, but I would have started younger – or a singer.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

There is a little hidden Japanese garden in the *Parc André Citroën*. When the cherry blossoms are blooming it is a wonderful place to escape to ... its peacefulness and beauty are definitely inspiring.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

Maison Blanche for the view, *Les Climats* for the burgundy wine and spectacular service, *The Beef Club* for drinks (I hear the meat is amazing but I only eat the fish, which is very good too!) and *Frenchy* for the atmosphere.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

We had a meeting in the *Bristol* before Christmas and were absolutely enchanted by the beauty, service and clientele!

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

Florence Lopez, Murray Moss, Steven Volpe, Kelly Wearstler.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

We offer tours of PAD Paris and Art Paris Art Fair in the end of March. I'm really looking forward to share my passion for collectible design with clients, at these fairs.

I am Fanny Liautard

Creator of Haute Couture Wedding Dress specialist fashion | FANNY LIAUTARD

www.fannyliautard.com | fanny@fannyliautard.com

What is my greatest passion?

Time and duration to create is my passion. To exist is to create. I also like listening to music, poetry, travel, contemplate ...

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

My happiness is in peace, love, serenity, joy, environment to achieve or create.

What is my greatest fear?

Violence, disease and vulgarity scare me sometimes. I'm afraid I don't have more inspiration; this will be very boring.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

Feel, look, make a living material in a form that I want to deal with the matter, sensual touch try to watch a beautiful dress.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

My shyness.

What is my greatest extravagance?

Being stuck in the hospital for several weeks because of illness, I installed my work in my room with my materials, surrounded by my drawing, it attenuated the sordid place and the disease and helped to heal faster to resume my work faster.

On what occasion would I lie?

To protect someone, or myself.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

The model is an inspiration, an invitation to the imagination ...

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

To realize my creative urges, I have a business, I am very sorry it is difficult to manage a business in France, it spoils our time, creativity, and has no interest in a creator, it is not a working tool, but a handicap.

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

I'm Happy in my work when clients like and wear my dresses. Happy emotional ties that created with clients. I often participate in the happiest day of their lives (wedding dress) or privileged moment (evening dress).

If I could, what would I change about myself?

I'd like to be less secretive and more expressive in my exchanges and conversations.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

Always have environment to better and more beautiful.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

Yes, and I will devote myself more to painting and writing.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

The banks of the Seine, I really appreciate me walk on water, the sky over the bridges of Paris are often very beautiful.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

An invitation to travel: **THE BLUE TRAIN**.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

I loved the Ritz a trip with the story. I'm not going to the hotel in Paris because I am fortunate to live in the beautiful neighbourhood of the Tuileries and Place de la Concorde.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

I like to stay in Paris, but I also like to work in other countries where I could create and speak more luxuriously. Transmit and share my knowledge and experience with other cultures.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

I have a project, but I can not talk about it yet, it's too early.

I am HRISTA

Singer/Songwriter | HRISTA

www.hristamusic.com | hhrista@gmail.com

What is my greatest passion?

Creations in all forms. Mostly, creations of music.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

Living in complete harmony and freedom of the spirit with an enhanced perception of the senses, when experiencing diverse powerful emotions.

What is my greatest fear?

Being stabbed to death, to be killed in a fire or due to any kind of violence.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

The way I feel when I create and the strong emotions I experience.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

It is not really a trait, but I tend to listen less to people who I don't feel very close to, and sometimes even underestimate them.

What is my greatest extravagance?

My paradoxical character, I still have difficulties to understand myself sometimes. I'm often two opposite things, at the same time.

On what occasion would I lie?

If I need to protect people.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

I had an impact in my childhood. Probably it is the reason I am a singer. Today less, but I still admire people who influence me in a way.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

Memorizing lyrics. I write my own lyrics, but I still tend to forget them.

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

Here and now in Paris. It is a whole new period for me because I quit my last job and started making music full time.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

I would love to be able to give up some love stories a little bit easier.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

Maybe my music video of 'In my style'.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

Now, I wouldn't like to reincarnate just right now. I love my life the way it is.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

I like walking close to the river from *Invalides* to the Eiffel Tower. Sometimes, I go there and write my lyrics; makes me feel free.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

I like *Le Marais*, go sometimes on *La rue Quincampoix* or around the metro station Saint-Paul (4th and 3rd arrondissements).

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

Well, I have never been in a hotel in Paris because I live there but If I had to go would love to try *Four Seasons* and *George 5*.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

Great musicians.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

Making new singles, music videos. Creating also music for publicity/movies and participating in designer projects.

I am Isabelle du Plessix

Founder | WineChicTravel

www.winechictravel.com | iduplessix@winechictravel.com

What is my greatest passion?

My passion is to discover a region through Wine and Heritage, through its soil and its history, its inhabitants and its culture.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

Sharing a deep, profound and silent smile in front of beautiful scenery with the person you love.

What is my greatest fear?

I have no real fear, as I believe a fear can be overcome with patience and tenacity.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

The role I play as the interface between wine and tourism actors who don't know how to communicate together and benefit from each other.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

My humbleness that sometimes prevents me to grow.

What is my greatest extravagance?

My tolerance and curiosity that make me go anywhere with anybody. There is something good in each of us.

On what occasion would I lie?

At Christmas time when I am waiting for Santa Claus with my children.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

The persons who are the most influential in my life are Sister Teresa or a surgeon who helps without judgment. The person who is the most influential in my work is certainly Bill Gates and the Foundation he settled.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

Having to deal with people of bad faith.

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

Almost every Friday afternoon when we share a bottle of wine we'd like to taste with the team.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

I would like to live more the present moment instead of always looking forward.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

Unify complementary characters to get the best of each to build one master and unique piece.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

An archaeologist. Well about the same kind of job, I am currently doing: explore, observe, dig and share!

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

On the bridge of Alexandre III, overlooking the Seine at sunset.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

I like eating at Mini Palais next to the Grand Palais and facing the Seine River as well as the Petit Palais, admiring all Paris in one place with a great glass of red wine!

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

Le Pavillon de la Reine on Place des Vosges, a historical charming hotel located on one of the oldest courtyard in Paris.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

I would like to work with wine amateurs from countries that don't grow wines. They learn from scratch!

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

I am working on Italy wine regions that will be featured in WineChicTravel website before summer. Italy benefit from mature wine regions that appeal to amateurs and connoisseur and offer the best mix of Wine, Gastronomy, Heritage and terroirs.

I am Krystal Kenney

Photographer & Owner | Paris Photography
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What is my greatest passion?

My greatest passion is discovering and documenting life.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

Perfect happiness is I with my camera, somewhere I have never been before.

What is my greatest fear?

My greatest fear ... 40 years old and living in my parents basement.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

The thing I love most about my work is making other people happy with the results.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

The trait I deplore most in myself is my indecisiveness.

What is my greatest extravagance?

My greatest extravagance is travel and food. I detest spending 40 dollars on a shirt but on a dessert, no problem.

On what occasion would I lie?

Occasions I might find myself lying about would be the number of days I've spent in a country pass my visa expiration date.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

Role models in my life have created who and what I am, my mother especially. Because of her constant enthusiasm for life, fear of travel, and camera in hand.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

The thing I dislike most in my work is working with dogs.

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

I was the happiest with my work this past year in Paris.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

If I could change something about myself it would be the fact that I don't speak French.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

My greatest achievement in work was moving to a foreign country where I don't speak the language and starting a company from nothing.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

Should I reincarnate, my profession would be an art historian.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

The most inspirational location in my city is *Square du Vert-Galant*. It's a point at the end of an island where one can quietly watch all the city life pass you by from all sides.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

My favourite place to eat in my city is *Café Constant*, fantastic traditional French food. My favourite place to drink, a small wine bar called *Les Caves Populaires* in the 17th where the drinks are cheap and the atmosphere is relaxing.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

My favourite hotel in my city would be *Hotel Westminster*, beautiful interior and great location.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

In the future I would love to work with more travel agencies specializing in travel to Paris.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

A project that I look forward to working on in the future is following another artist/ chef around France and documenting her work with the use of video and photography next spring.

I am *Laura Noben*

Make-Up Artist | *Laura Noben*

www.lauranoben.com | lauranoben@gmail.com

What is my greatest passion?

That's obvious! My greatest passion is my job. Make-up and its research is what I love.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

Going out, discovering new influences/cities/people, being with my family, knowing someone cares about you and supports you in what you do.

What is my greatest fear?

Not seeing/feeling any progress in my work.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

Travelling and meeting new people.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

Being too flexible sometimes.

On what occasion would I lie?

I don't like liars.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

They inspire me.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

The concurrence on the shows. Especially in Paris.

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

I'm always happy when I'm working (continuously). The higher the level, the happier I am.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

Doing more sports and enjoying every moment, also the little ones.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

I've had a few. I see every growth/passing another level as a new achievement.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

I don't have any clue, but a more stable one. I was thinking of a painter or a singer but this is a bit in the same spirit as a self-independent make-up artist. I love artistic professions and I wouldn't be glad to step out of it.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

Everything. Paris is full of authentic buildings, museums and concert halls.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

La Perle in Le Marais and *Le Fumoir* at the Louvre are very nice meeting points to have a drink. For eating I don't have a particular place. I love the areas of Canal St-Martin, Filles du Calvaire and le Marais.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

I live here so I unfortunately don't live in a hotel here.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

Tim Walker, he's the greatest photographer I know. I love the dream world he creates in his photographs.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

Estée Lauder made new lipsticks so I am going to develop a project as promotion for them.

I am Linda Addouane

Fashion stylist Assistant and Fashion Journalist | ELLE France

www.businessofeminin.com | linda.addouane@gmail.com | @lili_addouane: Twitter and Instagram

What is my greatest passion?

The greatest thing that makes me seethe at all times is without a doubt the fashion world in all of its aspects.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

To be in peace with all my friends and my family. Moreover, to have the possibility of understanding life everyday with lightness and smile... Carpe Diem isn't it?

What is my greatest fear?

To lose all my bearings that make me go ahead in work and in life in general. Loneliness is one of my biggest fears too; I mean we need each other to move forward.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

To be in contact with many talented and creative personalities (photographers, artistic directors, designers, writers for instance).... with whom I can exchange and share a real link. A relation can easily be created.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

To be on too many front in same time, just because I don't know how to say 'NO'.

What is my greatest extravagance?

Daily, the fact of wearing what I want when I want whatever what people will think about that.

On what occasion would I lie?

When I need to protect people I love or when is really necessary to obtain something that is close to my hearts. But, never meaning to hurt someone in an unethical way.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

Role models are the proof that when we want something more than everything it's possible to reach it. To have a model not allowed to loose sight of his professional goals, personal ambitions and motivations.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

Maybe the fact of being stressed and under pressure for not vital reasons: I mean, I'm not saving a life as a surgeon, or as a fireman! I may be just saving my jeans, a skirt or a pair of shoes!

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

When I had understand that i really belong to a great machine, and that at my scale I have a form of importance to manage to set up something really creative and interesting with my owns.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

My lack of self-confidence and sometimes my shyness in some situations. Incredible as it seems, it can be really crippling to my great regret.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

Maybe the fact that I have worked as and editor in chief at a magazine (cf. LE BON-BON Magazine – Paris Ouest). It was one of the most tiring but exciting experiences for me – A way to grow up by yourself in work.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

Against all odds, as a powerful woman in a government. Maybe because I'm watching currently, as a real fan HOUSE OF CARDS with the amazing Kevin Spacey and Robin Wright.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

All places in Paris are likely to be a source of inspiration: people, architecture, history, everything is full of energy in this city. At the risk of being not original, *Le Marais* remains one of the most representative and inspirational places of Paris for me.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

Pigalle without hesitation to get a drink, *Saint Germain des Près* to hang out and near *le Canal Saint Martin* to eat, may be because this place looks like a Dutch quarter.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

L'Hôtel Particulier in Montmartre: discreet, tucked deep in a garden, it's a soothing location far away from the hustle and bustle.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

Digital Projects are for me as for many people one key of our future in creative world: whatever the kind of project on fashion and digital world, thenceforwards it can permit me to evolve and share with others.

I am Myrtille Dupont

Photographer | Myrtille Photographe

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What is my greatest passion?

My greatest passion is photography since more 10 years when I met a great photographer who were a famous fashion photographer in 80's.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

My perfect happiness is to feel good and happy with my love and my family, to live in a great house or a big flat and continue to have important contracts in photography which help me day after day to continue to create and expose my vision of our world. It's not easy to do both or to have everything in the same time.

What is my greatest fear?

My greatest fear is to lose everything.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

The best thing I love about my work is the day of the shooting: to work with several people, to coach a model, all the process during the day I need for the result I'm looking for of a creation, and then we see it together in the evening, and we all have to say something about and after we relax.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

I'm too shy.

What is my greatest extravagance?

I had to explain to a customer-how he can use his future camera, I didn't know him before, when I explain he could take pictures very closely, I proposed him to take a picture of his eye to demonstrate how, he said ok, I took the picture and I saw it was amazing to do this but I stayed very serious and when we saw the result of his eye 100% accurate with red nerves in the eye and wrinkles around, I thought 'oh my God! Why I do that, I can lose my customer for that', and finally it was a happy end.

On what occasion would I lie?

I hate to lie but according to Dr. House 'everybody lies'... Well, I would lie during a shooting just to obtain a reaction specifics of a model for example.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

The thing that I dislike the most is the administrative work; I hate that.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

All my models are important in my work and life because they express something special at a moment in my life, so even if I don't see them anymore or a long time after, they are in my life, inside me, my creative world. They are with me.

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

I was the happiest in my work when I worked with my mentor, the best years for me.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

If I could, I change to be more communicative.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

My greatest achievement in work: my double exposure about Israeli and Palestinian women, and for MrDreamZ Magazine with "the French machine man" Cyrille Poquet.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

Should I reincarnate, I hesitate between actress and photographer or film director.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

My most inspirational in my city is le Pont des Arts, le Jardin du Louvre and Parc Montsouris.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

I have several places but my favourite is Rue Montorgueil.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

My favourite hotel in my city is the Lenox Hotel in Montparnasse.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

I would like to work in the future with Luc Besson and for international fashion or reportage magazines.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

I am looking forward to work on new exposures in different countries: North and South America and in Asia. I have to create a new website to sell my pictures too.

I am *Natacha Pons*

Embroidery designer | natachapons@gmail.com

What is my greatest passion?

Creativity in all its shapes: intellectual, artistic, technique, manual...

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

Having a warm cup of coffee with my beloved ones at the terrace of a Café in Saint-Germain-des-Prés, a ray of sunshine on my face.

What is my greatest fear?

Having a look back at my life when I am an old woman and feeling sad about it, ashamed or worst, having regrets about important things I wouldn't have done yet.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

I love the moment when people look at my creations and, after a short time, ask me: 'How did you actually do that?'

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

I dislike the fact that people can easily read my mood and mind on my face.

What is my greatest extravagance?

Waking up every morning with the idea that this could definitely be the greatest day of my life.

On what occasion would I lie?

I do not lie, but I like to embroider in order to transform minor facts into interesting stories. It looks like embroidery is definitely part of me!

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

My role models are the living proofs that I can always do better than today; they provide me enough energy and self-confidence to keep on taking risks.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

I dislike the fact that I feel terribly distressed every single time I start a new creation. And I dislike the fact that I know it will remain true throughout my carrier!

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

I would remain an embroideress and would be still working for a customer of privileged persons, but I would choose to live at the 18th Century in order to be sure that even my creasiest ideas would easily find takers!

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

I can still remember the day I decided to turn a passion - creative embroidery - into a carrier, by launching my own brand and opening a showroom. That was in my tiny Parisian studio of the 11th arrondissement. I was so excited that I felt as though my heart would leap from my breast. Window was wide open and I could almost jump and fly over the buildings!

If I could, what would I change about myself?

I would have loved having a better eyesight: without my glasses or lens, I feel like in the complete fog!

What is my greatest achievement in work?

I feel really lucky I could receive the most complete education possible: both technical with a Meilleur Ouvrier de France in Haute Couture embroidery, and creative at the famous applied art school, the ENSAA Duperré. I took a lot of time and energy but not everybody can say so!

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

I love spending a few hours at the *Bibliothèque Forney*: not only the place – a private mansion in the 4th arrondissement – is absolutely superb, but it offers hundreds of books about art, fashion and history of textile, that make you want to jump in front of your hoop.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink, in Paris?

Old couches, big windows, vegetarian food, mouth-watering desserts and smoothies. I'm able to spend a whole afternoon chatting with a friend at *Le Café Pinson*, 3rd arrondissement.

What is my favourite hotel, in Paris?

L'Hôtel Particulier Montmartre is one of those confidential addresses you only share with – very – good friends... In their charming hidden patio, you can pass near one of the owner's chicken, but also take your brunch not far from Orlando Bloom or Cate Blanchett's table.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

I would love working on new projects with craftsmen having complementary skills: feather masters, weavers, even gilders or cabinetmakers, in order to create really astonishing embroidered pieces!

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

I have just received two orders for the personal aircrafts of two Presidents, but I can't give further details!

I am Nathalie Sarfati

Reporter | France Télévisions – AITV agency

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What is my greatest passion?

My greatest passion is my work, and what a luxury it is to be able to make a living with one's passion. For me, it is journalism and especially the advancing of African music.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

In my opinion, the perfect Happiness doesn't exist. Everyone has his or her own happiness. The most important thing is to be in harmony with yourself.

What is my greatest fear?

Losing people close to me, and especially having to bury my children. That must be awful.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

My trips to Africa, and the people I have met there. Many human moments which have enriched my life. What I like best there is the absence of routine.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

My impatience (on occasion). And perhaps, my blunt way of expressing myself.

What is my greatest extravagance?

After thinking, I can't think of one.

On what occasion would I lie?

I hate lying. If I lie, it is to not hurt someone.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

I have respect and admiration for some professionals, but not enough to make models! In fact, I never had any models...only my mother, a big-hearted and very dynamic woman who is afraid of nothing.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

Sometimes, I put together subjects from agency images, (desk work). I don't like this. I am a field journalist.

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

Every reporting mission has brought me moments of happiness. My last great mission was to Tanzania, a wonderful country.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

Not much. In fact, if I must change something, I would say my height. I would like to be a few centimetres taller.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

A number of African musicians are now very well known, thanks to my reporting. Some of them have become loyal friends, and I'm very proud about that.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

I would have liked to be a cosmonaut. To see Earth from above and have a hand on the universe must be fantastic.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

I like Montmartre very much. It is the highest point in Paris, and in this district, it feels like time is standing still.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

Edgar Quinet Square. It is full of cool bars and small restaurants, especially Breton crêperies, for aficionados.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

Hôtel Raphael, avenue Kleber nears the Champs Elysées. I like its Art Deco style. I have never slept there, but it is the perfect place to have a cosy drink.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

I would have liked to work with Manu Katché, who hosted the TV show, One Shot Not several years ago. But it is gone. In fact there are no more good musical TV shows in France.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

My only current project is trying to save the audiovisual agency in which I work. We have been dealing with African news for 30 years, and the France Télévisions group wants to get rid of us. I would also like to hold another big concert to help young African talents. But, resources are lacking.

I am Roxanna Bonilla-Giannini

What is my greatest passion?

Entertaining my fellow men and women without limits, labels or prejudice, with inspirational characters, music, laughter and tears. Opening, sharing new, positive horizons and possibilities in their hearts and minds.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

Happiness is what occurs within ourselves, when we do our very best to fulfil what we know in our heart, is 'our purpose in life'. It also comes with the privilege within my capacities, to serve, protect and be useful to any living creature, with a joyful and open hand.

What is my greatest fear?

To not be able to fully protect my family, to the ultimate consequences. Becoming 'stale', not learning, growing, sharing with the world my 'given gifts'.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

I get to interpret the magnificent creations and inspiration of great composers and creative writers. I can learn and become 'a bridge', between wonderful messages of joy, love, hope, and the world's diverse audiences'.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

I accept myself as I am. I "don't deplore anything", rather I work at 'improving myself' every day in every way I can. I believe, 'the so-called imperfections we all have, is what gives us a chance to grow and learn from one another.

What is my greatest extravagance?

I believe our true value, beauty and wealth, resides in our essence, in 'who we really are as people' and how we act. I don't have extravagances. I don't need them; they're 'vacuous' and 'enslaving'. I'm truly happy, fulfilled and ... Free!

On what occasion would I lie?

When in fear for my life, the life and safety of a loved one or another person or... a defenceless animal. In order to avoid hurting someone, when I know the truth would not be of any help to them.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

I can't think of anyone except my Dad, my Mom and my oldest brother Rudy. I was blessed by growing up in a home, full of love, laughter, music, good 'people habits', honest work, void of prejudice, 'mental, physical, or cultural-socio-economic labels and borders.

Actor-Vocalist-Writer-Producer-Director | Roxanna Bonilla-Giannini Global Entertainment Productions

Roxanna Bonilla-Giannini Global Entertainment Productions

An Evening with Marilyn *The Musical* A Self Portrait

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

Nothing. It is creative, uplifting, with immense opportunities for growth, learning and making myself and other people smile. Being 'often typecast', it opens my heart to the perception, that only I can decide when and how I would fulfil my dreams.

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

When, as 'a demanding audience member' and performer, I realize deep in my heart, that I created a piece of work worthy of any audience regardless of culture, nationality or ethnic background. When I see, feel and listen to the people in the theatre or venue, 'be one with me', and become participants, instead of only spectators.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

That I could live a couple of hundred years, and be part of a fascinating future, and why not, meet 'the citizens' of other planets. For at least another hundred years keep learning, growing, improving myself, travelling and performing.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

Keep on believing in my childhood cherished dreams, and 'inspiring others with my work', in spite of some well-intentioned discouraging advice. Believing and persevering against all odds, with discipline, hard work and not ever accepting the word 'impossible'.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

Performer, actor, singer, dancer, independent writer, producer, director. All of the above plus oil painter of nature and free domestic and wild animals.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

In my city there are many; therefore I would say the sunset, over the ocean, which is always different, always changing. Looking out my terrace (s) through the glass walls and looking at the trees, the tops of my neighbours' homes, the birds, and once in a while, the eagle and the hawk flying.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

Breakfast at home in my bedroom with my boyfriend Roger. Dinner in the main terrace by candlelight, listening to music and looking at the multiple lights of the homes in the hills.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

Someone who is very talented, intelligent, down to earth, creative, open minded. Someone who is also positive, sensitive, with good sense of humour, who laughs easily and heartily.

I am Solène Cochet

Photographer | Solène Cochet

www.solenecochet.com | contact@solenecochet.com

What is my greatest passion?

My greatest passion is Photography. To create my own reality.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

I am not looking for perfect but I am very blessed and happy to have opportunity in doing what I love and to have supports from my family and friends during the years.

What is my greatest fear?

To not be able to see.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

I love trying to know people through their eyes.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

Too impulsive.

What is my greatest extravagance?

My pet is a snail.

On what occasion would I lie?

I never lie. I trust people.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

We are all actors but it doesn't mean that we are not ourselves.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

My bag is too heavy!

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

One week ago when I found an idea and my client said 'It's exactly what I was looking for'.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

If I could I would know all fashion world to have work every day!

What is my greatest achievement in work?

To show my camera at my models and they say 'I don't know that feeling of myself'.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

I'm still doing a lot of work; photographer, retoucher, stylist, artistic director so maybe in another life I would be surgeon.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

In Paris, I love *le marché aux puces de Saint Ouen* – so many stories and design who give me inspiration.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

On the terrace of the top of the *cité de la mode*.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

I don't know a lot of hotel I live in Paris, but I shoot one time in *Joyce Hotel*, so charming.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

I want to work with a big magazine!!!

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

I do artistic photography too and I'm preparing an exhibition about timelessness.

I am *Stéphanie Delpon*

CEO of *pictoresq* | *pictoresq*
www.pictoresq.com | stephanie@pictoresq.com

What is my greatest passion?

My passion is to tell stories. In the future I want to write books. For now I created an online magazine featuring real models, the "Enfants Terribles". They are my friends, characters who inspire my visual stories.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

Being free, being nurtured by creative people, great ideas and beautiful things. Be surrounded by talent, light and beauty, and share it with the one I truly love.

What is my greatest fear?

My greatest fear would be to fail at creating something meaningful. Not have the time to build something I'm proud of.

What is the thing I love most about my work?

My work is about creating visual stories, discovering characters in the street, and creating a story around them. I love to meet new people, approach strangers bluntly and ask them to play their part for me. It's like being a playwright!

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

I'm too impatient and I often tell sharply the truth.

What is my greatest extravagance?

I go to bed every night around 5 or 6pm and wake up around 11 or 12 am depending on my busy or not schedule. I am more productive at night and hate mornings...

On what occasion would I lie?

I would lie not to offend someone who is denial about something too obvious to be told...

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

People whom I admire surround me. They nurture me; I am deeply influenced by their input and feedbacks. They make me grow.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

Actually, I cannot think of anything I dislike in my work. As I work for myself, even the ungrateful tasks are cool to do. It's like changing your baby's diapers I guess...

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

I was the happiest when I got the idea of *pictoresq* in Miami, where I was living. I felt euphoric. I then took a plane back to Paris and wrote frenetically my business plan. I couldn't stop; I was like under drugs!

If I could, what would I change about myself?

Maybe be more patient, empathic and not so blunt...

What is my greatest achievement in work?

Building something that reflects what I like, what I admire, and something that people actually like.

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

Actress. I would have loved to live multiple lives and try to capture emotions authentically, without faking it.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

The *Marais*; where I live. It's the most beautiful neighbourhood in the world! It is elegant, charming and calm like a small village.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

I love the *Swedish Institute*. I love the garden; it is a secret place that no one knows of... But not anymore I guess, since I revealed my secret.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

The *Meurice*, is to me the most beautiful hotel in Paris. I love their bar. Très chic.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

I would like to work with Jacques Antoine Granjon, the French Jeff Bezos who created *Vente Privé*. I admire him because he seems bright, bold and free.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

I want to open with my friend and associate Domitille a Concept Store that will be an extension of *pictoresq*: where you can buy clothes, furniture, books, in an enchanting location.

I am Suzanne Flenard

Founder and Creative Director | Square Modern
www.squaremodern.com | suzanne@squaremodern.com

What is my greatest passion?

I would have to say my passion is modern design. I love all things modern and minimal, from architecture to design, less is more.

What is my idea of perfect happiness?

Perfect happiness is sharing a meal with good friends, somewhere with a view of the water.

What is my greatest fear?

Not be able to do what I love and fear of heights (climbing a ladder always terrifies me).

What is the thing I love most about my work?

In addition to working for myself, I love the entire creative process; from choosing fabrics, cutting the forms and overseeing production.

What is the trait I most deplore in myself?

My (over the top) attention to detail is both a blessing and a curse. I tend to be a bit of a perfectionist.

What is my greatest extravagance?

Travel is an indulgence that I can't live without.

On what occasion would I lie?

While I am not a fan of lying, I might do so to spare someone's feelings.

What is the influence of role models, in my work and in my life?

I am fortunate to have had great mentors, both professionally and personally. Those mentors exposed me to so many things and encouraged me to pursue my love of design.

What is the thing I dislike most about my work?

Self-promotion is a skill I am becoming more comfortable with; embracing the positive feedback about my work gets easier over time.

When and where was I the happiest with my work?

Being able to create a product line that people bring into their home is unbelievably gratifying.

If I could, what would I change about myself?

I have gotten better at accepting compliments over time.

What is my greatest achievement in work?

Creating a business in a foreign country and eventually visiting a boutique where my products are on display....that's cool!!

Should I reincarnate, what would my profession be?

In my next life, I would be an industrial designer.

What is my most inspirational location in Paris?

Musée Arts-Décoratifs (which is part of Le Louvre) is my go to place for inspiration in Paris. Every installation is always so well thought out and executed to perfection.

What is my favourite place to eat and drink in Paris?

Clamato has a great selection of small plates to share and a delicious selection of organic wines. Also, you can eat at the bar, which is difficult to find, and one of the things I miss most about NYC.

What is my favourite hotel in Paris?

Hôtel Paradis is a new small boutique hotel in Paris that has a great modern design aesthetic.

Whom would I like to work with in the future?

I would love to collaborate with Dorothee Meilichzon who is one of the top interior designers in Paris. She designed Hotel Paradis and some of my other favourite places in the city.

What project, in the nearby future, am I looking forward to work on?

I'm about to start work on my next collection, whereby I've sourced some great new fabrics. The idea of bringing them to market soon for my clients is exciting!

The Hero's Journey

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