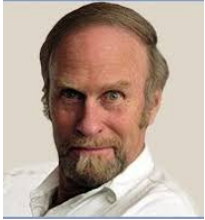


The Life You Were Born To Live: Finding Your Way, By Choice



By Frosty Wooldridge

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Just for a week, I want to leave my series on **Travels With Charley II**, to give you or members of your family, especially high school kids, a better understanding as to what they want in life and how to discover their life's path. Please send this column to any and all family members who have teenagers. Or, any family members who are floundering or are wondering what to do with their lives.

I remember my senior year in high school: I didn't know what I wanted to do with my life. I had no idea on how to find my path! My dad had died in my 11th grade year, which left me even more confused about my life. I carried a daily gut ache over his passing, and complete confusion as to what life had in store for me.

My mom said, "You're going to college. Just get those applications into those schools and pray you get accepted."

Well, I lucked out to be accepted at Michigan State University. My father had earned a baseball scholarship to Western Michigan University, but WWII pulled him into the United States Marines. He fought in the South Pacific. He lived...so here I am along with my siblings.

But the one thing they never teach you in high school...is how to operate in this society. How do you balance a check book? What about investing in the Stock Market? What do you do about a job and how to find one that fits you? How do you find a marriage partner that works for you? What happens when you drink and drive? What does it mean to be a responsible citizen who contributes to this society?

Luckily, after busting my rear-end studying to keep my 2-S student deferment, to let me graduate before the U.S. Army drafted me into Vietnam, I took a class, Creative Writing 201, in my sophomore year under Mrs. Beatrice Moynihan. She introduced me to Jack London, John Muir, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Edward Abbey, Kahlil Gabran, Ernest Hemmingway, Joseph Conrad, Upton Sinclair, Rudyard Kipling, Jane Goodall, Dian Fossey, Amelia Earhart, Nellie Bly, Helen Keller, Edith Wharton, and a host of other writers. They all set my soul on fire. My newfound major: Journalism!

Why am I writing this column? First of all, I became a teacher after serving in the U.S. Army. I discovered that kids stumbled out of high school not knowing what to do with themselves. They stumbled into jobs. They stumbled into marriages. They didn't know where they were going or what they were doing.

They also carried a raft of personal tragedies such as drunken fathers, abuse by their dads, poor parents who berated them, mothers who misguided their daughters...and an enormous amount of societal and family problems. How did I find all of this out? Answer: In college, I gave haircuts to guys on weekends for a buck a head. It put coins in my pocket, but also, I heard more stories about their lives than you can imagine. I learned a great deal about human nature. I took notes.

Anyway, while I taught school, I traveled on my bicycle each summer...piling up tons of unusual stories. I took notes. I submitted those stories to magazines. Guess what? The editors

liked them, published them, and paid me. Not that it was an easy path, mind you. After my first eight children's books...and hundreds of rejections...I kept at it for 22 years until my first book published. That's why I always worked a second job.

One of my customers whom I moved from Detroit to Tampa, Florida said, "You don't seem like a truck driver."

I replied, "You're right! I am a writer temporarily driving an 18-wheeler."

From all those experiences, I'd like to see every person in America find their dream, chase their dream, catch their dream, and live their dream. We would enjoy a much happier society if everyone worked at a job they loved, that meant something to them, and that contributed to the overall good of our country.

So, here goes! These are some of the books that will give any person at any age a leg-up on what to do with their lives. They're all on Amazon or Barnes and Noble.

The Life You Were Born To Live by Dan Millman. I met Dan 25 years ago when he gave a seminar in Denver. We've kept in contact over the years. He wants to see everyone live happy lives, too. He discovered the 37 pathways of life that will enhance each person. Just follow his formula in the book to find out about "The life you were born to live." You will be glad you did.

Big Magic: Creative Living Beyond Fear by Elizabeth Gilbert. Her brilliant book shows you how to live a creative work life. I bought it on audio and have read it 40 times. Yes, 40 times. It's THAT good!

The Enneagram Made Easy by Wagle & Baron. You will fit into one through nine personality traits. Any of the Enneagram books will show you your personality traits and your strengths

for work and your weaknesses. You can work on the positives and be aware of your weaker traits. If every parent would find out their child's traits and support their natural paths, we would see incredible improvements in schools and curriculums.

The Career Within You by Wagle and Stabb. Each of us possesses a little "engine" that wants to do what it wants to do. Harness it and drive yourself toward a destiny that you love.

Living Your Spectacular Life by Frosty Wooldridge. Okay, I wrote this book because friends said, "You're living such a spectacular life...why don't you show us how to do it." I said, "I can do that." This book features 12 concepts and practices that you can plug into at any age to find your dream, chase your dream, catch your dream and live your dream.

In the end, I would love to see you, your friends, your kids and everyone in America, and across the planet working jobs that fulfill them, that inspire them, that give them meaning, and that satisfy their love of life. When you love your work, you love your family, you're much happier, you're kinder to your family, you love your community, you love your country, and you love your life. It doesn't get any better than that. Vaya con Dios.

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