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with Larrie Winzar



YOUR UNIQUE TALENT

When the going gets tough in life, it's reassuring to know that there is something that can't be taken away from you. We all have special talents, gifts and passions. Sometimes those talents don't seem special to us because we do them so naturally and consider that other people do too. They don't! Yes, there may be people who do the same things but they don't do them identically to the way you do them.

Let's think about some of the bigger downs in life that can affect us and how our talent can then sustain us. Losing a job that you have enjoyed for many years can be devastating. So too can a separation or divorce or death of a loved one, a house fire or natural disaster. They will certainly impact on our lives hugely through loss of material possessions, self confidence, loneliness or an income but the essence of who you are, the holder of those special talents, gifts and passions cannot be lost because of circumstances in your life. They are yours to keep and to share.

What are your natural talents and passions? If you're unaware of what you do better than most people you know, here's a few to get your thinking. Your talent may be in communicating or organising or leading. Perhaps textiles, leather work, making hats, sketching, writing, poetry, music or painting comes naturally to you. Perhaps you've worked at one of those so that you're now highly experienced, competent and confident about your abilities. Perhaps you can create from wood or metal or clay. Perhaps you know more than most people about plants or animals or history or a particular culture or technology. Perhaps you have a natural affinity with children or the elderly. Your passion may be colour or design or being an entrepreneur or being able to take beautiful photographs or to see the potential in something in an op shop that you can upcycle.

You may be able to make a living out of this special talent or gift but that's not the main issue. The important issue is that this is a part of you that no one can take away from you because it's part of the essence of who you are.

It's not a tangible, material thing that you can touch. The result of some talents may be something that you can touch and feel but the actual talent or gift is intangible.

You know you're on the right track to identifying your talent when, if you lost your job, your house was destroyed or your key relationships disappeared, you were still able to turn to your talent after an adjustment period. What a blessing that is. How wonderful to have something to come 'home' to. You might even find a stronger, renewed interest in this passion when some of the other things of life that we usually consider highly important are not there. We all have a talent or gift – but sometimes it takes a little identifying.

I was recently made aware of a woman artist whose mother had thrown out all her artworks and drawings done over many years. The mother wasn't being vindictive – clearly though, she wasn't an artist either or she would have realised the importance of this work. Her mother simply said that she needed the space and as her daughter had been overseas for several years, she assumed (wrongly!) that she didn't want them. The daughter was devastated; she felt like part of her identity has been thrown away. I would have been devastated if that had happened to me too but, after some time, although the disappointment was still there, she realised that no one could take her talent for drawing and painting away and she is now working on a new portfolio, probably with even more passion than previously.

What's the talent or natural gift that you have that you can always look forward to engaging with and which will always sustain you in good times as well as challenging times? Identify that talent and nurture it. It's an important part of who you are.

It's also a key to happiness and wellbeing. To be happy - make something, do something for someone else without an expectation of anything in return, and always have something to look forward to.