



## Baby Steps

*By Cat Miller*

Living a passionate life is a change that can be made in a moment that will affect you for a lifetime. That one pivotal moment where you decide that mediocre won't do, that you want to wake up excited each morning instead of tired or dreading the day ahead. Passionate living begins with you. Everyone can tell you how easy or how hard it is to break through the self-proclaimed walls that we have all created for ourselves that we are totally convinced cannot be broken through.

Sometimes it comes down to a pivotal moment...when a boss humiliates you one time too many, when a spouse cheats, when you feel so stressed out and overwhelmed by your life that you can't imagine another day, when you realize that money has become more important than your dreams, when your family and friends are people that you fit into the cracks of your life ... that moment when you decide to change the complexion of your life, forever.

Other times, choosing to take another path is something that you ease into after lots of thoughtful meditation, just like a cold swimming pool on a hot day. Some people jump, others take their time. I don't' think that one method is better than another. As long as you choose to make a change, it is a time to get excited and to go for it. The excitement is an important part of the decision, as it has to override the inevitable fear or belief system that you have to step through to make the change.

I have found that it is very difficult to maintain a course in my life if I am not balancing it with activities that bring me joy. Simple actions can be taken to speak to these core parts that require expression. There are a multitude of projects that can stimulate whatever light is within you to inspire it to shine more brightly. It's always fun to look at the things that you loved to do as a child. When we are young, we are so much closer to the truth and play is something that happens naturally. When you are determining that first step of bringing more joy into your life, it doesn't always require that you do something that you think it productive as much as it puts you into a space of being childlike ... that place of being playful and in awe of life ... and fully in the moment.

Sometimes there are classes or lectures that will facilitate this same response but initially, when you are embarking upon a long journey, it is good to remind yourself how awesome and exhilarating this journey can be. So, choose one thing ... be it climb a tree, play a game of scrabble with a friend, take a hike in one of your favorite places, play baseball with someone ... whether you think you're good at it or not, laugh, dance, frolic and bring yourself back to center.

It is possible to create the change you are longing for in new ways of choosing your destiny, instead of waiting for a drama to erupt and acting out of that scenario. If you know that you are not living the most passionate life that you can be and you choose to take steps on to that path, you remove the need to create outside forces to create it for you. The steps that you take to make these shifts in your life don't need to be extreme (unless, of course, that is what's called for in the situation). I remember seeing the film, "What About Bob," and laughing my head off. Anyhow, Richard Dryfuss's character wrote a book called, Baby Steps, which helped Bob (played by Bill Murray), one step at a time, to make a new start for himself in life. By taking baby steps, Bob was able to step into the life he had always wanted to live and it affected everyone around him.

Well, taking the first step is a bit like the “baby step” philosophy in that you only have to take one small step to begin the process of living your dreams. Then, once you’ve taken that small step, you take another and another. So often the end goal distracts us, when the simple joys of life are in the real treasures of the journey. Making too many plans, too far in advance, is to miss the opportunity to discover your true passions and to fall into the trap of stressing out when you could be enjoying the “moment” instead.

What actions could you take to bring more joy into your life?

What have you always wanted to do that you’ve never done...and why?

What is one thing that you could do, right this moment, to bring more balance into your life?

## ***EXERCISE***

*Commit to doing this exercise for at least one month of your life. Each day, choose one small thing that will make a change in your life to create a more positive effect and to bring you into more balance. For instance, make an appointment with a body worker, go sit in nature and do a meditation, put the kids to bed early and take a hot bath with oils and candles, call a friend you haven’t spoken with in a long time who inspires you, look up a class in your community that you’ve always wanted to take and sign up, climb a tree, give up one cup of coffee or cigarette a day, tell your child a delightful story, bring cookies to the elderly neighbor down the street, take a walk, whatever it is that inspires you that day.*

*Actually, take a moment each morning or evening to be quiet and let your next step come to you. Feel what’s out of balance in your life and let the baby step bring you more to your center. It sounds very simple but you’ll be amazed at the changes that it will create in your life. While*

*you are going through the process of this exercise, keep a journal. Write down what step you take each day and how it made you feel to do it.*

*Watch as your life transforms from the inside out. You're not only changing the world around you in some small way by doing these simple actions, most importantly, your changing the way that you look at the world around you, that's where the real shift happens. You're also giving a big, huge YES to your spirit that you are ready to invite more joy into your life...more passion. As well, this exercise will warm you up and realign your being for future exercises in this book. Play, laugh, be physical, be still, be you...your spirit will know exactly what you need...just listen.*

The logo for Passionate Living. It features the word "Passionate" in a large, flowing, red cursive script, and "Living" in a slightly smaller, also flowing, red cursive script. Below the cursive text, the words "FALL IN LOVE WITH YOUR LIFE." are written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font.

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