

The Second Secret

*There is just one life
for each of us: our own.*

— Euripides

*A musician must make
music, an artist must
paint, a poet must write,
if he be at peace with
himself. What a man
can be, he must be.*

— Abraham Maslow

**Don't Die
with Your
Music Still
in You**

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The world you live in is an intelligent system in which every moving part is coordinated by every other moving part. There's a universal life force that supports and orchestrates everything. It all works together in perfect harmony. *You* are one of those moving parts. You showed up here in the body you inhabit, precisely on time. Your body will leave here with the same precision. You're an essential piece of this complex system. Here you are in this intelligent system that has no beginning and no end, in which all of the galaxies move in

harmony with each other. You *must* have shown up here for a reason!

Kahlil Gibran said, "When you are born, your work is placed in your heart." So, what is your work? Your purpose? Are you living it out the way your heart urges you to?

Listening to Your Heart

Take a moment right now and point to yourself. Your finger is very likely pointing right at your heart. Not at your brain, but your heart. This is who you are. The constant beating of your heart in and out, out and in, is a symbol of your infinite connection to the always-present heartbeat of God, or the Universal Intelligence. Your left brain calculates, figures things out, analyzes, and comes up with the most logical choices for you. It thinks, thinks, thinks! Your

right brain represents your intuitive side. This is the part of you that goes beyond reason and analysis. It's the part of you that feels things, that's sensitive to love, that's emotional about what's important to you. Your right brain allows you to tear up as you hold your babies, or bask in the beauty of a glorious day. Your left brain can *analyze* it, while your right brain lets you *feel* it.

Pick a situation and ask yourself if what you know or what you feel is most important to you. Generally, what you'll take care of first depends on the situation and circumstances you're in. Your intellect can be figuring out exactly how you're supposed to act in a relationship when things are collapsing (or when they're rapturous), and then there are times when what you feel will supersede what you know. If you *are* feeling fearful, scared, lonely; or on the other hand, thrilled, loving, and ecstatic, these will be the dominant forces

you'll act upon. These are the times when your right brain is right. Your right brain will always lead you passionately to your purpose.

Listening to Your Right Brain

There's an intuitive, invisible presence that's always with you. I picture this presence as a nagging little creature who sits on your right shoulder and reminds you when you've lost your sense of purpose. This little fellow is your own death, urging you to get on with what you showed up here for because you have only so many days to get it done, and then your body will be departing from this visit. Your invisible companion will prod you when you're spending another day doing what somebody else has dictated if it's not a part of your passion in life.

You'll most likely always know when

you're off purpose because of your thoughts of frustration. You might not always act on this knowledge, though, because your left brain has not mustered up the courage to do the bidding that your right brain knows is your destiny. Your intuitive inner voice keeps urging you to play the music that you hear so that you won't die with it inside you. But your left brain says, "Wait a minute. Be careful, don't take risks, you might fail, you might disappoint all of those who have a different view of what you should be doing." Then your right-brain invisible companion (your death) speaks even louder. The volume gets turned up and up, trying to get you to follow your dream.

Listening exclusively to your left brain will turn you ultimately into a pretender, or even worse, a commuter—getting up every morning going with the crowd, doing that job that brings in the money and pays the bills; and getting up the next morning and doing it all

over again, as a well-known song implies. Meanwhile, the music inside of you fades almost to a point of being inaudible. But your constant invisible companion always hears the music and continues tapping you on your shoulder.

The attempts to get your attention may take the form of an ulcer, or a fire to burn up your resistance, or being fired from a stifling job, or being brought to your knees with an accident. Usually these accidents, illnesses, and forms of bad luck finally get your attention. But not always. Some people end up like Tolstoy's character Ivan Ilyich, who anguished on his deathbed, "What if my whole life has been wrong?" A fearsome scene, I must say.

You don't have to choose that fate. Listen to your invisible companion, express the music that you hear, and ignore what everyone else around you thinks you should be doing. As Thoreau put it, "If a man does not keep

pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music he hears, however measured or far away."

Be willing to accept that others may even see you as having betrayed them, but you haven't betrayed your music, your purpose. Listen to your music, and do what you know you have to do to feel whole, to feel complete, and to feel as if you're fulfilling your destiny. You'll never be at peace if you don't get that music out and let it play. Let the world know why you're here, and do it with passion.

Being Passionate Means Taking Risks

You may indeed find yourself living a comfortable life when you don't follow your instincts. You pay your bills, fill out all of the

right forms, and live a life of fitting in and doing it by the book. But it's a book that was written by somebody else. You're aware of that nagging companion saying to you, "This may look right, but does it feel right? Are you doing what you came here to do?" For many people, the answer is, "How do I know what my heroic mission is?"

You'll find your passion in what inspires you the most. And what does the word *inspire* mean? It derives from the words "in spirit." When you're inspired, you never have to ask about your purpose. You're living it. For one of my children, it's about riding horses and being at the stables. She's in heaven when on horseback or even cleaning out a stall filled with horse manure. Another daughter is only inspired when she's singing, writing music, or performing. She's felt that way since she was two. For another, it's her artwork and design that make her feel purposeful. For yet another,

it's designing Websites and creating computer programs for others. For me, it's writing and speaking and creating products to help people become self-reliant. This has always been my passion, even as a young boy.

What is *your* passion? What stirs your soul and makes you feel like you're totally in harmony with why you showed up here in the first place? Know this for certain: Whatever it may be, you can make a living doing it and simultaneously provide a service for others. I guarantee it.

The only thing that will keep you from playing the music you hear and marching to the unique drumbeat you experience within, is fear. According to *A Course in Miracles*, there are only two basic emotions: one is fear, the other is love. You may fear the disapproval of others. Take that risk and you'll discover that you receive more approval when you don't seek it than when you do. You may fear the

unknown. Take that risk as well. Wander in there, asking yourself, "What is the worst thing that can happen if this doesn't work out?" The truth is that you will just move beyond it. You're not going to starve to death or be tortured if it doesn't work out. You might fear being successful. You may have been conditioned to believe you're inadequate or limited. The only way to challenge these absurdities is to go toward what you know you're here for and let success chase after you, as it most assuredly will. Or, you may fear the biggest one of all: You may fear failure.

The Myth of Failure

This may come as a surprise to you, but failure is an illusion. No one ever fails at anything. Everything you do produces a result. If you're trying to learn how to catch a football and someone throws it to you and you drop it, you haven't failed. You simply produced a result. The real question is what you do with the results that you produce. Do you leave, and moan about being a football failure, or do you say, "Throw it again," until ultimately you're catching footballs? Failure is a judgment. It's just an opinion. It comes from your fears, which can be eliminated by love. Love for yourself. Love for what you do. Love for others. Love for your planet. When you have love within you, fear cannot survive. Think of the message in this ancient wisdom: "Fear knocked at the door. Love answered and no one was there."

That music that you hear inside of you urging you to take risks and follow your dreams is your intuitive connection to the purpose in your heart since birth. Be enthusiastic about all that you do. Have that passion with the awareness that the word *enthusiasm* literally means "the God (*enthos*) within (*iasm*)."
 The passion that you feel is God inside of you beckoning you to take the risk and be your own person.

I've found that perceived risks are not risky at all once you transcend your fears and let love and self-respect in. When you produce a result that others laugh at, you're also stirred to laughter. When you respect yourself, stumbling allows you to laugh at yourself as an occasional stumbler. When you love and respect yourself, someone's disapproval is not something you fear and avoid. The poet Rudyard Kipling declared, "If you can meet triumph and disaster, and treat those two

imposters just the same . . . yours is the earth and everything that's in it." The key word here is *imposters*. They're not real. They exist only in the minds of people.

Follow your right brain, listening to how you feel, and play your own unique brand of music. You won't have to fear anything or anyone, and you'll never experience that terror of lying on your deathbed someday, saying, "What if my whole life has been wrong?" Your invisible companion on your right shoulder will prod you each and every time you're moving away from your purpose. It makes you aware of your music. So listen—and don't die with that music still in you.

