

## 8 steps towards creating an extraordinary life for the unemployed and laid off



**"Humankind cannot bear much reality."**

**T. S. Eliot**

If you have been unemployed, looking for a job, laid off for some time you might be at the point where you are telling yourself,

"I have no purpose. What is the point in filling out any more applications, I send out all these resumes, fill out this paperwork to end up in resume hell. The job sweepstakes gal didn't show up, CinderGodmother didn't shower job dust on me last night and Santa has me on the naughty list for cursing." And you envision yourself in the movie, "*I am Legend*, standing in the middle of New York City screaming , "IS ANYBODY OUT THERE?" Nobody responds to your resume, your emails, your voice mails. So you think what's the use?

Like millions before you, [create a new future](#).

**Re-writing your future is a state of mind**

You are never too old or young, it's never too late to start anew. At 92 my grandfather was taking college classes. I'm not sure you want him as your physics or chem partner in class, but if you think you are too old to learn--think again!

**If one person can learn something, anyone can learn to do it.**

Danny Aiello began acting at 40, Rodney Dangerfield at 42, Gloria Stuart was 78 when she was nominated Best Supporting Actress for Titanic, Peggy Ashcroft was 77 when she won Best Supporting Actress, and Jessica Tandy won an Academy Award at 80 for Driving Miss Daisy.



Grandma Moses (one of the most important self-taught artists of the 20th century) started her painting career in her seventies and Bill Traylor started drawing at age 83. In business Irene Wells Pennington became known in her nineties when she straightened out her husband's oil business, Colonel Sanders started Kentucky Fried Chicken in his sixties and Taikichiro Mori founded his business in his 50s and is the richest man in the world.

**So you think you're too old to start anew? I think not!**

**1. Failure is part of success. Don't avoid it.**

You need to fail in order to succeed. Every failure is one step closer to success. If failing is a problem for you, then change your mindset. The one percent ***fail- up and*** perceive failure as learning opportunities. Without learning opportunities, or practice, how can you get better? Many people are so afraid of failing that they spend their lives avoiding their gifts; or worse, they failed a coupled times and gave up because of it. For years I gave numerous speeches that went well. Then I gave one speech that bombed and it was so humiliating I froze, months later I had a meeting that didn't go very well. Those two experiences sent me to Toastmasters where I learned how to give a speech.

## 2. Become extraordinary.

Do what you say you're going to do. Accept responsibility and criticism. [Being extraordinary takes work.](#) Go the extra mile. Go above and beyond. Do what the normal person won't do...be the extreme! And learn what extraordinary people do, study them, learn from them. While at Toastmasters, I learned I had an issue with criticism and had to learn how to accept criticism, to thank the person sharing it with me and to understand that it wasn't personal. This was an issue I had to learn how to deal with from a professional coach. So the point is that I went from one problem and solved it, to discovering another problem and solved it to back to the original problem. That is what extraordinary people do--they don't give up. Ever. And when people tell them they can't achieve something, they think to themselves, "watch this!" Extraordinary people never stop learning, and it's not about how many letters you have after your name, or what you school you went to, it's about continuous learning--and knowing that the more you know, the more you don't know.

Be extraordinary, handle criticism with grace and dignity.

## 3. Study your successes

Take out a yellow pad of paper. Write down your successes. What were you doing? What value did you bring? What are you really good at? What does everyone say you are great at? What's staring you in the face? What is your gift? What and where have you repeatedly succeeded? Where is there a cross between extreme anger and happiness? That is passion.

## 4. Study your failures

The one percent *fail-up*. Failures are learning opportunities. Without learning opportunities, you can't get better. What have you learned? What patterns emerge? What did you do that could have done better? Use this time as a time to evaluate and learn. I have learned the most in my life from my failures---not from my successes. In the next post we'll address structured achievement relative to goals that will address setting a weekly fear/dream goal.

## **5. Happiness is not the key to success. It is a choice.**

Money does not make you happy. I know people that have jobs they hate because of the money they make, relatives that are wealthy, miserable and alone. Money doesn't fill your home with laughter and love. Money is nothing more than a by-product of your job. Success is a choice. Happiness is a choice. You choose to do the job your were hired to do and choose when and how to leverage that job into another. Life is a series of choices.

## **6. Trust yourself.**

Watch for the yellow lights or listen for the voice inside. If something doesn't feel right, it isn't. I call it, "validate and verify." Check out what it is that your voice is telling you. Don't rush. What is that yellow light? Generally, I count how many yellow lights I see in a situation and if I count more than three, it turns to a red light and I don't move forward. It signals the requirement to have a conversation, and flags that something isn't right. Every time I didn't trust myself or ignored the yellow lights—mistakes were made.

## **7. What miracles have you created in your life?**

Go to a quiet place and on a yellow pad of paper, write out every miracle you have accomplished in your life. Everything you achieved or created that you never expected to and is a miracle in your mind. List every one. On an index card write down the ten that are mind blowing to you. You simply cannot believe you ever achieved that goal. This is only for you, it doesn't matter how big or small it is. This is your Miracles card. I put myself through college; it's a miracle I went and graduated. That is one of about 50 on my yellow pad. Save the back of the index card for the next assignment which is in the next post.

Until then, when you get a little depressed one of the things you will do is look at your Miracles card and remind yourself that nothing is impossible.

## **8. Have the courage to self-reflect.**

It takes courage to reflect on your dreams, vision of how you want your life to be, who you want to be, how it is currently structured. The reality is that we structure our lives around other people's constraints. Our dreams and our visions are bigger than the constraints around us. If those constraints are too much, you must be willing to ask yourself some dangerous questions.

Take an honest look at your own life. How much is your life in alignment with how you are spending your time and energy? You have to take responsibility to thrive and flourish wherever you are. Think of yourself as a social architect, you create the rules of the game. Whoever has the goal, makes the rules. You may decide that you need to change some of the dynamics in your life in order to get yourself to the next level. You may have to change some of the players and your environment. Have the courage to look at your life and make those decisions.

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Ev Nucci is a serial entrepreneur and CEO of Nucci Consulting Group, a search firm that specializes in lift-outs and retained search in asset management. She spent the past three decades building high-performance organizations and started five companies, two with Fortune 100 firms. In 1998 she started working with the BlackRock founders and spent the next 10 years helping build the largest money manager in the world. Most recently she served as a consultant and Director to Armored Wolf, a global macro hedge fund. Ev can be found at [careerstrategist@blogspot.com](mailto:careerstrategist@blogspot.com), and <http://evnucci.com> and at her website is <http://www.nucciconsultinggroup.com>.