It was a spring day in April. No rain was falling, and there was a bitter cold wind. I was sitting in class trying to figure out what in the heck I wanted to do in ten years for a career I knew my professor was about to ask me this very question “How was I supposed to know this? What I am going to say?” I thought At my young age of 34 I have learned not to make plans for myself Just like I had thought I was asked by my professor “And what do you want to do?” I replied “Have my degree in Communications” To which he quickly asked “To do what with? Why?” I said I didn’t know He told me “Well think about it” Well okay then At the end of class I gathered my things put my notepad into my backpack and started to head out for the rest of my day I opened the double doors to leave and “BAM!!” like a sledge hammer it hit me I knew exactly what I want to do! I want to be a motivational speaker

I have spent so much of my young life already living for someone else Maybe my (ex) husband? Maybe the kids? Maybe for my extended family? The answer to all of these questions is the same…yes! And I don’t say that as if it were a bad thing However my life is lived for my children and making sure they have the best foundations possible Not only that but I also am a self-sacrificer meaning I will do whatever it takes to help one of them or other family and friends even if I have to sacrifice something for myself This seems to be how my life has gone No one has ever really asked me “Corrie what do you want? What will make you happy?” and now here I was asking myself

Seventeen years ago I started my college career I went to class day in and day out I always had a minimum of 15 credits I did this for a year worked a full time job and lived on my own with my high school sweetheart Life was good Even now thinking back which I rarely try to do I shake my head at the decisions I made most of which were to better or help him though that was never returned I think this was the beginning of becoming a sacrificer

He had wanted to go to school full time 20 plus credits and asked how I felt about taking on another job so he could quit his family’s restaurant and focus on school Needless to say at the end of my term that year I quit I worked two jobs to put him through college Even though he was capable of doing all these things on his own I did them because he asked me to and looked at my time as his time My nights were full of doing his homework writing his papers and making sure he was prepared for the next day I did this day in and day out for four years We married during this time had two kids and I always worked two jobs until he finished his degree I even only took 10 days of maternity leave just so we wouldn’t miss out on income with our first son Then one day graduation came I remember thinking “this is my chance now I can go back to school” Boy was I wrong and yet at the time this was okay I wanted my husband to be happy I wanted him to have the job he always dreamed of and yearned for I spent my evenings after putting my first two boys to bed scouring the papers and internet for a job for him I applied to multiple companies for him answered many a questionnaire typed a resume and cover letter Luckily he had decided to temporarily go back to work at the restaurant so I only had to work one full-time job

We found a job working with the state which would require us to move to the coast I did not want to do this I wanted to stay close to my mother who had been my best friend since I was 15 I also wanted to raise my kids by their cousins However this job was a great opportunity and it meant a stable income with benefits for our family I made a deal with my husband We could move to the coast uproot our family and sell our house if he agreed that within three years he would apply for a transfer back into the valley He agreed We moved to Newport to the cold the wind the rain and the endless overcast days My husband loved his job When my oldest son started kindergarten and my middle son started three year old preschool I thought again “Now is my time Now I can take just one class towards my degree” I asked my husband his thoughts on this and was quickly shot down with “I think it is best for you to be readily available for the kids and me What if something happens and you are in class?” This broke my heart I worked in Newport and was always available for the needs of my children or whatever whim fancy or demand came my way

Years went by I never did go back to school in that time I went to work for H & R Block one year a few of us attended a seminar a motivational one of sorts about dealing with the stresses of tax season and our clients Heck why not right? I got continuing education credits for it towards my license and I had only been to one other one before WOW! What an eye opening experience I walked into this auditorium filled with people everywhere Chairs bottles of water in coolers conversations and laughter filled this room Even to this day I can’t remember who I saw speak I remember being in so awe of the surrounds and of my situation I also remember sitting there listening and thinking “Now this THIS I could do” This woman talked of her own life experiences how she had handled them and what we could all do to help ourselves I remember thinking “Wha’d she just say? Yah I can totally do this!” I left feeling so good and yet sad to have to return to home life after such invigoration

Five plus years went by Sure I learned how to do taxes But this wasn’t what I had envisioned I continued to raise my kids and take care of my family My home life was falling apart as I had known it would Then one day about five years ago I had had enough My kids and I deserved better than the life we were living I was on anti-depressants begging for my husband to go to counseling with me trying my hardest to be happy and full of life in front of my kids Then one day I realized I was done I wanted to be back in the valley like he had promised me we would be

It was that day that I realized I must at some point start thinking of myself If I didn’t do it who else would? Step by step baby foot in front of baby foot I started to include my own wants and dreams into my life Don’t get me wrong; I still live and breathe for my boys for that one chance at getting a hug that is now too far and too between However after a nasty divorce and rebuilding mine and the kids’ lives I now know it is okay for me to think about me also

Spring of 2013 I enrolled at LBCC to finish the dream I had started so many years ago My first and only at that time online class was in interpersonal communications I felt so alive Here I was doing what I wanted to do I was learning what I wanted to learn I had long forgotten about that seminar I attended a few years before I just knew I was going to school and that is all I had wanted I met with an advisor for undecided students and discovered that I wanted my degree to be in communications

It is crazy how things can happen I didn’t know what I wanted to do with my degree and had never really thought about it I just wanted to go to school and graduate to show my kids “it can be done No matter what happens in life it can be done” just as I had told them Life is about learning It can be from the sea sun wind in the trees a child’s laugh or from a teacher telling you to “think about it” Take from it what you may Think listen and learn This is what motivational speaking is about “*The ultimate goal of an effective motivational speaker is to persuade his or her audience to make some kind of personal or professional change within themselves”*  *“A motivational speaker or inspirational speaker is one who makes speeches intended to* [*motivate*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Motivation) *or inspire an audience”* These little pep talks are meant to inspire and motivate people While doing research for this paper I ran across this saying: *“The key is in learning to listen to your intuition and to act on it at all times even at the risk of going against old patterns expectations and belief systems”* I mean WOW! I wish I would have heard this years ago and yet this is what I want others to learn and know Live in the moment I think a lot of people forget to do this It is not the end goal that matters so much; it is the journey that takes you there

*“When we are relatively unconscious we simply do what we've always done not realizing there is any other way As we gradually become more aware we begin to recognize that other options exist and we can make other choices in how we live”* Boy did this speak to me! Was Shakti Gawain watching over my shoulder when she said this? This is something I am trying to remind myself of often We are all often found operating our lives day in and day out on auto pilot When we slowly become aware of this we start to see what life has to offer We can choose which road we wish to travel down and make other decisions along the way Believe it or not for years I have found strength and motivation in Miley Cyrus’s song *“The Climb”* It is good to have goals and aspirations: however life will also be okay if you can’t reach them the first time You just have to keep trying “It’s all about the climb”

I am never going to forget this spring day I am thankful for it In ten years I hope this is what I am doing with my life I had thought of this in the past but never paid much attention to those thoughts I let them slip by as something not meant for me I know incomplete passes will always come my way as they have in the past If I am able make a touchdown is anyone’s guess Heck they could just become missed catch after missed catch All it takes is one ball though One touchdown to make me wonder how I can change my own grip and that of someone else’s to make the points and win the game Now I have a goal I don’t honestly know if I will reach it and that is okay I am excited for the journey

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