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This Time I Dance! Trusting the journey of Creating the Work You Love by Tama J. Kieves Reviewed by Dee Relyea

I've just read a remarkable book about a young woman who graduated Harvard Law School, successfully worked in a prestigious law firm and left it to find her "true vocation". In addition to being a writer, she is a career and creativity coach and seminar facilitator in Denver, CO. Her journey of transition and personal growth is beautifully articulated and makes a compelling case for taking the road less traveled to an "authentic life."

Tama bares her soul to the reader on every page detailing her fears, her frustrations and her moments of pure bliss. She literally walks you through her journey to create work she is passionate about. Whether you read the book in relation to your own work as a coach or as an insight into the lives of your clients, there are nuggets of profound wisdom here.

What happens when we are "burned out" in our jobs, living for weekends, annual vacations and the light at the end of the tunnel—retirement? Our jobs are so deeply intertwined in our lives that for many of us our career virtually is our life, good or bad. Considering how much of our time and energy we spend "working" one would hope it is a pleasurable if not meaningful experience. Unfortunately, for the majority of us it is neither.

Tama got to the point that she felt she had to constantly reward herself for struggling through another week of work. The salary of a Harvard grad lawyer enabled her to spend copious amounts of money on "stuff". No matter what, she still felt a gnawing emptiness that no amount of expensive goodies could fill. "Face it, we live with ache until we live our dreams..an unlived dream will sit on your heart like a Sumo wrestler..This discomfort triggers us to search for lures, cures, drinks, parties, cruises..and good department stores. Substitutes for passion and fruition."

Leaving her prestigious downtown law firm for a much needed vacation, Tama headed to the west coast. Epiphany occurred one day on a beach with a bagel: "*Gulls shrieked and I watched the flushed sun steal another day of my life into the horizon. Then the universe hushed into stillness, time paused, and the air seemed to tingle with imminence. And in between the sea's pounding intervals, my heart soared, whispered, roared, "Leave the firm. You can't go back. Honor your yearning to write."* Her mind proceeded to conjure up all the reasons why such a move would be insane. She of course, did it anyway.. as she says,"It all comes down to this: We can deny our hearts or we can deny our limits..."

Filled with quotes from her personal journal and splashes of lavender, this book is truly marvelous! Tama tackles head-on the "yes, buts..." "the I can't because..." and the other typical blocks to making successful life transitions. I found familiarity in her words, both my own and those of clients. Leave a job without a plan? Yes, proclaims the author, how else are you going to have the energy to follow your path if you are exhausted just getting through the workday? "You will engage the totality of your intelligence to find a means to succeed instead of to tally up and analyze the many ways you could fail."

Unlike other books I've read on the subject of: "finding and doing the work you love", this one encourages the reader to simply trust their inspired yearnings and yield to their inner knowing. Rather than follow a step-by-step process (like so many self help books recommend) Tama suggests you allow yourself time to let the path unfold before you. ".we only tend to find our mission once we take an intermission from the work life that doesn't work." But what about our need to make money, pay bills, be fiscally responsible? Again.. it goes back to trusting our inner self, listening to your soul's wisdom, your heart. "Decide to live your dreams before you can foresee the means. You can feed attention to your obstacles or you can feed attention to your desire. One gives you magnified obstacles. The other brings you fire." (and all this is just in the book's first chapter!)

I was so enamored of this book that I personally contacted the author and shared my enthusiasm for her words and admiration for sharing her journey. She is interested in coming to Madison in July or August and doing some speaking, workshops or seminars. If any of you have some ideas of venues, organizations or events that might be interested having Tama as a presenter in Madison, Milwaukee, Chicago or Minneapolis please let me know!

To learn more about Tama or to purchase her book, visit her site at:
www.awakeningartistry.com

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