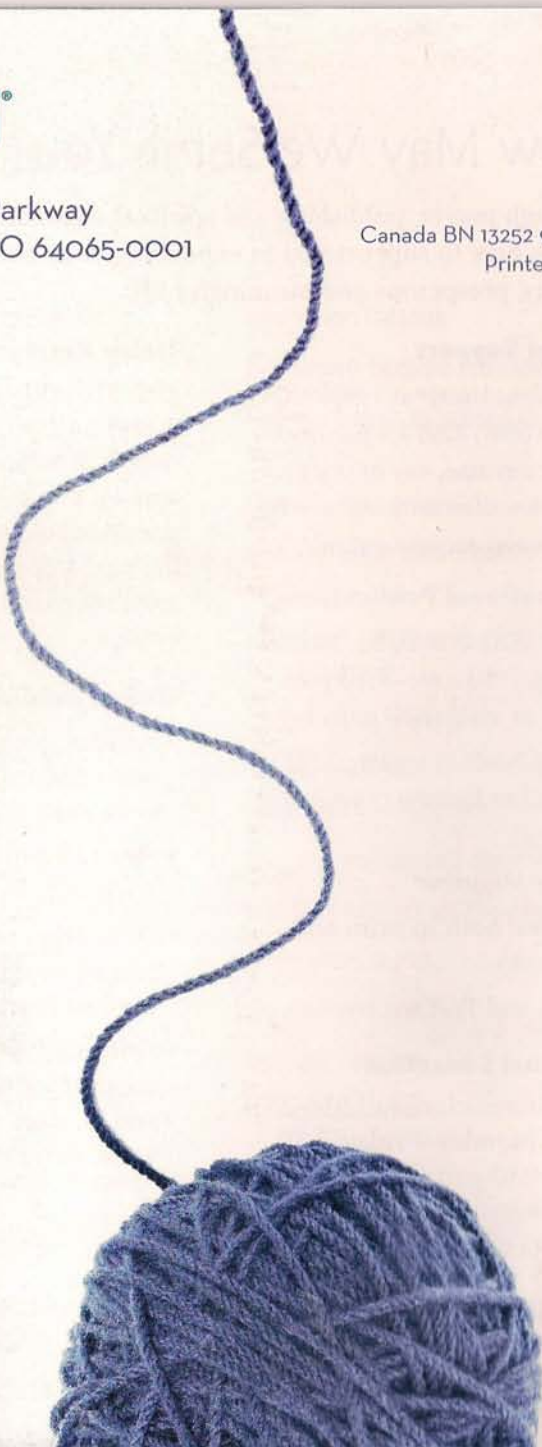




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Living On Purpose: Creating a Life You LOVE



We are unlimited beings.

—Rev. Dr. Michael Bernard Beckwith

Your Divine Order List

By Noelle Sterne, Ph.D.

You may be tempted to abandon some of your dreams when you reach a certain age. True, age may be a barrier to specific goals, such as winning at Wimbledon. But your age does not have to prevent or limit you from experiencing the glories of tennis, if that's your passion.

For example, if you dream of being a ballet dancer, you probably should have started training at age 5½. Now, at 42—paunchy, saggy, tired and stiff—you can stand on your toes only to reach the supersize box of salsa chips. So what can you do today to follow your dream? Here are four suggestions:

1 First ask yourself this: Do I still really want to involve myself with ballet? Or is it a residual “should” from old voices?

2 If your answer still firmly resounds “Gotta dance,” remind yourself of age-breaking models. I recommend a book called *Second Wind: The Rise of the Ageless Athlete* (by Lee Bergquist), which recounts many sagas of no-limits individuals. One, Don McNelly, completed more than 150 marathons—all after the age of 80.

3 Back to you. Set goals for expressing your love for ballet. What would you really like to do to be around ballet—to see, hear, feel, smell, even taste ballet? A few thoughts: Observe classes or assist a teacher at a dance academy, take your kids and their friends to ballet performances, start a blog for late-blooming balletophiles. You’ll probably come up with other ideas.

4 List the qualities, outcomes and feelings you want such activities to give you, even if you don’t yet know how to accomplish them: “Use my talent, use my passion and love for ballet, feel like I am contributing.” Keep this list in a special place (laminiate it). Read it daily.

As you may have suspected, I’m a great believer in and practitioner of lists. They organize and define your options so they don’t feel endless. They show you your choices. And they’re always open to adding or crossing out. So now ...

1 From the above list, start working with the smallest, most attainable thing—or the biggest, most exciting one.

Depending on your passion, you may want to make two lists: one physical—pulling on tights (groaning optional) and taking a class—and the other educational/inspirational—researching, interviewing or writing about dancers.

2 Divide your physical and inspirational lists into manageable and possibly sequential activities. Physical preparation may start with stretching exercises, water aerobics or yoga—or you can screw up your courage and actually take a dance class.

3 Your educational/inspirational list might include reading specific books about dancers (and especially those performing at later ages), talking to dance instructors near you, meditating daily and seeing yourself (also daily) doing what you love to do in this field.

Now, BEGIN. Choose one item from either or both lists. A physical action is great first because it will get your heart going—physically and emotionally. Then pick one thing from your education/inspiration list and you’ll know, with growing excitement, you’re achieving your dream.



Noelle Sterne is a published fiction and nonfiction writer. She has conducted a coaching, consulting and editing practice for more than 28 years. Noelle is author of *Trust Your Life: Forgive Yourself and Go After Your Dreams* (Unity Books, 2011). For more information, visit www.trustyourlifenow.com.