

Well-behaved women rarely make history.
—Anita Borg

If you want the impossible done, give it to a woman on fire.
—Vickie L. Milazzo



FIRE

Ignite Your Inner Fire to Live Passionately

Women are born passionate. We love hard. We cry hard. When we care about something passionately we can change the world.

Heroines who lived in times when strong women were not in vogue, such as French military leader Joan of Arc, American temperance reformer Carrie Nation, abolitionist Harriett Tubman and women's rights activist Margaret Sanger, changed the world because their passions drove them to stand strong for what they believed. Women have also carved out their place in the arts: dancer Isadora Duncan, blues singer Ella Fitzgerald, artist Georgia O'Keeffe, author Jane Austen. All passionately talented women—women like you.

Life is not about having or not having passion. All women have it inside. Either you honor that passion in your life, or you don't. Often we fear passion. We fear it won't stick, so we avoid it altogether. We fear that, like a lover, it will "betray us."

Every woman has the potential to dig deeper, to find the way to her passion and to live with fire. This won't make your life easier, but it will certainly make it more rewarding.

When I was growing up in a modest shotgun house in New Orleans, nothing about my childhood suggested I was destined to travel. Yet I was fascinated by it and dreamed of exploring the world. I wrote to foreign consuls and requested free information about their countries. I remember receiving big, colorful brochures—probably not as big or colorful as I recall. Those brochures were the only way I could experience my unrealized passion for travel. Each imaginary trip I took on paper was vivid and exciting.

Years later, when I became a nurse, there was little money or time for travel. But I found ways to indulge that passion. I attended one or two nursing conferences a year, choosing destinations that beckoned. I also traveled during my two-week vacation, no matter how tight my budget. These modest experiences made the passion inside me burn deeper, and when I eventually turned my passion for nursing into the business of legal nurse consulting, I included travel as part of my vision. Today, I enjoy not only passions for entrepreneurship, writing and teaching, but also my passion for travel. I have sipped yak butter tea with monks in the Himalayas, eaten sheep's brains with Berbers in Morocco and drained a gourd of grassy maté with gauchos on a Patagonian estancia. Because I consciously acknowledged and pursued my passions, I created a life that embraces all of them in some small way, including travel.

PASSION FANS THE FLAME OF SUCCESS

Without the fire that only passion arouses, success eludes us. If you're not passionate about an idea, you won't do what it takes to

carry it out, because pursuing that idea would be way too hard without passion.

To be an expert rock climber, you have to push through the pain and discomfort of scraped hands and aching muscles to excel, and to do that you must have fervent passion for the sport. If you're passionate about your job, you'll be far more successful in advancing your career than a woman who isn't.

To live passionately is to act. If you're true to yourself, you'll put energy behind your passions and take the necessary actions to bring them to fulfillment. You make time for the fire that burns inside you.

I'm lucky that as a child I played at teaching imaginary classes for free and now get to earn real money doing it. Work, for me, is still passionate play. But what if you're not sure what your one passion is? Does that mean you'll never find it? No, because passion is not just one thing, not just a career, a cause or a relationship. Passion is a way of approaching and enjoying life to the fullest. The gain is the passion itself, not a prize of victory, more money or more friends, although such rewards may well follow.

Passions are driven by a variety of values and beliefs. A woman can be passionate about excellence, like Carol, the education director who is as passionate about creating the perfect policy and procedure manual as she is about planning a conference for more than 1,400 people. One woman's passion for a healthy body can result in dedication to a workout that another woman would consider drudgery. Passion can be an intention to accomplish a goal, such as getting a promotion or being recognized by your peers.

Passions change and evolve. At any given time passion is a choice, and what you're passionate about is a choice. A woman can be passionate about anything she goes after (although my husband often reminds me that straightening the magazines on

the rack and folding a perfect hospital corner on our bed are compulsions, not passions). My friend Yvonne was passionately immersed in her career. Then she had a child she hadn't planned for, and now she's equally passionate about raising, teaching and loving that child.

Passions are lived out in as many expressions as there are women. Yours are inside you, and they will reveal themselves if you listen carefully.

LET YOUR PASSIONS MOVE YOU

We all know there's no one magic formula for prosperity and happiness, but there's one common denominator I've found among successful women: They have a passionate drive to do what they do. They're on fire. Some inner spark in the mind, spirit and soul burns intensely, driving them over seemingly insurmountable barriers. Passionate women don't do what they do just because they can—they do it because they are irresistibly compelled.

Alicia Alonso, the Cuban ballerina, is recognized as one of the finest classical ballerinas of our time. Her achievement is all the more impressive because Alicia is one woman we probably should never have heard of. Her soul was fired up to dance, but her body wasn't cooperating.

At 19, when she was not yet a famous dancer, Alicia was diagnosed with a detached retina. Her condition required three successive operations and left her with partial sight but no peripheral vision. After surgery Alicia was instructed to lie in bed, perfectly still, for a year. But Alicia's flame would not be extinguished by mere physical limitation. During her year of enforced bed rest she danced in her mind and with her toes to keep her feet, memory and passion alive. She taught herself to dance *Giselle*, a difficult ballet that demands the ballerina's full dramatic range.

When Alicia returned to the stage every prop and light was placed exactly the same for every performance, so that she could memorize her moves and dance even with her limited vision. The deadly peril of the orchestra pit awaited her slightest misstep or memory lapse. Still, Alicia Alonso achieved world renown and was honored with the highest designation a ballerina can earn, *Prima Ballerina Assoluta*.

Was it only talent that made her one of the world's most successful ballerinas? Or was it her driving passion to do what she loved despite overwhelming odds?

DISCOVER YOUR FIRE TO LIVE PASSIONATELY

If your passions have not yet got you leaping into action, try the following exercises to coax them to the surface. And please, write in this book. This book is yours. By putting your thoughts here, you personalize it and make it your guiding companion.

1. *Connect with your early interests.* Can you recall a pleasant childhood memory of playing? If so, what is it? What comes to mind first? *Write it down, no matter how absurd. It could make sense to you later, even if it does not make sense now.*

When you think about this play scenario, ask yourself: Did you love it? Were you passionate? Were you good at it? Did you engage in it every chance you could, without being pushed? Did your parents have to drag you away from it? *Now, describe it.*

Perhaps your memory comes from your teen years or early adulthood. Or it might be the first time you recognized a special talent, developed a latent skill or derived pure pleasure from an accomplishment. If you can remember even one time in your life when you felt passionately excited and no one had to push you into action, then you know how to ignite your passion for success. Write down something, even if you aren't quite certain or it seems outrageous.

2. *Acknowledge your current interests.* Imagine you have all the money you need and nine months to do anything and everything you want to do—pursue any career or hobby, live in a new state or country, sing with your favorite band or climb Mount Everest. You will be free of worry about financial or practical matters during that entire time. What would you do? Take three minutes to stretch your imagination and write down everything, but do not limit your answers to the obvious, such as traveling or spending more time with family and friends. *Write fast and write as many things as you can think of. When your three minutes are up, stop.*
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Glance quickly over your list. You'll notice that a few items give you a profound feeling of excitement, urgency or even disappointment. *Circle three that ignite a spark.*

Next, considering your everyday world as it exists right now, list everything you might want to accomplish in the next year. Stop after two minutes and circle three items that spark the most passion inside you.

3. *Go inside, listen and choose your actions.* Thinking back to when I was a child, I see that much of what I was passionate about has become a big part of my life now. It didn't happen instantly, but eventually I reconnected with those childhood passions and incorporated them into my adult life. In the process I had to make choices.

Women tend to pile on five responsibilities. Why buy into the myth that we must handle it all—home, children, career, care of an aging parent, social obligations, financial wizardry—and still have energy for great sex? Listen to your inner voice and you know that myth is ridiculous. Yes, we probably can handle it all—we're women, we can do anything—but why should we? Men would never expect to juggle so many responsibilities.

My good friend who is 60 has been cooking breakfast and dinner her entire married life. When her husband retired, he wanted her to make lunch, too. At first she hopped in and did it. But soon it grated on her that his retirement meant she had more work to do. Preparing another meal was contrary to her passion for enjoying life, so she decided to retrain her husband. She told him, "Our wedding vows included better or worse but not lunch. You're on your own for lunch."

How many of the everyday responsibilities in your life can be eliminated? Or delegated? Or hired out? Or automated? Which responsibilities no longer support you? Let them go. Eliminating just one or two items from your busy schedule can free up time to pursue your passionate interests. *Write down two responsibilities you will no longer handle personally.*

4. ***Keep listening and quickly reject whatever you're not passionate about.*** We all go through stages where our energy comes from a particular source, and once that source no longer provides a driving vitality, it's okay to let go and ignite a new fire.

There was a time when I loved to cook. I was passionate about cooking. I loved preparing a meal and having friends over to eat it. Now I'm just as happy eating out. I'd rather relax with my friends without the bother of kitchen duty. For a while I felt guilty and thought I should still love cooking. Finally, the epiphany—I don't have to be passionate about cooking anymore. While that fire burned inside me, I did it, I loved it. Then other passions took over and I moved on. When a passion burns out, let it go.

And if your burning passions are not yet evident, rejecting everything you clearly are not passionate about can help you get closer. Try backing into your passions with the following exercise.

Look at what you absolutely don't want to do. "I don't want to do this, or this. . . ." *Write down five things you absolutely don't want to do.*

*Then write down five things you might not mind doing.
“Maybe I would like to do this . . . or this.”*

Eventually you’ll hit on something that speaks to you: “Yes . . . I could really enjoy doing this.” Is that a passion? Maybe, maybe not. Only by exploring it will you know. *For now, write it down.*

Be patient. If you don’t get a fire in the belly that feels like real passion, keep exploring. Maybe for now it’s only a tiny spark. The flame has to start somewhere.

5. *Foresee the reality of your passions.* Frequently we want a result without foreseeing the full implications of that result. Fame brings intense responsibility and an end to privacy. Breaking a record opens the door to all contenders.

Alice wanted to be a keynote speaker until she saw the lifestyle that keynoting represented—living out of a suitcase, sleeping in musty hotels away from home and loved ones. She was able to modify that passion without forsaking her passion for family by speaking locally with only occasional trips out of town.

Suzi dreamed of opening a bed and breakfast and playing host to new guests every day. Soon after opening, she found that her time was spent cleaning, cooking, washing dishes, invoicing and answering the reservation line. That reality wasn't what she signed up for, so she changed it by hiring a manager and staff. Now she enjoys her dream of entertaining guests without toilet duty.

What benefit will you gain by living your passions? What are the realities of that lifestyle? Does this passion support your other life goals? If not, how can you modify or merge them?

THE PASSIONATE PATH ISN'T QUICK AND EASY

After I became an independent legal nurse consultant, I went to law school at night. I was consulting with a group of attorneys who, after I graduated, offered me a position as an associate attorney. I graciously and easily declined, thinking, "Why would I want to do that? I'm doing what I love, having more freedom and making more money than any new associate." A year later a partner at the law firm approached me and said, "Okay, if you won't come on as an associate, we're inviting you to be a partner."

This attractive offer raised the stakes considerably. Suddenly, saying yes to my passion wasn't so easy. I loved consulting with these attorneys, and a partnership would guarantee a bigger and brighter future every year, financially and in other respects.

But after the rosy glow of ego gratification dimmed, I declined the offer. Practicing law was not my passion, even with such ideal conditions. Eventually, choosing passion paid off big, although the payoff came more slowly. My passion was so strong that my business soon soared despite my lack of business training or education. I surpassed the law firm's offer in every way and was able to maintain my freedom, create my own financial security and, most of all, enjoy the career I'm passionate about.

That kind of decision isn't easy. What's easy is to compromise, say yes to a lukewarm interest because we, or someone else, think it's a smarter decision. Live and work your passions and the reward will come, maybe not always financially, but in a way that matters to you.

Daryn Kagan, news anchor for CNN, knew at age 16 she wanted a job that would be different every day. Her first thought, to become a doctor, lasted only through a single chemistry class, but her second childhood vision, to be a television reporter, became her driving passion. After five and a half years at a local TV station, she asked to move up to anchor. Repeatedly her boss passed her over to hire blondes. "There's just this 'it,'" he told her, "and some people have it and some don't. Clearly, you don't."

That was harsh, but Daryn refused to let her boss define her direction, her passion or her success. She circumvented his limiting beliefs and forged her own path. She convinced him to put her on as weekend morning sportscaster, a position she invented, and for over a year she worked that job for free. Daryn, who had a passion for sports, saw this as a way to get noticed at a much higher level—since this was a field where women were not the norm. Later, when a position opened up at CNN, she got it, and after only three years became an anchor.

It would have been so easy for Daryn to believe her first boss's assessment of her future in television. Similarly, it would have

been easy for me to believe my peers' assessment that the unsatisfactory healthcare system was the best place for a nurse's expertise. Sometimes the smartest move is to move on, especially when it's obvious that no matter what you do there's no reward at the end. Don't let others define you, your passion or your direction. When Daryn's passion was tested, she paid her dues, then moved on, following her own path and reaching the outcome she desired. When my passion was tested I created my own profession, where I could make a difference and make big things happen.

By following my passion and my 5 Promises, I was fortunate to get both financial reward and a life I love. You can, too.

PASSION DOESN'T BURN THE SAME FOR ALL WOMEN

Not everyone feels and expresses passion in the same way. Being Italian, I tend toward the active, fire-in-the-belly, excited way of seeing and doing things. My husband says I'm like a summer storm. I blow in, there's thunder, lightning, wind and rain, then I blow out.

My Vietnamese housekeeper, Thi Thu, is the calmest person in the world. She's unflappable, but I know she's passionate about cooking. She arranges shrimp on a plate around a sculptured mound of seasoned rice with all their tails pointing just so. Her salads are mosaic perfections, every vegetable cut precisely and layered in bands of color. When I make a salad, I chop it up any old way I can and toss it all together. It's food. Clean it and eat it. Her dishes are works of art. Mine are works of sustenance. Anyone can tell by the results that she loves preparing meals, but watching her go about it with such amazing calm you'd never recognize her passion.

It's okay if your passion burns differently. What's important is that the fire burns bright for you.

NINE STRATEGIES FOR LIVING PASSIONATELY

In March 1982, I had the privilege of seeing Alicia Alonso dance. She was 61 years old. I had no doubt that her passionate drive accounted for her long, successful career. That same month I started my business. This woman and her unflagging energy have inspired me ever since.

We are measured not by how we deal with victory and accomplishment, but by how we deal with failure and disappointment. When life gets tough, I remember Alicia and other passionate women like her whose blazing fire wouldn't be stifled.

Nine Ways to Live Passionately

1. *Commit to the fire.* We live in an increasingly passive society today, where we can sit and watch the news, play video games or chat on the Internet and believe we're involved when all we're doing is idling in place while life passes us by. We're not doing much, yet it seems like we're doing a lot.

Passivity is dangerous to passion, because passion never resides in a passive house. A passionate woman doesn't wait on the sofa. She's awake and moving. When a scintillating opportunity appears she seizes it on the spot.

2. *Practice being fiery.* If you're thinking, "I'm not naturally passionate," don't despair. You can practice passion as easily as you can practice any sport. Start by approaching your day and your life with positive energy. Any negative energy will interfere with expressing your passion.

I had never even been to a hockey game until my husband dragged me to one "kicking and screaming." We sat behind the goal, protected by a glass barrier, and within minutes I was into it. I didn't know the rules, didn't understand what was happen-

ing down on that ice, but I was beating on the glass, yelling at the players, the goalies, the referees, the people around me, “kicking and screaming” and having the time of my life. I was practicing passion—at least, that’s what I told Tom.

It takes practice to be passionate, just as it takes practice to excel at any endeavor. Any time you feel as if you’re not living passionately, try to enjoy what’s happening anyway. We can’t skip the parts of life we don’t enjoy, and few of us can enjoy every single moment. I have a friend who runs five miles a day, even in rain or sleet, and when I mistakenly mentioned that she loves to run, she quickly corrected me. “I don’t love running, I love the benefits of running. All the while I’m out there I tell myself how good it will feel when I stop.” I had no idea she didn’t love running.

You have two choices about every moment you live: You can appreciate the experience and at least learn from it, or you can be miserable. Choose the positive road. Nothing destroys passion quicker than negativity. “I’m passionate about hip-hop singing but I hate my day job” is not the energy that will propel you to succeed in that day job until you can quit to pursue your passion for hip-hop. It’s okay to know you’re in a temporary way station, but be happy in your way station. Find at least one aspect of your job to be passionate about. No experience is a waste; it’s training for what comes next.

Practice passion in every situation and make everything you do your passion training ground.

3. *Do something, even if it’s wrong.* Ninety percent of success is showing up. Whether you’re selling an idea, trying to land a new job or learning to paint, the bottom line is that you have to show up and dance. Many people are afraid to commit to a passion because they feel that a firecracker has to go off, a light

has to shine or a voice from the heavens has to proclaim, “This is it!” Maybe that firecracker will pop, maybe not.

And what you’re passionate about today may arouse no interest tomorrow. At any given time new passions emerge and you evolve differently.

Yet, even when you recognize that your passion today might not be your passion tomorrow, that it’s okay to move on, committing to one path as opposed to another is often difficult. Do something anyway, even if it’s wrong.

4. *Light your own fire.* My dad is 81 years old. Sal has had two heart attacks and two bypass surgeries, and he has outlived two wives. Based on statistical probability he’s pretty much “out of warranty,” but keeps going and going and going because he has a reason for waking up every morning. My dad’s passionate about playing poker at a local casino to the point that I have to call him at a specific time or miss him entirely. He’s not a big gambler; he rarely wins or loses more than \$30 a day and usually ends the week even. You and I might shake our heads at such a passion, but it keeps him young and feisty.

Likewise, don’t be disappointed if others don’t get your passion. It doesn’t matter whether your passion satisfies anybody else. This is your life, your passion, not theirs.

Too often we buy into other people’s definition of what’s right or wrong, where we should or shouldn’t go. Stop being so well-behaved. I’m not suggesting we arbitrarily break rules. We need to know what has worked and failed to work in the past. But rules can also serve as constraints, holding you back from achieving your passionate success.

My motto is “I do it my way—you got a problem with that?” That motto helps me to live my fire, not everyone else’s. My way doesn’t always work, but at the end of the day,

I'm comfortable failing if I know I followed my own passion rather than someone else's.

Don't just break rules, make your own rules. A woman in my company is practically combustible. She has been setting fires all over our office since her first day. She accepts the responsibilities of her job while constantly making new rules and brilliantly gaining acceptance for them. She has completely rewritten her job description and is passionately involved in every aspect of the company. What new rule would you have to make to light your own bonfire?

5. *Ignite your fire with a spark.* Women often think their passion is not worthy, that it should be bigger, bolder, more important. No one pushed me to do great things while growing up, but I am thankful my family taught me to be passionate about little things like touch football, powdered sugar fights at Café du Monde and card games that cost me my allowance.

Sparks ignite fires. Only you can decide which spark is worthy of your time and energy, but a small passion that drives you is better than no passion at all. Small sparks give us confidence to light bolder fires.

Anita Roddick, who took The Body Shop from a passionate idea to more than 1,900 stores worldwide, says, "If you think you're too small to have an impact, try going to bed with a mosquito." Start with small sparks, and soon you will be rewarded with the blazing fire of bold passion.

6. *Translate your passions into written goals.* In the business world it's common knowledge that what gets measured gets done. A Harvard Business School study revealed that only 3 percent of the population have written goals, 14 percent have goals, just not written down, and 83 percent have no clearly

defined goals. The study further revealed that the 3 percent with written goals earned 10 times more than the others.

Individuals with written goals are more likely to have better health and happier marriages. The power of written goals is indisputable, and only after writing a goal down can you sincerely examine it and define the strategies to make it happen.

7. *Make time for your passions.* In a busy, demanding schedule, it's easy to believe we have no time for passions. If we believe that's so then we make it so. Conversely, if we believe in the promises we make to ourselves, then we will carve out the time to pursue a passion that promises fulfillment.

Many authors rise an hour early to finish writing a book. Many successful career women use their lunch hour to study, place important phone calls or otherwise make progress in pursuing their passions. Entrepreneurial homemakers stay up to pursue their venture long after the family has gone to bed.

Are you passionate about what you spend 60 to 80 percent of your time doing? If so, then you will undoubtedly succeed. If not, make it your mission to change that ratio. Live and work a passionate life. You deserve to be on fire.

8. *Align your relationships with your passions.* It's not uncommon for a woman's passion to conflict with important relationships. This is true whether the relationship is with your supervisor, your best friend or your life partner. Will you change your vision to hold on to the relationship or change the relationship to hold on to your passion?

An important success trait is the ability to detach from people who aren't on course with you. It doesn't mean that everyone you know and love has to agree totally with your life choices. But don't waste time with people who want to diminish you in any way.

I have a friend who put her career on hold after she married and had children. She stayed at home until the oldest was four years old, when she began doing volunteer work to get out of the house. That wasn't enough, so she took a full-time job, which required her to travel. She was making more money than her husband, even after four years off the market. Her in-laws, who believe a woman's only function is homemaker, bombarded her husband with their negative opinions. Emotionally torn, he wanted to support his wife but was conditioned by loyalty to his parents' ideals. Naturally, his wife also felt conflicted, eager to pursue her vision but emotionally invested in her husband and family.

I encouraged her to go with her vision, because it's her life. Too many women give up their career dreams to protect a relationship. That's traditional, but it can drive you into a mental institution. And some dreams, if you don't pursue them timely, will pass you by. When you're finally free to go after them, you've missed the window of opportunity. To her husband's credit, he went along because he valued the relationship as much as she did.

Conversely, a former student, whose husband felt threatened by her earning more money than he did, dissolved her successful consulting practice and gave up a six-figure income. To avoid conflict in her relationship she renounced her passion. Maybe she should have renounced her husband's limited thinking and surrounded herself instead with people who believed in her.

A relationship must be mutually beneficial, and any genuine relationship will adjust to change. When you recognize that a relationship is extinguishing your fire, ask yourself whether you should gracefully detach and move on. Communicate how much your vision means to you, do it in a

relationship-friendly way, and the people in your life may surprise you.

Open a communication path to enroll in your vision the people who matter to you. The game of life is challenging enough when players support one another. And life is more fun when the people on your team are truly aligned in the direction your intuition says is right.

9. *Keep the passion alive by stoking the fire.* While enjoying a hobby or other activity, have you ever thought, “If I could do this every day I’d be happy”? Then you got your wish and discovered it wasn’t enough. You didn’t feel quite as ecstatic and alive as you had expected.

Not everyone can switch passions in midlife. You invest years in education, gaining experience and advancing in your profession. You build a support structure and that structure depends on your continued involvement. Switching to a totally different profession means starting from ground level, reinvesting your resources in an unproven venture and climbing a different ladder to a different future. That’s fine if you truly yearn to start over and your passion drives you in that new direction. Many people’s passions burn brighter when they make sweeping changes.

At least once a week I’m ready to sell my company—or auction off my CEO position to the first bidder. I love my work and my company, but I don’t love every aspect of it. Do you ever feel this way about your life, your job, your career? Stop and reevaluate. If you’re like me, maybe you’re not experiencing the dreaded “burnout” but only a need to stoke your fire.

Do what you do, but find a different focus. Or do what you do differently. My best growth ideas come when I toss out the old embers and stir things up.

Reinvent yourself, as Daryn Kagan did when she changed from news reporter to sportscaster. She shook up tradition and defied the odds, first by going after a position traditionally held by a man, then by using that leverage to vault ahead of the competition. Throughout those years, she followed her passion, which never had a chance to burn out because she kept stoking it.

What aspect of your passion have you not fully explored? What will set you ablaze? What new opportunities are available to you now? Passion is precious. Don't let the mundane routines that surface in any pursuit dampen your fire. Look within and find a spark you can fan to full flame again.

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Ignite Your Fire with the
5 PROMISES

*P*ROMISE 1

I Will Live and Work a Passionate Life

Write down at least one passion from the earlier exercises. Do it, even if it's only a spark.

How do your passions relate to what you do now? Calculate the time you spend each day living and working your passions. If it's less than 75 percent, how can you increase that time?

*P*ROMISE 2

I Will Go for It or Reject It Outright

What holds you back from living your passions? Is it physical, mental, emotional or financial? Is it driven by adverse responsibilities or relationships? How can you eliminate or minimize the obstacles?

PROMISE 3

*I Will Take One Action Step a Day Toward
My Passionate Vision*

What one action will you take today toward living your passions?

PROMISE 4

I Commit to Being a Success Student for Life

What do you need to know to pursue your passions? How can you obtain this knowledge? When will you commit to learning it?

PROMISE 5

I Believe as a Woman I Really Can Do Anything

Recall a passion that fired you up, however briefly. List three principles you can take from that to your next, bolder passion.

EVIE'S FIRE

Certain things that I'm on fire about push me forward, especially at work. Ever since I was young, I have always been passionate about making a person feel happy or pleased. In my first job, working as a cashier, this passion transcended into building good relationships with customers. Subsequently I was promoted to supervisor. Then I was promoted again, to a "cash clerk." I'm the last person who needs to be counting money, but my managers translated my passionate behavior to mean that I would probably do anything in that company well. Through passion for being a good employee and lots of recounting, I got through it.

Today, my passion is still customer service, and I have written and spoken professionally about the subject. Although my education is in marketing, I mentor and work directly with customers. I also train and coordinate customer service for a high-energy company, mentoring customer service representatives to be as passionate about our customers as I am.

No matter where you are in life, you have to be on fire about at least one aspect of your job to really

make a difference and stand out. Passion is the one thing that gets me ahead. I'm still working on my college degree, but I've had no problem surpassing people who already have a college degree by making more money and holding higher positions. It doesn't make me more or less smart. My passion fuels my fire. I guess that says a lot about passion.

EVIE, 35

*Customer Relations Coordinator and
Marketing Creative*

Women are born passionate and have the potential to live life passionately. Dig deep, discover the fire in your soul, then read on to see how intuitive vision can broaden your realm of possibilities.

*Before I go out on the stage, I must place a motor in my soul.
When that begins to work, my legs and arms and my whole body
will move independently of my own will. But if I do not . . .
put the motor in my soul, I cannot dance.*

—Isadora Duncan