

Are You Ready to Give Up the Dream of Affluence? Me Neither!

The headlines are coming at us from everywhere. There are numerous stories all over the internet, in your local paper, in the news magazines and on the television news telling us that the age of affluence is over. This week my Time Magazine arrived in the mail with the cover page headline, "The New Frugality." Peggy Noonan, a respected journalist wrote this headline in the Wall Street Journal, "Goodbye Bland Affluence" USA Today ran an article about a family giving up on pursuing a life of abundance and instead opting for something they describe as "a simple self-sufficient lifestyle."

The premise is that the current economic crisis has forever changed our future. That we no longer control our own ability to achieve and acquire the wealth and abundance we desire. Noonan states that the future a lot of people are hoping for is a pared down lifestyle. They are looking for a smaller place to live where they can grow much of their own food, sew their own clothes and become what USA Today calls the "21st century homesteaders."

The idea seems to be that we need to change our consumer culture of deciding what we want for ourselves and move to a thrift culture where we take whatever comes our way. Time Magazine states, "A thrift culture invites us to be grateful for whatever we can get." Since when did it stop being okay to want to create the life you desire and instead have to settle for whatever we can get and be happy with it?

These pundits suggest that we will stop spending money on luxury items or personal care and accept a life dictated by others. Noonan writes, "People will be allowed to grow old again. There will be a certain liberation in this. There will be fewer facelifts and brow lifts, less Botox, less dyed hair among both men and women. They will look more like people used to look, before perfection came in." She goes on to state, "the new home fashion will be spare. This will be the return of an old WASP style: the good, frayed carpet."

Time Magazine says that we are stripping down and starting over. According to their research, "most people think the pain will be lasting and the effects permanent." It seems they want us to believe we will be in a permanent new reality that makes us re-think the way we live our lives, what we can accomplish, own and do. Frankly, I just don't buy it.

When you started your business, you had a reason to do so. There was some type of goal and hopefully a dream that you wanted to achieve. There is no reason for you not to continue to pursue that dream with all your heart and passion. There are probably many reasons why the media wants to sell this new reality. Quite frankly, it really doesn't matter what they are. What matters is what you believe.

It is certainly possible that the recession will cause you to make some modifications to the tactics and plans you had in place prior to its start. That doesn't mean you have to

give up your dreams, lower your expectations and take whatever you get. Continue to take charge of your activities that will get you closer to where you want to go. Find ways to adjust accordingly and pursue your path.

About thirty million people saw a wonderful example of not giving up on your dream and being willing to put yourself out there to get what you want. The name Susan Boyle is probably very familiar to many of you. She is the forty-seven year old woman from Blackburn, Scotland who performed on the hit show "Britain's Got Talent."

Susan is a very unassuming woman from a small village in Scotland. When she stepped onto the stage to perform, all the judges, including the fan favorite Simon Cowell, were visibly unimpressed. They asked her why she was there and she said it was because she had a dream. Her dream was to become a professional singer and sing in front of a large audience. The judges rolled their eyes, made skeptical faces and snickered. The audience did the same thing. It was obvious from the giggles and laughs coming from the audience that they expected a bad performance.

All that changed as soon as she sang the first note of her chosen song, "I Dreamed a Dream," from "Les Miserables." She sang a beautiful rendition of this wonderful song that made the jaws drop of every one in the audience, including Simon Cowell. Within the first minute of the song, the audience was on their feet giving her a standing ovation. It was a very uplifting experience to see her take the risk and be rewarded for the effort. If you haven't seen the video yet, you owe it to yourself to go and check it out at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OcQ9A-5noM&feature=related>.

Be like Susan and go for your dreams. Just as Susan didn't let the skepticism of others intimidate and hold her back, you should not let the media, politicians or any other naysayers hold you back. Don't buy into all the hype.

Entrepreneurship is still the best way to build the life you desire. That is not likely to change anytime soon. You are in control of your own destiny. Make whatever adjustments you need to not only to survive the recession, but to grow and come out of it even stronger than before. America was built on the ideas, guts, hard work, innovation and creativity of the entrepreneur. It will continue to prosper under those same ideals.

The media stories seem to me to be no more than a way to inflict guilt on those who wish to pursue a life of purpose, wealth and abundance. There is no guilt involved in being successful and pursuing your passion. Your success allows others to also grow and succeed. Stay the course and build your own reality.

To your success,
Dennis