

Dislike your job? Create another one

By CHRISTIAN MILLMAN

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Doyle's alarm clock goes off at 6:50 a.m. He rolls over, hits the snooze button a few times and finally drags himself out of bed about 7:15.

The first thing he feels is a sense of dread — over going to work. Doyle (he doesn't want his last name used) is a salesman at a local business. He's in his late 40s and has been in sales, in one capacity or another, since his early 20s.

"Don't get me wrong, sales has been good to me in a lot of ways," he said. "I've bought and paid for a house, I've always had a good car and my family has never wanted for anything."

But, he's always wondered if another line of work would bring him greater satisfaction, a sense of accomplishment that he says has always been missing in his life.

"In school, I was a pretty good athlete, nowhere good enough to ever be a pro, but I always thought it would be nice to work somehow in the field of sports," he said.

Doyle is not alone in his unhappiness with his career.

"It seems to me that 75 to 80 percent of people feel unfulfilled in their jobs," said Raymond Gerson, author of "How To Create The Job You Want." Gerson should know; he's had more than 25 years of experience in job placement, career development, and career counselling. He also holds a masters degree in psychology.

A problem, said Gerson, is that many people simply "fall" into a line of work without ever taking into account their interests and talents.

HOW TO

CREATE THE JOB YOU WANT

Six Steps to a Fulfilling Career

RAYMOND GERSON

Available through Small Press Alliance, 1933 Whitfield Park Loop, Sarasota, Fla., 34243 or 1-800-444-2524.

The benefits of choosing a livelihood, said Gerson, are clear.

"Studies have shown that life satisfaction is enhanced considerably by career satisfaction," said Gerson. This is almost inevitable, he said, considering that the majority of a person's waking hours are spent at work.

"Conversely, if someone is in a job and is miserable, it can have a detrimental effect on their lives, their relationships, their finances and even their health. There's a definite correlation between good health and

"The way most people find jobs, is that we don't start with a very good inventory of ourselves and our gifts," he said. "I believe the place to start is within, then we can say 'OK, what jobs are out there that match who I am?'"

"Life is precious and short-lived. I think it's a really important question to ask of ourselves 'what do I want to do with my time here?'"

Benefits of job satisfaction

having a purpose in life."

A purpose in life. That's what it all boils down to, said Gerson, noting that far too many people suffer from a feeling of aimlessness, simply drifting through their days at work, hanging on from one paycheck to the next.

"Finding a purpose in life and living it out through your line of work, it just seems to bring people alive," he said. "I believe that we all have God-given talents and we have a responsibility to find out what they are and to put them to use to make a positive contribution."

He wrote his book, "How To Create The Job You Want," because he had found difficulty finding a clear, concise manual that applies to students and busy adults alike. It maps out six steps to be used by those interested in creating a job in a field of their choice, even when an opening doesn't exist.

Changing careers not impossible

Sound impossible or too difficult for many people who may be saddled with bills and a constrictive lifestyle? Then take the case of Linda Hardaway, a former high school dropout and mother of seven children.

Hardaway was in her mid-30s when she had her third heart attack. She weighed 550 pounds and had never had a job, let alone a job that brought her any kind of personal satisfaction.

"I really didn't know what I wanted to do," she said from her Austin, Texas, home. "After I had my third heart attack, I was in the hospital and I had just given up. I didn't want to move out of the bed anymore."

It was during her last stay in the hospi-

tal that Hardaway decided that there must be more than the life she had always known. Coincidentally, she found a copy of Gerson's book and began to thumb through, applying the steps to her own life.

Although she had no training as an artist or designer, she began to sketch designs of larger women's clothing. To her surprise, she impressed both herself and others with the quality of the drawings.

"Since I got home from the hospital, I have not been able to stop," she laughed. "Now I have a complete business started."

Called Big, Bold and Beautiful, Hardaway's line of clothing for larger women debuts in a showing this fall in Texas. And, amazingly to her, Hardaway's whole outlook on life has changed and even her health has improved. She has lost 175 pounds and has dropped from taking 13 different medications a day to only a couple.

Her line of clothing is poised to take off, too. One thing that Hardaway found when she began to research the industry is that she really doesn't have any competitors.

"I am a larger woman," she said. "I know what it's like to go into a store and to not be able to find anything attractive. It's depressing."

And, she said, it's irrelevant how stuck someone feels in their particular line of work. If they want it badly enough, they can change.

"I've proven that to myself," said Hardaway. "No matter what the barriers are, you can be anything you want. I don't care how much money you make, if you're unhappy with your job, you're going to be miserable and stressed out and it's just not worth it."