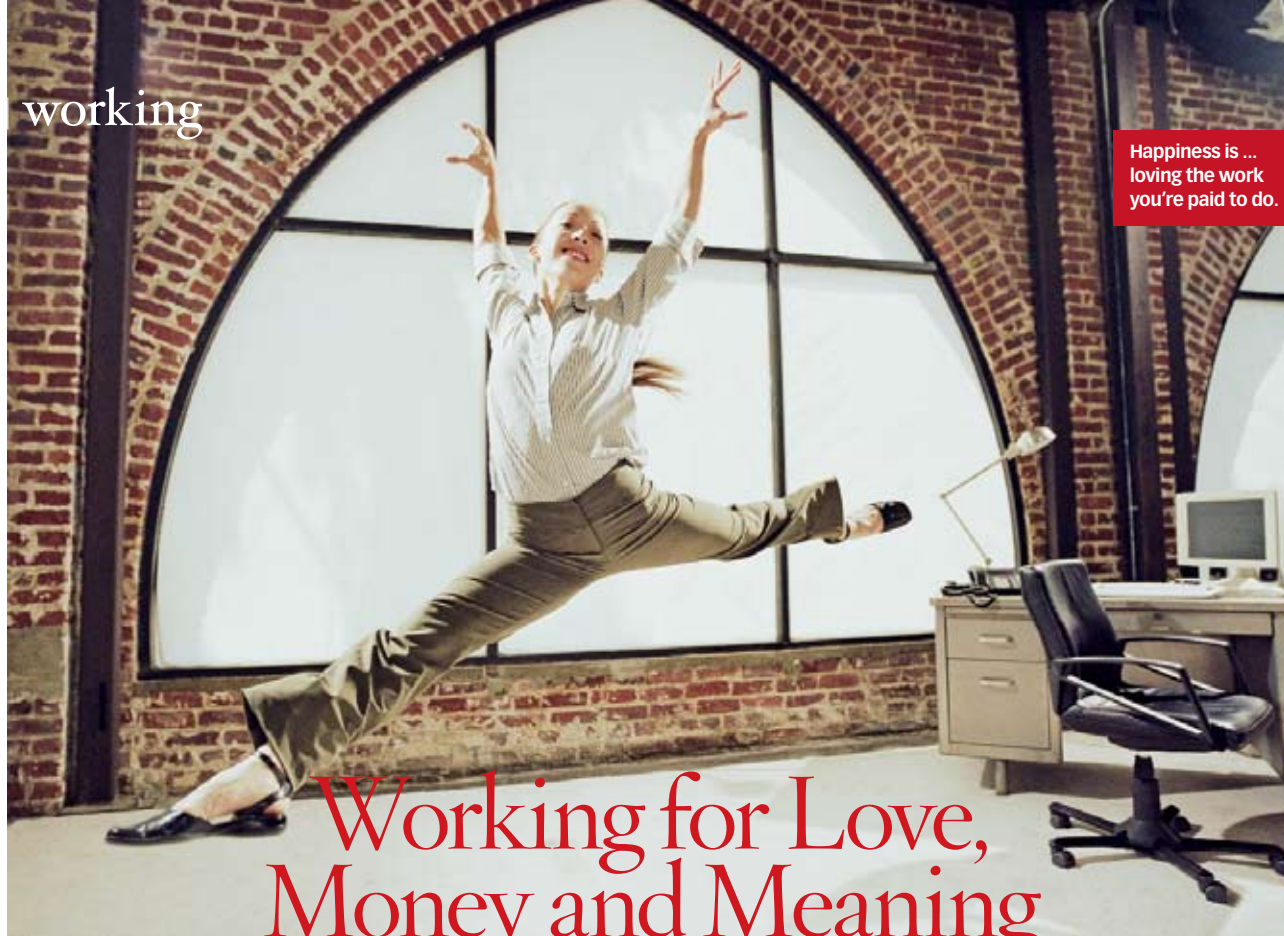


Happiness is ...
loving the work
you're paid to do.



Working for Love, Money and Meaning

Bestselling author **NICK WILLIAMS** quit his job to follow his dream. Can he help you discover the work you were born to do, too?

IN 1988, SITTING AT MY DESK, I found myself harbouring a deep curiosity about what I could become. I was bored in my well-paid and prestigious job at an IT company, selling expensive computers to corporate clients. Some greater force seemed to be operating within me, calling me to risk blossoming. I felt I had potential that was unrealised. But the greater part of me was terrified I would commit emotional suicide if I followed my heart and stepped off the conventional career path. Growing up according to the hard work ethic, I'd buried any ideas about doing something I loved. I believed work shouldn't be enjoyable, that it was a necessity to earning a living.

Three years of this inner conflict later, I mustered the courage to quit, gradually creating my dream of writing, speaking and teaching, inspiring others to follow their hearts. But first I had to become an example myself. Today I am

living the work I was born to do, and life is bigger, more meaningful and inspiring. I've written five books—one a bestseller—have given talks in dozens of cities around the world, and I'm hardly able to believe that I get paid for it, too.

A NEW WORK ETHIC AND VISION

It seems ingrained in us to either sacrifice our dreams and our deeper self in return for a regular salary, or follow our heart and do something that our soul needs, but holds risks in terms of financial success or security.

The dilemma is: Do you go for the money, or the love and meaning? You *can* have both, but you need to move beyond the idea that work is something negative, involving sacrifice, pain or boredom. Too few of us truly understand the vocational dimension of work – that it can be a blessing that we enjoy, and something which allows our unique gifts and talents to flow out and serve others.

This is the work ethic of joy – it is the highest view of work, wonderfully expressed by poet and writer Kahlil Gibran in *The Prophet*, “Your work is your love made visible.” When your work is the canvas onto which you express your soul, it is the job you were born to do, and involves moving beyond self-sacrifice to self-fulfilment, beyond dilemma to authenticity, and leads to a life of purpose and success.

HOW YOU DISCOVER THE WORK YOU WERE BORN TO DO

Your desire to discover the work you were born to do is not a selfish act but a spiritual impulse, and is actually one of the most generous things you can do for yourself. The question most people ask is, How do I find mine? Over the past 15 years I have found nine particular ways that people come to find what they'd love to do. Sometimes the answers are on the surface, other times they are buried, needing excavation.

1. Through your inspiration, joy and a sense of calling

It is the work that would inspire you; you feel called to it and it feels right in your heart. It's a field you're naturally drawn to and are curious about. It's what you would most love to do.

2. Behind your greatest resistance

The counterpart of inspiration is resistance, and often the work you'd most love to do is what you spend most time and energy procrastinating about; avoiding it, making excuses for why you haven't done it and talking yourself out of it. Many people are beaten by this resistance and never reach their full potential.

3. In your shadow life

The talents you have disowned become your unlived life, which you can only see in others. You can be close to the work you'd love, but you are more comfortable seeing other people's creativity and talent – you're afraid to acknowledge your own. Begin to put your own talents out there and move them towards the centre of your life. Your playing small doesn't serve the world, or yourself.

4. Beneath the familiar statement "I don't know"

Often we genuinely don't know, but with good questions and coaching, we can reach clarity. *I don't know* also masks *I am afraid to know* because then *I'd have to change, and that scares me even more*. We can confuse *I don't know what* with *I don't know how*.

Don't deny what you know you'd love to do simply because you don't know how you could do it and succeed. You can learn.

5. Through your naturalness, seen in the eyes of others

A great blind spot most of us have is to our natural abilities and talents. We value struggle, not ease, so don't appreciate or recognise what comes easily to us, and can easily dismiss it, missing our own unique brilliance. Notice how others acknowledge and appreciate you.

6. Behind the words "if only someone would pay me to do it"

We believe we can pursue our dreams once we have been successful and have made our money, and don't realise that we can support ourselves financially by pursuing our dreams now. It stems from the belief that we either work for love or money, but not both. There is practically nothing today that you can't get paid for. Think about what you would most like to be paid for doing or being.

7. In your lost dreams and your underutilised talent

Often, as children, we do know what we'd love to do, but we can be actively discouraged from it, criticised for it or somehow abandon our passions to join the "grown-up" world of working for money. You can go back and reconnect with what you loved, and sometimes this can be painful but poignant.

8. Behind a wake-up call or a crisis

A refusal to listen to our intuition and deeper self could precipitate a full-blown crisis. When things fall apart we can feel awful, but so many people speak in retrospect about their illness, redundancy or bankruptcy being the best thing that ever happened to them. It got them back on track to a greater and more authentic life, but they needed to be broken open first, allowing the phoenix to rise from the ashes.

9. In a greater sense of yourself and an expanded sense of your identity

You have probably experienced a comprehensive conditioning in little-ness – being told you are nothing special and that you shouldn't think too highly of yourself or, at worst, you are flawed or destined to fail. Your spirit is limitless, and your inspired dreams may seem too big, but you are called to grow, not shrink away.

OVERCOMING YOUR RESISTANCE

If it were as easy as that, we'd all be living our dreams, but the more important something is to you the more likely you are to experience resistance to it. Here are some tips for overcoming this obstacle.

- Commit to taking some action, even if it is only in baby steps. The tiniest of steps build your momentum and bring your dreams to life.

- Develop your courage – feel the fear, guilt, doubt or unworthiness, but act in the face of them; don't wait for these to subside. Engage with your fear to grow bigger than it.

- Learn the "how to" information and strategies – educate yourself and learn what you don't know, so you can move forward.

- Don't try and solve problems you don't have yet – you can waste so much energy worrying about what might happen in the future. Act now, and deal with the future when you get there.

- Get "higher quality" problems. We all have issues, so focus on those you'd love to have, like "I have too many clients to be able to service!"

- Surround yourself with positive people – isolation is the biggest dream killer, and the belief, love and encouragement of others helps you break through.

Step into your greater power and keep your focus on contribution; you have unique gifts, which the world needs, so give what you've got. **Q**

Nick Williams is a UK-based expert on work and the author of five books, including the bestselling The Work We Were Born to Do (Element Books). He works with individuals, entrepreneurs and corporations to spread a work ethic of joy. Nick wants to give away a million copies of his programme, Discover The Work We Were Born to Do, by 2012 – you can download your copy now from inspired-entrepreneur.com