

Getting What You Want While Loving What You Have

Posted on June 7, 2012 in Leadership – Robin Sharma

Some pundits encourage us to enjoy the moment and appreciate what we have, suggesting that constantly striving for more is unhealthy and the primary source of our discontent. And others say that, as human beings, we were built to push beyond our comfort zones each day and reach for something higher. I've struggled a lot with this issue, as I articulate a personal philosophy that I will live my life under.

I think I've found the answer, a solution that feels right to me: it's a balance. I call it The Mandela Balance. Nelson Mandela, a hero of mine, once said: "After climbing a great hill, one finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can only rest for a moment, for with freedom comes responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk has not yet ended."

To me, Nelson Mandela is suggesting that it's all about a balance. Enjoy the view from where you are at. Savor how far you have come. Be grateful for where you are along the journey that is your life. But, remember that with the gifts that reside within you come great responsibilities. I believe that every human being has a Duty to Shine. We must walk out into the world and do our best to be of greater service to others and greater citizens in the world. We must continually walk towards our fears and make more of our lives. We must constantly play a bigger game. This drive to realize more of our greatest selves has, I believe, been knitted into our DNA and to deny it is to deny our human nature.

And yes, as we set higher dreams and raise our personal standards, we will create discontent. But this world was built by people who felt some discontent with the way things were and knew they could do better. Think Gandhi. Think Mother Teresa. Think Steve Jobs and Bill Gates. Think Einstein. Think Mandela.

So love what you have. And then go for what you want.