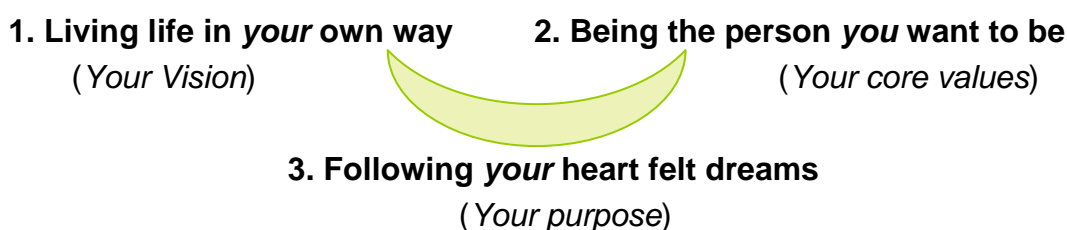




Midlife is a time to ask ourselves some of life's chewier questions – who am I? What's my purpose in life? What gives my life meaning? The answers to these questions allow us to re-evaluate our priorities and make mid course corrections leading us to a richer, more meaningful existence. The kind of existence we've always longed for.

The single most important key to success is this: Success is whatever *you* define it to be. Your meaning of success should naturally embody your heart-felt dreams and your highest aspirations. Anything and everything that's aligned with your core values, anything and everything that's connected with your true purpose in life. It doesn't mean the life your parents want for you. Ignore what friends and family consider is success. It's not the life you think you "should" have because it's safe, secure, and sensible. It's not a life deemed the "norm" by society's standards. Forget what the media proclaims. Focus solely on what success means to *you*.

The year off gave me a lot of time to think about this one and this is what I've come up with. Its my definition of success or, as I prefer to call it, "my smile formula" is:



Living life in *your* own way – More than anything this means breaking the chains of conformity. As you start to pay close attention you'll soon notice how much conformity there is in the world. Conformity suffocates creativity. Living life in your own way is about following your heart-felt dreams, following your vision of the good life.

Being the person *you* want to be – your success will naturally follow when you ask and answer two important questions – who am I? Why am I here? The "who am I" question isn't related to who you are today, but who you can be as an expression of your real self. This is the realm of soul, your authentic self that resides in your heart. Most of us are far from in touch with our authentic self, but rather an illusion of 'shoulds', 'coulds', and 'musts' that we believe we have to accomplish to finally be our true self. What we falsely believe to be our true self is only a definition that's been given to us from our past, others and even our own self. When we connect to our authentic self we're led to a fulfilling life by our true "internal compass," our core values.

Following *your* heart – is about answering the question why am I here? This is related to, “who am I” but different in that it seeks to find the answer to what is our life’s purpose. It’s how we go about sharing our unique gifts and greatness with the world and extracting the most out of life. The dreams that reside in us are our heart’s gifts. Quite simply we owe it to ourselves and every person on this planet to pursue the attainment of them. This is life’s biggest challenge and one of the greatest opportunities for us to grow in mid-life.

The short hand version of the formula is a Living Being Following

Living, which means you have feeling of aliveness.

Being, which means your coming from your core or your essence

Following - your heart, your truth.

Think deeply and consider the answers to these three important questions:

1. What are my heart-felt dreams?
2. What are my core values?
3. What is my purpose in life?

I know it’s a simple formula but following it will create a significant life map for you to follow on a day-to-day basis. Meaningful change will take place. By living the answers that gradually begin to bubble up you’ll get closer to living what your soul intends.

I have found that once you become clear on *your* definition of success you’re in a much better position to help others realise better lives for themselves and ultimately do your part in taking good care of this delicate, but sacred planet of ours.

With Love

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