

Quit Your Day Job

Getting More from Life



www.alventures.com

A “Getting more from life” publication, by Ali Hale of [Aliventures](#).

This is a free ebook – you’re absolutely welcome to share it with all your friends!

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What Do You Love?

Maybe you want to travel. Or you've got a hobby that you're really passionate about. Or you want to contribute something to the world. Whatever it is, you've got something pulling on you, telling you there's more to life.

Or perhaps it's about what you hate. You're not just indifferent to your day job: **you can't stand it**. You want to quit – but you have no idea what else you could do.

You're far, far from alone.

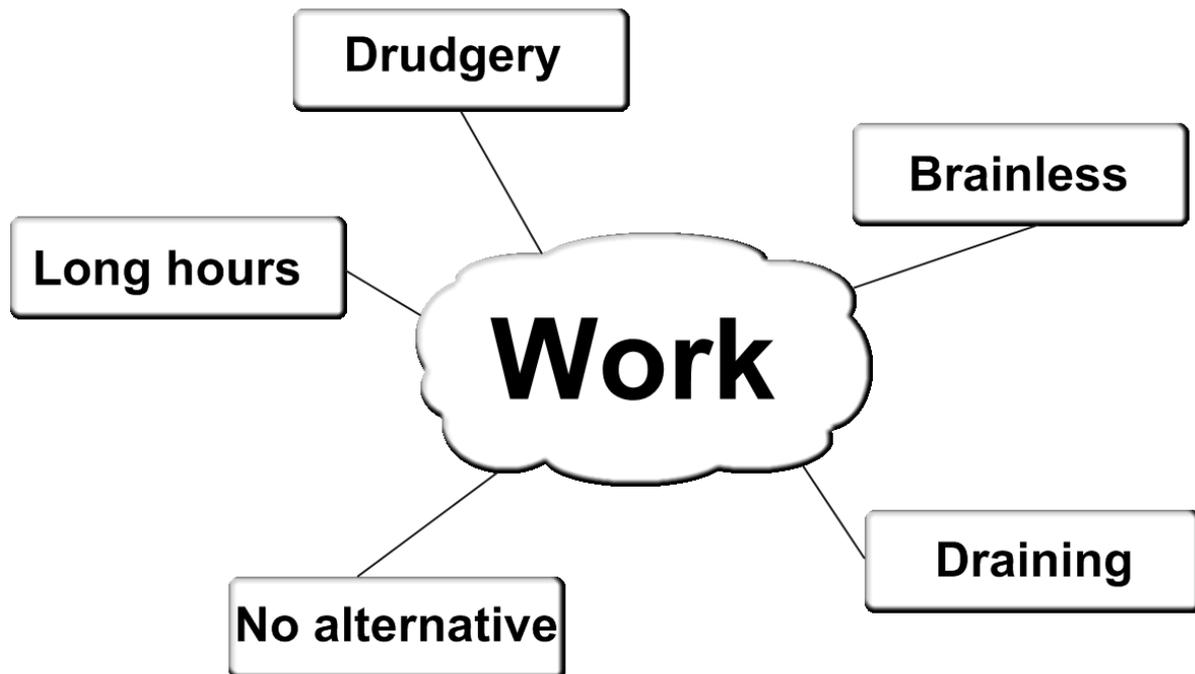
In 2007, ***fewer than half*** of Americans were even “satisfied” with their jobs. It's worse amongst newer employees: less than 39% of the under-25s were satisfied.

(Statistics taken from [U.S. Job Satisfaction Declines, The Conference Board Reports](#))

Given those figures, imagine how tiny a fraction of us are *passionate* about our jobs? How many of us *love* what we spend a huge chunk of our waking hours on?

And how many of us sit there, counting the hours till the end of the week, struggling on till Friday, recovering over the weekend, only to do it all again, and again, and again?

Our mental map often looks like this:



It's not a great picture.

The good news is ... it doesn't have to be that way. More and more people are turning their backs on wage dependency and striking out on their own. **More and more people are finding ways to do what they love – and making a living from it.**

In this ebook, I've included some quotes from people who escaped the corporate world. Some had high-paying, high-status jobs. Some had jobs they'd been trying to escape for years. They're following very different paths from one another – but they're all following their hearts.

So how did they do it? How can you?

Keep reading. That's what I'm going to teach you.

But First ... Take the Toughest Step

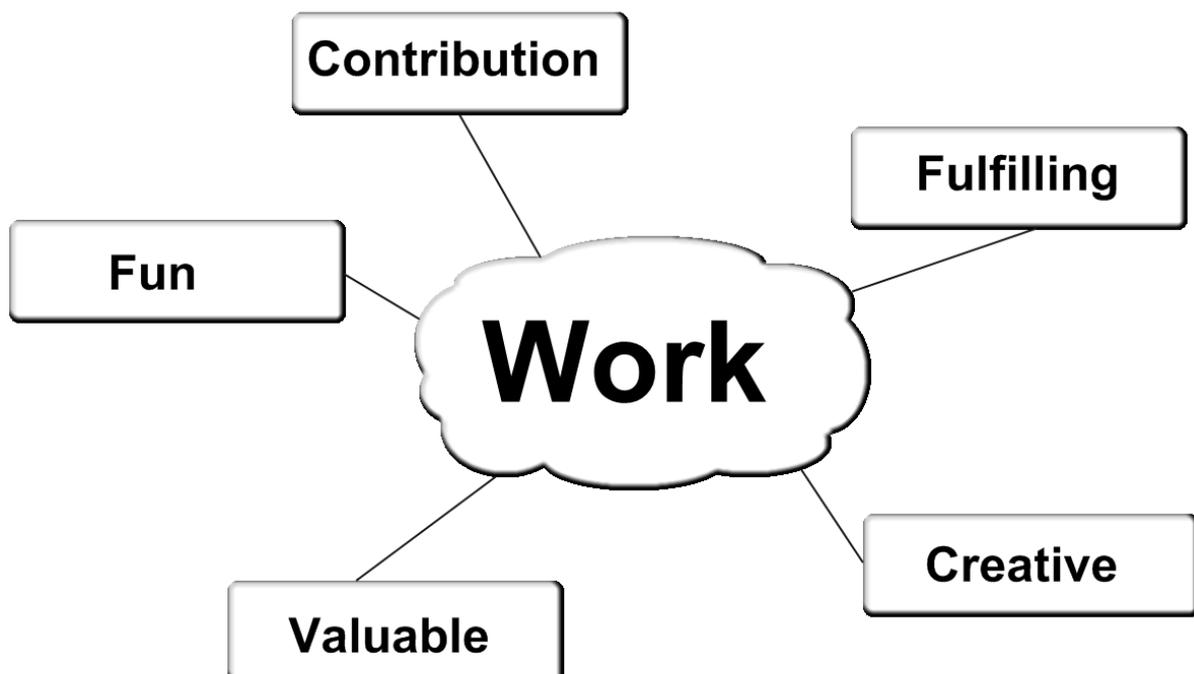
What do you reckon the toughest part of quitting your day job will be?

- It's not the loss of income, or of status.
- It's not having your colleagues and friends think you're barmy.
- It's not figuring out how to word your resignation letter.
- **It's not even having to tell your grandma.**

The toughest thing about quitting is *getting your head round the idea*. Because if you can't shake off that belief that a job is *the way*, that a job is *it*, that a job is *how life works* – you're never going to leave your cubicle.

You're never going to do what it takes to put yourself in a strong position to leave. You're never going to be willing to take that final step.

But if you can, you can have a mental map of work more like this:



Give Yourself Permission

There might be a hell of a lot of people trying to keep you in your job. Your parents. Your spouse. Your employer. Your colleagues. The media, in all its ugly forms.

And you might have made some crappy choices in the past that you're living with now. That can be really tough.

You might be in some crappy circumstances due to other people's choices. That's tougher. But...

...if you take nothing else away from this ebook, take away this:

It's your life, and your responsibility to choose how to live it.

That might be scary or awesome or, probably, a bit of both.

Give yourself permission to quit. Tell yourself that you *don't have to have a job*. (You might not be able to see any viable alternatives yet. That's okay.)

If you're struggling with this, you might want to read:

- [Life: Choose Your Own Adventure](#)
- [Stop Trying to Please Everyone: Live Your Way](#)

Tattoo Freedom On Your Mind

The one thing your employer can't lay claim to in the office is the inside of your head. Sure, you might have to stick out that day job for a few more months.

But you can stick it out without *accepting* it.

Think freedom. Imagine it emblazoned on the inside of your skull. Freedom. You can have it. You're going to have it. Let that one word keep you going. Sit deadpan through those pointless meetings thinking "*I'm going to be free.*" Walk the neon-lit corridors, thinking "freedom" with every step.

It's probably best not to chant out loud, though.

We tend to get what we focus on. If you tattoo "freedom" on your mind, you're going to be determined to get there.

(If "freedom" isn't strong enough for you, try "liberation". This is one I've seen a few people use to good effect, including [Leo Babauta](#) and [Jonathan Mead](#).)

Figuring Out Where and How to Begin

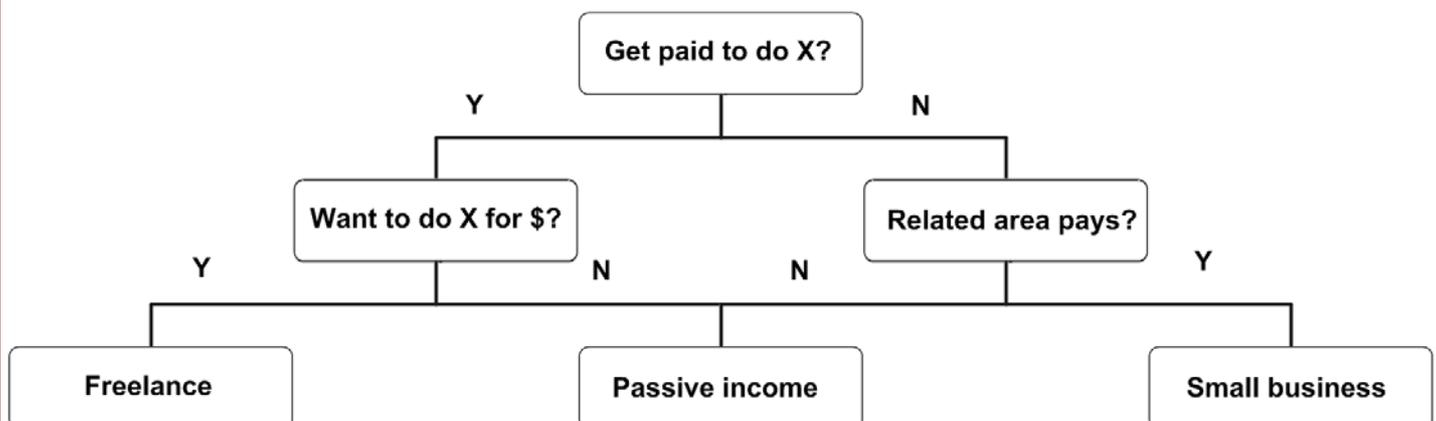
Do you have a passion already? Something you do in the evenings, on the weekends; something you might've been keen on since you were a kid.

Don't second-guess yourself at this stage because you think you won't make money from it. In the words of one my favourite life coach in all the world ([Tim Brownson](#)):

“People make money doing all sorts of weird and wonderful things, things that they genuinely love. People actually get paid to go shopping, eat food, tell jokes, play with toys, design things, play sports, pretend they are other people, write stuff, daydream, drive cars, care for animals, fly planes, talk, coach people and more or less anything else you can imagine.”

(From Tim's book-with-a-very-long-title: [Don't Ask Stupid Questions? There Are No Stupid Questions](#). It's five-star rated on Amazon, well worth checking out.)

But, *don't* stop reading if your passion is something you don't even want to make money from. There's still an alternative to the day job:



A Passion You Can Sell = Freelancing

If you're lucky, your passion will be something that you're actually *good* at, and will involve an obviously-saleable component. Something like:

- Computer programming
- Graphic design
- Writing
- Teaching, training or coaching

If you enjoy what you *do* at work but not all the surroundings (the hours, the people...) then freelancing in your current career area might be for you.

A Passion You Think You Can't Sell = Create a Business

A lot of us, though, have many hobbies or interests which aren't directly saleable. Things like:

- Watching formula 1
- Playing computer games
- Football
- Reading

One of the best books I've read on turning a passion into money is Jonathan Field's inspiring and solid-advice-packed book *Career Renegade: How to Make a Great Living Doing What You Love*. (You can [read my review here](#).)

Career Renegade is aimed at folks who want to own or run businesses that stem from their interests, and Jonathan shares examples from tiny one-person outfits to huge franchises.

A Passion You Don't Want to Sell = Passive Income

And sometimes, you've got a passion which you don't *want* make money from, something you want to keep pure. Maybe you write fiction or poetry. Maybe you want to devote a lot of time to volunteering, or to a religious or spiritual organisation. Maybe you just want a lot of free time to travel, walk ... exist.

I've got friends who work in jobs that they're never going to really *care* about. Their logic is that the job is the price they pay to wholeheartedly pursue their *real* passions on the side.

If that sounds like you, I don't get your reasoning.

You're "spending" eight hours of your life each day to buy a few hours to do what you enjoy. Why not set up a few passive income streams to earn money every hour, *regardless of what you're doing or where you are at the time?*

I'm in the very early days of experimenting with passive income, and I can already tell you, it's an *amazing* feeling when you get sent money for doing absolutely nothing!

Still stuck? No passions, interests, hobbies?

- What did you love doing as a kid?
- Which bits of your day job do you enjoy?
- What was your favourite subject at school?
- A genie grants you a whole week free of any work, chores or "should-dos". What do you get up to?

Don't self-censor. Don't cross anything off your list because it's "too impractical". Even if what you love most in the world is sleeping, you can make money whilst doing that (through passive income).

Once you've got an inkling of which route's for you— read on. All three of these routes *work* – plenty of real people (myself included) make money from one or more of these.

You can take your first steps down any of these paths while you're still working for an employer. You don't need to quit your job and take a great leap into the unknown. You can build up a second revenue stream from freelancing, from your own business or from passive income, until it's the right time for you to quit.

Route #1: Freelancing

“In medieval times when knights roamed the land and fighting was done on horseback with a long pole known as a lance, the mercenaries of the time were referred to as ‘free lances’.”

(Collis Ta’eed, [A Comprehensive Guide to Starting Your Freelance Career](#))

The first non-job way of making money is to freelance. This is as pure and simple as working for yourself gets. Typical freelance areas include:

- Writing
- Programming (and web coding)
- Graphic design
- Illustration

If you’ve got skills in one of those, you can make a great hourly wage. There’s an absolute ton of information online about every aspect of freelancing, including finding clients, getting educated, coping with health insurance and taxes, administration, marketing, doing the actual work...

Don’t be put off by nay-sayers who think that freelancing is an insecure way to make a living. It’s much more secure than many jobs are: you aren’t reliant on just one source of income (an employer) – instead, you have multiple clients.

Freelancing Resources

[Freelance Switch](#) – blog with tons of advice on all areas of freelancing, strong community feel

Start with: [A Comprehensive Guide to Starting Your Freelance Career](#)
[Freelancing 101: The Basics](#)

[Freelance Folder](#) – blog with similar content to Freelance Switch, slightly more entrepreneurial focus

Start with: [My Freelance Journey: 12 Things I've Learned Along the Way](#)
[10 Things You've Heard About Freelancing That Are Actually True](#)

[How to be a Rockstar Freelancer](#) – ebook/book

I bought this while I was still in the day job. It's an encouraging read packed with practical advice. It won't teach you how to *do* the writing, web design etc, but it's a great resource for how to set up and manage the business side of freelancing. (I've written [a full review here.](#))

Shameless self-promotion coming up...

[Staff Blogging Course](#) – ebook/e-course, authored by yours truly

I pay my rent and bills through blogging, and wrote the [six-part Staff Blogging Course](#) to teach other would-be freelancers to do the same.

Route #2: Small Business

“When I started this personal development business in October 2004, I went right out and plunked down the hefty sum of \$9 to register the domain name. After that I required that every other dollar I wanted to spend on this business would come out of revenue.”

(Steve Pavlina, offering an answer to the problem [My Wife Won't Let Me Start My Own Business](#), on [StevePavlina.com](#) – which he was making \$40,000 a month from by May 2007)

If your passion isn't something like “writing” or “computer programming” but more like “horses” or “retro computer games” or “real ale”, then starting a business might be for you.

You can focus *around* your passion, and if you're not sure how to do that, read Jonathan Field's excellent book, [Career Renegade](#).

Contrary to popular belief, you *don't* need a ton of start-up capital, a franchise, or a complex business plan. In many cases, your start-up costs are going to be a website and maybe some business cards.

Still stuck for ideas? Trent Hamm has a great list of [50 Side Business You Can Start On Your Own](#) on his blog [The Simple Dollar](#). See if any of those strike a chord.

Small Business Resources

[IttyBiz](#) – small business blog (focusing on marketing)

Naomi Dunford is very, very knowledgeable and very very readable (if you're okay with bad language). Her blog is and packed with great tips and advice.

Start with: [Money for Home Business: Can You Afford It?](#)

[Starting a Home Business? The One Piece of Advice You Can't Ignore](#)

[Entrepreneur's Journey](#) – online business blog

This blog from Yaro Starak (a *big* name in the internet business world) focuses on making money from online endeavours. If you're reading an ebook, you're net-savvy enough to make an internet business work.

Start with: [Is Internet Marketing Just Another Fools Gold Rush?](#)

[Start an Internet Business in 3 Easy Steps \(And What Holds You Back\)](#)

[Online Business School](#) – downloadable, self-study course

Fantastic, *very* in-depth course (six modules, audio, video & transcripts) that I'd recommend to any beginner/intermediate online business owners. It's pricy (\$397 at time of writing) but it's *packed* with information. I've written a [glowing review of it](#) if you want more details.

Turning your blog into a business – specific resources:

[ProBlogger](#) – the must-read blog for anyone wanting to make money blogging. Darren’s enthusiasm and gentle spirit shines through his writing, and there’s a *huge* amount of in-depth free content.

Start with: [Blogging Tips for Beginners](#)
[How I Make Money Blogging](#)

[Daily Blog Tips](#) –more focus on the technology of blogging. High-quality information from Daniel Scocco, who runs a number of online businesses.

Start with: [28 Ways to Make Money With Your Website](#)
[10 Requisites for Professional Bloggers](#)

[31 Days to Build a Better Blog](#) – ebook/workbook from Darren Rowse of ProBlogger.

Great, practical, resource to make you actually *do* something. Aimed at people who already have a blog that they want to improve and monetise.

“Blogs” section of [Cloud Living](#) – aimed new bloggers who want to make money from blogging. (You can [read my review of Cloud Living here.](#))

[ProBlogger: Secrets for Blogging Your Way to a Six-Figure](#) Income – book by Darren Rowse and Chris Garrett.

Comprehensive guide aimed at beginners. Covers topics like “flipping” (creating and selling) blogs.

Route #3: Passive Income

“Affiliate marketing done ethically (i.e. not recommending shitty products that you’ve never used) benefits everyone. The company gets a new customer. The customer gets a tried-and-true service. The referrer gets a piece of the action. You’re going to be recommending stuff to people anyway, so you might as well get paid for it.”

(Johnny B. Truant, from [Johnny Plays with Free Stuff and Affiliate Marketing](#), on the *IttyBiz* blog)

You don’t want to be a freelancer *or* run a small business. Frankly, from your point of view, both sound like a lot of hassle. At least your dull-but-okay job involves free coffee.

Good news – there’s a route for you too.

If you just want money to finance the rest of your life, your aim is simply to *maximise your income and minimise your hours*.

That means finding sources of passive, or almost passive, income: money that, with an initial effort and maybe some occasional maintenance, just keeps rolling in.

Yes, it sounds like a “get rich quick” scam. It’s not.

To give you some idea, I’m making upwards of \$250 a month from advertising revenue on a rarely-updated blog ([The Office Diet](#), if you want to take a look – those links under “Adverts” in the side bars). **That’s \$3000/year** which involves nothing more than sending an occasional email telling people to “gimme more money or I take your link down”, though I put it more nicely than that.

I’ve *never* had to hunt down advertisers, each of them approached me.

Passive Income Resources

Unfortunately, a lot of passive income advice is either well meaning crap or a dangerous scam.

These are resources which, like everything I recommend in this ebook, I've used myself:

[Not by the Hour](#) - website from the FreelanceSwitch team.

Aimed at freelancers wanting to create a passive-income stream or two. Good place to start.

[The Four-Hour Work Week](#) – book by Tim Ferriss

Very popular in the blogosphere, Ferriss's book sets out a step-by-step guide for creating a "muse" business: where you work, literally, four hours a week. (There are also a lot of tips about cutting out and outsourcing work, and figuring out what to do with your freedom.) You can [read my full review here](#).

"Minisites" section of [Cloud Living](#) – ebook by Glen Allsopp

This is the best explanation of how to set up an income-generating minisite/niche site I've ever found. Glen shares the exact tips that generate most of his income. (You can [read my review of Cloud Living here](#).)

[Online Business School](#) – downloadable, self-study course

I recommended this for the "small business" section but it also applies here. The Affiliate and Niche Sites modules (and Physical Products, if you set things up right) are great ways of generating passive income. [Check out my review](#) to learn more on each module.

Your Escape Plan

You've got no excuses now. You *know* there are a ton of possibilities. You *know* there's a way to do what you love *and* make a living.

- It might mean **you get to do something fun all day and get paid for it** by delighted clients. (Route #1 - Freelancing)
- It might mean **you get to *build something cool*** and rope other people into your grand vision. (Route #2 – Small business)
- It might mean you spend a few weeks working hard – then **sit back and watch money roll in**. (Route #3 – Passive income)

Or you might combine two – or even all three – of those routes.

You don't need to quit your job *before* you make a start on your chosen route. But you do need to keep that goal firmly in mind – or the months and years will slip by without you taking action.

Do you really want to look back in ten years' time and think "If only...?"

"Do whatever it is that makes you WANT to get up in the morning. Do not squash this wanting, no good can ever come of minimizing what it is we love to do. This love or this wanting is our sense of play. And when we play more, we connect not only to what makes us feel alive but also our inner power waiting to be unleashed."

(Katie West decided she wanted to do something she loved and which meant she could have lots of time with her little one. She quit her "soul-sucking" job and now makes her living helping people to laugh and love their lives more – how cool is that? You can find her at [The Levity Coach](#).)

Making Your Plan

Now, you *could* hand in your notice tomorrow and be free in four weeks' time.

For a few bloody-minded souls, that'll work.

You *can* launch a business, set up a passive income stream, or become a freelancer in a single month. (For a great one-month guide from zero to fully-fledged freelancer, check out Skellie's [30 Days to Become a Freelancer](#).)

But, you'll probably want to get a couple of things in place first: some cash, and some actual experience on your chosen route.

Set Your Release Date

However much it might feel like it at times, a job isn't a prison. You can walk out whenever you want.

Pick your quitting date, the day you're going to say to your boss, ever so politely, "I will no longer be requiring your employment services." ([Jonathan Mead's](#) words.)

This shouldn't be more than a year away. Don't set some far-off distant date: you need a bit of urgency to get you moving.

Make it challenging. Make it a month or two earlier than you feel comfortable with.

Buying Your Freedom

Start socking as much money as you can into savings. No, it's not boring. **This is your *freedom* you're buying.** Isn't that a bit more exciting than a new iPhone?

This is gonna be harder if you've got debts and dependants, but it's always possible to save *some* of your paycheck. Be courageous. Don't rule out options because they're "too hard".

To save money, you need to be making more than you spend. Not rocket science.

Earning More

Start up your logo design business. Record your first video training course. Build a minisite to promote an affiliate product.

Find a few hours each week – evenings, weekends, your lunch-hour – to make a start on whatever it is you plan to do when you quit.

(Skip back and re-read the three different routes, if you're still not sure.)

Sure, you're going to sacrifice some of your leisure time. But you're earning your freedom, you're getting direct experience, and you're starting your business rolling. Don't tell me that's less important to you than watching reruns of *The Simpsons*.

Spending Less

For a month, write down *everything* you spend.

That latte on the way to work. That so-so meal in the staff canteen. That book you buy on a whim. That DVD boxset you can't resist. The electricity bill. Drinks on a Friday night. Gym membership. Subscriptions to online games. Whatever. Write *EVERYTHING* down.

The first time I did this, I banned myself from ebay for some considerable time afterwards...

You *will* get some surprises. You'll find that little, everyday, expenses add up over a month. (No shit, Sherlock. But we often don't quite twig this.)

Where can you make changes, without feeling like a complete miser? Do you actually use that gym membership? Take sandwiches from home. Borrow books and DVDs from the local library. Drink at home, instead of going out.

(Check out the excellent blog [The Simple Dollar](#) for great money-saving ideas.)

What's going to make you happier, having more stuff, or having the freedom to get up in the morning and spend your whole day doing something you love?

Achieving Escape Velocity

Getting your first freelancing clients, getting a business started, or getting a passive income stream set up isn't something that happens overnight.

When you're working full-time, you need to squeeze your dreams into the cracks of life.

That probably means giving up part of your weekend. Spending some time in the evening working on your dream. Do whatever it takes to make it happen: I used to get up at 5.45am to do my freelancing work. (Not the best month of my life, but I focused on "freedom" and I got through it.)

"For about one year, many of my evenings, weekends and lunch hours were dedicated to self awareness and studying for my professional coaching certification. This transition time included, setting a new household budget, reallocating investments, setting up a line of credit, and buying a new car (for the first time in 11 years!) The plan was to build my coaching business and the True Balance brand, one day at a time, until I could give my two weeks notice."

From Shann Vander Leek, who, after fourteen years walked away from a high-powered corporate job that was making her feel suffocated – and she's now following her passion and [coaching others](#).)

Don't be afraid of working hard to achieve *something you really want*.

When motivation's flagging, focus on your goal. Think how good it's gonna feel to leave the office and know you'll *never* be working another 9-5 day in your life. (I can tell you, it feels *awesome*.)

If you're still feeling bleah, read something inspiring, in a gutsy, wanting-to-take-action sort of way, not a sitting-on-a-cloud sort of way. These are a few that work for me:

- [Cultivating Burning Desire](#) (Steve Pavlina)
- [Why Failure Costs Nothing and Success can Steal Everything](#) (Dave Navarro)
- [Top Twenty Motivation Hacks](#) (Leo Babauta, Zen Habits)
- [Entrepreneurship: What to Do When You're Scared Sh*tless](#) (Naomi Dunford, IttyBiz)

And don't forget ... you *absolutely* can find a few hours each week to achieve your dreams.

Lift Off!

There are *millions* of people doing what they love, in all sorts of ways – some which you might never imagine.

You deserve to be one of them.

Figure out which route works for you. Don't be afraid to dream. Don't censor yourself. Don't deny what *you* want.

Then start taking action. Build your freedom fund. Start freelancing, start a business, start earning passive income.

The final step is so easy, and so hard. Tell your boss, "I quit." It takes two seconds. It takes courage.

You can do it.

Appendix: Resources

These are all books, and one audio program, that I've used and found very useful in various ways. Hopefully they'll get you nearer your goals too!

Losing the “Job” Mindset

(Book) [4 Hour Workweek](#) – Timothy Ferriss

An eye-opener. Well worth a read for the way it opens up possibilities. Some inspiring stories and plenty of advice, including scripts for tricky conversations.

(Book) [Career Renegade](#) – Jonathan Fields

Impassioned and encouraging book that'll get you fired up about making a living from something you love. It'll also show you *how*.

(Book) [No More Mondays](#) – Dan Miller

In-depth book about finding your true vocation and calling. Encouraging, inspiring and helpful – plus the cartoons are great.

Achieving Your Goals

(Book) **How to Make Your Dreams Come True** – Mark Forster (*currently out of print – look out for second-hand copies*)

Forster takes a “pull” approach to set a strong goal and desire, rather than a “push” approach with a ton of to-do lists.

(Book) [The Success Principles](#) – Jack Canfield

Twenty-five principles, distilled from Canfield's life and extensive reading. (He's the multi-millionaire author/editor of the "Chicken Soup for the Soul" series. Don't let that put you off; this book isn't sappy or touchy-feely, but practical.)

(Book) [Personal Development for Smart People](#) – Steve Pavlina

Not a light read, but a worthwhile one. You'll probably disagree violently with some of what Pavlina says, but there's a lot of profound stuff in here.

Time Management

(Book) [Get Everything Done \(And Still Have Time to Play\)](#) – Mark Forster

Focuses on how to manage your attention – cutting commitments, staying focused, working on high-resistance tasks first.

(Book) [Do It Tomorrow](#) – Mark Forster

Forster's third book, particularly relevant for the information age. You can get the [first chapter free](#) from Forster's website.

(Audio program) [30 Hours a Day](#) – Dave Navarro

Audio program with ten (30 minute-ish) modules and a ton of exercises and worksheets. Learn to deal with interruptions, procrastination and your own doubts. Bargain price (\$10) at the moment, too.

You can find more resources – books, courses, software and services – listed on [the Aliventures "Reviews" page](#).

Enjoyed this ebook? Want more? Come and hang out at [Aliventures](#), where I write twice-weekly articles on “getting more from life”.

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