

Find a spark within then inspire others

Debbie Nicol

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Whether Oprah is your cup of corporate coffee or not, I draw attention to one of her many quotes: "You have to know what sparks the light in you so that you, in your own way, can illuminate the world".

Hope in the corporate world does not need to be as big as "save the world", yet will generate engagement and commitment in a workplace. An employee may find hope in your offer of assistance. A team may gain hope from what they see in your vision or the belief you have in them, while a community may find hope in the effect of initiatives being spearheaded by you.

How many leaders in your workplace shine a light so brightly that they themselves become a beacon of hope for others to follow? What is it that they have or do that you may not?

Clarity of purpose

My career had been an explosion of accolades. The external validation became more exciting with each and every one; I became in need of more attention and endorsement. My real purpose in life became secondary, distorted by what the environment was telling me to do and be. The spark that lit my world was gradually extinguished by the importance of another's spark.

I gradually lost myself to the addiction of career growth, the attainment of the title and a destination that was empty once I arrived. I lost my curiosity; I no longer dared to explore with questions, I no longer playfully challenged the status quo, nor did I care to go that extra mile. I was disconnected from myself, and lost the ability to be who I really was; I could not be me for fear of judgment. My purpose was now buried deep underneath the burden of entitlement..

Referring to Oprah's message, the spark and its source of power was dead as I drifted farther and farther into another world, one in which I did not believe in, yet was too weak to leave.

The desire to find the switch yet again – resilience and optimism.

It took pain, time and effort, but fighting for who you really are is worth it. Whatever it takes, for whatever is needed – just do it. Nobody has ever died failing, yet others have died while waiting and not trying to change. Letting go of that corporate ladder and the corporation that represented everything you do not and the titles that they bestowed allows you to enter a corporate system with a difference – one that we build ourselves with differing priorities and rules that ensure connection.

Being in alignment with your own self will be contagious as others around you also feel it. The energy returns, the confidence soars, the choices are

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clearly taken in line with what matters most. Curiosity abounds in every space possible and a day at work is rarely draining as alignment is effortless. Working your passion is simply living your passion and when the light is back on, things flow. Living the dream means you no longer work a day in your life. Others will want to know 'what you are on'.

If only I knew back then what I know now. The power of investing time into getting to know and respect yourself – once invested, you'll never look back. The benefits of respectfully releasing frustration and disagreement – once embedded into life, internal emotional storage space will forever be reserved only for the positive. The wonders of the mirror and all the wisdom it holds – you'll never look at it as a piece of glass again. The wonders of trust – once your trust is strong, nothing external has a chance to derail.

Last word

Shining a light is indeed a leader's responsibility as opportunities for a future of hope are created. Leaders build more leaders and with increasing contribution and excitement from all, the corporate world, so often described as in a state of ill health, can only but regain its might and surge to a brighter and more aligned future.

Debbie Nicol, the managing director of Dubai-based business en motion, is a consultant working with strategic change, leadership and organisational development. Email her at debbie.nicol@businessenmotion.com for thoughts about your corporate change initiative

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