

ELLE

February 2017

THE 5-SECOND
LIFE HACK TO
MAKE YOU
STRESS LESS,
SLEEP BETTER,
THINK SMARTER

AUSTRALIA

THE
BEST
NATURAL
BEAUTY
BUYS
RIGHT
NOW

WARDROBE TOP-UPS,
DOUBLE-DUTY PIECES...

**WORKWEAR
FASHION
SPECIAL**

*(Because clothes actually
can make the woman)*

Gwyneth
on fresh starts
& not caring
what anyone
thinks

THE
CONFIDENCE
ISSUE

AU\$8.50 / NZ\$9.20 (incl. GST)

PP100011228



9 313006 022602

02



FOR LOVE **OR** MONEY

We're told to follow our dreams, pursue our passion, do what we love. But when did *"live to work"* replace "work to live"?

In her last term of high school, the girl who would later become my mother was called in by the careers counsellor. "Right," he said, "do you want to be a nurse or a teacher?" "Well, I don't like blood," my mother replied, after a minute's thought, "so teacher?"

What she didn't say, or even think to say, is, "I want a job that pays me as much coin as possible so I can be financially secure for the rest of my life." It was 1970, the option did not exist.

It's now almost 50 years later. Career choices for women are unlimited. Independence and financial success are ours for the taking. So why is it that many – arguably most – young women still do not choose a job based purely on bank?

If there's a single, pervasive idea underpinning the way we think about work, it's this: our career – rather, our dream job – must be driven by passion. It must excite us creatively and fulfil us entirely. Above all, we must do what we love. But it's a myth every bit as limiting, and on the same locked course for frustration, as Teacher vs Nurse. "The concept of 'do something you're passionate about and you'll never work a day in your life' is really a fallacy," says career coach Lauren Maxwell. "But I can't tell you the number of women I work with who say, 'I write, I paint, it's my passion and I want to do it as a job.'"

However, are they to blame when the highly visual, celebrity-led culture we marinate in supports the idea so entirely? Our Instagram feed is awash with photographers on location, designers in studio, dancers at the barre. Influential lifestyle sites such as Goop and The Glow glorify, to the point of fetish, women who flicked the grind and turned their love of cold-pressed juice into an empire.

The columnist Caitlin Moran, writing after Hillary Clinton's defeat in the US presidential election, drew attention to the way romantic comedies still inform our subconscious idea of "women's work", as wary as we are of the form. Wedding planners, kooky dogwalkers and confessional magazine columnists populate the screen because, in Hollywood still, "women should not have jobs involving hard slogs, difficult decisions... diplomatic speech, power, or proper, steely heartbreak," Moran wrote. "Women should not have ugly jobs... their jobs are, essentially, sexy, self-fulfilment hobbies."

And that is the word: hobbies – which, by definition, do not pay the kind of wage that provides financial security, enables property ownership or a fiscal safety net to

mitigate against the prospect of divorce or time away having children.

"We have to start thinking about our dream job in the context of our whole life," warns Natasha Janssens, founder of financial advisory Women With Cents. "We're bombarded daily with this idea of living the dream, but first we have to ask, 'Is that actually my dream or someone else's?' And then think, 'Can I actually afford it?'"

Because rarely, we should realise, is an Insta-friendly career in artisanal kombucha not bank-rolled by a well-off partner or parents. But we've no means to check their privilege, as it were, before launching into our own small-batch baby food or street-style photography. Or before we feel vastly inadequate by the day job we can't afford to quit.

Consider also that the definition of a dream job will evolve significantly as the years go by. Being a freelance fashion stylist in your twenties – schlepping suitcases of product across sand at 6am and living at home to fund it – may no longer resemble a passion once you hit your thirties, when an event like motherhood makes security or paid leave suddenly become the dream. "Most women will face these challenges down the track," Janssens says. "Values will change. So while there may be a time and place for pursuing a passion, being too

naive and romantic early on is not serving us."

Even in certain quarters of the life-coaching industry, emphasis for women is put upon "soft values" rather than pragmatic ones. While men, more openly and acceptably, give primacy to status, money and power, women are conditioned to think almost exclusively in terms of personal fulfilment.

"When I ask most women what their values are, they'll list abstract things like honesty or trust, because they don't actually know," says career coach Suzanne Williams of Grace & Grind. Think harder and be mindful of your behaviour, and your real values may turn out to be paying bills or a short commute. ⇨

***"The concept of
'do something
you're
passionate
about and you'll
never work
a day in your
life' is a fallacy"***

Still, the idea that our work must be “meaningful” and contribute to a good greater than merely paying our own gas bill is almost never questioned, in a society where the nine-to-five is linked intrinsically to identity. “When I meet people in non-work situations... [I] try to see how long I can talk to them without asking about their work or have them ask me about my work,” said Miya Tokumitsu, author of *Do What You Love: And Other Lies About Success And Happiness* – and one of the first people to call into question the concept of working for passion and not cold hard cash. “It’s actually really hard to last longer than four minutes.”

In a 2014 thinkpiece for *Jacobin* (which has subsequently gone viral), Tokumitsu also argued that following your dream “is now the unofficial work mantra for our time”,

**“Being
a freelance
stylist may no
longer resemble
a passion once
you hit your
thirties, when
motherhood
may make
security become
the dream”**

even though its likely pay-off is personal dissatisfaction and a broader devaluation of actual work – real jobs, boring jobs, even well-paid grown-up jobs. Even if they’re the jobs that would provide women with more plentiful opportunities later on, and put them in a position where they would be able to pursue a dream from a place of financial security. And even if, in the short term, these jobs mean our creative outlet could stay exactly that.

“Are we really so sure that the best thing

to do with passion is attempt to monetise it, anyway?” writer Catherine Baab-Muguira asked in her essay on the topic for business news website Quartz. “Why not side hustle for love, and keep the filthy hands of commerce off our art or beloved hobby?”

And why not make some proper money on the way through since, as Caitlin Moran pointed out, eventually we must all wake up and think, “Right, it’s [2017], and this isn’t a princess movie.”



HAPPILY EVER AFTER

We seek out wedding planners
and relationship counsellors...
Now meet the divorce coach

No-one saw the Angelina Jolie/Brad Pitt split coming. After 12 years spent building brand Brangelina, the jetsetting humanitarian couple and their burgeoning international family seemed rock-solid a beaming example of a harmonious union of two Hollywood heavyweights who’d found the formula for lasting love. Yet just two years after making things official and tying the knot, one half of the dream couple was filing for divorce amid claims of cheating, unfit parenting and mid-air meltdowns.

Divorce can happen to the best of us, and bring out the worst in us. It measures number two on a list of 43 stressful life events that can contribute to illness, according to the Holmes-Rahe stress scale – second only to the death of a spouse. The loss of a home, time with kids and a relationship with