

Five Secrets to Making a Living as a Creative Multipreneur



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Introduction

Creative Multipreneur - a person with multiple interests and talents who is happiest and most fulfilled when developing multiple profit centers and/or pursuing multiple careers. He/She is creative, independent, persistent and highly inquisitive, loves solving problems and has a good grasp of assessing risk vs. reward.

This book started its life as an ecourse for folks who identified with my definition of a creative multipreneur and wanted more information from the course and my ezine, The Successful Dilettante. Because most of us are on email overload these days, I decided to offer the information in a downloadable eBook format.

In the first chapter, Secret 1: Do What You Love, you will find help in discovering your passions and interests and how to translate them into earning a living.

The second chapter, Secret 2: Money – It's a Question of Choice, addresses what most people believe is the biggest obstacle to starting their new business... financing.

Next, in Secret 3: Assemble a Strong Support Team, you will learn some tips on how to deal with doubtful family and friends and win them over to your team. You will also get some ideas on how to bring in supporters outside your immediate circle.

The fourth chapter, Secret 4: Outsmart Resistance with Unswerving Persistence, provides suggestions and exercises to get past procrastination and to deal with limiting beliefs.

In the final chapter, Secret 5: Master the Art of Juggling, you will find answers from seven guests who were interviewed in past issues of my ezine, when they were asked: "How do you manage it all without dropping any balls?"

It gives me great joy to offer you this free eBook. I hope you find it helpful and inspiring.

With Loving Kindness,



Secret 1: Do What You Love

Choose from amongst your many passions and interests to put together a portfolio of profit centers. The biggest motivator is doing what you love. Sounds obvious, right? But it's not so easy for most of us to actually choose and then translate that to an actual business or profit centers.

Start by making a list of everything you are passionate about. Free flow. Get it all down on paper. Now go back through the list and check only those that truly make your heart sing. Still have lots to choose from? Start looking for similarities and patterns. Do you prefer solo activities? Or do you prefer interacting with others? Are there any themes that act as an umbrella to include multiple passions?

Hint. Your true enduring passions are closely aligned with your life-long values and most likely been with you since childhood.

When you think about your potential clients or customers and how you would market to them, you may realize that you prefer that a passion remain a hobby. Or find that it is a passing fancy that is fascinating right now, but you know you will be ready to move on from it when your curiosity is satisfied. Hardly fair to all those customers you got excited about your new business.

So, how do you translate what you are passionate about into earning a living? According to authors Paul and Sarah Edwards in their book *Finding Your Perfect Work*, sometimes you can be a part of what you love without actually doing what you love. Earning a living pursuing your passions can be accomplished in several different ways. Here is a list from their book:

Ten Different Ways to Do Whatever You Love

1. Do what you love.
2. Provide a service to others who do what you love.
3. Teach others to do what you love.
4. Write about what you love.
5. Speak about what you love.
6. Create a product related to what you love.
7. Sell or broker what you love.
8. Promote what you love.
9. Organize what you love.
10. Set up, repair, restore, fix, or maintain what you love.

Take one or more of your passions and apply this list of ideas to come up with multiple profit centers for yourself. For example, let's say you have a passion for pets. You could start a dog-walking business and then offer pet-sitting services in your clients' homes when they are away (very low start up cost). You may add selling pet products and books through your website. You might write a book yourself about pets or how to start a pet business. To this you may add opening a doggy day care and/or boarding kennel where you could also offer dog obedience training or pet grooming. How about offering coaching or consulting services teaching people to start their own pet business? When you have the experience, knowledge, and systems in place, you might even opt to grow your business by franchising.

You may have discovered from creating your own passions list that though you love seemingly unrelated things, there is a common theme. For example, you may prefer outdoor adventure activities like hiking, kayaking, sailing, skiing, rock-climbing and such. You could teach others how to do these things. You could offer guided adventure trips combining some of these loves,

such as kayaking to an off-the-beaten-path hiking spot. Maybe you can improve on or design better equipment. Teach safety courses. Open a store or repair shop. Possibly, you also have a passion for photography, drawing, or writing which opens many more opportunities for income streams.

Try this for yourself and see what you come up with. Have fun, get creative, and don't worry about the 'how' right now.

Secret 2: Money – It's a Question of Choice

In a survey I conducted amongst subscribers to my ezine, *The Successful Dilettante*, one of the questions was: What Stops you from getting started on designing a multipreneurial life for yourself? I offered a choice of 12 obstacles plus an option to fill in the blank. By quite a lead, the frontrunner was 'Lack of Money.' Interestingly, the third highest was 'Limiting Beliefs', which we will address in Secret 4.

Here is the secret that successful Creative Multipreneurs know: Of all the obstacles to creating a multipreneurial life, money is actually the easiest obstacle to overcome. Most people believe the opposite to be true, but let me state my case.

Overcoming money obstacles is a matter of choice. After meeting our basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter, everything else we spend is by our choice. We choose the kind of home or apartment in which we live. We choose what car to drive. We choose our entertainment. It is our choices that determine where our money flows.

If you don't have a clear and true picture of where your money flows, especially cash purchases, then take the time to find out by writing it down. Be brutally honest. You will probably make some surprising discoveries and choose to plug up some leaks. You are not being asked to make great sacrifices, but to examine what is more important—all those meals out or creating the life of your dreams working for yourself. Do determine exactly what income you require to cover all your wants and needs.

Next, figure out how much money you really need to get started. Actually, very few small business start-ups require much in the way of cash to get going—especially if you start from home like seven out of ten new small businesses do. Most people overestimate how much money they need to start their business. But then they underestimate how much money they will need to operate their business after they get started.

You don't need an elaborate business plan to get started, but you do need to take stock of what you already own that you can use in your business, such as a computer, printer, phone, office furniture, truck or van, or other equipment suited to your business endeavor. Then figure start up costs such as permits and licenses, insurance, professional fees associated with start-up (such as a lawyer if you plan to incorporate), beginning inventory, business cards, website, marketing materials, and separate phone line for business, if required.

Determine recurring monthly costs, which could stay reasonably low if working out of your home office. But if not, then project rent, utilities, liability insurance, telephone, etc. What you pay yourself is what is left over after expenses are deducted from income.

Project your sales: estimate how much you expect your business to make the first month or two and project that out for your first year. You may have some customers already lined up or you may just be taking an educated best guess from the research you conducted of your target market.

Now that you know what you need, you can take a close look at what cash you already have in personal resources to start your business. Some of the most common resources are: day job (full- or part-time); temp work; savings account; credit cards; home equity loan or line of credit; early inheritance; and, while not actual cash, bartering your products or services with someone who has products or services you need can get you started in some aspects of your business.

If you have taken a good hard look at all your cash resources and still come up short, you may need to look for outside resources such as loans from family, friends, bank, or investors. You may consider taking on a partner with cash to put into the business. The advantage is that you

may be able to start with a much larger amount of cash than you can raise yourself, but the big disadvantage of borrowing from others is it sets up an obligation to someone else right from the start.

The safest way to get started on your path to success is to 'bootstrap' your business. This means building your business based on whatever revenues it produces and not overextending yourself with loans and other outside sources of cash. In this way your business grows at a rate and speed that is allowed by the profits you reinvest. I have seen this work well for others, as well as myself.

Secret 3: Assemble a Strong Support Team

When starting a business, the power and impact of a positive support team cannot be underestimated. Their belief in you and your dreams is just the boost you need to keep you going. If you are lucky, when you announce your plans to your family and friends you get nothing but pats on the back, encouraging words, and maybe even offers of help. But when you announce you are going to follow your multipreneurial dreams and create 3-5 profit centers, they are likely to look at you as if you are speaking Martian, shake their heads and mumble something about 'Jack (or Jill) of all trades, master of none.'

Sometimes all it takes is a little education and negotiation to get the support you desire. In Spring 2006, two books were published targeting and championing persons of multiple interests: *Renaissance Souls* by Margaret Lobenstine; and *Refuse to Choose* by Barbara Sher, who refers to those with multiple interests as "scanners". Before that most of us didn't know what our "affliction" was—let alone that it is a good thing and considered an actual gift! It is enough that you know who you are and feel good about it. Educate those closest to you and ignore the rest. This is your dream and your life, not theirs.

The frontline of your support team is most likely those who love you most and with whom you live, such as your spouse or significant other, your children, and possibly a parent who lives with you—people you see on a daily basis and who are most impacted by changes you make. Unless you are a master of disguise while working at something that makes you miserable or bored silly, or communication is poor because they never see you while you are putting in all those hours working for someone else, they are aware on some level that you are not a happy camper and something has got to give. They may even feel threatened. Don't add insult to injury by trying to protect them.

Start by opening a dialog with your loved ones. Share with them that you wish to design a life and career more aligned with your values—*who you are*. Explain that there are people in this world who are curious about many things and are happiest with variety and creativity in their work lives. Most importantly, share ownership of your plan. Tell them what you have in mind, ask them for their input, and then really listen. Try to anticipate their fears and concerns and be prepared to respond confidently and honestly. Make each one aware they are a valued member of your team and enlist their help. There is no better way to be a role model for your kids than living an authentic life. Remember this: Happiness and enthusiasm are contagious.

In all relationships with family, friends, colleagues and acquaintances, take an accounting of who supports you and who tries to undermine or sabotage your efforts. Find out who your true friends are that positively support your dreams and desire for independence. Focus your time and energy on those people. Ignore the naysayers. Don't try to change them and don't lose sleep over why they insist on throwing negativity at you. They have their own agenda. Keep moving forward. After all, living well is the best revenge.

Create new networks of supporters. Look for existing groups of people who are already doing what you want to do or start your own group. Don't count on a networking group for the level of support we are talking about here. Create a mastermind group or invite people to be on your R & D team. Join an association in your field if they meet regularly and are supportive of one another. Speak up and don't be shy about asking for the help and resources you need.

Hire a Coach with a good understanding of the multipreneurial mindset for one-on-one or small group coaching. If accountability, clarity, and maintaining a good balance are important to you in your quest to achieve your multipreneurial goals, adding a coach to your support team can be an excellent move. A coach does not have a personal stake in your success, but is clearly on your side and you can often achieve more in a shorter time with this kind of support.

Secret 4: Outsmart Resistance with Unswerving Persistence

We have all faced it. It is mean and ugly and will chop you off at the knees if you let it. It is a shape-shifter and ever so sneaky. It has no conscience and will do anything to deceive you. It is a liar and a bully. It is invisible, but can be felt as a negative, repelling force. It feeds on your fear and wreaks havoc on your self-confidence. It never sleeps and is always with you. It is the enemy within. The name of this monster is: Resistance.

Resistance most often shows up as procrastination and is the easiest to rationalize because we don't tell ourselves that we won't ever write that book, walk on the treadmill that's gathering dust, or start that business we are so passionate about. We tell ourselves we will do it tomorrow. Oh my, that resistance is a sneaky little devil, isn't it?

All is not hopeless. There is a way to outsmart our inner demons. Awhile ago, I attended a teleclass offered by author and seminar leader Barbara Winter called Outsmarting Resistance. She says we all have twin forces within us: Inspiration and Resistance. Whichever one of these puppies we feed and give our attention to will grow to be the strongest.

You must learn what feeds your inspiration and put yourself there. Everyday! Set a priority system for yourself that puts those high-ticket items at the top of your to-do list and the busywork at the bottom. Concentrate on the payoffs of actually doing what you want to do. Set up some rewards for yourself. Get out of the paralysis of analysis; it doesn't have to be perfect to get started. Make a list of all your accomplishments—big and small; then keep adding to the list as you try new things. When doubt (resistance) rears its ugly mug—and it will, revisit your list as a reminder of all the great things you have accomplished.

If you want a better life for yourself and to conquer those inner resistance demons that keep you from achieving all those things you have been "meaning to do, want to do, have a passion for", then read *The War of Art* by Steven Pressfield. He clearly exposes what resistance looks like in all its forms and then tells you the combat strategies to win the war against this little drain on your creative life force. It is a war worth winning. You are worth it.

Sometimes it's our limiting core beliefs that hold us back from accomplishing our dreams. One of the most limiting core beliefs foisted upon us starting in our childhood is that in order to be successful at anything, we must choose one thing and stick with it. This advice was generally offered in good faith from those trying to be supportive. However, that seemingly positive belief has wreaked havoc to varying degrees in the lives of those of us who were never meant to choose just one thing. We just aren't wired that way. So we came to believe there must be something wrong with us.

How do we stop our limiting core beliefs from holding us back from accomplishing our desires? What has helped thousands of people (including yours truly) is a process called "The Work" created by a woman named Byron Katie. The Work is simply four questions that, when applied to a specific problem, enable you to make a significant shift that can change your life forever. Here I share with you how I applied The Work to a limiting core belief that many of us have in common.

Limiting Core Belief:

To be successful, I must choose just one thing and stick with it.

Question One: Is this true?

Yes. There seems to be plenty of proof that this is true. It is what parents, teachers, career counselors, and others told me or implied most my life.

Question Two: Can I absolutely know that this is true?

No I can't. There are people who are successful juggling a multitude of interests.

Question Three: How do I react when I think this limiting core belief?

Angry, frustrated, sad, claustrophobic or fenced-in, and lacking somehow. I would be bored out of my mind. It is impossible for me to pick just one thing, so there must be something wrong with me. I even feel kind of rebellious – no one can make me choose just one thing!

Question Four: Who would I be without that thought?

I would be free to choose a multitude of things I love to put together my version of a successful life. Without that limiting thought I am lighter and happier. I feel like I can breathe again.

Anything is possible.

Now turn the underlying belief around:

To be successful, I must choose many things and stick with them only for as long as I choose.

To be unsuccessful (and miserable), I must choose just one thing and stick with it.

Are these turnaround beliefs as true as or truer than the original belief?

Absolutely!

This seemingly simple process is quite powerful in shifting your perspective. If you would like to learn more about Byron Katie and The Work, visit her website at: www.thework.org. I highly recommend her book: *Loving What Is: Four Questions That Can Change Your Life*.

Secret 5: Master the Art of Juggling

In one form or another one of the questions I asked all the creative multipreneurs I interviewed for my ezine is: How do you manage it all without dropping any balls? The responses are interesting and varied.

Lee Silber said that much of what he does may seem unrelated, but they are similar in that they are all creative endeavors and they all reach the same people. For example, he shared that he still does some graphic design arts and teaches classes on design—one of his passions. He is still a radio talk-show host and plays drums with his band regularly, but most of his time is spent either writing or speaking. He said when he is speaking he is promoting and selling his books. When he writes books it leads to a lot of positive PR, which means more speaking engagements. As a designer and drummer he is able to keep his hands in the creative arts so that what he writes and speaks about are authentic and real. He can relate to how to make it in the business side of the arts, which is what his books are about, since he is doing it himself.

Jennifer Loudon and Lee Silber both mentioned the analogy of a stovetop with 3-5 burners containing pots. You can only give your attention to and stir so many pots at a time. If you want to add a pot, you need to remove one. Jennifer's latest publication, *The Life Organizer*, helps her keep track of all the pieces and parts of her busy life. She walks her talk.

Gail Johnson, a watercolor artist, and her husband combine their multiple interests and talents to create a life they love. They started a company that provides website design and support for small businesses, artists, and artisans. They recently added a specialized printmaking technique for Gail's watercolors and to offer as a service to other artists. They both plan to teach their skills to others. And they have a small lavender farm. She shared that there is a lot of built in flexibility and the different activities have an ebb and flow that works quite well for them.

Shirley Pordominsky operates her three unrelated businesses with a different structure for each one. Her established high-end custom designed furniture business sells only to designers who understand the product that she provides. Getting clear on her ideal client has simplified her business. For her coaching business she reserves two days a week and coaches a limited number of people. Again she has defined her ideal client in order to be clear about whom she can best serve. As a trader in the Forex market, she has specific hours and days that she works. She also balances her life with creativity and daily exercise.

Tammy Cook told me that while she actually enjoys playing with different time management techniques, what works well for her is this: She lists her primary long-term goals in the top eight most important areas of her life. Then each year she makes an annual goals list with about 6-8 goals in each area. Out of these she picks three areas to focus on at once and sets three primary goals for each area. She suggests a simple tracking system and when a goal is accomplished or set as a habit in one area, she pulls another goal from the master list.

Lyle Lachmuth does something similar. He chooses nine action goals and makes three at a time his top priority. He knows what his objectives are in the remaining six, so when he is bored or needs a break with the big three goals, he spends time on one of those. He feels constricted by too much structure and likes to 'bop around' from goal to goal and work on what attracts him most or what has a looming deadline. But one structured practice he has built into every day to keep him sane is a walk first thing in the morning.

Barbara Winter, author of *Making a Living Without a Job* (contains a chapter devoted to building multiple profit centers), had this to share in her interview: "Over time, a big theme emerged and so my profit centers really are quite clustered around my passion for the joyfully jobless life. But within that, I have great contrast with activities that are solitary and others that are filled with group interaction."

"Long ago, I realized that people who are clear about their goals and priorities don't really need time management training. Self-employed people also discover their own biorhythms and plan their work around those rhythms as much as is possible. I find it helpful to give one aspect of my business top priority each day. I also am very good at doing whatever I'm doing 100% so my mind isn't working on anything other than what's right in front of me."

As you have read in this sampling of my interview guests who lead successful lives as creative multipreneurs, there is no one pat answer on how to "juggle it all." Some of them prefer a little more structure or to keep areas separate, while others see a correlation between their different passions and work on them simultaneously. Ask yourself what your comfort level is in each of these scenarios. Start small, but think big. Here's to your success!

About the Author



Susan Henderson has been coaching, consulting, mentoring, facilitating groups, teaching, training, and sharing knowledge in one form or another for 25+ years. In the last five years since designing and building her own website, she has dedicated many hours to furthering her web design skills and marketing education and experience.

She owns Susan Henderson Coaching, a solo coaching practice serving Creative Multipreneurs who have so many interests and passions that they struggle to choose a path and get started on building a business they can love.

Her coaching programs assist you to discover your purpose and core values and to gain clarity on what actions to take in your quest to redesign your life in a way that encourages the inclusion of your multitude of interests and talents. The result is a life and business in balance and totally aligned with who you are; who you best serve; and, what the best vehicle is to deliver your unique gifts to the world. Now, who wouldn't want that?

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