



INSIDE THE ENTREPRENEUR

Funding. Business model. Leadership. Technology. All important, but too often the entrepreneur's personal journey gets overlooked. This new series focuses on what it really means to commit to an entrepreneur's way of life. First up: Fear

By Ariane de Bonvoisin

Fear can mean the difference between pursuing your dream and not going for it. It can mean the difference between living an average life, meeting the standards of what is conventional—or, as Swedish artist Avicii sings, “liv[ing] a life you will remember”. Fear is at the root of our actions, choices and eventual decisions that shape our life.

For nearly 10 years, I had been working in the corporate world in New York City for three giant media companies. With every career move I made, I became a little less happy, made a little more money but felt a lot more trapped in a life I didn't want—until I found myself, at the age of 28, running Time Warner's almost R6-billion venture capital fund. It then dawned on me that I had climbed a high ladder, but that it was either the wrong ladder or leaning up against the wrong wall.

So, what was I supposed to do? Leave it all behind—all the hard work, the prestige, the pay cheque? To go do what? Start an idea? But what idea? What would people think? How would I make money? I was a corporate girl, not an entrepreneur!

And that's when fear arrived. And it brought along most of its friends: doubt, impatience, anger, disapproval...

What are the common fears confronting an entrepreneur?

FEAR OF HAVING NO SAFETY NET

This usually encompasses money at its core. From where is your next pay cheque going to come, and how are you going to be able to provide not only for yourself but often a family as well?

FEAR OF HAVING NO CERTAINTY, NO PLAN, AND NO IDEA OF WHAT'S NEXT

Yes, the entrepreneurial life is the opposite of comfort, routine and knowing what to expect day to day. Yet, that can be very exciting.

FEAR OF FAILURE

Shame and humiliation of not succeeding in whatever your next endeavour is can create such fear, that many of us don't even start or give something a try. Great entrepreneurs, though, are not hijacked by what people think or might say. They are human and still prone to the fear of failure, but they are able to take action.

FEAR OF NOT KNOWING WHAT TO DO, WHAT YOU LOVE, OR WHAT IDEA TO PICK

The mind is an expert at preventing budding entrepreneurs from accessing their inspiration. It finds countless ways to stop you, putting even more fear in the way. Watch the mind, but go beyond it to the creative part in you.

FEAR OF ALL THE GOOD IDEAS HAVING BEEN TAKEN ALREADY

Scarcity of mind is not a quality of good entrepreneurs. On the contrary, they see more of everything: more ways to make money, more good people to hire and with whom to work, more investors to put in money, more people wanting to use what they are offering... Abundance is their word.

FEAR OF NOT BEING GOOD ENOUGH

This is at the root of so much of our behaviour. The mind will dictate all the reasons you don't have what it takes. You're not alone here. Sometimes this belief never goes away, but you can still march ahead proudly.

Let me ask you: What about the fear of never giving your idea or side project a real chance? What about the fear of not showing yourself—and even your children—that it's possible, and even important, to do what you love? What about the fear of being bored, not learning, not growing as a person, not contributing, and simply being tied to someone else's rules and clock? And the fear of not having more time to spend with your family and kids as they grow up, or never being able to travel and explore the world?

Don't be afraid of squeezing the best out of life, of finding out what you're made of; taking the path less travelled, trusting that things will work out in the end, that there is always a way, and that being an entrepreneur is a fun, crazy and wild ride.

Some of the biggest fears show up even before you make the decision to change your

life. Once that's done, the fear always subsides. A feeling of courage often takes its place, or a deeper belief in yourself, as you know what it takes for you to follow through.

And my own story? Well, it took me two years of facing my fears before I found the courage to make a change, to find my inner resolve and my faith in life; to allow my identity to shift away from the certainty of a permanent job in the financial/business world to the inspirational/personal development sector. And, most importantly, I realised I was fed up of being in a career I no longer loved and of hearing my inner voice tell me each morning: "You're in the wrong job!"

So I trusted that voice more than all the fears. I resigned, travelled a bit to change my perspective and, in the last few years, launched two websites, wrote four books, started doing keynote speeches and, most recently, released a new app: Mindful365—living a conscious life, one day at a time. I was not a writer when I started, had never built a website let alone raised money; I hated public speaking and had a fear of apps and technology in general. But now I'm more myself and a hell of a lot happier day to day.

Yes, fear does come along: when you're writing the business plan, pitching investors, launching a website for the first time, figuring how to meet payroll etc. But fear isn't in the driver's seat anymore; a bigger part of you is. A part that knows, in the end, there is nothing to fear other than missing out on the chance to change your life.

Listen to that inner voice. What is it telling you? Is now the time? What do you love? What idea keeps coming back to you? What choices would you make if you weren't afraid? Why do you want to be an entrepreneur?

To quote the late Nelson Mandela, "I learnt that courage was not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it. The brave man is not he who does not feel afraid, but he who conquers that fear." 🙌

REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING WHEN FEAR SHOWS UP:

1. Identify what inside you is stronger and more courageous than your fear, and why you want to become an entrepreneur. This is your personal fuel to which you can keep coming back.

2. Always breathe more consciously when the fearful thoughts arrive. When the breath is calm, the mind is also much calmer. Learn to meditate—it's the secret sauce.

3. Whatever you end up working on, remind yourself that you are helping others. When everything isn't only about you, things often work out easier. The ego and its fears are a little less in control.

4. It's always a good idea to stop, take a break, change your state, and come back to what you are working on. Fear doesn't like being interrupted, so take a timeout when you need to.



Ariane de Bonvoisin is a life-change expert, speaker and entrepreneur who now lives in Cape Town. She is the founder and CEO of First 30 Days (www.First30Days.com), and author of *The First 30 Days: Your Guide to Making Any Change Easier, as well as Living Healthier, Pursuing Your Dreams and What I Wish Someone Had Told Me About Writing A Book*—and her latest, *A Foot in Both Worlds, in progress*. Visit www.arianedebonvoisin.com for more information.

HONDA

The Power of Dreams



THANK YOU 300 MILLION TIMES

Honda's cumulative worldwide motorcycle production reached the 300 million-unit milestone in September 2014. The 300 million-unit milestone was reached in the 66th year since Honda began motorcycle production in 1949 with the Dream Type-D. "Thanks to support from our customers and all of the people involved in development, production and sales, Honda was able to reach the 300 million-unit milestone. We will continue to provide products that will please our customers in each country and region in the world.



www.honda.co.za

facebook.com/hondasa

twitter.com/hondasa

care@honda.co.za

Toll Free: 0800 466 321