

FOLLOW THAT DREAM! – THE TSUFIT STORY

How does a woman with 4 kids muster up the guts and courage to walk away from a 10-year career as a litigation lawyer so that she can live a more creative and fulfilling life? Meet Tsufit, a woman of many gifts whose mantra is, “You only get one life. Who says you only get to do one thing?”

My first introduction to Tsufit was a few months ago, at a business networking function, when I found myself irresistibly drawn to this radiant bundle of energy, an anomaly amongst all the “suit people”. What was her story? Why was she there? And why was almost everyone in the room drawn to her? I sat down with Tsufit last week to find out what makes her tick.

Seven years ago, Tsufit looked in her mirror and realized that there was a funny, talented and joyful little girl inside of her that was trapped in the downtown maze-like tunnels of the underground P.A.T.H. She realized that instead of turning to chocolate bars to keep her going to a job that didn’t nurture her spirit, she needed to reconnect with herself and allow the creative and fun side of her to reemerge.

Tsufit’s love affair with audiences began at the tender age of 5 when she began entertaining the neighbourhood kids by putting on her own shows. By the age of 14, she started writing her own songs and performing at local folk clubs, accompanying herself on the guitar. A lively performer with an absolutely dazzling voice, Tsufit repeatedly enthralled her listeners.

Despite her successes in this arena, Tsufit decided to take the practical route and pursue a law degree, which she did with the same passion and enthusiasm as she does everything. She made the Dean’s List while studying law at the University of Toronto, and graduated fourth in her class. Even as a lawyer, she attracted media attention. *Canadian Lawyer* magazine published a piece about super-achievers and included Tsufit with a short profile while she was still articling with a large downtown law firm. She says she picked civil litigation because it was “only about money issues, as opposed to what really matters in life”. While Tsufit thrived on the challenges that came with being presented with a new “story” every day, she didn’t want anyone’s liberty or custody to depend on her. She wasn’t into the office politics of a life on Bay St. and soon after having her fourth child in four years, Tsufit realized that she was not living the life she wanted.

Tsufit began her exit out of the steel skyscraper world by taking small incremental steps. While having lunch in the Underground, she would write love notes to her kids, which she then left in their lunch boxes every day. Getting closer to her children helped her nurture a more intimate relationship with herself.

Another step she took was investing in her self-growth by reading inspirational books such as “Healing the Child Within” by Charles Whitfield, “Feel the Fear and Do It Anyway” by Susan Jeffers, and “Simple Abundance” by Susan Ban Breathnach. She kept a daily diary and once she developed a more accepting relationship with herself, she was able to give herself the same love that she gave her own children. This eventually led to her leaving the law profession so that she could finally pursue the life she truly craved.

The day after she left law, she celebrated by writing the first song she had composed in years – a funny and witty song that reflected her own unfettered spirit. And that was just the beginning of her living a more balanced and healthy life. Tsufit discovered the joys of massage therapy, long walks and riding her bike in the early morning sunshine, using natural remedies, taking vitamins and visiting a naturopath. Today, Tsufit eats a very healthy diet, which includes plenty of avocados, vegetables, hummus, tahina and almonds and no longer looks to chocolate bars to fill the void in her soul. She has lost weight and has boundless energy. Having left the grey skyscrapers behind, Tsufit now fills her mind and heart with natural beauty and loves to spend time by the lake, especially before creating something new. Tsufit has always felt a deep connection with nature and is passionate about travel, especially in the Mediterranean. Tsufit is also an advocate for an ecologically healthy planet, being a strong opponent of the use of pesticides. She has even written a sixties style protest song about pesticide use called “Tell Me Neighbour (The Greenest Grass)” which may appear on her next album.

Tsufit carves out time for herself on a daily basis, and she has found that meditating helps her tremendously. She gets an enormous amount of love and support from her four daughters every day, and is able to spend more quality time with them. Her home is filled with sunlight, plants, natural coloured cotton couches and colourful pictures with Mediterranean themes.

Tsufit's life has expanded since she left law, which she says she doesn't regret for a minute. Once she allowed her naturally creative self to blossom, she landed roles in commercials and comedy shows, comedy clubs, festivals, had interviews that aired on national TV, and even released a CD, "Under the Mediterranean Sky", a hauntingly beautiful mix of melodies that captures the imagination and lightens the heart.

She has also opened her own practice – Follow That Dream! – an enterprise that was born out of a desire to give back to others and help them achieve their own dreams. Tsufit coaches her clients, many of them also refugees from the corporate world, to follow their own dreams. This endeavour feeds her mind and her heart. She says that the synergy, when it clicks, is phenomenal.

Tsufit recently attracted the attention of the producers of CTV's new television show "Balance" on which Tsufit was invited to speak on the topic of following one's dream.

Brimming with energy and joy, Tsufit affirms that she lives her own dream life every day and helps others do the same. She changes people's lives in ways she never thought possible because she shares herself and her passion with others on a profound level. Her clients rave about her, saying that they feel energized, motivated and inspired by her. She works harder than ever before, but brags that right after her clients write her a cheque, most of them also hug her, something that never happened when she was a lawyer.

Tsufit relates that ideas come to her at all times of the day and night (it's not uncommon for her to get up at 4:54 am and scribble down an idea for a client). She says that when she sees the lights go on in her clients' eyes, it validates her decision to leave the corporate world once again.

Using lots of humour, her sharp and clever mind, and an ability to motivate, Tsufit coaches her clients to discover those wonderful and special things about themselves. Because she is now able to love herself she exudes that love into the world. Her clients feel this and respond in kind. She finds that the benefits of living life on purpose are many and were not, for her, found in a corporate job. She relates, with a laugh, that not one, but several of her clients insist on serving her bagels and cream cheese before their session and send her away with a hug afterwards. What a wonderful treat!

The subject of a recent half hour national TV documentary about her life, Tsufit is a light in the world of business who does not believe in doing things like everyone else. And that's OK because just as a rainbow, a butterfly, and a panther are each beautiful and magnificent in their own way, so Tsufit operates from her own colourful and wondrous place.

More about Tsufit at www.tsufit.com

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