



My Life as Creative Entrepreneur

Rabbi Robyn Fisher

I had never thought of myself as an “artist” until I began to see my life’s passions in a different light. I didn’t grow up with a particular talent for playing a musical instrument or creating in the visual arts. I always loved attending concerts, the ballet, and visiting museums around the world, but I just never had the natural talents or acquired skills to create on my own (or nothing I’d consider worth speaking of anyway!). So, whenever someone would ask me, “Are you an artist?” I would always answer “No!”

But when I thought about that question recently, I realized that I engage in a creative process every single day; not what you would usually think of in terms of creativity, like paintings, sculptures, or musical scores, but sermons, teachings, initiatives, and community. I have what some would describe as a “calling”, a Divine passion for inspiring in others the desire and inspiration to live a life of meaning by intimately connecting with our ancient Jewish traditions and rituals and finding relevance for them in our lives today.





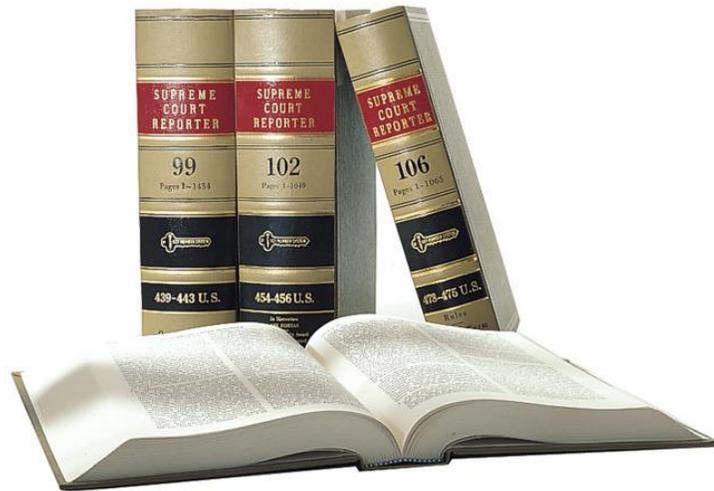
I am driven to reveal how to make our ancient wisdom come alive and spark a desire to live a more intentional and meaningful life. I love exploring how to bring people together to find sacred meaning in their gatherings. I love reimagining how to translate our prayers into healing of our world. I love creating moments in which someone's disconnection to their tradition suddenly becomes a source of inspiration and pride.



I love expressing my gratitude for all my blessings through what I do and give to others. All of these, I now understand, involve creativity, but it begins for me with an exploration of the deeper understanding of our ancient teachings as seen through the eyes of our rabbis and commentators throughout the centuries and then tapping into how those same ideas can find relevance and meaning to our lives today. That "how" is where my creativity begins....



I wasn't born with my "calling", nor did I wake up one day and decide I wanted to be a Rabbi. For the first 30 years of my life, I didn't know I had a purpose, or a passion to pursue in my life.* I went from one interesting pursuit to the next, growing as a person and deepening my connection to community and to my Jewish heritage but without feeling that I was on a particular path.



In fact, it felt like I wasn't on a path at all. I simply went from one degree to the next, and one job to the next. None felt connected to my soul or any life passion. During those early years of my life, I pursued a BSBA in Finance and a Juris Doctor degree; I tried my hand as an entrepreneur in 2 business endeavors, and then I immersed myself as a "professional lay leader" at the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, crafting my skills as a community leader, fundraiser, facilitator, organizer, and inspirational speaker.



During this period, I traveled to Israel on countless missions, sharing my deep passion for Israel and Jewish community. I was on a quest to learn about what Judaism meant to me, engaging in learning opportunities wherever I could. A dear mentor of mine, early on in my role as community leader, shared one of the most significant pieces of wisdom, one that has served to guide me in my life choices. She impressed upon me to seize the opportunities that come to me on my path, never finding an excuse for what I shouldn't or couldn't do. This valuable piece of wisdom runs contrary to the way most people live their lives. How many times people have said to me, "Robyn, you need to learn how to say "No" sometimes. My mentor's wisdom has served me well over all these years. I rarely say no to any opportunity that comes my way, no matter how busy I might be. As soon as I hear myself looking for a reason for not



embracing something asked of me, I pause and think about why I wouldn't do it, reasons which often include not trusting myself or my abilities, worried about failing or feeling judged by others. I have come to see that I need to push through such feelings of inadequacy so that I can continue to stretch the boundaries of my capacities and grow as a professional and as a person. Each opportunity has led me to more opportunities, and a deepening of my communal passion and my Jewish identity. Each role I assumed helped me to create anew and gave me the confidence to dabble, less in my comfort zone than in the spaces of my vulnerability. And through my explorations, I met interesting and enriching people who came to be my teachers, mentors, and inspirations on my journey. How grateful I am for the lessons taught and the people who invested in me!



Creating and reimagining has become part and parcel to my life. It's in my kishkes, it's who I am and what I do... Creating community brings people together in relationship. Reimagining new religious rituals makes our tradition more relevant and current and alive. Studying the deeper meaning of our ancient wisdom inspires people to be better and more responsive to others. Seeking ways to transform spiritual experiences into our lives brings healing to people and correction to the injustices of the world. The art of creating



brings richness and fulfillment to my life and others. Let us continue to create and share our creativity with one another, however your gifts of creativity manifest themselves. As we learn in Psalm 118, “*Ze hayom asah Adonai nagilah v’nismecha vo*, this is the day that God created; let us celebrate and rejoice in it!” Every day, this day, is a day to pay attention and to see it as a gift to create, a steppingstone to a connection to God, to that something that is greater than us all...and, it is only when we can recognize and manifest our Divine gifts in the world and be grateful for them all that we can find our life’s purpose and fully celebrate, *hayom*, this day!

*I was inspired to write this piece after a conversation with a 30-year-old, young woman who shared with me her frustrations and emotions about not knowing her life’s purpose. I have found that some people are born with a direction and a clear passion. And others, like me, only discover them later in life, when after looking back on the journey, you discover that all along, when you thought it wasn’t there, the purpose was in the making!!

