

(Choosing Yourself) Contributing to Society

Description



Self drafted shift dress with french seams made with FS Bleached Midweight linen and naturally dyed slightly off white with elm tree bark

The phrase reached my ears while discussing future plans with a former boyfriend. I shared my dream to someday be a stay-at-home mother and still provide income, but not bear the primary burden of family financial security. To this he responded, â??Not only do you not want to contribute to society, you want me to pay for it!â?•

It touched a sore spot, I confess, which is probably why I still remember it. I see smartly dressed women putting in long hours, laboring hard at their professional careers and seemingly loving it.



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But some of us, for whatever reason, just donâ??t seem to be made that way. I am one of them. All my employment experiences in â??normalâ?• jobs left me frustrated with the world and myself, emotionally frazzled, dispirited about life, and creatively ready to burst at the seams. Maybe I never found the right 8-5 job. Unwilling, however, to spend time finding a fitting position, I jetted out several years ago to make a living my own way.

When I pass those women on the street, the smartly dressed, successful looking ones, I sometimes still feel a tinge of jealousy. Why canâ??t I just fit into that role? Instead, I just want to sit and think about philosophy and art, then go create something with my sewing machine, capture a feeling with my camera, tinker in my dadâ??s wood shop, write some essays, learn how to draw and paint. Only the jealous part of me wants to spend hours on end in an office building.



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I refused to recognize it for years and years. It felt to me, too, that it wasnâ??t contributing to society. But Iâ??ve grown, and now I have to admit, I am an artist.

There are still moments of doubt about giving up a normal, good career path. But a gentle reassurance floods in to remind me: many of the beautiful things surrounding us come from people who rejected the norm. People who trusted themselves enough to listen to their intuition and did something different, something daring.



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Take for example, the musicians playing sounds in my ears, the artists who made paintings on my walls, the authors who penned books sprawled on the floor beside my bed, even the person responsible for the shoes on my feet (for an entertaining story, read Phil Knightâ??s autobiographic *Shoe Dog* to learn the humorous struggles and daring self-belief undertaken by Nikeâ??s founder).

To you stay-at-home moms, you artists, you finding your way through the messiness into something perhaps scarier and more fulfilling than a normal career, thank you for adding so much beauty to life.



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It strikes me that the best way of all to contribute, the truest, fullest form of contributing, is to unabashedly follow what you know deep down you are supposed to do. If you need a good nudge to DO THAT THING YOU KNOW YOU ARE MEANT TO DO, you may enjoy *The War of Art* by Steven Pressfield. Every time I read it, I am filled with shame at not being more proactive about new ideas and with motivation to put fear aside as I charge into the unknown.

I never told my mother about the phrase the former boyfriend fired at me. She is a very creative, stay-at-home mom herself. With five of her children running their own businesses, six of us buying and renovating a platoon of old properties, and all seven (yes, seven) of us unable to run away from creativity, itâ??s clear she contributed quite a lot to at least this society.



FS BLEACHED Midweight Linen

Have you ever had someone cast scorn on you for wanting to be a stay-home-mom or wanting to quit your day job to start your own business?

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CATEGORY

1. COMMUNITY
2. WELLNESS

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Date Created
September 19, 2022
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