

## Would you like to change your life for the better?



What do you dream of?

Do you do something every day that you are passionate about?

Would you like to change your life for the better?

Would you like to reduce your anxiety and get rid of those feelings of self doubt?

If there were no barriers at all, what would you REALLY like to do?

My passion is travel and I am living the dream. Almost! It's still not perfect but I am working on that. And that's the point. It doesn't have to be perfect but if you can weave whatever your passion is into your current lifestyle it can make everything a whole lot better.

We tend to hold ourselves back with our anxieties and our worries. We listen to other people who tell us that we must get a stable job, we must buy into the property market or we shouldn't dream about things that we can never have. And then often, before we know it we are on a treadmill of routine and our anxieties and our worries spiral and our world seems a little bit greyer and a little bit less fun.

But it doesn't have to be like this and I am here to show you how you can make small changes that could make your world sparkle again.

I am not going to tell you to quit your job or sell your possessions and travel the world. I am not going to tell you to save, save, save your money for the future so that you can buy that penthouse apartment. Living like a hermit and having no fun is not the way to do this.

Think about it. I bet you know plenty of people who have had their life snatched away from them or it has suddenly changed for them.

- I know a lady who damaged a disc in her back – she can no longer walk any distance yet hiking was her passion.
- I know a man who was knocked off his motorbike – he is now a paraplegic and dependant on a wheelchair to get around.
- People are diagnosed with a terminal illness every day or have to care for somebody who gets chronically sick.

You have to change your life TODAY because tomorrow it may be too late. However, you only have to make a series of small changes to make a big difference to your happiness and your wellbeing.

## 1. Try this simple exercise

Sit somewhere quiet and take 5 minutes for yourself. Jot down on a piece of paper the things that light your fire; those things that you would love to do more of or something new that you would like to try. It can be anything.

Maybe your dream is to move to a posh penthouse apartment, to have your paintings exhibited in a top gallery or to learn how to kite surf.

Perhaps you would like to stop feeling anxious when you meet new people or change your office job to something where you work with nature.

Next write down what it is that is preventing you from following your dreams.

I suspect that money will feature heavily for most of you, and probably also your current responsibilities, a lack of education or training in a specific field; but also your own self belief may be holding you back.

Take look at that list that you just wrote and think about how you could incorporate an element of one of those dreams or passions into your current lifestyle.

Here are some ideas for you.

| <b>Dreams and Passions</b>        | <b>A small step forward</b>                                       | <b>Avoiding obstacles</b>   |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| To be a professional photographer | Take a photography course   | Many courses are available free on line                                   |
| To be president or prime minister | Get involved in your town council                                 | Most town councils hold open meetings                                     |
| To display art in a top gallery   | Start a blog and promote yourself on social media                 | Many sites are dedicated to artists who share their work                  |
| To own a posh penthouse           | Decorate one room in your home in the style that you would choose | If minimalist, paint the walls white and remove the clutter               |
| To have more self confidence      | Join a club or a group and meet new people                        | Incorporate one of your other passions and find a group which shares this |

There are so many ways that you can move forward and incorporate your dreams and your passions into your existing lifestyle.

And by taking baby steps with them you will open yourself up to more things which can, in turn, lead to an even more exciting life.

For instance; if you dream of owning your own penthouse one day, you could decorate one room in the style that you would choose. You could do this very cheaply with a few tins of paint, buy some material for new curtains or covers and furniture from a second hand stall. You just might find that you have a flair for interior design, making appliqué cushion covers or building furniture from wooden pallets - and there you go – you could be off on a tangent with something else that enriches your life.

Perhaps you want to become the leader of your country? To begin with, get involved in politics at a grassroots level. You could attend council meetings and offer to help with campaigns. Sign up to a course and learn about political science. Network and you may find yourself travelling with a delegation to conferences and working upwards through the system. Take this as far as you like or until the enjoyment goes out of it.

If your fear of the dark is holding you back, start small. You may need to speak to a medical professional but spend time in your own home in the dark. Turn out the lights, walk around or listen to the radio. Go out into the garden and watch the stars. Learn about the stars (another tangent coming in here) and if it's not a step too far, try gardening in the dark. Small baby steps but each step is a step away from what holds you back.

## My credentials

Perhaps you are asking yourself what experience and qualifications I have to be able to bring you all of these ideas.

A few years ago I completed my Open University degree in Sociology and Geography, but more importantly I have experience of life.

Several years ago my life changed completely. I was literally at rock bottom and I was seriously contemplating checking out. But I discovered that everybody has a fighter in them somewhere; even me - and I came out fighting back. I had counselling and I had many excellent friends and a family who didn't always understand me but the ones that counted, supported me.

I couldn't find anything that could guide me to the totally different lifestyle that I craved. At that time my self-confidence was also at rock bottom as well as my self-esteem and self-belief. I was scared of my own shadow but the fighter in me still wouldn't give up.

I wasn't aware of it at the time but it turned out that I was designing my own recovery programme.

I sat in my apartment and I wrote out some lists. And then over time, little by little I acted upon those lists. And one day, I made the bold decision to take a leap of faith and I quit my job so that I could actually go and see one of the places on one of those lists for myself.

I was terrified and excited all at the same time. As I have said, I had no self-confidence or self-belief and I couldn't begin to imagine how I would cope, but I had something driving me to give it a go and I booked a flight to Peru.

It wasn't easy and I spent much of the first three months in a completely overwhelmed state. I was way out of my comfort zone but on Christmas Eve, sitting in my room in Quito I picked up my lists again and I checked out what had brought me this far. I then made a plan which would enable me to continue progressing and building my self-esteem. And as I travelled into Bolivia, Ecuador and then later Colombia I worked things out and I wrote about my journey in two ways.

I documented much of it on my blog – [www.scarletjonestravels.com](http://www.scarletjonestravels.com) – but I also pulled together the things which I believed had led my self esteem to grow – hoping to inspire others to make changes to their lives. And that is how I arrived at my online course which I have called the [Smash the Pumpkin Project](#).

## **2. Here is another simple exercise which can change how you view your life.**

Click on [this link](#) to open up another document and try out one of the challenges from the Smash the Pumpkin Project. This is quite an easy challenge BUT you may be surprised at how it can affect your point of view and your mood if you adopt this mindset.

The [Smash the Pumpkin Project](#) will lead you through a series of challenges and activities which will get progressively harder and more challenging as you progress. But the beauty of the project is that at all times you retain overall control depending on your previous experiences and confidence levels.

The whole project will take ten months to complete (there are plans in hand to offer a quicker condensed course) but I do believe that slowly is better – and this way you can work the project around your current life.

## **3. Would you find this next challenge difficult?**

The challenges and activities cover many varied topics. For example there is a food challenge, a creative challenge and a fitness challenge. You will visit museums or art galleries and offer your services as a volunteer.

Your challenge in week 4 of the Smash the Pumpkin Project is to go to the cinema. You can find out how this challenge will work by opening this link – [click here](#).

## To sum up

I believe that everybody has the power and the strength within them to make changes to their lives. No matter how much you believe that you are stuck in your existing routine or how bored you may be with your current role, or how nervous you are about making changes you CAN do it. The secret is to incorporate something that makes you sparkle into your life and to build upon it. It takes time overall although you will see immediate results.

What are you waiting for?

Try these three exercises this week and if you are interested in learning more about the Smash the Pumpkin Project, drop me an email at [info@scarletjonestravels.com](mailto:info@scarletjonestravels.com) or sign up here at [The Smash the Pumpkin Project](#).

And if you are still wondering if this project is for you, here are some of the things that current subscribers are saying about the course:

*Faye said ....'This course has been very encouraging in helping to gain confidence. Jane's advice is so helpful and is so good to see her progression and personal experiences, showing that anything is possible. I would definitely recommend this course and hope that many others can gain from this course'. Penny said ....'I felt more in control of my life (my body, my time). I felt empowered to do it (...a fitness challenge) again as my fears were unfounded'.*

*Debbie said ....'Very thought provoking. I like that you are thrown in without having the chance to think', and ....'I waited eagerly for my next email. There is no doubt in my mind that this course changed my life'.*



Thank you for taking the time to read this.

I hope that you enjoy the challenges and remember, if you want any more information you can drop me an email at [info@scarletjonestravels.com](mailto:info@scarletjonestravels.com)

You can read more about my travels, life and challenges at my website [www.scarletjonestravels.com](http://www.scarletjonestravels.com)