



## Life As An Adventure

**I woke up at 4 a.m. last Wednesday and couldn't wait to get up and start my day; The hour was unusual for me, a normally late riser who is the farthest thing from a morning person. But today was different. I was going on an adventure...and life looked and felt different.** *(Reading time 180 seconds).*

I was about to go down into the depths of the earth, hundreds of feet below ground into the belly of the highest producing gold mine in North America. One of my clients had given me the opportunity to tour their operations and I was excited and eager.

On arriving I was taken on a tour of surface mining first. This turned out to be a journey amongst giants, where I witnessed the operations of the world's largest shovel, the world's largest front end loader and the world's largest dump trucks. The trucks approach the height of a 3 story building. Workers compare operating one to driving a 4 bedroom house. The tires alone are taller than a tractor trailer. Empty, a truck weighs more than 175 cars and full hauls 400 tons of ore.

Next came the thrill of the underground expedition. I donned my miner's hat, light, belt, emergency oxygen supply and then received very thorough safety training. On a beefed up 4 wheeler we headed to the two tunnels that accessed the mine. A 25 mile an hour wind whipped from the first tunnel, the outflow of air being pumped into the mine to provide the necessary oxygen circulation for the miners. Fortunately we went in the other tunnel.

As we traveled down through multiple levels, I learned the broad strokes of underground gold mining. Approximately 8 cubic feet of rock is carefully and safely blown up at a time (with no one in the mine) and then loaded and hauled to the surface where it begins a multiple step chemical extraction process. It was fascinating to descend and see these expert equipment operators, men and women alike, so deep in the earth, making this happen.

After a couple of exhilarating hours exploring the depths, we exited and I asked the supervisor who accompanied me what his favorite thing was about his job. His answer was "Everything." His words and actions conveyed that every day he viewed his job as an adventure. Although his focus was on safely getting the ore out of the ground, where it was turned over to others, he was excited to be part of the whole adventure and the result: hundreds of millions of dollars of the pure precious metal going to market.

Later that day as I was flying home, I realized that what I observed might be summed up rather dully as digging dirt out of a big hole and dumping it into a huge pile. And some who work in the mine every day I expect view it that way. What was the difference for me and the supervisor?

We both went into the day, into the experience, excited about the adventure. When you view something as an adventure you feel more alive, more alert, more aware. You are focused and get more value from the opportunities each moment presents.

### Wake Up Every Morning With A Sense of Adventure

My gold mine experience triggered a personal experiment. I decide to wake up every morning with that sense of adventure – what am I going to learn today - what new am I going to be part of today - what experience that's at least a bit out of the ordinary, can I make happen?

What I discovered was that the "adventure attitude" changed for the better what transpired over my day. For example, on the first day I was invited to a political rally, something I normally would have skipped. I didn't. It was an adventure.

On another day, while I was taking an intentionally quiet lunch break, an older gentleman came towards me as he was leaving the burger restaurant. He stopped, propped himself on the table next to me as if to strike up a conversation. My inclination was to avoid eye contact and continue my planned peaceful reading. But life is an adventure, so I looked up, smiled and said hello. The next 10 minutes were a reflection in wisdom and inspiration. This very spry 92 year old man had just recently moved to Atlanta after spending most of his life in a small coal mining town in Pennsylvania. He had walked over a mile to lunch and was on his way to walk his mile plus back. His story was an adventure, an education and inspiration for me. I expect to see him again.

## Every Job As An Adventure

I also realized that every job should be an adventure. Whatever product or service your organization delivers, it is important and valuable - probably taken in perspective, much more valuable than gold. At times part of every job seems mundane, but if it were not of consequence to the end product, no one would be paid to do it. Look at your job as part of an exciting process of people and things. Be proud of what you do and how you do it. Try something new. Learn something outside your area and explain it to others. Meet someone different. Ask somebody out to lunch you haven't had lunch with before. Heh - why not - it should be an adventure.

Every day we are offered up so many choices that can make life more meaningful and exciting. Being aware of and making such choices is the source of hope...hope for what adventure those choices may bring.

So today why not choose to do something a little out of the ordinary for you - experience something or someone new - do something atypical in your job or for fun? Remember, life looks and feels different when you are on an adventure.

*Jim Bird, Publisher*

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## Quotes by Jacqueline Cochran

*"I have found adventure in flying, in world travel, in business, and even close at hand... Adventure is a state of mind - and spirit."*

Jacqueline Cochran (1906 - 1980) was a pioneer American aviator, considered to be one of the most gifted racing pilots of her generation.

**e-tip**

## Life as An Adventure Even Bad Choices Can Lead to Meaningful Adventures

Life is an adventure of choices. It is a fact that some of your choices will NOT turn out as you hoped. You can't escape that. But you can and should turn a wrong choice into a meaningful adventure. You've learned something not to do. Focus on retaining the lesson, not on beating yourself up. Use it to help yourself and others avoid the same mistake again and make your future adventures much more positive.

## Work-Life Balance Lessons

By Karen Hogan

Now that I have a six-month-old daughter waiting for me at the end of each day, it's not as easy as it used to be for me to work long days or weekends. I try to leave work as close to 5 p.m. as possible because she goes to bed at 7 p.m. and I want to play with her a bit before then.

My colleagues - many of whom are parents themselves - are supportive, so I feel like I have good work-life balance. I have the schedule flexibility I need to accommodate my day-care schedule and checkups with the pediatrician. In addition, after seven years with Turner, my supervisor knows I will do my job well, even if it means I'm working from home because the baby is sick.

Here are some of the things I do to make sure I give my best to the company as well as my husband and daughter:

**Don't rely on your memory.** I've got a lot more on my mind now - and I'm getting less sleep - so I am extra vigilant about writing things down on my to-do list, recording deadlines, and using the alarm function in Outlook so I get reminders. All of these tools help me continue to do my job well, which is my goal.

**Adjust your priorities.** I used to care about housework. Now, however, I'd rather play with my daughter than do laundry. Our home doesn't look quite like it did when I had more time, but that's okay. My family and my job are my top priorities now.

**Don't be afraid to ask for help.** I can leave early enough to spend time with my baby before she goes to bed because I'm willing to ask my supervisor for help. The alternative would be cloning myself, because I can't be in two places at once.

**Plan ahead.** I take an hour on Friday afternoon to get my desk organized for the following week. Before I leave, I know which tasks I have to focus on next week and I have everything that I need set up and waiting. When I walk in the office Monday morning, I can hit the ground running.

**Look for new ways to reach your goals.** Spending time with clients outside the office or off the job site helps us establish relationships, and I need to keep doing that. I'm doing it differently now, though. Instead of attending cocktail hours like I used to, I'm now more likely to connect with them at breakfast or lunch functions.

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