

I'm 44 & Now I Know For Sure That Freedom Is Most Important

BY LEAHANNE WOODS

Recently, I was reminded of the ways things used to be.

My amazing friend from a long time ago remembered some things I used to do, and some of the ways I used to keep. It was unbelievable to see how afraid to live with basic human rights I was. It's as if I were raised in a culture where women had to hide themselves and get blamed and be considered unclean for getting raped. He was merely walking me through entertaining memories from the past. I was remembering myself, seeing that I was repressed and scared as hell to step into my own God-given life.

Autonomy for my own life was the space suit that was left hanging, unworn, in the closet I was afraid to go into. In my psyche, there were cobwebs and rats and spiders and unknown things in there. I loved to pretend it didn't exist. It was easy and felt rebellious to forget about being responsible for my own life and depend on others who were glad to be the "bigger" people in my life.

Undeveloped as a "normal adult" for so long, I found myself to be so far behind the mark in many different essential areas of life much further into my adulthood than I ever like to admit. But now I do admit this. Now, I finally admit all super embarrassing and "not normal" things about myself. Now I finally care more about living my truth with integrity than what others think about me.

For most of my adulthood, despite being a powerful woman in some ways, I was not really living in my power. The fuller extent of my God-given birthright power was still in shadow to me for so long. It was very confusing to see, not believable, as if it were a nice illusion.

When it came down to the choices I made for my life, I did not trust that I could make good decisions. I'm not sure if it was due to my lack of experience, or that I was raised to think that I had to trust a man over my own intuition. I did not act out of my heart or desires. I was afraid to really own my true desires, much less state them or begin to live them.

In that time, I stayed clear from the kind of responsibilities it would take to make my life my own. I feared for my survival. Back then, I didn't admit that I feared my survival. I didn't really let myself know it fully. It was much easier to pretend that everything was okay and keep my repressed ways looking like they were happily my own choices.

For the most part, I followed a dogmatic, societal, fear-based way that many men are taught is the way. That "way" includes that his girlfriend or wife not show too much skin, that she not express anything of herself that is not "in line". Examples of these ways are:

1. Not showing that you might have any sexual or romantic interest in someone.
2. Not disagreeing publicly with the status quo or opinions.
3. Not being too bold in any sort of way, such as on Facebook.

A good girl was the only girl who might have a chance of survival, even if she worked like a dog. This is what I saw. This is what I picked up as truth and what I felt I had to live.

I have not made a living wage on my own for my entire 18-year career as a caregiver. We are needed like blood. But, still today, we do not get paid like it's an important job in society. This is because nursing/caregiving is a woman-dominated profession. And, as we see, women still make less than men for the same job and our government still feels this is right – as do most people in our count, y unfortunately. We find proof of how little we are valued around election time when the issues are brought to light.

But no matter the circumstances – now I am finally free!

I broke free on the inside and that resonates so far beyond any freedom I could ever have imagined in my earlier years.

Now, I know for certain that the most important thing is my own life.

Now, I know for certain that I am the only one who can protect and live my life the way that is best.

Now, there is no doubt that I am the one who knows what is best for me.

Now, I know to follow my intuition, my inner fire, my spirit – beyond any person or social ways.

Now, I know to spend time with myself alone each day, so that I can hear my heart, so that I know my truth.

Now, I know to go outside each day and stand barefoot and enjoy feeling myself rooted in nature.

Now, though I see and hear lots of people who are still lost to the ways of nature, I must follow mine, and not worry so much about taking them with me. I am the only one I am responsible for. Without me being grounded and clear in myself, I am not able to lead anyone else.

I've had more people thank me, see me, and realize my medicine in this world since I have turned the other cheek on caring for them in lieu of caring for myself. I trust myself more. And others trust me more now, too. And there is no work to this happening. It just flows.

I've turned from a woman who let her partner's mood or behavior rule over me, to a woman who makes her own agenda each day with her own work as her main interest. All else has fallen away. And when I look back, I see that people fell away with no effort on my part. When I made the decision to make myself the pinpoint of my life, those who are meant to be with me are here.

Now, I look and I see support, love, ease, pleasure, and new adventures on all sides of me.

Now, I feel that anything is possible!

In a download into my journal yesterday, I wrote the following on this very subject of the freedom that I feel now versus the way I used to live:

I think, no, I know I just kept it hidden. I didn't lose interest. I just tucked it away for a while. I seem to have been very accustomed to having to put my interests away for a while. As a matter of fact, I was pretty darn comfortable with putting my things away as second nature. So much so that I forgot what my first nature was. Not completely though. Never completely. Thank Goddess I've always been

able to recover and retrieve my true self at any stage, even when changed and transformed beyond recognition. I could recognize my basic, wild, socially unacceptable, raw self.

And just imagine...I am probably one of the lucky ones.

Imagine how much more full of pure, raw love and truth the world would be if other women were as lucky as I am to have some sort of space for freedom for herself to think and feel on her own.

Imagine if, when each woman who realized that they were not free, had the means to change things for herself as I did.

Imagine a world where more energy was given to the allowance of all truth instead of repressing it.

Let's be mindful of our desire for a world of freedom and truth for all, and action by action be part of the medicine.

Encourage young women to come forth and tell how they really feel. Believe her. Learn from her.

And allow the same for women in their 40's and beyond, such as myself.

I feel like I saved my life – my true life – when I ensured my freedom (beyond what is understood by most people out there).

Here's to freedom!

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For more self-study, [The Urban Howl](#) recommends [The Inner Voice of Love: A Journey Through Anguish to Freedom](#) .

Sip a little more:

*I Am Mother, I Am Home, There Is No-Thing To
Fear*

*Gathering Enough Kindling: Honoring Our Endings
& Letting Go With Burning Rituals*

*Be In The Sun, Be Life & Become The Light Of The
World*



"Stand in your own truth and
don't be swayed by societal
pressures of fear. These are
killers for the creative mind.
Expression is our greatest
freedom."

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