

This e-mail came in response to the January 2009 newsletter, "What if you were fearless?" I want to thank Jon for sharing his powerful, and fear-*less* story. ~ tk



My name is Jon Wyly and I'm a workaholic. Actually, I used to be, until I discovered that a satisfying life is more than just a satisfying work life. The "balance" arrived for me in the form of a failing company, one that I had worked at and grown up with for 25 years. I was just sure I would retire from this place, but then the unthinkable happened. A series of events, not the least of which was the most distressing economic conditions in my

lifetime, drove the company to bankruptcy in November of 2008.

Now, as luck (or foresight) would have it, for the first time in my life I declared a New Year's resolution in January of 2008, and set about in earnest to make it happen.

Driven by the obviously deteriorating condition of the economy, and by my recently discovered financial mentor Dave Ramsey, my resolution was to become debt free as soon as possible and the stay that way. For those of you that know Dave...nuff said. For those of you that don't, and want to experience the most liberating lifestyle imaginable (no debt), then give his nationally syndicated radio show a listen, or go to www.DaveRamsey.com for info. It changed my life; it's that simple.

So, I set forth with resolution in hand and made it happen! I gave up some luxuries, sold some stuff, focused on the goal using Dave's methods, and nine months later was completely debt free except for my mortgage. Talk about intensity! Every day was occupied in part with reaching that goal, and oddly enough, that challenge was exciting and gave me a much needed emotional boost during the terrible times the company was to see in the next few months.

Toward the end of the year as I looked into the uncharted waters of changing my workplace after 25 years, the comfort of financial independence was immeasurable!

What a relief it was to not have to worry about money at a time like this!

The rest of the story is almost a fairy tale. The company folded, I did some networking and ultimately landed a job right next door at Keystone Automotive Operations...and I love it! The first few weeks felt a little strange, but I'm settling in very nicely now, have a great project or two on my plate, and have found a whole new opportunity to grow, learn and succeed. While I regret the failure of the company and the effect it had on so many people, it ultimately proved to be a growing experience that will usher in a new chapter in my business life, supported by the new chapter in my personal life that I created with that New Year's resolution in 2008.

I guess the moral of my story is two-fold. First, take control of the things that you feel may be controlling your life. For me, it was financial freedom. Dave Ramsey (and the Bible) both say that the "Borrower is Slave to the Lender", and for me, that liberation has given me a new

outlook on my potential for security, savings and retirement.

Second, constantly cultivate your business reputation and network. I was stunned at the outpouring of friendship I received when it became obvious the company was going down. In hindsight though, I should not have been surprised.

What I felt was a long-term accumulation of friends in the industry who felt good about my style, contributions and sincere love for this business. In short, I learned that my reputation was sound and my style in conducting business fairly and with mutual respect helped pave the way for this terrific opportunity that I received...literally not missing a single day of work in the transition.

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