

I am not a teacher. I am an awakener.

—*Robert Frost*

My own launch to success began where it does for all of us: when I became conscious of that persistent voice inside my head that kept telling me I was meant to do something more. Following that voice took me from feeling like I was missing something to a sense of deep fulfillment—and from flat broke to international success.

Meant to Do Something More

I grew up in Seattle, Washington, one of three children. I was a shy kid with a quiet voice—I dreaded having to speak up in class. Like most shy kids, I had a tendency to become invisible. I behaved and maneuvered to avoid calling attention to myself. Even in kindergarten, I remember watching in horror when kids who misbehaved were sent to stand outside and wait in the hall. How embarrassing! I vowed to be good so that would never happen to me. My worst fear was of sticking out.

We lived on Lake Washington and played with a great group of neighborhood kids. We put on lots of plays and performances and enjoyed lots of lakeside parties organized by my mother. My love of celebration came from these parties, though I wouldn't make full use of it until much later.

I lived in the shadow of a talented older sister who was good at all sorts of things. In spite of my terror of “sticking out,” I wanted to find ways to shine the way she did. In grade school, I decided to be an ice skating star. I remember practicing tirelessly at the rink, and overhearing my mother and one of her friends snickering in