

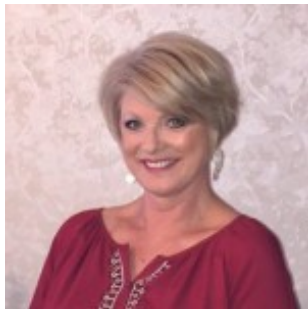
## Make a New Beginning: A New Starting Point

*Whether you're 20 or 50 or 80, if you never stop seeking then you'll never cease to be amazed by what you might find.*

by **Donna Bellacera**

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Birthdays. They're supposed to be a joyous celebration, right?

That one special day each year when we throw a party and reflect on the day our amazing journey began.

The starting point.

I've had quite a colorful journey and certainly enjoyed many wonderful birthdays in my life.

Turning 54 this past year wasn't one of them. Here's why.

When we're little, every birthday marks a major accomplishment. We learn to walk. Then we learn to talk. Then we go to school and learn our ABCs.

Everything is brand new.

**When we graduate high school, they tell us we have our whole lives in front of us. Whether we're off to college, exploring the world, or entering the work force, we begin a whole new chapter. Independence.**

A starting point.

You can just picture that open highway stretched out to infinity before you, beckoning to a future somewhere out on that horizon that calls you to adventure. All that you will become lies out there.

In my twenties, I was a wife and mom. How bad can that be, right?

Turning 30 was awesome too! I was working in the medical field. At 35, I became a single mom and enjoying my children. Life was good.

Even 40 was great. I started doing things outside of my comfort zone, meeting new friends and exploring new adventures.

A starting point.

But 50? Now that's a different story.

**You're supposed to have accomplished your greatest life's work by now, right? Achieved all your major goals. Changed the world.**

But what if you're still working on that? What if you're just now starting to figure out what you're really supposed to be doing with your life?

You can say many things about turning 50, but one thing you can't say with a straight face is that you still have your whole life in front of you.

At this point in the journey, life has shown you many of its cards. Not all, mind you, but you've got a pretty good grasp on how the world turns. If there are still any surprises, they have mostly to do with learning to change the way you see things.

But something else happened that was very difficult to escape. Much as I hated to admit it, I found that I was looking around and comparing myself to other people.

When you view life this way, there's always going to be someone who you feel is ahead of you by your own estimate. And you'll never *catch up* to them. So that leaves you feeling *behind* in some imaginary race that can't be won.

## **And when the game is comparing yourself to others, you will never have enough. *Ever.***

Unknowingly, you build this imaginary scale to see how you measure up against other people. Let's call it the Success/Happiness curve. Yet, no matter where you believe you fall on that curve, the moment you mark your place is to engage in a losing battle.

**You believe that if you can just obtain that figure of money in the bank, job title, certain car, that you will have arrived at your destination and will find happiness there.**

But you won't. Because it's not out there.

Not in any material things you can obtain. Whatever it is will begin to lose its appeal the moment you acquire it. Then you'll have to look for something new to replace it and give you another fix. And the cycle never ends.

So how do you break out of this destructive cycle?

Well first, I needed to learn how to let go of a lot of my preconceived notions about where I thought I would be by the time I reached 60.

**Most of us never learn to appreciate where we are at this very moment because we're so focused on what happened (or didn't happen) in a past that no longer exists and worried about a future that hasn't happened yet.**

Armed with this new perspective, the next thing I did was to review my life and my experiences to figure out what was working and what was not. This brought me face to face with a rather harsh reality.

As much as I consider myself to be a caring person, I realized that I'd spent most of my life focused on my own self-interests.

And that's when I realized what had been gnawing away at me all these years. It was a yearning to connect with people in a meaningful way that focuses on helping *them*. On seeing the world through *their* eyes.

Empathy.

And so at age 54, I am only now seeing the light.

Only after allowing the hidden talent within to finally emerge did I realize that I have been telling stories my whole life.

**With that came the realization that each of us has a unique story we're supposed to tell. That's why we're here. And I'm supposed to help people to tell theirs.**

The epiphany was that as a wife, a mom and a friend, I had been doing this already for many years helping other moms to realize their vision. Suddenly everything felt different. Like I had steered the boat back on course. Like a new chapter.

A starting point.

Suddenly that really successful person I follow who I want to emulate, the one who seems so far *ahead* in their journey, finally, it all gets put into perspective.

We think they just arrived where they are today.

We never got to see all the years they spent toiling away in obscurity.

Experimenting, missing the mark, failing. Trying to figure out the very things we're looking to figure out now.

We never stop and give ourselves a break for simply being on the path. It may be a path of discovery. It may be a path toward a specific destination. Or it may be a path away from our old ways.

**But you're walking the path.  
Celebrate that.**

The law says that if you take steps in the direction of your destination every day and keep walking, no matter how slow or how far you must travel, you must one day arrive there.

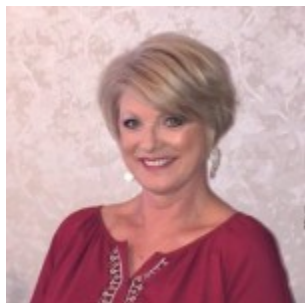
**Age is irrelevant. Wherever you  
are in your journey is a starting  
point. Whoever or whatever it is  
you're chasing, slow down.**

Realize there is no race.

Whether you're 20 or 50 or 80, if you never stop seeking then you'll never cease to be amazed by what you might find.

And if every point is a starting point then every day can be your birthday!

How will you celebrate today?



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Mastery for Women is a division of Successful  
Thinkers Network™, where building  
relationships is the key. Our groups are  
designed to foster a sense of community where

we, as women, can grow.

It is a call to action, a movement, a safe place where women can support each other to reach their goals and desires that tug at their hearts and souls.

It is more than just socializing – we provide a blueprint for making the lives of others better and in the process enriching our own lives. We have just begun!

We can serve one another best by putting our egos aside, by listening to one another and by supporting one another. We are a sisterhood sharing together.

Mastery for Women is dedicated to providing the tools necessary to help reach out and welcome more women into our family. We are a family of supporting, building and mentoring. We are all beautiful, intelligent and all have something to contribute.