

outside the box creative changes *for creativity*

It all started when I was a kid – and I blame and thank my parents for everything! A graphic arts teacher for a father and a nursing professor for a mother, Tae Kwon Do lessons, a cabin on an island, and the freedom and encouragement to make art and explore all manners of science known to man gave me a solid base for both creativity and academia. Living with two teachers meant that attending and doing well in school was an expectation and so a bachelor's degree seemed to be the only choice after high school.

At first I fluffed around in first year arts at the U of S in Saskatoon, then not knowing what to do I dropped out to work at a deli. I had always been curious and interested in connecting with people and the healing modalities of massage, bodywork and yoga, but aside from venturing into the local public clinic for a cheap massage when I had some cash, I had never really considered a career as a massage therapist or a yoga teacher to be a viable option. Eventually, (pushing aside the unknown and elusive world of body and energy work) I went for that bachelor's degree and became the perfect meld of police detective, microbiologist, environmental scientist, and exterminator; I became a Public Health Inspector.

It was so exciting to grab that first job of my career in Northern Alberta, a town I'd never heard of, some crazy place called Fort McMurray. A single 24-year old with student loans, my first car and the freedom of finally making my own living, I entered with the famous 2-year plan. One thing led to another and now I am married with two kids and going on 11 years here in Wood Buffalo. That 2-year plan has become a 20-year plan and I'm LOVING it!

YOU positively

Working as a Public Health Inspector served me well for many years. It gave me the opportunity to connect with people, use my mind, learn new things and work with different levels and arms of Government while still making a difference. What it didn't give me was the creative outlet that I needed to be well-rounded and happy. A sense of accomplishment – sure, but nothing close to the DELICIOUS-ness of a joyfully singing heart.

I tried photography, quilting and scrapbooking, but it wasn't until my health deteriorated and I found yoga that things started to change. Shifting my focus to a practice that made me feel good both inside and out was exactly what I needed. Stepping into the yoga teacher training program gave me a taste of what a creative and prosperous future might look like. Since then, several years of soul searching in the fields of body and energy work have brought me full circle and back to the "what ifs" of my late teens and have provided the opportunity to evolve in ways that I never would have dreamed.

I admit that on one level, leaving the security of a well-paid Monday to Friday government job was scary. It was also, however, extremely exciting to think about a world where my "job" could also be my "joy". Being fortunate to have financial and emotional support from family made the decision to change careers midstream much easier (despite my mothers' nervousness about the whole idea of leaving guaranteed job security and a pension plan). If I'd have been on my own, I firmly believe that the change would have occurred anyway. The ball was rolling and couldn't be stopped. It just might have taken a bit longer and a lot more guts! Somebody once said: "if you aren't happy with something, then change it". That applies to work, love, and where or how you live. If you aren't happy, try for a change, and keep trying until you find that essential ingredient that makes things right.

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Heather Thomas

It is a big leap to trust in yourself and follow your dreams. Sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't, but you never know if you don't try. I tried and was lucky, and am now living my dream and following my heart. Working for myself, I have the opportunity to be creative every day. I get to think and dream and conjure up new ideas for classes, workshops and one-on-one client sessions, all without having to tow somebody else's line. If something doesn't feel right or strays from my personal philosophies, I simply don't do it. It is amazing to me that it can really be THAT simple! Having this creative outlet and being able to earn a living from following my passions, truly is the most DELICIOUS feeling in the world! I am grateful for the opportunity to explore, to learn and to grow, by being creative every day on my own terms!

For information about Yoga, Reiki or any of Heather's services, see her ad for Ananda Center for Balance on page 61.



Heather Thomas



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