



## **Chase your Dreams**

by Charlisa Anderson

For most of my 30+ years (ha!ha!), I have dreamed of finding my passion in life. I always believed, as most of us do, that I am here for a reason, but WHAT IS IT ??? What do I have to do to find my gift so I can begin to develop it and use it to serve others? I read many books on the subject but for some reason, I was not zeroing in on it. Some of the clues I read in these books were to try and answer such questions as: What do I love doing? What were my favorite things to play as a child? What do friends and relatives tell me I am good at? I was able to answer these questions pretty well, but was not getting anything that looked like a profession or vocation. I loved being a Mother but the last of my four children was close to leaving home and I was ready for the next chapter.

When I met my husband, Steve, in January of 2001 we spent hours talking every time we got together. One of the things I found out early from him was that he had found his passion and that was to help others find theirs. Wow, did I win the jackpot!!! Not only did I fall head over heels in love with him, but he began to help me find MY passion. It really did not happen quickly, but I took his advice of taking time to be quiet and listen within. By taking that time and journaling, I started to learn how important it is to sit with your own thoughts and feelings to work through daily issues. I struggled with making the time to do this, but whenever I did, I was so amazed at what I learned about myself and how it helped me understand my emotions. It also helped me work through painful situations

At the end of 2004, I was very unhappy at my full time job as a computer analyst. I liked computer work but it was not fulfilling. I really liked interacting with groups of people in a training capacity whether it be computer or interpersonal skills training. I got to do a little of that at my job but not enough. I had always loved watching live theatre and while surfing the web one day, found a website for acting classes in Columbus. It was a weekend Acting Boot Camp, and I was planning on taking a weekend away by myself in January. When I talked with Steve about it he encouraged me to go for it!

Well, after the first day of the classes, I was very excited. I LOVED IT !!! It felt very natural and even though I had a lot to learn, it really beckoned me to continue. My instructor was very encouraging and I really knew I had found something I could be passionate about. I dove right in and have since taken more classes, read several books on the subject, and signed on with an agent through whom I have gotten several acting jobs. I have also been in three theatre productions and have met many new friends. I am having a ball!

Steve's support before and after finding acting has been invaluable. I would not have found it without his love, support, encouragement and constant belief in me (and PATIENCE...I was quite consumed by all this at first!). Since August of last year, we took a risk so I could work at ILS, which allows me to support Steve's dream and to pursue mine. I am one happy, lucky woman!!! And, all because I would not settle for a job that just earned me a paycheck. I went after the dream that would earn me self-respect, fulfillment and the opportunity to give back and inspire others.