

STYLUS

Scratching Beneath the Surface

stylus n. an instrument of metal, bone, or the like,
used by the ancients for writing

YOUR GIVEN TALENT What's Your Truth?

by Nina Durfee

I've recently had the pleasure of connecting with a company that provides career coaching with a twist. Rather than engage traditional skills and attributes testing, Stuck in a Rut (www.stuckinarut.com) helps people discover and articulate their Given Talent through an in-depth process called The Clarifier. How does your Given Talent differ from your skills?

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| A Given Talent isn't learned. It's just a part of us. | A skill is learned. |
| A Given Talent energizes us when we're doing it. Time seems to fly by when we're doing our Given Talent. | A skill doesn't necessarily energize us. |
| A Given Talent is something we do naturally and unconsciously. We've been doing it since childhood. | A skill is something we are trained to do. |
| A Given Talent is something we do every day and everywhere. | A skill is something we typically do only in a work setting. |

"People are compelled and propelled by their Given Talent," says Dave Dutton, co-founder of Stuck in a Rut. "Your Given Talent is like the energy source deep inside you. It's the motor that is silently running away and patiently waiting for you to release the clutch to let things take off. It's your inner voice begging to be heard and acted on."

In short, your Given Talent is something that comes naturally to you, and when you are engaged in your Given Talent, you love what you are doing. Stuck in a Rut helps people attract careers that foster use of their Given Talent. My personal results from The

Clarifier reveal my Given Talent to be in direct alignment with life coaching, which makes sense, as coaching is something that provides deep satisfaction for me.

I shared this information with a close friend, and she responded skeptically. While she agreed I might exhibit my Given Talent characteristics in some circumstances that I find fulfilling, there must also be times when my Given Talent creates discomfort or angst. She pointed to Galileo, who stood by his ideas (which stemmed from his natural talent and innate knowledge) but suffered as a result.

What we know about Galileo's experience is only what we observe from the outside. What he felt inside, only he knew.

Galileo lived and expressed his passion in his discoveries, his teachings and his writings. The fact that others denounced his findings did not change his beliefs or his passion. In fact, "It was while Galileo was under house arrest that he dedicated his time to one of his finest works, *Two New Sciences*. Here he summarized work he had done some forty years earlier, on the two sciences now called kinematics and strength of materials. This book has received high praise from both Sir Isaac Newton and Albert Einstein." (*Wikipedia*, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galileo_Galilei, 1/22/08).

According to Dave Dutton, "Angst typically happens when that inner voice (your Given Talent) conflicts with what you think the outside world wants." Suffering results when we *deny* our Given Talent or attempt to suppress it.

Our innate knowledge, our Truth if you will, is so certain for us that no matter what happens on the outside, what others refute or argue about, does not change what's on the inside. How we *respond* to what's outside determines our ultimate experience, but it does not change our Truth. When we choose to deny our Truth for fear of others' response or reaction, we rob ourselves of fulfillment.

My sense is that the geniuses of the world are so firm in their Truth that in spite of outside appearances, they enjoy deep satisfaction. One can argue, "How can you be happy when others are persecuting you?" I respond that unhappiness comes to those who don't acknowledge their own Truth. I retain the inner satisfaction of my own Truth, because it is unshakable.

Have you ever known a child who was shaken when picked on by a bully? Perhaps the child felt ill-equipped to physically fight back, and so felt diminished as a person. In this case, the child hasn't recognized or acknowledged his Truth – that his strengths go deeper than his physical prowess, that his strength and Truth is in his compassion and love. The child's ache comes not from his own lack of value, but from his perception that what others think is more important than who he is at his core.

In the case of the genius, the bullies still exist. But because the genius is firm in his Truth, bullies don't shake his core.

According to Dave Dutton, we are all geniuses at our Given Talent. It's a gift that's been with us since we were small children. Using it is always compelling and energizing. Recognizing and embracing that gift unlocks the magic that creates contentment.

What if each of us has a Given Talent that is unique to us? What if its very uniqueness is what makes it powerful? What if acknowledging our individual Truth and accepting the individuality of others is what makes the puzzle pieces fit, creating a peaceful coexistence that is greater than the sum of its parts?

Wouldn't it then be to our advantage to step into our Truth and share it with others?

What truth about yourself do you deny? What truth do you want to acknowledge? What are you willing to do to awaken it? How can you acknowledge it in all that you do? What will happen if it is different from someone else's truth?

Whose Truth will you acknowledge today?