

For love or money?

By Beverly Denver

Readers often ask me about the successful women featured in Houston Woman Magazine. Many tell me they have a keen curiosity about the women and wonder if they have a lot in common — other than their obvious success. Many want to know: “Are they all Type As? Are they all workaholics? Are they all overly driven or obsessive? What is their primary motivation for doing so much?”

I am always quick to respond, “Yes, the women on our pages do have a lot in common. But, it is not necessarily their personalities or their work habits. Each is a truly unique individual. From what I’ve observed, each approaches her professional and personal life in a variety of ways.

What they share, however, is a passion for what they do — the kind of passion that excites and moves them onward and upward. For these women, nothing is out of reach. They truly believe, because of their passion, all things are possible!

Indeed, the women featured here — without exception — love life and how they spend their time. And, if you ask any of them whether the motivation for achievement was love or money, the overwhelming response will be, “Money? Are you kidding?”

I can relate to that. I have always loved the field of print journalism. Though it was never touted (to me) as the easy road to riches, I always wanted to grow up to be a reporter and then, with experience, an editor and publisher. I’ve always viewed journalism as a noble profession, and the telling of other people’s stories a worthy contribution.

Growing up, my first role model was Lois Lane. Later it was Katharine Graham of the Washington Post. In between, so many other female journalists influenced me and made me proud to be part of the Fourth Estate.

I’ve met and interviewed dozens of attorneys over the years, and many of them have been women. When asked what motivated them to go into law, most responded, “I grew up watching Perry Mason. I loved the way he solved problems and helped people. He was always in passionate pursuit of the truth. I wanted to be like that too!”

I’ve also met and interviewed a lot of physicians during my career. Again, when asked what made them want to go into medicine, the responses were familiar: “As a kid, I watched a lot of medical shows on TV.” Baby boomers mentioned Ben Casey. Generation Xers talked about Thursday night episodes of ER. In all cases, I heard, “The doctors on TV were my heroes and role models. They were passionate about their calling. I wanted to be like them.”

Artists? Yes, I’ve met and interviewed dozens of them too. All have told me, “Other artists who were passionate about their work influenced me a lot. I saw how absorbed they became in their work. I saw how much pleasure they got from the creative process. I

saw how much others were moved by the results of their labors. It made me want to spend my life that way too!"

Years ago I learned the hard way that "love" is an action word. I've never forgotten the lessons of that truth.

Even so, it is only in recent years that I have realized just how much our loves and passions can impact the lives of those around us - especially the youngsters. Clearly, they sit and watch and yearn for inspiration.

We need to give it to them!

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