

## PILOT LIGHT

Creative people have a little light inside them right by the heart. It's like the pilot light on a stove, that little light that never goes out even when the stove's not on. Your creative pilot light went on the moment you realized what you love to do. Remember when you were in third grade and you recited that Thanksgiving speech that got huge laughs? Or when you found yourself caring for all the animals in the neighborhood and realized you wanted to be a veterinarian? Or when you realized that your writing could be more than a hobby? Sure, you do. It was the beginning of wanting more and more of that feeling.

That's the pilot light. The problem is if you don't stoke that light—pay attention to it, nurture it—it will burn your insides out. You see, the light never goes out. This is the reason creative people have to keep pursuing the dream, no matter what.

Discovering what makes your pilot light burn is thrilling. It can guide your next step when you feel you're at a crossroads. You may feel there's something missing from your life and focusing on your pilot light can help you figure out what that is. If you're not sure what makes your light burn, work it out with some friends. Talk about what you love to do, when you're happiest, what moves you, what makes you feel connected to something bigger, what makes you feel alive and believe me, sometimes this can turn into a lucrative business. Once you've honed in on your pilot light, the next step is to stoke it continually. You don't have to make a career out of the things that turn you on but you can't ignore them.

There are times when circumstances in your life change and you can't tend to your pilot light the way you would like to. It could be anything from being PTA president to having family obligations to going through a natural disaster. At times like these, it's important to know that your light's never going out. It's always going to be there for you, even when it's not set on high.

Your pilot light is ageless. One of my favorite pilot light stories involves a client of mine named Jerry. He was a writer in his early 50's and he thought that because his dream of publishing a novel had yet to materialize that, in his words, "the train had passed him by." I looked at him and said, "There is no train." At that exact moment, we heard a train whistle fading away in the distance. Everyone in the workshop looked at me like I was a witch. Jerry eventually got his book published.

There's no train. There's no race. There's no end to what's possible