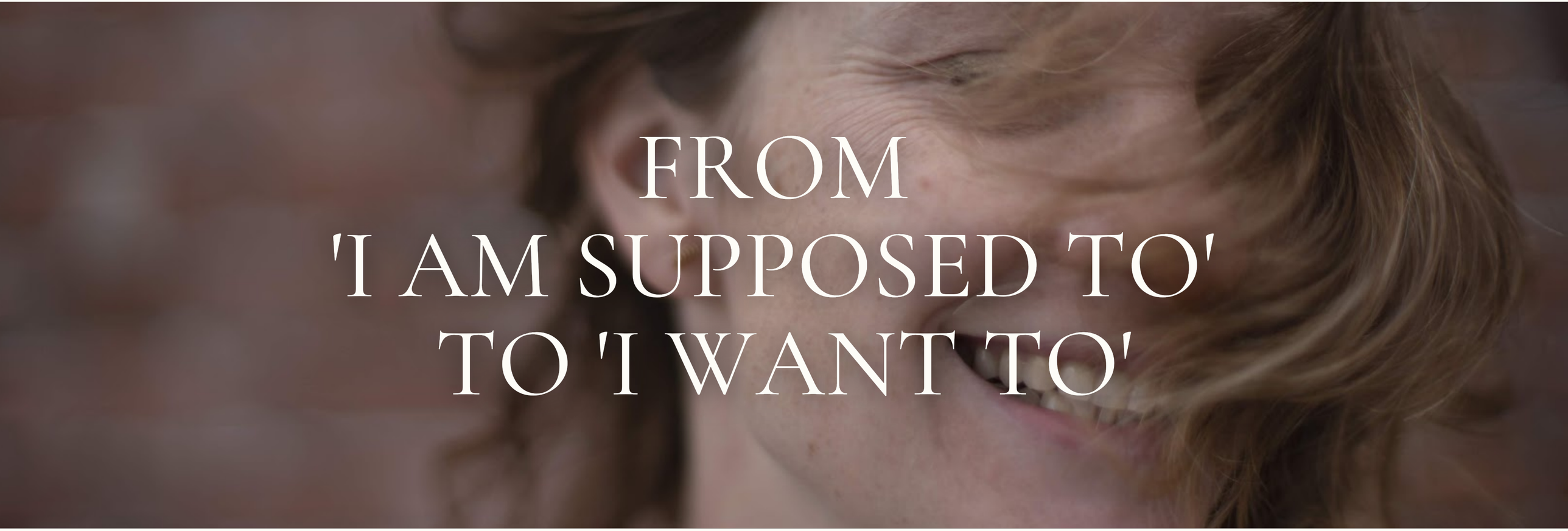
5 STRATEGIES FOR LIVING A MORE MEANINGFUL LIFE ON YOUR OWN TERMS



FROM 'I AM SUPPOSED TO' TO 'I WANT TO'

ARJANNA.COM

HI, I'M ARJANNA

I'm a formerly Silicon Valley-based Dutch leadership coach, who has recently settled in Zurich. I can proudly say that moving across the planet has helped me tremendously in caring less about what other people think would be good, smart or safe for me, and instead finding my own path- and I want the same for you!

In this e-book, I am sharing a few of my favorite strategies that help you stop living up to other people's expectations so you can become more confident, relaxed and -counter intuitive as it may seem- more successful.

If you want to know more about me, check out arjanna.com.

"I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself,
not the life others expected of me."

From the book The top 5 regrets of the dying, by Bronnie Ware

IN WHICH AREAS OF YOUR LIFE ARE YOU HOLDING YOURSELF BACK?

- [x] You’re dreaming about a career where you could have real impact, but you've been told switching jobs at your age is risky, so you stay put.
- [ ] You suffer from stress-related headaches and insomnia, but you keep going because you don’t want to disappoint your colleagues and clients.
- [ ] You wish your partner was more supportive, but you don't ever ask for anything in order not to bother them. Can't they just read your mind?!
- [ ] Since having kids, you feel inadequate as a parent, partner, colleague, friend... You're basically disappointing others in all areas of your life.
- [ ] You're no longer going to your beloved yoga classes and miss them dearly, but you're too ashamed of your Corona kilo's to go.
- [ ] You're embarrased about your woo woo spiritual side, so you hide it - and at the same time blame yourself for hiding something so important.
- [ ] Whenever you visit your parents, you see yourself slipping back into the teenager version of yourself. You crave having a more equal relationship with them, but have no idea how to start that conversation.

WHAT WOULD IT BE LIKE FOR YOU IF...

- You know who you are, what you want and why that matters to you.
- And because of that, you feel much more confident in your role as a professional, partner, parent, friend - or whatever else you choose to be.
- Your fear of judgment, failure and conflict no longer stops you from pursuing your dream career, a thriving relationship or that woo-woo spiritual passion of yours.
- So you spend your time on things that energize you, instead of things you feel you should do.
- Your relationships with your loved ones are much deeper, because you show up vulnerably with them, and you accept them as they are, with all their quirks and perks.
- You feel more free, happy, relaxed and strong, because you've let yourself out of the cage of expectations you've build for yourself.
- And that will allow you to have much more impact, because you can let go of societal norms and play life by your own rules!

SO HOW TO LIVE LIFE ON YOUR OWN TERMS?

"Why am I so afraid to fail?"

UGH, YOU GUESSED IT, THERE IS NO QUICK FIX :(

"Why am I never really happy where I am?"

You're not simply going to all of a sudden live by your own definition of success by reading this e-book.

Why do I care so much about what others think of me?

But when you consistently apply the following strategies, the high standards you set for yourself will get in your way a lot less.

"Why am I so demanding of myself?"

STRATEGY I

EMBRACE THAT YOU ARE TOO STRONGLY FOCUSED ON LIVING UP TO EXPECTATIONS

It's hard to look yourself in the eyes and admit that you are making your own life hard with living up to expectations you think others have of you.

We all have a tendency to blame our circumstances for making our lives difficult, but the truth is that in most cases the way we deal with our circumstances is the problem, not the circumstances themselves.

"Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you react to it." —Charles R. Swindoll

Admitting to yourself that you spend too much time and energy on people pleasing and letting others decide what you should do is the first step in freeing yourself from these patterns.

STRATEGY II

UNDERSTAND WHAT SITUATIONS OR PEOPLE TRIGGER YOU

The better you know what triggers you, the easier it is to pause yourself in the moment. Knowing your triggers allows you to stop yourself from going into full-on people pleaser, perfectionist or insecure overachiever mode, or to understand when to avoid or better prepare situations that you know will make you feel stressed and insecure.

And then, start to surround yourself with people and situations that bring out the best in you. Listen to podcasts that inspire you, follow people on social media that have a lifestyle you want for yourself - or even better: find these people in real life!

Write down people and situations that trigger you, and that help you live life on your own terms. I know it seems harsh to write this down, but making it explicit helps you make better choices for yourself. If you want more exercises to deepen this exercise, write me an email!

STRATEGY III

DEFINE YOUR OWN VERSION OF SUCCESS

You currently probably base most of your decisions on what you think is expected of you, or what makes you look successful in the eyes of others.

So when you get the question: ‘what do YOU really want?’ you get nervous. Other than ‘to live a successful life’, you don’t really have an answer.

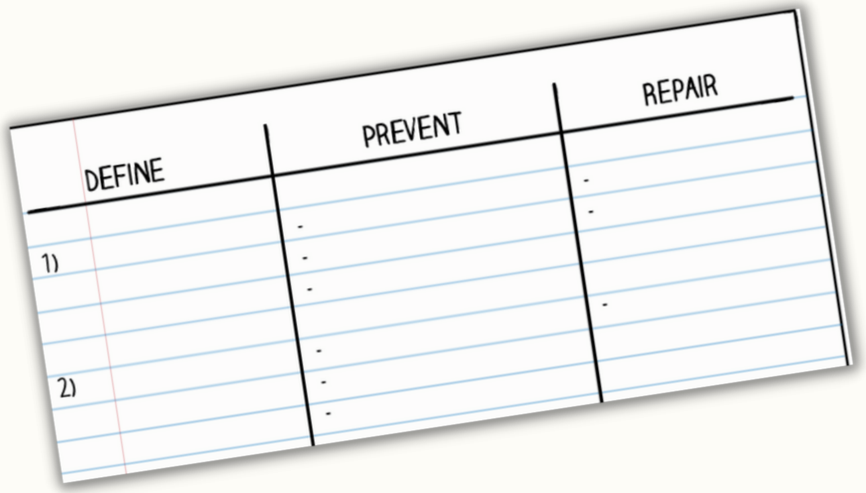
Spending time contemplating how you want to look back at your life when you are in your eighties can help you set the right priorities now.

Do you want some more guiding questions? Contact me for a more in-depth exercise.

STRATEGY IV

FACE YOUR FEARS

Have you noticed that when you even dream about doing something that others might not approve of, you feel fear rising up in your belly of chest? We are social animals, and so going against the 'tribe' feels so risky we often don't take action on our gut feelings.



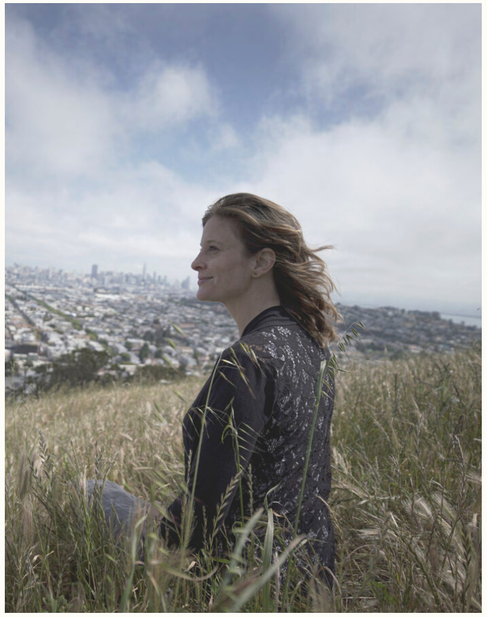
Paralyzed by the fear, we stick to what feels safe, but are ignoring the fact that sticking to the status quo (e.g. working too hard in an unsatisfying job, staying with a romantic partner that is not good to us) is also a risk.

This fearsetting exercise is one of the most powerful tools I know to clarify your thinking and take action in the face of fear.

STRATEGY V

CONNECT WITH YOUR INNER WISDOM

When faced with a challenging situation or big decision, is your first impulse is to ask others what to do?



There is nothing wrong with collecting information and insights from others, but all too often this is your only source of information, and the 'others' might be projecting their fears on you, have a very different perspective on life, or might benefit from you playing small.

Would you like to consult with someone who always wants the best for you, no matter how weird or scary or bold or boring or fluffy?

Try this visualization exercise and see what comes up for you!

SIGN UP FOR A FREE SAMPLE COACHING SESSION THROUGH ARJANNA.COM

WANT TO DIVE DEEPER?

I know you know, reading an e-book alone is not going to change your life.

If you want to dive deeper, I invite you to sign up for a free sample coaching session with me, so we can explore if I could coach you on this topic. During the conversation, I will already give you more tips and tricks you can apply directly.

And if you are ready to dive deep, sign up for a coaching journey with me!

SEND ME A NOTE TO START YOUR COACHING JOURNEY

WONDER WHAT IT'S LIKE TO WORK WITH ME?

You're unique, and so is your coaching trajectory. However, there are a few things that I can say about my approach to coaching.

I'm a coach. Not a mentor, and not a consultant.

That means that I believe that you have the answers, and I'm here to mirror, champion and challenge you, and provide you with tools and exercises that might benefit you.

Your coaching trajectory might be action-oriented or introspective, down-to-earth or deeply spiritual, based on what is beneficial for you in the moment.

With most of my coachees, I do bi-weekly 60-minute coaching sessions via Zoom (in-person also possible if you're in the Zurich area), for 3-6 months.

And if you're a nature lover like me, you might enjoy a walking coaching session!

Contact me if you want to know more!

I'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Contact me with any questions, thoughts or ideas you'd like to share.

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Portraits of me were taken by the gifted Fran Guijarro