

From Change to Transformation

Being Stretched into God's Purpose for Your life: Valorie Burton



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speaker, Valorie Burton is the author of *Listen to Your Life*, *What’s Really Holding You Back?* and *Rich Minds, Rich Rewards*, and *Why Not You?* 28 Days to Authentic Confidence, all published by divisions of Random House, Inc. Ms. Burton is a frequent

media contributor and has engaged in hundreds of interviews from *The Los Angeles Times*, *The 700 Club* and *Essence* to the *ABC Radio* and *CNN*.

When your speaking and communication platform includes organizations such as American Airlines, Toyota, O, *The Oprah Magazine* and *Ohio University* as well as some of the nation’s largest churches including *The Potter’s House (Dallas)*, *Lakewood Church (Houston)*, and *New Birth (Atlanta)*, a person has to not only have a calling and passion for public speaking, but they must also have the confidence that comes with such a ministry.

After completing her Master’s degree at the age of 21, Valorie Burton began working as a marketing director for an accounting firm in Dallas, Texas. Soon people began asking her to do pr work. Within two years, she took a leap of faith and starting her own public relations company. “It was scary, but the most important thing is to be willing to be in it for the long haul. And to have a clear vision of what your calling is.”

When asked about handling the responsibility and obstacles of becoming an entrepreneur, Ms. Burton explained, “I don’t see obstacles as stop signs.” Her wispy voice

reverberated through the phone. “There were obstacles of course, but if you focus on obstacles they’ll block your path. I knew there were things that were going to be difficult, but the challenge is really about knowing when to close the door and move into a new direction.”

Such was the decision Valorie had to make in 2001 when she sold her business. Although the door she closed would not only open a large window, her path was stalled when one of the hardest moments in her life transpired; her mother had a massive brain aneurism. Valorie moved back home to assist her mom and younger brother.

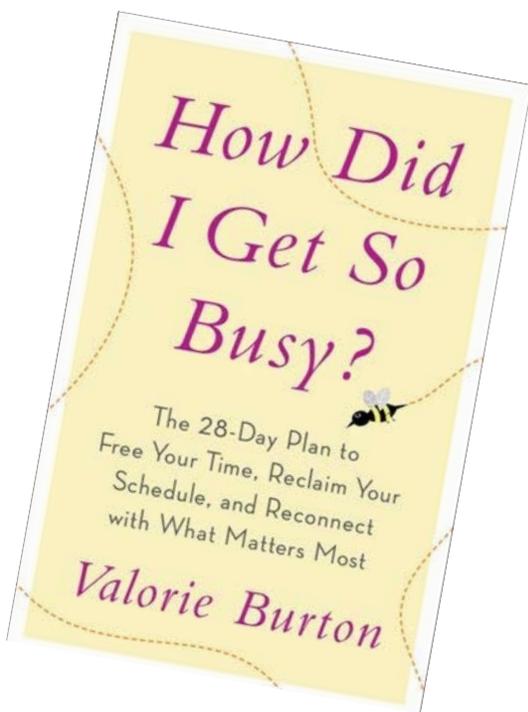
“You come out with a sense of hope and perseverance that you will get through things. You will be stretched but God is there. No matter what my obstacles were, there’s someone who’s had worse and they made it.” Valorie goes on to recant her time during her mother’s aneurism. “It was one of the biggest periods of growth for me. It was a major turning point. I was 28 and talking on the phone with my mom. I remember her saying, ‘Oh my head.’”

With so many years of having only to take care of herself, she was now put into the position of a caregiver of an ill parent and an eight year old sibling. The experience of being responsible for both of them helped her to see what was more important. That she had to slow down and re-evaluate her life.

When it comes to evolution, you normally think of Darwin’s scientific theory; but evolution embodies transformation which is ultimately triggered by the dreaded catalyst of change. Change is uncomfortable; in fact watching your life shift around can make you can feel like your world is falling apart. Change can be intimidating and encapsulate new fears you didn’t even know you had. Most people don’t move past this fear and remain ‘stuck’ mentally and do not grow spiritually.

Since change is part of life, whether you accept it or not, it will eventually happen. You can either be prepared for it or hold tight to a bumpy roller coaster ride. It’s when you decide to embrace change that it brings growth and maximizes one’s potential. That’s why reading books by authors like motivational speaker and life strategist Valorie Burton can help ease you through this transformation process.

As a sought-after life coach and



In her debut book, “Rich Minds, Rich Rewards,” Valorie mentions how people tend to take health and simple things for granted, but after having to watch her mom not being able stand, sit up or speak Valorie states she realized how blessed she is to have family and friends. Her friends from Dallas and co-workers visited her mom while in the hospital. She learned a lot about herself and succumbed to the knowledge that no matter what a situation is you have something to be grateful for.

“All the stuff I’d learned by reading the bible, I had to put into action.” Her mother surgery occurred in the middle of the night. The doctors’ said she may not make it or may even become brain damaged. The thought alone could’ve stifled the prayers of many but Valorie continued to be steadfast. While driving downtown to Methodist Hospital, Valorie merged off of I-35 and curved along the ramp onto Colorado Boulevard. Right then, at that moment she raised her hands to praise God. A specific scripture flickered in her mind, “I shall praise the lord at all times,” and that she did.

“In my difficult times it wasn’t all up to me. It’s all on Him. I would not lose faith in God. The battle is not mine, it’s the Lord’s. I know it’s hard to give praise at times when you’re in pain and in uncertainty. But when you face trouble, you should do what the bible says to do. It doesn’t mean you’re not in pain or that you like it. Still I don’t know how you get through life without God.”

Valorie believes that when people believe something is too hard for them to work past or get through, the end result does no one

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any good. “You can’t get any strength from that.” As an entrepreneur, she admitted, there were times when she felt like it would be easier to get a job, with set hours and salary. “But,” she softly interjects, “it wasn’t my calling.” When listening to Ms. Burton, you truly believe in her message about hope, perseverance and inner strength. You feel empowered by embracing her words and allowing them to permeate into your spirit and become substance.

“I know this is what I’m meant to be doing and I simply cannot do anything else.” Valorie continues, “I would be miserable if I tried. If God created you to do something it’s not going to be anything else that you can do with peace. I pray for anointing to speak. People want to hear truth. Anytime you’re able to stop focusing on yourself, it takes a lot of pressure off. There are times when you need to get quiet and sit with God. Truly study his word.” As Valorie transformed from an entrepreneur to a motivational speaker and author to life strategist, she handled what some would call obstacles, as a chance to grow and be stretched.

“It’s about reclaiming your time and focusing your priorities,” that’s sound advice from a woman who’s endured much at such a young age. When speaking of her goals she includes that she would like to do inspirational television and have more of a presence in the media and possibly have a syndicated column. “You know, I’d like to use the journalism degree I have.” Her humor trickles through the receiver and immediately I feel a kinship.

“Overall, I want a life with space. My aim is to have a life that is not so packed that you can’t enjoy the journey and be able to breathe.” Valorie has successfully mastered the balancing act of creating time to spend with God, Family, Career and Self and she encourages all women, single or married, to do the same.

“There’s no choice but to wait on God, patiently and joyfully. Make use of your time productively and trust God. It’s time to embrace where we are, and to open our minds to what God wants us to do. When

you get clear about God’s will for you, you can’t fail at that, because God created you. When you’re outside of that, that’s when you lose confidence.”

Surely Ms. Burton is doing what she’s called to do and she’s got the confidence to prove it! Still even the most confident of people can have time management problems. She addresses this next step in personal evolution in her latest book, “How did I get so busy?”

“In society there’s this urgency to become busier than ever. People do have a choice in scheduling. Often times, our scheduling can be based on more than just priorities, sometimes it’s out of fear.” Valorie should know, it was fear that pushed her to become an overachiever. After being a cadet at the United States Air Force Academy for a year, she transferred to two other colleges before graduation – all in a three year period.

She continued on to graduate school, finishing a master’s degree in journalism at 21. “I thought if I finished early it would be a better reflection about me. But in rushing through college and life I missed something. I missed the college experience and things I could’ve gotten involved in. I’ve rushed my entire life, always staying busy.” Although she doesn’t live a life of regrets, she does value the importance of ‘stopping to smell the roses’.

Things in life will happen to slow you down and literally force you to re-evaluate your life. In her latest book, *How Did I Get So Busy?*, Ms. Burton uses her ‘stretch filled’ moments as a testimony to challenge people to reconnect with what matters most in their lives. While you’re reconnecting, be sure to watch Valorie as a contributor on ABC family’s, “Living the Life,” which airs weekdays at 9:30 am.

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