**Workshop**: Whose Choices Are You Making?

**Website Description:** Here’s the real truth: Our parents taught us the best that they knew when we were growing up. So did our teachers. As adults, we are doing the same as we raise our children, carry out our job responsibilities, do service work, run the household. *Have you ever stopped long enough to discern if you want to do “it” this way?* Do your choices representyour personal style, talent, desire or, rather, t*he way it’s always been done*? With opportunities expanding daily, and life as we know it ever on the move, it is more important than ever to choose with intention, let go those activities that do not serve us, and create life experiences that feel right.

**Stake**/**Purpose**: People who question then intentionally choose their activities, relationships, traditions are happier, freer, more fulfilled, more energized.

**Intended** **for**: Anyone who feels unfulfilled or overwhelmed by things that are “out of their control”.

**Desired Impact:** Persons will literally see their life busyness on the page along with a picture of how much of it is personally fulfilling – and not.

**Outcome:** Persons will realize that they CAN choose to make room for what is more personally fulfilling by letting go of what isn’t and they will be inspired to commit to some specific changes.

**Supplies:** The Renaissance Soul book, Plenty of paper and pens and boards to write on

**Musical content:** Look Beyond, Show Up, Paving My Own Way

**Resources (books, articles, etc.) for participants:**

[**http://www.songsforyourspirit.com/Publications/SecureYourOwnMaskFirst.pdf**](http://www.songsforyourspirit.com/Publications/SecureYourOwnMaskFirst.pdf)

[**http://www.songsforyourspirit.com/Publications/MakeYourDreamsComeTrue.pdf**](http://www.songsforyourspirit.com/Publications/MakeYourDreamsComeTrue.pdf)

**Content:**

DISCUSSION spawned by these questions:

* Whose life is perfectly balanced, filled with all that you want to do, the way you want to do it?
* What do you long for that always waits behind “I don’t have time or money…”?
* What did you do this week that you didn’t want to do?
* What did you do this week that expressed your deepest desires?
* Take a moment to look at the fundamentals of your life: where you live, how your home is decorated, your job, how you spend Christmas day, whether or not you are a Packer fan, how you volunteer at the kids’ school or church, your religious practices, how often you wash the sheets on the beds, the kinds of meals you serve: How much of all of this have you, as an adult, stopped to think about and ask:
  + Do I want to do this?
  + Do I want to do it this way?
  + Does this bring me joy?
  + I really resent this … but dare I really change?

1. What is the SINGLE biggest thing that ZAPS your time at present? …………………………………   
2. What NEEDS to change? ………………………………   
3. What one thing is MOST IMPORTANT to you right now? ………………………………   
4. What is the EASIEST change/s you could make to prioritise your time better? ………………………………   
5. What could get in the way? If you were going to sabotage yourself how would you do it? ………………………………

Too often we do “what we were told, what our parents did, what is expected, tradition, …” or we do “it” “Their” way … yet we are in a time when the world is asking for change! And the world is offering more and more, different and better (or not!) all the time!

ME? Scouring powder in the bathtub, microwave oven, real diapers, overtime at LU and “I QUIT”

ASSERTION: We all continue some habits and practices without thinking and then claim we can’t do what we want, can’t be fulfilled, carry around frustration and resentment.

TODAY: We will question some things. KNOW that questioning doesn’t mean anything has to change. But willingness to see clearly opens the door to choosing with intention.

SONG: Look Beyond

Mine/Theirs exercise [Margaret Lobenstine, The Renaissance Soul]

* + - * Part I - Divide a sheet of paper into 3 columns and la**b**el the columns:

1. **Activity**
2. ***Justification*** *for this activity*
3. ***Whose?*** *Does this reflect “my” values or “theirs”*
   * + - Guidance for completing the sheet **[KEEP YOUR WRITING BRIEF]**
         * Column I, Activity – List all the “directions” you run in: yoga, church, job, kids’ activities, parties, gardening, housecleaning, bargain hunting, cooking, groceries.
       - Imagine a typical work day – list 3-5 things you do routinely
       - Imagine a typical weekend – list 3-5 things you do routinely
       - Imagine a family holiday, vacation, neighborhood event, …
         * Column II, Justification – How do I justify spending time doing this?
       - Example: Driving kid to soccer practice because “that’s what mothers do” or “that is the only quality time we have together”
         * Column III, Whose Values – Does this reflect a value of yours OR of mom, dad, partner, society, boss, family tradition.
       - Place and M or a T in the third column
       - Part II - Divide a clean sheet of paper into 2 columns and label the first column:
4. “Their” activities
5. List the things from the other sheet that you marked **T [WAIT]**
6. Label the second column *How to Eliminate “Their” Activities*
7. Before you think I’m crazy, let’s discuss a few items as a group. Keep an open mind! *Brainstorm* means let the “wild and crazy” come out! It might not be perfect – but it’s definitely moldable (remember the sticky notes at Retreat 2?)

* Who has an item that is “t”heirs?
* One or more steps toward eliminating the activity or keeping the part you personally value and finding an alternative for the other part?
  + Car pool
  + Trade with a neighbor for something you love to do
  + Talk with your spouse about shifting roles

1. Depending on time, continue open discussion, grab a partner, or complete on your own. Maybe spent 5-10 minutes alone and then discuss.
2. Commit to 3-5 real changes – WRITE THEM ON ANOTHER PIECE OF PAPER
3. Share around the room your commitments
4. SONG: Show Up
5. WRAP UP WITH GUIDED MEDITATION WHERE THEY FOCUS ON THEIR DECISIONS

* What do you notice when you imagine the changes in place?
* What’s possible when “it” isn’t present anymore?