



Manifesto Musing

Who Knew?

I confess that I was an ardent adherent of Jane Fonda in the days of her workout tapes – so much so that my first-born son reckons they were the soundtrack of his childhood! All silliness aside, she was one of the strong women in my young womanhood, who stood for something, and ‘Hanoi Jane’ was loud in speaking out about perceived injustice, particularly highlighting the rights of women and those of the marginalised and oppressed.

She is here in Australia in June 2025 for her *Wanderlust True North* tour. Reading an article about what drives her at 87 years of age, I see a lot of resonances with myself and our My Manifesto tenets. In an interview with Liz Hayes, she mentioned she feels ‘younger than ever’ and attributes this to her mindset. She characterised it in this way: “this mindset has a lot to do with a change in my attitude and living a purpose-driven life.” Indeed, at the very foundation of our work is a belief in the power of choosing one’s attitude, and Fonda’s and our belief echoes the words of Viktor Frankl, in that we only really have control over ourselves, our attitude. A ‘purpose-driven’ life too, is so powerful a concept. Finding one’s meaning and purpose, at every defining point in one’s life, is virtually lifesaving – the life of the spirit, that is.

As an older adult woman, I know that each time my life’s circumstances changed – adulthood, career, marriage, motherhood and so on until most recently retirement from the teaching classroom – I have needed to reflect. My self-directed question was, “Who am I now?” My response to that question, or more accurately, the response which reflected my current priorities, was the one by which I chose the next steps of my life.

Now however, when I ask this question, I have done my quintessential work, the work of my personal manifesto, the step-by-step process for which we have gifted to you in our book, *My Manifesto: a compassionate guide to reveal your best life*. With my personal manifesto as my guide, I have the meaning and purpose of my life against which I can calibrate each change as it arises. My personal manifesto, too, may change as we state that it is current AND dynamic, but much of it will stay the same. The part which particularly stays the same is the part rooted in my character strengths and values, my goodness and what I will stand up for.

I applaud Jane Fonda that she is still sharing her insights with us at 87 years of age and look forward at my 73 years of age with hope and optimism that I will still be doing the same at 87 and beyond; sharing the way to find your meaning and purpose in life and its corollary, the blessing of inner peace.

Warm wishes,
Sue