

Discern If Your Dream Is From God With These 5 Strategies

Do you have a dream?

Are you growing discouraged as year after year passes and it lays dormant and unaccomplished? Are you about to give up on it altogether?

In an earlier post *4 Thing You Need to Know About Dreams* I shared in a video about my dream of coming to Croatia.

But that isn't the only dream I've had. Oh, I've had many dreams.

There was one in particular that I never thought would come to life, and yet it wasn't one I felt I must accomplish.

There is a quote from Anne of Green Gables that I love:

"No wonder [Aunt Josephine] has so little imagination. That's one consolation about being poor—you have to dream all this up."

Imagine how boring life would be if everything we ever dreamed of having or doing came true? What would be left to dream about?

In 2012, my husband and I went to look at a little yellow country house and a yard big enough for our kids to run around and play in.

I had always wanted such a house, although I never really believed it would be a possibility for me. But the moment I laid eyes on this house, I was in love. That was in June, by the end of September we put the key in the lock, opened the door and began moving our things in.

The process of birthing a dream can be both exhilarating and excruciating. But through it I learned a few things about dreams.

5 Things I've Learned About Dreams

1. *When God gives a dream He will make it happen.*

I had no idea my little yellow country house was a dream from God's heart. I thought it was dreamed up by me. But every step of the way the doors have miraculously opened, as if on their own.

Every step of the way we were prepared for the whole thing to fall through. In fact, we thought the idea that we could be homeowners was just too good to be true.

But here we are in our own home, newly renovated, and even more lovely than it was four years ago when I first laid eyes on it! And what more could we conclude other than God made this happen?

2. *Hold your dreams lightly.*

It is easy to clutch our dreams in a death grip, thinking that they are our and that it is up to us to make it happen. Doing this only causes deep dissatisfaction to grow in our hearts. We envision how fulfilled we will be if only our dream would come true, yet we fail to realize that fulfillment and satisfaction do not lie in our dreams, but in our decision to be content in every situation.

This is something I have made great effort to cultivate in my heart. I even blogged about it in a series called 5 Keys to Contentment. I haven't arrived yet, and I still fail in these areas, but I am finding that I am growing in contentment. When we first began inquiring about house—and all through this journey we've been on in buying it—I told my husband, "No matter what happens, I am content. I love living here in our apartment. I have friends here and everything is nearby."

I held my dream lightly by focusing on the good things we have now. I had a long list of “pros” on both sides, which helped in case the house fell through. I knew I would still be happy. I would just keep on dreaming!

3. *You need to know when to fight for your dream and when to let go.*

One thing that stood out to us was that we didn't have to fight for the house. It has been the easiest and most painless process we've ever encountered! There are dreams that seemingly come true on their own. And yet there are those that require us to have courage and stamina in fighting to make them happen.

But we have to be discerning. Sometimes we fight to make dreams come true that were not meant to come true. Sometimes the dreams we are fighting for are self-serving dreams that we think will elevate us, make us feel better about ourselves, promote us, and stroke our egos. Such dreams are never of God.

It takes great humility to recognize this and let those dreams go. But when we do, we will find great freedom because dreams like this will only hold hostage the ones that God has for us. Learn to fight for God's dreams, while letting go of our own selfish ones so we are free to accomplish the ones God has truly given!

4. *You may have to let your dream die so it can live*

Does that statement sound confusing to you? Like an oxymoron? It's not. Jesus described a seed that, when planted in the ground, dies so that it can live. Sometimes God plants a dream in our heart. We cultivate it, water it and even pray about it. And then we watch it die. This can be very disillusioning!

Do not lose heart or grow angry. Sometimes God lets a dream die, so that we cease being possessive of it. It's not **our** dream, after all. It's God's dream! It's His plan. Sometimes God will let it die so that we pry our fingers off

of it and let it go. In doing so, we give God the freedom to let that dream live as it should live. Quite possibly the path we were taking to make that dream come true was a wrong path, or maybe it was wrong timing. Maybe we need to include others in that dream, or a different set of “others.”

Has your dream from God died? Don't give up. Keep praying about it. In the meantime, let God help you make it *His* and not yours; and let Him renew that vision in your heart the way He created that dream to be.

5. **Never stop dreaming**

Never stop dreaming. Ever. Even those dreams that may seem silly and insignificant. Even the ridiculous ones you know will never come true. Dreams fuel passion and drive. Sometimes the ridiculous dreams are what give foundation to the “real” ones down the road. Never stop dreaming. Never let your imagination die. Never starve creativity. Allow God to use it, hone it and cause it to grow.

Rosilind Jukic, a Pacific Northwest native, is a missionary living in Croatia and married to her Bosnian hero. Together they live with their two active boys where she enjoys fruity candles, good coffee and a hot cup of herbal tea on a blustery fall evening. Her passion for writing led her to author her best-selling book *The Missional Handbook*. At *A Little R & R* she encourages women to find contentment in what God created them to be. You can also find her at *Missional Call* where she shares her passion for local and global missions. She can also be found at on a regular basis. You can follow her on Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Google +.