

Opinion

ROSEMOUNT
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Put me in, Coach

My mother liked to say things always come in threes. I thought of this when a friend told me of someone he knows who helps people transition to retirement. His email was the third time in less than a week I had heard or seen the word "retirement."

The first talk of retirement had been when I asked my husband if he had any thoughts of saying farewell to his career. He did not and told me he could see himself working for a good long time.

Not long after that, I received a call from a medical provider needing to update my records. The caller wanted to verify the date I had retired. The word caught me by surprise. I never use it to describe myself because after leaving my job of nearly 30 years, I became a freelance writer.

Being a writer means I am always looking for a story so, of course, I called

the life coach my friend told me about in his email. Her name is Doreen Johnson. She lives in Prior Lake because she wants to live near water. A fitting setting for a woman who helps her clients maneuver the ebb and flow of their lives — not only retirement but a career change, lifestyle shift, divorce, or illness.

Doreen says the best time to look at your life is when there's a major transition. The focus of her coaching practice is to show people how to design and organize their lives so they are able to create their own version of the good life.

When she talked about helping people find their



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passion, it hit a nerve. "What are you passionate about?" I asked myself as I hung up the phone after our talk. The usual answers came to mind: family, friends, Margherita pizza with goat cheese. But then, I blurted out that I am passionate about people. I love to hear their stories.

When I was selling cars and trucks, I often forgot about the job at hand because a customer and I would get to talking about their work, their kids, a brother's cancer surgery. Everyone has a story and I was eager to learn the one about the person sitting across the desk from me.

Doreen Johnson has a good story. Growing up on a farm near Doran, she attended a country school with eight classmates. She graduated from Concordia College in Moorhead with a degree in music and was band director for a public high school. She

worked as the head of production operations for a media group, did consulting and transformational training for businesses and worked with a number of self-improvement leaders to design and develop training programs.

Now, she is a life coach and her purpose and passion come through when she talks about her company, River Dreams, and her work. About helping people optimize their gifts and be more authentic. Her energy is contagious. Even when we got around to talking about retirement, she made it seem like the job of a lifetime.

"Retirement gives you the space," she says. "It's a time when we can fulfill our dreams: The dreams we put off because we had to fulfill our obligations first."

My mother was right: Things do come in threes. In Doreen Johnson's world they are purpose, passion and dreams.