

# Nick Williams

## Changing the way people view work

Interview by Eve Menezes Cunningham

**N**ick Williams is best known for his book *The Work We Were Born to Do: Find the Work You Love, Love the Work You Do*. His other books include *Unconditional Success*, *Powerful Beyond Measure* and *How to Be Inspired*.

Nick is also founder of Heart at Work in London and a trustee Director of Alternatives. He recently set up the Inspired Entrepreneur website.

I first interviewed Nick in 2005. His solution-focused attitude helped me keep going as I was building up my own coaching practice and writing business.

Nick remembers that when he was starting out “there was a lot of fear because I had to change my life and I didn’t know how I was going to do it. So I think a lot of my teaching comes out of my experience and compassion. I’ve always enjoyed working with people. I enjoyed helping people and being in service to people.”

Most of his work involves helping his clients, readers and online community find their vocation. He says, “The work we were born to do is the way we share our unique gifts and talents with the world. I love the quote from *The Prophet* [Kahlil Gibran] about how your work is your love made visible.”

But it took him a while to figure out what that meant for his own life and work. In some ways, that struggle is what makes him so empathic and helpful for people reading his books or attending his workshops.

Remembering his early career, Nick says, “I felt inspired to help other people, to speak and to write and coach and teach even though I’d hardly done any of that. I took baby steps. I started studying Transactional Analysis and, in time, gave a talk about TA. While this was going on, I thought ‘I love doing this!’ No matter how much resistance and fear I had, I knew I wanted

to be doing more of it. Little by little, inspiration grew and resistance shrunk.”

Now he inspires “people to new possibilities around what work can be. Work can be a wonderful thing. It’s how you share your talent.” He loves “teaching people how to make those possibilities true in their own lives, on an individual level. They can start creating their work and many people start their own business. More and more, I’m seeing people who want to get going in the personal development area washing up in my shore. One of my big dreams is to change the way people view work.”

Nick is very conscious about walking his talk and, having earned his living in this field for a long time, now feels more congruent. He says, “Some of this happens with experience, as your

confidence grows. And some comes with age. I’ve turned 50. If I don’t claim my confidence now, when am I going to? I don’t use NLP a lot. I never trained in it but I aim to live what I think NLP is about - connecting with people and seeing things from other points of view.”

Asked if he ever wanted to give up on his own dreams, Nick says, “I think, ‘What else would I do?’ Do I want to go work in a shop? No. Do I want to serve sandwiches? No. I am totally committed to my life so any setback is just an obstacle to overcome. I get back on track by laughing about it. Once you get on the path, it’s about committing. You have to just keep committing and saying ‘I’ll make this work.’ So my focus shifted to ‘How can I make this work?’ The way we deal with failure links with how we feel about fear. Most people are brought up to avoid fear or to defend themselves against it. I used to think, ‘If I could just face these fears and be clear of them, I’d be alright.’ The day I realised it was a daily activity, I was very disappointed.”

In many ways, it would be wonderful if we could deal with something once and for all and then be free. But life doesn’t work that way. While lots of motivational speakers and self help writers act as if a positive attitude is all it takes, Nick’s openness about the struggles involved is refreshing and, in many ways, more inspiring.

He says, “There’s a big difference between being good at something and being able to create a successful business. It’s really important to learn how to get visibility for yourself. How do people get to know, like and trust you so they’ll want to do business with you? It’s less important to think of yourself as a coach than to think of yourself as an expert so you can consistently help people solve a particular problem. Niching is very important.”

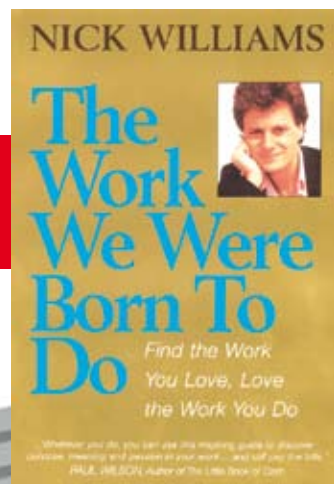
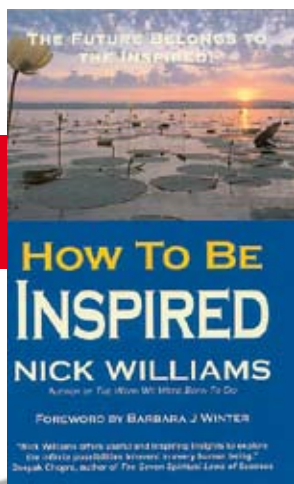
His own niche is all about work and inspiration. Nick loves being his own boss. He enjoys “being self-motivated, being able to generate ideas for myself and follow them through. If I have an idea I just do it. I like that ability to think and do.” He especially likes not having to ask for permission, write papers or deal with the whims of committees.

As he reflects over his career, Nick says that even though he initially resisted this path, “I gradually grew into it. It’s a constantly evolving process. Not quite a moving target but you have to grow into it. Often the thing we think we can’t do is the thing we sometimes feel most called to do. Resistance often operates as a pointer.”

Nick is a big fan of inspiration. Not in a ‘waiting for the muse to strike’ kind of way, but in finding a way of working that encourages creativity. He’s particularly inspired by the opportunities offered by the web and has set up the business networking Inspired Entrepreneur website.

He says, “I want a million people to download it – for free – over the next five years. Even if just 10,000 people felt happier about their work as a result, the ripple effect on the planet would be fantastic.” ●

**The work we were born to do is the way we share our unique gifts and talents with the world**



**Further resources**

You can download your free copy of Nick's nine-part programme, to help you discover the work you were born to do and become an inspired entrepreneur, at [www.inspired-entrepreneur.com](http://www.inspired-entrepreneur.com)

Nick's books *The Work We Were Born to Do: Find the Work You Love, Love the Work You Do*, *Unconditional Success* and *Powerful Beyond Measure* are available through Amazon.

For more information about speakers and workshops at Alternatives, please visit [www.alternatives.org.uk](http://www.alternatives.org.uk)