YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY FROM YOURSELF

...just be you

A CONVERSATION WITH CINDY WILSON · BY GISELLE HUDSON · 2021

Exodus was still on the UK chart when its follow-up, *Kaya*, was released on March 23, 1978.

Kaya became Bob Marley's highest-charting non-compilation album in the UK, where it peaked at No. 4. Some critics at the time suggested that Marley had in some way sold out his hardcore political beliefs to produce an album of softer emotional hues, tailored for the mainstream market.

But, as Marley told *Hot Press* magazine around the time of the album's release, "Me never like what politics really represent," adding of his new songs, "They not really move away from anything. 'Tis music. It can't be political all the while."

On the subject of reworking old songs, he told the French publication *Rock & Folk*:

> *"The first time is raw inspiration. The second time is comprehension... Songs evolve."*

Just like Marley's songs, Cindy Wilson has evolved. And the Marley discussion is relevant, because at one point in her life Cindy found herself simply running. Marley's existential musing in "Running Away" is that however fast you run, you can't run away from yourself, and Cindy soon came to that realization herself.

BAD BOSSES ARE MORE COMMON THAN WE CARE TO ADMIT

Bad bosses, unfortunately, are all too common, and Cindy had one under whom she just couldn't do anything right.

Cindy left that job and found another, but learned quickly that bad bosses do not operate in just one manner.

She knew she couldn't keep running, so she made up her mind to stand her ground and confront all of her fears.

This is when things started to shift!

Cindy started to take stock of herself. For the first time, she actually heard herself, and listened. She was holding herself back.

At that time she didn't believe in affirmations or the metaphysical. Hers was a purely material world. But slowly she opened up to her inner world and sought

direction from there.

> *Plato said that music and rhythm find their way into the secret places of the soul.*

Interestingly, as I walk through Cindy's story for the second time, I find myself reaching for yet another song to describe this part of her journey: "Be Yourself" by Audioslave, a song about the many ways we hide from ourselves, and the quiet courage it takes simply to be who we are.

JUST BE YOURSELF

We've all heard "just be yourself" so many times. It sounds like an amazing experience, yet how exactly do you know that the self you're being is you?

The world is screaming at us, through athletes, actors and now social media influencers, to do it this way, show up wearing this, walk this way (and yes, in the music vein, I am thinking of Aerosmith).

> *"Waking up to who you are requires letting go of who you imagine yourself to be."* – *Alan Watts*

Our true self is who we really are when we let go of all the stories, labels and judgments we have placed upon ourselves. It is who we naturally are without the masks and pretension.

It is who we really are when we let fall to the floor the cloak of other people's stuff that we have taken on. Everything else we claim to be when we say, "This is who I am!" is only a story.

Tiny Buddha, a leading resource for peace and happiness with more than six million readers and followers, shares three steps to find the true you:

1. Get in touch with your inner child.
2. Become more aware of your thoughts.
3. Follow your intuition.

JUST BE YOU

Could Cindy first find herself, and then be that?

Cindy is quiet, contemplative. She decided to get comfortable and accept that not everyone would like her, but the people who mattered would embrace her. She just needed to be Cindy. And that she did.

A billboard in her honour would say: "Just be you!"

SINCE THEN, MANY LESSONS

Cindy has learned to ignore people who say you can't, especially when it's something she really wants, and to say "no" to things she doesn't want to do.

She is fierce when it comes to her children, putting those she loves first. But she accepts that everyone has to learn and grow on their own, as her son found out when she would no longer help him with his homework.

Cindy cautions against pursuing only career and qualifications on paper. For a long time academia was her only pursuit, but she quickly realized that what she lacked, despite her education, was experience.

> *"You need to widen your scope. Don't limit yourself to one area."*

Now Sector HR Manager, Automotive at Ansa McAl, she is grateful for the latitude, experience and coaching she has received there.

STILL ON THE RIGHT PATH

Sitting across from Cindy, her strong, quiet demeanour commanding attention, I cannot imagine her ever getting ruffled. Yet I ask: "When you feel overwhelmed, or lose focus temporarily, what do you do?"

You would be wise to follow Cindy's suggestions:

1. Stop and take a moment.
2. Make a list.
3. Remind yourself: "What do I want? What outcome am I after?"

And then you might just realize that you've merely slipped off the pavement, but you're still on the right path. As is she.

THREE TAKEAWAYS FROM CINDY'S SPOTLIGHT

1 *You can't outrun yourself.*
Changing jobs didn't change the pattern. Things shifted only when Cindy stood her ground and confronted her fears.

2 *Your true self is what's left without the stories.*
Letting go of labels, masks and other people's expectations is how you find the self worth being.

3 *Widen your scope.*
Qualifications open doors, but experience grows you. Don't limit yourself to one area.



Cindy Wilson

Senior HR executive, speaker and coach in Trinidad and Tobago, and Group HR Strategist at ACADO. An architect of culture, talent and transformation, she was Sector HR Manager, Automotive at Ansa McAl at the time of this conversation.

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