



CapeWomenOnline - Where Cape Women Shine

Your local venue for the women of Cape Cod to share their ideas, experiences and resources while inspiring each other in their life's journey

Inspire . Encourage . Network . Share

Working Women



Summer 2013

Searching For Work? Keep Paddling!

by Beverly Ryle

My husband and I own a canoe, but for years the only action we took regarding canoeing was to talk about how we ought to take it out on one of the marshes or kettle ponds before the summer ended.

We'd gotten rid of the car with the roof racks and it always seemed like too much trouble to have to figure out a new way to strap the canoe on top of the new car, so there it sat, season after season, on sawhorses beside the garage.

This year, however, as the tourists began to arrive, I found myself looking at their kayaks with envy, so I told my husband it was time we went canoeing again.

He went to work, cleaning years of accumulated dirt off the fiberglass shell and fixing a broken thwart, while I rummaged in the attic and located the paddles, the life jackets and the dry bag.

At a local outdoor store we found a carrying kit suitable for hauling a canoe short distances. We bought it and drove straight home, loaded Sacagawea onto the car and took her to Salt Pond. I'd forgotten how to hold the paddle, but it all came back to me as we made our way out of the pond into Nauset Marsh.

First there was the sheer pleasure of the quiet and solitude. On the water there is no traffic noise, no worldly chatter, just the sweet melody of the drip off the paddle at the end of each stroke. Our only human company was a man digging for clams and a middle-aged couple in kayaks who looked as if they were having as much fun as kids in a bathtub.

Canoeing, however, like life, sometimes starts out to be one thing and becomes another. There is always uncertainty involved in facing the elements of nature in a small craft. Halfway through the channel they call the Northwest Passage, what had been a refreshing breeze in our faces suddenly turned into a stiff wind.

We pulled as hard as we could for the mouth of the channel hoping to catch the tide in our favor, but when we got there we discovered that it still hadn't turned and we now had both the current and the wind against us.

For a moment I thought we weren't moving at all, and I panicked and froze. My husband yelled, "Keep paddling!"

It felt a bit like rounding Cape Horn, but we finally did get the canoe turned into the adjacent channel where we at least had the wind behind us. But there was a new obstacle. We were losing water and the channel soon became non-navigable.

We had no choice but to walk the canoe through the shallows and port it over a sand bar. Fortunately the water was warmer than we

expected and we were doing just fine, until we got to where it was deep enough to get back in the boat.

I took my seat in front, and, in my eagerness to get underway, I began paddling before my husband was all the way in. He started to fall, tipping us over, and we both grabbed the gunwales for support. They literally crumbled in our hands. Where they had looked merely weather-worn but still intact, they were actually full of dry rot and holes made by wood-boring insects.



Our craft was now on its side, and our sandals, the water bottle and the dry bag were floating in the water, along with pieces of gunwale. We emptied the canoe out, put everything back in, and when we took our seats, the cane bottoms caved in.

As we re-entered the calm water of Salt Pond, a mother with small children watched us with the same kind of longing I'd felt not long before, looking at the tourists' kayaks.

From her vantage point, she could see neither the debris in the boat, nor that we were sopping wet. She certainly had no idea that a spider made homeless when the gunwales disintegrated was making its way down my bra. She gave us a cheerful wave and said, "Looks like fun."

What's truly amazing is that I answered, "It is!" and I meant it.

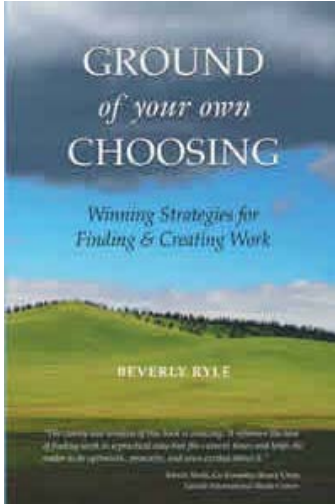
Now what, I'm sure you've been asking yourself for some time now, has any of this to do with work search?

Well, at least four things.

1. Like our canoeing adventure, work search requires accepting that it's probably not going to be what you thought it was, nor will it be easy. Yet in spite of this, there will be parts of the process which will be unexpectedly enjoyable, e.g., meeting new people, trying new things, having time for self reflection and discovery. Look for them.
2. Just as I did when I saw the kayaks, you can use envy as a clue to what you want and a motivator to help you get it. If others are experiencing smoother sailing, find out what they're doing that you're not.
3. You will need to look for ways to rest when you get tired and engage other people to help you over the shallows so you can restart the journey.
4. Above all, when you find yourself in a place where external conditions (statistics, bad economic news), internal feelings (frustration, fear) and exhaustion converge and you want to stop, don't. KEEP PADDLING!

Photographs courtesy of Beverley Ryle

*An Invitation to Break Out of the
Pack and Try Something Different!*



Available at
Ground of Your Own Choosing
Or **Amazon.com**



Beverly Ryle is a career counselor and business consultant. She has been helping corporate professionals, business owners, and people-in-transition achieve their full potential through education and empowerment for over twenty-five years.

Her integration of business, counseling and spiritual disciplines has made her a vital resource for clients seeking to grow professionally by overcoming habitual patterns in order to claim greater authenticity in their work and interpersonal relationships.

In her first book, *Ground of Your Own Choosing: Winning Strategies for Finding & Creating Work*, she focused on ways

of achieving self-leadership in your professional life.

In her second book, *Standing Alone* (now under development), she turns her attention to helping people enhance their potential for leadership within the context of family dysfunction, including rampant, multi-generational addiction and mental illness.

She welcomes comments or questions on the site or by direct email to bev@beverlyryle.com.

Read Beverly's blog at www.beverlyryle.com/newsletter-blog.

www.BeverlyRyle.com