

Glencoe author shares her path to a new life in the book, *'The Real Brass Ring'*

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A Journey of Many Changes

People change for the better or worse. Once changes pile up, however, you have a transformation. In Dianne Bischoff James' book *"The Real Brass Ring: Change Your Life Course Now,"* she delves into just that sort of grand change. James, 53 who has been living in Glencoe for a total of 16 years, chronicles her personal transformation in the book, which was published in October 2013 and for which she is currently on tour promoting (she said she's been in eight different states throughout the tour). In the book – which she started writing 10 years ago – she details a mental, physical, emotional and psychological transformation, leaving a life behind that is now almost unrecognizable to her.

It all started with a psychic. She met psychic medium and internationally known author, Sonia Choquette, who told her that she had to change her ways.

“She said I was going down the completely wrong path,” James said. “My life was out of control, going in the wrong direction and I better hurry up and grab at the real brass ring... or it was going to be too late.”

That fateful encounter changed everything, yielding an “awakening” in her. She struggled with her weight and was taking medication for depression and although she said her Chicago-based business, Core Marketing Solutions was successful, she still didn’t feel whole.

“I was functioning, and I had a very successful business, but I was not happy,” James said. But her “journey” happened over a period of years, not overnight, especially since many emotional issues can begin in childhood and slowly bubble over as the years go by, she said. For example, her family moved often when she was growing up, never staying in a single location for more than a few years – she started high school in Indianapolis before graduating from Regina Dominican in Wilmette.

She said she read “thousands” of self-help books, but books could only do so much. One of the first steps in her journey was a trip to the Hoffman Institute’s White Sulphur Springs, Calif., location for a seven-day program which she likened to “emotional-rehab.”

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She also realized that part of her unhappiness stemmed from the fact that she was not pursuing her true passion: acting.

James hadn’t pursued acting since high school. She did her first audition at Glencoe Community Theatre for a production called, “Oliver.”

James tells the story in the book, explaining that she thought there was “no way” she’d get a part. Despite her fears, she landed a role in the ensemble, as Townsperson 1, she said.

During the rehearsal process she lost 30 pounds, which helped push her down the road she’s taken in the time since.

One thing led to another and after several years of community theater, she found an agent to help her get work in commercials. In addition to a number of other appearances, she has a role in the upcoming murder mystery, "Precious Mettle," starring Paul Sorvino. Those who enjoy heading north for family vacations can also spot her in an upcoming commercial for the Wisconsin Dells. She also played the part of a grief counselor in the 2013 psycho-horror "Proxy."

Her acting career helped propel her forward in the social and emotional aspects of her life. After going through what she called a "healthy" divorce, she is now engaged.

In her book, James lists 14 rules that have "changed her life," which allowed her to "get clear, get going and get happy." She's currently conducting workshops all over the country, including a recent workshop she held in Northlake.

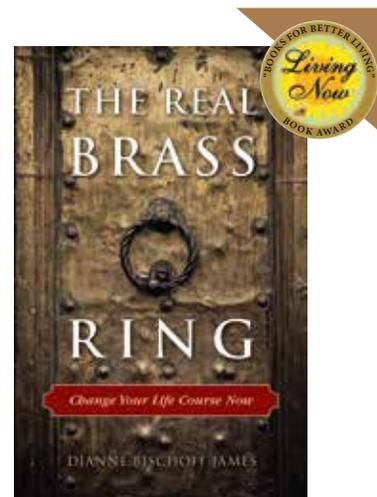
While any journey like hers involves a wide variety of moving parts and avenues of success or failure, she summed up the best way to frame one's decisions simply.

"I always say 'Practice reaching for the thought that makes you feel better,'" she said. "In every situation, there's an opportunity to have a different thought that will help you resonate at a much more positive level."

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In addition, at the end of the day, the only person who can create true, positive change in your life is you, she said.

"I knew that I had about 30 years to make all these changes," she said. "I decided to make those days count. I figured I had 11,000 days at the time, so I was going to make my 11,000 days count."



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