

Dimitra Arthur
found fulfillment
in helping others
to live healthier,
happier lives.

pinning points

From the chance reading of an inspirational book to a deliberate search for greater happiness, four people pinpoint the exact moments their lives took a new direction.

Dimitra Arthur, 38, and her husband quit their lucrative jobs and went in search of fulfillment when they realised a good salary wasn't everything.

"When I was growing up, I always thought money would bring me happiness. So I didn't hesitate to choose a career in financial services when I finished school. That's where I thought the money was... and at the time that was my focus in life.

"I was right about the pay; it was great. But the happiness – well I soon realised it took more than just money to bring that. In 1999 I was retrenched by my employer. It was so disheartening to see such a ruthless side to the industry. I was also sad to leave the firm where I met my husband, Nick.

"I soon found another job in the same field, but as time went on I became totally

more, exercised, ate really well and we felt fantastic. It gave us a whole new perspective on how good life could be.

"We knew we wanted jobs that would be meaningful to us and helpful to the community so I went back to uni to study psychology while Nick studied nutrition.

"Two years later I was pregnant... with twins, so we moved back to Melbourne to be closer to our families. Within a week of our return, my mum was diagnosed with terminal lung cancer and she died three months later. It was sudden and devastating and really brought home the fact that good health and family truly are the most important things in life.

"That realisation gave Nick and I the impetus to take the next big leap of faith: to start our own business. We realised our combined knowledge in nutrition and

"Nick and I spent more time together, talked more, laughed more, exercised, ate really well and we felt fantastic. It gave us a whole new perspective on how good life could be."

disenchanted as I discovered more and more things about the industry that went against my personal value system.

"Our jobs were taking a toll on Nick and I physically, too. We were working long hours, stressed, eating poorly and not exercising. Despite only being in our early-thirties, we were fast approaching burnout.

"Then, in 2002, a close friend died of a melanoma. She was only 31. It turned my whole world upside down and made me totally reassess my priorities. The money no longer mattered; I realised my life lacked fulfillment. Nick felt the same way.

"Within a few months we had quit our jobs and moved from inner-city Melbourne to Noosa in regional Queensland – we knew we needed to really get away from it all to be able to totally change our lifestyle. I found work as a fundraising officer for Guide Dogs Australia while Nick worked part-time in a bookstore.

"Friends and family were baffled, but even in those scary first few months we knew we'd made the right decision. Just being away from the fast-paced city and the usual distractions, Nick and I spent more time together, talked more, laughed

psychology could help people regain good health and that owning our own business would give us the flexibility to spend more time together as a family.

"So we created a weight-loss program called Appetite Right. Diets often focus solely on food and nutrition, but by adding psychology to the program, we help people to understand why they are eating what they are eating, which really helps them keep the weight off long term.

"People have said that aside from just weight loss, the program has given them their self-confidence back, and a second chance to live fuller, happier lives. I couldn't ask for a better reward.

"Nick and I could still be stuck in that rut – unhappy, unhealthy and unfulfilled. But now the exact opposite is true. Making the change was really scary; especially as we both threw in our well-paying jobs to jump into the unknown at exactly the same time. But you can't live your life in fear, and then in your twilight years think, 'What if? Could I have been happier?' You only get one chance. I'm so glad we jumped at it."

To find out more about Appetite Right, visit www.appetiteright.com.au.