

Post-task: Breaking Out

Octavia has begun the process of Re-invention, shifting out of her father's shadow and into her own light. Her debut album entitled *Break-Out* is in preparation for release. So, what is Octavia breaking out from? She is breaking out from the trappings of a music industry where success is not always guaranteed.

Money or Heart?

The music industry is tough. There are many great musicians who have gone through a lot of hardships and some have never been able to be comfortable and financially stable. So, how do you make it while doing what you love?

As Octavia approaches the release of her debut album, she is being very cautious because she is learning from her dad. Barney released multiple solo and collaborative albums throughout the 70s and 80s. His pennywhistle albums from the 50s are still selling, whilst his contribution to Graceland assisted in that record going to number one in the world in 1986 – even peaking Michael Jackson. This is the downfall of the recording industry, it is an aspect of the music industry where exploitation of the artists for the benefit of the middle man is rife.

Yet, a successful attitude is to understand the playing field and not let it build up negativity or anger. Once you realise the pitfalls, you can arm yourself with patience to strive for a sustainable and long term success.

You see, explains Barney. "It is not about the money, it is about the heart. All of this can be accomplished through the heart."

Never give up on your dream

The privilege of a lifetime is to be yourself. To be an individual. To make it on your own. To not have to follow certain trends, but to play your own music, or as Octavia says, "to do me." But how can we be ourselves in an industry that seems to be more impressed with gimmicks than authenticity? To be truly successful is to do what you love and sustain this. Some may think that to sustain a career and do what you love to do, that you will need money or the approval of others. But this is not the case.

All you need is your well organised inspiration, so you are ready when that opportunity arises and the breakthrough presents itself. Breakthrough's may present themselves and it is best to be patient and cultivate that inner strength whilst waiting for the breakthrough.

However Octavia has noticed that in Soweto there are a lot of talented young people in Soweto that accept certain gigs or collaborations simply because they think this may have a good influence on their career. This is working for exposure. It usually causes more harm than good. As seasoned musicians say, "people die from exposure." And that's why the elders say if the money is not there – it is better to stay at home. You can always play to your family or your pets?

Playing your music for the sake of impressing other people in order to get an opportunity is known in the industry as compromise. The result of compromise is being restricted in what you can and can't do.

The opposite of compromise is being true to yourself. When you are true to yourself, you can go with what

you feel and what you want to do. And when you do it yourself, you get to grow as an individual.

Once you value your self-worth and respect your own achievements you will never take a bad gig. You would then be in a better position to build your career, like a builder builds a house. And when the opportunity arises – you will be ready.

Now answer the following post-task questions:

1. Octavia says, “You just got to try and keep on pushing and just try until you get to where you want to be.” Where do you want to be? Can you describe what success in your career looks like to you?
2. One of the challenges for Octavia has been finding radio play? Do you think your music can make it onto radio and how would you plan to get your music onto radio, which station, which slot?
3. Maintaining your self-worth is one of the greatest challenges in the industry. You could go months without opportunities and without income. This may lead you to start hanging curtains like Barney had to do, or do deliveries just to put food on the table. So, how will you maintain your self-worth in these difficult times where you may need to leave your dream for a moment just to survive?
4. When you are true to yourself and produce music that is totally you – then nobody can take that away from you. And if they do try and take it away from you it will always come back to you. So, are there any musicians or artists in your life experience that you believe are completely true to themselves? What attracts you to them? And what similarities do you find between them and yourself?