

## **Don't count on lightning** **by Rose Jonas, Ph.D.**

Stop looking at the sky and get off your horse. There was only one Saul on the road to Tarsus, struck from his horse by lightning, who afterwards knew his job was to spread the word about the new religion, Christianity.

We often think of ourselves as a St. Paul-in-Training, galloping down a pointless road doing meaningless things. We want someone to jump from the bushes, grab the reins, and point the horse in a new direction. We fear the celestial Ka-BOOM! but feel so hopeless doing what we're doing. We would take lightning over our daily drudgery.

Guess what? The sky is clear and the road is empty. You have to create and place everything on your career map: the destination, the scenery, the path, even the damn horse. Oh, there are people like me lurking in the bushes, happy to take the reins for a moment and point out a pass in your life's mountain range, but the journey is mostly all yours.

Saul was one of the lucky ones, along with the children who issue from the womb knowing what they want: the baby lawyer with her baby briefcase dangling from the umbilical cord; the will-be doctor with a stethoscope in his waving fist; the tiny artist already gripping a dripping brush. The rest of us squeezed out looking sheepish that we didn't already have it worked out, and both the look and confusion have remained.

The map is created as you walk it. Stop a minute and look back at the way you've come. That's your lived life. Is it what you wanted to do, or what someone else thought you should do? If you see how much is there but you don't like it, you probably did the latter.

The best way to create your life map is to stumble toward what feels good for you. Contrary to what other counselors might tell you, it's not a question of what you can do well or enjoy doing. It's what feels right for you RIGHT NOW, and that's a significant difference. If you begin to stumble (and I do mean stumble) in that direction, the right path will open for you. And your over-the-shoulder life/path reviews will give you joy, not regret. The way doesn't come immediately, but it comes sooner than later.

Day-by-day trudging is less interesting than being bounced onto our kiesters by lightning. The stories are certainly less exotic, but the trudging leads to meaningfulness. I promise.