

# Follow Your Dreams While You Follow the Military

by Kathie Hightower and Holly Scherer

I was a brand new military wife at Ft. Rucker Alabama. I got my resume together and started clipping want ads every day. There weren't very many in rural Alabama. After months of searching, the best job opportunity I could find seemed to be selling vacuum cleaners door-to-door, hardly what I'd gone to college for, and not something I wanted to do.

My second plan was to go for my MBA or law degree, only neither one was offered anywhere nearby.

I saw that assignment, that particular location, as empty of possibilities...as a deadend to my dreams.

That was in 1978. Knowing what I know now, years later, I realize that that location was full of possibilities — of opportunities. I just didn't know where to look and how to go about finding them. No one had ever taught me anything about job searches or goal-achieving techniques or possibility thinking.

I hear stories similar to my Alabama story from military spouses all over — especially when I do seminars in rural areas or overseas. They have dreams of their own but they don't see any way to put them in place where they are. Many feel that they might as well just give up on personal dreams as long as they are following the military.

My partner, Holly Scherer, and I created Follow Your Dreams While You Follow the Military™ Seminar as a way to show other military spouses that you can create a life that works for you too within this military life. (Some of you know these as the Joyful Living Seminars — we've revamped the name and the content a bit). The truth is you don't have to give up on your dreams.

One part of our workshop that we love is when we ask for a volunteer to share their dream with the group. We ask that individual to tell us what they see as the possible ways to move forward towards that dream where they are currently stationed. Their ideas are usually pretty limited. Then we get everyone to help brainstorm additional ways. It's so much fun to watch the ideas, resources and contacts fly onto the flipchart and to see that individual's eyes light up as they start seeing possibilities where they were seeing obstacles or emptiness before.

One young woman in Germany, Diana McCartney, wanted to go to law school but that wasn't available where she was stationed. She figured she would have to wait until they returned to the US and hope to be stationed near a law school. The ideas flew.

We received this email from her a few weeks later.

“I just wanted to let you know you have motivated and made a big difference in my life. I have volunteered for the JAG office and signed up for some distance learning law classes as I go to the library and check out books all the time to help me with my law career.”

Of course, getting ideas and taking action are two separate things. Diana obviously put her new ideas into action and is moving towards her dream — without any change of assignment or circumstances.

Over the next months, this column will include tips, tools & techniques from our seminars — ways for you too to follow your dreams while you follow the military. Here's how.

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Kathie Hightower and Holly Scherer lead workshops and are the authors of *Help! I'm a Military Spouse — I Want a Life Too!*  
For more information, go to: [militaryspousehelp.com](http://militaryspousehelp.com)