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Reclaiming her lost soul

*Author shares
lessons in new book*

By Renee Harris
rharris@miamitimesonline.com

After achieving what appeared to the naked eye to be the "American Dream," Lisa Whaley's life became a nightmare. The former IBM executive with loads of money and the material trappings to prove it, found herself smack dab in the middle of a crisis no amount of cash could dissolve. With a teenage daughter desperately acting out, her marriage teetering on the brinks and a feeling of emptiness so profound it hurt, Whaley found herself in her garage seriously thinking about ending it all. That she did not end it and the new life she created as a result are the basis for her book, "Reclaiming My Soul From The Lost and Found."



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"I wrote the book because I thought other people might be inspired by what I had gone through," the mother of two teenage daughters said. Feeling what she described as alone, embarrassed and ashamed while in the process of "reclaiming my soul," she later realized that not only were those feelings normal, but shared by many others experiencing similar pain. "We live in a society caught up in pretending," alluding to the notion that many people whose lives look perfect, may actually be suffering behind closed doors. "I decided I would be brave and share my story - using it almost as a case study."

Whaley's ascent to the success she experienced at IBM began in Miami, where her parents, Josie and Ernie Jones still live. A straight 'A' student, Whaley whizzed through Hampton University in three

years, graduating with honors before heading off to California, landing what would begin a 22-year career with IBM.

Her daughter, Krisin's downward spiral into drugs and rebellion at age 14 led Whaley to send her away to a wilderness program, a difficult decision that her daughter eventually thanked her for making. Her marriage strained, her career choice questioned and her own physical and emotional well-being in need of repair, Whaley began soul searching. Her healing process led to her walking away from her executive position with IBM to begin Lifeworksynergy, her own company dedicated to helping others create lives built from the inside out. Whaley's work includes motivational speaking, career coaching and workshops. Of her one on one coaching with clients, Whaley helps them to rephrase questions from what if their plan doesn't work, to what if it does?

The book itself includes an

autobiographical examination of Whaley's life, laying the foundation for how she got to where she was, and clues into how she ended up "losing her soul." The realization that she had allowed her professional life to overtake her personal life led Whaley to rediscover her faith, something that had been absent as her life spun out of control.

Whaley says her book is gaining momentum, generating feedback from women who have experienced similar life events from an unfilling career to suicidal thoughts. "If I can save just one life, it was worth it," she said. Asked to reveal the most significant thing her journey has taught her, Whaley replied, "True self-acceptance....not being worried what others think of me, being ok with who I am." Of her daughter's well-being, Whaley added, "I think she also reclaimed her soul." Kristin is now 16, and according to her mother, is more responsible and accountable. "Her choices are not all good, but she is learning to be accountable for them."