



Weaving the Red Thread

Remember what it was like the first time you fell in love? I'd imagine you couldn't get the person out of your head. You'd daydream for hours wondering what they were up to and imagining your next encounter. If you grew up in the age before cell phones, maybe you'd write them a letter with their name in colourful koki at the top, perfectly folded in that weird tuck-in 80s style. While you were apart, waiting for a reply, time seemed to slow down to an unbearable pace. Once together, however, it would feel like someone had pressed the fast forward button. The outside world stopped existing, as you were totally lost in the excitement of the romance.

by Catherine Blersch

When we are young, we have the freedom to get lost in our loves. This applies not just to the people we are drawn to, but also to the activities that draw us in and light us up. As we become adults, this often fades away as responsibility and duty take over. We go through the motions every day because we feel we must. However, acting solely from a sense of duty or obligation is a soul-destroying way to live.

Thinking about your life right now, how would you answer the following two questions:

1. Do you have a chance to play to your strengths *every day*?
2. Were you excited to go to work *every day* last week?

Author, Marcus Buckingham, has found that resilient, satisfied and engaged people could easily answer *yes* to these questions. It's not about doing everything you love, or loving all you do, but finding some moments you love in what you do *every day*. In his book, "**Love+Work**", Buckingham reminds us that as truly unique individuals, we all have our own strengths and passions that bring us joy and put us in "the zone" - an almost spiritual state. He calls these red threads. Red threads are the things you are uniquely good at, instinctively volunteer for and that consume you, making time fade away. He argues that when we find and follow our red threads our work becomes more meaningful and we contribute something better and brighter to the world at large. As he says "*Work is not just a job. Work is anything of value created*

for someone else. Your life, lived fully, is finding the strongest possible connection between what you feel (your loves) and what you give to others (your work)."

This is something we know to be true at Granate. Our COO Simone put it well when she said, "What I love about my 'job', is the fact that it doesn't feel like a job at all, it feels like I get to pursue my passion each day." It isn't good enough for an organisation to hire capable people without deliberately creating the kind of environment where those people can thrive. A big part of that is giving people the freedom to figure out what they love and shape their careers to follow their red threads. Guiding people in this way requires flexibility. As Quantitative Analyst Caroline Webber explains, "Granate doesn't limit people to traditional pigeonholed, pre-defined roles - there are things that need to happen at Granate and anyone is free to take them up and add them to their responsibilities. People who are best placed to run with things (because they really care about them) can do so." When each person is really in their sweet spot, the whole becomes greater than the sum of the parts.

As an equity analyst, I find my joy in researching a complex topic (like silicon carbide semiconductors, for example) and distilling the important elements into something that I can share with the team to build our collective knowledge. It's the sharing of the learning that lights me up. My fellow analyst Tyron is more of a details guy. He loves the freedom "to spend time to better understand a company and industry enabling me to have a more insightful and better conviction call". Looking for great equity opportunities can be exciting,



Vaneshen Naidoo
Portfolio Manager

but Alida, who spent three years at Granate focusing on these opportunities, has recently found more purpose in her new role as a credit analyst. She explains, "What resonates with me, is that how I spend my time helps to safeguard the savings of people who need their money to last - retirees, in particular. I derive a deep sense of purpose from knowing that I contribute to our clients' sustained financial security."

In the fixed income world, it's about more than just good research. The search for yield means being constantly on the lookout for opportunities. This is what analyst Dalya loves most, "I enjoy scurrying around in the secondary market, which involves chatting with brokers and banks to identify bonds that align with our funds. It's satisfying to use a significant portion of my day to seek out deals, a passion that extends to my personal life, where I love shopping online! And I also love talking to people - so my work is basically an extension of me." For Caroline, it's the variety that makes things enjoyable. She says "I love that I get to use my brain in different ways - I get to think about the market, program, do mathsy stuff, work with models, price up opportunities and design technological systems." Portfolio Manager Vaneshen says something similar, "I love the problem solving. It's like a problem that is consistently changing. Trying to take a vague idea, delving into the detail to learn, and then sharing it with the team."

Like Alida, Phila initially focused on equity analysis and enjoyed learning about new industries. However, the open-ended nature and inherent uncertainty of making investment calls, didn't bring her joy. After jumping in on



Simone
Blanckenberg, COO

various compliance and finance tasks, she found her niche and is now our Chief Finance & Risk Officer. She says, "I love analysing Granate's finances and the control environment within the business, to either further improve these areas or make sure the controls are in place. I believe everyone sleeps better knowing we are compliant and everything we do is above board." Those in the operations team, find similar joy in serving the team to make things more streamlined. Nosihle says, "I'm in the privileged position of helping the team's dreams to come true - we talk about what we want to do as a business and the operations team makes it happen. I love being a reliable support for the investment team and the rest of the business."

One love underlies all that we do - a love and care for people. This starts with the people we work with every day. As Portfolio Manager Paul says, "I love working among people who energise each other." The team walks the journey together and we challenge each other to be better. Simone explains, "I love the fact that I get to work with like-minded people that I like and trust and who challenge me each day to learn and become a better version of me. I love that I am forced to think differently about things and to challenge my natural way of thinking."

However, the most important people are undoubtedly our clients. Portfolio Manager Henno simply said, "I love that I can make a positive contribution to the lives of people I care about." I believe this is true for all of us. For Ryno in the Client team, it's about how we communicate with our clients to make their lives easier. He loves "helping financial advisors make sense of markets and their investments, simplifying complicated financial jargon and helping people make more informed decisions about their money." And for our Head of Clients, Alex, the joy comes in the moments when true partnerships form. He says, "I love it when we tell someone our story and their eyes light up. Then you know you have found someone you really need to partner with. That moment when someone tells you that they are going to trust you to look after their savings, will never stop making me feel proud...and nervous at the same time."

At the end of the day, we are able to do what we love,

thanks to every person who has entrusted Granate with their savings. What a gift that is! You are the reason we get up and come to work every day. **You are the reason we get to weave our individual red threads into the Granate garment.** We thank you for this privilege.

Granate is a people business.

We are committed to creating a rich and rewarding culture through our shared values. Granate is configured thoughtfully and intentionally so that our team can thrive for the benefit of our clients. We care about the same things you do and are *relentlessly* committed to protect and grow your savings.

Granate Asset Management (Pty) Ltd ('Granate') is an authorised Category II financial services provider in terms of the Financial Advisory and Intermediary Services Act No. 37 of 2002 (FAIS Act), with FSP number 46189. The information contained in this brochure should not be construed as advice as defined in the FAIS Act, neither does it constitute an investment recommendation. Investors should take cognisance of the fact that there are risks involved when buying, selling or investing in any financial product. The value of financial products can increase as well as decrease over time, depending on the value of the underlying securities and market conditions. Past returns may not be indicative of future returns and an investor should seek independent professional financial, legal and tax advice relevant to their individual circumstances before making any investment decision.

