



Working With Style?

How Sandra Magsamen Lives Artfully

What's your
motto
Sandra
Magsamen?

“Life is a work of art and you are the artist in your life.”

People often ask Sandra Magsamen—who has essentially turned her life into a business—about forming businesses from their ideas. Her advice: “Be you. That’s the only way that you will be successful. Bring something new and authentic and original. You already have that. You just have to let it out.”

And she knows a little something about the abundance of ideas. The artist and author creates books, ceramic gifts, greeting cards, stationery, scrapbooking materials, calendars, home accessories and baby clothes. Her products weave together playful images along with her trademarked “Messages from the Heart” phrases, such as “Joy is not in things, it is in us.”

“My whole life is a motto,” says Magsamen, whose most recent book is *Living Artfully* (Free Press, 2006). “Everything is about the words that we want

to pass on, that we want to share . . . in the service of connecting and belonging, and loving and being loved.” In many ways, she says, a motto is the first sentence and you write your own story.

Inspiration for Magsamen comes from everywhere—paintings, letters, flowers. Sometimes it’s in the quiet of a bath or the riding on a train. She works in a large studio in her country home near where she grew up in Glen Arm, Md., which Magsamen shares with her artist husband, their daughter, two dogs and a cat. While her home is filled with an array of whimsical art, Magsamen’s work is intentionally out of the main living space. “I really want to be inspired and gather things that I think are beautiful, that will aid me, and speak to the next thing,” she says. “I want to be connected to what’s going on universally, not what’s only in my heart.” —CARALEE ADAMS