

THE POWER OF PASSION

by Carolyn Hansen

Add Clarity To Your
Life's Purpose As You
Find And Fuel
Your Dreams



Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	2
Chapter 1: The Highway of Passion	3
Chapter 2: Reviving Passion	5
Chapter 3: Passion at Home	10
Chapter 4: Purpose / Preparation / Planning / Goals	18
Chapter 5: Concentration / Focus / Intention / Awareness	29
Chapter 6: Belief / Conviction / Faith / Trust	37
Chapter 7: Commitment / Persistence	47
Chapter 8: Visualization – Envisioning Success	51

Introduction

“Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life.”
~Confucius ...

If you could do one thing to transform your life it is recommended that you find something you are passionate about and do it for a living. That is the ultimate job or work situation as ideally around 80 percent of your life is spent working, you should start your business around something that is a passion of yours.

If you dread going to your job, or find yourself constantly lacking motivation, or find what you're doing dull and repetitive, but you are not realizing your full potential in life and will end up making yourself unhappy for the long-term.

Imagine this instead: you get up early, jumping out of bed, excited to go to work. You might put in more hours than the average person, but it doesn't seem difficult to you, because your work hours just zoom right by. You are often in that state of mind often referred to as “flow,” where you can lose track of the world and time, losing yourself in the task at hand.

Work is not work for you as many people refer to it, but something that is fun and interesting and exciting. It's not a “job” to you but a passion.

This may seem like a pipe dream to you. And if you never put in the effort to find what you are passionate about, you are right: such a thing will never be possible. But dare to dream, dare to imagine the possibilities, and dare to actually search for what you love, and it is not only a possibility, but a probability.

You cannot become rich or achieve any other kind of success in life if you don't have passion about what you are doing. Be it the simplest thing or the most sophisticated thing, you need passion in order to succeed.

In the following chapters we take a look at how important passion is and what different forms it must take in order to point our lives in the right direction. The ultimate direction of course is to be happy, fulfilled and to experience success in whatever we choose to do. But for that to happen we need to experience passion.

What's the importance of passion in your life? Where does it take you?

Chapter 1: The Highway of Passion

“When work, commitment, and pleasure all become one and you reach that deep well where passion lives, nothing is impossible.”

You have a 9 to 5 job drawing a good pay, you have a good family and all's well with the world. But deep inside, you feel like you are going nowhere. The job is not moving upward either. You are actually stagnating in your career and mentally and spiritually. Something is missing.

Passion. The one quality that textbooks, instruction manuals and company procedures will never talk about. Everyone is in such a hurry to make you fit perfectly into the machine like a well-oiled gear, that they forgot you are a living, feeling human being. Even you have forgotten.

Ask yourself. If I had a million bucks in the bank, what kind of work would I be doing? Would I chuck this humdrum job and move on to something really exciting, something that I have always wanted to do? Then ask yourself – why am I not doing that right now? Is it because of peer pressure or because I don't want to move out of my comfort zone or I just don't want to rock my boat?

Maybe you are half asleep in your boat already and in a few years; you could be put out to pasture. If the boat rocks now, you could be jerked awake and come to your senses, you passionate senses.

In the aftermath of the recession of 2008, millions of people lost their jobs. Many of them took up new vocations and suddenly found that they were finally following their dream. Many of them are now highly successful in their new found professions.

You don't have to wait for dire straits to rock you out of your present mediocre life. You can decide right now, that you want to live and work passionately and make your life worthwhile. The Highway of Passion is an amazing ride. And Prosperity is just one of the landmarks on this route! Get ready for the ride of your life!

“Nothing great in the world has been accomplished without passion.”
– Georg Hegel, German philosopher

What's your real calling in life?

So you have decided to break away from the pathetic monotony of your regular job. You want to live fully and passionately and reap all those rich rewards at the end of the rainbow. How do you find out what you are truly passionate about?

How do you separate the delusions from the do-able? You could be passionate about becoming the King of Spain, or winning the lottery or ruling the world. Indeed, there are people who have dreamt of that and done it. Alexander the Great ruled almost the entire known world in his time. But what is your true passion?

Here are a few steps you can take to discover the currents that move you deep inside:-

1. Read your own body language. How does your body behave at your present job? Does it tense up and ache all the time? Do you get panic attacks very often? Are you so bored that you doze at your desk? Do you keep looking at the clock as break time approaches? Then you are in the wrong job. You simply don't have the passion for it.

When you work on a job that you are passionate about, all your aches and cramps will dissolve. You will find yourself working extra hours, talking to your friends about your work and simply bubbling with life.

2. What did you love doing as a child? Your childhood hobbies and obsessions can indicate a genuine passion. Education and family pressures often move us away from our true calling. Did you love bikes or gardening or trekking? Then maybe a career in the automobile, landscaping or travel industries is where you should be. So sit back and recall your childhood and write down your memories. What made you smile then may still make you grin today and in the future.
3. What do you love doing as an adult? You might very well have passionate side pursuits even today. Do you love your moonlighting job more than your regular day job? Many corporate honchos work the night shift as chefs or night school teachers. Start spending a few hours every day on your pet hobby. It may just hold the key to the real you.

Chapter 2: Reviving Passion

Passion can be unleashed in various ways; one way is to change the circumstances that engulf you.

Sometimes to unleash true passion in yourself, you may have to change your job to suit your aptitude better. But you may find that you do love your existing job, but simply don't feel very passionate about it. You can study your situation and then try to make a few changes to rekindle the passion you felt when you first started working.

Visualize yourself working passionately at your job. What would you be feeling? A sharp focus, clear vision of your future, total control and mastery over your work, a healthy, fit body and an exuberant attitude! Then reverse engineer these symptoms to regain your passion.

Check on whether you work better with a team on the field rather than those solitary hours at a desk. Are you logical minded or creative minded? Are you crunching numbers when you would rather be in the design section? Get a revised aptitude assessment done. Ask your superior for a re-designation or transfer to a more appropriate department.

Restore the balance between your mind, body and soul and when these things are in balance your passion will return in abundance. Are you taking good care of yourself – really good care?

Make getting some strengthening exercise in to your life 2-3 times each week a priority. Strong body, strong mind. Get active as much as possible. Let the adrenaline pump and flow in your blood. Eat healthy (unprocessed) food and get enough quality sleep so you are renewed each day.

Increase your knowledge of your work, career by taking new study courses. Take time out to travel and widen your perspective. Take a half-pay sabbatical to add new qualifications to your resume. Some lateral career movement can bring an innovative twist in your way of working.

Passion does not come overnight. Taking these proactive steps will see a gradual increase in your enthusiasm. You will begin working with a newly fired zeal which becomes contagious, motivating your team mates as well. You will have consciously taken charge of your life again and the fruits of prosperity will be in sight once again.

Passion Force 1 - Curiosity

What drives passionate people to work so hard? Where do they get their energy from? Passion can be fuelled by many factors. Let us examine 6 most important sources of the Force.

One of the most powerful triggers of human invention has been curiosity. Why does something happen? How does lightning occur? What happens if you mix two chemicals? Which route will discover new lands? The human mind is programmed to question everything around it.

Discoveries take place when this curiosity becomes a passionate driving force. It takes on a relentless unstoppable energy which will not rest until a solution is found. Thomas Alva Edison tried out thousands of versions of the electric light bulb until he came up with one that worked. Madame Curie and her husband Pierre Curie spent all their lives unlocking the secrets of radioactivity.

Success stories in the workplace often arise out of sheer ignorance. An employee may find he knows nothing about a particular field and begins learning it to satisfy his own curiosity. Pretty soon he has mastered it and is teaching the world a few new things about it.

So step out of your 'known zone' and venture into the unknown. There just may be a discovery waiting there, with your name written on it.

Passion Force 2 – Challenge

A challenge can be posed by a person upon himself or by external forces. A personal challenge can arise from adverse circumstances of poverty or deprivation. Rags-to-riches stories have been told for hundreds of years now. Even Presidents of countries have arisen from humble beginnings and risen to their positions of power by the sheer force of their passion.

Family prestige and a desire to prove one's mettle to one's elders and to society can also act as a challenging force. When a son inherits a business built by his father, he is propelled to expand that enterprise and thus demonstrate his own prowess.

Sometimes the source of the challenge may lie closer to home. The love of a woman or one's children can drive a man to succeed with the intent of providing better care and education for them. We are motivated to buy a larger and better house, a bigger and faster car, the latest cell phones and clothes. All these must-haves also act as challenges and rewards for our work.

It is up to each individual to determine what challenges him or her and then as Nike's motto says – Just do it!

Your natural challenge instinct will push you through. When a mountaineer was asked why he climbed a mountain, he answered – Because it is there! Its very existence as an insurmountable peak was a challenge to him!

Without challenge in your life, you could hardly make the most of what you are passionate about. Infuse your passion with the right quest and you will do much better at it.

Passion Force 3 - Legacy

When you are young, your motivation for working and living lies in a higher income, better standards of living and in general having a good time. But as you grow older, your priorities change. You want something more fulfilling. You seek to achieve goals that you will be remembered for. A sense of urgency begins to set in as time passes. And the source of your passion arises from wanting to leave behind a legacy.

That legacy may take the form of social change brought about by your work. Or it can be in an enterprise or institution founded by you. Many successful businessmen set up foundations and trusts in the pursuit of noble causes. Thus they seek to perpetuate their name or family name for posterity. An invention or a new process or a novel product can also enshrine the maker's name in the books of history.

Remember that all the great men and women who have brought about change were ordinary men like you and me, but they had the power of conviction and passionate belief in their dreams. When tapping on your passion, one thing that could be important to you is that you need to leave a legacy of some kind for others, like your children or grandchildren.

Passion Force 4 - Faith

One of the most powerful engines of passion is faith in an external agency. Though faith may seem to have been marginalized in today's seemingly rational society, it still works behind the scenes in many areas.

Religion plays a dominant role in the lives of millions of people in the world today. Priests, nuns and monks are known to accomplish tremendous feats of social work and penance. Their faith in God and their religious ideals is the rocket fuel in their lives.

The term evangelical fervour comes from a passion driven by a belief in God and the desire to convert other people to your way of thinking.

This passion has sent explorers out to new lands, triggered numerous holy wars and changed entire demographics and cultures.

Oriental martial artists go through harsh training regimens and become lean mean human fighting machines. Their ruthless discipline arises from the strict codes of their specific martial art. Their devotion to this credo and their all consuming faith in the mentor or sensei turns their lives into passionate experiences which are not for the feeble or faint of heart.

In modern sports we see the same phenomenon displayed with players and their coaches. A dynamic coach can inspire his team to put in a passionate performance. If the players do not have faith in the coach or their fellow team mates, the team fails to coordinate and the game is lost.

A footballer may in turn be driven by his faith in his fans. A corporate executive may be passionate about his employees and shareholders. Faith, emotion and inspiration are alive and kicking in every corner of human activity.

Which external agency are you focusing on? God? Your boss? Your coach? Your community or country? Decide on what moves you and use that agency as a star to guide you and drive your passion. Be trusting. Have faith that you can realize the full potential of what you are passionate about.

Passion Force 5—Altruism

Altruism is a concern for the welfare of others. It is a traditional virtue in many cultures, and a core aspect of various religious traditions, though the concept of 'others' toward whom concern should be directed can vary among cultures and religions.

Altruism is the opposite of selfishness and is a motivation to provide something of value to a party who must be anyone but the self, while duty focuses on a moral obligation towards a specific individual (for example, a god, a king), or collective (for example, a government).

Pure altruism consists of sacrificing something for someone other than the self (e.g. sacrificing time, energy or possessions) with no expectation of any compensation or benefits, either direct, or indirect (for instance from recognition of the giving).

How does altruism become a force of passion? In the on-going recession we have seen millions of jobs being lost. Many of these people have taken up volunteer work in social or environmental organizations. And quite a number of them have discovered that this selfless work gives them more satisfaction than their high paying job ever gave them.

Their paradigm has shifted from the prosperity of the body to the prosperity of the soul.

The concept of altruistic work has often been mocked by an aggressive materialistic society. Social workers are called 'do-gooders' and there is always a cynical and contemptuous ring to that phrase. But after years of ruthless ladder climbing, people often cherish the ability to be themselves and help others.

Altruism is generally overruled by stronger passions geared towards material success in the early years, but as age advances, altruistic thoughts resurface and become a primary passion in most of us. This is probably because we know that great people are remembered less for the millions that they make, but rather for their service to humanity.

No volunteer or social worker ever starved. While there aren't any millions to make in selfless service to the lesser privileged sections of humanity, the rewards of spiritual fulfilment are tremendous.

The same passion that runs a corporate unit can be brought into play in running a successful Non-Governmental Organization or a Not for Profit outfit. All your skills can be well utilized in these noble ventures and you will see your passion suddenly multiply.

Passion Force 6 – Epiphany

One of the definitions of epiphany is 'A comprehension or perception of reality by means of a sudden intuitive realization.' That's a moment in your life when you are suddenly struck by a powerful thought that changes your life forever – that 'ah ha' or 'light bulb' moment.

A lifelong passion can be triggered by an epiphany. Such a life changing incident occurs in the lives of many great men. It may be something provocative that someone says to you. It may be the sight of another human being suffering.

It can be a sudden realization that you dislike your present job and you decide what you really want to do in life. Sometimes an epiphany can be a harsh tragic event like the demise of a family member or some colossal disaster somewhere in the world. Your eyes open wide and all the shades fall off. You can see clearly around you and far ahead.

Chapter 3

Passion at Home

Getting passionate about your career and blazing a glorious path at the office is Great, but don't let your loved ones suffer from a lack of passion at home. A proper balance has to be struck by giving love to your spouse and children too.

A passionate lifelong affair with your wife or husband can do wonders in your work life too. You are happy and relaxed and your body glows with the healing effects of healthy loving sex. The love you shower on your children is also reciprocated many times over.

Passion can become a double-edged sword if not wielded properly. Spending hours and hours of obsessed extra time at the workplace can affect your health as well as your family relations. Neglecting to attend your son's school events and not cheering him at his football match can create an alienation that can never be repaired.

An unfulfilled spouse can also prove very damaging in the long run. A marriage can fall apart and a string of unhappy one night stands can never take the place of a loving caring relationship.

Passion is not about throwing huge family parties where everyone can feed on your wealth. It isn't about giving a no-limit credit card to your wife or the latest bike to your son. It is spending time and effort to share your life and soul with your loved ones. Passion lies in transmitting your passion for life to your children, your wife and all around you.

Your passion could be a great tool that could take you places. Don't stifle it. Don't let it die. Instead, give it the right fuel and watch it blaze like an inferno. This would be the inferno of your success. And the very good thing is you needn't go very far to realize your passion.

Attitude = Motivation

The elements in your life that can have the greatest impact on your success in life is your attitude and motivation. With these elements, great discoveries have been made, men have landed on the moon, and great works of art created. With the misdirection of these elements, opportunities are missed, the best intentions and plans go array, and even championships lost.

Firstly what is an attitude?

An attitude is a point of view about a situation.

It is one's outlook towards a situation, person or article and is made up of one's enduring evaluation, feelings, inherited wisdom and behavioural tendencies towards an object or activity.

Attitude has three parts, made up of:

- What you think: Thoughts
- What you feel: Feelings
- What you do: Behaviors

No matter what situation you are in you always have certain thoughts about it. You also have an emotional response to it, and you respond / react a certain way to it. Feelings, thoughts, and behaviors are all related. When you change one of them, the other two will change as well. To change your attitude you either have to change your thinking, the way you feel, or the way you act.

Since it is easier to get a "grasp" on thoughts and behavior this is the place to begin. It would seem easier to change the way you think or behave than to change your emotions. However, it's usually our emotions that get our attention in regard to the situation. Our initial response is to focus on the feelings and to try to change them first.

When we feel sad, angry, anxious, or frustrated we don't like it. We want the feeling to quickly go away. So, we start by trying to change the emotion. When we try to change our emotions, we often begin by trying to change our surroundings or others, so we can feel better. It doesn't work.

We blame others – the boss, our partner, or our kids. We blame fate, life, maybe even God. We engage in reckless behaviours, seeking "thrills", or abuse food, alcohol and drugs to dull the feeling. We bury ourselves in our work or in "retail therapy" to avoid the emotional disturbances or disease. They just don't seem to work.

Our feelings or emotional reactions are the most difficult to sway. We can't "grasp" a feeling and force it to change. Feelings are powerful, but vague waves of reaction to our thoughts. Hooked on a feeling, as the song goes, but you cannot get a grip on a feeling.

If you want to change your feelings you have to look elsewhere.

To effectively change our attitude is remembering that feelings, thoughts, and behaviours are all related. Our feelings influence the outcome - the behaviour. Our behaviour establishes our chances of achieving success or sets the conditions for failure, and our level of happiness.

We now know that when you change one of them (thinking) the other two (feelings and behaviour, which are dependent on thought) will change as well. To begin to change our attitude then, we have to start at its source, our thoughts.

It is our ability to choose the content of our minds that determines what our feelings are and how our behaviour is influenced. To work at staying resilient, to reap what we sow, it is important to plant the conditions.

Change what you think - change what you do. The emotions will change and you will be creating resiliency and the conditions to achieve success and happiness in life. This has a profound impact on our career objectives at work, our place in family life and individual meaning to our lives since success and happiness are the product of one's thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Attitude is the lens through which we perceive our environment and our experiences with it. It's our outlook on the situation. It is through the ability to choose our thoughts that determines our attitude. We know that for a fact from the experience of people who have experienced hardship and tragedy.

We know that thoughts are a choice. It is a product of our free will to determine the control and content of our consciousness which leads to the control over the quality of our life and the opportunities it creates or rebuffs.

While many may claim that our attitude is a product of our upbringing, environment or personality, the evidence shows otherwise how we develop at our attitude.

Attitude then is how we perceive the glass of life. Do we see ourselves as survivors or victims? Are we held back because we don't think we can or because someone told us we can't? Are we going to get that job, that promotion, that girl or guy or are we going to let our beliefs determine the outcome even before we try?

What will break down those barriers – those mental barriers that prevent us from seeing success? Do we see ourselves succeeding or are we afraid of failure? Do we see ourselves winning or losing? Are we afraid to let go of the "devil we know because we are afraid of the one we don't know?"

How do we expect to succeed at anything if we don't think we will succeed? That is not the basis for learning an instrument or practicing a sport. Do you pick up a guitar and say I can't learn it?

So if we are to practice seriously, that same fatalistic attitude of success, of outcome must be present in our daily life if we expect to succeed whether it's at an instrument, a job, in our relationships, a hobby or in life.

Sometimes we are chided to stop looking at the world through rose coloured glasses, and other times we are encouraged to look on the bright side of life. We could all be as successful as Donald Trump but what we often lack is the attitude, along with the vision of it, the plan, the commitment and dedication, just to name a few aspects.

Somehow, we just don't believe we can do it, or don't want to do it. It seems too hard. Yet that is what it takes to succeed. If we think we will get the job, studies have shown that it's one of the best determinates of hiring. Hire for attitude train for skill, the recruiters like to say.

As the saying goes, success is nothing more than opportunity (luck) meeting preparation and hard work. (Henry Ford)

What are you doing to meet success? Are you ready to meet it? Are you creating the conditions of success? Everything you need to know that could make you as successful as Donald Trump is right here in this book. It's already within you.

Sowing The Seeds

In setting a greater purpose, a greater goal to achieve, whether it be to get a job, start a business, or win a championship, we need to set the bar and define the goal to achieve. With a defined purpose for our efforts, we gain perspective.

What really makes champions and championship dynasties is that winning attitude, based on the desire to achieve something. We set a goal, a purpose to our efforts. Part of the process is that the goal is achievable, or at least a chance of achieving it.

Professional sports teams hone this approach to a high level. Certainly they don't go out and play the game expecting to lose, especially during championship series. Just ask Michael Jordan.

When life presents us with those opportunities to move forward- a new job, a new love, a championship – to taste of its fruits we often identify with and crave, there is a responsibility to it.

First we have to conceive and believe of success or its possibility. It can be done, the glass is half full. We believe that we can break forward as opposed to falling back into old ways and old patterns, there is a responsibility attached.

Then we have to recognize this is a dance of chance.

That is what life will always offer us. Maybe not often – we are not up to bat every time or every game, not every player plays every game. But you have to be ready. To be ready to play every game takes not only physical practice but mental practice and preparation. It is the dance of chance and preparing the mental soil of life.

If we give in to old fears, we keep ourselves and our teammates out of contention, and ourselves out of life. To give into the fears, we lose before we start and surprise ourselves with a victory in spite of our efforts to believe otherwise. You won't get a job, you won't be called up to play in the big leagues, or you can't get out of that relationship or unhappy situation, that mental prison.

No team can win without the desire to win – the reason to win, both as a team and individuals. Same thing with life. And therein lays the responsibility, to yourself and to the team - to even take it for the team. Be ready whether it is sitting or playing every game, you have to be ready. And it really doesn't take much, just a little awareness.

Therefore we need the awareness of the chance and the responsibility that comes with trying to move forward. In trying to get out of the relationships, especially an abusive one, or typing up your resume and sending in an application, in practicing hard, even if you are watching the game from the stands, you have to be ready, willing and able. You have to chew through those fears and fight those conditions that lead to fears.

Remember it is a story of the hole we have dug. Unfortunately, we are often more afraid of the devil we don't know than the one we know. Better to dance with the devil we know than the one we don't – the dance of chance.

Getting To Yes

In trying to shake off our baggage of the past, the past memories like static electricity that passes in our brain, their pitfalls and in learning the lesson, that is when we change, the direction of the intention, our attitude - the karma of our life - where the seeds of thought land.

At that moment we are no longer watching from the stands but actually playing the game of life. In dealing with our current pain, our team contribution in watching from the stands, we are actually playing the game of life – dealing with it, not denying it – and approaching it head on completely and responsibly. Those same elements that are required to win sporting championships are there, and available to practice in our day to day lives.

So, when we consider that concept, we should now see it's important to say yes to every opportunity. We must be ready to play; we don't know when the next opportunity will come.

It's being open to it, aware of it when it happens and not let those self-defeating thoughts and memories come up again. It's no longer saying it won't happen "again", it won't work out "again". It could also work out differently this time, you just might get that job, a dance, the right person, depending on your perspective, your attitude.

Therein lays the responsibility and the challenge. To say yes to that opportunity, that you will swing that bat at the next opportunity and grab hold of it. To accept when it's not there and accepting when it is there. To push on the door that says push and to pull if it says pull. But to at least try something new, a new mind-set, to say it might work out.

Therein lays the responsibility, to yourself, to the opportunity, to life. But you have to put in the effort. To say "yes – I'll accept and I'll try to make the most of it. Not half-heartedly but with committed intention, even though you will be learning, and in the beginning learning the process may take time and practice.

Practice comes about through opportunity, effort, circumstance and initiative. When we can take the same approach to achieving sport success in changing the channels of the mind for everyday success, it comes through practice and discipline.

Therein lays the responsibility to discipline, even the discipline of the mind, to rein it in as opposed to letting it run amok. Am I master of my thoughts or do they master me? In the end it is a choice, whether we let go or harness them. Therein lays the responsibilities, to grab those reins or to let the horses run wild. The freedom TO as opposed by freedom FROM. Freedom to change.

We go to school to learn how to add and subtract, compile chemical combinations, and history lessons. But we never have been taught how to think. We are taught how to use computers, but we're not taught how to use our minds effectively. To teach awareness, to be master of our destiny, pilots of our ship.

When storms hit are we at the helm of our thoughts or are we battered about by the waves of our mind? We have harnessed the power of wind, but not the power of the mind.

Therein lays the responsibility, to try, to practice awareness in those most trying of moments - to see yourself as the actor in your own life, on stage. This requires we prepare the mind like soil by practicing.

This might include mock interviews to prepare for your first or next big job interview or practice your favourite sport or instrument every day to get better.

What's In You?

To give you an inside look at the profound effect of attitude on your life, consider the following story of the elderly carpenter.

An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. He told his employer/contractor of his plans to leave the house building business and live a more leisurely life with his wife enjoying his extended family. He would miss the pay check, but he needed to retire. They could get by.

The contractor was sorry to see his good worker go and asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favour. The carpenter said yes, but in time it was easy to see that his heart was not in his work. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end his career.

When the carpenter finished his work and the builder came to inspect the house, the contractor handed the front-door key to the carpenter. "This is your house," he said, "my gift to you."

What a shock! What a shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently. Now he had to live in the home he had built none too well.

So it is with us. We build our lives in a distracted way, reacting rather than acting, willing to put up less than the best. At important points we do not give the job our best effort. Then with a shock we look at the situation we have created and find that we are now living in the house we have built. If we had realized, we would have done it differently.

Think of yourself as the carpenter. Think about your house. Each day you hammer a nail, place a board, or erect a wall. Build wisely. It is the only life you will ever build.

Even if you live it for only one day more, that day deserves to be lived graciously and with dignity. The plaque on the wall says, "Life is a do-it-yourself project."

Who could say it more clearly? Your life today is the result of your attitudes and choices in the past. Your life tomorrow will be the result of your attitudes and the choices you make today.

Taking It With You

To give yourself an attitude check-up, see if you have the building blocks of a great attitude:

1. Belief in the self
2. Willingness to see the best in others
3. Ability to see opportunity everywhere
4. Focus on solutions
5. Desire to give
6. Persistence
7. Responsibility for one's life

If you find yourself a little short on the fundamentals, here are some tips for getting your attitude into shape:

1. Claim responsibility, not rights.
2. Associate with positive people
3. Make the present moment your happiest
4. Find ways to relieve stress
5. Don't take yourself too seriously
6. Take action to change your attitude

Chapter 4

Purpose / Preparation / Planning / Goals

Preparation is defined as:

- Planning: the cognitive process of thinking about what you will do in the event of something happening.
- Readiness: the state of having been made ready or prepared for use or action
- Training: activity leading to skilled behaviour.

Preparation is vital components of success. It is the making, reading and following your map of life.

So how do you prepare for your own personal and professional success?

It's a simple two part process:

1. Identify the desired results. Determine what is important to you and what it is you want to achieve.
2. Then, create a plan of action.

The first part of the process is to determine what is important to you. Figure out what you were put on earth to do. We all have our own unique purpose in life, the trick is to figure what your life purpose is and then to determine the course of action to fulfil that purpose.

Without discovering your purpose, life seems to drift, like a boat out at sea with no place to go. You go nowhere really fast. You cannot get anywhere because you have no compass bearing.

With purpose, everything seems to fall into place. Action seems effortless, things seem to happen. When you are truly pursuing your purpose, people, events, and resources seem to gravitate to you. Your actions are in alignment with your life purpose, and benefit others.

What is the "why" behind everything you do? Without a compass bearing to lead you, goals and actions may not fulfil you. Maybe someone you know is suffering in jobs they dislike or in relationships that seem elusive or distant? Maybe you are that person. Are you pursuing something because of someone else's dream of success or a vague hope that it might just find us?

Successful people are successful people because they envision the success. They know where they want to point the boat. Even though an aeroplane's automatic pilot flies 95 percent of the time off course, it constantly corrects itself to head towards its destination.

But it takes a pilot to plot the course, set the coordinates and land the plane. If you are not the pilot of your plane then who is? You can't get away being a co-pilot in life. Most people coast on automatic pilot, but don't seek to land the plane, or even take off.

We all have an inner guidance system that helps us tell if we heading at least towards our purpose. It's the duality of the moment. Often people express it as "it just feels right", or a gut feeling, as it were. Your experience of joy or going with the flow, which we will see in focus, increases as you head towards it, even moment to moment.

Many successful people say the secret to success is to figure out what you love to do, and are good at, and figure out a way to make a living doing it. We are all good at something, everyone has a special gift. Focus on your natural talents.

Determine The Course

So now that you understand how important your life purpose is to being successful, how then can you find your purpose in life and lay the foundation for success? With just three simple steps you can find your life purpose, plot the course and create your master plan.

Step 1 - Determine Your Purpose

Some call it a dream. Not an unrealistic one like, "I'm going to win the lottery", but something you feel a harmonious sense of desire to do. What gives you the most feelings of joy, what activities and pursuits do you do? What has you going with the flow, even momentarily? What can't you wait to do? What are you passionate about?

Write three things down now.

Here's an example of three things you may love doing so much you would do them for free.

For example, you may be passionate about:

1. Painting
2. Gardening
3. Playing music

Your purpose must be yours. Decide now to create your own definition of success and stop worrying what the rest of the world thinks. Even if you think you really want success or the lifestyle, just make sure it's what you want and that you are doing it for the right reasons. All too often it's someone else's design we follow - the company, the brand, family or the lifestyle.

What does purpose do for you? It gives your life direction to prioritize your efforts. It helps you grow your abilities to increase the effectiveness of your efforts – your productivity as it were. It seems to add value to your efforts as well. Most importantly, it allows you to project your efforts, and shape your future. This is how you can accumulate gain, whether a sports skill, a musical prowess, a lucrative position, love, travel, or pursuing personal success.

Your purpose must be meaningful. Ask yourself what is important to me? What's the purpose of doing this? What am I prepared to give up, to make this happen?

Thinking stimulates clarity of purpose. Envision the rewards for this pursuit. This lets you not only aim for something, but you avoid letting your life drift along unfulfilled.

Take charge of the helm. Every day we make choices, often bad ones, as up to 90 percent of our daily actions are based on established habits. Imagine if you don't get out there, if you keep doing the same thing that you have always done, what will your life be like in 5 years?

Where is the mental path to success? Where will you be if you do not make any changes? Where will you be in your love life, financial pursuits, your dream job or dream of living near the beach? Will you still be wishing for it happen or will you be making it happen?

Regrets can weigh you down in life, when you allow your life to drift along aimlessly and unfulfilled. You don't want to look back years from now and saying: "If only I... had taken the business opportunity, had more time with the family, taken better care of myself..."

It's all your choice, your responsibility. You have ultimately responsible for every choice you make. Choose wisely – commit yourself to creating goals that will guarantee your future freedom and success – or stay the course and tread water. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first few steps.

Once we begin to reveal our purpose, you will want to write out a life purpose statement. Begin to think about it now. Now is the time for you to fill out your worksheets.

Step 2 - Create A Mission / Vision Statement

In step 1, we listed out our three ideas or areas of passion. Once you have come up with your initial ideas, you then rank the three, and drop off or eliminate two.

Here's a worksheet example to help you:

Three things I love doing so much I would do them for free (passion):

1. Having a slim, fit, strong, healthy body
2. Gardening
3. Writing

Final Choice: Fitness

2nd choice - Gardening

Here is an example of how my personal attributes contribute to my goal.

After you have chosen your passion, the next task is to list two of your best character traits or personal qualities (characteristics):

1. example: organizing
2. example: hard working

1. example: enthusiastic
2. example: disciplined

List two ways you enjoy expressing those qualities (actions):

1. example: inspire
2. example: improve

1. example: share
2. example: create

You can determine your life purpose by taking the information in these steps. Start by determining the principle actions you enjoy performing. Then take your first choice from the areas of passions above. Next add it to the two traits (characteristics) from above and add a "who".

This is the first draft version of defining your purpose and creating your first mission statement. Your life purpose is to write it out now.

Your purpose in life is to:

action + who + by / with / through + characteristic + passion

Example: Inspire others by keeping myself fit and strong

OR - Example: Keep myself and my family healthy with fresh vegetables.

This is only the first draft of your constitution. You have never had one yet, but you are about to write yours here. Tomorrow in 24 hours you can come back, touch it up or even add to it.

Next day it could look like this:

Example: By my dedication to my own personal fitness I wish to set a good example to all those around especially my immediate family members.

OR - Example: To inspire others to grow a vegetable garden as well as keep myself and my family healthy with a constant supply of fresh organic vegetables.

With help from these examples, write out your first draft of your constitution. You can amend your mission statement so after a day or so you will know if this is the basis of your constitution – your purpose.

Once your life purpose becomes settled on, write it down again on a fancy card and hang it up where you can see it first thing in the morning and before you go to bed at night.

Countries have written constitutions to guide them and amend; companies have charters to charge them. Even religious orders have codes. Writing down the master plan is where we get clarity on where we should go.

Do it now! One sentence is all you need to write. You must do this to commit to the intention. We retain 80 percent of what we write down. It commits it to our memory. How hard can that be?

If you didn't write anything down now, commit yourself to doing this 24 hours from now. Spend the next 24 hours thinking about the first draft. What does it take to make you feel happy?

With your own written personal manifesto, you will know what to orient and aim for. Eventually you can expand your mission statement to the other sectors of your life – such as relationships, family, career, finance, recreation, health and wellness, and contribution to the community.

Step 3 – Setting Goals, Charting The Course

With visions or plans, man can build boats that sail the seas, with captains to set a course on charts. So too, you must set your course – your dream, your mission statement written down to lead the way. In the process, you honour your purpose, nurture it and help yourself develop your potential. It gives focus.

Clarity of attention and actions act in unison. You know what you want and where you want to go. This is how you can then plot courses, set goals and milestones to chart your course to success. With clarity of direction, you can then set goals based on purpose and give direction to your actions.

So now that you are beginning to chart the course of your life, how do you set goals to honour, pursue and develop your purpose? How do you know if you are getting there? How do you know if you are “on” purpose? That is where goals come into play.

On the path to success there are points you need to aim for along the way. These objects of attraction are goals, and give meaning to activity. Whether it is to find enough food for today or apply for the next position at work we define our goals with these points.

The following parameters let us know if we are moving towards or away from our purpose:

1. Your goals must be aligned with your values and purpose. When your goals are in accordance with your core values, the mechanisms for synergy are set in motion. Your core values are anything you feel strongly about that resonates on a deeper level within your being. They are your fundamental beliefs that are well-developed and have shaped your character over the years.

Your gut feeling or intuition tells you when you have done something that isn't right or are contemplating something that is contrary to your values. When you harness your core values to positive, exciting, purposeful goals, decision-making becomes easy. There is no internal conflict – this creates an energy surge that propels you to high levels.

2. Goals must be specific and measurable. It is one of the main reasons you do not achieve what you are capable of. You do not identify or define what you want. Vague generalizations and wishy-washy statements of purpose aren't good enough. Saying spending more time with the family is vague.

Saying that you want to be wealthy is not enough, be specific as to what, when, where, how much? Or for your business pursuits, if you want to make money don't just say that you want more money, be specific; is it twenty thousand or twenty million in sales? A goal without a number is just a slogan.

Goals must also be achievable. Break down your goal to the specifics. As your goal crystallizes break it down to a clear, measurable system. You may have to wait to see the whole staircase, but you can focus on the milestones, such as getting off your butt and getting a note pad or computer to begin to write down a set out your goals right now. You dramatically increase your chances of success when you do this.

3. Your goals must be flexible. You do not want to design a system that is so rigid and cast in stone that you feel suffocated by it. For example, if you want to exercise to improve your health, you don't want to design an exercise regime that is arduous or boring. You want to make it challenging, stimulating and enjoyable.

A flexible plan also allows you the freedom and flexibility to change and adapt to opportunities that come along that would be foolish not to pursue. This does not mean that you get distracted by every idea or are chasing after everything that comes your way. You cannot chase two rabbits at one time. Maintaining your focus on one or two things will make you happy in the long run.

4. Goals must be challenging and exciting. Many aspiring athletes and entrepreneurs seem to plateau after a few years. They lose the initial excitement that was fuelled by the uncertainty and the risks involved to grow their skills or business idea. They become stagnant, routine in their development. Their training becomes uninspiring or their business capacities drift into those of an administrator.

Setting exciting and challenging goals outside your comfort zone prevents you from settling into a life of boredom. In the end you will always learn more about yourself and your capacity to succeed when you are uncomfortable.

When your back is against the wall, is when you make the greatest breakthroughs. Life has a lot to offer – do you really want to get to the end of your life and realize you haven't accomplished anything?

5. Your goals must be well balanced. If you had to live your life over again, what would you do differently? When you set goals, make sure that you include areas that give you time to relax and enjoy the finer things in life. Working yourself to the bone, is a sure fire way of creating burnout and ill health. Life is too short to miss the fun stuff.
6. Your goals must be realistic. While you are encouraged to "think big", a measure of reality will ensure that you are getting better results. Most people are unrealistic about their goals and the amount of time it will take to achieve them.

Make a point of remembering: There is no such thing as unrealistic goals, only unrealistic time frames.

7. Goals must be set within or on realistic time frames. Think big about the future and create an exciting picture of the future; just make sure your plan isn't farfetched and that you allow a reasonable amount of time to get there. Your goal must also include a "due date" otherwise there is no urgency to achieving the goal.
8. Your goals must include contribution. We may remember that old saying – "As you sow, so you shall reap". If you aim for good things, if you consistently sow well, along with good thoughts, your rewards will be guaranteed. That's a good deal, isn't it?

Unfortunately, many people who strive for success (often defined as money or accolades) miss the point. There is no room to give back to the greater good of society. They are takers, not givers but if you keep taking, in the long run you lose out.

Contribution can take many forms. You can give of your time, your expertise and of course of your money. So make giving a part of your program unconditional. Don't expect payback; pay it forward. It comes in due course, in the most unexpected ways.

Setting Your Goals

Goals must be specific. It's one of the main reason we don't achieve what we are capable of. We don't identify or define what we want. Vague generalizations and wishy-washy statement of purpose aren't good enough. Saying spending more time with the family is vague. Say that I want to be filthy rich, be specific as to what, when, where, how much?

My ultimate, specific goal is: _____

My goal or milestone for today to advance my ultimate goal is: _____

Goals must be set within or on realistic time frames and should include a "due date", otherwise there is no urgency to achieving the goal.

My due date for my Ultimate goal is: _____

My action(s) that are due today: _____

Planning The Way

Now that you have just created your mission or vision statement, your first page of your constitution. Do one thing a day to advance on your purpose to support your constitution – your personal manifesto.

This is the start of your master plan. Repeat the process and take action - do one thing today and every day to move you forward. A clear methodical approach will help you move steadily forward, without feeling overwhelmed by the ultimate goal.

You can repeat this process for the other areas of your life and begin to add other sections to your constitution where you may also derive purpose. Maybe today you are enlisting the help of your friends. Perhaps today you will call to see if that place is for rent, or research something on the internet to help towards your purpose.

Part of this phase or process is determining the "skills or means" we need. That is what puts the "action" in the plan of action. You have to convert your dream, your goals into reality and the way we do this is by breaking your goal into smaller steps. Then arrange the steps in priority and write a date next to each one indicating when it must be accomplished by to meet your objective.

The will to win is important; the will to plan is vital. Most people want to win. They want the rewards, the glory and the satisfaction of achievement, yet few people take it to the next level and actually plan for success.

Planning is vital component of success.

To execute a plan we need to:

- Research
- Seek advice
- Collect information - feedback
- Create opportunities.

The big secret to achieving success though is the hard work, the integration of purpose into everyday life as we saw in the chapter on attitude. Planning and success is hard work with no immediate payoffs. There is no sudden leap into the stratosphere. There is only advancing step by step, slowly and torturously, up the pyramid towards your goal. A plan gives you clarity in the pursuit of purpose.

Execution - Action is the key ingredient of the plan. Execution is the chariot of genius. You must commit one act towards your goals today.

Action is energy + intention.

Stick To It

A plan requires discipline, commitment and dedication. Self-discipline is a key component of the action plan. Mastering self-discipline is also the key to success and it can be learned. With this key you can accomplish anything. Without it, nothing worthwhile or lasting can be achieved.

In order to learn self-discipline you need to first know the characteristics of self-disciplined achievers.

There are several dominant characteristics that identify a self-disciplined achiever. These behaviours make it possible for high achievers to reach unbelievable goals in all areas of their lives. The first is a strong sense of purpose. These achievers know what their purpose is in life and will do everything to reach their goals.

Another characteristic of a self-disciplined achiever is that they visualize. They have seen their goal fulfilled, they know what it feels like, where they were, how they lived; they experienced it in their minds. The French have a word that we are very familiar with, "déjà vu", meaning it has been seen before. The self-disciplined achiever has already visualized attaining his goal.

The self-disciplined achiever has a strong belief in self. They KNOW they can achieve their goals and nothing will stop them from doing it. It is possible no matter what happens in their life or how long it takes.

This brings us to the next characteristic of successful people - patience. The self-disciplined achiever has patience that it will happen. They know that they must keep going after their goal. They know that all people can walk 1000 miles - it merely takes one step at a time. You cannot do it if you are sitting down or turning around. So they are patient because they know the end result will be success.

Another characteristic of a self-disciplined achiever is perseverance. They will not give up. They do not believe that they have failures, but simply inconveniences. They know that if they keep going in the right direction, they will arrive at their destination.

Another characteristic of the self-disciplined achiever, they plan. They map out how they are going to get where they are going. They do the activities that will get them where they want to go and plan how long it will take, how many calls they have to make, how much it will cost, and what they will need to say to accomplish their goals.

The self-disciplined achiever is always learning. They learn from their own experiences as well as the experiences of others. They are always adapting to the market place, learning new technologies, and growing in knowledge. They are always honing their skills to make their job easier and make sure they reach their goals.

The last characteristic of the self-disciplined achiever is that they love what they do. There is very little distinction between work and play. They enjoy their work and derive great pleasure from what they do.

The way to learn self-discipline is to study the characteristics and adapt them to your business. Be honest with yourself and work on the ones that you are weak in and in no time at all they will become a habit. There is no lasting success without self-discipline.

But, once you become familiar with the characteristics of the self-disciplined high achiever, you will be able to adapt your own life to include these positive values.

"A six-word formula for success: Think things through - then follow through."

Chapter 5

Concentration / Focus / Intention / Awareness

Focus is the concentration on the content of the moment, of “going with the flow.” We make the most of the moment - when we are focused – united - we often find ourselves in the flow, in things both great and small.

Focus also allows us to practice many of the other elements, often concurrently, oscillating from one element to another. It is only by practicing a sport, for example over and over again that we get better.

When we lose ourselves in developing our abilities, most importantly, our skills improve through concentration we get better at it. Practice improves our concentration and we improve our skills by concentrating on mastering a skill.

So too often, we need to have that same focus on each moment of our lives to experience those same sports-like conditions that result in flow and the conditions to practice other elements of the wheel. Focus also allows us to check in with our attitude to ensure we are not deviating from our pursuit of practicing our own version of tragic optimism.

So what is this process of focus and is it something you have control over? Can you change this process to achieve great results, or is it preset within you that it is unchangeable?

Flow is changeable and within your control. The elements of flow – and enjoyment - are within our grasp. With this knowledge, it is possible to achieve control of consciousness so as to enhance enjoyment and achieve success by following the components of Flow activity.

The combination of all these causes a sense of deep enjoyment that is so rewarding people feel expanding a great deal of energy is worthwhile simply to be able to feel it. It is from or in this state where great achievements in sports, business and in life come from.

The Gateway

Focus is what we let into consciousness. Control over consciousness is not simply a cognitive skill. At least as much as intelligence it requires the commitment of emotions and will. It is not enough to know how to do it; one must DO IT, consistently in the same way as athletes or musicians who must keep practicing what they know in theory.

The way to achieve mastery over one's life is through control over consciousness, which in turn leads to control over quality of experience. Any small gain in that direction will make life richer, more enjoyable, and more meaningful.

The ability to persevere despite obstacles and setbacks is the quality people most admire in others and justly so; it is probably the most important trait, not only for succeeding in life, but to enjoy it as well. To develop this trait one must find ways to order consciousness so as to be in control of feelings and thoughts.

The information we allow into consciousness becomes extremely important; it is in fact what determines the content and quality of life. Information enters our consciousness either because we intend to focus attention on it or as a result of intentional habits we acquire.

It is attention that selects the relevant bits of information from potential millions of bits available. It takes attention to retrieve, the appropriate references from memory, to evaluate the event, and to choose the right thing to do.

The mark of a person who is in control of his consciousness is the ability to focus attention at will, to be oblivious to distractions, to concentrate for as long as it takes to achieve a goal and no longer.

When a person is able to organize his or her consciousness so as to experience flow as often as possible, the quality of life inevitably improves, because even the usual boring routines of work improve becoming purposeful and enjoyable. In flow, we are in control of our psychic energy, and everything we do adds order to consciousness.

Improving the Quality of Life

There are two main strategies we can adopt to improve the quality of life. The first is to try making external conditions match our goals. The second is to change how we experience external conditions to make them fit our goals better.

Neither of these strategies is effective when used alone. Changing external conditions might seem to work at first, but if a person is not in control of his consciousness, the old fears and desires will soon return, reviving previous anxieties.

The waiting rooms of psychiatrists are filled with rich and successful patients who, in their forties and fifties, suddenly wake up to the fact that a plush suburban home, expensive cars, and even an ivy league education is not enough to bring peace of mind.

Yet people keep hoping that changing external conditions of their lives will provide a solution. If only they could earn more money, be in better physical shape, or have a more understanding partner, they would have it made. Even though we recognize that material success may not bring internal peace and happiness, we engage in an endless struggle to reach external goals, expecting that they will improve our life.

Wealth, status and power have become in our culture all too powerful symbols of happiness. And we assume that if only we could acquire some of those same symbols, we would be much happier.

If we do actually succeed in becoming richer, or more powerful, we believe, at least for a time, that life as a whole has improved. But symbols can be deceptive, they have a tendency to distract from the reality they are supposed to represent. The reality is that the quality of life does not depend directly on what others think of us or on what we own.

The bottom line is, rather, how we feel about ourselves and about what happens to us. To improve life one must improve the quality of experience.

Money, fame and material possessions may lead to happiness. They can be genuine blessings, but only if they help to make us feel better. Otherwise they are at best neutral, at worst obstacles to a rewarding life. Research on happiness and life satisfaction suggest that in general there is a mild correlation between wealth and well-being.

Given these observations, instead of worrying about how to make a million dollars or how to win friends and influence people, it seems more beneficial to find out how everyday life can be made more harmonious and more satisfying, and thus achieve by a direct route what cannot be reached through the pursuit of symbolic goals.

Our day to day enjoyment is characterized by this forward movement: by a sense of novelty, of accomplishment. Playing a close game of tennis that stretches one's abilities is enjoyable, as is reading a book that reveals things in a new light, as is having a conversation that leads us to express ideas we didn't know we had.

Closing a contested business deal, or any piece of work well done, is enjoyable. None of these experiences may be particularly pleasurable at the time they are taking place, but afterwards we think back on them and say, "That was really fun" and wish they would happen again.

After an enjoyable event we know that we have changed, that our self has grown: in some respects, we have become more complex as a result of it.

Without enjoyment life can be endured, and it can even be pleasant. But it can be only so only precariously, depending on luck and the cooperation of external environment. To gain personal control over the quality of experience, however, one needs to learn how to build enjoyment into what happens day in, day out.

The Factors of Enjoyment

So what makes an experience enjoyable? We know from interviews of successful athletes or the "average" person, how to describe what makes an experience enjoyable. Whether it was a chess player or a long distance swimmer, all described what it was like in a very similar fashion.

The phenomenon of enjoyment has eight components:

1. A challenging activity that requires skill, with a chance at competing or completing.
2. We must be able to concentrate on what we are doing.
3. The concentration is usually possible because the task has clear goals.
4. Provides feedback.
5. One acts with deep, but effortless involvement that removes from awareness the worries and frustrations of everyday life.
6. Enjoyable experiences allow people a sense of control over their actions.
7. Concern for the self disappears, yet paradoxically the sense of self emerges stronger after the flow experience is over.
8. Sense of duration of time is altered so time is transformed. Hours pass by like minutes, and minutes seem to stretch.

The combination of all these elements causes a sense of deep enjoyment that is so rewarding people feel that expanding a great of energy is worthwhile simply to be able to feel it. With this knowledge, it is possible to achieve control of consciousness and turn even the most humdrum moments of everyday lives into events that help the self grow.

Making the Change

Conscious change is brought about by the two qualities inherent in consciousness: attention and intention. Attention energizes, and intention transforms. Whatever you put your attention on will grow stronger in your life. Whatever you take your attention away from will wither, disintegrate, and disappear. Intention, on the other hand, triggers transformation of energy and information. Intention organizes its own fulfilment.

Often we may find ourselves stuck in patterns of negative thought that prevent us from realizing most fully the power of our creative intention. Perhaps we inherited these thought patterns and scripts from our families. Perhaps difficult life experiences have made it difficult for us to believe in our own soul's beauty and power. Or perhaps we fear that in acknowledging our power to create the life we want, we are bound to fail.

No matter what our negative conditioning has been, we have the power at every moment to completely transform our lives by directing our energy and focus for change, healing, and transformation.

When creating an intention or a vision for our life, it is crucial to begin by asking that our goal be answered in a way that harms none and is for the highest good of all. "Words are vibrations of thought," and the words that we utter have a powerful effect on our consciousness. Carefully consider the options that you want to bring into your life. Do not focus on the negative that you would like to release, as this will only energize the negative.

Your intentions will be more effective if they are worded in positive, evocative and inspiring language, and in the present tense. You will want to be as specific as possible in your intentions, but leave room for divine intervention and inspiration. Use words such as "exactly the right..." or "the best possible..." Speak the words aloud, and use all of your senses to make your vision real. Hear the sounds, feel the textures, see your life unfold as you desire it to be.

Behaviour patterns that interfere with our purpose become transformed as our entire being fills with the light of the divine will. We become more strongly linked to our soul's creative intelligence, open to its guidance, and receptive to the many gifts of a life of transformation.

Attention

You are responsible for your thinking. Change your thinking and life will get better. But, what thoughts do you change? Your troublesome thoughts about a situation can easily be found in your self-talk. Self-talk is that inner running dialogue you have with yourself. It is what you tell yourself about life's situations.

All of us have a voice that talks to us. You might think of it as your conscience. It might be that "inner observer" who seems to sit in the corner and watches everything you do. You may recognize it as that voice that starts talking to you upon awakening in the morning. Sometimes it may wait until you look in the mirror before it actually speaks. It is that voice that says, "You sure are handsome." or "What a wonderful person you are."

Or “You are going to have a great day.” It might say, “You are so slim and your hair looks beautiful.” If you don’t recognize this voice then yours may be speaking to you in a different tone. You might be hearing, “You look like crap today” or “You sure have gained a lot of weight.” “Your hair is a mess.” “It’s a terrible day, get back in bed.”

This voice, the negative, critical one, is one of the main reasons we have so many problems. It can destroy resiliency by opening the flood gates and draining away your energy.

This voice can make anything worse. You may be like most people and know how to take any small problem, think about it for a while, and have a bigger problem. That little voice keeps telling you what might go wrong. All of the dark possibilities are pointed out.

The imagination creates a very bad situation. The problem goes from a mild annoyance to a major catastrophe as you convince yourself that the imagined situation is the real situation. You are now busy confronting a problem that only exists in your mind.

Any response, at this point, is going to be out of proportion to the original problem. The normal reaction to the original problem is most likely some degree of emotional distress. If you have been laid off from a job, you may be feeling some combination of tense, worried, anxious, sad, irritated, frustrated, or angry. All of these are normal emotions for the experience.

However, that inner voice may be busy exaggerating, This is horrible and terrible. It is the world’s worst thing. You will never find another job. You are a hopeless and helpless person. No one will ever hire you. You won’t be able to pay your bills. You will lose everything you have. You should just give up.

With such a running dialogue you will soon fall into depression or become enraged at your imagined mistreatment. In a deep depression you may decide that the situation is hopeless and become suicidal. In a state of rage you may act in an inappropriate, violent manner towards your former employer. Either reaction is too intense because the response is to a situation you have created in your mind.

Change your mind, your attitude, and the problem can shrink back to its original size. The original problem may be bad enough but it is not the catastrophe you have invented.

Awareness

To change your attitude you must change the inner dialogue.

To change the dialogue you must catch it in action.

To do this you have to pay attention to yourself. You must engage in self-observation and listen for that inner voice.

The next time that you find yourself feeling “bad” don’t start asking, “Who did this to me?” Don’t start looking around for the external cause of your problems. What you should do is to ask yourself, “What have I been thinking?” “What have I been telling myself?” You may find that your inner dialogue has put you deep into emotional distress.

Awareness is being in the moment. All your attention is focused, like when you are holding a hot bowl of soup. When a person’s skills are needed to cope with the challenges of a situation, that person’s attention is completely absorbed by the activity. There is no excess psychic energy left over to process any information but what the activity offers. All attention is concentrated on the relevant stimuli.

As a result, one of the most universal and distinctive features of optimal experience take place: people become so involved in what they are doing that the activity becomes spontaneous, almost automatic; they stop being aware of themselves as separate from the actions they are performing.

Each person allocates his or her limited attention either by focusing it intentionally like a beam of energy or by diffusing it with disconnected random movements. The shape and content of life depends on how it is invested. The names we use to describe personality traits – such as extrovert, high achiever, or paranoid – refer to the specific patterns people use to structure their attention.

At the same party, the extrovert will seek out interactions with others, the high achiever will look for useful business contacts, and the paranoid will be on guard for sign of danger he must avoid. Attention can be invested in innumerable ways, ways that can make life either rich or miserable.

Because attention determines what will and will not appear in consciousness, and because it is also required to make any other mental events –such as remembering, thinking, feeling, and decision making happen there, it is useful to think of it as psychic energy.

Attention is like energy that without it no work can be done, and in doing work it is dissipated. We create ourselves by how we invest this energy. Memories, thoughts, and feelings are all shaped by how we use it.

And it is energy under our control, to do with as we please; hence, attention is our most important tool of improving the quality of experience.

Attention is the furnace room for the combustion of negative attachments.

What tools do we use? Only one. We have all heard of it, but very seldom use it.

It's called attention.

When by persistent observation, we recognize the unreality of our self-centred thoughts and doubts, then we can remain dispassionate and fundamentally unaffected by them. That does not mean to be a cold person. Rather, it means not to be caught and dragged around by circumstances.

We are by no means "dispassionate and fundamentally unaffected" by what is going on. So it's extremely important to remember that the main purpose of attention is so that our lives can be dispassionate and fundamentally unaffected by outward circumstances.

If we are unable to burn up each circumstance as we encounter it, and the culprit is always our emotional attachment to the circumstance. For example the boss asks you to do something unreasonable, a spouse tests you, and your child gets into trouble. How do you react? Is it the same old you or are you there? What is the situation saying to you right now? What will you say back?

If you can see it, the mind's eye can perceive it and you can bring it forth. In awareness, we can discern the patterns that keep us behind, prevent us from moving forward.

We unlock our potential when we say goodbye to ourselves. In saying it can't work out or I can't, in letting go of that, then you can begin to achieve what you can. That is awareness, when you leap and you jump away from those thoughts – all thoughts of good or bad. Awareness helps us identify opportunities and stop those self-defeating patterns that are keeping us on the side lines of life.

Chapter 6

Belief / Conviction / Faith / Trust

You may believe in God, a higher power, life on another planet, or nothing at all. You can believe that money makes the world go round, that you reap what you sow, or that it's better to give than receive. You may believe in something - even nothing at all.

We all have thoughts and opinions most of the time, especially about ourselves, others, and the events in our lives. What we need to know as information for our physical body and mental calibrations, we let into consciousness. It's what we let in and what we anticipate of the outcome direct the course of our actions. We feed and clothe ourselves, have careers and families, create fantastic works of art or succulent dinners.

Some can achieve great wealth, make astounding discoveries, and inspire the masses. Most of us though would claim not to be getting our "fair share", our piece of the pie, our creative pursuits into galleries or museums.

We know from statistics though, that most of us do not feel happy and successful. When it comes to creating and achieving the things we want in life, most of us aren't getting what we want out of it.

We can see how belief is an important component to success for sports teams. We often read and hear how this team won this championship or this series. They believed in themselves, that they could win. They trusted in the coach's plan that planted the seeds that lead the team's efforts and success.

Successful teams and people see themselves as successful. They think they have great ideas, are capable of great things and believe it will work out for them. The problem with most of us is that we only look at the surface of life. We only seek out enough, and strive for mediocrity. Many of us cannot or will not achieve success, because we are not aiming at it. We don't seem to have a paddle to steer us, or even have the boat in the water.

So we do not venture very far in life because we are not aiming for it. We often get caught up in the trap that we will not succeed so we don't even bother to try.

Our ingrained self-beliefs allow us to see how we can create our destiny or wall in its path. When we envision it, it seems so desperate and pointless, why bother to try and change it?

We create a vision of failure, quite often because that is all we have known.

From childhood trauma, natural disaster or economic restructuring, we keep reinforcing the belief that it can't, it won't ever work out.

That is where awareness comes in and how you can use it to your advantage. Learn something about yourself that takes advantage of your nature, as well as helps you see the potential of life.

Life's Little Instruction Book

In our life, it's unfortunate though that when we went to school, we learned very little. We know how to add and subtract, but we don't really get enough clarity on the human psyche. We are taught how to feed ourselves, how to dissect a worm, or how we are harming the planet. What we don't learn about is how to think.

In many ways, school reinforced our containment of our view of the world within the narrow eye of the needle. Our view or perspective is limited. Our life is like a juke box and the songs are often the A side.

As protection of the biological unit, we know that our compulsions (eat and sleep) can be quite strong. This is hard wired into us and great for our survival. Where once we used to struggle for survival, we know can produce in abundance, yet seem incapable of delivering it to where it's needed most.

We have accepted certain comforts. Our economy now allows us to ponder these questions and the time to devote in great interest to these more worthy ideas. After all how did we end up here? We got the basics down, but why am I only getting the scraps of life?

Our development has provided us with an opportunity to decide if we want to continue listening to the A side of Life or look outside the eye of the needle.

We also know we can transcend these things. It is a known psychological phenomenon that we tend to let into focus one thought at a time. In knowing this, it is in that moment when we recognize, "ah, I'm doing it again", we begin the process of rewiring our brains, sending a powerful shock that can literally transform the body and the mind's powerful abilities.

When you catch yourself "...ah, I'm doing it again". Which way is the energy of your life battery flowing? When you have a thought, say yourself that I'm having a thought. Label it, disconnect yourself from the thought. It's not your thought. It's your record player or tape recorder that runs in your mind.

Imagine the fear then imagine the complete opposite outcome.

Imagine the success of achieving the goal, instead of saying I won't get the job, the account, or the girls, imagine the flip side. Hit the stop button, and turn the tape over.

Listen to the B side. To the side that says even for just few moments at a time, I can. Better yet, break the record. Change the tape on the tape deck; even better, rip out the tape. It's welcoming you to the other side of the needle. That is where you can be in life, in creating the very conditions necessary for creating success.

Envisioning and affirmations are an important part of the process. No one ever really made it big, by saying I can't do it, or it won't work. That is where the potential, your potential lies. You just have to be able to see the picture.

The problem first of all is to realize that there is a tape recorder playing. Ahh, there I go again.....

Most of us when we look at how we function, it is at a very superficial level, and just take for granted what spills out of our mind's eye. We all know of how we are formed by the past. Needless to say as adults we tend to settle into a way of looking at the world, and us in it, based on these old patterns.

If we want to change our beliefs and begin to work on achieving our hopes and dreams, we need to reengage ourselves into our consciousness. It may sound scary and may seem daunting at first, but with a little practice, in no time you can create a mountain moving belief system.

At first it may be difficult. We may find easier to believe that it won't happen for us than the opposite. It's like a dam that won't burst.

It's like learning to see what surrounds the eye of the needle rather than looking at life through its eye. We know that in the beginning like any skill or pursuit, it takes time to learn the fundamentals, but we know from experience that in no time we will get the hang of it. This is where persistence or "grit" comes in. It's what builds star athletes, dynasty teams, business empires, or even your dream of starting your own business.

Right from the start, in believing you can do bigger things helps you begin to see life from a higher perspective. You see more of the playing field. You see it from that higher perspective, the more you say to yourself "I can." Momentum builds as we begin to practice.

Situations around you change solely by your outlook.

When you change the way you look at things, the things you look at change. A rainy day could be the most beautiful day. Are you going to get that “headache” again?

If our thoughts can go to the negative, to the “I can’t” then we attract that to our lives. Conversely if we were to reverse the thought pattern the other way, the other pole, reposition the GPS to “I can” – we can change it for the better. We already have these tools inside us, we simply need to learn how to reuse them.

A Personal Constitution

After all what have we got to lose? If your life really turns out worse, do you need to be repeating those same patterns that lead you to failure? Where is your rudder heading, where is your compass needle pointing? Do you have your guide book, your map, your personal constitution or personal manifesto? What do you believe in?

It is not good enough to just speak of your beliefs; you must commit them to existence and to take the first action. You must make a declaration, bear witness. You must write down your own personal mission statement.

You must then write your goals down on a piece of paper. What is the first goal you want to achieve, right now? If you haven’t done this before, write it down now. Tell others. Make yourself accountable to your declarations.

This is the first line in your own personal manifesto, your own guide book. Over the next few days, you should think of all those things you may want in each area of your life and write them in a small notebook. Is it to go back to school, write a book, get fit, make \$1 million, travel? You need to know this.

Once you envision a higher place, you have to hold on to that and imagine it exists now. If it can be, it can be had. Once you acquire a vision, then all you have to do is just imagine achieving it. Get rid of that old tape that tired old program that says you can’t, you won’t. Instead let’s hear at least I can, It might just be possible...Maybe.... Let’s pretend....If the current can go one way it can go back the other or at least in another direction.

Our thoughts are what inspire our actions. Even though we learned to walk on our own, we do pick up unproductive fears from our environment and project it outward. We internalize many of societies and our family’s very fears, copying them directly onto our minds hard drive like a virus.

If we can envision fear and failure, we can envision achievement and success, and to have a goal or something to live for.

Are you are being a light unto yourself? Personal truth is a component of what your belief is - your purpose. Your purpose is what you believe to be right, the right course of action, right thought, right idea – even the reason to live.

This project, your dream or talent fulfilled, a family member to live for, the girl you might meet, the \$1 million you could make, physical fitness, projects and artistic inspirations. It is your personal code of conduct that orients, aims and directs your efforts and actions towards your purpose.

Opening The Door

When you believe something is true, you literally go into a state of it being true. Beliefs help us tap into the richest resources deep within us, creating and directing these resources in the support of our desired outcomes. These are powerful forces for creating good or failure in your life and is what initiates you to take action and create the world you want to in – the 'now'.

Beliefs help you see what you want and energize you to get it. Do you see yourself as getting the job, the girl or guy, or the life you want to create? Do you see only short comings or possibilities? Miseries or adventures? Never happens or always happens?

Success or failure is in your mind right now.

Whether you believe you can or can't you're right. Henry Ford
To change your behaviour you have to change your beliefs. Belief is nothing more than an internal representation that governs behaviour. You can believe that it is possible or isn't going to happen. It is an empowering or disempowering belief that you can make it or not.

If you believe in failure, that tends to be the outcome. You may at times even surprise yourself otherwise in spite of yourself, but you generally succeed at failure too. Both kinds of belief have power. The question is what kinds of beliefs are you holding and fostering?

The birth of excellence begins with our awareness that our beliefs, a component of attitude, are our choice. You can choose beliefs that limit you or support you. The trick is to choose the beliefs that are conducive to success and prosperity, to discard the ones that say you can't and hold you back.

There is a direct connection between thoughts and results. It's your beliefs that determine how much of your potential you'll be able to tap into. Beliefs can be turned on or off. Whatever you say to the nervous system opens up the pathways to the part of the brain that can potentially deliver the answers you need.

If You Don't Like the Journey, Change Your Direction

Dare to believe that you CAN achieve that goal, change the outcome – the game of life. Just as there is a duality to yourself, the mind is both your companion and your critic. What are you saying to yourself today about how you can't or can?

You gain belief by believing in the 'Yes' of the moment. When you start saying "I am succeeding" even if you don't 100 percent believe it yet. You are still planting the seeds of nirvana, cultivating the garden, preparing the soil, planting corn and expecting it to grow and ripen. It takes time to sow what you reap.

As soon as you can envision yourself doing it, it is achievable. If you truly believe, your energies, both external and internal will not believe otherwise. We all have core beliefs ...some so fundamental we would die for them.

But most of them are vague at best, with our lives are governed by our own self-limiting beliefs that we picked up over the years. The key is to take those beliefs and make sure that they work for you, your personal constitution, that they are effective and empowering.

As you change the directional thought patterns, confidence can come out with the feeling that you are moving towards your goal. It is a physical action that stimulates movement. Action in the direction of your goals, and the corresponding feeling of having achieved a step in that direction, is what you can consider to be satisfying the quest towards meeting or acquiring your goal. Like a kid who saves his pennies for that new bike, working towards a goal can and is equally satisfying as the ultimate prize.

Responsibility

You have the sole responsibility for being the captain of your own ship Are you heading for the rocks, or are you taking hold of the helm and steering your boat towards more positive, productive thoughts?

If you are heading in the wrong direction fix your compass. Each voyage is a series of tacking to get towards the destination. No ship or plane is ever bang on course, but maintains a heading towards its destination.

Just as you have to get rid of those ideas that prevent you from achieving your potential, so too do you have to give up those bad physical habits that keep you enslaved. If you lack energy, have health problems, are constantly tired, feel unwell you need to improve your lifestyle.

Eat less processed food, more fresh unprocessed 'real' food you cook from scratch. Bad fuel or gas will only produce poor engine results. Join a gym and get your butt in there at least twice a week and rebuild and re-strengthen your physical self.

Change your lifestyle. Change your ideas, perspective too. You also have to revisit what you set as your goals and priorities. All too often, people are working for a status or a place that is hollow in its victory. It only is preoccupied with material success or attainment of goods. It celebrates consumption as the ultimate prize.

This is not what drives human search for happiness. Money and possessions does not equate happiness as studies of the super rich have proven to be only slightly higher than those of average wage earnings.

Happiness is a choice, a place to be cultivated by achieving an intrinsic goal. Yes, you can plan that trip overseas, but it is in working towards that goal last year or reading about it that made it all that much more enjoyable.

Choose something based on your passions, that little fire within. In looking for something that is your passion, look for desire. If you want to paint, paint. Try it, test out that passion. It might not be the one, but at least you have tried and it may spark other interests. And in the process you support in developing the self, the true self. Begin to see what actually drives you as opposed to what others want you to drive for.

If a thought, a habit or fear is stopping you from trying something new, or achieving your goals, stop doing it. Stop the fear train; deflect / change that thought or modify / break that habit. Recognize its existence. If we are powerless to stop, get help if necessary. That's recognition.

What comes next is responsibly, the responsibility for your thoughts. Your compass calculations and plots along your chart, your constitution of life, taking action as pilots of your own boats. Be guided by your goals, which you write down in your little book, and carry around with you. Read it every day, and take action on once a day of any one or all goals in one day.

Do at least one action or spend one hour towards one of your goals today. Spend five minutes today, right now, and write out your goal for today, and what action you will do towards it. Maybe it's calling the local college to see if they have the program to help you. Perhaps it's a visit to a website to learn how to set up a catering business. Make that call to see when the art classes are starting in town.

Your canvass of life has been mostly bare. The paint and brush await us. So take up the brush and lay on a few strokes on the canvass of your life. Paint the picture in your mind now how you see it.

Trust that everything will work out as it should. It is better to believe that life will deliver us what we wish or that it be empty and void. Is the harbour of life full of incoming vessels or void of cargo? Am I attracting love, success, job, fame, money, or whatever else is important to me? Trust that you are, even if you never have before. That is why you haven't received yet.

Take a look at the mental component of your constitution? Do you constantly complain or take action? Are you buying a ticket and sitting in the stands or do you step up to bat and play the game?

Moving Mountains

Thoughts are where it's at to end the attitude train. Engage the thought, don't just accept it. Where's your head?...Be vigilant, that is what awareness is all about. It at this point you can begin turning your boat around, and begin to gain a new perspective on everything around you.. Are you planting barley but expecting corn? Is the glass half empty or half full?

Disbelief and doubt are the arch enemies of faith. It's sometimes easier to give in to them. Doubt is the little voice that says to give up, to lose hope that you can gain or achieve the pursuit of your goal or your code of conduct.

Awareness allows you to recognize the thought – "Ahh, there I go again, having a thought about"...and you can then engage the thoughts. Are you a negative thought or positive thought? Which end of the battery is your energy flowing from?

Trust that you will receive all that Life and the Universe can give you. Say to yourself "I am succeeding, I am making new friends, getting the better job, more focused on my goals, my fitness and health has improved since I have been taking better care of myself. I can see there are rich opportunities around me. The ocean of life is plentiful.

Trust is like a vast ocean of water. It is the single mindedness where you only conceive of one possibility, one purpose, and have the one belief. It feels like you are flooding yourself in the warm bath of the light of possibility. Raise yourself up and have a peek for the first time. Dare to glimpse at the light of possibility.

Act as if you have already received; trust that you are NOW receiving all that you want. When you think that you aren't getting there, have a look back at what you have done to date to show progress. In celebrating the little victories, you will gain or change your perspective. When you can see the vision and how you are getting to this goal, one step at a time your attitude will change for the better.

Professional teams have to go out there believing they will win. You need to have that same desire in your everyday life to embrace the opportunities life provides. You have to trust that your ability to conceive of it, in the moment of now. You are attracting these things in life you don't want and do want. It's how you believe, "will I get the girl or not?" If you show doubt on the field, in the boardroom, or on a date, they can sense it.

So, how do you develop the power of belief, of trust?

Creating an unstoppable belief system:

Here are some great tips:

1. Think success, don't think failure. Let the dominating thought, "I will succeed," take over your thought process. You should tell yourself over and over throughout the day that you will succeed. Tell this to yourself with conviction. Say it like it is already happening. Tell yourself: " I AM succeeding."

Thinking success conditions your mind to create plans that produce success. It is the natural behaviour of your mind to start generating ideas and plans to achieve whatever thought that you allow dominating it.

While this is useful and beneficial, it can work against you as well. If you allow negative thoughts to dominate your mind, your mind will naturally create the results that you already anticipate.

Believing requires this complete trust that everything will work out. That you will do your part in finding solutions while trusting and knowing that you can and will get what you want out of life.

That's the kind of belief that is needed to achieve your goals.

You have to believe that things will workout - no doubts - just trust in yourself, your inner powers and the powers that be - that everything will workout. So how do we get to that level?

First of all you have to get there by taking small steps. Start setting small goals – even with things you know will happen - then trust and let go, and see what happens.

If you are not sure about a decision you have to make, think of all the possibilities.

Then tell yourself that you are making the right decision and let go - forget about making the decision. After a while you will naturally think about it again and you will make your decision easily. The key is to trust and let go - sometimes you have to distract yourself so you don't worry.

Worry is the opposite of trusting and believing. It's like saying I don't believe so I have to worry - because by worrying I can make it better - but you can't. So get busy - distract yourself and see what happens.

2. Believe Big. The size of your success is determined by the size of your belief. If you set little goals for yourself, you will always have just a little achievement. If you set big goals, you will win with big success.

Start small so that you develop this practice. Because when the big decisions need to be made you will know the process works and you won't worry - you will believe that you can and will do what you need to do to achieve your goal.

The mind is powerful. What you think with your mind is often formed into reality. Many of us have limited success because we think in our mind that we can't or never will achieve success.

Nothing - absolutely nothing - in this life gives you more satisfaction than knowing you are on the road to success and achievement. And nothing stands as a bigger challenge than making the most of it yourself.

Chapter 7

Commitment / Persistence

Commitment is what makes an individual achieve a gold medal, or a team into champions. The “do whatever it takes” attitude. Commitment is our desire in action – mentally and physically, in actions taken. It is the ‘stick to the course’ efforts– the application of action towards a desired goal or outcome.

A true commitment is a heartfelt promise to yourself, from which you will NOT back down, no matter what the circumstances may be. Many people have good intentions and dreams, but only a few are willing to commit to what is necessary to achieve them.

Do a review on your commitment level, ask yourself these questions and be honest with the answers.

How badly do I want to achieve my dreams?
What will achieving my dreams mean to me?
What price am I willing to pay to make this happen?
Do I believe I can?

The ability to achieve your goals and dreams will be determined by the level to which YOU are willing to commit. NOTHING is as important as this fact.

Commitment

There is a huge difference between interest and commitment. When you are interested in something you only do it when it is convenient. When you are committed to something you accept NO excuses.

The enemy of commitment is resistance. Anything you wish to achieve that is worthwhile, will meet with resistance. This can take the form of, family, friends, advisers, self-doubt, self-defeating habits, lack of money, regulations, peer-pressure and many other unforeseen difficulties, such as illness etc...

This can leave you questioning your dreams or even your sanity. Take some comfort in the fact that you are not alone. All those who wish to make a better life for themselves, will meet with resistance

Think of athletes or performers in any field. Think of the sacrifice, the endless hours of practice and learning, the lack of a social life, the defeats. The huge amount of personal sacrifices and professional challenges these people have to meet so they can fulfil their dreams. Only YOU can decide whether the rewards you look forward to are worth your effort.

A serious commitment to a goal does not mean you have to take all the joy and fun out of life. Laughter and humour are an integral part of the human make up. So try and integrate fun into your daily goals.

Learn the difference between giving up and giving in. There may be many times when giving up a certain direction or idea, would be wise. Giving in, on the other hand, should never even be considered.

Life presents itself one day at a time. Take your commitments in daily bite-sized pieces. You can do without mental indigestion. One brick at a time, a house is built, one stroke at a time, the artist paints. It's the everyday battles that get you to where you want to be.

Every New Years, people resolve that THIS New Year will be different: "This will be the year that I write the book, lose weight, quit smoking, start that new venture, double my income, take more time off to spend with my family," and the list goes on and on. However, when people think about pursuing their dreams, they often squash the idea because it doesn't seem practical.

Does this sound familiar? You have a dream, but are afraid that if you pursue it, you would risk giving up what you already have. It is easy to put it off to a later date - a time when there will be more money, more time and/or when the kids have graduated from college.

However, there is never a time when everything in your life is perfect for carrying out your goals. Don't wait for everything to be lined up. Once you actually commit to your dream, things will begin to fall into place. Know that is possible to live out your fondest dreams AND make a great living at the same time.

Here are some strategies to make that idea most effective:

First, design your life around your priorities. Many people try to fit their dreams into their life and complain there are not enough hours in the day to make it happen. If you want your dream to become a reality, make it a priority.

Second, handle the basics (food, clothing and shelter) then reach for fulfilment and self-actualization. You may need a low-stress interim job to pay the bills while you pursue your dream.

Visualize every step of your dream and watch the magic unfold. Laser in on one idea, one dream, one business or income stream at a time. One of the mistakes people make is diversifying too quickly.

This is true whether you are trying to build multiple streams of income or are just working on several different ideas at one time.

The key is getting the first stream or idea up and running and having systems in place so it will keep running without you before going on to the next unrelated stream. This is one of the biggest life strategies for anyone to follow, as it is for many entrepreneurs and creative people.

And last but not least, develop your resilience muscle by bouncing back from setbacks. You will very likely have setbacks along the way. Don't get stopped by these bumps in the road; learn from them.

Perseverance - Persistence - Desire

Perseverance is the spark that can reignite the engines and is what makes the car go even if it has been idle for awhile. A lack of persistence is the major cause of failure. It is a weakness though which may be overcome by effort.

The ease of which a lack of persistence may be conquered will depend entirely upon the intensity of one's desire. The starting point of all achievement is desire. Weak desires bring weak results, just as a small amount of fire makes a small amount of heat.

If you find yourself lacking in persistence, this weakness may be remedied by building a stronger fire under your desire. As surely as water gravitates to the ocean, fortune and success - all that we desire - gravitates to those minds which have been prepared to attract it. Just as we need to prepare the soil for seeding, we have to prepare and tend to the gardens of our minds.

Yet most of us remain indifferent in our own life garden. If we don't pay attention to what we want in our lives then that is what we will get out of life. If you are indifferent, not fully engaged, not fully practicing, or have not yet acquired the consciousness of success it will be very difficult to achieve extra desired success in your life. Without persistence, you will be defeated, even before you start. With persistence will come success.

No one enjoys great achievement without passing the persistency test. The only way to pass the test is to take the test. Those who can't take it simply do not make the grade.

The Power Of Failure

"Progress always involves risk; you can't steal second base with your foot on first." When you take the first step, you don't always have to have a clear outline of your dream. Just take the first step in faith.

You don't have to see the whole staircase. You just take the first step, as the quote says: "Leap and the net will appear".

Many people though fail to take action because they are afraid to fail. Successful people, on the other hand, realize that failure is an important part of the learning processes. They know that failure is part of the learning curve. They know that failure is just a way we learn by trial and error.

Successful people don't let failure go to their heads. Instead of dwelling on the negative consequences of failure, thinking of what might have been and how things haven't worked out, they focus on the rewards of success. Learning from their mistakes, thinking about how they can improve themselves and their situation. Depending on your attitude toward it, failure can either bog you down or help you along on your journey.

The only real way to achieve mastery over failure is to stop being afraid of failure, to fail forward. Not only do we need to stop being afraid of failure but we also need to be willing to fail – even eager to fail.

That's how we learn and improve our skills, our habits and abilities. That's how we seed and tend our garden of life. These are those seeds: "the learning experiences, detours, setbacks, tuition paid, etc..."

Think of a failure as a milestone

We are conditioned to only look at the end result of any person's long success journey. But we forget the years of hard work between Olympic medals, not to mention the races lost in formative years that tested resolve and set character.

Change the way you think about failure and approach it in an entirely different way. With each failure, you can move forward, another step on your success journey. Successful people keep moving. They make mistakes, but they don't quit.

Simply get started, take action, make mistakes, listen and learn from the feedback, correct, and keep moving forward towards your goals. As you travel through life, learning how to fail is part of the door to the elements of success.

Chapter 8

Visualization – Envisioning Success

The key characteristic of champions is that they visualize success. They have seen their goal fulfilled, they know what it feels like, where they were, how they lived. They experienced it in their minds already.

Visualization is one of the most under utilized tools at our disposal. Your subconscious mind doesn't think in words, it thinks in pictures. When you give your brain, vivid and compelling pictures of what it is you want – your mind seeks out the information and resources in the environment to bring the picture into reality.

Visualization opens your brain to start letting into your awareness resources and opportunities that will help you achieve your goals. It stimulates the mind to seek out or create solutions for getting the goals you want. Fresh ideas begin to pop into your mind. You wake up with new insights and ideas, while showering, or even during the meeting at the office.

Visualization also stimulates and increases your motivation. You will begin to notice how you will start things to move you towards your goals, and you have the 'stick-to-itness' to advance in that direction. You will develop momentum and will notice how things begin to happen for you as well. It's as much as if they come to you, or is it that you go towards them.

If you give yourself a vision of a beautiful house, a wonderful spouse, a rewarding career, or fame, your mind will go to work on it to make it happen. On the other hand, if you are constantly feeding your mind negative images, fearful thoughts, and depressive ideas – your mind works to make those happen too.

Visualization is seeing yourself already in possession of the desired object or outcome, imprinting it on the universe so it aligns to fulfil your plan. You see yourself in possession of the million dollars, opening your business idea, that strong, fit, slim body.

You have to come to a definite of purpose, a decision in your own mind. It is not enough to have a vague idea of success; you must live it as if you possess it. You have to proceed with a definite of purpose, acting as if it will happen.

Transforming Reality

Visualization keeps the dream alive. It's what nurtures it, especially in the tough times. It's also what fuels its presence during the day to day pursuit of success.

Visualization activates the creative powers of the mind. It focuses your brain by programming you to notice available resources and opportunities that are there but were previously unnoticed. It acts like a magnet attracting the people, objects and opportunities you need to achieve your goals.

Visualization makes the brain achieve more. Research has shown that when just visualizing the activity, the brain uses the identical neurological process as doing the activity. Studies at Harvard have shown students who visualized in advance performed with near 100% accuracy than those who didn't.

It's been mentioned how your mind is like fertile soil. If the desirable seeds are not planted weeds inevitably grow over if the ground is left untended. In this way you are feeding your mind thoughts of the creative nature, or through neglect or indifference, enable the destructive thoughts to find their way into the rich soil of the mind.

When you visualize your goals it creates a divide in your mind between what you visualize and your current position. Your mind tries to mend this conflict by turning your current reality into the more exciting vision.

This conflict, when amplified over time through constant visualization, programs your brain to start letting into your awareness the things, people and opportunities that will help you achieve your goals.

It also activates your subconscious mind to create solutions. It's like a ripple effect of a wave. New ideas spring out of this. It creates new waves of motivation. We know how powerful the ideas can fuel the practice. You begin to do things to move you to your goals.

Information comes your way, seemingly out of the blue. More can come, if you keep visualizing those waves. You challenge yourself to do more, getting the job, seeing the school you will attend, saving money for the trip around the world. It's those constant reminders that act as the fuel, the drop in the pond of the mind. This is where we create the motivation.

What is the process of visualizing?

It's really quite simple. All you have to do is close your eyes and see yourself as if you have already received or your goals completed. As part of this process to success, it's important that you write down your goals, which you want to achieve. This helps write it into your brain. To make it work even more successfully you will need to repeat it to yourself when you get up in the morning and before you go to bed at night.

Man can become the master of himself and his environment, because he has the power of the subconscious mind and because he has the power to influence his own subconscious mind.. It is transforming desire into action and action into that which you seek. It the means that we reach or influence our mind, the subconscious, and the door way to the spirit of which you desire.

You can eventually do this with each area of your life. Create the conditions in your mind. Repeat them throughout the day, meditate on them during the day. Add in the feeling of pride of completion, satisfaction of having achieved your goals, the sun on your face you stroll along the beach at sunset, running that business, having a healthy relationship.

If you have difficulty seeing your goals, use pictures and symbols to keep your mind focused on your goals. Find a poster of the place you want to go, the car you want to own, or the house you want to live in. Create a mock diploma, or the bank account you want to have. Put them on the wall of your place of work. Have them in a book where you write your ideas and progress in. Have them fixed on the fridge or bulletin board, somewhere you can see them every day.

Here the law of habit comes to your aid. Form the habit of applying and using positive emotions and just like seeds sown in the soil they sprout and take hold. Eventually they dominate your mind and negative thoughts can't enter. How do you do this?

Act the part before you get the part. You act 'as if' and soon 'it will be'.