

The Change¹⁷

Insights into Self-Empowerment

Jim Britt ~ Jim Lutes

With

Co-authors From Around the World

The Change¹⁷

Jim Britt ~ Jim Lutes

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The Change

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DEDICATION

To all those who dedicate their life to helping others live a more fulfilled life

Foreword

By Les Brown

Many of us spend at least a good part of our day going over internal dialog. We relive past experiences, worry about the future, blame the outside world for our shortcomings and criticize ourselves for not having all we want by this point in our lives. We do this both consciously and unconsciously. Even while we are listening to others, we aren't really fully present. Instead, we are rehearsing our answers, slipping back into yesterday and worrying about tomorrow.

We live in uncertain times. We all feel we have minimum control over being able to change external circumstances, but we do have control over being able to change our internal environment, not only being able to see the truth behind a given situation but also how we respond to it. And to get the best out of the most stressful times, we need to demand the best from ourselves.

Many feel the pain of unhappiness. So many suffer from it daily, unaware that they can eliminate their suffering and find happiness by simply seeing the truth behind their unhappiness and making the right choices to change it. The problem is that our emotional conflicts are so familiar to us that they keep us blinded to better possibilities. We actually become addicted to feeling the way we do, thinking that it is just the way things are and we resign ourselves to getting by and coping.

I have had the privilege of speaking for over forty years serving millions of people from over 51 different countries. I know that there are certain patterns that create success and other patterns that breed internal conflict and failures.

The secret to being fulfilled and living the life you want is having the courage to go beyond the skills you've learned and discover the gifts that you were born with and to implement them daily. So many people settle for less in life, but I can tell you from my experience that it doesn't have to be that way.

I was born in an abandoned building on a floor with a twin brother in a poor section in Miami Florida called Liberty City. When we

were six weeks of age, we were adopted by Mrs. Mimi Brown. Whenever I speak, I always say that all that I am and all I ever hope to be I owe to my mother.

When I was in the fifth grade, I was labeled educable mentally retarded and put back from the fifth grade to the fourth grade and failed again when I was in the eighth grade. Mrs. Mimi Brown took my brother and I and five other kids in as foster kids and eventually adopted us.

Because of the work that Jim Britt does and the methods and techniques he uses to change your story and how you see yourself, it enabled me to build my career to make it against all odds. Both Jim Britt and Jim Lutes are icons in personal development and empowering others to be the best they can be.

You have something special inside. You have greatness in you. When you read this book it will take you on a journey and introduce you to a part of yourself that has remained hidden and you didn't know existed.

When you begin to look at your goals and dreams realize that you have greatness inside you. The Change will provide the insights and processes of self-development that will empower you to manifest your greatness.

Jim Britt and I actually started the foundation of our speaking careers in the same direct selling company, Bestline, over 40 years ago. Although I haven't followed Jim Britt's career over the years, but I do know that he is recognized as one of the top thought leaders in the world, helping millions of people create prosperous lives, rewarding relationships and spiritual awareness. He has authored 13 books and multiple programs showing people how to understand their hidden abilities to do more, become more and enjoy more in every area of life.

Today, Jim Britt and mind programming expert, Jim Lutes, along with inspiring co-authors from around the world, bring a pioneering work "The Change" book series to the market to transform lives. Their principles are forged on touching millions on every continent. As you read, you are exploring self-empowerment principles from a whole different perspective. In fact, Jim and Jim's publications of

The Change book series now has hundreds of coauthors in 26 countries. The real power in each book is that 20 coauthors share their inspiring story so that the reader may benefit from their experience. It is packed with life-changing ideas, stories, tips, strategies on various empowering topics that you will love.

The principles, concepts and ideas within this book are sometimes simple, but can be profound to a person who is ready for that perfect message at the right time and is willing to take action to change. Maybe for one it's a chapter on relationships or leadership. For the next maybe it's a chapter on forgiveness or health awareness, and for another a simple life-changing message like I received as a youngster from a teacher. Each chapter is like opening a surprise empowering gift.

As I travel the world presenting my seminars, I meet people who spend more time and energy focused on what's wrong with society and their lives than is spent on helping each other improve the quality of life. With so much time spent on social media we often fear intimate contact with each other. Mistrust is often our first reaction. We judge and sometimes brutalize those among us who are in any way different from ourselves. We become addicted to anything that allows us a brief consolidation from the terrible pain we feel inside.

We need to begin to understand more about ourselves and our condition if there is ever to be the possibility of a healthy society. I believe this is possible and that's why I am so passionate about the work I do. Simply put...we are at war with ourselves. Real healing only takes place when we are willing to experience and face the truth within.

The conclusion to me is an exciting one. You, me and every other human being are shaping our brains and bodies by the thoughts we think, the emotions we feel, the intentions we hold, and the actions we take daily. Why is it exciting? Because we are in control of all these things and we can change as long as we have the intention, willingness and commitment to look inside, take charge of our lives and make the changes.

Whether you're pursuing, your dreams as an entrepreneur, a business owner or you want a more fulfilling relationship, or simply

want to live a happy life, being authentic and actively appreciating what you're really capable of is going to be one of the most important assets you possess. It will make the difference between just "getting by" and really thriving and experiencing happiness or internal conflict.

Self-knowledge provides you the emotional edge that will help you create a better life not only for yourself, but also for everyone with whom you come in contact.

This is the time to extract the best out of yourself and to use that gift to touch the lives of others.

I want to congratulate Jim Britt and Jim Lutes for making this publication series available and for allowing me to write the foreword. I honor them both and the coauthors within this book and the series for the lives they are changing.

As you enter these pages, do so slowly and with an open mind. Savor the wisdom you discover here, and then with interest and curiosity discover what rings true for you, and then take action toward the life you want.

Be prepared...because your life is about to change.

Hope to meet you one day at one of my seminars. And remember, everything you do counts!

Les Brown

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Jim Britt



Jim Britt is an award-winning author of 15 best-selling books and seven #1 International best-sellers. Some of his many titles include Rings of Truth, Do This. Get Rich-For Entrepreneurs, Unleashing Your Authentic Power, The Power of Letting Go, Cracking the Rich Code and The Entrepreneur.

He is an internationally recognized business and life strategist who is highly sought after as a keynote speaker, both online and live, for all audiences.

As an entrepreneur Jim has launched 28 successful business ventures. He has served as a success strategist to over 300 corporations worldwide and was recently named as one of the world's top 50 speakers and top 20 success coaches. He was presented with the "Best of the Best" award out of the top 100 contributors of all time to the Direct Selling industry.

For over four decades Jim has presented seminars throughout the world sharing his success strategies and life enhancing realizations with over 5,000 audiences, totaling almost 2,000,000 people from all walks of life.

Early in his speaking career he was Business partners with the late Jim Rohn for eight years, where Tony Robbins worked under Jim's direction for his first few years in the speaking business.

As a performance strategist, Jim leverages his skills and experience as one of the leading experts in peak performance, entrepreneurship and personal empowerment to produce stellar results. He is pleased to work with small business entrepreneurs, and anyone seeking to remove the blocks that stop their success in any area of their life.

One of Jim's latest programs "Cracking the Rich Code" focuses on the subconscious programs influencing one's relationship with money and their financial success.

www.CrackingTheRichCode.com

Think Like Superman

By Jim Britt

“Waking up to your true greatness in life requires letting go of who you imagine yourself to be.”

--- Jim Britt

FACT: Becoming a millionaire is easier than it has ever been.

Many people have the notion that it's an impossible task to become a millionaire. Some say, "It's pure luck." Others say, "You have to be born into a rich family." For others, "You'll have to win the Lotto." And for many they say, "Your parents have to help you out a lot." That's the language of the poor.

A single mother with five children says, "I want to believe in what you're saying. However, I'm 45 years old and work long hours at two dead-end jobs. I barely earn enough to get by. What should I do?"

Another man said, "Well, if you work for the government, you cannot expect to become a millionaire. After all, you're on a fixed salary and there's little time for anything else. By the time you get home, you've got to play with the kids, eat dinner, and fall asleep watching TV."

Everyone has a story as to why they could never become a millionaire. But for every story, excuse really, there are other stories OR PEOPLE with worse circumstances, that have become rich.

The truth is that all of us can become as wealthy as we decide to be, and that's a mindset. None of us is excluded from wealth. If you have the desire to receive money, whatever the amount, you have all of the rights to do so like everyone else. There is no limit to how much you can earn for yourself. The only limitations are what you place on yourself.

Money is like the sun. It does not discriminate. It doesn't say, "I will not give light and warmth to this flower, tree, or person because I

don't like them." Like the sun, money is abundantly available to all of us who truly believe that it is for us. No one is excluded.

There are, however, some major differences between rich and poor people. Here are some tips for becoming rich.

Change Your Thinking

You have to see the bigger picture. There are opportunities everywhere! The problem is that most people see just trees, when they should be looking at the entire forest. By doing so you will see that there are opportunities everywhere. The possibilities are endless.

You'll also have to go through plenty of self-discovery before you earn your first million. Knowing the truth about yourself isn't always the easiest task. Sometimes, you'll find that you are your biggest enemy—at least some days.

Learn from Millionaires

Most people are surrounded by what I like to call their, "default friends." These friends are acquaintances that we see at the gym, school, work, local happy hour, and other places. We naturally befriend these people because we are all in the same boat financially. However, in most cases, these people aren't millionaires and cannot help you become one either. In fact, if you tell them you are going to become a millionaire, some may even tell you that it's impossible and discourage you from even trying. They'll tell you that you're living in a fantasy world and why you'll never be able to make it happen. Instead, learn from millionaires. Let go of these relationships that pull you down when it comes to your money desires. It's okay to have friends that aren't millionaires. However, only take input from those that have accomplished what you want to accomplish. Hang out with those that will encourage and help you get to the next level. Don't give your raw diamonds to a brick layer to be cut.

Indulge in Wealth

To become wealthy, you must learn about wealth. This means that you'll have to put yourself in situations that you've never been in before.

ON OCCASION, DO SOME OF THESE:

Fly first class and see how it makes you feel.

Eat out at the finest restaurant and don't look at the price.

Take a limo instead of a cab or Uber. Watch how you feel.

Reserve a suite in a first-class hotel.

If you are used to drinking a \$20 bottle of wine, go for the \$100 and see how it tastes. It does taste different.

All I am saying is, try some of the things that wealthy people do and see how it makes you feel.

Believe it is Possible

If you believe that it is possible to become a millionaire, you can make it happen. However, if you've excluded yourself from this possibility and think and believe that it's for other people, you'll never become a millionaire.

Also, be sure to bless rich people when you can. Haters of money aren't likely to receive any of it either.

Read books that have been written by millionaires. By gaining a well-rounded education about earning large sums of money and staying inspired, you'll be able to learn the wealth secrets of the rich. I just saw a video on LinkedIn with my friend Kevin Harrington from the TV show Shark Tank. He said that one of his new companies just had a million-dollar day on Amazon.

Enlarge Your Service

Your material wealth is the sum of your total contribution to society. Your daily mantra should be, *'How do I deliver more value to more people in less time?'* Then, you'll know that you can always increase your quality and quantity of service. Enlarging your service is also

about going the extra mile. When it comes to helping others, you must give it everything you have. You just plant the seeds and nature will take care of the rest.

Seize ALL Opportunities That Make Sense

You cannot say "No" to opportunities and expect to become a millionaire. You must seize every opportunity that has your name on it. It may just be an opportunity to connect with an influential person for no reason. Sometimes the monetary reward will not come immediately, but if you keep planting seeds, eventually you'll grow a fruitful crop. Money is the harvest of the service you provide and sometimes the connections you have. The more seeds you plant, the greater the harvest.

Have an Unstoppable Mindset

Want to know some of what my first mentor shared with me that took me from a broke factory worker, high school dropout, to millionaire?

First, he said, you have to start thinking like a wealthy, unstoppable person. You have to have a wealth mindset. He said that wealthy people think differently. He said, "I want you to start thinking like Superman!" Sounds crazy, right? Well, it's not. It's powerful and here's why. How you think will change your life.

Wealthy people think differently. They really do. And anyone can learn to think like the wealthy.

I'm not talking about positive thinking, Law of Attraction, or motivation. Let's get real. None of that stuff works anyway. Otherwise, we would all be rich and happy already. I'm talking about thinking based in quantum physics science. Once you understand and apply it, it will change your life. You will become unstoppable!

If there was any person, fictional or real, whose qualities you could instantly possess, who would that person be? Think about it. Personally, I would say that Superman is the perfect person. Now, you are probably thinking I have lost it right? Just stick with me here. I think you will like what you are about to hear.

Superman is a fictional superhero widely considered to be one of the most famous and popular action hero and an American cultural icon. I remember watching Superman every Saturday morning when I was a kid. I couldn't get enough. He was my hero!

Let's look at Superman's traits:

Superman is indestructible.

He is a man of steel.

He can stop a locomotive in its tracks.

Bullets bounce off him.

He is faster than a speeding bullet.

No one can bring him down.

He can leap tall buildings in a single bound. Great powers to have in this day-and-age, wouldn't you say? What else would you need?

Now, for all you females, don't worry, we have not left you out. There is also a female version of Superman, named Superwoman. She has the same powers as Superman.

Now, this is where it gets interesting. Let's first look at the qualities that Superman possesses that you want to make your own. And to make it simple, I will refer to Superman for the rest of this message, and you can replace with Superwoman if you are female.

Again:

Superman is powerful and fearless.

Superman is virtually indestructible—except for kryptonite of course.

Superman can stop bullets.

Superman has supernatural powers. He can see through walls.

Superman can stop a speeding locomotive.

Superman can stop a bullet.

Superman jumps into immediate action when troubles arise.

Superman can crash through barriers.

Superman can even change clothes in a phone booth in seconds. Not too many of those around anymore. You'll have to duck behind a building to change.

So, you're thinking right now, *'Ok, I know that Superman has incredible supernatural powers, how can that help me? What good will it do me to think I am Superman, a fictional character?'*

Here is where science comes in. This is the part where you will be amazed when you learn about the supernatural powers that you already possess! NO, REALLY!

Your brain makes certain chemicals called neuro peptides. These are literally the molecules of emotion, like love, fear, joy, passion, and so on. These molecules of emotion are not only contained in your brain they actually circulate throughout your cellular structure. They send out a signal, a frequency much like a radio station sending out a signal. For example, you tune to 92.5 and you get jazz. Tune to 99.6 and you get rock. And if you are just one decimal off, you get static. The difference is that your signal goes both ways. You are a sender and a receiver.

You put out a signal, a mindset, of confidence about your financial success and people, circumstances, and opportunities show up to support your success. When you put out a signal of doubt and uncertainty and you receive support for your doubt and uncertainty. You've been around someone that you didn't trust, or you felt less than positive just being in their presence, right? You have also been around people that inspire you. That's what I'm talking about. You are projecting a frequency, looking to resonate with the frequency you are transmitting.

Anyway, the amazing part about these cells of emotion is that they are intelligent. They are thinking cells. These cells are constantly eavesdropping on the conversation that you are having with yourself. That's right. They are listening to you! And others are listening to your cells as well. Others feel what you feel when they are around you.

Your unconscious mind, your cells, are listening in, waiting to adjust your behavior based on what they hear from you, their master. So just imagine what would happen if you started to think like Superman...or like a millionaire.

Here are some of the thoughts you might have during the day:

"The challenges I face day today are easily overcome, after all I am Superman."

"I am indestructible."

"I have incredible strength."

"Nothing can stop me.....NOTHING."

"I have supernatural powers and can overcome anything."

"I can accomplish anything I want when I put my mind to it."

"I can break through any barrier."

"I can and I will do whatever it takes to accomplish my goal."

"I fear nothing."

The trillions of thinking cells in your body and brain listen, and they create exactly what you tell them to create. Their mission is to complete the picture of the you they see and hear when you talk to them. They must obey. It's their job!

Since you are Superman, you cannot fail. Why? Your thinking cells are now sending out the right signal, because you told them to. They are making you stronger, more successful, everyday! You have the ability to fight off all negativity, doubt, fear, and worry—nothing can stop you!

Superman has total confidence. So, your cells of emotion relating to confidence will now create more neuro peptide chemicals to promote feelings of power and confidence that others will feel in your presence.

Superman is fearless. So, your cells of emotion relating to fear will now create more neuro peptide chemicals to create feelings of courage. You are unstoppable!

And here's the key. Others will respond to you in the same way that you are talking to yourself.

If you are confident, others will have confidence in you.

You have thousands of thoughts every day. Make sure your thoughts are leading you in the direction you want to go. Make sure you are telling your cells a success story, and not a 'woe is me' story.

Most have been conditioned to think that creating wealth is difficult, or that it's only for the lucky few. What do you believe? It doesn't cost you any more to think like Superman; and it's much more inspiring!

Mediocrity cannot be an option if you decide to be wealthy and think like Superman.

Your decision, and communication with your cells, creates a mindset; that mindset influences how you show up.

None of that old type of thinking matters anymore...after all, you are Superman, and you can accomplish anything.

If you want wealth, you have to stretch yourself. You have to do the things that unsuccessful people are not willing to do. You have to say "yes" to opportunity, then figure out how to get the job done.

Maybe you are uncomfortable selling and asking for money. If that's the case, then learn sales and learn to ask for money every day until you feel comfortable asking for it. You will never have money if you don't learn to ask for it.

I've learned a lot in the past 40+ years as an entrepreneur. I've learned that in order to have more, you have to become more. I've also learned that if you are comfortable, you are not growing. I learned that I couldn't go from a nervous rookie speaker with minimal self-confidence to hosting TV shows and speaking in front of 5,000 people overnight. I simply wasn't ready. I grew into that, one speaking engagement at a time. Every time I finished a speaking engagement, I would ask myself, "How did I do, and how could I do it better?" I still do that today.

And I've learned from the hundreds of thousands of people I've trained, coached, and mentored that none of us can do something we don't believe is possible. It's not going to happen if you're not ready to step out of your comfort zone and stretch yourself.

This has led me to understand the single most important principle of wealth-building, that has meant the difference between poverty and riches for people since humans first traded for pelts.

Are you ready?

Come in just a little closer. Listen up!

Every income level requires a different you, a different mindset! If you think that \$10,000 a month is a lot of money, then \$100,000 a month will be completely out of reach. If you believe that having \$5,000 in the bank would make you rich, then \$50,000 won't miraculously appear. You will never earn more money than you believe is "a lot" of money.

What you do as a business is only a small part of becoming rich. In fact, there are thousands, if not tens of thousands, of ways to make money—and lots of it. What I've learned over the years is that, by focusing on who you want to become instead of what you need to do, you're going to multiply your chances of getting rich a hundred-fold.

Ask anyone who's found a way to make a large sum of money legally, and he or she will tell you that it's not hard once you crack the code. And cracking the code starts with you and your mindset. The "code" to which I refer isn't a secret rite or ancient scroll. It's not even a secret. It's a certain way of thinking and believing in which you've trained your mind to see money-making ideas.

That's where you see a need in the marketplace, and you jump on the idea quickly. It might involve creating a new product; or, it may just be teaching others a special technique you've learned. It may even require raising capital to start a company or to market a product or idea on social media.

Don't Hold Back. You Have to Take Action to Change.

Start right now to imagine yourself as already having wealth. How would your life be? How would your day unfold? Start to own your wealth mindset now! The subconscious mind is unable to differentiate between actual fact and mere visualization. So, by imagining that you already have it, you're encouraging your subconscious mind to seek the ways and means to transform your imaginary feelings into the real thing.

Find yourself some mentors. Nobody has all the answers. Surround yourself with people that will support, inspire, and provide you with answers that keep you moving in the right direction. If you truly want to attain wealth, have a thriving business, or reach the top of your game in any endeavor, having a qualified mentor is essential.

Okay, lets come in for a landing ...

It is absolutely essential to have a crystal-clear picture of what you want to accomplish before you begin. If you want to attain wealth, you must learn to operate without fear and with a sharply defined mental image of the outcome you want to attain. This comes from thinking like a wealthy person, (like Superman) making decisions like a wealthy person and being fearless (like Superman) when it comes to stepping out of your comfort zone. Look at the end result as something you're already prepared to do, you just haven't done it yet.

Think about this. Your success is something that you have been preventing; it's not something you have to struggle to make happen. The key is to not let fear, doubt, other people, or mind chatter push your success away. You'll find that the solutions taking you toward your goals will come to you in the most unexpected and sudden ways. You don't need the *perfect* plan first. What you need is a perfectly clear decision about your success, the right mindset, the right mentoring, and the ideal way to get you there will materialize.

The greatest transfer of wealth in the history of the human race is happening right now. Are you positioned to get your share?

Remember, in order to get a different result, you must do something different. In order to do something different you must know

something different to do. And in order to know something different, you have to first suspect that your present methods need improving. THEN, YOU HAVE TO BE WILLING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

For more information on Jim's work:

www.JimBritt.com

<http://JimBrittCoaching.com>

www.facebook.com/jimbrittonline

www.linkedin.com/in/jim-britt

For free audio series www.RichCode1.com and www.RichCode2.com

To find out how to crack the rich code and change your subconscious programming regarding your relationship with money: www.CrackingTheRichCode.com

Jim Lutes



Say the name Jim Lutes and chances are a top performer in your company has attended one or more of his dynamic trainings over the last few years.

Having taught his branded form of human performance since the early 1990s, Mr. Lutes has accelerated top level entrepreneurs throughout his career by conducting trainings on personal growth and subconscious programming into worldwide markets.

During this time Jim took his skills regarding the human mind, and combining it with trainings on influence, persuasion and communication strategies he launched Lutes International in the early 1990s. Based in San Diego California Jim has taught seminars for, corporations, sales forces, individuals and athletes. Having appeared on television, radio and worldwide stages, Jim's style, knowledge and effectiveness provide profound results.

“Jim Lutes possesses a unique ability to create performance change in an individual in a fraction of the time it takes his competitors”. The core of human's decisions is based on the programs we acquire, reinforce and grow. Combining Jims various trainings individuals can reach new levels of achievement and fulfillment in all areas of life. The results are at times nothing short of astonishing.

“My goal is to take that embryonic greatness that exists inside every person in America, foster it, empower it and then hand them personal strategies based on solid principles that allow them to take that new attitude and apply it to creating a life masterpiece”.

What You do with YOU

By Jim Lutes

Most people think that if they can just learn enough, earn enough, get smart enough, then they will BE enough. And they think that when that happens, they can finally relax and be happy. But what happens is that they get so caught up in what they are constantly *doing* that are not focused on how they are *being*.

In other words, they are not focused on their emotional state. When you engage your emotions your subconscious mind begins to get the messages and begins to establish new rules and new behaviors. And then it becomes a way of life and enters your heart and really begins to come from your heart. When it is in your heart then it is truly part of you. When you are really getting it now at the deepest level, when you can begin to anticipate what I am going to say, you know you understand it at a much deeper level right now.

I began to study human performance as a way to make some changes in my own life and when I began to see some serious results, I got so excited about it that I wanted to share it with other people. And so I committed my life to learning and sharing what works with others. So, I am a committed lifetime learner and therefore I have been fortunate enough to have had the ability to look at and study just about every approach there is to personal development and success that is available in today's market. I am a strong advocate of clear, simple, workable approaches that get dependable and lasting results.

Because of the vast wealth of information my Life Masterpiece teaching gives you and the amazing results you will get, you will likely find yourself returning to it again and again throughout your life.

No matter how successful we are, or how successful we become, we all need a coach to encourage us, to challenge us, to remind us to live up to our potential. I am going to be here to do that for you each day, and it is both my honor and my privilege to serve you in that way.

Let's get started now.

That person that you are and that person that you must become in order to put the colors of your life masterpiece where you want them and blend them in just the right combination to create your own unique experience might right now seem like two very different people, but they are one in the same. You are that person right now. I am going to help you uncover your true identity and purpose so that you can then activate the universal laws and make them work for you.

When we let go of all the stories, we have been telling ourselves about who we think we are supposed to be and what we think we are supposed to do and have, we not only free ourselves we free our families, our children, our intimate partners, and our friends in the process. There is no way you can make a difference in yourself without touching somebody else even if it is not your intention.

The Life Masterpiece focus is about what you can do with YOU. If you want to change any circumstance, any relationship, then you must begin with yourself no matter how convinced you are that somebody else or something else must change. Changing yourself can change even the most rigid system and stubborn person. And ANY progress moves you forward. And any movement forward on your part creates the opportunity for every other part of your life to be moved forward as well.

One of the most effective ways for you to reprogram your mind is through what I like to call vicarious experiences. These are the experiences other people have had and I will bring you through their experiences by sharing their stories with you. These stories are not in this book simply to fill it up and make it fat like you find in some books. These stories are the heart and soul of the book because this is how you will begin to reprogram your subconscious and take the information into your heart where it will transform you.

The reason why vicarious experiences are so powerful is because they relate to you and so when you are reading these stories your conscious mind will get go and your unconscious mind will get the lesson.

And when you read some of these remarkable stories and meet some of these people who have gone through some amazing personal transformations, you will begin to realize that no matter who you are, no matter what part of the world you are from or what culture you grew up in, whether you grow up poor, wealthy or somewhere in between, whether you grow up with religion or Monday Night Football, you will begin to realize that we all have the same problems.

So what will happen is you will begin to connect with these people because they have the same problems you have- the same challenges. They are universal. And you will learn what the reason is for this is that we all have the same basic needs, and our lives are about meeting these needs and that they impact and determine every single thing we do and every decision we make. Every single habit, behavior, rule or pattern is your unconscious way of trying to get your needs met. And your needs are the same exact needs every other human being on the planet has. We all use different behaviors to get these needs met but they are still the same.

Some of the behaviors we use are positive and healthy and some of them are not quite so resourceful. And this is one of the reasons why even though we all have the same needs and the same problems, we all get different results. We are hard wired with the same needs, but not with the same subconscious programming. And the reason why we all get different results boils down to one thing- standards.

You know, so often in life, we find ourselves in a position where we live life a certain way. We act a certain way. We were raised a certain way. And through our lives in an effort to avoid pain and still meet our needs, we made critical decisions about who we are and how we think we need to be. And so we believe we know who we are.

But the way we have behaved for years is simply an *adaptation*. Something that happened in response to the desire we had to meet our basic needs- to get the love, or respect, or acceptance from a parent, lover, loved one or peers- caused us to make a key decision and adapt to the circumstances around us. We do not ever realize that for years we have been living something that we are really good at but which is not necessarily our true nature.

One of the things you will learn here is that a single decision has the power to change everything in a heartbeat. In fact, when you stay with me through this you are going to learn about a decision, he made perhaps some time ago that his determine the choices you have made in the course of your life up until now. Today he made a decision to pick up this book and begin this journey with me and if you will indulge me for just a few hours the decision to pick up this book might be the decision that changes everything in your life from today on.

Now that you've made the decision to read it, I will tell you what this book can really do for you. It will get you to uncover and maybe for the first time really identify how the role models of your life have affected your subconscious decision-making in ways you never dreamed possible.

Without getting into the actual science behind it, a child's brain works much differently than an adult brain. As you might already know our brains operate using four different wavelengths -- alpha, beta, theta and Delta. Most of the time, the adult brain operates at the beta level when we are awake. The beta level is when our eyes are focused in our conscious mind is in control, and we are logical. The alpha level is a level that we must pass through to go to sleep and to wake up, and it's also the most common level is one we are in a trance. Theta is for a deeper trance or dreaming, and Delta is for deep sleep. This means that when we are at the alpha level, we are highly impressionable, because the messages are going directly into our subconscious minds. A child's mind is different because it operates primarily at the alpha level, which is why children are so impressionable. This also means that our parents and other significant people in our childhood had a tremendous impact on the messages that are subconscious mind received and events from our childhood had a strong impact on our self-image, our identity and how we develop as adults. This is why when we speak about reprogramming the subconscious mind is very important to talk about her childhood and her relationship with her parents. This is not done to point fingers or place blame, but to help us understand some of the reasons for the choices that we make for the patterns that we keep repeating and how they carry over from generation to generation.

Even if you feel like you held your own when you were growing up, and that the relationships that you had as a child -- especially the relationship she had with your mother and father -- were strong, and you feel like you are strong as a result. There are still patterns that your subconscious mind is running that no longer serve you. Because it's the tension, the experience of having to deal with all of the events of your past and even the events that happened before you were born in your parent's past -- all of these experiences affect your decision making, your relationships, your finances, your choices, behaviors and life circumstances, even today.

Even if your childhood was perfect and you feel like you honor, respect and love your parents and adore all of your siblings and even if your parents or your greatest role models, you are still affected on many levels and in many ways. And because you decided to read this book, I believe you have some things you would like to change. If you change anything, first you must learn to reprogram your subconscious mind and part of doing so is to understand that the key decisions you made in the past still impact you today.

Our childhood role models deeply affect both our conscious and are subconscious decision-making and behavior patterns. We are all examples, and some of us are warnings. We all, at one time or another, impact other people. This is one of the reasons why I stress that it is so important to live consciously and be an example.

When I ask people about their belief systems and the habits and patterns that basically control their lives, I am often struck by how few of these beliefs and habits were ever chosen by that person on a conscious level. In other words, the rules that are guiding your life about how to BE in your own life very often picked up unconsciously.

It is incredible how common it is that people start this process, and when they begin to reassess their lives and their relationships with themselves and others in the success they are having or perhaps not having, they discover that much of what has been screwing up their lives, their achievements, their finances, their careers, their intimate relationships, and even their bodies (and I am not talking about the excuse many of us use about genetics. Being the reason, our bodies look the way they do) was influenced by their PARENTS. Not by

their parents' problems necessarily, but by somehow trying to be liked, loved or appreciated by one parent. Many times, these decisions also have to do with trying to avoid pain that was inflicted by a parent or other significant role model, or simply standing up to a parent.

We can be 4050. Even 80 years old, and we are still living the strategies of a child.

And what's even worse, is it very often when we were a kid, we said, "I'll never be like that!" And here you are today, exactly like that! You don't want to admit it but if you held up a mirror and watched a film of your interactions you would say, "Oh my God, I never wanted to be like that parent." And yet you are. Or perhaps you have done the opposite. Perhaps you have thrown the pendulum the other way and you're not like that parent at all. Now, you are something worse. Or, let's just say you are something else. You are the opposite of the extreme you didn't like. And so now you are another extreme, that doesn't work either. Because no one teaches us this stuff, and so it becomes unconscious. We don't even see it. It's part of the invisible fabric of our thinking and our decision-making every single day.

This book will give you a unique opportunity to look deep inside yourself. It will allow you to look inside of your relationships, your decisions about money, and your decisions about your career, your relationship with God or your higher power, and even your body. It will allow you to understand how your own up bringing us may be influenced you and you probably know a lot of the ways it has influenced you, but maybe you'll spot some of the decisions you have made, maybe even one core decision that has affected your identity.

So, what the heck does identity mean anyway? It can be such a big and often loaded word. Well, I believe identity is the strongest force in the human personality. If you want to know what shapes you the most it's not your capability. It's your identity and the rules you have for who you think you are.

And you know what the challenge is? Most of us to defined ourselves a long time ago. And when we step outside that definition, we get really uncomfortable, because the strongest force in the

human personality is the need to remain consistent with how we define ourselves. Later, we will talk about the human needs are referred to earlier. One of them is certainty. What this means is that if certainty is one of the deepest needs we have, then if you don't know who you are, you do not know how to act.

Very early in life, we begin to define who we are. We use labels such as loner, aggressive conservative, sexy, successful loser rich poor in charge. I work for others. I am ugly. I am smart. I am a procrastinator. I am clumsy. I am athletic. I am thin. I am big boned. What happens is these definitions become self-fulfilling prophecies, because nobody wants to be disappointed. Nobody wants to live in a place of uncertainty. So, there may be arranging your identity or in your definition of yourself, but it may not be absolute.

The metaphor that you so often hear of what we talk about our comfort zone, is that our comfort zone is like a thermostat. We all have our comfort zone, and it is set by our subconscious mind. So, if your subconscious mind has set your thermostat a particular area of your life, for example how much money you make, that let's say 45°, and if the temperature drops down to 40°, guess what happens? It doesn't meet your identity. In other words, things are not good enough, whether it be mentally and emotionally financially with your weight (which by the way is the primary reason people whose weight tend to gain it back because they lose it before reprogramming their subconscious mind to reset the thermostat) or whatever.

For example, if you drop down to 40° and your finances and 45° is your identity. This means that 45° is what you must have. Or, if you drop down to 70° in your intimacy and 80° is your identity, then this is what you must have. Whatever it is, when you drop below your comfort zone, you will be compelled to drive to make it better automatically. If your body gets out of control, there is a point at which you go, "that's enough!" You are willing to be a little off your identity but not that much. And suddenly you go on the diet suddenly make the change because you feel the pressure that comes with being inconsistent with your own definition of how you think you should be.

But what most of us fail to recognize is that this happens on the other side as well. Your subconscious mind since your mental thermostat at say 45° for your finances or 80° mentally for how close you want to be with your intimate partner, or 70° for how your body should look and feel,

This is not your *goal*. Your goal is something much larger. This is your subconscious comfort zone or your subconscious definition of yourself. For example, you might think of yourself as big boned, but if it suddenly isn't good enough and you really become overweight, then you change to fit your self-image or your definition of yourself in order to get back into that comfort zone. But also, if it gets better than you expected, perhaps, you lose a lot of weight and get really good shape, or perhaps you lead your company in sales for two quarters in a row when you normally come in third or fourth, or perhaps you jump from 70° in your intimacy, and now you have a relationship that is at 90 or even 100°. You have a really hot, passionate relationship with more passion than you ever have before, or you lose three dress sizes instead of one, or you double your income, whatever it is, your subconscious mind starts talking some sense into you. And your brain goes, "Hello, dude what the heck are you doing? You are 70 degree-er, what in heck are you doing way appear at 90? You can't keep that. That's not gonna last. Get back down to 70° before you get hurt or fail or screw it up. You're in over your head. You're not an entrepreneur. You work for other people."

Wherever your subconscious mind has set your comfort zone based on the way you define yourself, you're going to keep adjusting to stay in that comfort zone. So many times in these types of programs, people challenge you to get out of your comfort zone, which you can't do consciously. You have to go into your subconscious and reset your comfort zone, just like you would the thermostat. And this will keep happening until you reprogram your subconscious mind with a new identity, and the new comfort zone. Before you set out to make any kind of lasting change, you must reset your subconscious comfort zone.

And what do we do when we exceed our comfort zone? Well, what happened is that the drive to make things better stops. And so you

stop growing and gradually you drift back until you reach your comfort zone. Or worse, you start to sabotage. The mental air conditioners kick on bring yourself right back down to where you think you deserve to be based on your subconscious identity.

For example, if the only kind of love you view as a child was abuse, the only kind of life. You knew was living paycheck to paycheck or in debt, or the only kind of lifestyle you ever experienced with sedentary, whatever it is, even though it might be painful. It is what you know. This becomes your comfort zone and therefore provides the certainty that you need. It becomes your self-definition and what you think you deserve. You begin to think -- not consciously, but unconsciously -- this IS love, this is just the body. You inherited, or that wealth is for other kind of people, or you're not the right kind of person to make certain kinds of social contacts. Of course, this is not your conscious thinking that this is what is going on in your subconscious. That is why we often don't get the results we are after, or continue to sabotage the matter, what types of technology, techniques and information we add to our bag of tricks.

And therein lays the trouble, or perhaps a better way to say it, the shortcomings with many of the programs you may have tried in the past. They pump you up and felt good about it. They motivated you with affirmations and taught you use visualization. They've even taught you that the universal laws work for everyone. You may have even made some changes, but they did not last. Because when you're taught these things, you know the stuff in your head on a conscious level. But your identity and self-definition is the thermostat of subconscious mind, so before you can make any substantive or lasting change, first you must reprogram your subconscious mind and change who you are at the deepest level. (Green papers).

In other words, you must become the kind of person who has whatever it is that you want. Visualizing it, affirming it, and even living your life by a new set of standards is not going to work long term until this stuff goes from your conscious to your unconscious and finally into your heart. Not only do you have to DO it, and not only do you have to LIVE it, but you also have to BECOME it. And then you will manifest it.

And that is the difference between the stick figure you are drawing now or the paint by numbers life you have been taught to lead and the masterpiece you are now creating. So for the colors in our masterpiece is to really live consciously, to be an example, then we have to get conscious about what is shaping us and the thing that shapes you most identity.

Someone who is outrageous will behave, say things differently and move differently than someone who believes they are extremely conservative. They will use a different voice, a different way of moving and different language. Here is my question for you:

When did you come up with this definition?

When did you decide that is who you are?

When was the last time you updated it?

Maybe it's time to take another look at who you are today. And maybe you don't have to actually give up your identity. Maybe the identity of created for yourself is magnificent, but maybe it's time to expand it. Maybe it's time to add to it. Maybe it's time to open up to a new level of freedom and options.

And when you do that there will be a processional effect in all areas of your life, because we are all connected in a cybernetic loop. If I want to change you, I can try to control you, but that will not change anything. Or I can try to change the system, but that will not last or will be futile. Or, I can change me into an ID that everything changes.

For example, if I change the way I treat you the way I respond to you my voice my body my feelings and my emotions by respect for you. It will affect the way you feel and the way you respond back. And the same is true with the universe and higher intelligence. Once you change yourself, reprogram your subconscious, become the person you need to become that the things that you want in your life, then you will begin to receive a different response from the universe in a different result in your life. Then begin to experience your life as a masterpiece.

You will learn that what we value controls what we are willing to do or not do -- in our businesses, and our relationships, with our

bodies and with her children. Some people get locked in place into a mindset. I call it being committed to your commitment. For example, have you ever been in an argument, and you were so angry that as the argument progressed, you forgot what you were angry about, and it just became about winning? We've all been there and what happens is we get committed to being angry and said that resolving the argument. Or we get committed to being right, instead of uncovering the truth. When this happens, get so wrapped up in our commitment that we can no longer see the forest through the trees. We lose touch with what we really want, because we get stuck in a mindset, and we get committed to our commitments.

(Judy- discovers a decision she made as a child and uses the discovery to transform her life and her children and grandchildren's lives).

Today, you are beginning a process that can truly change the quality of your life forever and can take that paint by numbers life you might be living now and create the masterpiece called your life. So just for a moment now, what I want you to do is imagine that your life is a painting. And imagine that you have died and are looking down at that painting. What did you leave behind? Is your life, a masterpiece that is cherished and hangs prominently as an example for others of what is possible, or is it a paint-by-numbers life that is packed away in someone's basement?

As you begin this process, I asked for only two things from you:

1. Your heartfelt desire to make real changes.
2. The commitment to follow through and do this, as simple or as located as it might seem in the moment.

If you can do just those two things, then the things that you used to call dreams will become part of your daily reality.

Why is it that you can have a person who seems to have superior abilities, talents, skills, and education, the same time, they don't produce the quality of life they want or that you might expect from them? And why is it, on the other hand, you can have someone who seemingly has every disadvantage -- no family support, the wrong social status, no emotional support, no education, and the wrong

background -- and yet they go out and produce results, way beyond what anyone could have expected or even imagined?

The difference in our quality of life is not about our capability, background or education. Human beings, *that means you*, are *all capable* of achieving incredible results, and yet sadly only a few seem to get it.

What people WILL do is very different from what people CAN do.

I want to challenge you right now to start using your WILL muscle, instead of your TRY muscle, which is probably overdeveloped anyhow. I challenge you to start exercising your inborn human power, which is your birthright as a member of the human race, your ability to act based on the choice and free will that every human has in equal measure. Frankly, this means that if it has been achieved, then there is no reason on earth why you cannot achieve it. And beyond that, if it can be imagined, then there is also very little reason why you cannot achieve it. As a matter of fact, your unconscious mind will rarely imagine something that you are capable of. That is the difference between desires and fantasies. It's true. There are no excuses anymore. If you are reading this and you are human being that you have the ability to take action and to produce results.

Disability that I'm talking about is not something I can give you. Why? Because you already have it. You were born, great. Now, I challenge you to go out and take back what is rightfully yours.

Hopefully, something is now a weekend within you in two ways. One, by igniting your desire and two by showing you some simple systematic strategies on how you can get greater results out of yourself on a daily basis.

When most of us think of success or failure, we tend to think of these monumental things. Failure is not an overnight thing, and neither is success.

Just what is success? Well, some people describe it in terms of achievements like our resume. But it is different for everyone. So some people describe it as a feeling. It's your difficult for you to make it a goal to achieve a feeling for something that is difficult to define. Many programs attempt to do that, and they use motivation to give you that temporary feeling of success. But it doesn't last.

The truth is that success is actually wrapped up in failure. What I mean by that is that success is simply a string of failures all going in the same purposeful direction. That's right. If you want to find success you have to look inside a failure. In other words, if you want to be more successful than the next person, then you simply have to be willing to experience more failure, but not just any failures. You must be willing to take specific actions, based on specific decisions, fail most of the time, keep going, perhaps with a new strategy, experience and more failures, and eventually you will succeed. If this sounds painful, then I want you to think for a moment about what true failure actually is.

True failure is lifelong failure. It is the failure of inactivity. It's not actually failing at what you DO -- those things will lead to success. But when you fail to DO, you fail to succeed. In failing to do is a recipe for ultimate failure in life. When you fail to make the calls, when you fail to follow through, when you fail to say I love you, when you fail to give your all, that is what creates the ultimate failure in life. Ultimate failure creates the greatest pain, the feelings we want to avoid at all costs. Now *that* is painful.

Success happens one step at a time. Actually, success happens when failure at a time. It is successfully making the calls and doing it no matter how long it takes for the outcome in the moment. It is successfully getting up and following through. It is successfully making sure that you make that unique contact. It is successfully breaking through the limits that used to stop you.

Success is a combination of all those little things -- those little successes that often come disguised as failures -- over each day and over your lifetime that eventually create a life that you will have total pride and great joy in knowing that you created your life and made it into a masterpiece of your very own -- a life that is an example to others as how it is done.

The purpose of Life Masterpiece is to show you how to tap the power you were born with and how to tap into it every single day. And to make it an effortless process so that it becomes a lifestyle.

Before I go any further, I want to thank you for your friendship. Even though I have never met you, personally, I feel as if you and I are kindred spirits. The reason why say that is it you picked up this

book. You made an investment. You're now reading it. This means you are one of the few who will do what others will not. This puts you light years ahead of 99% of the people. You and I encounter every day. Those people are living a paint-by-numbers life. They want to change, but they just do not get it, because they haven't got the first clue what they want and worse, they are not willing to do anything to change it.

I know you're special because you are researching and exploring and because you are reading this. It says something to me about you. It tells me that you are willing to do what it takes to succeed. It tells me that you are not satisfied with your life, and you will not be satisfied until you have successfully created your own masterpiece. So, I really want to give you the tools that can make a difference.

I have dedicated my life to understanding what makes people do what they do. What drives you? What is it that makes the difference in performance from one human being to the next? If we are all born with the same stuff, what causes some to tap into it and others to settle for a mediocre, paint-by-numbers existence?

Power comes from concentrating your focus and taking daily action to improve something. Even a 1% improvement today can result in unbelievable change, because 1% per day will not give you a 365% difference in being the year, because it builds and compounds to create a difference, way beyond anything you can probably imagine right now.

I will show you how to make it happen quickly, not 10 or 20 years from now, but today. Anything you commit to and focus on everyday must improve.

The challenge is that most of us do not know WHO we are, and therefore do not know how to control our mental focus. In fact, most of us focus on what is not working and spent most of her energy focusing on what we DON'T want by asking questions like, "how come this always happens to me?" If you focus on that enough then that is what you will continue to experience. (Universal laws don't work unless you reprogram).

I am going to show you how to refocus your mental energy and reprogram your subconscious, so that you can ask better questions

and therefore get a better result. Whatever you focus on, you manifest, which is why the Law of attraction won't work until you know what you want at the deepest level of your mind.

The key is to get you to live by those factors. Most people focus on the small stuff. I know you are to believe this, or you would not have picked up this book. Most people are so focused on what they have to DO. In other words, they focus on their to-do list, how to make a living instead of how to create their life. You could so easily get caught up in the day-to-day experiences that you tend to make a monument of the port in your mind, when actually in the long term these things that seem monumentally important now are actually quite trivial.

To create your masterpiece, you have to learn how to take care of the big things -- each color in your crayon box -- mentally, emotionally, physically, financially, and spiritually. Here are two things that usually lead to ultimate success -- either inspiration or desperation. Desperation can be a good thing because until you get really dissatisfied. You won't do anything to take your life to another level. Dissatisfaction is awesome! If you are completely satisfied, you will get comfortable. They may life begins to deteriorate.

My guess is that you invested in this book because on some level you are dissatisfied.

("If you make enough money, at least you can handle your problems in style" R)

(lots of money, beyond comfort zone)

"It's a funny thing, the more I practice the luckier I get" AP

Subconsciously, most of us have an idea of what we think we deserve. This is our comfort zone, which the subconscious mind determines when it sets our internal thermostat. Your subconscious mind has set your internal thermostat, and so when you begin to achieve, perhaps make a lot of money, you begin to sabotage your success in drop down to where you subconsciously think you deserve to be.

The past does not equal the future. Even if you are jaded and cynical, you've tried everything, this moment is a great new opportunity if

you've tried other programs in the past that nothing has really changed your lifelong term. I believe that all it has done is it has prepared you for this program. And at some level if you did not believe that, then you would not be reading this right now.

Life Masterpiece is very different from other programs you may have tried. You will not find affirmations and visualizations and motivations in this book. What you will find is the answer to what is keeping you back, and how to reprogram your subconscious mind and how to use it to create

Your brain is the most powerful computer on the planet. When you learn to use it properly, you can create any result you want. And they can give you the answer to almost any problem you have. The problem is that this computer, we call our brain is not user-friendly, and does not come with an owner's manual. Life Masterpiece will show you how to operate your supercomputer with precision. Lasting change is not created in your life by learning more. Lasting change is created by using your own power to take action.

We're going to recondition the way your mind works by reprogram your subconscious. This will change the way you feel and the way you behave for the rest of your life. Just as there have been extraordinary technological, scientific and medical breakthroughs in the past two decades there has also been a breakthrough in the science of quantum physics. While we are not going to learn specifically about quantum physics in this book, we are going to take and use part of that technology. Because the latest cutting-edge tools for creating lasting change comes from breakthroughs in quantum physics that have to do with human technology and how to get new results in record time.

There are four steps to success:

1. Know what you want. It is important for you to know what you want, and for you to know how you want things to turn out. In other words, you must know your outcome before you begin. The first step is to decide what you want out of whatever situation you are currently in. The clearer you aren't what you want, the more you will empower your brain to give you the answers.

2. You must use it. In other words, you must get yourself to take action toward your outcome. This means that you must put energy in the right direction, even when you do not know exactly what to do. Many people do not know what to do first. I will teach you exactly what to do. Some people want to know what happens if they try, and it doesn't work. I can tell you right now, and you will learn why in this book, why nothing you try will ever work. So how do you take action? Decide to. It's not about what you can do. It's about what you will do.
3. Notice your results. It's not enough to take action. You must also pay attention to the results you are getting from your actions. Do your actions always work? No. Remember, success is just a series of failures, but failures with the purpose, failures directed at a specific result. You know what you want; you took action, now notice the result. (JS-obstacles and timing).
4. Be flexible and willing to change your approach. You must be willing to make changes and adjustments based on the results of your actions, because flexibility is the key to the system. In other words, if you notice that what you are doing is not working. And you're not getting closer to your goal or even getting further away, instead of feeling like a failure in giving up. Sometimes you simply need to change your approach.

There is a way to speed this up. Instead of just knowing what you want, taking random actions, I will show you a way to increase the pace and the certainty of your success.

(“Knowledge is not power. Knowledge is potential power.” R)

You may be thinking, “Jim, if this is a simple, how come everyone isn't doing it?” The answer is because the majority of people tend to get caught up in the day-to-day trivialities such as paying their bills. Now, paying your bills might seem monumentally important to you, but honestly, can you think of anyone who has ever reported that they were successful in life because they mastered the art of bill paying? I am not saying that you shouldn't pay your bills, what I'm saying is that you should know I yourself to get caught up in

something trivial and make it something big, so that you can use it as an excuse for not doing the really important things in life. At the end of your life, no one is going to remember whether or not you paid all of your bills and what a wonderful job you did of it. In other words, people get caught up in making a living instead of creating a life. They come to the end of their life dissatisfied because they realize they only live 10% of it, not because they were not capable or intelligent, and not for a lack of knowledge, but simply because they never had a clear idea about what they wanted.

Some people think that what they really want is a program that deals with only one area of your life like that business program. If that is what you are thinking, let me tell you right now that Life Masterpiece is one of the most powerful business programs because it deals with the source of all your business -- YOU. When you are better will be a better speaker, salesperson negotiator. Your creativity will flow freely. Mobile to manage and influence people far more effectively than you can now. The first step to changing your career and your business is to change yourself.

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Mike Greenly



Mike Greenly was a successful Fortune 500 Marketing & Communications VP -- now a versatile and highly effective business writer and speech coach. His promise to clients: “Sound Like YOU ... Only Better!”

Having been a corporate officer himself, Mike is comfortable dealing with execs at all levels. He’s known for his ability to capture his clients’ thoughts and messages with clarity and creativity, while minimizing demands on their time. In addition to exec and team presentations, he ghostwrites editorials, chapters, even entire books. Clients across many industries praise the quality of his work and his unwavering commitment to outstanding client service along with excellence.

Immediately after leaving corporate life, Mike became the world’s first "interactive electronic journalist" ... covering computer and other trade shows online, including the launch of Macintosh. His award-winning journalism was covered by TIME magazine, The Wall Street Journal, CNN, NBC and international media.

When not helping his clients, Mike enjoys writing song lyrics. Eleven of his Dance/Electronic songs have been charted on Billboard including four #1 hits. Successes in other genres include pop, R&B, Gospel/Contemporary Christian and American Roots. He’s honored to be the author of “Our Great Virginia” — the new state anthem as of July 1, 2015. Website:

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The Impact of COVID on Business Presentations

By Mike Greenly

Here is this chapter’s take-away message: COVID has changed some truths about how executives and their teams deliver, receive and are affected by business communications. Other truths haven’t changed a bit. This is to share a few examples of both outcomes with COVID as the backdrop.

First, some perspective.

Myself, I’m too young to remember World War II. But as I look back on my life, I recall such landmarks as America’s entry into the Vietnam War in 1965 ... the first landing of a man on the moon in 1969 ... and the many digital transformations that began with the invention of the World Wide Web in 1989, resulting in the power of the Internet today. (Decades ago, my early work in creating online content got me quoted in *TIME* magazine as “planet earth’s first interactive electronic journalist,” an acknowledgement I’ll always be proud of.)

But what about right now during *all* our lives?

In a world changing as rapidly as ours does, virtually anyone with a normal lifespan will experience “milestone” events that alter and shape the way we live on the planet. I’d count Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 among them.

Clearly COVID must also be counted as a major milestone. Regardless of your age and circumstance, I’m sure you’ve felt at least some of the pandemic’s ramifications. (“Pan” being Greek for “all” and this disease has affected us all.)

I can’t pretend to know how history will judge the sweeping long-term impact of the disease. But I’d like to share some observations in an area I know first-hand and rather well: business presentations (corporate sales meetings, for example.)

First as background: I’m a guy who lacks many practical, mechanical skills in life. Don’t ask me to change a flat tire. I can injure myself just trying to hang a picture on the wall! But my exec

clients often say I'm the best wordsmith and presentation coach they've ever worked with. And the only freelance writer also to have been a successful Fortune 500 Marketing & Communications VP. Turns out that my having lived life on the exec's side of the desk allows me to write with first-hand insights that few other freelancers possess.

That was back when Avon Products was the #1 beauty company and #1 direct seller on earth. After rising to become responsible for every aspect of creating 300 new products a year ... then to printing 22 million copies of the sales brochure every two weeks (with split runs so I could learn which visual and text approaches would sell more lipstick, etc.) ... I was put in charge of Meetings & Events, directing communications to a sales force of several hundred thousand and doing my part to help the company achieve a billion dollars in annual sales.

For that last assignment, I had to overcome my "stage fright" – the dread of public speaking felt by successful business leaders you'd never guess suffered from "glossophobia." I've long known of surveys showing that many among us fear standing up in front of an audience even more than other phobias ... like the fear of heights, darkness or even death.

I share my background to help you understand why I have a special interest in the impact of COVID on business presentations. My mission these days is helping my clients achieve successful sales meetings, product launches and other goals involving effective communications to an audience, whether in person or remote.

I'm totally sure of some of my conclusions, while other others are simply my best guesses. And despite what I believe will be some permanent effects of COVID ... I find it hopeful to consider what truths will *not* change in our lives. I'd like to reflect on both: the changing and the immutable.

For starters, let's acknowledge that our dining and interpersonal habits were altered dramatically during the past few years. Most of us had never even *heard* of "social distancing." But with so many workplaces shut down, we started doing business with "virtual" meetings. Suddenly Zoom, Microsoft Teams, etc., were household

necessities when so many of us could no longer visit our own offices.

And now? Even as COVID appears to be waning, it seems clear that we'll be living in what is sometimes referred to as a *new* normal. Zoom, for example, is not likely to be going anywhere. It will remain a convenience that many millions – individuals and teams -- have experienced and learned how to use.

But here is a *fact*: there's a significant difference between motivating a sales force of 500 sales reps, live in the same room and all applauding at once ... versus having “attendees” in their separate locations, neither seen nor heard from by anyone else except, perhaps, in “chat.”

And yes – not bringing people together in person saves \$\$ on transportation and housing. But if you're trying to motivate sales reps to be enthusiastic about their new drug, detergent, or whatever: a “virtual” meeting will never have the same visceral and experiential impact as when its content is experienced side-by-side with other audience members, live and in person together. We're still *human*, after all.

One thing I've noticed that several colleagues still in corporate life have confirmed: audiences tend to be less attentive and intently focused when they're “attending” a meeting remotely from their home offices, living rooms or cars. Really, that only makes sense.

As we gaze at our home computer screens, for example, we can easily be diverted by the child or pet who wanders into view. Or makes sounds from another room. We are ignorant of such distractions when seated in an auditorium or conference room but participating from our separate locations makes us vulnerable to myriad mental intrusions.

Even in person, human attention spans are shorter than ever. The Statistic Brain Research Institute has shared a study¹ which notes:

- * Average attention span of a goldfish: 9 seconds
- * Average human attention span in 2001: 12 seconds
- * Average human attention span in 2015: 8.25 seconds

So, we're now officially less attentive than the average goldfish which, at nine seconds, focuses more than we do! Even before COVID, it had already become clear that – in the modern world, more than ever -- if you try to convey too much in *any* communication, your message is less likely to stick in the minds of your audience.

Now, years after the study I just quoted – with more Instagram, Twitter, texting, etc., on our mobile phones – you can safely bet that we're even *less* attentive as a species, whether COVID home-bound or not.

So what to do about it?

Clear, Strong Takeaway Message

I long ago learned – in writing an executive's speech, PowerPoint, video, etc. – to organize the content around a single, overall message – a communications “North Star.” Prominently featuring your “big picture” point in any presentation will make it more likely to be remembered. That's more important than ever in a digitized, post-COVID world.

It's also true – as the old saying goes – that you have only one chance to make a first impression. Start off strong and relevant to your audience. The first paragraph of this chapter was deliberately constructed to summarize up front the “WIIFM” (“What's In it For Me?”) that I hope to provide to you as my reader.

Reinforce the Message Afterward

Reinforcement is necessary even after a live, in-person meeting ... but all the more after one of the remote “meetings” to which COVID has led us. Not just because of attention problems in our separated environments, but also because of tech interruptions that all of us have observed.

It doesn't take much experience with online meetings to know that things can go wrong. Images can freeze, sound can disappear, an entire connection can be broken with a new sign-on required.

As important as post-meeting message reinforcement has always been, it's potentially even more so when people aren't physically together. I once attended a sales meeting where there was a

temporary power black-out. Suddenly the hotel ballroom went dark with only dim back-up lighting in the plus an emergency back-up microphone. But the executive presenter turned the interruption into an opportunity to informally reinforce the message of the meeting – using his knowledge and personal conviction to make it that much more memorable. That would have been impossible in a virtual meeting interrupted by a tech problem – a fact which makes post-meeting message reinforcement even *more* important.

“Um” – “Er” – “You Know” (so-called “filler” words)

Filler words are short, meaningless words (or sounds) that we use to fill the little pauses that occur as we decide what we're going to say next. A colleague recently asked me about this topic during our own Zoom “breakout room.” He wanted to know if these self-interruptions matter ... and if they're different on Zoom than at a live group event.

My answer is – yes: presenters who say “uh” a lot in *any* presentation are interrupting their flow and weakening their impact on listeners. My opinion, however, is that these self-interruptions are *more* noticeable and *more* distracting when a viewer is staring at the presenter's image just a foot or so away.

The good news is, there are proven ways to raise your own consciousness of the habit and reduce your use of it. With or without COVID. I'll say more in my next point about the right kind of rehearsal before *any* presentation, whether for a live or virtual audience. But the point I'll make right now is that live rehearsal *aloud* can help. Silently “reading” your presentation to yourself is not a real rehearsal.

One effective technique suggested by Noah Sandan in the Harvard Business Review² begins by making yourself more aware of the fact that you use them. As you literally start to *hear* yourself, substitute a silent *pause* for an empty filler word that's said aloud. Your audience will better connect to your message this way. It's as true on MS Teams, Zoom and so on as it is at a live event. marker

The Right Kind of Rehearsal

Whether for in-person events or for Zoom calls, the way that you rehearse can make a surprising difference for your ultimate

presentation. Forget forever about reviewing the words of your speech in silence. NO! That misses the point.

Making rehearsal real for a *live* event means actively envisioning everyone in front of you – every time you rehearse – and always addressing them aloud, with the same energy you expect to use on-stage.

Making rehearsal real for a *virtual* event is the same – except this time you’ll envision an appropriate number of squares on your computer screen, imagining that you’re actually *presenting to them*. Even worse and also common in COVID times, presenting to the camera on your laptop with no feeling of an audience at all because you can’t see them ... not one person!

The more mentally “real” you can make each run-through, the more confident and effective you’ll be in front of your audience. This is relevant to my next point as well: eye contact.

Eye Contact: Live Audience vs. Zoom

Eye contact matters. Correction: make that *perceived* eye contact!

Let’s be clear: it’s great to look directly at audience members from the stage at a live event ... being careful to vary your gaze to create a sense of including everyone across the room. For some presenters, however, it can be unnerving actually to *see* people’s faces ... versus *seeming* to see them. If you’re standing up at a live event and addressing a seated audience, they truly won’t know the difference if you choose to look at their *foreheads* instead of their eyes.

On MS Teams, Zoom or other webinar programs, however, things are different. Depending on the settings each participant chooses, your face may be large and the central focus for some participants ... or just the actively talking square among a group on other screens.

It can be challenging to remember to look at the video camera as you present. Of course, if you choose to share your screen visual with everyone else in the call, during that portion of the presentation, your face may not be seen much at all.

First and foremost, you need to be comfortable with yourself. All I’m really saying is that deliberate eye contact can be helpful and

effective, whether in a post-COVID virtual meeting back to a live event.

A Closing Thought --

When I'm not using My Friends, The Words to help my clients be more effective whether on paper, online or presenting ... I still use them for writing song lyrics.

I recently had the pleasure of collaborating with singer/songwriter Linda Marks. We'd admired each other's work and agreed to do something together. What we discovered, in writing a song called "Let There Be Love" (not yet released as I write this chapter, but soon it will be) is that we needed two versions.

COVID had become such a vivid part of life that we felt we had to include it. On the other hand, of course, we're hoping it will become less relevant over time. (Personally, I'm ready to get COVID vaccines each year when I get my annual flu shots.)

So I'll close by sharing a relevant portion of our lyrics below ... and by thanking you for following along with me. To paraphrase my own lyrics ... let there be health ... and ... let there be success in your business presentations.

=====

"Let There Be Love" – COVID portion

VERSE

Chaos rules our world, things are not the same

We wait for this to end, to return from whence we came

Wearing masks, sheltering at home has become a needed way

We are tired, scared and worn from surviving day by day

=====

"Let There Be Love" – Non-COVID option

VERSE

Chaos in the world and conflict in the news

Will it ever end, the world is so confused

Social media floods our lives, each on our separate tracks
The stress does not let up, no time to be relaxed

=====

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¹ Source: Harald Weinreich, Hartmut Obendorf, Eelco Herder, and Matthias Mayer: "Not Quite the Average: An Empirical Study of Web Use," in the ACM Transactions on the Web, vol. 2, no. 1 (February 2008), article #5.

<http://www.statisticbrain.com/attention-span-statistics>

² Source: Noah Zandan: "How to Stop Saying 'Um,' 'Ah,' and 'You Know'"

Aug. 01, 2018 Harvard Business Review

<https://hbr.org/2018/08/how-to-stop-saying-um-ah-and-you-know>

Review³

Source: Film Festival Traveler, Jan. 6, 2022 - Singer/Songwriter Linda Marks' New Album "Home" — A Second Collection of Songs Inspired by Pandemic Times

<http://www.filmfestivaltraveler.com/film-arts/film-arts-interviews/4345-singer-songwriter-linda-marks-new-album-%E2%80%9Dhome%E2%80%9D-%E2%80%94-a-second-collection-of-songs-inspired-by-pandemic-times>

Antomius Wise



Antomius Wise is an experienced Life Coach, Business Mentor, Tax Guru, and Relationship Expert based in Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. (DMV), offering life strategies around the globe. With a high-value mindset, he is a solution-based thinker who is pro-truth.

With over ten years of experience in the nonprofit and finance industries, Antomius has overcome countless obstacles to get where he is today. His clients are professional athletes, high-ranking officials, business executives, and everyday people seeking advice and guidance.

He was a professional athlete in the NFL, obtained an MBA, started an asset protection business that his family operates, and founded a 501(C)(3) that supports domestic violence situations. He has Federal Law Enforcement experience with the United States Secret Service, found a woman willing to be a helpmate and allows him to be great, produced two sons, and assisted many clients in obtaining their ultimate goals. His life is fulfilled, and the biggest reward is bringing value to society and creating economic growth.

Why does he do this? It is his way of bringing value to society. As a Life Strategist, he volunteers his time, experience, knowledge, guidance, and understanding to Wise Protective Services and More, Inc. (501(c)(3), to raise money and awareness for domestic violence victims (mental and physical). 100% of the proceeds go to WPSM.org. That means it's all a tax deduction!!

Intro to Life_Strategies_2.0

By Antomius Wise

“The key to patience is doing something in the meantime.”

I would like you to close your eyes and think about this for a moment. Have you ever wondered what to do after you set your goals? Goals don't come to fruition overnight. I came up with a quote to give you peace of mind and embrace monotony while you're on the journey. “The key to patience is doing something in the meantime!”

Hi, my name is Antomius Wise. Providing solutions and bringing value to society has always been important to me. I have achieved everything I had envisioned up to this point because of this approach. I understand and value what it is to be “in the moment.” This philosophy allowed me to decrease my chances of bad things happening to me at an early age, assisting me into adulthood to make logical decisions and allowing me to communicate with you today.

I started my journey as a Life Strategist in 2016. Getting there was more than just accomplishing goals, overcoming adversity, and some internal doubt. The question was whether I was ready to advise someone on how to fish, rather than just give them a fish, so that they can achieve their desired outcomes on their life journey.

Learning how to bring value to society and using your abilities to bring your vision to fruition are two key components that I will touch on. Understanding this gave me the ability to excel during the journey of life while also assisting others along my journey. I'm proof that these concepts can give you the fuel and ammunition to overcome any obstacles you could face. With these critical components, I positioned myself to have conversations with many of our Presidents and other notable people in the world. I found that we all had this one “major” thing in common-can you guess what that was? Keep reading to find out what happens next. Every topic I discuss below has a course. I only cover topics I have first-hand experience with. After all, experience is the best teacher.

Professional Athlete: The three phases to go from nothing to something

As a 5-year-old kid, I promised my mom that I was going to go to the NFL. She passed away three years later. Soon after, I started to set my life up to keep that promise to my mother and accomplish the goal of making it to the NFL. As I grew, I realized that navigating this path would be challenging. So, I adopted three phases to help me along the way. Those three principal pillars were **imagination, faith, and discipline**.

Imagination is one of the most powerful tools that the Most High blessed any of us with. It's the beginning of creating all new things. There were many days I would imagine myself playing in front of thousands of people, being looked at in a Godly way, or just getting paid handsomely for something I love to do. For this to all take shape, I had to have the imagination and plant the seed so that my ideas and dreams would flourish.

When you have **faith**, anything is possible. And without it, nothing is possible. There were many times people would tell me to give up on my dream of making it to the NFL. They would say things like "just graduate from college, don't worry about the NFL," "you're too big to play CB (cornerback)," and the most famous one was "fewer than 2% of college football players will get an opportunity to go to the NFL". These are just some things they would say and laugh in my face about. I switched from my imagination phase to my faith phase very quickly. I always said to myself, "as long as I have breath in my body, I have a chance." When you have faith, it's similar to having a secret generator only you know about. For it to be activated, you must connect it to your imagination. If it's not connected, you have nothing, no power, no fuel, etc. Faith gives you the opportunity from within, which means you have to make opportunities yourself.

Discipline requires putting in the work while still applying faith and imagination. I went to four colleges to give myself a better opportunity to advance to the NFL. Michael Strahan, Jay Glazier, and many others in the NFL circles called me "4-schools" because I actually went to four different colleges to make this opportunity happen. Coming up on possibly my last year of college eligibility

for football, I knew this could be my last shot. My imagination and faiths were all at the forefront, and this was when discipline kicked in. I made it through the season with good evaluations from NFL Scouts. Many of them projected I would be a late-round pick if I stayed in school for my last year of eligibility, per NAIA approval. My eligibility was denied. My imagination, faith, and discipline allowed me to stay focused and bring the NFL vision to fruition. My life consisted of cold calling/networking with NFL scouts to keep my name on their radar, working out sprinting with 45-pound-sleds, doing intense plyometrics five days a week, and operating a forklift loading tiles on trucks since I needed money. NFL Pro Day came, and things went great. On draft day I got the opportunity to go to the NFL's Washington Redskins (now Washington Commanders).

Applying the three principles put me in a position to go from nothing to something. Always remember, "The key to patience is to do something in the meantime."

Entrepreneur mindset: Stepping on good to become great

All of us have goals we'd like to achieve, but most dreams take time to come to fruition. You must live, function, and bring value to all facets of your life while you're on that path. This is what I call being patient while you strive towards your goals.

Setting a minor goal every day helps tremendously! Having an open mind to change something if it's ineffective is also key. You don't want to continue doing the same thing over and over if it's not working. That's insanity. It is sometimes necessary for us to put pride aside for a moment and be open to making changes to find a solution. Change the plan, not the dream.

While navigating life's journey, you will notice people content with being average. There's nothing wrong with that. It's their life, right? You will also see that some people are willing to recalibrate their minds, understand the power of networking. They are prepared to become a human sponge, sacrifice, find solutions and solve problems. These people are willing to step on good to become great.

Being cut from the NFL, watching your dreams unravel, can seem like death. Yes, I said DEATH. Being laid off as a W-2 employee during a crisis can appear that your world is crumbling at your

fingertips. What do you do when the opportunity is nowhere in sight? You create it.

Building a solid foundation: Spirituality, financially and in relationships

During my time on and off of NFL teams, I flirted with becoming an entrepreneur. When my football days were over, the time for flirting ended, and it was time to commit to building a kingdom. Spirituality, finances, and relationships all play an integral role in building a kingdom in modern times.

I started studying the scriptures, our western civilization, and the money system. That's when I found out the truth about society - navigating your way through the corporate world is not the end all be all. It's owning your own kingdom and being personally debt-free. When you understand our society from a macrocosmic standpoint, it assists you with becoming a solution-based thinker, opens you up to having a ruling class king mentality.

The entrepreneur journey took off by recalibrating my mind. As you recalibrate your mind, you will need to let go of many things' society instilled in you as a child. You have to be willing to go on a journey to obtain new information, seek successful mentors, apply the information learned, and look to improve what society has already created. When you can create something new, solve problems and provide solutions, society will reward you. It allows you to be your own boss.

I started an asset protection company, protecting celebrities and hedge fund managers. People will always need protection no matter where they are in the world. If there is a need, you provide a solution. Things were good, but I wanted them to be great. I had to ask myself, "What distinguishes me from other companies?" This question led me to recognize that I needed a solid credential to be taken seriously. So, I put myself in a position to join the United States Secret Service. The naysayers would say that I put the cart before the horse. I say that I just put a motor in the cart and put the horse in the stable.

During this time, my protection business is doing well, and I'm going through the process for the position with the Secret Service until a hiring freeze occurs. As my motto goes, "The key to patience

is doing something in the meantime,” so I had to keep things moving. I noticed that the tax code is structured so that if you're bringing value to society, then the government will reward you. Being a three-dimensional thinker and at times four-dimensional on some spiritual knowledge, I saw a need in my community and immediately set up a 501(c)(3) nonprofit to assist domestic violence situations. At this point, I'm moving into the High-Value Man category. The trajectory is through the roof and beyond. I finally got the call from the Secret Service, and I proudly accepted it.

High-Value Relationships

If you have a good grasp of the scriptures as a man who understands how to protect, provide, prophesy, and preach, you increase your chances of a High-Value woman coming your way. Speaking from experience, I chose one for marriage. I designed courses for these types of relationships. Let's be honest; no one wants to go through life's journey alone.

This portion pertains to people who have or strive to have means. For those who desire to get married possibly, this is one of the most significant investments you will make. Example: If you're earning a million dollars, and your spouse decides to exercise the option of “irreconcilable differences” that's half gone from your pocket; let's not forget about taxes - another 30-40%, you're close to \$200K, yikes. I'm not here to discourage anyone from marriage; I'm here to increase your chances of possible solutions to reach your desired outcomes. While you are on your way, I will provide you with a few strategies to think about.

For Married Couples: Bringing value to your relationship

During and since the Covid-19 pandemic, people's thoughts were often centered around their relationship status. Some couples had to be around each other 24 hours a day throughout the quarantine period. Some realized how much they needed each other, and some realized the opposite.

A lot of people believe that love is the foundation of marriage. This isn't a fairy tale. In reality, you should consider that you are together for "duty" to one another. Knowing what value you can bring to the relationship and whether that aligns with your partner's philosophy

is paramount. Understanding how to embrace monotony, repetition, and sacrifice increases your chances of a healthy marriage.

Former POTUS John F. Kennedy, Jr. said it best, “Ask not what your country can do for you—ask what you can do for your country.” Make sure you give 110% in all aspects of your life and show the value you can add. If the relationship ends, you won't have any regrets. Nothing is more frustrating than the "should've, could've, would've" feeling. Time waits for no one. We all get 24 hours in a day. What are you doing with yours?

For Men: How to obtain and maintain a ruling class mentality

I've had many conversations with a number of highly influential people across the world, and I'd like to share a few components that define a high-value man. Financial resources, recognition by other high-value men (HVM), being part of a network of high-value men, visibility, utility, discernment, integrity, ethics, discipline, and morals define a High-Value Man (HVM). I don't make the rules of society. I just understand how to apply, use and teach them to you so you can find solutions to reach your desired outcomes.

This course is specifically for those men who have or are open to having a ruling class king mentality. I use the term “open” because many men may not be as well-read of the scriptures to know of the gifts that the most-high stored upon them to understand female nature.

For those with discernment and knowledge to use those gifts, strategies can be implemented to advise you on the tax codes. I will also discuss ways to protect your assets before getting married so that you don't get taken behind the shed by the courts doing what they please to you if you get divorced.

There are also strategies for those that are already married. Since most women today are considered "modern," knowing what laws and tax codes benefit you in modern times is essential.

For those that don't know about these gifts yet but are willing to learn, there are strategies for you as well. To obtain this level of knowledge, you must be ready to come in good faith and make things happen. This will be the beginning stage on your way to creating wealth. The strategies outlined are very solution focused.

You can still be solution-based and married, but you must structure your kingdom to deal with people/relationships from a position of power.

For Women: Be his peace and be his paradise

This course is specifically for women who want to be chosen for marriage or a long-term relationship by High-Value Men (HVM). In most of my consultations with women, they seldom describe the average guy when it comes to what type of man they would like when chosen for marriage. They'll have this idea of some "mythical man" who is considered wealthy, handsome, athletic, corporate, street, godly, and a little bit of a bad boy. So, I had to develop a series of questions to increase their chances of finding solutions to reach their desired outcomes. The one question that seems to perplex them is, "Do you know what these HVM look for and value in a woman so you can have the opportunity to be selected for marriage by them?" Remember, many times, the men ask will you marry me and the women can choose to accept. The keyword is "opportunity" and my course is like having a study guide to the final exam.

The pandemic gave many ladies a taste of what it would be like to be living alone, with a dog/cat without the access of a man, and thoughts of possibly dying alone. Let's just say it didn't feel good. Having a 501(c)(3) that assists domestic violence situations, many ladies wanted to pick my brain during consultations about how to increase their chances and opportunities to get this type of man.

Once you've passed the initial attractive stage, the number one thing you must do to give yourself this opportunity is to provide him with peace of mind. A man of this type is a protector and a provider. He is someone who is driven, working up to 16 hours a day, and is looking for peace.

Every woman isn't going to get a professional athlete, entertainer, or wealthy guru to marry them. There are men in the middle making six figures, on their purpose, and have the ability to put a woman in a position to have the "option" if she wants to work. The media doesn't advertise these men as much because "allegedly" in the late '60s, it is believed that society could make more money off of women if she is not within a good covenant of a man.

Many modern women aren't focusing on getting married and being a wife in early adulthood. That's ok. Some strategies can be implemented and executed to increase your chances of obtaining your desired outcomes with these particular men. We are in the age of information, and for ladies who want to live this type of lifestyle, you do something about it.

Corporate Marriages: Looking good together

Everyone involved knows this is a business. Both parties would sit down; consult about their duties and expectations for the marriage. These marriages typically are for financially successful individuals who like their own space. These couples usually have scheduled get-togethers, events, family gatherings. Let's face it, not too many people want to go through life alone. This option gives them the best of both worlds.

Final thoughts:

As a life strategist, I will assist you with understanding society from a macrocosmic standpoint and how to bring value. Together, we will expand your mental agility, so that you will be able to reach your desired outcomes. I'm primarily based in the DC area, and offer phone consultations and virtual sessions. One-on-one, couples, group sessions, and speaking engagements are available.

Throughout my story, strategies from my courses were utilized in my life to gain optimal results. Some other courses we offer are a 501(c)(3) finance course to create wealth, consultations on mindset, motivation, and many others that are designed to assist you in solving problems as well as achieving your goals.

Life is a long journey, and tomorrow is not promised to any of us. We all get 24 hours in a day. What are you doing with yours?

Quote "The key to patience is doing something in the meantime."

Attribute - Antomius Wise

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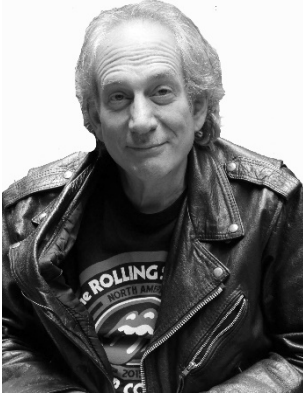
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Brad Balfour



Born in Youngstown, Ohio, Brad Balfour's parents moved to Cincinnati in 1960 or '61. With that move, he immersed himself in collecting comic books, trading cards, toys and more. Unlike his peers, he somehow realized he should save all this pop culture detritus. Thus, a pack-rat archivist was born.

Though he never expected to be a wordsmith, Balfour began writing in junior high school. While he wasn't going to be a lawyer or a doctor (as his dad wished), he was planning to be a Rabbi until, at 18, he landed the editor's job at the Queen's Jester, Cincy's alternative paper. He moved on to be the Cincinnati Post's rock critic in 1975. He never looked back from there as he moved to NYC and a series of cool editorial gigs.

Once he hit the Big Apple, Balfour's life went from local to international, from music to film and every other kind of pop culture possibility as he wrote interviews, reviews, and commentary in print, online, video and live. He even scripted a graphic novel/screenplay with noted author John Shirley. For the next 45 years he racked up an impressive array of experiences.

From interviewing Steve Jobs (for the Apple Store NYC debut), shaking hands with President Bill Clinton after Nelson Mandela's speech inaugurating the Tribeca Film Festival, to working on articles in Heavy Metal with Stephen King and William Burroughs, he's had enough experiences to fill several volumes. His interviews and writings have been included in several books and international publications.

Balfour continues to produce stories weekly, reaching an audience of thousands — maybe millions — through his multiple online outlets. Right now, he's in talks to transform his archives into a docu-series, podcast and various publications.

Finding Identity Through Memoir: Creating A Life Story Worthy for Others to Read

By Brad Balfour

For years I grappled with the idea of writing a memoir. Though it's a slice of a life, a memoir needs to be more than that. It should have a theme, rationale and purpose whether as a warning, inspiration or declaration.

I've been asked to edit memoirs, ghostwrite them or even obtain the contents from conversations with my client. But when I was hired to draw the fascinating details out of a man turning 100, the challenge of creating his memoir upped my game. Thankfully he had an uncanny memory, spewing out details beyond expectation. But the project also posed an entangled set of complications.

My client was a World War II vet and a political activist, deeply involved with his synagogue. Also, a fine art publisher and an art appraiser dealing with controversial works. Though he'd led a fascinating life, fashioning a memoir out of that proved to be quite a task. Not only did I need details — dates, locations and people's names — to correctly sequence, I had to determine which points needed emphasis and elaboration versus other content that would best be underplayed.

In doing so, I had to negotiate between what I thought made sense, what my client most cared about and, ultimately, what his overbearing wife thought should be done regardless of my suggestions. The project never became the story I thought it should have been. Though I was paid some of what we agreed on, she did what I thought she'd ultimately do — adopt my suggestions without letting me finish, thus depriving me both of credit for the work and the final payment for it.

I learned two things from that experience. First to know when and how to define parameters. Next, write a contract that takes into account such ambiguous variables.

More importantly, I absorbed crucial lessons for making an effective

memoir... or not.

I needed to discover my own story and what made it come together. Who was I? Was there a mission in my life and what words would I share?

Recently, I was sent a memoir written by a friend's cousin. His story was one of survival, having landed in prison. He did a pretty good job of capturing his state of mind and how he'd managed to get things together enough to write more than 20,000 words.

I asked, "Besides helping you order your past and discover your motivating focus -- is this a way to know whether or not you have a worthy story to tell? Why did you need to write a memoir?"

"If you want to have a full-blown memoir, it needs to be more than just a chronology and a description of your emotional states. Besides examining what's happened and the emotions behind your life's events, you need to develop your story more visually and narratively. It needs descriptions. What did that building look like? What was notable about its location?"

"You've lived your life, but now you need to help your audience feel what it was like to do that."

I then decided to craft a memoir for myself and have begun with no urgent deadline. What would I consider worthy of inclusion in a memoir of my own making?

Although surviving in New York City without collapsing into drug addiction, suicide or madness might be considered worthy of a memoir on its own merits, that's not the case here. I had to discover my deeper story and understand why it made sense. It had to come together as more than just a factual rendition, conveying a deeper, driving mission.

My story isn't so much about a struggle against adversity, but about being a witness and an advocate -- of cutting-edge culture. As a journalist who's interviewed celebrities for decades, I've seen a world of shifting sensibilities and the growth of a global pop culture.

We all start out as part of our local village culture — our neighborhood or whatever ethnic community we identify with. But we grow up to be part of a national culture we connect to.

Transcending all that is the international pop culture which unifies us globally — much of it thanks to the shared “reality” of the internet and social media. Connecting with what gets called cool, hip progressive, avant-garde, it means embracing whatever disrupts the conventional day-to-day humdrum existence.

As far back as I can remember, I was a disruptive child. Why? I don’t know. But I went from merely disruptive to being a socially constructive disruptor after discovering MEDIA. I consumed anything in newspapers — especially if about science, music and pop culture.

I began reading at an early age (maybe two or three years old), gobbling up books with stories about dinosaurs at first, then comic books and science fiction. In reading about science and history, I got to know stuff without being force-fed. My mother always said she was lucky -- blessed by the fact that she could sit me in a corner and stick a book in my hand. I’d then stay quietly engrossed in whatever she had provided.

Born in Youngstown, a gray-hued industrial city in Northeastern Ohio, my earliest memories somehow tied in with the things that would later become core to my life. The first few songs I recalled were Elvis Presley’s classic “Hound Dog” — because I identified with a hot dog stand in the form of a big dog — and Johnny Cash’s intense 1963 “Ring of Fire.”

I was fascinated by astronauts and collected clippings about them. Leaving the planet seemed like an exciting idea, so TV programs such as “The Twilight Zone,” “The Outer Limits” and “Star Trek” were revelatory. Among the many comics I discovered were superhero favorites such as Silver Age Green Lantern, The Flash, Spiderman, The Fantastic Four among the many others.

When I was about five years old, we moved to Cincinnati — on Newfield, part of Bond Hill, a neighborhood that was once Jewish and was becoming ethnically mixed at the time. Even when I was five, I was a disruptor. My mom explained that kids got mad when I knew all the answers and blurted them out without raising my hand.

Around six years old, I made it my mission to both build a serious

comic book collection and, eventually, have my own small museum in the basement. A huge science nerd, I collected clippings of animals along with some actual animals themselves. Every Saturday, I went to the local Natural History Museum to hear the head curator teach classes about nature. I had bug boxes, a real stuffed fox and lizard plus lots of rocks and shells. I put them all on display and cajoled other kids in helping me organize it — all at eight years old.

I explored all kinds of art in books and through an occasional museum visit. But when I discovered Dali and Magritte, such disruptive stuff fascinated me. Surrealism, dada, abstract expressionism, pop art, minimalism, conceptual and performance art — I loved anything which challenged conventional notions of what defines art and makes it acceptable. Or not.

In elementary school, I had started drawing, inventing my own superhero characters and stories, gathered together in many notebooks. In fact, the first thing I professionally sold was a drawing for an underground newspaper.

But it was music that really charged my passions. My dad played jazz on LPs and 78s — Coleman Hawkins, Stan Kenton, Errol Garner, Sarah Vaughn and Ella Fitzgerald — and then I discovered progressive radio station WEBN and shows like Eclectic Stop Sign and Jazz & Poetry.

From free jazz to psychedelic rock, I was getting high without illegal drugs. Whether John Coltrane or Captain Beefheart was being played, my life was changed by rock n roll -- and more. The first single I bought, "The Israelites" by Desmond Dekker and The Aces wasn't Klezmer but Jamaican Rock Steady. My first five albums included Miles Davis' "Bitches Brew," Beefheart's "Lick My Decals Off, Baby," King Crimson's *In The Court of The Crimson King* and The Flock's eponymous debut.

At that time, I became political. While Jewish social groups were shaping up, I was joining protest movements and socially concerned youth groups. Of course, being such an outlier, I got bullied which pushed me further into what local underground there was, hanging out at Kidd's bookstore talking about shows like "The Prisoner," Allen Ginsberg's poetry, Jack Kerouac's novels and the Velvet

Underground's music.

When my mom found a clipping announcing an up-coming Midwestcon in 1967, I joined the original outlier crowd -- science fiction fandom. The original “cons” (conventions) that emerged in the ‘30s -- and have continued since -- led to all the fandoms that now populate comic-cons and such world-wide.

Ever since I discovered science fiction and sci-fi cons, I found a way to productively connect with outlier behavior. I launched my own mimeographed fanzine. Unlike the slick websites and Instagram pages one can create nowadays, these cheap print publications were made with crude stencils on ragged paper. I’m talking about a time when there were no Xerox machines or copiers, even cassette tapes.

With my fanzine, Diddy Wah Diddy, I merged proto-punk music commentary with sci-fi musings and grungy poetry aping the Beats (referencing beat poet Michael McClure). My identification with anti-mainstream, cutting edge, blood-on-the-tracks creators expanded.

Fast forward to my 16th year. I decided to be a rock critic. Hey, I could get free vinyl while joining other reprobates, degenerates and cranks. And thanks to my high school newspaper, *The Bulldog Barks*, I published my first reviews, that of “Lick My Decals Off, Baby” and then, *The Last Poets' This Is Madness LP*.

Once I focused on music — whether it be avant-garde jazz or cutting-edge rock — I knew I had to be involved with new sounds and sights that were somehow forward-thinking and game-changing.

I loved rock & roll for its expression of aesthetic liberation — and quest for enlightenment. Its passion for life, for a realization that liberation isn’t fully possible without a connection to everything around us. That music embraces contradiction and irony. Trying to embrace the entire universe is absurd: you can’t be who you are individually while being one with everything else around you.

In science fiction, serious as it can be, there's a celebratory sense of wonder which unleashes a sense of exaltation -- just as great rock does. Music offers contemplative insight without intellectualizing it; you just feel it.

And that is life on the edge. Zigging when I should have zagged and following only the rules that made sense to me. I was always out there, promoting the new and unfamiliar.

As I grew up, I directed my attitude towards ideas which offered new possibilities and supported other kinds of outliers. That's been the driving force of my life — not to dwell on the past, but to transform my interactions with thought leaders and forward thinkers and then pass on what I'd learned to subsequent generations through writing, speaking and other forms of media.

I moved to New York in January 1978, after nearly three years as the Cincinnati Post's rock critic. I knew at the time that I was standing up for something, but I had to do it on a much larger scale than Cincy could bear.

My life's trajectory led to being a pop culture philosopher. It was a way of expressing social criticism while having fun doing it. In the immediacy of the moment, I didn't think I was doing something important, but there I was, memorializing what was occurring at that moment.

The punk "movement" was infused with irony and a hard-edged "don't take oneself too seriously" ethic. But it also possessed morality propelled by a drive to create — like when the Ramones sing "Beat on The Brat" What the fuck was that? It wasn't meant to be taken literally -- it had to be taken ironically with a tongue firmly in cheek. Irony is about layers of meaning, sometimes contradictory, realizing that what's heard or seen is just a layer on the surface -- there's more underneath.

So I became a pop culture chronicler. For half a century, I've documented the worlds of art, film, music, performance and pop culture creators of all sorts. Various actors, directors, artists, musicians, writers, photographers, chefs and entrepreneurs have provided me with many insights. I've offered them in turn to audiences through reviews and interviews. I've been a publisher, editor, columnist, or staffer for many publications — online and in print.

I've spoken with so many from The Rolling Stones and Pearl Jam to writers like William S. Burroughs and Ken Kesey. I spoke with

actors the likes of Jennifer Lawrence, Robert DeNiro, Clint Eastwood, Meryl Streep and many more.

My coverage has attracted millions of readers worldwide in publications ranging from AM-New York, Creem Magazine, Reflex, Heavy Metal, Spin, Vibe, Omni, Look and Seventeen Magazine. In fact, two of my pieces can be read on Spin.com — interviews with The Cure's Robert Smith and George Michael.

With one foot in the analog world and one in the digital space, I took advantage of the internet's advent. Shifting my focus, I began publishing online. I've contributed to HuffingtonPost.com reaching millions of visitors. I've run sites such as Timessquare.com and launched FilmFestivalTraveler.com -- which I published and have been its editor-in-chief.

As the Arts/Features Editor for irishexaminerusa.com, I have a regular platform and regularly contribute to Times Square Chronicles and popentertainment.com. I've hosted a podcast, MUSICARTFILM, and have been a club deejay and magazine publisher. I've produced screening events, panels, workshops and media materials on self-empowerment for musicians, filmmakers and writers.

I created a media consulting company, Insider Media LLC, to advise people on their social media efforts, as well as their online and print start-ups. I have also worked on films doing everything from marketing to script work.

In '79, I discovered the SX-70 Polaroid camera. Out from its compact, sleekly designed frame came a single piece of film which developed before your eyes. But those images had a limited shelf life and would last only if properly stored. Too often, they weren't

During the '80s, I made images of celebs, hip personalities, scenes and even a few nudes. Over time, they got locked away but weren't forgotten. My work has become a goldmine for ideas, stories, articles, exhibitions and books. In digging out those visuals, the past was recalled and illuminated.

Along the way, I've saved everything — media materials, pop culture items, various photos and notes. There's a body of work I created as a writer, editor and consultant while collecting a treasure

trove of supportive materials. I've got thousands of magazines, invites, press releases, audio recordings, videos and photos. Plus, there's a vast array of vinyl, CDs and DVDs along with historic collector items like vintage comics, toys and trading cards.

For a long time, this stuff languished in storage — draining resources for no apparent reason. Finally, I decided over 10 years ago to transform this disparate mass of shit from being a hoarders' paradise/nightmare into my "Media Box."

I have hoped it will become a fully realized media institution -- where the many collections (mine and those of others) turn into source material for curated shows, master theses, fashion items, pop culture programming, design inspirations while preserving hundreds of hours of interviews and visual documents.

Wrangling this notion into reality has been an elusive goal with defeats and frustrations. But I'm determined to make the idea so successful that i'll earn a NYTimes obit — or least cause people to wax nostalgic on Facebook.

In creating and opining, I've placed myself within the world of the hip, fashionable, culture-forward and innovative. An advocate for bohemianism, cutting-edge art, progressive visions and alternative lifestyles, I've used the power of "soft culture" to advocate for social change. At times, I've taken an active role — participating in sit-ins and anti-censorship rallies, joining an anti-war march in Washington, holding classes as a guest teacher and being a motivational speaker.

I try to be adept at the latest technologies and have explored activities most would not expect of me — like trying to live off the land during winter. That's made me particular in my choices of friends and lovers — discriminating about where I hang out and who with.

Torn between a struggle for authenticity versus success, money, fame, and power, I've pinioned between one effort and another. That might have kept me from bigger accomplishments, more money and a grander public presence, but I've accomplished enough that there are BB mentions throughout the Wikipedia landscape and online. Google me and you'll see lots of stories along with a few gripes. I'm

at the point where I send a bio instead of a resume to get work.

Maybe if I didn't have Midwestern roots, I'd have a more insular NY-native perspective. I'm skeptical about explosive fame and quick burnout. I've avoided some of the emotional and physical pitfalls that others of my generation have succumbed to. But I keep plugging along.

Which brings us to today: Is this enough for a memoir? I hope so.

After writing the above, I stepped back to see what I had. In doing so, I could see what I would share with anyone who wanted to create a memoir of their own.

What of the above would I expand into a book-length memoir? What part requires me to develop the narrative, dialogue or imagery? Where does that leave the discussion for those of you out there considering your own memoir?

How do you get started? Do you create an outline or a chronology?

And that's where I come in. After working directly with so many celebrities -- writing about and with them -- I can improve your first draft or pull the story out from scratch.

The fact is, everyone's life is potentially a story to be documented — whether as a published article or a full-fledged memoir. I'm ready to help you have your own.

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Carol M. Moulton



Silence. It's time to finally live a life you feel you belong in. This is why I became a coach. I saw myself in so many women who were struggling but could not clearly identify the source of the problem. That was me. It does not have to be you.

You don't have to be stuck. You don't have to wait a minute longer to change. Make the decision you will no longer participate in a conspiracy of silence to keep you stuck and miserable. The life you want is waiting for you. All you have to do is reach out.

My Life as a Cautionary Tale

by Carol M. Moulton

The most recent KPMG Women's Leadership Summit Report' found that 75% of executive women feel imposter syndrome throughout their career; and 81% believe they put more pressure on themselves not to fail than men do.

That number is horrific, but not surprising, because I lived it too.

I was anxious to go into business for myself. Hiring my then-husband to work as a business manager, I started my own law firm with no business training, and zero mentorship. All I knew was that I needed to keep good files and make sure I got to court when I was supposed to be there.

Within the first year, I thrived. I made a lot of money and looked good doing it.

But beneath the surface, I was secretly drowning. Money was slipping through the cracks. I had no balance. No fulfillment.

A decade later, I was divorced. Broke. And still questioning if I even deserve to be successful at all.

All I could do was question myself. What happened to me? What happened to my life and the momentum I started with? How did I end up in such a bad relationship? How did I let this man destroy my life's dream?

The truth is, I fell into the same trap many of us do. I was sleepwalking through life, living a story I'd been given, focusing my pain on serving others and often spending money on things that were supposed to fill the hole.

Now you heard those statistics I gave you earlier but let me say it again a different way.

Some of the most powerful women in the workplace are walking around feeling like they don't deserve to be there. The most powerful women in the workplace are pressuring themselves to be perceived

as perfect, just to survive. The most powerful women in the workplace aren't living their best life after making it to the top.

It's a trap. And I was just one of the many women who looked successful but struggled on the inside in ways I couldn't describe.

Ladies, we've been sold a lie, and this life is killing us.

- We were told to get those degrees, those certifications, those
- letters behind our names.
- We were told to get that job, the right job, with the right pay.
- We were told to wear the right clothes and do our hair just right. (Translation: For women of color that means “professional” No braids, no locks. I am personally thankful for the CROWN Act — “Create a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair”.)
- We were told to marry this man, have those kids, buy that house.
- - We're told to buy this dress, that bag, this car.

We're asked to solve everybody's problems but our own.

And all along, there's something bubbling up inside that you can't quite name.

No, you're not crazy. You're just focused on the wrong direction.

I want to help a sister out. Heed what happened next. Change came for me when mentors and friends asked me questions, I couldn't answer. It was through their coaching that I realized how deeply I had internalized my own fear of failure. I was afraid to leave my comfort zone, afraid to make a choice that left me in an unknown place.

I needed to be married, right? People like me are married. I need to do it like this, right? People like me work this way.

I can't talk about these problems, right? People like me are stronger than that.

This is what fear of failure does to us.

It creates perfectionism, which eventually leads to inaction. How can you make decisions if you're fearful of the consequences at every step? How can you make a new choice if you've been told what all the right things are?

That mentorship I received taught me to stop looking past my own experiences and to truly dive deep into who I am, what I really need in my life, and stop ignoring problems. I had to build the skills to be courageous for the first time in my life.

The solution for me was a radical spiritual and intellectual transformation.

What I learned through this moment in my life were these 3 truths.

1. Pretending you're fine, doesn't make it so. We can sell others a fantasy but hiding from our problems -- our shame -- doesn't save us from the consequences.

I had a longtime friend, we'll call her Cheryl, who told me that she'd found herself cashing out at the dollar store with an amount equating her monthly rent. She passed it off as a casual comment, but the quiver in her voice told me there was so much more going on. While we may not go as far as spending the rent on discount items, we can find ourselves doing things to relieve the discomfort inside that ends up causing even more problems for us. Whether it's overspending, overeating, or simply sitting actionless (hours on Netflix?) when something needs to change, it all comes from the same place.

2. Life issues and work issues will collide. You can't ignore the challenges in your home and think you'll progress at work. It's all part of the same story and each one impacts the other.

My story was a perfect example of this. My husband was part of my business and his poor management of our finances left us penniless and lost me my license. I didn't take care of home, and it had a direct impact on my work life. For others, it may seem less direct, but the impact is still as deep. Your family is struggling, and you feel distracted at work. You're supporting others financially or morally and feeling drained, which impacts your ability to lead. It's all connected, so you can't allow yourself to ignore home and think it will work itself out.

3. We cannot grow, and we cannot change, with the same mindset that got us here. **We need a major shift in our consciousness to achieve our personal greatness.**

This almost sounds cliché, but it's also very true. I needed a mentor to help me see myself and my life from a different view. My mind was trained to ignore the truth, to sell a fantasy to myself and others. I was living perfectionism, fear, and refusing to change. You need to renew your mind completely in order to fully shift and become the successful person you want to be.

If you're anything like me, you're probably thinking of all the reasons you don't have the time, the energy, or the money to fix any one of the challenges swirling around in your head right now.

But hear my testimony. The cost of staying in place is far more than the cost of taking action in your life today. For me, staying in place cost me 10 years of my life, a decade of work with no savings to show for it, and years of emotional trauma from the hurt and pain of the betrayal I faced in my marriage.

Once I learned to live courageously, putting aside my perfectionism, imposter syndrome and fear, I finally knew where I belonged and how to finally become the woman of strength, I always believed I was.

Dr. Derald Wing Sue is a psychologist and has written several books on the subject of race and race relations in the United States. His books are impactful and cause us to see things we might have no desire to see. Nevertheless, if we are to grow, it is important that we look (and really see) the unvarnished truth.

In one of his books, Race Talk and the Conspiracy of Silence, Dr. Wing Sue discusses the protocols we have silently put in place (and agreed to) of Western culture and that impede authentic dialogue.

I think one of those protocols is particularly important here. Not just in the context of race but in the context of having open and honest conversations with and about yourself.

Dr. Wing Sue defines the Politeness Protocol:

“We must be nice and polite. We must take care not to offend others. We must keep conversations light, friendly, and noncontroversial. We

must avoid conflict. We must **embody different selves to maintain social harmony.**”

How does that feel? Does that fit your life? Is that YOU? Are you rewarded for always being the self-sacrificing, putting others' needs ahead of your own — even when it costs your health, wealth, and sanity? Is that really how we are to live? Is this how you present yourself on the job? Always “nice”, “non- controversial”, self-sacrificing, anything to get the job done? I am not saying there is anything inherently wrong with any of those things. It is when we are not being our true, authentic selves a problem arises.

Dr. Wing Sue discusses the Politeness Protocol and I believe many of us can find the principles Dr. Wing Sue outlines instructive for our lives. First, there is the Authentic Self — who I really am. What language do you use to express your ideas and beliefs when you are not in fear of being judged?

Can you find yourself here or is it a struggle? It can be if you are ALWAYS concerned about being judged. Judgment is harsh as it leaves no room for grace. And grace is sometimes most difficult to extend to ourselves.

I think of Maya Angelou as demonstrating this quality. Her words were life-giving and touched the soul because of the depth from which her words sprang. And the very young Amanda Gorman has picked up the torch Dr. Angelou left behind.

The next principle is the Ideal Self. This is who you think you are. Now, this one is tricky because you may think of yourself one way but present in an entirely different way. Please take a moment and reflect. How judgmental and critical are you? Is everything around you “wrong?” And if it is to be done correctly, only you can do it? It is very easy to fool yourself, thinking that you are a nice compassionate, giving person when you are actually quite the opposite.

In all honesty, this was me several years ago. I was hyper- critical of everything and everybody. I could spot a flaw from a mile away and did not think twice about sharing this information. Was it helpful? Uplifting? Godly? Not in the least. But I did not SEE it that way. I did not connect my heart to my words and found safety in being critical (perhaps so that no one would look too closely at me.)

I think of many church ladies I have known over the years. They all testify how much they love the Lord but the gossip flows, unending. No shade, just real talk. I love these folk, but I do believe they are, on the whole, some of the most un-self-aware people the good Lord ever put on this planet. And I am saying this with love, not criticism. For too long, our identity has been rooted in the church, one of the few one places Black folks had a degree of authority. That authority has not always been used well. And all too often, the very people who seek help in the church are embarrassed, thrown away, or just left feeling they want no part of anything called “church.” But as my Pastor says, “Eat the meat, throw away the bones.” If you are in a place where you are being fed spiritually, separate yourself from the other stuff and get your blessing, child.

Finally, there is the Tactical Self or what I think of as the Instagram Self. That is the Self that is heavily curated to appear perfect. Every meal is perfect. Every drive to the grocery store, perfect. Every aspect of one's life is, check, perfect. There are no babies who throw up or men who cheat. There are no money problems. They think everyone must be jealous because their life is so wonderful. Really? Can that actually be accurate of anyone's life? And how long can that curated life continue?

What happens when the baby gets sick or the man cheats or someone gets fired? What next?

Well, I suggest it is time to stop trying to lead the reality show lifestyle that is void of any semblance to reality. It is really time to stop feeling that fake is better — fake life, fake everything. I knew a woman (this is a true story, I worked with her) — who was very attractive but very insecure. She announced that she was pregnant, but the pregnancy went on for an extraordinarily long time. She was not pregnant; she was wearing a pillow. She needed to present herself to her husband as with child so he would not leave her. Did it work? Hardly. She ended up in the hospital but not in the maternity ward. My point — you can try to “fake it ‘til you make it” but it rarely works. Be the Magnificent You God called you to be. That is so much better than any fake. (“Ain't Nothing Like the Real Thing”, said Marvin Gaye and Tammi Terrell).

So - my story? Took me from Catholicism to Islam to the Protestant Church to no church but I found God. I found God in the valley, when I was in the deepest, darkest, place one can imagine. I found that a relationship with Him is better than gold. I also found God has a sense of humor. I once was talking to Him and I complained about getting older. He laughed and said, "You're old? Imagine how old I am!" That caught me so off guard, I had to laugh. God is so amazingly wonderful and loving and if you approach Him with your true self, not your curated, self-conscious, inauthentic self, but the real you — the 5-year-old you, the result will be truly amazing. Don't get hung up on the church-y stuff. The dogma and thou-shall-not's. Just breathe and know that He is God. And because He is, you are.

And all I have been through has led me to this moment. The moment where I realize my purpose on earth is to help women who have been through or are going through what I've experienced. The pain, the betrayals, the hurts but like the lotus, able to rise above,

Do you know about the lotus? It grows in mud. But emerges without a trace of it. Let that be you. You have been through some things, but you can come through without a trace of what that looked like. It was an experience, but it is not you.

It's time to be your own advocate. It's time to stop suffering in silence. It's time to finally live a life you feel you belong in. This is why I became a coach. I saw myself in so many women who were struggling but could not clearly identify the source of the problem. That was me. It does not have to be you.

You don't have to be stuck. You don't have to wait a minute longer to change. Make the decision you will no longer participate in a conspiracy of silence to keep you stuck and miserable. The life you want is waiting for you.

All you have to do is reach out. No pressure. Just pure Sister love.

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William C. Washington



William C. Washington is "Mind & Music." Becoming a living icon.

William is a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor, Clinical Hypnotherapist, IFS therapist with Black Therapist Rock, and was a collegiate level adjunct faculty and counseling mentor. He graduated from St. John's Jesuit High School, Xavier University, John Carroll University, and is currently a Ph.D.

candidate for the Health Psychology program at Walden University. William has been published as first author, advocating for better health care. He believes we should never choose the better choice, but the HEALTHY one! His passion for your success is felt when he meets you.

William has another side that keeps him grounded. He is a well-accomplished musician, trained in over nine instruments, and has been playing local, national, and international shows. William did his first international tour at 20 years old in Columbia, South America and was on tour with The Temptations. He is currently touring with internationally acclaimed Mourning [A] Blkstar while locally leading Da Land Brass Band based in Cleveland, OH. William has performed and created music in notable areas such as Cartoon Networks Adult Swim, The Kennedy Center, and Christoph Winkler Company in Germany.

During the pandemic, William started a content creating non-profit called "ViewUnity," which has successfully raised over \$10,000 with collaborators to help sick kids in hospitals. William stated, "Being myself has been the most challenging and rewarding experience of my life." William is currently looking for his next protégé.

Heal All Ways; Come with Motive, and Leave with Purpose

By William C. Washington

I grew up believing I could change the world, and I never stopped growing up. Being “William” can have so many meanings, and I found myself in some of the most challenging situations because I never understood the power of my own story. To be a Washington man in my family was to live by a standard that worked twice as hard to get half of what “they” had. As a child, I wanted to be a taxicab driver because I could always go somewhere and meet new people (before Uber was even an idea). I also thought that being a dentist would change my whole life, and my family would finally be proud of me. My brother and I (who eventually became a fantastic physician) would own a clinic together, and I would finally earn my place in the world. My family believed in the American dream, and honestly, I still do... But the sequel.

I was denied from dental schools, and it took every dream I held so dearly away. The feeling of rejection is one thing... but putting in the work, staying up late, studying all week wasn't enough. Rejection creates a brief moment where you start to question the worth of your ability and impact. The feeling of denial can sit inside you for weeks, even years, and changes how you look at needing help. I started living in a state of survival and lived in impulsive cycling, not recognizing my worth. Surviving in failure feels like window shopping, and everyone else is somehow affording everything you can't. I had to find the price of acceptance to feel like I could start again. I found that the cost of acceptance is yourself. No one else can pay for who you will become, and knowing your self-worth is living your experience to the fullest.

I sat for months trying to open doors that were not mine, and I had to learn acceptance. I went back to school to make myself more competitive for dental schools and was a janitor and musician to make money. I found my nights cleaning the facilities as one of the most peaceful times because I was a part of progress, and it let me think about the cards dealt in my life. Within the first month of being

a janitor, I got employee of the month. I was so proud of that because I give everything, I have in any situation to make sure I am myself. I accepted the certificate with such joy after going through such rejection. Two days later, I received a call asking if I wanted to play for the Temptations and I would have to move to Tennessee. I was on tour for a year and saw another lifestyle I never thought was possible. I realize you are only as open to experiences as much as you are hurt from. Being on tour and learning the stories of other artists made me think about my own story and who I truly am. I decided to go back to school, but not for dentistry. I learned that listening was a skill that everyone needed.

You see, I am a therapist by day, musician by night. Being a worldwide healer required audacity to own the story only I could tell. The more you tell your story, the less you become of it. The uncanny thing is I found my most authentic moments in my losses and hardships. Humility kept me alive. I created the Washington Wellness Institute to provide a healing center for those just as lost as I was. I was frustrated, burned out, suicidal, and unsure of how to make an impact in my life. But I had an energy that would never go away, and there was something that kept pushing me to have this attitude of wanting more.

Have you ever eaten an entire plate of food and knew you could go back in line but didn't want people to notice? When you live your purpose, you forget people are watching. I tried so hard in my life to be seen, but when I found my purpose, I only wanted to make sure I was who I needed to be for the bigger picture. You'll find that unhappy people can smell a happy person a mile away, but never taste it. After years of research in psychology and performing tours on national stages, I found one thing in common: Everyone is trying to be themselves but doesn't know if they should. It was at that moment I realized that I needed to make something that may not change the world but give someone the chance to change their world.

I created Restorative Enhancement Management, REM, to help the individual find their purpose and create internal reciprocity through a 5-step principle philosophy to address their distress. I found limitations as a therapist and wanted to go beyond sitting in a chair

for 60 mins. I found limitations as an artist and wanted to be able to live in harmony regardless of how unsure life presented itself. Even when you do the things you love, there's always more of yourself to give. REM gave me a level of peace in my purpose and let me process and heal at the same time. I couldn't believe the philosophy I made gave my clients a sense of purpose beyond my own training.

The first principle is, "The action is never the reason." I found many people who were trying to find their purpose living by motive, creating instant gratification or self-sabotage. The second principle is, "Unmet needs result in irrational behaviors." Whenever you lose who you are on the inside, you seek false things on the outside. The third principle, "Time is a resource used for limitation or application." We always feel limited when we don't understand what is truly ours to use. Invest in your autonomy and find opportunities around the corner. The fourth principle is, "Be everything, expect nothing." Understanding who you are in the spaces you show up in are accents to who you want to be. I choose competence over confidence in my experiences, and it creates healthier boundaries when owning your story. The fifth principle is, "Purpose is the human compass." When you feel unsure about why you exist, the first question is asking yourself, "What do you want to be known for?" When you finally come to your purpose, the weight of people, places and things won't hold you back as they once did. With self-awareness comes emotional responsibility.

I would use REM with clients and found them seeing their mental health and trauma decrease. It was amazing seeing their ability to become emotionally responsible actively changing. In REM you process uphill and heal downhill, giving the individual the ability to applicate their growth. Going uphill is to help gain the perspective needed to see all the obstacles in your way, but going downhill is just as careful because you have to pace the peace you learn to accept. Acknowledging the difference to make the difference separates the good from the great.

We believe, in REM, there are four emotional cancers. These emotional cancers grow within you and cause you to live by motives, which remove you from your purpose. The four emotional cancers are the following: reactions, rationalizing, regret, and

resentment. There are things in your life that have gone unresolved or unanswered and unfortunately, they still live in how we interact day to day. When you react and not respond, you mentally lose your integrity, feeling emotionally compromised. Think about all the times you had challenging moments and thought of the perfect response after the fact. When you begin rationalizing the importance of how you feel, you let others decide how much you matter moving forward. That moment can create regret if you don't address the issues that caused you stress. Resentment is knowing what the problem is, but you feel helpless, and unwanted behaviors or feelings occur. This creates negative projections or deflections. REM helped me navigate processing and restoring the motive-based feelings.

I couldn't believe that every moment I experienced in life fell under a principle of REM, and what was even better was that I felt in control of myself, even when I was lost. I saw REM changing people in ways I never saw in standard therapeutic work. They could take REM with them, live through it, and make it something special on their own. I teach that therapy happens in the session, and healing happens in the application. REM became the answer.

I can't think of having a bad day anymore because, with options, there are results I can choose from. Motives have become red flags when discovering the truth in intention for me and others. The hardest thing right now to accept in today's society is living in a world you don't choose yourself in. These principles gave me five reasons to think bigger, be bigger, and live bigger. I found my stress had a story, and there was nurturing that was needed. I knew I was the main character of my story, but I needed to be a better writer, and REM gave me the preparation to get back to that. I stand today healing the world of others, fulfilling my dream to be a cycle breaker.

I never thought that Restorative Enhancement Management would become the foundation of my dream and the answer to so many other people. I simply knew that I wanted to wake up knowing I had a way of life that celebrated who I am. Purpose is a beautiful thing because it has no direction, it is a way of life, and you are invited to hold onto your own. You are the compass in your journey if you believe

in what you do. Internal reciprocity is knowing you're worth and spending everything you got. You still feel enough after every moment because it is meaningful. So back to dinner, Are you ready for the next plate?

To contact William:

If you want to contact, become part of the REM journey, or want guidance, please contact me at info@wwillc.org. Look at our website, www.washingtonwellnessinstitute.org, and follow on Facebook or IG (@Wash_Wellness). We are also on Youtube as Washington Wellness Institute.

Diane A. Curran



Steeped in the creative arts from her earliest memories, Diane A. Curran, The Wow Whisperer, is passionate about the role and value of high-performance communications in life, business marketing, and the classic fine arts, especially painting, design and modern media. She is a branding expert and marketing consultant and who makes marketing creative for audiences via messaging, design, and interactive strategies.

Some people consider speaking in public a fate worse than almost anything. Diane's gigs include 4600+ public speaking presentations, art tours led, media performances, teaching, training, and leading events of many types and audience sizes. Add 3000+ networking events in her career, and she has a wealth of secrets and stories she's always delighted to share.

With marketing & creative projects done for thousands of professionals shaping her vision, she knows the pulse of the good, the ugly and the extraordinary that impacts communications success. A fountain of creativity, Diane knows what's missing in most presentations is ease, play and connection.

Diane's signature podcast is "Wow Whispering" for which she is developing her third series for airing. You can find it on Podopolo, Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, Amazon, Podbean, and Google, where she and her guests from many walks of life explore wows and whispers in the Heart of Conversation, and exchange original ideas in warm, engaging episodes.

How Do You Know When You're Been Wowed?

By Diane A. Curran

Truth be told, wow itself is a quirky word. Most people can't give you a definition for it at all. And I've asked!

There's barely a worthwhile definition in any dictionary that I've opened, none to pinpoint its real energy. Yet the word wow has been traced back to the Scots in history, with its first recorded appearance in the early 16th century.

Yet people certainly do know when they're in the midst of feeling wowed.

When the word "Wow!" is voiced, you, or maybe someone near you, is having a moment. You can tell by how people slip into a faraway dreamy look when you ask them to remember a wow they've felt or seen.

How Business Can Wow

I became fascinated with the word wow itself in my own business a couple of decades in... ever since I started noticing that clients would often say just one word when I unveiled creative branding and logo graphics or shared a new communications concept for their growth.

"Wow!" they'd say.

That single, unprompted, indefinable word. It held everything from emotional excitement to visions of possibility, and quickening questions about what to do next. All in a word with just three little letters and no universal definition.

I heard "Wow!" enough that I took it on for my own business branding. People naturally smiled about "The Art and Science of Your Wow! Factor" when I said it. When heading to the podium or microphone in networking groups, people would just shout "Wow!" and we'd grin at each other, as I said nothing... and smiled a split second longer than you might expect. My audience knew there was

a swift riddle or story snippet coming, and they were up for being surprised by me with something they couldn't predict I'd say.

Wow wasn't about shocking my audience, and definitely not about hard sell or shouting them into submission. It was always about opening us up to be together—to enter the unknown, where we could “Wow!” together.

Your audience is always the smartest brain trust in the room, real or virtual. They give the courtesy of their time while holding their smarts close to the vest as they size you up, skeptical faces politely veiled.

Any audience always wants more of the real wows. Like the puppy that races to retrieve the ball, then bounds toward you so excited for you throw it again that sometimes they forget to drop the ball first. Maybe they want a little fun chase. Then again and again they run back to you, until you're both out of breath, you laughing, their tongue wagging, happy to sit, pant and relax together.

It's tempting to consider money as the ultimate measure for wow in business. We live in an era when not only businesses, but institutions of all kinds try to define themselves with money and metrics. They are measurable, with a surface aura of objectivity, commandeering the mic, demanding attention as they compete to win biggest-as-best.

I propose something more magnetic as evidence that wow is in the air.

Wow brings you and others together.

Whether it's you and your clients, you and your team, you and your larger community, there is an exchange of value more far-reaching than money or winning against others in the metrics trap.

Wow joins you and others together in shared experiences of inspiration, transformation, and even trust. It's naturally magnetic.

Notice when you and those you seek to connect with have done so, because wow is in the mix, and trust and loyalty are about to arise authentically,

How Dreams Can Wow

Dreams can wow if you give them enough room to reveal their messages.

Dream One: Runway Nightmare

Some of you may know of a TV reality series about fashion runways that's been on air for at least 18 years. I'm a devoted fan, and pore over the details of every episode with a close friend every time it's on.

Well, one day, my dreamtime self-decided it was time to make my leap into fashion design at warp speed. Or more accurately, wrap speed! I call it My Fashion Runway Early Morning Nightmare.

We join this dream already in progress, as often happens to me...

Three other remaining competitors plus myself were left in the semi-finals. We were given a surprise assignment to work inside a floaty funky weird, overstuffed boutique.

Our clients were ladies who were very pretty, but they had never been professional models. They would choose their own fabric and go buy it, but not at the legendary fabric store used in most episodes. Uh oh!

We were supposed to design and sew three "looks" each, compressed into a single 4- or 5-hour stretch of time.

My lady was very late arriving, then went to go in search of fabric for her task but came back with no fabric at all after a long time.

Now I had only 15 minutes to come up with all three looks, plus no workspace, no sewing machine, no table, and no fabric. So, I pulled scarves from the boutique's retail displays to pin together a dress.

My model expected she would now go get hair & makeup done. I decided, "No makeup, no hair. Stay right here!!" and the show's producer & another designer supported me.

I started the first look with four scarves I'd found with shoes and jewelry from inside the boutique. I pinned one scarf into a wrap with faux dolman sleeves. The other three scarves made up the draped-pinned dress itself. I had more scarves for other looks, but absolutely no time to make them, eek. But at least my model was not naked for the runway!

Suddenly, I woke at dawn, despite trying to actually stay asleep and use last the 15 minutes before the runway show, hoping I could dream them all into existence on time.

Alas, no more time to finish, either the fashion looks or the dream...

So I got up in real life, and bee-lined to my computer. Scribbling a few words to document this vision would not suffice, so I launched my graphics software and drew that fashion ensemble at break-neck speed while I could remember it, visualizing what I had created as the dream's look #1. Nightmare over ;-) Whew.

I posted the illustration and dream summary on one of my social media pages right away. I never did get to finish the dream and find out if I won against all odds. Exhausted, I was wowed by somehow bridging the gap from dreamtime designing to real world art illustration.

Dream Two: Dream Home

In the midst of a 1990s long-distance romance (me in CA, he in AZ) I had an unusually vivid dream one night. Mostly, I forget my dreams, because as you can read in the one above, they can be exhausting!

Anyway, I was living in The Valley in LA, in an architecturally boring 1BR cookie-cutter 70's era apartment building at that time.

The dream floats into my sleep time... and I realize I'm being shown a new apartment that looks suspiciously like a cottage of the tiny kind.

It has dark interior wood paneling, but it looks nicely handcrafted. It seems to have vertical casement windows in its one-room corners, and some sort of built-ins everywhere to store books, canned goods, decorations, clothing, you name it. It reminds me of the super spare little cottages that dotted Cape Cod in Massachusetts where I'd stayed overnight with my dad and brother twice as a treat while a kid. Because they were summer cottages, they were not insulated, and they used the support beams and bracing slats as storage shelf cubbyholes.

As I was looking at this and marveling at this cottage's little nooks, my current romantic partner floated into the dream (... people never

seem to walk in my dreams; they float with the greatest of ease) and I telepathically asked him how he liked it.

Naturally, I woke up without his answer, or what this little cottage/studio was all about, so I called him on the phone in real life to ask what he thought it meant. His answer was simply “I don’t know.” Alrighty then!

Well, not long after, the pre-dawn Northridge Earthquake bounced me out of bed in my boring apartment (I was too close for comfort to the epicenter, so bouncing was indeed the operative word) almost 24 hours to the minute the day after my mother had died on the East coast.

Suddenly in the aftermath, while shivering through repeated aftershocks as I thought about my Mum’s eternal adventure just beginning, I was in the market for a new place to live. At a random rental-finder service popular at the time, I found an attached guest house, surrounded by a garden my mother would have loved, and was selected from many applicants to move in.

Yes, it was really quite tiny, but thankfully only one story, no one above or below me, and my jangled nerves felt safer by the hour. A few days after moving in, with it barely furnished, I was sitting in an armchair in the middle of this tiny studio when my eyes finally opened to the the details of my surroundings.

This very studio, with its handcrafted paneling, corner casement windows, and cleverly inset built-in cabinets and closets abounding, was the cottage from my dream! Wow was the only word that would do.

Dreams have no interest in something most of us allow to run (ruin?) our lives.

Time. And especially the clocks we invented to measure time.

The two dreams I shared here treated time completely differently as I reconsider them.

The Dream Home had no clock, and no mention of time at all. If anything, it assumed an aura of being in the present, which I was unable to place in any context that I could act upon when I awoke.

The Runway Nightmare was utterly time-obsessed, with 15-minute deadlines stoking impending doom for me at every moment in the contest at hand. None of the tasks went according to plan!

Yet both dreams wowed me in their own way. Together they wove a bigger story, years apart, and only now is it dawning on me consciously.

With the Dream Home, I was wowed in mere weeks of real life. I was bounced into a completely new home, and had no clue from the dream, or any interpretation I sought out, that this was about to happen, and quickly. Earthquakes have a way of reminding us how much the unknown runs the show!

For the Runway Nightmare, I felt compelled by its energy to race in real life to use my computer and draw the dream's dress design. I suppose it's not that different than doing fast-paced design work for clients when inspiration comes to me from the ethers or waking dreams.

I felt I was failing in that Runway Nightmare, as it tore away from me before I could finish my task. Little did I know that the invisible cosmic clock was counting down that frantic 15 minutes for five long years until a worldwide pandemic truncated not just my plans, but everyone's tasks, timetables, health, and many precious goals and dreams. I'd never expected such a glacially slow reveal to a wow.

The Wow of Dreams requires us to stay present while being grounded in both patience and action.

Patience and action are not born enemies, no matter how often we humans set them against each other. An elusive secret is that we can make them allies within ourselves. Slow and fast each have a contribution to make. For me, slowing down enough to feel grounded corrects my habit of racing so fast in daily life that I run out of time, oddly enough. The pandemic gave me plenty of time to practice all that as even non-Covid health challenges demanded that I slow way down. Wow!

The Wow of Dreams has an added bonus to offer once you start embracing patience and action as allies. That's when it begins to drop hints about the power of Not Knowing. Shhh! Lest our noisy

curiosity chase Not Knowing back into unfathomable shadows. I'll be quiet about this for now and move on.

Is It Time to Offer a Definition of Wow?

We may have started wandering through our own memories of wow as these dream vignettes unfolded here.

A few years ago, I created what follows as a definition, and it continues to open up my perspective on what wow is. Diane's definition...

Wow: An Intuitive, instinctive expression voiced in awe, pleasure, or stun when presented with the unexpected.

We've touched on several of the more appealing aspects of wow, but one we have not yet explored jumps out in this definition.

The Challenges of Stun

Consider that we know we're inside a "Wow" when we say it out loud spontaneously, often unaware we're about to say it. It's stimulated by moments of awe, or pleasure, or even the "stunning" excitement of beauty, joy, or a delightful surprise.

We even use the word stunning as shorthand for beautiful, dazzling, breathtakingly attractive.

But we know that the word stun can signal experience of a very different kind.

As I write these words, we've navigated the often stunning and tragic difficulties of a worldwide pandemic. It has taught us the hard way that the unexpected is woven into the very essence of life.

Definitions attempt to evoke nuances that words seek to explain objectively. Words are meant to be useful in clarifying meaning.

When we learn a new language, we go at it much faster than babies do, usually thinking and memorizing rather than simply immersing ourselves in a lived experience. We are often frustrated by what are called idiomatic expressions that convey the energy behind an often-illogical combination of words that native speakers grasp deeply in their psyches.

The energy behind words is what we hint at when we say we have a meeting of the minds with someone, or we refer to a special someone as a soulmate or kindred spirit. We want to go beyond words to enjoy common understanding, common connection and common ground.

Words seek to evoke the energy of wow.

However, in a world still grappling with health mysteries not yet tamed, environmental factors far from resolved, inequities and much more, we humans are also an example of the destructive reality of what stun can mean.

Stun can surface amidst overwhelm, conflict, violence, war, and fear.

Fear is considered a primal emotion, and our reactions to it are often instinctive, which speaks to a core aspect of wow.

We've seen others, maybe even found ourselves, caught short of breath at some awful moment, saying "Wow!" as an expression of revulsion. It strikes unexpectedly.

Stun often means being shocked into a temporary inability to react, or worse, to being knocked or dazed into an unconscious state. We're frozen spectators, unable to look away or resolve what stuns us in those moments.

How Life Can Wow

My suggested definition of wow intentionally combines the the intuitive and instinctive. This is intended to provide a new option to remind us that we humans have the power to forge new neural pathways, even under duress, that do not dead-end in permanent entrapment, or the subjugation that destructive stunning is meant to impose.

We can instead ally the power of intuition and instinct. In recognizing that they are often treated as opposites in their emotional root and physical expression, we can learn that they are not opposites.

Just as I suggested that patience and action are not born enemies, and that we can make them allies within ourselves, so it is with intuition and instinct.

When intuition and instinct align, then further ally with patience and action, no amount of destructive intention can outlast what they make possible. Because what they make possible opens up many new healing pathways.

And when fear learns that Not Knowing is not its enemy, fear can discover that war in all its horror is not the final arbiter or ruler it claims to be.

Have You Been Wowed Lately?

To help us answer this question, I'd like to pair the word wow with another of my favorite words... whispering. Naturally I have a definition to offer for that word, too. Diane's definition...

Whispering: Using a soft, confidential tone or manner to hint at or deliver a private message.

Each of these words seemed to possess very different energy signatures.

Wow is Spontaneous. Open. Expressive.

Whispering is Intimate. Still. Receptive.

People's self-expression often seems to gravitate more toward one or the other, though in reality we are a unique and variable blend of both.

In fact we need to ponder both wows and whispers when we consider what messages, impulses, and inspirations have caught our attention lately.

How receptive are you to wise whispers, or exuberant wows, or both? They help you focus on what's now or next for you, bringing you present to inner guidance, the light of spirit, or a higher power of inspiration.

You may hold certain whispers deep in your heart, quietly nurturing them as a source of nourishment, rest, and respite for your own peace of mind.

You may relish more public excitement, risks, or adventures, freely sharing your gung-ho energy as you live life like there's every tomorrow.

Life is overflowing with the unexpected, a capable partner to the unknown. "Not Knowing" frees you to notice the wows and whispers arising in your life's ebb and flow.

Your unique, ever-fluid journey is your gift to all of us, and we thank you in advance for the discoveries you'll make and share with us.

Let people wow you, one at a time or collectively, just as you're already wowing us!

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Dr. Jackie Lau



Dr. Jackie Lau is a neuroscientist and an award-winning international life coach, who is fascinated with human behaviors and the mechanisms underlying our mental and emotional states. With a deep appreciation for the integrative approach of modern psychology, neuroscience and spirituality, Jackie is a top life coach in Australia and has co-created with people all over the world to radically transform into more self-awareness, sense of

purpose and inner freedom.

Jackie is trained as a strategic interventionist and breakthrough specialist, which combines effective techniques evolved from neurolinguistic, psychological, and therapeutic inter-disciplines. As a curious researcher, Jackie completed her Ph.D. in neuroscience at the Garvan Institute of Medical Research, Sydney Australia, studying the neural circuits governing motivation and reward. She is currently researching on neurodegenerative diseases in Hong Kong, investigating the molecular basis relating neuroplasticity to cognition.

Leveraging her diverse cultural background, Jackie is profoundly devoted to studying Eastern and Western philosophy and literatures, learning transformative wisdom from influential spiritual teachers. She loves the art of music and dance. Jackie is trained as a classical violinist from a young age, later on discovered her passion in classical guitar, and has also been a dedicated hip-hop dancer and instructor since her college years.

Jackie's vision is to empower the human family to tune in consciously and align with our authentic virtuous Self, to live passionately and creatively with full presence.

From self-love to Self-love

By Dr. Jackie Lau

I. Coincidence or guidance?

Our experience of life can be complicated until it can be not. It can be one with millions of decisions leading to another decision at any point in time, or one with millions of decisions leading to the letting go of resistance to guided intuitions.

Get curious with the gift of your sense of resistance, it offers more wisdom and cosmic comfort than all perceived conveniences combined.

It was 4:00 in the morning. I was still sitting at McDonald's hogging a quiet spot next to a plug socket, determined to aimlessly watch stand-up comedy specials on my laptop till my next flight in three hours.

After all it was finally the Christmas season, I could not be more ready to take a break and see my folks after a week-long conference in Germany and plentiful sleep deprivation halfway through grad school.

*“The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell you.
Don't go back to sleep.
You must ask for what you really want.
Don't go back to sleep.
People are going back and forth across the doorsill where
the two worlds touch.
The door is round and open.
Don't go back to sleep.”*
— Rumi

Just as I was simultaneously dozing off and vigilantly noticing how freakishly quiet the familiar Kuala Lumpur International Airport was, considering it was the festive season.

“Excuse me?” A woman in her 50s with black frame glasses asked politely. “Where can I find an adaptor for charging my phone?” Her accent gave her away that she's a fellow Aussie.

“Don’t think you can find anything in the wee hours. Happy to be your savior with the collection of charging cables I’ve got.” I put on a cheeky smile, gesturing for her to sit next to me - at this point I would enjoy any company.

We spent the next three hours sharing wonders.

With her beautiful child-like spirit and kind eyes, I wasn’t surprised yet felt incredibly delighted to learn that she was the founder at Wellspring Initiative Cambodia – an organization founded in 2013, working on the streets with the “invisible” community of homeless children and their families, some were found begging at the traffic lights, to bring God's love and transformation in Phnom Penh Cambodia.

It was a seemingly simple encounter that spoke to and touched my heart on many levels, particularly at a stage of my felt existential and identity crisis. Despite having the fortune to have never experienced any of the four mental breakdowns on average per doctorate degree that others speak of, I was inevitably going through waves of overwhelm as a young neuroscientist – the futility of the academic publishing machine, the unforeseeable translatability of medical research to meaningful health practices, the incessant search for fulfilment through an external identity and a functional role.

“May I offer you a prayer?” She placed her hand on my forehead with a beatific smile, interrupting my deep thoughts with an inexplicable sense of knowingness that “This has to be the long-awaited profound experience that opens me to myself.”

“I can see the shadow of you on a mountaintop, in front of a herd of sheep...” She opened her eyes and realized it was time to run for her connecting flight to Melbourne.

I was left spellbound and deeply humbled, with an intense realization of the unmistakable and auspicious sign of a powerful shift within me, one that is revealed many years later to serve as a beacon for my journey to alignment, expansion and service.

II. Self-love: inheritance or birthright?

With a deep appreciation for the combinative approach of neurolinguistic, psychological, and spiritual inter-disciplines, I have co-created with people all over the world in the last decade to transform into more self-awareness, sense of purpose and inner freedom. Along the path of transcendence into self-realization, one theme that we always wind up with no matter the challenge, from trauma to relationships to business building, is “self-love”.

“Love is a state of Being. Your love is not outside; it is deep within you. You can never lose it, and it cannot leave you. It is not dependent on some other body, some external form.” — Eckhart Tolle

We are often told that love, or love for oneself, is an intrinsic capacity, both innate and inherited; it does not depend on any external circumstances or personal traits. Why, then, do we feel that “self-love” is so hard to attain? We are not looking for rainbow and unicorn, but a default felt sense of joy and contentment. Why the cross-cultural, cross-gender, cross-age struggle?

What if we have got it the other way round all long? Rather than “effort-ing”: to figure out how to attain “self-love”, and to seek something that is perceived as outside of ourselves...what if we start “love-ing”: to first understand how we have blocked ourselves from recognizing this natural state, and to relax the patterns that hinder connection to our true nature?

To tune in and truly see the blocks we have built around our own love opens the gateway to grace and flow.

III. “Self”-love does not rely on “otherness”

“Respect was invented to cover the empty place where love should be.” — Leo Tolstoy

So much about the theme of “self-love” is conceptualized around a sense of separation with others today.

It may be fair to say that people cross paths in the “self-love” ideation often have had our fair bit of sufferings due to external circumstances and our ongoing relationships to them. Let’s take things simply, humbly and lovingly.

There is much and increasing attention given in our society to the invention and use of terminology that emboldens the illusion that we are separate – narcissists, sociopaths, malignant people, energy vampires, etc. And then there are the ones that gained instant creditability and armor through coating with seemingly righteous and positive connotations, such as healthy boundaries, spiritual boundaries, private life, personal matter.

It is tempting, especially when we feel pain, to conclude situations or people with a simple label, with a self-diagnosis or a self-directed diagnosis of others, without attempting to understand the source and cause of such perception.

“There are no facts, only interpretations.” — Friedrich Nietzsche

Question is, how much of our interpretations is actually the reflection of our own projections or shadow?

All forms of generalization are created to soothe our hurt expectations from specific events or people, to move our attention from a curious and intimate place to one of complacency, apathy and resistance to understand the “general groups”.

“He wouldn’t answer my calls, exactly like what they say about them narcissists!”

“Asian parents are all like this, why bother telling them my dream of becoming a comedian. I’m not ready to be a doctor or a lawyer anytime soon...”

“I should stop hanging out with them vegan paleo keto fanatics, they are always on my back about every food item I barely glanced at.”

We invent internal dialogues to externalize how we truly feel; all forms of perceived rejection operate ultimately through our sense of powerlessness against another.

Imagine a state of being, where a deep sense of peace and wellbeing does not rely on our guardedness from others whom we perceive, from their temporary expressions, as “weak” or “negative” or “toxic” - fleeting traits that we sometimes also unconsciously exhibit.

IV. Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the barest of them all?

“Projection is one of the commonest psychic phenomena...Everything that is unconscious in ourselves we discover in our neighbour, and we treat him accordingly.... Not that these others are wholly without blame, for even the worst projection is at least hung on a hook, perhaps a very small one, but still a hook offered by the other person.” — Carl Jung

What we see in others often serves as a reflection of our relationship with ourselves - the way we connect with others starts with connectedness within.

Let’s suspend any resistance and skepticism for a moment, and be open to the idea that, given the same life experiences, past conditioning, core values, level of consciousness, we would all do exactly the same as another.

To be more specific, what if our tendency to externalize our source of discomfort is the cause AND result of emotions that have been repressed, suppressed and avoided? And the resistance to look within is putting us at a default state of heightened involuntary reactivity? Hence more vulnerable to the temptations of separateness and further externalization?

We therefore see the world through the lens of our unresolved emotions and are ready to identify anything as triggers for us to react to, as means to release some of the constant tension that we feel. This projection mechanism is often manifested as externalization of the disconnection we feel with ourselves on the inside – subconsciously or unconsciously, we set heavy boundaries with others in order to normalize a sense of disintegration with ourselves.

“When you squeeze an orange, you'll always get orange juice to come out. It doesn't matter who does the squeezing. What comes out is what's inside.” — Wayne Dyer

Here is an example of a common pattern we go into for nursing our sense of otherness: in order to avoid confronting our inner issues, we create mental scenarios where we conclude another’s identity through selectively labeling their momentary expressions, to which we felt victimized. We then get fixated on our version of the story

through perpetually casting ourselves the victim and avoidance of confrontation with another, for consideration and understanding of another's perspectives in a real conversation may threaten the sense of significance we get from blaming. In time, to stay in the "at effect" position and escape from external and internal confrontation, we go into false acceptance and generalize this projection as the nature of the world.

We have all heard "It is what it is. I have tried and some people are just like this. I pick my battles...with some people, you just have no control."

What if, as law of attraction puts simply, because we reject and avoid ourselves, we perceive others as rejecting and avoiding us. We are then triggered to reject and avoid others first before feeling our own rejection and avoidance. It is almost like a "self"-regulating feedback loop.

Eventually, the progressive externalization of our feelings and experiences becomes some type of social conditioning in our society — we all live in a big bubble of choppy connections derived from self-denial packaged as political correctness, comprising smaller isolated bubbles of individuals tiptoeing around shinny mirrors of self-reflection.

V. The little s and the big S. Does size really matter?

"Whenever two people meet, there are really six people present. There is each man as he sees himself, each man as the other person sees him, and each man as he really is." — William James

What if I propose to you that self-love can be realized and actualized simply through the process of recognizing the "Self"?

Our disintegrated selves feed on the disintegration between the little self and the big Self. As much as we know that words and labels don't really represent the true essence of anything other than the trap of the intellect, yet since the language we use shapes our model of the world, and the concepts about ourselves and others, let's willingly get stuck on the level of words for a moment.

Most of who we think we are derives from the little self – ego identity, the survivor, dualistic, "self"-seeking through sense of

separation from others, fear-based judgements and “at effect” victimhood.

And then there is the big Self, the undefined and unmanifested, the “at cause” creator, non-dualistic, one-with-all consciousness.

“The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao; The name that can be named is not the eternal name. The nameless is the beginning of heaven and earth.” — Laozi

Much like “Oh this must be a moment of no-thought that the masters speak of!” during meditation, which is itself a thought, identification with the big Self is just another attempt to feed the ego identity, or specifically the spiritual ego, through spiritual materialism.

The Self is inconceivable yet impeccable, and is often retrospectively realized through our inner awareness, from then on it cannot be un-realized or un-known.

“No matter what the practice or teaching, ego loves to wait in ambush to appropriate spirituality for its own survival and gain.”
— Chögyam Trungpa

Imagine a forgetful frog that wakes up every day with amnesia. One day, having spent most of the afternoon on a marshland, he decides to explore the neighborhood and stumbles across a lake. Seeing water for the first time, curiosity gets the best of him. He dips one leg to test the depth of the water. To his surprise, he instantly feels revitalized by the moisture soaked through his skin into his body. Only then did he realize how dried out his skin has been. He can no longer deny his natural inclination to return to his home of water — suddenly he remembers, that is where he started off as a tadpole.

This is basically how we live – letting the little self run the show until our skin dries out and we can no longer deny the big Self.

“You say, I’ll make believe you are who you think you are if you make believe I am who I think I am.” — Ram Dass

Most of us are conditioned and socialized to compulsively conceptualize who we are through what we have, what we know, and what we do. We categorize our and others’ actions and behaviors, as soon as they come into our awareness, as some polarized things with a degree of intrinsic goodness or badness, to

constantly feed our egoic mind's need for dualism. Our sensitivity to life is compromised when we live in this predicament – we miss the essence of our vision outside our predetermined knee-jerk reactions to situations; we miss the beauty of Beings, independent of their relationship and function to solely our “selves”.

“The moment people remember that they’ve forgotten is a moment of grace.” — Barbara De Angelis

The journey of Self-transformation has begun with our willingness to see the misalignment and alignment within our “selves”, and between ourselves and others, to come to realize the nature of reality.

Instead of falling into the habitual entrapment of dualistic judgement and resistance, we can allow more. Gently tune into a sense of curiosity and acceptance, to give more rather than to demand for more, to see a more harmonic world.

Our curiosity about ourselves and others is directly proportional to our degree of openness to express our authentic Self.

VI. Expanding awareness to the impersonal oneness

When I stop believing in opposites, I see myself in all.

Have you ever wondered that everything we say, know and do is picked up from someone and somewhere else, in order to socialize and be socialized, to condition and re-condition, to learn and unlearn? There is no such actual thing as “my” rituals, “my” ways, “my” life. We all exist in relation and connection to the ever evolving everything else.

There come the questions, “Must I fear what others fear?” “Are my fears even mine?” “If not, where did I pick them up and when do I put them down?”

Consider that – change is natural. There is actually immense energy going into staying the same in stagnation, into resisting the natural waves of change and the rhythm of nature.

Perhaps, ‘I invented nothing’ is a helpful reminder for an ongoing return to flexibility and sensitivity to life.

Since all human experience comes from within, what if we can turn our strength and effort for self-protection and survival reinforcement into power for Self-awareness and unity?

“First there is a mountain, then there is no mountain, then there is.” — Donovan Leitch, inspired by Qingyuan Weixin

Unity and oneness is not defined or potentiated by a lack of diversity, or fear of differences, it is an innate place of raw peace and creation that we spontaneously return to, where ego dances, openness and love shines — all part of the divine play.

Through profound introspection on the paths to inner freedom, one can realize the kind of transcendent connection with the infinite oneness that is within all of us, through which we can connect with each other in a different way, collectively we can have a different kind of power.

“With great power comes great responsibility.” — François-Marie Arouet (or Uncle Ben in Spider-Man)

VII. Healing from self-love to Self-love

Self-love does not depend on the others, nor the seeming otherness of the seeming others.

Much attention has been placed on the theme of “healing” in the self-“help” communities. Is it actually helpful to focus on “healing”?

There is every day healing from mental and emotional loads, to cleanse our mind and body from external and internal stimuli and thought forms and reactionary cravings. It is wonderful to bring awareness to “unloading”.

On the other side, there is to heal “from an experience” or “from the past”, presupposing there is a place of significance in the past, where originated the gap between the “less-than-whole” and the “whole” Self.

In this sense, the concept of healing is affixed to the idea of the past combined with the identification with an “at effect” mental position with past events.

To “heal” then presupposes us to first come from a place of “lack”, and through the process of healing, return to wholeness — some form of destination or endpoint to get to eventually.

What if there is nothing missing inside of you?

All forms of true healing are rooted in acceptance, accepting the totality of life, recognizing the seemingly undesirable life situations are all part of a non-dualistic cosmic dance, part of who we are. Therefore, less-than-ness can only be created through perceived “shouldn’t be’s — discrepancies derived from comparing the meanings we give to “what is” versus “what I think would be favorable to my manifested forms”.

To let go of suffering and the barrier against Self-love is to let go of the need to be identified with the consequences we associate with certain events that life entails, and the reiterated past stories thereof, to let go of our egoic need for victimhood, to recognize the possibility of an expiry date to what we no longer need to re-activate in our vibrations.

If we go beyond the illusory sense of “self” identified through past conditioning and events, and just be present — there is nothing to do, nowhere to be, no destination to get to or achieve. There is nothing to overcome to get to the other side to resume our wholeness — it is an uncaused default state of Being.

If you listen to silence, you will hear a peaceful presence where infinite creativity lives.

Awaken your inner potential, live in authentic Self-love, one that is rooted in inclusion rather than exclusion, inward focus rather than outward focus.

Allow connection to the profound knowingness of our infinite, all-encompassing present Being, then just learn and grow, from and be in the here and now.

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Eleanor Oliver-Edmonds



Eleanor (Elle) Oliver-Edmonds is a writer, certified virtual coach, and speaker. She masterfully evolved her 25+ years of experience as a creative strategist to leading workshops and masterclasses designed to support women as they make bold transitions in their lives. She began coaching health and wellness clients over 7 years ago and broadened her focus to better serve their big-picture goals. She founded the “Elevate Your Dream” community, a collaborative space for aspiring women entrepreneurs, empty nesters seeking a career change, and women exploring meaningful personal growth.

Elle understands sustainable change is an inside-out process. She created S.H.I.F.T., the 5 transformational pillars Elle integrates into her 1-on-1 and group coaching programs. The purposeful principles are based on years of research, a lifetime of personal development and countless hours of applied learning. They are the guiding principles Elle relied on to rebuild her own life after loss of job, marriage, home and business. Affectionately called “Coach Elle in Coachella,” by her clients, she brings heartfelt authenticity and transparency as she empowers her clients to courageously bring their dreams to fruition. She has written numerous articles on mindset and personal development and has appeared as a guest speaker in live workshops, online forums and conferences. The philosophy she lives by is to create a ripple effect, whereby the positive actions of one impact many.

How Get in Alignment with Your Purpose

By Eleanor Oliver-Edmonds

“We took a little tumble in mommy’s new car.” Those are the words my then seven-year-old son said the first responders who found us at the bottom of a C-curve embankment. It was more than a tumble, we rolled two full rotations in our 4 days-new Land Rover as we merged from the 710 freeway in Long Beach onto the notorious 405 freeway. I always dreaded this stretch of freeway, the cargo trucks barreling alongside the cars made me nervous. Until our unexpected incident, the day had been uneventful, we spent an impromptu fun-filled summer day at the aquarium. My oldest son made a smart aleck remark which cost him his front seat privileges; he was not happy to be relegated to the back seat with his younger brother. I still find it incredulous how that turned out for the best.

When the first responders arrived, their initial looks of astonishment were almost comical. One firefighter kept asking me to clarify who was in the car with me. It’s obvious they did not anticipate walking onto an accident scene of a rolled car to find said car on all four wheels without any visible damage, two kids sitting on a downed telephone pole (one playing a hand-held video game and the other reading a book) and a barefoot woman (my shoes fell out of the open sunroom) calmly talking to a man. Miraculously, I didn’t suffer any burns when the driver-side airbag deployed and thankfully, since my son rode in the backseat, the passenger airbag did not deploy. My only visible “injury” was a rug-like burn on my shoulder from the seatbelt. As I answered questions for the police report, I looked up at the freeway, and wondered: why every time I tried to get ahead, something always seemed to happen to knock me down? Later that evening as I took a much-needed soak in the bathtub, I breathed a sigh of gratitude that the boys and I were safe at home safe. Perhaps my lowest point was behind me. It turned out I was wrong.

In the years prior to the accident, in place of New Year’s resolutions, I would choose a specific word to reflect the characteristics I wanted to embody for the coming year. The year I chose “integrity,” I had questioned whether or not I was honoring my word with myself and

others. The universe truly has a wicked sense of humor because over the course of 12 months, every individual without an ounce of integrity crossed my path. Lesson learned. Next, I chose “strength,” I wanting to work on speaking and standing up for myself in my marriage and career. Five months into that year, my father passed away from a massive heart attack. I planned his funeral with my siblings, and despite my fractured relationship with my father, delivered his eulogy. I discovered an inner strength and resilience I didn’t know existed in me. Four months later, “strength” delivered one more unpleasant surprise, I was laid off from my dream job of eight years. I experienced a tremendous year of growth realized I already possessed the traits I desired. However, I still hadn’t connected the dots to fully understand the power of intentions.

The year I rolled my car I chose “clarity” because something felt off balance in my world. Clarity was a dizzying time filled with dichotomies. With the determined precision of a surgeon deftly wielding a scalpel, over 18 months, “clarity” exposed and excised every malignancy. Clarity revealed what I knew in my gut to be true but lacked conviction to act on. This season was also filled with epic breakthroughs; I launched my freelance copywriting business, earned more money in my first year of business than at my corporate job, relocated and purchased a lovely home and launched a second business, an insurance agency.

It appeared the dust had finally settled, and I began to feel confident in my new life as a single mom and entrepreneur. Despite my outward successes and transitions, I found myself suffering from imposter syndrome. In the words of Sunil Khandbahale, MIT Sloan Fellow and entrepreneur, “Good, bad, or ugly we are the co-creators of our universe.” I routinely found myself doubting my wins. Just as my single-word intentions manifested powerful outcomes, fear fortified my negative self-talk and hissed at me in my foe’s voice, “You’re worthless.”

Less than four years of opening my insurance agency, I suffered several more devastating personal blows and then the real estate bubble burst and tanked the economy. My negative mantra became a self-fulfilling prophecy: I was forced to close my agency, lost my home and my life was in ruins. On paper, I was worthless.

I wanted to give up but how does that work when everything is gone? I knew I had to summon all of my strength for my kids and to keep moving forward even if it was only one step at a time. This had to be rock bottom which meant I could only go up from here. Every now and then a miracle would occur, which brought with it relief and a renewed sense of hope. In perfect timing I received a call from an old friend telling me about a job opening for which not only I was a perfect fit but also the candidate of choice. Light began to shine through the fissures of darkness.

Despite the small wins, I was still overwhelmed and rudderless; what I needed was vision for myself. I drifted along for several months until the oddest thing happened one Labor Day. After mindlessly watching several back-to-back episodes of paranormal shows, I was startled by a loud thud on the floor behind me. Apprehensively, I turned around; there on the floor, coverside up was a book from my shelf, "Purpose Driven Life." I cannot logically explain how this book "fell" to the floor. Needless to say, I was spooked. I grabbed the book, immediately left my apartment and vowed no more paranormal TV shows. My crazy story gave my oldest son a good chuckle and we both agreed, regardless of "how" it happened, treat it like a sign and figure out its meaning behind it. I understood it to mean I had become both distracted and disconnected from my purpose.

The tools and resources I'm going to share with you are the culmination of the 30+ years I have invested in continued education and as a life-long student of personal development. My objective has been to understand how to unleash the power of my mind and help others do the same. These foundational principles will help you navigate the toughest challenges so you can stay connected with your purpose. Yes, you do have a purpose.

"Shift" is an acronym for part one of a two-pronged process I use to help my clients connect with their vision and chart the action steps necessary to achieve it. Part one is your road map, and part two is the curated points that guide your path. When used in tandem both parts ensure your actions, values, and beliefs are congruent with your vision.

North Star: Your Road Map

Your north star is the crystal-clear vision of what you want to achieve, think of it as the destination on a road map. It's a one-sentence statement that encapsulates your goal or objective, and why it's meaningful to you. For instance, if your goal is a new job, merely stating: "I want a new job," is too vague. Any job other than your current one would technically be a new job. There's a profound difference in the example above and the following: "I am working at a company that values my experience and expertise, I am earning an income that reflects my worth and contributions, which allows me to fulfill my love of travel and donating to my favorite charity." The late Dr. Wayne wrote in great detail about the power of the words that follow, "I am" and how your brain begins to recognize the potentiality of what you desire. Additionally, when you define where you are going with clarity, you have a guiding reference point that prevents you from veering off course. All of your decisions and choices can be checked against this vision.

Core Values: Your Guardrails

With your north star statement as your navigational focus point, your core values are the guardrails that help you stay on course. One of the biggest insights I've had while looking back over the challenges I've faced, is how integrity, strength and clarity were the essential core values I needed during that difficult time.

Identify three values that align with your vision and the represent who you are or who you want to become. Core values provide structure, so you can be confident the actions, decisions and choices you make are not compromising your beliefs and objectives. In fact, when a value is incongruent with your beliefs or north star, it becomes glaringly obvious.

How to SHIFT Your Life

Now that you've identified where you want to go and why it matters to you, the second phase begins the granular process of charting the actions and behaviors to support your journey. This inside-out, reverse-engineering process encompasses a 360-degree perspective so you can see how your vision impacts multiple areas of your life simultaneously.

The 5 Pillars to SHIFT (Story ~ Habits ~ Intentions ~ Focus ~ Transition)

Story

The key is to identify stories that hold you back; many take the form of negative self-talk. Your brain replays past conversations and experiences to illustrate why the change you desire may not be in your best interest. Suddenly you recall the teacher who told you weren't smart enough, the abusive boyfriend who complained about your weight, or when went away to college and felt alone. These old stories running in the background of your mind may be the culprits that inexplicably cause you to sabotage your best efforts or opportunities.

Here's a plot twist: you are the author and co-creator of your life and as such, you can rewrite the narrative or override old programming at any time. Tune in to your inner dialog and make a conscious effort to replace the negative self-talk with empowering, positive messages, affirmations or mantras. Review these statements these first thing in the morning, before bedtime or throughout the day as needed. Studies on neuroplasticity have shown these positive statements can boost your self-esteem, improve performance, and even reduce feelings of stress and anxiety. Here's a tip: your intuition or inner voice is always in harmony with your purpose and vision; it guides you forward while negative self-talk pulls you backwards.

Habits

You've likely heard this refrain before, "old ways do not create new results." Your habits, routines, and rituals or lack thereof may provide important insights as to why you are or are not where you want to be. It's not that you're lazy or lack discipline, the fact is you cannot become who you want to be by sheer force of willpower alone. Neuroscience expert Joe Dispenza states, "If you want a new outcome, you will have to break the habit of being yourself and reinvent a new self."

Habits determine your behavior, and your behavior forms your character. To become who you want to be you must do things you

in a way haven't done so before. Here's how to make habits work for you:

- Break down large tasks into smaller attainable increments (weekly, daily, hourly)
- Write a daily action plan, activity repeated over an extended period of time creates a compound effect
- Habits performed consistently become routines
- Routines impact behavior and increase the likelihood of success
- Use rituals to create a meaningful shift in specific area your life (fitness, health, mindset, etc.)
- To overcome negative habits, have a clear plan to avoid triggers

Remember, change doesn't happen overnight; it happens over many nights. Show yourself kindness and grace when you miss your mark. Each day you have an opportunity to begin anew.

Intentions

What's the difference between an intention and a goal? A goal defines the outcome you'd like to achieve, and I believe intentions are the limitless expressions of possibilities that help you attain them. It's best to craft them as affirming statements linked to the positive traits you want to embody.

Write them out using descriptive language that evokes an emotional response within you; paint a picture of what you want with so much clarity you see it in vivid detail. Be sure the words you choose reflect who and what you want to become.

We are multi-dimensional beings, and our goals often impacts multiple areas of our lives and those around us. Ideally, you want to curate your intentions, so they seamlessly flow into one another. You may want to include the following: finance, relationships, spiritual, health, personal development, and community. If your vision is a new job, a possible relationship intention may be. I am working for a company that offers a flexible work schedule.

Anytime you feel overwhelmed, frustrated or stuck, revisit your intentions and identify where you may have drifted off course. Setting yearly, monthly, weekly or even daily intentions for yourself allows you to keenly manage and direct your action steps in relationship to your north star.

Focus

Turn your attention to where you see yourself going, you are not moving backwards so do not look that way. The End.

In all seriousness, take a moment to ask yourself, where are you placing your attention. You may have heard the saying, “what you think about you bring about.” When you focus on your problems, guess what? You have more problems. This is one lesson I learned the hard way and why I want to prevent my clients from needless prolonged suffering. Your focus on the pain caused by a problem obscures your ability to find a solution as you fear experiencing more pain.

For every problem there is a solution. One valuable lesson I learned as a result of my 25+ years as a creative strategist in marketing and advertising, is how to focus on solutions. When my team and I were given the scope of a creative project, the only acceptable outcome was a solution that met the project’s objectives. Anything short of that was not an option. When your only objective is to find a solution, you WILL find one. We wouldn’t dare uttering anything that sounded like: “I can’t...I don’t know how, I’m too busy, we don’t have enough time, this is impossible.” In the end we always delivered.

While working with my coaching clients, we collaborate and ideate on solution-based outcomes. When you understand what you focus on expands, you will realize the power you possess to imagine and create a different outcome.

4-Step Process to Shift Your Focus

Focus Forward: The key to this technique is to stay in alignment with your vision and avoid making hasty decisions you will regret later. When you’re at loss for what to do next or feel like giving up; take a beat. Review your north star to keep your eye on the prize.

Fast Forward: This technique works for situations that produce short-term discomfort like public speaking, having a difficult conversation, or completing a challenging task. Visualize yourself moments after accomplishing the challenging. See yourself from a 360-degree perspective; notice how you feel (relieved, calm, happy, etc.), include approving comments made by others. By focusing on the positive outcome, you are tapping into and engaging your neuro receptors. Shifting your focus transmits feelings of accomplishment and minimizes the negative feelings holding you back.

Future Focus: Close the gulf of fear that exists between where you are and where you want to be. Envision the future version of yourself confidently fulfilling the role, behavior or lifestyle you seek. Ask your future self for advice on what skills you need to gain to get there? When you see this 2.0 version of yourself having accomplished your vision, doing so from the present feels possible and less overwhelming.

Focus Inward: Create a quiet time and space, ideally mornings or evenings to apply mindfulness, meditation and journaling to connect with your inner self. Even 5-10 minutes per day can foster insights, calm and much-needed inner peace.

Transitions

Transitions can take the form of unforeseen obstacles, or they may be the result of change. Our brains are not wired for success, we're wired for survival. Anytime you are stretched or pushed outside of our comfort zone, your brain may perceive such changes as a threat. This in turn activates your amygdala, the part of your brain wired to keep you safe, secure and free from harm at all costs. It doesn't matter whether you're about to speak in front of a large audience or waiting to be called in for an interview with a potential employer; when triggered, your body's flight response signals the urge to flee.

You can prepare for some foreseeable transitions by paying attention to your core values. For instance, if financial security is one of your top three values, creating an emergency fund would be a big priority.

Periods of transition remind me of Deepak Chopra's teaching to "mind the gap." As you move towards your goals, you may become

restless and uncomfortable. You may begin to see progress however, while you're not where you've started, you're still not quite where you want to be. Transitions may make you feel untethered and wary of the decisions you've made but resist the urge to give up. It is during this time your greatest growth is taking place. When you shift your perspective to view transitions as a necessary part of your journey, you can leverage them as a setup for transformation, instead of as insurmountable setbacks blocking your path.

I am grateful for my journey; I wouldn't be who I am today were it not for every setback, struggle and obstacle I had to overcome. The good and the bad were necessary. My life had to be rebuilt from the inside-out so I could grow into the vision I had deep within myself: a confident woman, proud mom and wife who has a fulfilling life as a coach on a mission to help others become the best versions of themselves.

What is the vision you have for yourself? Know what you seek is also seeking you. You have the power to chart the course for your life any time you choose. I'll leave you with these powerful words from Buddha: "What you think you, you become. What you feel, you attract. What you imagine, you create."

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Katerina Cozias



Katerina Cozias is an international media expert and on-camera TV host. Currently residing in Los Angeles, she is the co-producer & host of the morning talk show *LA40*, host of the digital web series *Book Circle Online & Hollywood Spotlight On* and the founder of *VasGeo Media Corp.*, a Hollywood based media company. The company's popular *Make Media Matter* 21-day online intensive is considered by many to be today's most effective online media training course.

As a professional on-camera personality, Katerina has participated in award show commentary and covered red carpet premieres for some of Hollywood's most prestigious events. As compliment to her strong skills as a producer and host, she has also overseen the communications and pitch strategies for several international brands across broadcast, print, digital and social media platforms.

Fluent in English and Greek, Katerina holds conversational French and is currently learning Spanish. And, with many years as the brand ambassador or host for various high-profile nautical and luxury/lifestyle events her travels have seen her present in cities including, but not limited to Miami, New York, Hong Kong, Athens, Moscow, Dubai, Cannes, Monte Carlo and The Bahamas.

As America's Media Mindset Mentor, Katerina is proud to contribute to the global growth and acceleration of leading media associations and is an active member of *Toastmasters International*, *The Caucus* (Producers, Writers & Directors), and *WIFT* (Women in Film & Television).

Media Mindset Mastery

By Katerina Cozias

“God’s gift to you is more talent and ability than you will ever use in one lifetime. Your gift to God is to develop as much of that talent and ability as you can in this lifetime.”

~ Steve Bow

The Call of Potential

Have you answered it yet? The call? The call to pursue the fullness of that which is meant to be your life?

We all get the call. But few of us answer it. For some it happens early. They detect the subtle whisper, and they tune into it. They lean into life’s invitation to pursue their greatness, and they do so with passion and tenacity and a genuine love for their journey. For others, the call might come later in life. Some choose to answer it, and some do not. For those who do not, a challenge is that oftentimes by then they are already committed down the winding road of their current life’s path. And although it’s a path that hasn’t quite resulted in leading them to that dream life, it’s a path which has led to a life that is relatively manageable. Although they continue to hear the call, they think to themselves “why disrupt the status quo?” and simply settle into complacency within their own mediocrity.

But life is not meant to simply be “manageable”. Life is not meant to be mediocre. Life is meant to be fabulous!

And so, if your life is fabulous, terrific, big congratulations to you! But if it is not, don’t despair. Day by day you can make little changes that will move you toward that grander life, towards your true calling. Know that you are put on this earth to develop and share you unique greatness. What ever phase of life you may currently find yourself in, know that your time is now!

Media mindset mastery

“Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our

darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be?"

~ Marianne Williamson

As a global media specialist and Hollywood-based television and radio host, I've had the opportunity to sit with some of the world's most successful authors, entrepreneurs, activists and yes, celebrities. And based on all of the interviews I have conducted, one thing is clear: those who are truly content with their lives dared to step into their own greatness. They dared to answer the call. The question is, will you?

How content are you with your current reality? Are you really where you thought you would be by this age? Are you living your purpose with passion? Are you exhibiting true integrity to self? Are you willing to step up and answer the call?

Although wonderfully content and satisfied with my life the way it is unfolding now, for many years, I spent a lot of energy creating a life that wasn't really my truth. I invested time living only 20% of who I knew I really could be. Why? Partially because I was trying to live up to others' expectations of what my life should be and partially because I was scared to step into the potential of the person, I knew deep down that I was meant to be! I was scared to shine brightly for fear that others would punish me for that shine. I have since come to truly understand however, that it is our obligation as human beings to shine as brightly as we can, for when we shine, we give others permission to do the same. And when that happens, the universe expands exponentially with the talent, knowledge, wisdom, creativity and unique gifts we were all endowed with to share.

The problem is that most people hold back. Why? Because to really answer the call and step into greatness, one must shake up, sometimes even flip upside-down, their very own belief system and internal wiring. Hmmmm.... Not so easy. Or is it?

I'll let you in on a little secret. Although changing your habits, processes of thought and internal paradigms can be challenging, there's a relatively easy fix that you can apply to help speed the process along. The fix? Borrow belief from someone else until you

have mustered up enough of your own. A powerful way to do this is by learning to leverage a media mindset. Mastering it in fact!

What is a media mindset? A media mindset is just that, the impactful, incredibly captivating essence of tapping into the same power and grace exhibited on screen by your favorite on-camera media personality, tapping into and displaying the same levels of articulation, confidence and charisma as your favorite TV star. It's really that simple.

Just imagine stepping into everyday projecting that high level of confidence in-self, that same level of knowing as someone like Oprah Winfrey, or Ellen DeGeneres, Larry King, or Anderson Cooper. What would that mean for your business and your life? How good would it feel to project such a high level of personal confidence that people would be lining up to assist you as you step into that higher version of you? Imagine if through the development and mastery of your media mindset you could catapult yourself or your business to the next level. Imagine being miles ahead of the competition with your brand exposure and recognition. Imagine what that would mean for you and your family? Imagine what that would mean for your personal contentment?

With years pitching to global media markets, plus experience both on-camera and off, I know that no matter what field you're in, confidence in-self coupled with excellence in communication-style really does make all the difference when it comes to achieving success in business, and in life. If you are a person who is intelligently engaged in building your brand, if you are a person who is finally ready to step up and answer the call, then it is imperative that you also build up mastery of your media mindset.

How can you develop and work toward the mastery of a media mindset? By following the Make Media Matter three-step formula: By learning to Polish, Pitch and Promote yourself!

Step 1: Polish

It's no secret that charismatic people tend to get further ahead both personally and professionally in life. Charismatic on-camera personalities have mastered using emotion to inspire and motivate people. Your favorite television personality has learned how to

polish their image to bring about change, devotion and loyalty by influencing and impacting his or her surroundings. And you can do the same. The wonderful thing about charisma is that it can be learned, borrowed in fact. Charisma is really nothing more than the use of emotions and good communication to inspire action. Charisma is about delivering messages that connect. And mastering the quality of smooth, on-air charisma is actually quite easy.

By tapping into a media mindset, we can literally borrow, in order to then emulate, the charismatic tendencies we see our favorite on-air media personalities exhibit. Here are the core skills you may want to consider polishing:

Skill A: Set high expectations for self, and clearly communicate those when engaging in conversation

Charismatic people dream big and believe bigger. This acts as a green light for others to do the same. People resonate with those who give them permission to step into the highest version of themselves. If you want to step into your own greatness, make it easier for the people around you to step into theirs.

Skill B: Learn to share your story

Whether watching television or having a live, in-person conversation, people love to be entertained. Sharing your personal story will make you more relatable to people and will increase their tendency to want to help you along your journey. So make sure, when in conversation, not to focus on simply selling a product, not to focus on simply pitching a service, rather, focus on sharing a story. Your story.

Skill C: Radiate confidence both verbally and non-verbally

Confident people are masters at transferring their emotional states not only through speech but also through body language. Smiling is incredibly important. It projects not only confidence but also a sense of safety. Think about it, if you smile at someone walking down the street, chances are they are less threatened by you than if you had not.

The tone of your voice is also very important. It needs to be grounded and it needs to come from the gut. No squeaky high

voices. No deep mumbling murmurs. Clear, concise, solar-plex initiated voices resonate best. And remember, just like your favorite TV personality, it's important to speak CLEARLY, ARTICULATELY and CRISPLY.

Borrow these on-camera media tips and practice infusing them into your day. Soon these skills will become second nature and *your* personal charisma and confidence will have no choice but to shine through!

Step 2: Pitch

Are you making a good first impression? Because at the end of the day, let's face it, we're all in the business of sales. Step 2 in the process of mastering a media mindset involves learning how to sell or "pitch" yourself. If you want to heed the call and step up into your true personal potential, parlaying a great first impression is a must.

How important is a good first impression? Think about it, if your favorite media star doesn't make a strong first impression in the first few seconds they appear on camera, you, the viewer, are likely to click off. In the same vein, if you don't make a good first impression the minute you encounter someone new, the other person is likely to start to tune out and your chances of really impressing them and sharing what you have to share diminish with every minute that passes. No pressure, right?

But do not despair, *you* can control every first impression. And here's how.

Skill A: By communicating that you are there to be of service

Oftentimes, stepping into the higher version of you in order to "answer the call" takes place because somewhere deep down you know you are intended to play a bigger game, that you are meant to be doing something of greater value and being of more service to others. Think about it this way - when you are genuinely focused on helping others, you are sending positive energy into the universe. And, as has been proven by science and quantum physics, that energy will come back to you in the form of the help that you need at the time you need it.

Minutes before going live on-camera, TV personalities ask themselves: “Is what I’m about to share going to provide value for the audience?” In that same voice, ask yourself: Is what I am about to share with this person going to provide value? Make sure to take every precious moment you have with someone to communicate that you are there to be of service to them. Then sit back and simply watch that good energy multiply in your life.

Skill B: Good vibes attract good vibes

Having delved into years of personal development in addition to co-authoring the book *Rising up from Mental Slavery; How to Unleash your Infinite Potential*,

one thing I know for sure is that, whether on-camera or off, when you project ideas of expansion, optimism, positivity, love and success, you create a force field of vibration that attracts to you the very things you are thinking about. This is literally the “Law of Attraction” at work. Oprah Winfrey didn’t create a multi-billion-dollar media empire simply because of her tenacity and skill in business, she did so because of her tenacity and skill in business coupled by a genuine and specifically focused personal mission to spread goodness into the world. And her efforts came back to her a thousand-fold. Pitch yourself in a way that exudes goodness, and goodness will be returned unto you.

Skill C: Be Present

Have you ever wondered why you are immediately attracted to some television presenters over others? What is it about them that you like? Why do they make you feel so good? More often than not, it’s because they feel good about themselves, and they then make a point of focusing that goodness on you!

And so, this is another great media mindset strategy you can easily adopt. By focusing your message for the receiver’s benefit rather than for your own, you make the other person feel special. Everyone wants to feel important. As the American poet Maya Angelou has said “ People will forget what you said, people will forget what you did but people will never forget how you made them feel”. So make a point of making everyone feel good, because first impressions *do* matter.

Step 3: Promote

And finally, step 3 in the formula required to master a media mindset is: Promote.

Don't be shy – go ahead, brag about yourself.

Too often I see people who have immense amounts of knowledge to share with the world, shrinking back because they don't want to come across as pushy. True, no one wants to be thought of as pushy or arrogant, *but* there is a distinct line between being pushy and honestly promoting yourself and your wares.

Great media visibility can spread the word about your company and boost its credibility. By the same token, tapping into a media mindset on a daily basis will allow you to recognize that spreading the word about your products or services can be of huge benefit to your community. Good promotion extends, allowing you to leverage yourself and your story so that people can become more familiar with who you are, what you are about, what you are selling and how that product or service might better benefit their lives. People buy from brands they trust. So don't be shy, go ahead and promote yourself by offering creative information or solutions which will build your credibility and brand loyalty, not to mention your own personal self-confidence.

Mastering a media mindset starts by simply borrowing, and then leveraging the confidence, drive, ambition and charisma of your favorite media personalities. Learning to Polish, Pitch and Promote yourself is key as you move towards expansion and into the highest version of you.

“We are all self-made but only the successful will admit it.”

~ Earl Nightingale

In conclusion, know that there is a proverbial river that flows, that flows towards all the good you could ever want and hope to achieve. And your little inner voice, your gut, knows just what you need to do to get into that flow. And it calls you. All you need to do is tune in and listen. All you need to do is answer the call.

The good news is that it doesn't really matter at what point you decide

to drop your boat of dreams into the river, the river will always carry you forward, carry you to that ideal end. So don't be scared to grab your boat and head for the river. If there is a dream in your heart or a passion worth pursuing, know that it is never too late. Could you have put your boat of dreams into the river sooner? Sure, we all could have. But is it too late to drop it in now? Absolutely not. Because the only time you have is right now. So go ahead and course correct, if that is what is what you want to do. It is never too late! And if the little voice in your head is shrinking back, scared to answer the call, remind yourself that all you need to do is look towards your favorite media star and simply borrow their media mindset strategies. Be decisive. Take action. Float freely in answer to the call. Because your life deserves it...

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Signature Program: Make Media Matter

John Jones



I have had many successes over my life before finding LifeWorks in 2019. I am an Eagle Scout, College Graduate, Private Pilot, and have a thirteen-year marriage to my beautiful wife Mary. Since joining LifeWorks I have become a Certified LifeWorks Life Mastery Coach and Best-Selling Author. I am one of the founding partners of LifeWorks Global, a community designed to help Success Driven people from all walks of life to design and REALLY live the life of their

dreams. Contact me Today to start your LifeWorks Journey.

How Life Works: The Transition from Server to Servant

By John Jones

“Do not wait; the time will never be ‘just right.’ Start where you stand, and work with whatever tools you have at your command, and better tools will be found as you go along.” – Napoleon Hill “Think and Grow Rich.”

I have always had a passion for helping and serving others. In fact, looking back, I realize I have spent my whole life serving others. My background for the last 35 years has been in the hospitality industry, and I have dedicated myself to providing guests with a level of service they can't get anywhere else.

Then one day, it hit me like a ton of bricks. I was heading to an early grave just like my dad unless I made some drastic changes to my life. When my dad died of a heart attack at 60, and my mom died six weeks later, I was devastated. My dad worked tirelessly for 35 years as the vice president of an oil company, leaving him almost no time for his family. It was especially painful knowing that he would never fulfill his promise to my mother about being able to spend their retirement years together enjoying the fruits of his labor.

I never considered the idea of following in my dad's footsteps in the oil business, but when I turned 50, I took a hard look at my life and realized that I was heading in a very similar direction. I was working 70 hours a week and had no time to do anything for myself or my family. I realized it didn't have to be this way. I decided to create a life that I could enjoy now and into the future. I searched for ways to accomplish my goals and met a lot of disappointment. In fact, I was almost ready to give up when, about three years ago, I met Don. He presented me with a powerful opportunity that would allow me to live my life around what matters most.

Not only have I given up a 70-hour work week, but I also now have a blueprint and a plan to live the life of my dreams. I have reached a turning point in my life. I have made the transition from server to

servant. Leadership is all about service to others. My dedication to excellence in the hospitality industry allows me to help people embark on their own journey to design and REALLY live the life of their dreams.

I'll share a bit of my journey with you in the hope that my story will inspire you to also seek the life of your dreams, and know, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that this is a genuine possibility for you.

My life was fine. I had a great marriage and a job I loved - and a good home and a good life. Really, I was fine. However, there was something missing. I didn't know what it was; I just knew I felt restless. While there was nothing specifically "wrong," I just felt like things could have been a little more "right." This restlessness led me to start to consider some options to make things more "right." When I really examined my life, I discovered that I have always been a good leader. In my 35-year career I have always stepped up into leadership roles. Now, my mission was clear. I needed to learn all I could about leadership. This mission led me back to school.

These days, it isn't hard to find an online university to attend. Many people return to school later in life to upgrade their skills or transition into a new career. I knew this was an option, but it didn't seem like the right path for me. In November of 2019, a friend told me about a MasterMind group he was in and how it caused him to think about things differently. He told me how he met with this group once a week to talk about dreams, visions, and goals and how, while it was all virtual, he felt it was a group I would be interested in.

I was curious enough and he spoke so highly of the experience he was having that I checked into it. And man, am I glad I did. Unlike other companies I have been involved with, I can truly say I have found a home. There is a genuine sense of family and community. When I first started, I must admit, I was a bit resistant to some of the teachings. Following a system that might actually allow me to have the life I dreamed of seemed a little unbelievable at first.

In fact, the first exercise was to cast the vision for my life. I had never been one to visualize pictures in my mind or do any kind of meditation or journaling. So, with the first exercise I was a bit skeptical about whether it would work for me. But, being a new

student, I was willing to follow the program and give it a try. Doing the first visioning exercise, I had difficulty forming the mental pictures in my mind. However, with the second part of the exercise, when I put pen to paper, I was amazed by how clear my vision became. The pictures that I had not been able to form in my mind were revealed to me. I manifested a written vision for the first time in my life. It was a breakthrough experience.

The next step for me was to begin journaling daily. Once again, this was new territory for me. I had never been one to journal anything, especially every day. Regardless. I was willing. I followed the journaling formula they provided, and reflected daily on my successes, challenges, A-HA moments, what I was grateful for, and my commitments for the week. I never realized how many daily successes I had before this exercise. We accomplish so many things on a daily basis that make us successful. And yet, oftentimes, we are completely unaware. As for the challenges, I noticed that, while not many, they were mainly the same from day-to-day. I had far more successes than challenges. There were a few A-HA moments as well, but what I found to be grateful for was new every day. It's amazing to me how much you can find to be grateful for in life when you really focus on having an attitude of gratitude. You might say I've reprogrammed my default setting to gratitude.

Then came the plan, which we call the 'areas of priority.' This was where my vision got traction. I was able to develop defining statements for each of the eight areas of priority: success education, health and fitness, wealth and income, significant other, friends and family, lifestyle management, fun and recreation, and purpose and passion. This exercise helped me to gain clarity about who I needed to become to make my vision a reality. I contemplated the distinction between the pleasure I would experience if I did accomplish my goals and the accompanying pain if I didn't. I suddenly realized, maybe for the first time, that the pain we associate with not achieving things is one of the main factors holding us back from taking action and breaking through our challenges. I knew I had to determine where I wanted to go. But first, I had to figure out my starting point. Then, it was simply a matter of bridging the gap between the two.

Within each area of priority, I determined the milestones toward my vision. I don't know why this is not taught to us in school. I have had 16 years of formal education, and never once was I taught how to live the life of my dreams. That formal education gave me the ability to have a job, make an income, and provide for my family. However, I had fallen short in other areas, which have now been exposed to me. Today, I have a blueprint and design for the rest of my life that will make my vision a reality. I have discovered, for the first time in 50 years, a crystal-clear vision for my next 50 years. I have always had a burning desire for success but was missing a key component that I now have found.

Although I have had a short journey on my new path, I feel that I have been here much longer. I have already learned to focus on my self-improvement daily. I do this through meditation, journaling, and keeping a daily schedule of my commitments. When I first began, I was amazed at how much I could really get done in a day. I was also amazed by how much time I had each day to work on projects that were important to me. Now, as I list my commitments for the day, I feel more accountable. I have formulated a clearly defined path toward my vision which ensures it will become a reality. Never have I had such clarity and a personal manifesto to make my vision a reality. For the first time, I feel a strong sense of my life's purpose and direction. Also, for the first time, I have a community of individuals that are here to support me. My MasterMind members are also my accountability partners. When I hit a roadblock, I now have a way to work through it with my group and celebrate my breakthrough on the other side.

Besides having an action plan to follow to achieve success in all the areas of my life, I've also learned some valuable personal lessons along the way:

1. I can't change everyone; I can only change myself.
2. To be a great leader, you must realize that it isn't about you. Great leaders take the time to understand, listen, and empathize with their teams.
3. We should never stop growing and learning. Our brains need exercise, as much as our bodies, to maintain optimum health. I

am now on a path to lifelong education in ways I have never imagined before.

The sad fact is that most people don't even read one book after graduation. Some read self-help books, but there is no action or follow up. I use these self-help books as textbooks and apply what I learn from them. I have begun to re-read many of the books I read before, now with a new approach. It's amazing how much more information I've found in each book the second time through.

I have had many successes in my life: I was an Eagle Scout (a rank that only 4% of scouts achieve), I am a college graduate, I obtained my private pilot license, and am celebrating a 13-year marriage to my best friend and the love of my life, my wife Mary. Never have I felt more passionate and driven towards my vision than I do today. Sometimes I wonder how much sooner I might have realized my vision had I only discovered this system 35 years ago, when I first started working and setting goals.

Thanks to this new journey, I have also found a coach that has encouraged me, and challenged me professionally and personally, and has become a lifelong friend. This is the core component that I had been missing the first 50 years of life. I have always had a burning desire for success but until I found my new path, coach, and MasterMind team, I never had the vision and personal manifesto I needed to ensure my success. Going forward with my next 50 years, I am filled with a sense of commitment and passion that I have never found before. I am 100% confident that my vision for life in all eight areas of priority will become a reality.

I am passionate about helping others design and REALLY live the life of their dreams because of the journey I embarked on. To achieve success like mine, I help each person create a crystal-clear vision for their life and craft a plan to make that vision a reality. After 35 years in the service industry, I have made the shift from server to servant, and I am so grateful, I have found this family to support me.

I hope my story has inspired you to want to live YOUR dreams. Let me know how I can help.

Cheers!

John Jones

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Linda Marks



Linda Marks is a healer at heart, emotional alchemist, singer-songwriter, pioneering somatic psychotherapist, public speaker and author. Known for her heart-to-heart style of songwriting, with 12 studio albums, Linda has been featured in the Boston Globe, Boston Magazine and on NPR. Her pandemic-inspired weekly livestream began in March 2020, Songs From the Heart, Meditations For the Heart, has a global following.

Linda's critically acclaimed pandemic-inspired album, Home, charted at #18 on the Folk Chart (Folk Alliance International). She has written songs for non-profits including the global Light Up the Love movement, Upstage Lung Cancer, and "Unstrummed" for the Cotta Blue Project. Linda's newest releases include "Let There Be Love" co-written with Mike Greenly, and her Kindness album.

A leader in the field of somatic psychotherapy since 1985, Linda co-founded the country's first state professional association in 1988, national professional association USABP in 1996, and trained therapists through the Institute for EKP, 1990 - 2001/2008 - 2012. Linda has taught at conferences in United States/Europe, at UMass Boston, written books Living With Vision (Knowledge Systems: 1988) and Healing the War Between the Genders (HeartPowerPress, 2004), and hundreds of articles.

A lifelong social entrepreneur, Linda has founded community organizations bringing people together for mutual support and to make a difference. Most recently, in 2018 she co-founded artist-alliance group #WIMG Women In Music Gathering.

The Alchemy of Hope: How to Take Inspired Action for the Greater Good

By Linda Marks

We are living in unprecedented times, navigating an ongoing pandemic world in which the ways we live, work, study, connect and care for ourselves and others have morphed in a chaotic, continuously changing landscape. Our daily vocabulary now includes masks, gloves, social distancing, COVID-19, antigen and PCR testing, and an introduction to the Greek alphabet through mutant variants: alpha, beta, gamma, delta and omicron. Peppering the daily news are reports of percent positivity rates, number of new daily cases and hospitalizations, as well as, sadly, deaths.

In a world where most of us pray for peace, Russia has invaded the Ukraine. The heart-breaking and seemingly senseless destruction and loss of lives taking place, is exacerbated by the threat of deploying nuclear weapons. If deployed, they have the potential to impact everyone on earth and even destroy life itself.

In the United States, the combination of the pandemic and the war in the Ukraine has fueled an unbridled inflation, driving prices for necessities like food, shelter and gasoline up fast and furiously. Many people are now challenged to make ends meet. This weighs heavily on both the individual and collective mind and heart. The only certainty is uncertainty.

It is no secret that our pandemic world, the war in Ukraine and the resulting inflation have taken a toll on our mental, emotional and spiritual health, whether we are young, old or in-between. Adding further stress, critical issues of public health and economic survival have become politicized and polarized. The result is a scarcity of grounded data with which to make informed choices, and no mutually agreed upon guidelines for safe behavior. In this backdrop, individual people and communities as a whole become more polarized and at odds with one another. A sense of crisis escalates and so many of us feel invisible, powerless, and alone.

While having our minds firmly grounded in the current reality is critical for self-care and survival, the spirit needs a seed of vision and hope that the future will be better than things are right now. **How can we find empowerment in a world where so much seems out of our control?**

The Creative Alchemy of Hope

We are fortunate that as human beings, we are wired with the capacity for both creative vision and resilience. Finding a creative spark that can germinate into a seed of vision for better times can transform both our inner lives and our outer world. This vision seed fuels hope, which allows us to not only go on day by day, but also channel our energy and creative power to make a difference for the future. Hope is a creative crucible. It opens the heart and taps into the creative energy that comes with getting clear about what really matters. Clarity gives direction for both our mind's focus and actions that follow. Hope catalyzes an alchemical reaction within us, and when shared in our circles of family, friends and colleagues, allows us to transform our current experience into something much better.

A grammar school science experiment helped me learn what I call “**creative alchemy.**” We were each given a prism and a piece of paper. The teacher told us if we aligned the prism just right, we could direct sunlight to burn a hole in the paper. Easy enough, right? In theory, yes, but I tried and tried to find the right angle for my prism, at first to no avail. Eventually, I let go of the pressure to “find the right answer,” and soon I noticed a brown spot started to appear on the paper. The creative alchemy was working! I felt magical and empowered.

As I grew older, I realized this experiment was a metaphor for how we can create in our lives. If we get clear in our minds and hearts about what really matters, we can channel our emotional, mental and spiritual energy through our thoughts and actions to create a better world, including now. The heart and mind are both prism and conduit of light. The world is our piece of paper. As we center ourselves, quiet the chatter in our minds, and from a place of hope and possibility, focus on what really matters, we will have inspired insights to guide us on what steps to take and when. We will

synchronistically cross paths with magical strangers who can provide something we need to move towards our vision. If we find one path leads to a dead end, we will be able to move in a new direction that is more fruitful. Slowly but surely, over time, by leaning into our heartfelt vision, we will find ways to build it and make it real. Creative alchemy is inspired, empowering and transformational.

Creative Alchemy and The Power Of The Heart

I am grateful that much of my life has been guided by moments of creative alchemy. A pivotal experience occurred when I 16, returning home from my job at Fenway Park.

To give you a context, I was just 4 years old when John F. Kennedy was shot. Then, in short succession came the assassination of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy. Their deaths had a huge impact on me. I was like them. I, too, felt a call to make the world a better place. But I became afraid to follow my sense of purpose. If I stood out, someone might also shoot me.

I was very active in my school and town, assigned leadership positions of all kinds, on a path to greater leadership. I never expected my brush with death to take place in an alley behind a Brigham's ice cream store where I had a second job.

A stranger came out of the shadows and violently attacked me. As I walked off an MBTA train, he watched me. As I passed by the Brigham's and on to a side street to the left of the store, he came from behind and grabbed the pocketbook strap from my shoulder and quickly wrapped it around my neck like a noose. He threw me down to the ground and tightened the strap.

Thank God I was a singer and knew how to breathe from my diaphragm. As he pressed my body into the ground and pulled the strap, I fought for my breath. Just as I felt as though I could no longer fight him, he angrily screamed, "you will not die!" and dragged me across a lawn, through a row of bushes into the alley behind the Brigham's.

I tried to use my physical strength to fight him off, but it did not work. I tried to discourage him from further harming me using facts from a class I had taken called "The Law and The Individual." That

just enraged him further. I realized I had no choice but to turn it over to the God I was never raised to believe in. I spoke from my heart, telling God I wanted to live. The message came back, “then you need to commit to your mission.”

I told God, “I commit.” I heard back, “Forgive him.” Without thinking about what forgiveness meant. I spoke from my heart and said, “I forgive you.” The man burst into tears and stopped beating me.

In retrospect, I realized this was my initiation into the power of the heart. I became aware that human beings are conduits of living energy. By reaching into the depths of my heart, I found a connection to divine energy, that I was able to channel that ultimately saved my life.

I have been tapping that creative channel ever since. As a songwriter, when something in the world around me pulls at my heart strings, I revisit that deep well in my heart. Words and music flow. Early in our pandemic time, a close friend of mine and fellow singer, went into the hospital, into the ICU and onto a ventilator with a severe case of COVID-19. When I heard the news, I started writing a song which became a pandemic anthem, “Prayers.” The song brought with it an alchemy of hope of its own as I sang it every week during my pandemic livestream to invite others to send healing prayers to my friend Bob. After 4 weeks in the ICU fighting for his life, 3 more weeks in the hospital with double pneumonia and a blood clot in his leg and then 100 days in rehab, Bob survived. And “Prayers” took on a life of its own. Its message was quite universal as more and more people and their loved ones were touched by COVID-19. With the war in the Ukraine and all the ways our lives have changed since the pandemic began, prayers are both helpful and needed.

When the pandemic began, I asked myself “what can we create during a pandemic?” The answer was the title song of my 2021 pandemic-inspired album, “Monuments of Love.” When George Floyd was shot, my heartbreak and resolve to envision change led to the song, “All One Human Race.” “Put away your guns. Open up your arms. Light the flame of justice. Love begets love...I was touched by Amanda Gorman’s poignant inaugural poem, especially

by her reference to doing more than “see the light,” and instead to “be the light.” “Be The Light” was a call for us to “keep the flame of peace still burning in the heart, humanity.” I envisioned groups of people joining voices to carry this much needed message to all of us. The message feels even more timely with what is happening in the Ukraine.

When we tap into the alchemy of hope, we can all find inspired ways to contribute to the greater good.

How You Can Take Inspired Action For The Greater Good

Each of us can take steps, small and large, to make a positive difference in the world. If you look deep into your heart, you will find a pathway that feels right for you. Here are some examples.

1. **Take a positive step to set off a ripple of good in the larger community.** COVID-19 has showed us we really ARE interconnected. Let’s use this reality to know that every positive step we take does make a difference in not only our own lives but also the lives of loved ones and our greater world community.

2. **Be a good example.** As people tire of pandemic living, and want to throw caution to the wind, it is reinforcing to see others do the right thing. Wear a mask. Social distance. Make safe choices about activities in our COVID-19 world. Do whatever you can to stay safe, and should you show symptoms, get tested, quarantine and do your best to protect others.

3. **Cultivate creative outlets.** They help us process our experience and can also touch others. Music and songwriting during this pandemic time has been powerful for me. Journaling, story writing, cooking, gardening, painting, drawing and taking photographs are personal outlets. Finding new ways for people to gather and connect safely can help stave off a sense of isolation. Family dinners on Zoom, attending or performing in virtual concerts or open mics, and meeting outside at a state park instead of inside in a living room allow us to still enjoy pandemic-safe social contact.

4. **Shine the light of kindness.** In our current world, materialism has eclipsed kindness to our detriment. We need to find a way to restore a better balance. Kindness is fertilizer for the heart and soul.

Kindness lightens our personal burdens and touches others in our local and global communities.

5. **Step away from political polarization and focus on what is at the heart of the issues that affect us all.** It seems that both the left and the right have become further apart on most any issue that might serve us best from a middle ground. Even public health issues in a pandemic have become politically polarized. Risk mitigation practices, like wearing a mask or getting vaccinated have morphed into threats to individual freedom and Democrats versus Republicans. Trying to get facts and making choices accordingly is better for all than engaging in political warfare.

6. **Consciously choose projects that will help others in your community.** Some projects need financial resources or goods. Others need time. Contribute food or money to a food pantry. Offer graphic design, office or IT skills to an arts non-profit. Ask what kind of help is needed at the YMCA, your local hospital, or a children's program.

7. **Appreciate the contributions our four-legged companions are making to our well-being.** Cats and dogs, and other animals are supporting emotional, mental and spiritual health during this pandemic time. Donate pet food, blankets and toys to an animal shelter. See if they need help doing laundry, cleaning cages, sorting through supplies or any other task. Veterinary clinics are overwhelmed with care needs as more people adopt pets. See if you can offer any kind of help as a volunteer.

8. **Help those around you tap into the alchemy of hope.** Invite loved ones to talk about a vision of how we can work together to transform our world for the better in the face of issues that are most pressing. Vision tends to spark more vision. Let conversations move into plans for action.

9. Look for and share images and inspiring stories of people making a difference, helping others and overcoming the odds. Images and stories are powerful and fuel the alchemy of hope.

10. **Lean into your ability to live with uncertainty.** We often back off from what is scary and go into our turtle shells. Take one day at a time. Find ways to be grounded, like meditating, journaling, taking

a walk or doing yoga, even when there is chaos. Close your eyes and take a few deep breaths when you start to feel frightened. Feel the chair under your tailbone and the floor beneath your feet.

In reality, we are always living with uncertainty. When life seemed more stable, pre-pandemic, uncertainty was just not as apparent every day. Over the course of human history, there are periods of greater calm and greater turmoil. Life is an evolutionary process. Things grow and change every day. Mutant virus variants do; so do we. Uncertainty can grow good things as well as bad. If we can work to focus our minds and hearts on what is needed and how to make things better at any point in time, we have the power, individually and collectively, to tap into the alchemy of hope. Let's each do our part to make this world a better, safer, kinder, more sustainable place.

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Linda Marks is a singer-songwriter and recording artist, and a heart-centered body psychotherapist in Waltham, MA. Listen to her two 2021 pandemic-inspired albums “Monuments Of Love” and “Home” on all digital platforms, and watch her inspirational lyric

videos on YouTube. You can reach Linda at lsmheart@aol.com or visit www.healingheartpower.com.

Michael Overlie



Michael Overlie is an Energy Healer, Canine-Partnered Energy Coach, Author and lifelong dog fanatic. He has had a gift of connecting with animals since he was a small child. Dogs have been with him most of his life, giving him gifts and teaching him lessons. His greatest breakthrough was after the death of his brother. While grieving this loss, he was fully awakened to his own potential and the gifts our animals bring to our lives.

Now he helps other men awaken to the gifts available to them from their dogs. He has dedicated himself to assisting men and their dogs discover their path to living a life of purpose, being extraordinary. Remembering who they truly are. This is Michael's purpose, his mission on this Earth.

Michael's first book, *Let Your Dog Lead*, is an invitation. It is an introduction into a different way of being. He finds that high performing men with dogs are more likely to do the work, get dirty, get uncomfortable and find their path. Although he wants to help everyone, he has realized that those that have already "made it" but are looking for their purpose are not only open to the change necessary but are willing to do whatever it takes.

I Don't Know Shit

By Michael Overlie

Funny, isn't it? I used to think that I was smart. I was intelligent. I worked hard and got results. I could shape shift to fit new situations, relationships. I knew shit. Until I didn't. Let me explain.

I was soooo smart up until March of 2017. Then my brother died. My older brother, the most beautiful man I ever knew, died. It wasn't a total surprise as he had been sick most of his life. He had undergone multiple open-heart surgeries and was actually waiting for another one. Like I said, not a surprise he had moved on. What happened afterwards, however, shook me to my core and left me stripped bare.

Just a matter of days after Bob left for a more peaceful existence, I was at home with my dog Darby feeling crappy. I can't remember exactly why but I had the strangest feeling. I sat in my leather recliner and laid it back. Next thing I knew, I was crying. Sobbing. Writhing in pain and agony. I had no idea what had overtaken me, but I was scared. I felt like I was being torn apart, then squeezed by an angry giant. Darby, my amazing teacher, sat quietly by witnessing the whole thing.

When my body stopped rioting, I slowed my breathing and looked around. Darby slowly came to me, crawled up in the chair with me and laid on me. I felt such an amazing calm and loving presence, the likes I had never experienced before. I realized later that he was helping me change my energy by sharing his with me. That little dog was an energy healer. My life was never to be the same again.

Shortly after this event, I started to notice things I hadn't noticed before. I started feeling things I hadn't felt before. I started living as I hadn't lived before. I began paying more attention to him. I began paying more attention to nature and all the amazing creatures I shared this beautiful location with. I realized that Darby had been trying to get through to me, but I had been unable to hear him.

I soon realized that I didn't like who I was, who I had become. I had been living such a stuck, fearful, angry existence and I didn't want

this anymore. I began to get curious. I remembered the energy Darby gave me that day. I remembered him doing the same for my mom when she visited shortly after Bob's death. I wanted more of this. I wanted to know how to do this too. I began searching.

The more I opened my eyes, the more I discovered. There are so many different energy healing modalities out there, holy crap! I started researching, reading, sampling. I studied Healing Touch for Animals first, obviously because of the animals! What an amazing experience! Blew my socks off! I was exposed to Pranic Healing and Seiki Jutsu. Next came The Kinslow Method, then Reconnective Healing, then the big dog, Reiki. I loved Reiki because of the Zen feel, I have a thing for Japanese ways and beliefs (I was a Samurai in a former life I was once told). I studied under two different Reiki Masters for two different "styles" of Reiki.

Then one day, I was doing a distance session for my Reiki Master and something amazing happened. I tapped into something so incredible, so peaceful. I didn't realize what was happening. I had started the session in a different way, Reiki was not involved. I started moving similarly to Qi Gong, flowing type movements that energized my whole being. I saw clearly in my mind's eye, my Reiki Master as a small child- riding her horse with her hair flowing out behind her and her arms flung wide, a huge smile on her face-bliss. I was giggling, tears streaming down my face. I felt as though I was plugged into the grid, which in effect, I was. She called me after the session and asked me "How did you do that?" She had felt immense energy coursing through her body as well.

What I tapped into that day was phenomenal, yet ever present. You see, I didn't actually do anything. I didn't heal her. I didn't make her feel better. I helped create an opportunity. I assisted in creating an opening, an opening into herself and everything around us. Most of you know intellectually that everything is made of energy. You can grasp the concepts that physicists put forth when the ideas are broken down. The difference that day was that I allowed myself to feel it, feel into it. I helped her tap into her innate joy as a child, which she had not felt in a very long time. Simple, yes. Easy, no.

Shortly after this amazing event, I started working on being able to get into this same space more frequently. I was craving this exalted

feeling, this heightened status in my being. What I came to realize however, was that this state as a constant “place” was not where I was to be. I was given a sample of what is possible, not necessarily where I need to be at this time. I noticed that what I need to master is the ability to find peace, in any moment. To find peace, regardless of what is going on out there. To be able to just be peace.

How the hell do I do that? Is there one book, one teacher I can follow to get me there? I became voracious again and started digesting more and more books, courses, lessons. The Dali Lama, Thich Nhat Hanh, Eckhart Tolle..... I became aware that these things were all helping to guide me, they were assisting me in opening further. What I also became aware of is the fact that I had to take whatever resonated with me from each of these teachers and make it mine. I needed to create my own practice. I needed to start becoming my own teacher.

What came next was a deeper understanding of myself. An understanding that there were so many things within me that needed love and healing. I hadn't been able to access these “hidden and buried” aspects with trapped emotions, and now I was given another gift. Now, I could get even more uncomfortable and know that I was safe. Holy crap, I found things down in there that brought back feelings of deep insecurity. Anger. Rage. Shame. Things that I never wanted to see or hear about again. This sucks. It hurts. I don't want anyone to know about the thoughts I have, they might think I am crazy or unworthy of love. My fear would start to rise again, but this time I could see that my fear was pointing me in the right direction.

Becoming my own Master

Initially, to me, this sounds egotistical. It sounds pompous. It sounds expectant. Then I realized: no one is going to create a better life for me than I can. I was still looking to others to fix my problems. I was still looking to others for my validation. I forgot that I can give myself these things. Man, I don't know shit.

So, I begin again. I create my practice. I sit and meditate with my dog, tap into something bigger than me. I do the things I need to do. I allow the things I need to allow. I reach another level. Then the hard work begins. This is where it can become difficult for me, very difficult. I want to keep moving. I want to continue to rise. So, I do what I don't want to do. I sit. I relax into where I am at. I allow

myself to be. This is me, creating. Creating space. Creating open spaces for more to flow in. I sit in my perceived comfort and allow the resistance to fade. I allow more to surface. Damn, forgot about that one. Crap, really? I thought I had dealt with that already. I let the dog take me for a walk to clear some more space.

The prize. The gold and diamonds. They are usually not found on the surface you have to dig. Is that why my dog does this? Once you have uncovered the prize, you win. You win because you now have more options than you did before. You have the ability to make other choices. You can choose to stay or go, but you get to choose. This is an amazing place to be, full of possibilities. Limitless. How freaking cool, I get to create again from this place. I get to create my own space, my way of being. I do the work that I need to do. Then...

I begin again. I create my practice. I sit and meditate with my dog, tapping into something bigger.

Perspective

I need help. Sometimes I can admit this, other times I get stuck in my belief that I can do it myself. Take this chapter for instance. I didn't know this was going to be in this book. At the time I connected with Jim Lutes and Jim Britt, I was struggling at another level. I was kicking myself because I was struggling (way to make it even harder Mike!). Their business mentorship has already made a difference in how I do things. But I needed perspective. I needed someone else's perspective. I can only see what I can see. Standing outside my struggle and story, another person can see things I am unable to see. Or admit.

This has been a pattern for me and I am so glad for it. I feel a pull to change and start to work on it. Then I get to a point where I need help. I find someone to help me, and I accelerate my growth. Then I practice and deepen. I improve, I expand. I shift. I gain perspective.

Creation

Create. Creative. Creating. Kick these words around for a bit, what do they bring forth? How do you create? Are you creative? What are you creating? Every day we create. We create our circumstances, our experiences. We create our realities. If you are reading this and, in a place, where this sounds like crap, good! That is exactly why

you are here! You see, by you being here, reading this, you and I are creating. We are creating an opening, possibilities, space. Co-creation. By you reading what I wrote and applying your thoughts and beliefs, we are co-creating. How cool is that? Regardless of whether or not you agree with me, we have joined in this journey—even if only for a bit. We have both been changed by the experience. It literally cannot be any other way.

What do you want? Why don't you have it? Do you even know why you want this? Hmmmm. I know, more questions. Does it make you uncomfortable to ask yourself these things? Can you get curious about it? This is where the creation begins. In the awareness of noticing a difference between states comes the discovery of how to get from one place to the other. One of the greatest things about this is that you can do it differently than everybody else. I am not suggesting that you don't follow a previously proven process or method to get you started, but you get to make it yours. You get to choose. Choose what to keep and what to toss. What can you learn from your dog about this?

This is being creative. Being creative isn't only for artists, authors, actors, Hollywood directors and God. Being creative is you, doing something different, making it yours. Making your work- work for you. Making your life work for you. Doing your thing as only you can. Hell yeah. So, I ask you again- What do you want? Why don't you have it?

Resonance

Does any of this ring true? Sound good. or right? Does it sound like a load of shit? Either way, you are tuned into resonance. Resonance is frequency, vibration. You can feel it. Gut feeling, anyone? Do you listen to your gut? We have so much internal wisdom at our disposal, how to tap into that is part of the journey. Here is what I have thought after *not* listening to my gut during important situations: Damn. Crap. Seriously? Oh boy. Do these cuffs have to be so tight?

How can you begin to find what resonates for you? Sit down. Be quiet. Notice. Start to question. What do I like? What is fun for me? What brings me joy? Notice the feelings and sensations that arise when you bring good, happy things into your consciousness. Etch those feelings deep, they are guides. Now flip it. Think about the

things that are sticky, icky, bring anger or resentment. Notice these feelings and sensations too. What does this feel like? These also give good information- what you don't want. The effect on your body, the sensations that arose from the feelings, are energetic. Think of sound waves. Music. Music you like, you listen to. When a song comes on that you don't like, what do you do? Change the channel.

That was a choice. You made a decision based on a sensation. It resonated or it didn't. You don't have to like the same thing someone else likes. You can like what you like. Love what you love. If something truly resonates with you, it is you.

Presence

Where are you, right now? Where are you physically? Look around you. Look at the space around you, what do you notice? Is your dog looking at you? Take just 10 more seconds and look around you again. Is there something you didn't notice the first time?

Where are you emotionally? What is going on in your life? Just sit in this space. Be as present as you can be. No past or future is in this space, just you, now. Slow your breathing just a bit. Do you notice any sensations? Hear anything outside? Hear anything inside?

Look at your dog. What is he doing? What if he isn't doing anything? Can you change this perspective a tiny bit and realize that he is just being? Think of the situations where your dog is fully present. Head hanging out the window of the car, sniffing like mad. Laying in the yard, soaking in the sun. Staring at your slice of pizza, trying to look as cute as hell. In these moments, he is fully present. Nothing else exists, until it does. Nothing else exists, until it is allowed to.

This does not mean that there is not an awareness. They have a greater awareness of their world than we can grasp in our own. We see our intellect as such a defining thing, making us "better" than others. Better than each other as well as other species. What if we were missing something?

How do you show up? More specifically, how do you show up in different situations and relationships? Are you even aware of how you show up? Are you present? If you are having difficulty gauging this for yourself, pay attention to how your dog responds to your

energy. When you are angry or frustrated, watch how your dog acts around you. When you are happy and excited, notice how your dog wants to celebrate with you. If you are sad or depressed, what is your dog showing or giving you?

The less present we are, the more we need from others. More attention. More validation. More love. Our dogs step in, attempting to give us what we need and show us what is possible.

What if your dog was constantly communicating with you? We tend to think of ourselves as the “dominant” species. I now know that we have a lot to learn, that our egos get in the way of our growth and “empowerment” as humans. Your dog is the Guru of communication and energy management. They are Zen Masters of presence. They are constantly right here, right now.

Unconditional love

We love the idea of unconditional love. Unconditional acceptance. Not feeling judged by others. Typically, we don’t feel like we get this from the people in our lives, but we do get this from our dogs. They don’t care what we wear. They don’t care what kind of car we drive. How big our house is. If we are overweight or ripped. The dogs are not having midlife crises. They are showing us something deeper, beyond our normal reach, the true prize.

What if I told you that the only one placing conditions on you was, well, you? The only reason you don’t have or can’t find unconditional love is that you are not able to give it to yourself. Again, the four-legged Sensei steps in to teach, to guide, to hold space. What if, in this space, you could allow? Allow just a little bit more discomfort to come and be with it. Allow just a little more of your shit to surface and be with it. Guess what happens? By allowing these things to come, be recognized and healed, you are making room. You are creating space. Space for love. Space for loving yourself. How amazing are you?

I have learned so much, experienced so much. I have helped many people and animals in my life. I have opened to possibilities I never fathomed. I have learned from amazing teachers. I have listened to nature. I have listened to the animals. I have experienced amazing

things. And still- I don't know shit. I am grabbing the leash and my Sensei and letting her lead for a while.

What do you want? Why don't you have it?

Much love,
Michael

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Michèle Connor



Michèle Connor grew up between Dublin and the UK, she's passionate about helping people discover the benefits of having a positive mindset and offering daily gratitude.

Her work has also been published in the book "Speak Up, Step Up, Stand Out".

She has experienced first-hand that changing one's perspective you can have a totally different viewpoint on life.

Michèle has an infectious energy and great humour that motivates and inspires those around her. She is committed to helping others implement proven Universal Laws and principles in a practical and simplified way to teach others. To show that gratitude opens the door to many things.

Are you going through a stage in your life where you feel lost, confused, or conflicted? Do you feel like you're disconnected with people around you, friends, co-workers or even with yourself? Are you feeling a lack of motivation, or lack and understanding of your true purpose? Do you yearn for a romantic partner or the perfect job? Or do you just want to upgrade your life to the next level?

Michèle is trained in helping people find themselves, find direction, and true happiness in all aspects of their lives. We each have a light within us. You are already born with the qualities you will need to get everything you have ever wanted! Michèle helps her clients reach each milestone. With an ultimate end goal of satisfaction and success.

The Art of Living

Reboot, Reset, Get Rich by Increasing the Power of Your Thoughts

By Michèle Connor

I thought for a long time whether I should write about what I've come to know, I mean, there are literally thousands of books out there on the *law of attraction* I have read a lot on the subject. There are many out there talking about it, most advertise their ignorance when they talk about it. I'm of the conclusion that the law of attraction is not understood by most people. A lot of people have heard of the law of attraction, but don't understand it. A lot of the books I did read, involved universal laws, but not many spoke of how to get those laws to work for them. So, in my own frustration, I wrote this book because I was searching for answers, I couldn't find answers at my church or from other people, I remember thinking when someone would say to me "it's meant to be", that that answer was cop out. That didn't satisfy me. So, after reading, studying, and learning this material and putting the material I've wrote about into practice, things started to really change for me, all for the better.

When others talk of their struggles, I understand. I had a violent home life at times. My father would never support us, he'd slam and throw things around the house. He'd never support my mum, he refused to work. He'd take his anger out on me. Others knew he was abusive. Growing up with humiliation robs you of self-respect, it makes you angry at your parents, the world, yourself. By the time I was a teenager, the violence got worse, my mother got sick. This kind of upbringing creates a negative attitude. I couldn't focus on school, to busy trying to stay alive. Changing your life takes focus.

I grew up when I was nine, had to be an adult. My father was mentally ill. My mother did the best she could, in time she became ill herself. There was not much security at home, those I trusted most, my mother's family, betrayed and abandoned me. Leaving me with insurmountable responsibilities. I had to raise my younger sister, with no help from anywhere. If I see any kids treated badly, I

don't support that behaviour from anyone. To escape this abusive home life, and help my mum, I joined the Forces.

I started asking questions, I'm the curious type, why my violent military accident happened, why the abandonment. I asked for a long while, eventually, I attracted the answers, I kept reading and researching for the answers, that's when things began to change for the better, they changed for the greater good. I finally understood why things happened, and now I'm being given closure. I started to talk again, started to see people as individuals, started to slowly trust again. To others, it may seem like something small, but for me, it's huge, because I deliberately made it difficult for others to approach me to protect myself. Now that I understand what I'm about to share with you, that has all changed for the greater good. And now I know, when I vibe with someone, conversation flows easily and when I don't vibe with someone, I don't vibe and leave it. I'm *very* enthusiast and passionate when discussing this subject because this works for those who apply it and who want to understand it. I acted on what I was reading, so, on that note, there's no time like the present to begin...

This book is based on the teachings of Wallace D Wattles, Abraham-Hicks and Bob Proctor. In preparation for this book, I read everything that I could find on the subject - everything from books to newspaper columns, to articles. I've listened to hundreds of hours and hours of Abraham-Hicks and Bob Proctor audio recordings. This subject is a little off the charts for many, most don't realise that everything around us, including us, is all energy, it's been written about many, many times. A lot of people have heard of the Law of Attraction, the most powerful *Law* in the Universe. I'm coming to understand and realise that not many understand this Universal Law, you just must look and observe their daily struggle to realise this. What we see in this physical world looks solid, but this really isn't the case.

Most people don't know why they are getting the results in their life that they are getting, it is all down to the vibration they are in, you may never have thought of yourself as vibrational, the Universe doesn't hear what we say, the Universe hears our emotions, what we feel, how we're feeling is the vibration we are in. Everything that is

around us, including us, is vibrating. When I was having a difficult time growing up, I didn't know this. I kept asking why are these things happening? I don't understand, why are the people I trust the most acting like this? It was the vibration I was in, and I had no idea! Do you look around at your life and question why you're getting the results you're getting? No matter what I did, I kept getting it wrong! Can you relate to that? No matter how much you work at your job, your struggle every month to make ends meet, can you relate to that one?! Do you wish you had more coming in? Do you wish you were getting different results?! This was where I was, can you relate to this frustration?!!

Schools and universities teach their students everything but how to make, nurture and tend to money. The results we are getting in our lives is a direct result of the thoughts that we are thinking. When we think a thought, either a positive or negative one, and we think that thought time and again, and we mix that thought with emotion, that thought then gets impressed onto our subconscious mind, it has a magnetic pulling power to that thought. Thought is a vibration; we get what we think about whether we want it or not. As I was trying to work out why things were going wrong, because I kept thinking of it, I kept attracting more of the same as I was trying to understand it! Can you relate? As you begin to work with these Universal Laws, you'll feel inspired to do things and you won't be sure why you are doing these things. As Bob Proctor said "by saying you feel enthusiastic, remember that the word Enthusiasm is just a derivation from the early Greek – "en theos" – meaning in God. As you communicate with Source Energy, or God, or whatever name you feel comfortable using, as you transmit to Infinite Intelligence God is listening to you, as you get a hunch or gut feeling to do something, that is God talking to you, follow your gut feeling and ignore logic. If you're willing to study and work with these Universal Laws, you will see results in your life. It is impossible to fail.

We have come to believe that what we see in our physical world is solid, we have also come to believe that to change anything, it takes a lot of effort to make those changes that we want. We believe that to achieve the results we want we must work hard to achieve those results, that we must struggle to reach our goal. We think to get anything done, we must take physical action, and we pay little mind

to our thoughts. A lot of people don't believe that anything can change using their thoughts, they feel that they must act first to complete the task, but that's where all ideas originate from, our thoughts. Everything starts in our thoughts. Before anything is formed in this physical world, it starts off as a thought first. Before anything is made or created, someone thought of the idea, be it the cloths you're wearing, the car that you drive, everything that is around you first started as a thought before it became the physical object it then gets created into.

It has been proven that everything around us is energy. Everything that you can see, hear, taste, smell, and touch, including our emotions, is all energy at different rates of vibration, this might be new terminology to you, when I say "vibration" I'm referring to your "emotions", so when I ask you "how are you feeling?" I'm actually saying, "what vibration are you in"? And the vibration/emotion you're in, is what you'll begin to attract to you.

Our experience tells us that we live in a world that is solid and unchangeable. It has been proven that this physical world that we've come to know and interpret with our physical senses is actually a very large sea of energy. We are energy, we are vibration. The objects we see around us, they look solid to us, but are in a different rate of vibration, a tree, a rock, your hand, they are all vibrating at different speeds, as Proctor mentions in his book, "to obtain a more graphic conceptualization of the idea of Vibration, just stretch out one of your arms straight in front of you. Then hold it perfectly still. While you are holding it still and are unable to perceive any motion in that arm at all, know that the electrons which compose the arm, are moving, shaking, quivering, or vibrating, at the rate of 186,300 miles per second".

If you wanted to see this, you could conduct experiments on yourself, if you put your arm under a powerful microscope, you would see that you are made up of energy, it's energy in the form of molecules, atoms. You would see your arm in a constant state of motion, nothing ever stays still. It may look still to your eyes, but your eyes can deceive you. When you're looking down a rail-road track, it looks to you that the railway is joining together doesn't it,

but you know this isn't true, that's what your eyes see, your eyes deceive you. You don't see with your eyes; you see with your mind.

To understand and to work with these Universal Laws, I'll start by talking about The Law of Attraction, the most powerful Law in the Universe; it is this law that governs what we attract, be it, personal prosperity, health, and relationships.

I'm referring to Universal Laws. When we come into alignment with what we want, all the things that you've been asking for, begin to manifest themselves into your reality. When I say "alignment", I'm referring to getting happy in any way that you can. I'm writing this book to go through the process of how to attract what you want into your life, as in: healthy relationships, money, plenty of abundance.

Some people ignore what their emotions are telling them, if they are going for something new and they get a not so good feeling about it, sometimes that feeling is put down to, having cold feet. If you're anything like me, I used to do that, I'd think it was just nerves, and despite the not so good feeling I felt, I'd go ahead with what I was doing, and when I didn't follow that nudge, I'd end up kicking myself when it doesn't work out. Have you ever done that? Your emotions are guiding you towards receiving the things you're asking for; I had no idea. As I found this out, and things started to work out for me, I was so shocked, when I found out that this worked once you apply it, I knew things would begin working out!! If you pay more attention to how you're feeling, with the understanding that the better you feel, the quicker the things that you've asked for are on the way to you, you would start to pay more attention to how you're feeling, your emotions will guide you towards what you're asking for!

The object of our life is to develop our talent and to be totally abundant in all the ways we wish to be. An understanding of coming into alignment and working with these Laws of the Universe I feel is essential to everyone.

It is my opinion that this should be taught in every school, both public and private. When we find ourselves being broke and having nothing to give to help another person, we can't fill our place in society, we are unable to do much, or to help another.

It is in your best interest to come into alignment to study and work with these Universal Laws. If you don't and you decide to neglect studying this, as my mentor Proctor states, and I happen to agree with him, Bob goes onto say "you are derelict in your duty to yourself, to God, and to humanity. You can render God and humanity no greater service than to make the most of yourself".

Now that we've talked about the most powerful *law* in the Universe – The Law of Attraction, let's now direct our attention to the other subsidiary laws.

The law of Vibration is the foundation for the "Law of Attraction" these laws operate and work in co-ordination with the other seven *Laws*:

This is a Universe that operates by law:

These Universal Laws govern every individual; they are as exact as the Laws which we adhere to in our material world.

Here are the seven Universal Laws.

The Law of Perpetual Transmutation

The Law of Relativity

The Law of Vibration

The Law of Polarity

The Law of Rhythm

The Law of Cause and Effect

The Law of Gender

If you want to know what you are in harmony with, look around where you are, your environment tells you what you are in vibrational harmony with. A question does arise, can we work with these Laws? Or would it be difficult to do this? We come to realise it can't be that difficult to do, you can see others who have come into alignment and who work with these Laws, their abundance is your proof that it works.

As Bob Proctor mentions "you can act in accordance with these universal laws or you can disregard them, but you cannot in any way alter them". These Universal Laws operate by strict Law and will

always hold you accountable for the thoughts and vibrations you are emitting into the Universe, when choosing thoughts, choose happy uplifting thoughts. There is no room for ignorance if you don't understand these Laws.

The Law of Attraction will deliver to you **what you do want** when you hold your thoughts in a good place as quickly as it will deliver **what you don't want**. Your emotions are your indicator to how well you're doing. As I struggled with my past, I didn't know this.

We all learn from a very early stage about the Law of gravity, yet the other Universal Laws are not told to us. Why are we not taught about these other Universal Laws? This should really be taught in schools. We're taught virtually nothing about these Laws. Keep in mind, when you don't obey these laws, and when you violate the Laws, we do pay a price.

Once you come into alignment, hold the image of what you want in your mind and work with these Universal Laws, you can't help but succeed. When people show gratitude after they received what they have asked for, when they come to ask again, they don't show much gratitude for what they already have, cutting themselves off from receiving any better.

Income:

Most people mainly have just one source of income; their income is from their main job. No matter how secure you may feel in the job and industry you're in now, there is always a chance that things in your job could easily go south, where nothing is working out. You lose your job; the bills are coming in and you've no money to meet them. If someone were to lose their job, more than likely they would feel demoralised and probably depressed.

It would be in your best interest to create some multiple sources of income, in the chance that your main source of income gets cut off in the future. They would have more bills in their mailbox than have the money to pay their bills. Each job just has so many hours in the day; there is a saturation of time, so with the main job there is only so many hours in the day, so those with their job can only earn so much!0

So instead of having just one job, you can create what is known as Multiple Sources of Income (M.S. I's) by creating many sources of incomes, is used by almost every very wealthy person, they incorporate this system; they have many sources of different income. You begin by creating a service, one that is different from your primary source of income. By adding value to the marketplace, your income will start to increase and change.

What is surrounding you is a manifestation of the thoughts you were thinking in the past. As you begin to change your thoughts, and if you hold onto your new thoughts, these new thoughts will dominate in your vibration and manifestations will present themselves to you in the future. Don't get discouraged that they haven't manifested right away, just remind yourself what Nelson Mandela said, "this is what it looks like while it's happening". You need to get onto the same vibration, the same frequency of what you're wanting, and the quickest way is to raise your vibration by thinking hopeful, good thoughts.

Go out and get the best life you deserve.

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Nina Boski



Nina is an entertainment and media executive and host, life, business and energy coach, author, facilitator and entrepreneur.

Getting her start in radio, Nina expanded into many areas of media. As an entertainment and lifestyle expert, Nina was a TV correspondent for the Hallmark Channel's "New Morning" show, as well as LIME's Healthy Living Channel (now GAIAM TV). She has also been on air on

Lifetime TV as well as the WE network interviewing celebrities for entertainment features. Nina currently hosts her own radio show and has aired LifeBites radio on Sirius Satellite Radio and AOL Radio, and is a main contributor for *Positively Positive*, the inspirational social media smash with over two million followers, and Australia's *Make the World Move*. More recently she hosted and produced a weekly TV show on emPOWERme TV "LifeBites LIVE!"

Nina's passion for life is evident the moment she walks into a room. With a unique combination of self-help and entertainment, she combines her media world with helping people as a lifestyle expert. She is also the co-author of a book for women, called the *Spirit of Women Entrepreneurs* and her new upcoming book, *Rock On With Your Wonderful Bad Ass Self* (Dec 2015). Her media savvy and experience has earned her a loyal following and national & international recognition as a lifestyle and entertainment host and coach. Nina is also producing four media projects, one of them about Marilyn Monroe around mental health and addiction.

Rock On with Your Wonderful Bad-Ass Self

Nina Boski

“If you want to be successful in life, stop asking for permission.”

- Anonymous

Definition of bad·ass

noun

- “A dynamic, confident, take charge, ready for a challenge person.”
- “Belief in oneself. Fearless; will not cower under adversity.”
- “Comfortable in one’s skin. Connected to oneself.”
- “Ready to take on the world and enjoying the ride.”

If you are reading this book, and specifically this chapter, you are ready for a change and wanting to become a wonderful bad-ass yourself. Now, you may be very clear about what kind of wonderful bad-ass you would like to become, or you may just have a fuzzy inclination that something profound is stirring deep within you. Wherever you are, it is time to ask yourself two important questions to get you started on your adventure:

1. Are you ready for the change?
2. Are you going to be successful in your change?

For me, I have always been a risk taker. I love change and opportunity to create new things. Innately I am a positive person and people see the positive in me. However, like many of us, my filter from an early age was programmed not to succeed. Although my mom and family loved me, they did not always fill my mind and heart with thoughts of, “You can do it.” They didn’t have big expectations for my future, but I always had big dreams. It’s through the twists and turns of falling down and getting up, through failing and succeeding, that I learned I could be successful in life. I learned it’s not just having the will to change, but the will to evoke, create, ignite, excite and be passionate about really becoming a wonderful, bad-ass self!

“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.” – Albert Einstein

I see many people in my coaching practice, and out in the world, who think that they are going to make a change with the same old energy and don't take new action. They are waiting for some Divine inspiration. If you want to create a change, you need to start embodying that change now. No more waiting! People say, “I want to start working out,” but they haven't even put on their running or walking shoes. They are only in thinking mode. Or, you hear some say, “I want to make more money,” but they have not implemented one new strategy in order to shift the energy. Thinking about putting something into action and actually putting something into action are two different things. In order to rock on with your wonderful bad-ass self, you need to get crystal clear and not just talk change. Be the change – NOW!

“It is in your moments of decision that your destiny is shaped.”

– Tony Robbins

Once you know you are ready, willing, and able, you'll start to shift, as long as you put it into motion. But just like with anything in life, before you get moving, it is important that you have a vision. A vision gives your life direction and a concrete place to grow into. In my life, vision was never the issue, but creating a grounded structure and support system was always my stumbling block. After leaping without a proper support system in place, and suffering the bumps and bruises from it, I got a clue – maybe I need to do it differently. If you do not couple your vision with focus and structure, it is like jumping off a diving board with no water in the pool. You'll crash and, believe me, it will hurt. Vision is key in becoming a wonderful bad-ass but building a structure will allow the freedom and the support to manifest that delightful dream!

“In order to carry a positive action, we must develop a positive vision.”

– Dalai Lama

One of the first things you want to do before embarking on your bad-ass adventure is to get clear about what it is you want to create. I meet with so many people who have not developed a meaningful

vision for themselves. They'll say, "I want to make a career change." I'll ask, "Do you know what kind of change you want to make?" or "What are you passionate about?" Their response, "I don't know." If you are going to rock on with your wonderful bad-ass self, you will need to go deeper in order to expand who you are, what you want, and what you need to get there. Vision needs focus, clarity, and structure in order to fully come to life! Part of being a wonderful bad-ass is not being afraid to set the stage for yourself to fully bloom. In fact, you should be excited about creating a plan for blooming and taking calculated risks. The key is to create a solid foundation that allows you to fully manifest that change. The bottom line, "KNOW THY SELF.

When opportunity knocks, are you prepared enough to go for it?

- Anonymous

Don't get me wrong. Sometimes great things can happen unexpectedly. I love to follow my impulses and act on my ideas, and sometimes creating as you go can help to overcome inhibitions and can be the best way to manifest an opportunity. If you find yourself in this place, then jump in and fill in as you go – dream, structure, get it clear and focused, all while you are in the process of creating, but don't skip calculating the risks and creating that foundation. The key to getting this energy to really work for you is to pull in the right people and support to help you make the change or build your dream. So many times, we have big dreams, but we don't have the right resources, time or systems to make it happen. Don't let this be you or you will be that person who dives in without any water in the pool. Don't take on risky opportunities if you know you can't pay the rent at the end of the month. Part of being a wonderful bad-ass is being smart enough to know what choices to make.

"You always have two choices: your commitment versus your fear."

- Sammy Davis, Jr.

If you look at some of the greatest legends of our time, they all have one thing in common – they took a risk. You just heard me say be calculating in your risks, but if you have done that, now it is time to get crackin'! Part of risk-taking is not just physical, but mental,

emotional, and spiritual as well. Last year, at 50 years old, I made a complete left turn in a portion of my career. I became the lead producer in a \$5 million feature film and yet I never have produced a film in my life! Talk about risky. The film business was something I never did before, had little experience with, and the stakes were high. I was not prepared for the energy and the learning curve that came at me. However, I was prepared as a businesswoman, and I applied those skills immediately to this project. I pulled in successful people that know film to help support this opportunity and make it successful. At first, I was clumsy, but I never lost my focus and clarity of what I needed. The support came because I was clear. Knowing that vision with structure is always best when you are creating, but sometimes you just need to roll with it, especially if you want to rock on with your wonderful bad-ass self. Be bold. Don't be afraid to take a risk!

"Fate Loves the Fearless."

- James Russell Lowell

Doing anything in life requires balance to do it well. You are not always going to be in perfect union with creating and with change, and that's okay. That is part of nature. However, if you are being bold, fearless and confident, and jumping into the adventure, you will need to recharge your bad-ass self. A lot of stress is created from this place of imbalance, especially here in the United States. We are celebrated for what we do, not for who we are. It is important that if you are going to make a change and really become a bad-ass yourself, you will need to create, what I call your "recharge zone." It is a time that you get out of the race for a moment to realign, recharge and refocus your energy. A time for you to tune into your highest potential. In other words, you need to "Seek your Silence." Take some quiet time for you, to clear your thoughts, to hear yourself get out of *doing* and get into the *being* of your life. We live in a world of opposites: light and dark, sun and moon, negative and positive, masculine and feminine. It is important to implement the silence in your life, to counterbalance the high-powered "do" mentality, and all the technology being pushed out at us every single day.

“When you know yourself, you are empowered. When you accept yourself you are invincible.”

– Tina Lifford

Another important part of succeeding to rock on with your wonderful, bad-ass self is accepting you – the good, the bad and the not so pretty. Many times, what keeps us from going forward is our need to be perfect. We say to ourselves, “When I have the perfect plan, the perfect career, the right man, the right money, the right education, I’ll move forward with my dream or goal.” But sometimes, by waiting for it to be perfect, we never get moving. Or, the opposite happens. We judge ourselves so harshly, and are so critical of ourselves, that we are frozen in time, afraid to get rockin’. We think we are not good enough. We are too fat, too thin. We are too old, too young. The point is, we hold ourselves back in judgment, not ever getting over the fact that the little voice inside of us may not be telling us the truth. If you get into action and stop judging yourself, you may realize that the world is not judging you either. A few years ago, when I was a host of a television series, my co-host was about twenty years younger than me. I remember thinking, “I’m old enough to be her mother. I even sort of look like her mother.” It was the first time in my career that I became conscious of my age and judging the fact that I was getting older. I also remember wrestling with the voices in my head at the time, saying, “Maybe I am too old to be doing this anymore.” All of my critical voices surfaced. These voices created mental images that I call my “perfect pictures.” I knew then that for me to go forward in my life, I needed to get to acceptance of myself and look deeper at my worth and what I bring to the table. So, part of you rockin’ on with your wonderful bad-ass self is to be more loving and accepting of yourself. I know that I could not be the wonderful bad-ass self I am today without all the things that have brought me to this point, and that includes my age. For a woman in media and entertainment, age is a touchy subject and that is one you have to reconcile with to really ignite your full potential. Now look at your own life. What “perfect pictures” are you carrying around with you? Are you ready to let them go?

“Our greatest glory is not in never falling, but in rising every time we fall.” - Confucius

The saying goes, it is not about the fall; it’s about the rise. Another part of being a wonderful bad-ass is to know you are going to fall down, and do it anyway. I used to get so scared about failure and rejection. One failure in and I thought it defined me. However, if you talk to the really successful people, failure and rejection are part of getting to your “YES” or success in life.

Failure is part of success. Michael Jordan is a true sports legend, but that doesn’t mean he didn’t make mistakes or face failure along the way. He was recently quoted as describing his career as a list of failures: “I’ve missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”

Look at J.K. Rowling, author of the mega, best-selling Harry Potter series. Rowling is indisputably one of the most successful writers in the world, yet, she wasn’t an overnight success. She spent years in poverty struggling as an undiscovered author and single mother, devoting countless nights in a cafe attempting to make her novel about wizards come to life. She once described herself as “the biggest failure she knew.” Her now famous manuscript was rejected 12 times and one publisher even told her to “not to quit her day job.” But now, she is the author of the best-selling book series in history, more than 450 million copies worldwide, has won multiple awards and accolades, and the Harry Potter films are the highest-grossing film series in history.

Many people look at famous icons and think they became that way overnight. But you have to remember that even if a person is lucky enough to get that big break, it is not luck that will keep them there. They have to bring the goods, the talent, the integrity, the persistence, and the drive – all of it, in order for it to last. Look at some of the leading women in the media: Oprah Winfrey, Ellen DeGeneres, Hillary Clinton, Arianna Huffington – all of these women have failed at one time or another. The point is, they regrouped and got back up again. It’s not the fall that counts. It’s having the courage, the strength and the motivation to get back up

and try it again! If you are going to be a wonderful bad-ass, you are going to have to get comfortable with both rising and falling. Both of these qualities will make you a true success and give you the ability to make and succeed at change!

If you can make a girl laugh, you can make her do anything.

- Marilyn Monroe

When I was young, I had such a fun energy. However, as I became an adult, I remember thinking, “I have to be responsible,” and “It’s time to get serious.” Part of maturing is doing just that. However, people take it too far. We get stressed out from the small things in life and we stop laughing and having fun. Part of my intention a few years back was to recapture that fun energy I had as a child. I call it, “finding the fun.” In doing this you don’t have to be doing big things to enjoy yourself. You may find the fun in your everyday life, singing along to the radio while driving in traffic, playing catch with your dog, or just having a gut-wrenching belly laugh with a friend. The point is to not just look for the fun, but to find it and live it in your life – every day. Not just something you do on the weekends or on vacation. I think if you want to be a true, wonderful bad-ass, you need to “Get Your Fun On!” It’s too easy to live in stress and take things way too seriously. Just remember that at the end of your life, you are not going to be thinking about your fender-bender from last week or momentary fight with your co-worker. You are going to remember the good times and the meaningful moments with the people around you. So, stop, laugh, giggle and let that inner twinkle shine bright. Your homework assignment - HAVE SOME BAD-ASS FUN TODAY!

It is the ultimate luxury to combine passion and contribution. It's also a very clear path to happiness.

- Sheryl Sandberg

I don’t know about you, but my life has better meaning and texture to it when I am giving back. Making a contribution to someone else’s life, to my community, or to the bigger world can make such a difference. For me, it gives me a sense of connectedness. There are so many people, and you may be one of them, saying, “My life has no purpose.” If this is true for you, start making a contribution. Start

giving back. By helping someone else, it can instantly give you a sense of purpose, and even passion. Part of rockin' on with your wonderful bad-ass self is knowing that selfless can be better than selfish. By doing some good, and looking for the good, not only are you giving, but I can guarantee that you will be receiving so much in return. If you want to become a better bad-ass, find a way to make a contribution, because you will feel good in the process. The better you feel and the more you help others to change, it can only give you the inspiration to keep making changes yourself.

“The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate.”

- Oprah Winfrey

How many of you celebrate you? What I mean by that question is, how much time do you spend celebrating all of your wonderful qualities?

Most of us are trained to focus on the negative. You can do 100 things right, but if you do one thing wrong, that will be your focus. We are conditioned in society and in the media to look for the wrong or the negative. Our programming needs to be tweaked in this area. It time to start looking at all the things you are doing right, moving from “wrong” thinking to “right” thinking, and shifting from the negative to the positive. Part of being able to rock on with your wonderful, bad-ass self is celebrating and acknowledging your wonderful bad-ass qualities. So this is what I would like you to do:

1. Make a list of five wonderful qualities (list more if you can).
2. Say them out loud.
3. Say them to another person.
4. Say them with passion and conviction.
5. Say them with a bad-ass smile on your face!

Not only do we not get a lot of acknowledgements by the outside world, but we also spend little time, if at all, acknowledging ourselves. In order to be your wonderful bad-ass self, that old conditioning needs to end here and now. It is time to celebrate you!

It is truly time to bring forth your good, your magnificence, your power, and your passion! Come on, light your fire!

Let me say that life is not always going to be a breezy ride. You will have your ups and downs, good days and bad. However, if you are committed to making a change and you instill these qualities of fearlessness, vision, structure, action, time, contribution, celebration and fun into your life, you won't just be ready to fulfill your dreams and desires, you will be fully loaded to ROCK ON WITH YOUR WONDERFUL BAD-ASS SELF! - Let's Rock!

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Sandee Sgarlata



Sandee Sgarlata is a two-time award-winning author, certified life coach since 2004, public speaker, retired U.S. national and international figure skating coach, gold medalist in ice dancing, and has spent the past 20 years helping people create lasting changes in their lives. Due to several tragedies that deeply affected her, along with hitting rock bottom with drug abuse in 1990, she has spent the last 30 years in her own quest to find and maintain a sense of peace and happiness, especially during times of stress and chaos.

Sandee's recent best-selling book, "Happiness Solved: Climbing One Hundred Steps" is a self-improvement book, part memoir, and workbook. She is also the host of the Happiness Solved Podcast which is ranked #11 out of the top 80 happiness podcasts.

Sandee's coaching practice offers group coaching programs, online courses, and one-on-one coaching for elite athletes and corporate leadership.

Happiness Solved: Change your Perspective, Change your Life.

By Sandee Sgarlata

How many times in your life have you had to work for something you wanted? Maybe it was getting better at your golf game. Maybe it was getting in shape. Maybe it was learning a new hobby or trade. How hard did you have to work at it to get the result you were looking for? Was it easy? Or was it something you had to work on every day?

For me, nothing has come easy in my life. I have had to work at everything single thing I have accomplished. Did I want to give up and throw in the towel? Absolutely! However, quitting has never been an option for me when I wanted something bad enough.

In 1990 when I found myself hitting rock bottom from cocaine abuse, the only thing that mattered to me was getting better. Here's the thing though – when you clear your mind after going down a major rabbit hole and hitting rock bottom, I was left with many years of shame, guilt, grief, abuse, and every other negative emotion humanly possible. I had to heal those wounds before I could get better. Abusing drugs was my way to escape all of those emotions.

What I learned very early in my recovery is that I wanted to experience the happiness I felt when I was 12 years old. I wrote about this experience in my book “Happiness Solved: Climbing One Hundred Steps.” You see, that was the turning point in my life. I was having a happy day only to learn that my older brother had tragically died while serving in the US Army. He was only 19 years old. My whole life came crumbling down. It wasn't until 1990, when I found myself in an outpatient recovery program, that I was able to begin the process of picking up my life that had crumbled around me 12 years earlier.

It took many years of therapy, reading hundreds of self-help books, attending dozens of workshops, years of mindset coaching sessions, and countless hours of meditation to realize that my happiness is a choice.

Unfortunately for me, the tragic death of my brother was just one of many tragedies I would have to face. I dive into those details in my self-improvement, part memoir, part workbook, “Happiness Solved.” In short, besides the death of my brother, I had an abusive father who tragically died when I was 18 months old, I had four miscarriages, a divorce, and my ex-husband was involved in a car accident in which two people were killed and he spent seven years in prison to pay his debt to society. This left me a single mother to raise my then 12 year old little boy.

Here’s the thing, when you do intense self-improvement work like I did, you come to realize that all of these things happened FOR ME, not to me. The other thing that you realize is that being happy is a *practice*. It is *not* something that will be *mastered*.

This brings me back to my first paragraph. If you want to be happy, you have to practice being happy every day. It is no different than a doctor who is practicing medicine, an athlete who is practicing for the Olympics, or an actor who is preparing for their next big role.

Since I am known as “America’s Happiness Coach,” I have been interviewed on dozens of podcasts and have appeared on live TV multiple times, I always get asked the question: what is the one thing people can do to shift their mindset and experience happiness?

To answer that question, I can sum it up in this way: Change your perspective, change your life.

You see, we all have our own perspective, which is the way we view the world. It’s like wearing glasses – it’s like the lens in which we see things.

Our perception is the way we think about or understand someone or something and it is also what we understand or interpret from our five senses: touch, sight, sound, smell and taste.

However, our perception is shaped by our past experiences, feelings, thoughts, the way we were raised, and so on. The interesting thing about your perception is that it is unique to you. Two people can look at the same image and interpret it two different ways. Think of it as looking at the glass half full or half empty.

Everyone has their own perception of the world in which they live. The perception that you have of the world is the lens through which you see the world, and in turn, you come to conclusions about things that take place.

Why is all this important? Because the thing about your perspectives and perceptions is that it can end up becoming your reality. You see, your perspective is the lens through which you are looking. This will then become your perception of the situation. Your perception turns into your beliefs, which influences your behavior, which becomes your experience and ultimately your reality. Change your perspective and change your reality.

When we have a situation that causes us deep pain or anger, if we are unable to make that shift and see things differently, how is that going to affect your ability to live a happy life?

So, another way to look at this is you can also think about certain perceptions you carry as limiting beliefs. A limiting belief is something that you think is true, however it will only hold you back from truly being happy and the ability to take your life to places you never imagined possible.

Are we born with limiting beliefs? Absolutely not! They are shaped by our personal experiences, what we are told by our peers, family, teachers, etc.

When I was in the fifth grade, I loved art class. I remember doing this one assignment and I was so proud of the drawing I did. When I showed the teacher, she told me it was terrible. Can you believe that? A schoolteacher actually told a ten year old that her art work was terrible! So, what do you think this did to me? I have lived with that in the back of my mind for decades thinking that I was terrible at art. Is this true? NO! Did I know that as a ten-year-old? Of course not!

Some other common limiting beliefs are “imposter syndrome”, or “I want to be a public speaker but who will listen to me?” or “I can’t do _____”, or “I will never make enough money to afford _____.” Are those statements true? Absolutely not! However, if you can learn to shift your perception about those limiting beliefs, your

reality will change, and again, your life will change in ways you never imagined possible.

While today I can honestly say that one of my superpowers is being able to see things from multiple perspectives, I was not always this way. It has taken me many years of self-reflection and self-improvement to be able to claim this as one of my superpowers!

I personally experienced being unable to shift my perception in 1998, when I was in my early thirties and became a US National and International figure skating coach, against all odds. You see, as a competitive figure skater in my youth, I never competed outside of my region. I viewed the world of figure skating as this loving community as that was my experience as a young adult. When an opportunity arose in 1993 to start coaching skating, I jumped at the chance and figured I would simply teach group lessons to boys and girls and pass on my love of the sport. I had no expectations as to what level I would reach in the coaching world. As fate would have it, in 1994 when Tanya Harding tried to injure her rival, Nancy Kerrigan, it brought figure skating into the limelight. As unfortunate as that was, all of a sudden, I had 50 little girls who wanted to be a figure skater. That started my career as a full-time figure skating coach.

What I did not realize at the time, was that I was getting into a negative world as the other coaches looked down on me because I did not have impressive medals and titles under my belt. I had one extremely talented student who had faith in me and my abilities, and he is the one who I took to US Nationals and then watched him win a gold medal at his first international competition. Soon after, we brought on a new technical coach, who was even more difficult to work with than the previous one we had recently parted ways with. I then made the tough decision to leave the sport while I was on top. Why? Because my perspective about the figure skating world was damaged and I was unable to shift my perception and I gave into the anger and bitterness I felt.

What is the price we pay if we continue to hold on to perceptions that do not serve us and the price we pay for not dealing with it? These negative feelings are going to affect your physical health, your emotional well-being, as well as your spiritual well-being.

Most importantly, when you choose to hold on to these negative perceptions, you will not be able to fully live a happy and joyful life.

What is the price I paid? I felt deflated, bitter, and lost the joy and love I had for the sport I adored my entire life. I was utterly disappointed that people could be so mean to their colleagues, as I had always lived my life celebrating other's accomplishments. It was a hard lesson learned that not everyone will behave the way I choose to.

I'd like to share with you the five steps I took to change my perspective and be able to free myself from the negativity that was holding me back from truly being happy. These five steps need to be practiced every time you find yourself stuck with a perception that is not serving you. By practicing these on a regular basis is the only way to create lasting changes in your life.

The first step is to feel the feelings and talk yourself off the ledge. The feelings you are having are real and you have to experience all the emotions that are surrounding it. Acknowledge to yourself that it is okay to feel that way. Acknowledge to yourself that it is real. Validate the feeling and know that it is a normal human emotion. Understand that you are human and so is everyone else.

The second step --- Give yourself a break! Are you feeling bitter? If you are feeling bitter, you likely need to work on forgiveness. Forgiveness does not mean that you are letting the other person off the hook for how they behaved or treated you. Forgiveness is freeing your mind of the resentment you are holding onto toward the other person. By not forgiving them you are letting them take up space in your head and they do not deserve that right! You see, resentment is a form of anger and if you do not release it, it will eat you up like a disease. If at any time when you think of this person you are feeling anything but peace in your heart, you still need to work on forgiving them. Sometimes you need to practice forgiving another person every minute, every hour, of every day until you are able to fully be free.

The third step is sometimes the hardest part and one that most people never realize that they need to do. You need to work on forgiving yourself. Forgive yourself for feeling shame. Forgive yourself for being cynical. Forgive yourself for resenting another person.

Forgiving yourself is just as important as forgiving another. It takes practice to learn how to do this every time you are feeling bitter toward yourself or another person. Again, you may have to practice forgiving yourself every minute, every hour, of every day, until you are able to be fully free.

I have worked so hard on forgiving others and forgiving myself that it now is so much easier for me, as I fully understand the end result of not forgiving. I have a motto that I live by which came from a novel I published in 2009, *Forgive for Peace*.

Fourth, just let it go! Let it go and accept the fact that you cannot change or fix the other person. Let it go and accept that the way they behave is out of your control. You can only control the way in which you react to the situation. Letting go is also trusting that everything is going to work out exactly the way it is supposed to, because it always does!

I do want to add that when you trust that things are going to work out exactly as they are supposed to, it is also important that you do not place any expectations on the outcome. If you do, you do not fully trust it.

Lastly, when you have a negative thought, switch it to one that is more positive. If I am thinking “people are awful,” I can switch my thought to “this is about them, not me.” In some situations, ask yourself “is there another way to see this? Am I making up a story about what just happened?” Here’s another one: have you ever worried about what other people think of you? Instead, say to yourself “what other people think of me is none of my business.”

I recently interviewed a fellow coach named Kyle Gillet on my *Happiness Solved Podcast* who put it this way: In all situations there are three stages to it: 1) the situation that occurred; 2) the story we make up about it; and 3) the way we react. I love that! Many times, we make up a story about what just happened when in reality, we are probably jumping to conclusions.

Here’s an example of what I mean by making up a story: You run into an acquaintance only to have them blow you off. You may think to yourself “how rude that she didn’t say hello.” This is a story that you made up. You have immediately assumed that this person

recognized you and made a conscious effort to avoid you. Maybe that person chose to avoid you. So, what! However, did you ever stop to think that maybe she did not recognize you? Maybe she was having a really bad day and simply did not want to make small talk. You know what? That's okay! Stop making it about you because it isn't about you. All you are doing in this scenario is creating a drama that is not there.

These five steps can be used as tools for you to gain more peace in your heart and put an end to the negative feelings and help you to shift your perspective and ultimately, your perception.

So, when I think of how the inability to shift one's perspectives affects our world, I think of the amazing life story of someone who I have admired since I was a teenager. I remember watching her on the daily news and could tell even back then that she was someone very special. What I did not know until many years later, is that she had a very difficult upbringing and dealt with sexual abuse from several family members and family friends beginning at the age of nine.

She kept the abuse from others and began acting out. She would skip school, steal and run away. At the age of 14, she kept a pregnancy hidden from her family for seven months because of the shame she felt. The baby died two weeks after being born as a result of complications from being premature. When it became too much for her mother to handle, she went to live with her father.

Experiencing all of this by the age of 14 would have broken most people. Instead, her father told her that this was her second chance at life. She said, "I was, in many ways, saved by that, and I made a decision that I was going to turn it around."

She eventually landed a co-host spot on the evening news in Baltimore, MD, where I would watch her on a daily basis. Her co-host made it really hard on her and would try to embarrass her any chance he had. She then moved to a morning talk show and the rest is history!

Can you imagine what would the world look like today if Oprah gave up and chose to be stuck in a negative perspective the way I did?

Instead, she took responsibility for her own life, learned to forgive, realized she had to accept things the way they showed up in her life, and she moved on, and moved up in the world in a way we rarely see!

When I think back about all those little girls I adored teaching and why I left the sport, I wish I had the strength to stick it out because life is too short!

So, the next time you want to flirt with being stuck with a perspective that doesn't serve you, talk yourself off the ledge, give yourself a break, and skate on!

Change your perspective and change your life!

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Shawn Feurer



Shawn Feurer is an author, speaker and elite business consultant, who has specialized in the home improvement industry for over 25 years. He is a certified professional behavioral and values analyst and has dedicated his life to impacting the world through his guidance and consulting. Shawn loves to travel especially to exotic destinations and attend live music festivals. He has worked with leadership icon Bob Proctor and is one of his top inner circle consultants.

Through his consulting, he assists others to remove self-limiting beliefs and uncover the **BREAKTHROUGH** moment in their lives.

How I made the “Change”

Shawn Feurer

Let’s start in 1991, when I was a senior in high school. At 18 years old, I thought I had it all figured out. My ingenious plan was to get engaged to my high school sweetheart by the time I was ready to graduate, then go to college while working part time in the family business. I would then take my shiny new business degree and get a 9-5 job with a medium size corporation offering a decent entry level salary. \$30K was a nice starting wage back then, I’d acquire that with no problem. I could then purchase my white BMW, join a local gym, get married, and find a nice little house in the suburbs with a white picket fence. We would settle down, raise some children, and live out our days in harmony. Sounds perfect, right? The job, the family, the house, the good health! What more could a man want? I was literally going to be living The American Dream.

My humble beginnings started with my biological father leaving my life twice before the age of six. The second time, he didn’t return and was completely absent from my life until I found him almost twenty years later. The man I called “Dad” met, and married, my mother shortly after my biological dad left for good. He became a positive influence in my life and his example motivated me to put together my perfect life plan. He was a good, hard-working man who taught me everything I *thought* I needed to know about life. Honesty, integrity, loyalty, strong work ethic, and the importance to treat your wife and family as the top priority they should be.

Growing up, we were not poor, but we were not what anyone would have considered wealthy. I worked hard in school and in life. I acquired good grades and became somewhat of a leader, getting involved in sports and student government. I began working before I entered high school, which provided me with enough money to maintain my simple lifestyle. I did not want for much and tried my best to enjoy the life I was experiencing. I wasn’t always good at simply enjoying what I had and found myself always looking for the

next best thing. I could not wait to be sixteen and get my car and finally be independent. Then I wanted to be eighteen, so I could vote and move out on my own. Then it was twenty-one I sought after, so I could drink and gamble and behave like a real adult. I did not realize it at the time, but this began a cycle of chasing the next experience. I was stuck in a vicious cycle of looking to the future for that age or experience that would finally bring me the “happy” I was I was so desperately looking for.

“A happy life is just a string of happy moments. But most people don’t allow the happy moment, because they’re so busy trying to get a happy life.” -Esther Hicks

These are words that are burnt into my head and heart today, but I did not hear them nor, more importantly, understand them until I was in my early forties. Obviously, we have some catching up to do! We can fill in the blanks as we go, but let’s pick things up around 2014. It was January and, after celebrating my fortieth birthday the year prior, I had come to some disheartening and out right disturbing conclusions. After graduating college, I had executed most of my ingenious plan to a fault. Instead of going on to work in corporate America, I decided to stay in the family business. Other than that deviation, I completed the rest of the plan to perfection. I married my high school girlfriend at twenty-two, we bought our first home together the same year, we had our first son at twenty-five, and I purchased the family business by the age of thirty. By the time I turned forty, I had built and lived in several beautiful homes, had four amazing children, traveled everywhere I desired, owned the vehicles and toys I always wanted, and appeared to be in decent physical shape. From the outside, I looked like the man living the American Dream that I was programmed to live. How does it get better?

One the inside, however, it was a very different story. I was stressed and burnt out. After buying my first house at the age of twenty and flipping it upward and onward multiple times, I was about to lose everything. Twenty years of hard work, building a business, and my

real estate portfolio were all on the verge of vanishing. The million-dollar dream home I had built in 2008 was upside down on the mortgage and, despite how hard I battled to keep it for six years, it was a sinking ship. The family business I had successfully grown and managed over the past two decades was still recovering from the recession of 2008 and had been downsized to the point where it could not support both me and my father any longer. My father was having health challenges. He had a stroke and was also dealing with caring for my mother, who was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's.

All the stress of these life events, coupled with two people growing apart and not working to grow together, had my marriage up against the ropes. I was miserable and could not see any way out of it. I hated the work I was doing. I was a hamster spinning on a wheel, running to keep up with the dream I so badly wanted. I was spending no quality time with my children. I would wake up before them, work all day, and get home as they were going to sleep for the night. I had toys collecting dust in the garage, because I was too busy and too tired to enjoy them. I had trouble even wanting to get out of bed let alone put together the kind of effort it would take to turn everything else. The stress of the past few years had taken a toll on both my physical and emotional health, which left me battling depression and anxiety. I was on multiple prescriptions for heartburn and indigestion and my hormones were so out of whack that my doctor had recommended I get on testosterone therapy to increase my levels. I did not feel like much of a man at this point, and it was literally being reinforced by my doctor that I was not.

I never went down the full dark path of planning to take my own life, but there were moments I did the math on the mess I was in comparison to the life insurance I had on myself. I had thoughts creep in: *"My wife and kids would be so much better off financially if my miserable ass was no longer around!"* While the thoughts were there, they were fleeting. I knew I needed to make a change.

I will never forget the day I found myself stuck in a roundabout, just five minutes from my home. As I drove my car round and round, my favorite song by Imagine Dragons was playing on my car stereo: *“It’s Time to begin.... It’s time to begin, isn’t it?”* The message I heard loud and clear was it is time to make a change for ME. Many of us spend a good amount of time in our life doing things for other people. We do this for a variety of reasons ranging from external validation to wanting to make a positive impact in this world. For me, the pattern of making sure everyone in my life was cared for, despite taking care of myself, had left me extremely unhealthy mentally, physically, financially, and emotionally. I was putting so much focus on everyone else that I was neglecting the most important person of all: ME.

When traveling on a commercial airline flight, the attendant goes through the safety procedures they give very specific instruction on the oxygen masks. “Put YOUR mask on first, then take care of those flying with you.” This is a well-known and often used analogy that applies to all things in life. It has been one of my biggest realizations and growths as I have made my “change” and totally rebuilt my life. If you do not take care of yourself first and foremost, you will not be able to take care of those you care about most.

The best advice I could give to anyone who feels like their life is not turning out the way they want is make THE decision. There is so much power in ONE decision. That day in the roundabout, I made a decision that my life was not going the way I wanted to and I was going to make the necessary adjustments to change it! I was blessed enough to have some challenges come into my experience that pushed me to the point of being uncomfortable enough to have the courage to make these changes.

For most people, it takes something like that to be a catalyst for change. For example, if we are not in the best shape, rather than eat better and exercise we sit on the couch and eat potato chips and watch television. It’s okay because we are “good”. Then one day in a random checkup, we find out we have some serious health

problems and now we must make some changes. Do not wait until life pushes you past the breaking point. We are God's greatest creations, and we deserve abundance and happiness in every area of life. Make decision and choose YOU.

For me, that decision was made in 2014. Over the next few years, I sold my interest in the family business, short-sold my million-dollar home, ended my twenty-year marriage, lost my mother to early onset Alzheimer's at 63, and shortly after lost my father due to his health challenges and a broken heart. I had my kids turned against me due to false stories they were told, and friends and family I loved and cared for literally turned their backs. As challenging as the financial obstacles were, having people you love and care about most turn on you and disappear is the most painful hurdle.

Fortunately for me, with this decision I had made I also attached a worthy goal. I had a vision and a purpose to what I wanted my life to look like on the other side of this mess. I wanted to be financially secure doing work that I love, making more money than I ever had. I wanted to be in the best health and wellness of my life and have the time and energy to do what I wanted, when I wanted. Most importantly of all, I wanted to love myself more than ever. My self-esteem and confidence had definitely taken a beating through all of this. As much as I knew what I desperately wanted, I had no idea how it was going to happen. If I had known how, I would have already created it. If I had known then what I know now, I'd have realized that the fun part is figuring out the how!

One of the first things I had to figure out after making the decision to change careers was what I wanted to do. Making a change professionally after twenty years can prove to be just as challenging as making a personal change. I was not sure what I wanted to do, but I knew I wanted to work remotely doing something that would provide purpose for my passion in helping others. My knack for helping others led me to my own demise in the past, and I decided I may as well learn how to capitalize on this trait. Again, I did not

know the “how”. I simply created a vision of this dream job, being able to travel and work anywhere I wanted while helping others.

After pushing hard to find something that fit what I was looking for, I decided to take a month off and see what came to me. At forty years old, I had not taken a month off work once since I began working at the age of fifteen. This was not in my comfort zone, but I was beginning to learn that life begins at the end of our comfort zone. I spent the month relaxing and doing something I normally never did watching television. One of my mentors, Jack Canfield, calls the television an income and self-esteem reduction box. I agree and embrace this statement but put it to the side for my down time. I decided to fully surrender to not knowing the next steps as far as what my professional life looked like, and patiently waited for the “how” to appear.

Much to my delight, before the end of my month of rest, I received a phone call and eventually an offer from a company. They had acquired my name from a colleague and approached me during my time of surrender. I accepted the offer to work for a national training organization that assisted small business owners through business coaching. The work would be remote and include traveling to conferences across the United States and Canada. I had the ability to make a mid-six figure income right out of the gate. I wasn't sure if this was my long play, but it sounded like the perfect opportunity to get me heading in that direction! Little did I know, I would spend the next five years loving working with, training, and coaching business owners and sales representatives from all over the United States and Canada.

From some of the first phone calls I made, I found out a few things. One, I had more experience and knowledge than I had previously given myself credit for. Two, I possessed a natural ability to bring out the best in people. Finally, third was I truly loved this work! Helping others put plans in place to improve their business and assisting them in achieving the goals they have set is the most satisfying work I have ever done. Within the first six months, I knew

I had found my life purpose and calling. I did not feel like I was even working because I was having so much fun! I was spending my days talking to and working with people that I called friends as well as associates. Sharing my life experiences combined with the powerful training material I had been given proved to be fulfilling work. I was able to travel both professionally and personally and work from anywhere in the world. I would literally set up for my calls while working from a beach! I applied the work ethic and accountability that had been instilled in me and used in building the family business to this position. I quickly became the top coach and lead trainer for the organization. As much as I was enjoying the work, learning, and growing, I knew there was still something missing. I knew I could create more. I was having fun and impacting several clients, but I knew I was being held back and limiting my potential. So many of my clients were paying the company I worked for a lot of money to be coached, received systems and trainings that would improve their business, yet still they were not making the changes. This led me to make another decision. In 2018, I decided I wanted to do this work on my own so I could have better control of the results and what I was creating for myself and assisting clients to create for their own lives.

When I started my own consulting company, I went from coaching over seventy companies and hundreds of reps all over the country to just five clients. My thought process was that I had been spread too thin in my prior position, and if I spent more time with less clients, I could have increased impact on implementation and results. This proved to be a very naive thought because just a few months into my new endeavor, I wasn't having the success that I knew I was capable of. I realized it wasn't an amount of time spent, it wasn't the number of clients I had, and it wasn't the quality of the training I provided. There was something else going on that was blocking success and I was on a desperate mission to find it.

I can't tell you how many times in my life I have put an idea into my mind without any clue as to how I was going to accomplish it, to then have the right person or experience come into my life with

divine timing to make it possible. A few months into starting my new consulting business, I had put an idea out into the universe. I was looking for a tool or process to help business owners and sales professionals get out of their own way so they could have the success they so strongly desired. I was thinking about it around the clock and talking to everyone I knew in the consulting and training space, searching for a tool that I could implement to add even more value to my clients' lives. I will never forget how the solution came to me. I am a believer in the angel hours, those early-morning wake ups at 2:22 or 3:33 AM, when you wake from a deep sleep with a startle, almost like someone tapped you with a message. This happened to me at 2:22 AM in February of 2019. I found myself wide awake and ready for whatever message had broken my slumber. I sat, pondered, and listened for whatever the message may be. I usually don't get on my computer in the middle of the night but was prompted to open my laptop. I ended up finding a webinar registration for a Bob Proctor presentation on mindset and human potential. I remember getting goose bumps as I filled out the registration for the webinar. This was exactly what I was looking for! Because Bob Proctor and his company are worldwide, the next webinar time available was at 3:00 AM in my time zone. I was up and this seemed perfect, so I made a cup of coffee and sat down to watch the presentation.

The information I saw presented in this webinar by Bob Proctor was the missing link to the work I was doing with business owners and sales professionals. I had spent over twenty years of my career working with and training individuals on processes and procedures for their businesses. I had found time and time again that the procedures only work to the level of belief instilled in the person I was training. There had to be something else, and I finally found it! Over the next few months, I would reach out to Bob and find out more about the process to become a certified consultant, teaching this mindset process and learning about the material to remove self-limiting beliefs and help people live out the true potential of their lives. One of the first assignments in the certification process was to

become a product of the product. To literally begin living the training and materials you would be using with clients. Again, I had been searching for this, so I did not waste any time getting to work.

I went all-in with the material. Over the course of the next few years, I had phenomenal results with both my own life and the lives of my clients. I am currently one of Bob Proctor's top mindset mentors and coaches in the world. I am running a very successful business, helping individuals from all walks of life remove the beliefs that hold them back, allowing them to live the life they truly deserve. Using this proven process for mindset, I have created financial security for myself doing work that I love. My health and wellness are better than ever, and I am currently in the best shape of my life and on zero medications. My self-love and confidence are at an all-time high and I am not only loving myself but attracting better relationships all around me. I am truly living in full abundance in all three areas. I will take the dream I am living now over the hamster-wheel American Dream any day of the week.

As I do this work, assisting others in creating change, we focus on three areas. I call it the trifecta: better finances, better health and wellness, and better relationship with self. You can start by rating yourself on a scale from one to ten in all three areas. Once you have the rating, ask yourself: What would it take to make each area a TEN, and what is holding you back? Next, pick the area you rated the *lowest*, and start there. Once you start working on one of these three aspects, you will see improvement in all three. This is because the self-limiting beliefs that are holding you back in one area are holding you back in all areas. Once you have identified the area you want to focus on first, take the steps below to get started with your own CHANGE.

Step 1: Decision

If you are ready to make a change, remember the first action step is to make a decision. This is your life and you get to take control and decide exactly what you want.

Step 2: Vision

You must work on the belief and vision. The “how” might change many times, but the end goal should never change. Hold the vision in your mind long enough and you will eventually hold it in your hand.

Step 3: Find a Mentor

This is an important step! Find someone doing what you want to do and ask for assistance. Success leaves clues and someone doing what you want to do successfully can offer a wealth of knowledge. A mentor will shorten the learning curve and give you a path.

Now you have it. A recipe for CHANGE. Come on, what are YOU waiting for? Let's Go!

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The Universal Mindset Disruptor

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Shonneia M. Adams



Master Motivator Shonneia M. Adams has been helping individuals “level-up” to fulfillment of purpose and greater heights of achievement since 1998. Known as “Coach Adams,” she is a sought-after speaker, empowerment coach and consultant to corporations, ministries and small businesses – frequently training teams, staffers and management in principles of leadership, vision birthing, team building and more. She is *an Independent Certified Coach, Teacher, Trainer and Speaker with Maxwell Leadership Certified Team.*

As “one who inspires,” Coach Adams encourages and empowers clients in private sessions, group trainings and programs including her branded “*WINShops*” and “*S.H.A.P.E. UP*” events. Both programs focus on imparting a mix of vision training, coaching empowerment and strategic planning in order to unlock previously unearthed passion and purpose in the lives of participants. She is also a Radio Personality, Creator and Empowerment Coach who can be heard live on the *Inspired Media 4 U* production “*Motivational Mondays with Coach Adams*,” an hour-long, weekly broadcast designed around her “I Coach; You Win” power principles.

Coach Adams has trained 1000s of individuals throughout the U.S. and globally in countries and regions including Australia, Belgium, England, France, Italy, Jamaica and Ukraine in partnership with Al and Hattie Hollingsworth’s internationally recognized *Vertical Leap Seminar* for adults and *B.O.S.S. The Movement* training program for youth. In her role as the Global Master Trainer (GMT) for “*B.O.S.S.*” (an acronym for “building on spiritual substance”), she has worked extensively with kids, teens and adults, teaching the dynamics of leadership and dream birthing. Coach Adams is also a skilled facilitator of special “Train-the-Trainer” sessions designed to assist community leaders in implementing *B.O.S.S.* programs within their own organizations.

Coach Adams is a proud Los Angeles native with an adventurous heart. From her very depths, she believes that each individual has a purpose that, when revealed, allows them to live their best and most profoundly fulfilled life.

The Power of Words

By Shonneia M. Adams

We are spirit beings having a human experience... When we encounter each other as individuals in life it's not what's on the outside that we encounter, but rather what's on the inside. What speaks is what has been deposited on the inside of us, what's in our emotional bank account. Each of us are made up of a compilation of words. What does this mean? We are a living manifestation -- made up of and the product of the words that have been spoken into our lives; negative or positive. These words have shaped us into the individuals we have become. Words frame our thoughts, beliefs and in turn affect what we achieve. What's in our emotional bank account, more commonly known as our heart, is what we speak.

As individuals, comprised of words, our lives manifest the words that have been spoken and deposited in us. When a word is spoken it becomes a seed that takes root in our emotional bank account. In turn, each word takes shape and blossoms; negatively or positively. The words that have been deposited into our emotional bank account become our actions, what we live out and what we will achieve or not. Our emotional bank account is the heart center, the core of who we are.

Words build us up or tear us down; they are either a plus or a minus that takes root in the garden of our lives. The words that have been deposited into our lives breathe life or death. Words are both negative and positive seeds of energy, creating tears or empowerment. On our journey, the goal is to be empowered.

Words shape our core and our values, which renders or takes power. The words that have been deposited into our lives, into our emotional bank account establishes how we view the world. How we view the world determines what limits or possibilities we perceive. Insights into Self-Empowerment 105 Words carry great weight and power! IF they are the right words and have been

effectively converted, the effects are positive. Adversely, the same is true on the opposite end of the spectrum negatively.

What I've learned to be true...

Over the years, I have grown to realize that life requires key ingredients, like any well-perfected recipe. With any recipe certain ingredients are non-negotiable for the outcome to be one that lends to a successful end. One of life's foundational ingredients for a positive outcome is the deposit of the "right" words. If positive words are deposited, the outcome will be positive. The same is true when the "wrong" words have been deposited, the outcome will be one of a negative effect. If there is negative in, the outcome will be negative. Words influence our behavior which, in turn drives what we do.

Insight gleaned on my journey...

Growing up as a little girl I learned the power of words early and the effect they could have to the hearer of the words. I learned the life changing impact of how words could make a devastating impact. I learned that words could either tear you down or build you up. I learned that words can hurt, they have the ability to wound, because words carry great weight and power. Words have the ability to empower, inspire, damage or shift one's view of the world around them because of the cause and effect of the words. Words breathe life or death. Life and death are in the power of each word spoken; it's in the power of the tongue.

Personally, I've experienced the negative and positive effects of words growing up, up close and personal. Both made an impact shaping who I have grown to be. What inspired me and compelled me to share this insight was the wisdom I've gleaned. I now know and understand both the negative and positive effects of words. I want to be used as a channel for others to be empowered. With that said, I was inspired to collaborate as a co-author of *The Change* to provide a resource of empowerment as an agent of change. May the words shared empower, motivate and inspire you on your journey.

It's been stated that we receive only one positive word to every twenty-five negative words. The reality is that we all have a lot of stinking thinking. Understanding this fact and its affects weigh heavy on my heart. This reality speaks to the condition of one's emotional bank account. Both the negative and positive state of the world around us is reflected in the media. The news images that we see daily, negative or positive are a result of what's beneath the surface in each of us. Our emotional bank account is the state or condition of our mind, associated with our thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and feelings. The ratio of negative verses positive words lends to the need for empowerment. Our state of mind and the need for rebuilding our emotional bank account is key in the process of us being more whole.

The effects of all the words that have been deposited have made an impact. The large majority of the words that have been deposited have been designed to tear us down verses building us up. They do not empower. My mentor, Coach Al Hollingsworth, Founder of Christian Business Ministries; home of B.O.S.S. The Movement and Vertical Leap teaches, "whatever you give your attention to its spirit will live in you." So, if you focus on negative things, that's what you breathe life to and if you focus on positive things that's what you breathe life to.

My desire is that you would be built up from the inside > out; inspired, motivated and empowered, having a positive deposit, for positive change. It is my sincere hope that you would grow more conscious, deliberate and intentional regarding the words that are deposited into your emotional bank account. I've grown to realize that having a greater consciousness of the words we speak, and the words spoken around us is significant. This awareness supports us in guarding what we hear, so that we can maintain a healthy balance of words that motivate, inspire and challenge. Always access and examine if the words are worthy of deposit. Process each word... Are the words positive and empowering? Will the words strengthen and add value to your life? Will they edify and build up your emotional bank account? A positive word spoken is a blessing and

a negative word spoken is a curse. May your life be inspired, enriched and empowered by positive words that are designed to edify and build you up.

In the Beginning....

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born, I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations." Jeremiah 1:5 (NKJV) I believe our story has been established well before our birth.

Here's my story...I was born with eczema. Eczema is an inflammatory condition of the skin causing lesions that scale and/or crust, often accompanied by intense itching or burning. As a child, I suffered severely from the affects, physically and emotionally from eczema. My skin was highly inflamed from infancy until I was an adult. On several occasions, this issue was so severe that I was hospitalized as a child, as a direct result of this condition.

Why do I share this? Not only was my skin inflamed, suffering the burning affects physically from eczema, but emotionally I felt the effects and the burn as well due to hurtful words. I was teased and picked on because of the condition of my skin, by other kids, by my peers. The burn of hurtful words hit deep and was truly wounding! The negative words spoken early in life during my crucial stages of development affected my self-image, esteem and self-concept.

What I've grown to realize is that my peers did not know any better. They were kids themselves. They didn't know or understand the effects of the words they were speaking from a place of innocence, based on their truth, spoken and unspoken. Nor did they know the true potency, the sting, the potential affects or power of their harsh, negative words spoken would have to the hearer of such words. The impact of each negative word spoken brought with it a great poisonous sting. It wasn't just the words spoken; it was the unspoken words expressed through gestures and glares, accompanied by quiet whispers.

As a child, I recall moments of crying out silently on the inside, saying...THIS IS NOT ME! The condition of my skin does not make me. The words you are speaking are not who I am on the inside. I was crying out, see me. Not based on the condition of my skin but SEE ME!! There was a battle, a tug-o-war going on from the inside > out based on the negative words that had been released. These words were fighting to take root.

A level of saving grace were the words of empowerment and love that had already been deposited. These positive words gave me a greater base of power to draw from, which allowed me to be aware, even as a child of the inward conflict. I was fortunate to have a strong positive base, because positive words had already taken root. I was more empowered to battle the negative words that wanted to penetrate my emotional bank account. Despite my battle, many of the words were able to seep in. Remember; it's been stated we receive twenty-five negative words to one positive word; 25 to 1! Negative words like; can't, stupid, won't, idiot, appalling, dreadful, impossible, insane, gruesome, etc.

The cells in our body react to everything. Negativity can affect our overall health. The things that we think and feel affect us from the inside > out. Negativity and negative energy are stronger than we may realize. Negative emotions and words can lead to stress. Just as positive words and feelings can lead to joy.

I was truly impacted by my personal experiences as a child. So much so, I silently vowed to make a positive impact with my words and cautiously select the words I would speak and release. These experiences caused me to have a greater consciousness, now understanding the power of words. I have grown to know that the second most powerful force in the universe is the power of words.

I'm eternally grateful for my parents, family, close friends, spiritual leaders, teachers and mentors for the positive words they have spoken into my life and most importantly during the most challenging years. Every positive word spoken, over time became fuel that would replace and erase the images of the negatives that

had been deposited, shifting the negative (-) to positive (+). Each positive word equipped me to battle the negative, cruel, hurtful effects of the early words of innocence spoken by a child and my peers.

My next greatest and most impactful experience, which impacted my understanding of the power of words, was associated with my dad being diagnosed with cancer. As a result of this diagnosis and the aggressive treatment plan prescribed, he was scheduled for surgery. In short, with any surgery the doctors review all possible outcomes; negative and positive. One -- you would have a difficult and long recovery and two -- you may not make it off of the operating table. Translation -- meaning you may not survive the surgery; you could die. That word spoken, you may not make it off of the operating table, you could die, created a sense of terror to the hearer of the words, my dad. Doom and gloom!!

When I took him to the hospital that dreaded day, the day of his surgery in 1996, I saw the terror and fear in his eyes. He went into surgery with these glooming thoughts pressing on his mind based on the words that had been spoken. Remember the words of my mentor Al Hollingsworth – “whatever you give your attention to, that spirit will come and live in you and manifest out of you as your destiny and circumstances.”

Regretfully, my dad's reality of the words spoken became his reality. He made it off of the operating table that dreaded day however, not in a conscious state of mind. He was in a semi-comatose like state for three months, never regaining consciousness and eventually graduating to heaven. He embraced and embodied the words spoken. His perception was one of doom and gloom. So, although figuratively he made it off the operating table, emotionally he never made it off the operating table.

How are you allowing words to affect you?

The POWER of words... WORDS! WORDS!! WORDS!!!

The Power of Words... Have you ever wondered, "why do I do the things I do?" "Why do I react the way that I react?" "Why do I think the way that I think?" "Why do I feel the way that I feel?" "Why do I believe what I believe?" The answer is hidden in "The Power of Words!"

Words shape our belief in others and ourselves. Our belief shapes our view of the world and what we perceive. Our perceptions of the words develop our emotional bank account. How we treat others is a direct result of the words that have been deposited into our emotional bank account. The words and even unspoken gestures deposited into our lives speak volumes and shape who we are and who we become. Whether we will give love or hate, a smile or a frown, give or take, feel joy or sadness, happiness or pain, abuse others or show kindness, is a direct result of the words that we have received.

Those that have accomplished great things in life have often stated that because they were told "that they could do and be whatever they desired to be," they had no limits. They had the confidence within to perceive great things, so it didn't matter what obstacles were sent their way. The perception on the inside was, they could do and be whatever they desired. Conversely, those that were told "you will never be anything, your mother wasn't anything and you're no different," generally fulfilled those expectations.

A not so wise man said, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." Broken bones heal quickly, yet words affect generations. The greatest hurts we have suffered have been the words spoken and deposited into our emotional bank account. The second most powerful force in the universe is the power of words. With just one breath, words will breathe life or death. One word can inspire hope or cause one to die a dark and painful death. Words shape who we are, our life's journey, what we will endeavor to accomplish and what we achieve. Words will also determine how we handle adversity: the obstacles we face, times of despair, unmet goals and shattered dreams.

The words that are deposited in our emotional bank account become a plus or a minus. They are literally assets or liabilities. Our emotional bank account is synonymous with our mind. It is the heart center, which shapes our character and crystallizes into our destiny. Words will build us up or tear us down.

Before you speak a word, think about how your words will affect the receiving party. What type of deposit will you make? Will your words have a negative or positive impact? Will your words render life or death? Build up or tear down? Count the cost.

It is priceless and powerful to breathe words of life into others, for words transform the speaker and the hearer. Therefore, speak words that will edify, empower and encourage. Select all words cautiously; remember you are making a deposit into someone's emotional bank account and your own. How do you want to affect others?

To the receiver of words, select the words that you accept as a deposit into your emotional bank account. Make a decision to select life, not death. Just because a word has been spoken, does not mean that you have to own it. Hear the words spoken and evaluate which words are worthy for deposit.

Coaching Empowerment...

Understanding and having an awareness of “The Power of Words” is empowering and gives power. If you don’t like the direction, you are headed in, you can now shift the course of your journey by shifting the words that are deposited. Words are vibrations that have the ability to transform.

Action plan...

The trigger words below are intentional and deliberate. Each word is designed to support you on your journey so that you may be more equipped to maintain your focus in the right areas:

- Awareness – Have a consciousness of the words spoken around you and the words you speak. Words breathe life or death. Words

are energy – be aware of how words make you feel. Remember the body reacts to everything.

- Recognize – Words do matter! They carry great weight and power; negative or positive. Remember words are the second most powerful force in the universe.
- Understand – Words are seeds and words shape our beliefs. We speak and do based on what’s on the inside. Know what’s in your emotional bank account.
- Evaluate – Process and examine each word that has been released for deposit to determine if it is worthy of deposit.
- Protect – The garden of your life; your emotional bank account. Guard what words you hear and see. Be empowered by knowing you don’t have to accept every word spoken.
- Responsibility – Choose your words wisely. Make the “right” word deposit. Remember positive in > positive out. Negative in > negative out.

In closing, stay mindful that we are spirit beings. Be a positive verses negative force with the words you speak. Be intentional and deliberate about making a positive impact into the lives of others. A kind word can edify and build someone up!

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Sue Fries



The Old has Gone, The New is Here! – 2 Corinthians 5:17

Sue Fries aka The Termitelady, President of Ecola Termite and Pest Control, is an entrepreneur, author and speaker. Sue has been hosting a Christian radio show since 2010 on the Pursuit of Passion, Purpose and Connection.

Sue believes that everything we go through is preparing us for our next assignment. Knowing who you are in

Christ and who He says you are, is empowering, **2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

Change

By Sue Fries

Do you love who you are? Are you passionate about who you are? It's so easy to use this empowering word (LOVE) to express how we feel about others, but often difficult to say about ourselves. Life is a journey by which everything evolves. Everyone has unique strengths and weaknesses, gifts and talents. Knowing what yours are can help when you are discovering your purpose and passion on this Earth. Some of the gifts are hospitality, discernment, teaching, or healing. Over time we develop habits that can transform us to confident or beat down human beings.

The Bible encourages us to be thankful in all things. We as individuals have our unique story that placed us where we currently stand and make us who we are. I have a story that incorporates fond memories along with tragedies. We are relational human beings and for that fact, we connect on different levels based on many different reasons and causes, we can call it a "special connection". We feel this special connection when we realize a person has gone through a similar scenario and they can relate on a different maybe deeper level because of a shared understanding. Such as experiencing death of a loved one, or divorce of a spouse, maybe even parents divorcing as a child, losing a dog, having an abortion, being sexually assaulted, being raped, or verbally abused, or even a tragic accident that has made your lifestyle change to where the things you enjoyed doing the most, you can no longer do.

My story involves having a loving mother, blessed with two great sisters (One who did not like me because I rained on her parade by taking attention away from her, after seven years of her having our parents to herself) being a great speller in school and having an athletic ability. Having a father who demonstrated his love only through giving gifts, he always gave me great gifts such as a bicycle with a steering wheel instead of handlebars, a unicycle that took me many hours to learn how to ride, along with a motorcycle that also took me hours to conquer. Many fond memories of boating, water skiing, dancing parties at our home, earning my own way to camp

by selling candy covered peanuts. Receiving the Lord at camp and coming back to having my mother say, “Dad and I have decided to get divorced”. All of these events have transformed me into the person I am today.

Reflect on what has happened to you and ask yourself are you a victim or are you blessed? I am thankful because I am who I am today, because of all these experiences that have occurred up to this moment. We have a choice on how we view things and the thoughts that we choose to believe. We really don’t know what we are capable of until we are pressured or pressed. My desire is for you as a reader of this chapter to understand my heart and to understand that I am truly a servant to be used for the purpose in which I was created for. The same is true for you.

As water reflects a face, so a man’s heart reflects the man. Proverbs 27:19

Think of a rock. With time, erosion, wind and water cause the rock to chip away; its shape diminishes until it becomes sand. Now envision a tree. Similar to the rock, the tree changes. However, there is a prime difference between the two objects in that the tree grows, while a rock fades away. Stemming from a small seed, a tree plants its roots into the ground, securing a strong and lasting foundation for life. The trunk emerges as the first visible sign of life to the naked eye, although nourishment has begun in the soil. The tree’s branches stretch to the sun, eventually bearing healthy vegetation, beautiful flowers and sometimes fruit. There are many other purposes and benefits for each tree. The gift could be shade or more oxygen. The tree has a purpose and needs to be flexible to endure what comes its way.

He will become like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit. Jeremiah 17:8

Similar to both the rock and the tree, we endure life transformations. However, unlike both, we have our strengths and weaknesses, gifts and habits. We have been given the freedom of choice. It is within our control to choose to nourish our talents, to cultivate the person

we wish to be and ultimately love. Are you willing to be truly honest with yourself?

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit just as you were called to one hope when you were called. Ephesians 4:2-4

Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:31-32

Are you passionate about your life? Do you want to pursue a purposeful life? Do you want to change an addictive habit or better your relationships with others? Part of nurturing our gifts and talents has to do with our behaviors. Referencing our tree analogy, a tree performs best when it has the proper balance of shade and sunlight, water and carbon dioxide to flourish. Its chlorophyll makes it possible to absorb these elements as energy. We perform best when we have balance in our lives by maintaining a positive physical, mental and emotional state. All things are intertwined to develop or diminish who you have the power to be.

Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in the way everlasting. Psalm 139:23-24

It is never too late to cultivate yourself. Understand that you have specific gifts and that you will produce more significant results if you work in your gifts, specifically for the purpose in which you were created. Know that these gifts take time to develop, sometimes causing discomfort. Embrace this feeling; acknowledging your weaknesses and being willing to feel the pain makes for improvement and growth. Creating daily motivation for yourself and aiming to become better with time makes your personal growth more like a stroll in the park rather than a never-ending chore. Always remember that you are a flourishing tree, making the journey from a small seed to bearing strength and fruit.

Goal setting is a very important process and a necessity to creating significance in our lives. Make every moment count. Be intentional. Dream big and with passion! Make sure that the goal your setting is the (purpose that you are called to serve) correct goal for you.

Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.
Proverbs 15:22

Once you are clear on your goal then the process of working backwards begins. How do you eat this elephant? One bite at a time. Relate this process like navigating with a map. You need to know where you are and the destination of where you are desiring to go, and your passion will drive you. Then you can map out the route to get there. Who do you need to talk to? What do you need? Who, What, Where and How questions begin?

Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. Philippians 3:13-14

Whatever is True, Whatever is Noble, Whatever is Right, Whatever is Pure, Whatever is lovely, Whatever is admirable, If anything is excellent or praiseworthy think about such things. Philippians 4:8

How do you become clear on what your gifts are? Take a look in the mirror at the person you are right now. Look at yourself objectively and realize the strengths you have. Look internally and find what makes you happiest. What could you do every day for the rest of your life? Ask yourself. Are you striving for success or significance? Denial of your abilities must be completely out of the question, as you will never find the lasting courage to begin your transformation. Continually moving in the same routine and expecting a different result is part of the old you. Your belief system, especially in God can help guide you in the right direction. When guided by God's hand, the pursuit of passion, purpose and connection will cultivate you and help you thrive. Have a willing spirit to learn all the time. Be open to possibilities. Whether you realize it or not you are being prepared for your next assignment.

Can you prepare for change? Not only is it important to gain a strong belief system and maintain confidence in your abilities, but it is

valuable to gain support from those around you. Is there someone who serves as a source of inspiration in your life? Look at this person and pinpoint what you admire about them. What have they changed about themselves for the better? How can you learn from their road to success? Be careful not to try and become this person, but rather strive to emulate their passion and learn from their mistakes. We have been designed intentionally with our own talents and gifts. Focus on your own journey and gradual transformation to becoming a person that you love. Lives change one habit at a time. What we do on a daily basis, is what forms our future? It takes 21 days to form a habit. Here is an example: You are short on cash? Ask yourself what you spend money on daily? If you stopped purchasing this one habit, (Cigarettes or Starbucks coffee) what would you save in a month? What is the savings? If you let unwholesome words, come out of your mouth and you have a favorite (not so nice) word. Changing that word for another saying or word would become a nicer, better habit. Habits are those things we do daily. These habits create our quality of life. Change your life one habit at a time. The saying you are what and where you; eat, drink, say, listen to, believe or spend your money on. Pick one, with laser beam focus, make a decision to change this one habit. Nothing happens without motion; you have the power to alter the course.

You may be thinking, “Great, I’ll start tomorrow.” Sometimes the hardest step is setting a goal. You should spend most of your time on this, as you will develop your habits with time, energy, love and patience for the rest of your life. Success is when preparation meets opportunity. Once we have chosen what skills we want to build, we must prepare for what we can do moving forward. Flooding your mind with past thoughts and negative thoughts will only tarnish what you believe you can do in the future. The belief that you CAN will always trump any negativity claiming that you can’t. Regardless of aging, change in status or changes in health the focus should be on what you CAN do.

Create healthy boundaries remembering you get what you tolerate. Forgive others and yourself and remember YOU ARE SPECIAL and UNIQUE so celebrate that and surround yourself with others that will not just tolerate but that will celebrate you.

Take a minute to consider your funeral. I know, not a real happy thought process. But ask yourself, what do you want people to be saying about you at your funeral? Currently, do you believe that what you want them to say and what they truly would say, match?

This can be a reality check. How many people will show up to celebrate your life? How many lives have you touched in a significant way? Have you put yourself out there? Have you made yourself vulnerable? What is on your bucket list? With this line of questioning, would the list be adjusted? What is really important in the grand scheme of things? If you had one month to live, what would you do with that time?

LIFE IS a DANCE- Be passionate in non-verbal communication, learn to lead and follow, trust submission in love, engage in conversation, be fluid in the motion of life, devote yourself to

learning new steps and ways, follow new directions, lead by example, trust your partner, gain understanding of body mechanics, find balance, realize the timing in every situation, patience in the moment, give energy, embrace physical touch, accept your mistakes, practice persistence, listen in conversation, and hear the unspoken universal language, adapt to change, be graceful and share appreciation for the magic in this dance of life.

Change is not comfortable. Forgiveness is one of the hardest forms of change. Harboring hard feelings is another way in which an aggressor can wield power over you if you allow it. What more power can someone have over you than occupying a portion of your mind? Forgive and release and enjoy the freedom of a clear mind focused on serving God and in turn improving who you are as an individual.

Change is your friend. Of course, you've heard the term "Can't teach an old dog new tricks?" Are you that old dog? Do you surround yourself with "old dogs" that don't inspire you to grow or keep you stagnant? It's important to be open to growth and have the ability to learn, grow and adapt and be passionate about the person you are.

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."

[Romans 12:2]

For there will be peace for the seed: the vine will yield its fruit, the land will yield its produce and the heavens will give their dew; and I will cause the remnant of this people to inherit all these things.
Zachariah 8:12

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Jeremiah 29:11

What are you tolerating that needs to change? These are questions that are important to ask. First and foremost, it's important to determine your boundaries. The line in the sand. What do you stand for? What is important to you? What are your non-negotiables? Understand you have the power to change you, but you do not have the power to change another. God gives us grace and love which is the ultimate changer. There are some situations that are far beyond our control but in what ways do we exacerbate a situation because we overlooked and ignored your spirit. Put on the full armor of God. Stand your ground, in truth, be ready, have faith, and pray. Focus on what you can do not what you cannot do. If you have bad influencers around you, cut them out of your inner circle. Your body is your temple. Protect it. Guard your mouth, your ears, your eyes, your body, and control the influences of your life?

When making any decision, get all the information you can. If there is fear, face it. Think through the worst scenario and walk through it. This process takes the power away and helps provide the courage needed along with prayer. Be sure to count the costs, all the costs. Think it through. I was married for 32 years. I have two beautiful adult children and many wonderful memories. During our marriage I learned so much. I learned you cannot change another person; you can only work on you. Areas of conflict were trust first and foremost. Communication, fighting fair, submission is not being a door mat, it's when you resist being in control, depending on another person to make you happy or fill your needs is an expectation that

can leave you frustrated, dissatisfied and unfulfilled. Not dealing with childhood issues or any issues does not mean they go away, they don't. Forgiving others and yourself is absolutely necessary. Giving and receiving Grace is a must. Healthy boundaries is HEALTHY, saying no is OK. Not dealing with issues makes them get bigger and costs more to repair. Realizing what is important to others that you love needs to be important to you as an action of LOVE. Putting others before yourself is the ultimate expression of LOVE. Faith, Hope and Love and the greatest of these is LOVE. Don't judge, but love. I grew closer to God when I was searching for directions to being a good wife, mother, friend, sister, Christian. When is enough, enough? A relationship cannot succeed without trust. Accepting responsibility and being humble- saying your sorry is healing for everyone. Your actions speak louder than your words, but words can and do hurt. So, be careful how you speak and what you say?

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Ephesians 3:16-19

Be a blessing to someone every chance you get.

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Thomas Howard



Thomas is originally from New York and has been in San Diego since 2002. He

is a retired Navy Corpsman of 22 years and has served with the Navy as well as the Marines. Thomas has been in business since the late 80's. He has owned several network marketing businesses and done well with helping others start their own businesses. He is currently a Nurse and the Co-Owner of R.O.C. Enterprises, which stands for Revive Our Culture, with his

wife, Lori Howard.

R.O.C. is about reviving the culture of humanity whereas people begin to care about one another. He has worked on doing this by being a Host, Public Speaker, Podcaster, Vlogger, Networker and DeeJay. His love of technology has allowed him to work “smarter and not harder”. Thomas strives to help people find a thing they love to do and make it into a thriving stream of income. Thomas also enjoys making money while helping people save money.

Traveling the World is something he enjoys doing with his wife and family. “Workcations” are his favorite thing, because, if done right the World becomes your office.

Thomas' ultimate goal in life is to: “Create a Culture of Caring World 🌍 Wide!”

Be the Change You Want

By Thomas Howard

I was born in Manhattan, New York, and raised by my single parent, Helen Bradley. We lived in the Bronx and at age 12 we moved to Islip, Long Island. My mother instilled in me all that I am today. Even though she didn't have a lot, she told me to always help others in any way I could, without looking to get anything back.

Thus, my first act was to join the Navy, two days after graduating high school in 1981. The best way I thought of helping people then was to become a Hospital Corpsman. I've been to quite a few places and helped military members as well as civilians. I retired from the Navy after twenty-two years and went on to becoming a Licensed Vocational Nurse with a wonderful medical group in San Diego, California in 2002.

During my military career, I've always had a interest in business. I thought it was a fantastic way to earn extra money. Once again, my thought was on how to help people with a business. However, I didn't know how to go about starting a business. All I knew is that I had to have my own business.

In 1983 I heard about an opportunity in the Import / Export industry. Seemed simple enough, you buy items at a low cost and sell at a higher price. That sounded easy and great! I went on to purchase items like desk lamps, pens, Knick knacks.

The interesting part about this is that I never really thought about what this business really was. I didn't know what it would really take to start, maintain, advertise or even promote. All I knew was I wanted and now had my own business. However, the excitement waned very rapidly. I took money from my military paycheck, to purchase products, thinking I will make this back tenfold.

About a week into this business, I did not have products in hand and bills were coming due. I spoke to friends and family about the soon to be arriving products that would be available for purchase. All I had were pictures from the book I ordered the products through. Unfortunately, I didn't realize this wouldn't be enough to entice

people to pay for something sight unseen. By the time my first shipment arrived, three weeks later for a total of four weeks, I was behind on bills. It literally took me two months to figure out how to market, advertise and move the initial products I had bought. There were many more bills that were unpaid before I made my initial investment back. When it was all said and done, I ended that business after 6 months with a total loss of about \$3,000.

What I learned from this “opportunity” was that you must think about what business really is. Business is defined as a person’s regular occupation, profession, trade or the practice of making one’s living by engaging in commerce according to the Oxford dictionary.

I also decided that I must learn what it takes to run a business. I enrolled in some college business classes. I took advertising, marketing and communication. I began to read books like; “How to start a business”, “The Art of War,” “Think and Grow Rich,” “How to Think Bigger.” All of this began to seep into my psyche. It made me think about things that I never thought of before. First, how to interact with people from a business standpoint. Second, how to find out what motivated people. For once you start to have an idea of that, then you can begin to see what people think about as well as what may be their needs.

Over time I started to figure out something else as well. In business you must be able to understand what supply and demand is. These are two very different pieces to the business puzzle. The law of supply and demand as defined by Investopedia is a theory that explains the interaction between the sellers of a resource and the buyers for that resource. The theory defines the relationship between the price of a given good or product and the willingness of people to either buy or sell it.

Knowing the definition of what a business is as well as what supply and demand is will allow you to figure out a way to create a business that will be worthwhile and viable. In order to put the above in action, I feel a great way to do that is to find what you love to do, then turn that into a business. This allows you to be passionate about it, thus giving you pleasure in what you are doing. Just think about it. Here are a few examples; if you like to read, you might purchase

and sell books. If you enjoy cooking, you may become a chef. If you like to travel, you may become a travel agent.

Now you have a plan that you can now begin to execute. Whatever type of business you decide on, make sure that it is actually in demand. Many people create a business that is either saturated or no longer in demand. This will make it very hard to succeed. Is it impossible? Maybe not if you are able to overcome the previous stated issues. You will have to make sure that you are more marketable than others. In other words, you will have to stand out from the rest. How to do this could become a chore in itself. However, it doesn't have to be.

Knowing how to market your business and the different types of advertising platforms there are can be extremely helpful. To do this you also need to think about who your target market will be. Utilizing technology, social media, mainstream platforms are all great directions to go.

When I put all of the above in action, my wife and I were able to create a business that we are proud of as well as happy with. Our goal has always been to help people. Remember, we found what we loved to do, as well as a personal reason or mission we had and created our business from that.

In December of 2014, we were at the mall with our then eleven-year-old son and 10-year-old daughter. It was very busy, and people were doing their last-minute shopping. Our children love this time of year because of the decorations, trees and lights. This year though, they weren't feeling it. People were pushing, in a hurry, and matter of frankly they were just rude. The kids wanted to go home. Once home after putting the kids to bed, my wife and I started talking about why the kids were so bummed. We started discussing what could we do to change things. We stayed awake all night talking.

By morning, we had a plan. Not just a plan, but a business plan along with a motto. We needed to "Create a Culture of Caring". We needed to "Revive Our Culture" aka R.O.C. Enterprises was born. We felt there was a demand for reviving the culture of humanity, how humans treated one another. Next, we needed to supply what we saw as a demand. We thought about how and why people were

behaving the way they were. We wanted to fill what we felt were needs that weren't being met.

We also started thinking about how to do this. In marketing, branding is one of the top strategies. Along with branding, there are two very important components that I strongly believe in; integrity and commitment. So, in creating our business we wanted to make sure we did and had all of these. With integrity, if we said it, we will do it. The commitment meant we would find ways to do it. I wanted to make sure the branding piece prevented the "out of sight, out of mind" mentality of people. I knew we needed to come up with something that would be different, catchy and new. The next step was how to make money and truly help people at the same time.

Welcome to R.O.C. Enterprises

R.O.C. Enterprises, which stands for Revive Our Culture, is owned by Thomas & Lori Howard aka Dj Doc & Lady R.O.C. We strive as a company to change how we, as humans should care for one another. Join us in our journey to create a "Culture of Caring World-Wide". To help us in this journey, we have created the following divisions within our company.

① R.O.C.'s Modeling Coach & Runway Coordinator featuring Lady R.O.C. who is a NYFW/LAFW model and actor.

② R.O.C.'s Paint & Sip Events where we provide guided painting for your events; Girls night out, bridal showers, baby showers, birthday parties, couples night, kids events, engagement parties in any venue you'd like.

③ R.O.C.'s Business Marketing & Incentives Program where you can partner with us to provide you with valuable incentives for your business.

④ R.O.C. Media covers events via the Red Carpet and / or the event itself with photos & videos. We have several ongoing shows:

1. "Straight Talk with Dj Doc" on Facebook Live. We promote businesses by interviewing them as guests on our shows. We also provide commercial spots during our shows for a nominal fee.

2. “Straight Talk” Podcast where we have episodes about health, wellness and business via Anchor and other podcast platforms.

5 R.O.C. Photography and Videography will capture your “Moment in Time” with photos via headshots, portraits, portfolios, modeling, lifestyle, glamour, boudoir.

6 R.O.C. Worldwide Travel Agency. We can save you up to 35% on travel as well as show you how to save up to 70% on your travel while you MAKE money when customers SAVE money.

7 Save with R.O.C. allows us to help you SAVE money on your BILLS while giving you a peace of mind. This works for personal and business needs.

8 Learn with R.O.C. via Ellev8

Ellev8 is a Legacy Management Platform designed to:

- Teach you Financial Literacy
- Educate you on Forex Trading so you can trade like the banks and receive profits on your own money.
- Empower you to Design Your Own Life

9 R.O.C. Health & Wellness provides products that will give you a peace of mind as well as protection from a wide spectrum of bacteria, viruses and fungi via SkinTech & Zence.

10 R.O.C. Entertainment provides Deejay, Emcee & Voice-Over Services. We also provide Public Speaking for your Company, Business or Event.

Over the last seven years, we have seen our goal touch many people. We helped some create their own businesses. Others have saved money and been able to literally feed their families. In turn they have actually reached out to help other families do the same. Some have traveled to places they never thought they could ever go to. The best part is to see how they have reached out to also “Create a Culture of Caring” themselves.

We’ve been able to help guide, assist and provide people with knowledge on how to continue this trend. I always say, “one must be willing and able to allow oneself to continue to grow and learn”.

I have found that we must also be ready and willing to “pivot” when needed. What do I mean by pivot? Change how you do things so you aren’t left behind, so you don’t miss out, so you can stay current and needed.

One way to do this is to learn all the different platforms there are to “stay in people’s faces as well as on their minds”. Learn to be where people are physically as well as virtually. One of the best ways to keep connected with people is by letting them see you. This should be, if you don’t mind, from two different ways, personal as well as business. I like to do a live or recorded video daily. It doesn’t have to be long. Even one minute long is enough to be inspirational, educational, fun or all of these. It lets people see who you are. I have found when people become comfortable with you, they are more inclined to do business with you. Some videos I talk about our R.O.C. Pups, Rokee & Syree. By the way they have their own Instagram page. People look forward to what’s going on in their world. I also may give a tip regarding health, business or just talk about life. When doing this consistently people will begin to expect it. If I miss a day, I have had people reach out and ask if they missed it.

Since 2020, none of us knew that the world would be forever changed. Many people have been suffering. Isolation, depression, hopelessness has been real for us all. From a small business standpoint, it has been devastating to see those brick-and-mortar locations close down. All that people had put into their business dwindle and eventually disappear. We’ve seen big businesses close down as well. They have been others that were able to “pivot”, hang on, and in some cases thrive.

I love technology! I feel that Technology has the ability to hamper or escalate one’s life. If you become too engrossed in it, you may lose what it can truly do for you. Now there are many different aspects to technology. I want to talk about a few of them here. We have actual tools, devices and hardware. You may know of some of them as smart phones, tablets, computers, cameras. I won’t go into the different brands. I feel that people should think about what they intend to do with these devices then chose the brand that works best

for themselves. You have software that Integrates with the hardware.

There are different platforms that will enable you to reach the world. I am sure you are familiar with some. The ones that I use the most; Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn, TicToc, WhatsApp, Telegram.

The way we use these is via the internet. Having internet service allows you to reach the World. Years ago, major companies had the means; financial, manpower, reach, to be the only ones that we able to get the word about themselves around the World. However, technology has gotten better, less expensive and more intuitive for everyone.

What do I mean? R.O.C. Media's studio is run from our home office. We have lighting, a green room for guests and the ability to do interviews with people from around the world...virtually. We are able to shoot in 4K resolution with top-of-the-line sound. We can then place that video on a platform that allows us to share, show and make available to anyone within a few minutes.

The best thing about this is that many people are able to do this same thing. People have also been able to create online stores to sell products, tickets to live and virtual events. They are able to communicate with others all over. This allows for collaboration, education, and so much more. One of the things I still use is a website. I see a website as a central location for your business services, products and how people can connect with you. I have heard different people say they won't work with those that don't have a website. Their apprehensions come from the unfortunate number of scams that are present. Learn to allay those fears by making sure you impart your integrity and commitment with whatever platform you utilize. There are some people that use different methods. Once again one must decide what is best for them.

There are a number of ways to learn about things. Reading gives insight via another person's experience or education. Watching a video, show or even attending an event can be educational as well. One of the top ways that people learn is via listening to different topics while at home or on the go. Today many people search out a

specific topic via the internet. There's nothing wrong with that. However, make sure to research anything you've seen so that you are fairly confident and comfortable with your findings.

I love the ability to learn new things within minutes, that may have taken days, weeks, months or years. Being able to do this in the comfort of one's home is fantastic. This also gives people the ability to be creative. They can come up with ideas that may not have even made an appearance. People are even able to reach out, and in some cases actually talk to a subject matter expert, a teacher, professor or scholar. In reality the possibilities are endless.

There are several sayings that I have heard; "Find what you love, turn it into a business and you will never work a day in your life".

"The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks and starting on the first one" by Mark Twain.

These are all things that will enable you to begin a business that is right for you. Always remember integrity and commitment go a very long way with people. Being able to supply a demand will keep you viable. Learning to pivot when needed will keep you in the game. Being open to learning new things will allow you to stay relevant. Lastly, enjoy what you are doing. Have fun and try to manage your time. There should be time for pleasure as well as business. If you can do both then you will have the best of both worlds. Remember to strive to make a difference for others and yourself, for in doing so you are "Creating a Culture of Caring" all around the World.

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Timothy L. Retic



Timothy L. Retic has been the owner and operator of Forever Faded since 2010. He has a passion for helping others be the best version of themselves. So far, he has accomplished this from behind the chair one hair cut at a time. Timothy is currently working on creating an educational platform to help new and seasoned barbers alike reach a six-figure income in the shortest time possible. Timothy plans to accomplish this with a multifaceted approach which includes but is not limited to starting a Podcast which will give barbers a voice, creating an Online course curriculum that shares his 18 plus years from behind the chair, utilizing social media to grow and build an audience and clientele base, and creating a subscription base platform that will benefit all who join by giving collective access to the wisdom of the group through Q and A and monthly webinars. For years Timothy has helped as many people as possible for free, asking nothing in return but the cost of barbering services. After years of good advice from clients and family to venture out and share his gifts with the barbering world, he is finally ready to accept that challenge.

The Evolution of Change

By Timothy L. Retic

First and foremost, I'd like to take a moment to thank God, Jesus, my family, and my work family for allowing me the time needed to make the necessary **changes** to afford me the invitation to be a part of this project.

Jim Rohn said: “For things to change, YOU have to change. For things to get better, YOU have to get better. For things to improve, YOU have to improve. When YOU grow, EVERYTHING in your life grows with you.” My Mentor Mr. John Malott said: “What are you willing to give up, to go up?” Tao Te Ching said: “When the student is ready, the teacher will appear.” In each of the aforementioned quotes the common theme is **CHANGE**. I will use this word throughout this journey.

I have failed at more business ventures than most people will ever attempt in their lifetime. It is this failure that has propelled me to the deepest levels of **change**: a **change** in thought, which ultimately led to a **change** in activity, which brought about a **change** in the desired results. “Every level of success reached will require a new you.” **T.R.** You cannot move through life with a heart of **FEAR**. Fear is a Liar; **F.E.A.R.** is False Evidence Appearing Real. Once I accepted this truth I stopped living from a space of fear and moved into a space of courage. By loose definition courage means: “Having the ability to do what is needed while still being scared.” Understand the man who never tries loses more than the man who tries and fails time and time again. The man who continually tries, continually **changes** the plan but not the goal; he only must be right once. It is this driving force that allows him to ignore the naysayers whether they be friend or foe. Only the end goal of being right once drives his pursuit of happiness.

“Change is inevitable. Growth is optional.” John C. Maxwell “You will have to Grow Through what you Go Through.” This statement is just as true today, as the first day I heard it. I was born two months premature to a single mother. I was one of two children being raised

in the inner city of Milwaukee, WI, in one of the most destitute zip codes in America: 53206. (It's said young black men between the ages of 13 and 25 can expect to be slain or locked up.) I was a lively child, a bit mischievous at times. My home life became chaotic around age seven due to my mom succumbing to a drug induced, hereditary illness. At age twelve I received my first real dose of positive **change** and opportunity when my Aunt Joyce and my Uncle Eugene (surrogate Mom and Dad) invited me to move into their home. It was with their guidance that my life was forever **changed** for the better. I graduated high school and entered the U.S. National Guard and enrolled at Carroll College.

I remember I was twenty-three years old, and two years removed from dropping out of college and being kicked out of the Army National Guard via general discharge for smoking weed. Now my ex-girlfriend and I were expecting our first child. The year was 2000 and I was working as a car salesman. My son was born July 2000; Fast forward 9-11-2001 had just happened and the country was in shock. I was just fired from my job as a used car salesman. My world was literally spinning out of control, and I was wandering around as an aimless nomad. I found another car salesman job. Unfortunately, with child support hanging over my head and me being easily distracted, I was easily lured into a check scam for extra cash. All seemed to be going well until nine months later when the local police came knocking at my door. Once again **CHANGE** was forcing its way into my life. I now had to contend with probation for the next two years, loss of my driver's license, and mandatory drug screening. The year was 2003, and I had successfully completed probation. I was about to get married and enrolled in school for Barber Cosmetology as an apprentice. (All because my mother-in-law planted this seed of faith when she said, "You do a decent haircut, so why don't you look into going to school?") Let me paint a clear picture: I had just walked away from a job selling cars averaging approximately 40k a year, into a job now starting at 19k a year plus tips with 6k a year to pay in child support. Also, I was in and out of court with my son's mother fighting to spend more time with him. All this was going on and I was still heavily smoking weed. In 2005, I graduated Cosmetology School and received my license, I transferred stores, my wife was pregnant, and I was still

addicted to weed. In 2006, my second child was born, and my wife was completely fed up with my shit. I got promoted to store manager and another **change** to a new store. With this new store and new crew, it was all on me. Finally **change** was working in my favor again. At least I thought so. At the very least, it bought me a little more time at home and kept the “D” word (divorce) at bay a little while longer. In 2007, I decided to step down as manager. I wasn’t cut out to be the dictator that management required. This brought about another move in store locations. With a new manager who was every bit of the tyrant the corporation wanted, it was only a matter of time before we butted heads and sparks flew. Mid-January 2008, my manager pulled a no-call no-show, forcing me to cancel the twelve appointments I had scheduled to do an elderly lady’s perm because she was on a set schedule and wouldn’t be able to rebook. I blew an entire gasket. Not only did I read her the riot act, but I also called our main boss. **Change** again was about to force me to stand up and take accountability with the man in the mirror. I got fired, and that was when I discovered that God has a way of laying a foundation for the faithful even when the faithful don’t have a goal or a plan. It so happened that my friend was looking to open a barber shop/clothing store combination, and he just so happened to need a barber and partner. I took him up on the offer and we became partners in an LLC.

Excited about this new **CHANGE**, I was I hard at work every day getting the new location ready to open. January 31, 2008, one night before the grand opening and one week back from a major shopping trip to Manhattan, New York, to purchase product for the new store, I looked up and there standing at the door were two local police officers: “We’re looking for Timothy Retic.” “I’m him.” Fast forward and I found myself on **change's** ever daunting roller coaster. I was facing three felony counts of selling weed to an undercover CI. Sitting in front of that detective, I’d never been more nervous. I honestly had no clue what or who he was talking about. (We went on like this for an hour or so.) At least I thought I didn’t when he said, “Well you gave him back five dollars in change.” I leaned back in my chair and smiled because everything was all too clear. It turned out that the guy I bought my weed from regularly back in August of 2007 had been pulled over with an illegal firearm

and some weed in the car. The local police department gave him a deal. He turned snitch to save his own skin and gave up eight of his weed heads. When I tell you I was angry, that's putting it lightly. See, I did music with this guy; he had a team, and I had a team. My team was better than his team. So, this ass clown thought if he got rid of me, my two artists (my brother and nephew) would sign with him. I persisted to tell the detective everything I knew about this guy. He wasn't interested. I quote, "We already got him, who else you got?" "No one," was my reply. Then he spoke and the words he muttered sounded amazing to me. "How about you go home and sleep on it, and I'll have a detective call you this week." Now I'm at home, my wife's crying and furious with me, and my two-year-old son is in bed. I explained everything to her the best I could at the time. **Change** I tell you is going to happen whether you like it or not. Lucky for me I had recently started a journey of personal development with a multi-level marketing company called Pre-Paid Legal, now known as Legal Shield. So, I met with the detectives and as I looked up, I recognized that one of the detectives on the task force was a former college football team member of mine. He asked me how much weight was involved, and when I told him, he damn near bit his lip to keep from laughing (less than seven grams). We all shook hands and agreed I'd have my day in court. Fast forward through this entire ordeal and God never took his watchful, loving eyes away from me. To this day I don't know why the judge let me go free: no probation, no jail time, and no jail to job time. I can't tell you what I said to him to sway his judgment in my favor, but I'll never forget his words to me, "Mr. Retic you're free to go, but hear this, if ever you step foot in my courtroom again, I will take this case and all other cases into account in judging you for your offenses."

Feeling revived and renewed, you guessed it, I smoked some weed. If I'm being honest, I never stopped smoking throughout the whole proceedings. (Another story for a different day.) But another step closer to permanent **change**. It was the summer of 2009. The business was afloat only because of me. I discovered my partner proved to be undependable, so I made my move and revisited the thought of me buying the business from him. I followed through with the buyout, and though I lost a friendship, I gained my own business. My wife, and the backbone of our home, went through all

that while being pregnant with our second child. (She gave birth to a beautiful and healthy girl in February 2009.) Now really feeling for the first time a **change** was in order I started looking for a new location for the business. In October 2010, I made the move to the current location. I was still doing all the wrong things with the wrong crowd (smoking, drinking, and partying).

It was October 2011. The last three years were mentally and physically exhausting for both me and my wife. I began to suffer from mental psychosis, and I couldn't shake the feeling and thoughts of my wife cheating on me (which I now know was brought on by my own guilty conscience of not being fully present and supportive while she was dealing with her postpartum depression). I was barely making enough money to help support my family. I was still fighting the court battle for more time with my oldest son. I was in the midst of the court proceedings because of my weed addiction, and I was always, always finding a reason to be away from home. I know for a fact this was not how my wife envisioned our marriage or her life. She had enough of my bullshit and my charismatic words fell on deaf ears. She was done supporting my pipe dreams of becoming a rapper and my fleeting attention span. One night I walked in the house to her slamming her wedding bands on the table and uttering the words, "What the FUCK are we doing?" I had no real answers, just a sinking feeling deep in my gut (like when you're at the apex of a roller coaster and it drops). We talked; I can't remember what was said. She left for her weekend trip. When she got home, she had her mind made up that we were getting a divorce. I left the house and drove around my hometown of Milwaukee, smoking weed as you might have guessed. That night I slept on a friend's couch and had a dream that my daughter was crying. I picked her up, held her close, and told her it was going to be alright. The next morning, I walked into the house. My wife came downstairs balling. She asked me, "Did you come home last night?" "I said, "No." She said "that our daughter was crying at 1am, and she did not go to check on her because she heard my voice through the monitor." To this day I don't know how, but I do know God had something to do with saving my marriage. **Change** once again had kicked in my door, and although it would take an additional two years to quit smoking weed, I did through sheer will and prayer.

It was mid-year 2013. I came home after a long day of cutting hair, smoking, and joking. I walked in the door and my four-year daughter looked me in my eyes and ran away from me crying. My eyes were bloodshot. I went to the bathroom and locked the door, looked myself in the eyes and asked myself, “If your daughter was old enough to date and was dating someone just like you, would you be ok with it?” The answer was a clear, precise, and hard, “NO!” I went to bed that night and prayed like I had never prayed before in my life. I went to work the next day and told everyone what I was planning on doing. Some said good luck, but one friend I give a lot of credit to for my success his words cut deep like a knife that had been sitting on burning coals for hours, “Meh, you’ll be back” “To hell with this,” I thought and instantly dug in, solidifying the beginning of lifelong **change**. I quit everything that year: weed, cigarettes, and going out all the time. And it sucked! (Since I couldn’t **change** the people around me, I had to **change** the people I was around.) I used to give the boys roughly 70% of my free time and that changed to 7% over the first year. The next two years I went through depression, loneliness, heartaches and feeling downright unappreciated. But at the end of this road that was littered with self-doubt, weakness, and temptation was this thing called success. I sought the help of a therapist to deal with my trauma from my childhood and adult life. My wife doubled down on me and became the support beam that our young family needed. She became a friend, and now what used to be a strain when we went out on a “date”, became a very easy conversation. It was like we got to fall in love all over again, and we did.

Keep in mind that while all this personal trauma was happening and I was operating my barbershop, I also decided to try other businesses. I’ve always had a love of music, so I formed an LLC, partnered with a friend, and cut my first CD. My partner and I fell out, the company went stagnant, and this year I dissolved the company. I wanted to be a motivational speaker, so I joined Toastmasters to learn the trade. This dream still burns bright in my heart. I coached youth baseball, basketball, and football and from this I formed a non-profit to help student athletes. It takes a lot of connections and money to make a dream this big happen, so it's on the back burner for now. I started a business selling air purifiers due

to COVID. It didn't work because I didn't create the time to make it work. Because of my love for fashion, I started a clothing line and formed an LLC. It's been revamped to support my barber shop. I also tried a host of Multi Level Marketing's companies that never worked because I couldn't recruit up.

Over the years many people have advised me to focus on one business, and I finally decided to take their advice. The year is now 2022. My business is soaring with one of the biggest financial years to date. I have a new team at the barber shop and a growing clientele. After living in our starter home for 17 years, my wife and I bought a more spacious home. I drive a luxury sedan. Our kids are teenagers and doing well in school and sports. My wife and I are celebrating nineteen years of marriage, and knowing everything I know now, I wouldn't change a thing.

I was cleaning up a couple of days ago and came across several check stubs from when I decided to become a barber. For seventy-three hours of work, my take home was two hundred fifteen dollars, and eighty-one cents. I make that now in less than three hours. I don't say that to impress you but to impress upon you that **change** is to be embraced. Taken by the horns and lead it to where you want it to go. If not, **change** will drag you through life kicking and screaming until you stand up and take control.

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Link in Bio <https://app.metricool.com/public/smartlink/mrtim>

Poca Blue



The warmth of the sunbathes my face as the fresh fragrance of rain fills my brain, flooding my nostrils. "Open your eyes!" I hear a familiar voice say. The voice is mine, but my lips are closed. I have not moved. "Open your eyes!" It repeats again. "Who is speaking," I ask. "Your past," it answers. "How long have I been asleep?" "Not long", it responds. I laughed; coming to the full realization this was not a dream. It was my life-- there for

me to review.

Where did we come from? A United States Army Active-Duty Soldier, actively serving even amidst extensive injuries experienced in Desert Storm/Desert Shield, the Gulf War. An injured soldier still proudly serving the needs of those I love, and this country, ensuring our rights to FREEDOM, remain free. But--FREEDOM isn't FREE.

"It's time to be a soldier in my Army," came the still silent voice. And twenty-two plus years later, my career succumbed to my injuries and God's Command. Leaving me, a Retired Disabled Veteran. Albeit a BETTER ONE.

Where do we go from here? A Speaker and Teacher on Sexology, using my Brain Training Music, infused with my personally curated and copy-written Erotic-Porno-Poetry, to stimulate the required hormones necessary for brain and body healing--teaching others to understand the VALUE of our God Given Gift, PROCREATION.

Long Road to Freedom

By Poca Blue

Poca Blue hasn't always been a Sex Transformation Director, or STD, a title she reveres and hold in high esteem. Some would scowl at such a moniker, but to Poca, this title best represents her. After all, it was better than PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), a title she resented after leaving the military with lower paralysis and a TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury).

Some twenty-two plus years later, Poca was retired and discharged from her official military duties due to inability to perform based on her new found illnesses, a result of the now constantly talked about, but the then carefully guarded secrets of the Gulf War and the many medical disorders stemming from such. She felt fucked. On approximately fifty-five different types of meds (from salves, shampoos, lotions, pain and psychotropic drugs), Poca had pretty much given herself over to death. Depression was her constant companion, who later dragged suicide along, and soon suicide became her closest friend and confidant, --even depression didn't stand a chance. Everyday, she was dressed in pain, her pajamas, while drudging around in fear as her underwear, dragging anxiety and anger on her feet, her two mismatched pair of shoes; sipping on frustration, dreaming about hallucination, and DARN, if panic didn't keep pushing her buttons, adding to her already overall dismal situation. She found solace beneath her bed and in her closet. Living an alternative lifestyle, she tried desperately to hide, not wanting it revealed in case folks talked about her on the streets, --labeling her with PTSD.

Fearing suicide her favorite friend and guide would take her at any time, she began to downsize her life. Selling and giving away all she owned except the house she hid in, she began to dig in. Making a grave inside her closet, (a mausoleum in fact), except she had her computer, fan and mini fridge, what a gig; she hid. Only coming out for her doctor's appointments which were five to seven days a week, and then right back in. This went on for several years among

many tears from very vivid nightmares splattered in pain which seared through every fiber of her being, --fibromyalgia, that smeared her body internally, like a bad political campaign. That was how the pain rocked her body, notwithstanding the bad memories playing havoc with her estranged brain. Heck, she had almost no memory, not even enough to remember her own name.

More time passed. Her paralysis now corrected by God and a surgery, Poca still battled brain separation. Like her military retirement and discharge, her brain too had retired and discharged, her information from her data bank. A Baker Act and an extended stay in motel mental health facility plus several survived suicidal attempt on account of her then confidant and best friend suicide, Poca was still struggling to survive, stay alive, amidst the many painful sleepless nights. Nights where she hung upside down like a bat, ass up, head down on a sofa or a cot, in her closet or chancing it out on the loft. Thinking. "This is a LONG ROAD TO FREEDOM." The FREEDOM I was free and dumb to fight for, yet here I was still carrying the unseen battle scars of a hidden war. Not the Gulf War, but the gullible war of distrust I daily fought within my own heart. The one where scud missiles of sleepless painfilled nights ripped through the sky of my mind and bombs of perspiration dropped incessantly, plus patriot missiles, projected their projectiles of hallucinations through my sharded memories, too. It was a long road to freedom with no sight in end soon. I felt doomed. Every day was filled with gloom, locked away in my closet inside my bedroom.

Brain test after brain test. Long six-inch needles and electrodes sticking out my cranium. "Electrolysis will fix this," they insist. "Yeah," I desist but still tried. What did I have to lose? So why resist? Some help was in sight, while time took flight. Not wanting to wait on me to heal, many opportunities bypassed me; but why should I of them now speak? The key is, I got impregnated with a Spiritual baby in Erotic-Porno-Poetry, a few long years after struggling to get results (i.e. cure my separated lobe problem).

Yep, I struggled to make ends meet, with my brain and memory and thus ended up, really struggling to make ends meet. My illnesses

had not only gotten the best of me, but also my money. I quickly transcend from a million saved, some call it a millionaire; descending to the ranks of nothing to spend, I call this a pooranaire. More like a zeronaire really. Yep, like that, my illness took all the money I got because clearly, suicide failed to garner me a proper burial plot and so, I had lost my spot with death and was forced to return to debt if I was to heal holistically and not by way of the pharmacy. The pharmaceutical companies were not that vested in me, and therefore I, had to invest in me. A decision had to be made. Do I safeguard my "lil" wealth and lose my health, or do I go from millionaire to thousandnaire to hundrednaire to pooranaire and get well? Well again like I said, suicide failed in its attempt to find me a burial plot in which to reside so...I had no choice but to try and give life another good "ole" fashion try (smirking laughter).

A pooranaire it was! It was settled! Debt met death and I...I met sex, via Erotic-Porno-Poetry, my new found prospect. Who would have suspect? From here on out, my life became a success. Okay, so not yet. But I was at my best. My brain began to spark and so did my heart, --not to mention, my underparts...(laughing). Imagine! This old fart (only 48 at the time) now pregnant with twins. What the hell was I doing??? F'king... After many trials and tribulations with my brain, my ovulation had gone on a vacation because my ovaries were busy taking a hormonal break in complete relaxation. Heck, sex was not a thing, neither masturbation (laughing). "Neither is impregnation, at your age," said my doctor. "Well tell that to Sarah who was ninety-six and Abraham would insist, he did it, and he was even older," I yelled at him even louder. But, moving right along.

Let's get to the juice of the matter, or is it the root, but does it even matter? Truth is, the matter in my brain overtime began functioning again. And so did my libido! The more I let my pen reign upon my paper and the ink stain drain like rain, creating words of love instead of those filled with disdain, the more the pain, began to dissipate and dissolve like a bad covid strain. My memory wanted to remind me of shit I didn't even want to remember. My brain was so excited, it incited panic attacks and seismic like seizures through my face; in fact, it would not shutdown or stop. Who the heck wanted that? But it was better than not remembering or being able to recall jack. Well

not jill either--the reason I was ill. All I know was, I was coming down off all those God Forsaken pills--except for plan B, clearly, I never had none of these. Remember...pregnancy!

Swimming in my feelings, in my emotions reeling, I was seeking words to fix my heart break, my brain rearranges, dying to get rid of the constant headaches and pain, engulfing my body, filling me with disdain. Wanting to go into my thoughts, I was stressed, my mind upset, my body in a state of unrest; me listening to soothing calm words, yet, unable to pass the test. Frustrated, I delved into my misunderstanding, searching for clarity and understanding, but my brain defied me, and my thoughts betrayed me notwithstanding. Pure words were not enough to cure me. Instead, I became my own fault finder, a reminder, of my flaws that scarred me. I was having non-stop love making with my pain, while like social media, Twitter or Instagram, posting dismal messages of hate to my brain.

On the Facebook account I mount in my mind like a computer screen, I post pictures of pain, anguish and agony, even against the advice of my brain; such tragedy. But finding sex, I meant, Erotic-Porno-Poetry, was not what I expect. This was not your usual, but rather your unusual suspect. Now suddenly, sleep no longer eluded me. It was not my common enemy. It & pain started trying to befriend me. Still, many nights I screamed; you would think I was in a porn movie. No wonder the Spirit of Sex, cum, calling collect. It wanted in on the fun, or just for me, to have some.

Excitedly, daily and nightly writing on my newly found subject, spending time crafting my unusual suspect, Erotic-Porno-Poetry, my newfound prospect; sleep, suddenly noticed me. Up late working, sleep, tries to get in my way [Laughs] like a mofo [Laughs]. But sleep didn't get in my way, like Pookie by Will; it just knocked me the fu'k out. I felt I was in Friday. Whoops and here I am in Friday, holding my Oscar. Holding pen to paper, my brain, raping my thoughts like it ought, words of love seeping, bleeding, from me penetrating myself so hard, I went to work on this arduous task. Day and night, writing my butt off. Breaking my mind's hymen for the first time, impregnating myself with unheard music, producing lyrical rhymes so sublime that twelve months

later; I gave birth to this baby of mine. Triplets, to say the least. A compilation CD of Erotic-Porno-Poetry. Seething hot. Enough to sear and steer a man's cock—oh! and did I fail to mention, my brain and crotch? Heck, even my Christian mom, felt the impact; the reason she advocated for me to record it, although it was Xrated. She stipulated, it was educating, not just stimulating; and thought it could edify and UPLIFT [note the emphasis] others. It was a welcome venture compared to the adventure, she experienced, listening to my PTSD Poetry.

Humor was abound and no more depression and suicide coming around. And of homicide; not a sound. Plus, my brain it seemed to ground. My memory started coming back, in fact, less treatments were being required, and sleep, became a friend again. While pain held me less closely, more loosely, that weight fell off my brain. Stress began to undress. From my mind, removing its own self. And though my thoughts were upset because it had become obsessed with the putrid mess, the putridness of my unhappiness; wanting me to remember, not forget, I refused to give it access. Hell, why? When my mind was now totally occupied and consumed with sex!

All the melatonin in the world I took, could not equate to the words my thoughts consistently fabricate & masturbate. Sleep was no longer a thing of the past. No longer was I on a sleep fast. Heck, I couldn't even wake up at times for lunch or dinner, much less breakfast. Once hungry for sleep, now sleep I had to starve. I was in awe of my newfound craft, and the impact, it was having on my brain and crotch. Oh! and did I mention, my fiancé's cock? Yes, ladies and gents, this Erotic-Porno-Poetry, was all that! No bag of chips, just a bag of tricks, used to empower and recharge, vagina and dicks--leading to an awesome and phenomenal orgasmic discharge. HELL! It was magnificent for brain training too, if you ask. But don't! Because I won't--tell you my secret and how I get men and women to take off their underpants and draws. Oh, don't be so sensitive ladies [Laughs]. Ok, panties it is. After all bloomers and draws have been long out [Laughs]. That's right, women now wear thongs, g-strings or none at all [Laughs]. My bad, I haven't yet caught on to the new fad [Laughs].

But in all seriousness. Poca Blue was being applauded or lauded for her Eroticness. My eroticism seemed to draw skeptics or sexist--those averted or avowed to it. Some were acquiescence to it, others basically sick or made queasy, yes uneasy, by it. But there was no truly pleasing everyone by it. So, I chose to please God, and tease men and women brain and love glands; so they could produce the much needed hormones required, to fulfill their earthly desires and heavenly plan--the very thing we were made to do, "Be Fruitful and Multiply." And the only way, is for a man to slide between a woman's thighs. So not happening if he cannot jumpstart his ride. If his whip is sick, she will not be riding on the comfort of his dick. And if her boat is dragging, sails sogging, in her cabin, he will not be lodging. No sperm count to her ovaries will he be logging. No eggs will she be producing to send to his noggins. Even when he gives her head in the bed, no eggs will she release from between her two legs. But with my new art!!! Okay, so it's not so new. But let's pretend for the most part. After all, it is new to those who never before experience this as is. So back to what I was saying. [Damn it man, it's so many SOs'; SOs' is SO'd out.] Anywho!

From stress I undressed. Cortisol no longer the suit to impress. I was wearing it in excess, using it to suppress my intended happiness. But no more. Enroute to happiness by way of the words I expressed, not only was my brain process renewed, but my memory was much more improved, and so was my appetite for sex. I felt unusually BLESSED. Finally, I was at my happiest. Hormones raging; in more sexual activity engaging; my memory of the past scars, saging; my body as well as my brain now far more stimulated, no longer prematurely aging; I was again activated. No energizer bunny, but I had far more attention and retention span, plus so much energy, it wasn't funny.

Now I was again able to focus on my wealth, while pushing to attain even better health. I felt like the sex demon from hell. Honey, sex was about to erase both debt and death on the way to the money. I felt rich, in both dick and lips, and most definitely not as sick. Erotic-Porno-Poetry had left its mark on and in me. Not only was I starting to have lucid dreams with minimal hallucinations, but I was also giving off more cream as I scream--especially, during self-

titillation. Hell, Baskin and Robbins had nothing on me! Thirty-One Flavors? Huh?... That was outplayed according to my sexual behavior. So much so, even I, myself wanted to savor. Yup, I went from being this sick chick, to won't you suck my clit; shit! just give me the dick! on my way to producing cream real nice and thick. I sure was feeling rich [Laughter].

My friend Christina once said, "Of the many ways to sin, none is more egregious than the sin of being bored." However, I say, "None is more gregarious, as the sin of being a whore" [Laughter]. Although not for any and every man or woman, I am sure. Low or no libido, you become bored. Too much sexual hormones, you become a whore. Yet and still, sex is something to be explored not deplored. Virtuous or not, "We are all born sexual creatures," Marilyn Monroe once quote. Sex is not a sin; it is where life ends as well as begins. What am I saying? Sex is the purpose of our being, so, our sex hormones we need. Thus, if we fail to understand sex and our relationship with it, we fail to understand ourselves within and our true purpose here on earth. Therefore, to embrace sex, helps us more than it hurts.

Change your paradigm, change your world. Change the paradigm, change the world. Say there is no paradigm, change nothing at all. After all nothing changes, unless you change nothing into something--a motto I enveloped and developed to help me heal through the use of sexology.

During the height of being sick, I watched myself wasting away. Delay became my decay, until opportunity gave birth to possibility, now look at me! Hard to believe! From my own words, within my yoniverse, I finally found my universal happiness thanks to sex--the power of my Erotic-Porno-Poetic verse, giving life to my yoni, activating my universe. All because of the hormones being discharged from the words my mouth imparts, stimulating my brain. The very hormones that brought me to life as a child, are the very hormones that now saved my life, bringing me back to life. Proof, sex and death have a strong connect.

Scars are reminders of where you and I have been, but it does not dictate where we are or even where we are going; so why not overcome and again start growing? Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is the present, a gift from God--a present. Therefore, I relent and resign myself to living in the present, being ever present, my very presence a present to myself, and the world ever so prevalent. They say you are the sum total of the five most influential people around you. And I say you are the cum total of the five most sexualized people around you. The laughter, the happiness, the brain stimulation that the body goes through and the hormonal process it produces, is pure proof, that SEX is the GREATEST OF ALL GIFTS, GOD has given to me and you. The healing power that exists between our two hips, to even the very elicit verbiage of erotic poetry poets' spits, adds to this. It opens up our chakras, minimizing our visits to the doctors.

It is with this in mind, I embarked upon this new venture of mine. Over time, taking my adventure offline to online. Using what I inadvertently ran into, or rather, opted into per chance, to help others' libido advance--their performance in romance enhance and their partners enchant. I now, want to stimulate both brains and groins, the way I did my partner's and mine, and so many others over time. Just give it a chance. What do you have to lose, except your low or no libido, and the excess stress that comes with having little or no sex? This new process of mine have healed my mind, rejuvenated my groin, as well as my man's loins. All my customers are left with a smile; although, one or two are left holding a child. Sorry, just another side effect of sex, albeit a blessing, nonetheless. So, in business let's connect. I will be your favorite hello and your hardest goodbye. You will long see me coming, never want to see me going. Let your desire give birth to a life of hormonal balance and success, just as mine, gave birth to sex.

In the words of my good friend JB Owens, "Head, Heart, Private Parts." It's the order and best way for us to get our relationship off to a good start. First, connect to my head with your intellect, and stimulate my mind via conversation--a process we call Sapio-Sex. This gets to my heart stimulating my feelings, igniting my emotional aspect, firing up our relationship via Tantric Sex; opening up the

private parts for business and copulation success, via Spiritual Sex. This is the ultimate formulary to better brain cognition and improved formation of sex hormones we need for procreation.

In conclusion, my desires to heal gave birth to sex and sex gave birth to my desires, only it took me a lot higher. No longer paralyzed from the waist down, still fast healing from my TBI [Traumatic Brain Injury], I was in a hormonal state of bliss. My body optimally working to resist the pain, and brain fog that had me constrained. Inflammation was slowly being drained, once my body found balance again. Thus, my performance in my everyday life, as well as romance, was totally enhanced. I stumbled upon the secret, but to myself I don't want to keep it. The secret to health and wealth, stems from the First Gift, God ever gave to man. Therefore, sex is an intricate part of God's plan, as much as it is a part of us as humans.

In summation, please give yourself permission to perform, speak and act, on the power of procreation. It is a help in any and every situation. It is life sustaining--given to us by God from the very beginning of Creation.

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Afterword

Life is always a series of transitions... people, places and things that shape who we are as individuals. Often, you never know that the next catalyst for change is around the corner.

Jim Britt and Jim Lutes have spent decades influencing individuals to blossom into the best version of themselves.

Allow all you have read in this book to create introspection and redirection if required. It's your journey to craft.

The Change is a series. A global movement. Watch for future releases and add them to your collection. If you know of anyone who would like to be considered as a co-author for a future book, have them email our offices at support@jimbritt.com.

The individual and combined works of Jim Britt and Jim Lutes have filled seminar rooms to maximum capacity and created a worldwide demand.

The blessings go both ways as Jim and Jim are always willing students of life. Out of demand for life-changing programs and events, Jim and Jim conduct seminars worldwide.

To Schedule Jim Britt or Jim Lutes as your featured speaker at your next convention or special event, email Jim Britt at: support@jimbritt.com or Jim Lutes at: mindpowerpro@yahoo.com

For more info on Jim & Jim visit: www.LutesInternational.com or www.JimBritt.com

Master your moment as they become hours that become days.

Do something remarkable today! Your legacy awaits.

Blessings,

Jim Britt and Jim Lutes