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# Praise for 'Powerful Attitudes'

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"After reading this book you will experience a change in your brain chemistry and a soul searching urge.

Written from the heart with sincere, colloquial style, you hear in the author's words those simple truths that hit home. And, so, he becomes your close friend, your life coach, your partner in achievement. Every page is inspirational.

This book puts you in touch with the hidden seeds of your success and mobilize you to take action. It awakens your collective consciousness and faces you with your own greatness, with your higher mission.

Even if some of the concepts are familiar to you, the way Michael Murphy writes about them, still have the power to ignite in you the sacred feeling of being, and to energize you to take charge of that being."

**Dr. Alicia Ghiragossian**

**Internationally best-selling poet and author of over 44 books**

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"As I know you will, I completely identify with Michael in recognizing the power of your attitude for wealth and success. It was not until I recently interviewed him that I realized the depth and impact of his message. His book sets the standard for all personal empowerment books to follow. Once you begin reading it, you won't be able to put it down. He is an awesome communicator in both speech and in his writing. You will feel the passion of a man who is set on fire to give you the tools you need to transform your life.

Get this book and, as Michael says, 'adopt and adapt' every word of it. You will be forever glad that you did."

**Matt Bacak - #1 Bestselling Amazon.com and Barnes and**

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**Noble author of 'The Ultimate Lead Generation System' and leading international authority on Internet marketing strategies**

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“Powerful Attitudes is one of the very best guides you will ever find. It goes beyond self-help to total transformation. To lead the maximum life with minimum strife, you need a new game plan and this is it. Michael provides a treasure trove of fresh valuable insights and immensely practical action steps for unleashing your fullest potential. Read and use this groundbreaking book.”

**Harold H. Bloomfield, M.D.**

**N.Y. Times Bestselling Author with 19 books and over 8.5 million copies sold**

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**Instant Success Immersion  
Through  
Powerful Attitudes**

**The Awesome Power of the Attitude of Success**

**Michael Murphy**

Introduction by  
Harold H. Bloomfield, M.D.

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**Instant Success Immersion  
Through  
Powerful Attitudes**

**The Awesome Power of the Attitude of Success**

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND SINCERE THANKS**

There are so many people I would like to thank who have made my life better, who have challenged me and made me who and what I am today.

With tears in my eyes and a great deal of love, I want to thank Clyde Causey who made me believe that anything was possible in my life. You believed in a rebellious teenager who most people thought was beyond hope. I want to thank Mike Hayes for his incredible support in affording me the time to complete this project. I love you, my friend. I want to thank my good friend, Dr. Larry Lea. Larry you inspired me, made me believe in myself more and have made me enjoy more of life. I want to thank my dad, Elbert Joe Murphy (who has transitioned from this life) for taking the reins off me in my younger years and allowed me to live freely, make my own mistakes, learn my lessons and believe that anything was possible. “Dad, I’m sure you can hear me now and just want you to know that I did it.” I want to thank my grandmother, Alma Hazlewood (who also has transitioned from this life), for teaching me that, “You are no better than the way that you treat others.” I want to thank my uncle, Stan Hazlewood, who has been a mentor, friend, advisor, and powerful encourager in my life. I finally got focused Stan and now you can see the results! I want to thank my mother, Dorothy Murphy, who is 100 times more than I could ever ask for in a mother and a friend. Bud Leavell, I want to thank you for pushing me in the beginning. I want to thank Heather Down for the cover design that I dreamed of. You read my mind, dear lady. I want to thank Matt Bacak for teaching me most of what I now know about marketing. You are an inspiration to me. I want to thank my daughter, Courtney Murphy for your spectacular background photo on the back cover. You are amazing!

And to everyone else who isn’t named, you are a part of my life and have made me what I am. I love you all.

Michael Murphy

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## **Dedication**

I am dedicating this book to the loving memory of my dear aunt, Nancy Anna Hazlewood who has also transitioned from this life. I was there as we held hands and felt the peace that passes all comprehension on February 26, 2006.

Nancy taught us about love, life, faith, and how to face death. There was never a person who absolutely owned a more “powerful attitude” than her. I still believe that she was and is an angel.

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## Introduction

The deepest reality that you are aware of, is the one from which you draw your power. Power is a deeply universal and highly personal source of energy, intelligence and commitment; the ability to enjoy a high level of success, to think creatively under pressure, to grow a purpose (career, business), mature your love life and family relationships and effectively accomplish your highest goals and greatest dreams.

**“Powerful Attitudes”** will boost your energy and ability to think creatively and act effectively to accomplish more of whatever matters most to you in your life and work.

The truth is, to a great extent, you are a product of your choices and not a victim of your circumstances. You are constantly making choices, or unconsciously letting the choices be made for you. Then you are living with the consequences of those choices. Most of us, however, do not like the results we experience.

Reacting to whatever urgent demands appears in your life, it feels as if you are a ‘victim’ of circumstance; that ‘bad’ things just happen to you. Chances are though, what is really happening is that you’re stuck, limited by reacting unconsciously and all too often, counter-productively.

**“Powerful Attitudes,”** offers you a collection of highly effective strategies to get unstuck and accomplish more of whatever you want in your life.

Michael Murphy will brilliantly and lovingly inspire you to:

- Jump to a higher vantage point.

- Turn on your personal power switch.
- Fire up your powers of imagination.
- Straighten out negative thoughts and clear up misperceptions.
- Spark creative thinking.
- Refocus your attention on what is ahead.
- Revitalize your mind and become more at ease.
- Stay on track to accomplish your goals and dreams.
- Accomplish more of whatever matters most to you and do less of what doesn't.
- Boost your spirit to bring out more of your best during difficult times.
- Demonstrate powerful, genuine leadership.

And it all begins with discovering that the purpose of your life, like that of Henry Ford, Abraham Lincoln and Michael Murphy, is a life of purpose and to discover that you are powerful beyond measure. Michael will help you to create the path of least resistance to fulfill your highest goals and greatest dreams. "This is the true joy in life," wrote famed playwright and British ambassador, George Bernard Shaw, "to be used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one."

There is an inner longing that all of us feel. We want to get more out of each minute of life, to give more back, to gain a deeper understanding of what matters most. How many of us experience love, freedom, faith or devotion as deeply as we really want? And how many of us cannot seem to feel these things at all and are left with the numbness of guilt, shame and blame instead?

A passion for life is more than some vague feeling of hopefulness or enjoyment of living. It is a deep inner commitment to the experience of life, in all its myriad dance of light and shadow, which motivates you to use your unique gifts and talents, to extend a helping hand and to make some positive differences in the lives of other people and the planet.



In “**Powerful Attitudes**,” a down to earth, breakthrough book, Michael shows you how to start now, in living out your passion and dreams, no matter where you are or what you have or haven’t accomplished until now. Michael will take you by the hand and teach you to tap into so much more of this high-powered force of life, and to make it a central part of your future. You’ll learn how to concentrate on what truly matters, so that far from declining with age, your creative spirit can actually gain in strength and vigor.

How do you want to be remembered in life? Vividly imagine what others might say about you in a eulogy if you were to die today. Be honest. Now envision the specific kinds of qualities, actions and contributions to your friends, family and the world, you’d truly wish for them to feel, say and remember about you. Now, how would you live differently between now and the day that you will die? Then, ask yourself whether you are devoting some attention every single day, to living that kind of life.

If you aren’t living like that, take heart. This book is perfect for you. Michael will gently assist you to re-examine your priorities, dust off your hidden dreams and make specific, concrete changes that draw the direction of your life more into line with the values and purpose in your heart.

Life presents each of us with many possible courses of action; many possible ways to live. Anthropologist, Carlos Castaneda, gave this advice for whenever you find yourself standing at a crossroads, “Look at every path closely and deliberately, then ask yourself a crucial question: ‘Does this path have heart?’ If it does, the path is good; if it doesn’t, it is of no use.” This is a book with heart, where the human spirit shines its brightest light. Therefore, read it “closely and deliberately,” to infuse more heart into your path.

Swiss psychologist, Dr. Carl Jung wrote, “Your vision will only become clear when you look into your own heart. Who looks outside, only dreams; who looks inside, also awakens.” Your deeper values, that is, what really motivates you, plays a central role in your life.

When we suffer from inner conflict, it is often because we are unsure of our personal values. We don’t know how to determine

which values are most important. Michael will inspire you to live by your highest values and thus avoid a lot of unnecessary conflict. What was of earth-shattering importance during your past, will suddenly seem trifling.

Your spiritual values are absolutely necessary for psychological health. They provide deep reassurance and comfort during turbulent times. From the hospital bed to summoning the will to win on the playing field, from terrorist attacks to divorce courts, the key ingredient to resilience, is faith.

For some, faith will exist within the framework of organized religion. For others, it lies in remembering eternal truths. You can count on Michael to stir your faith, deepen your wisdom and re-invigorate your spirit.

The Indian sage, Patanjali wrote, “When you are inspired by some great purpose, some extraordinary project, all of your thoughts break their bonds. Your mind transcends limitations, your consciousness expands in every direction and you find yourself in a new, great and wonderful world. Dormant forces, faculties and talents become alive and you discover yourself to be a greater person by far than you ever dreamed yourself to be.” By being fortunate enough to have picked up this book, your “great purpose” and your “extraordinary project” await you.

Welcome to the new (Michael) Murphy’s Law:

**“We rise to our highest level of vision and purpose with  
Powerful Attitudes!”**

Harold H. Bloomfield, M.D.

New York Times best-selling author of 19 books with 8.5 million copies sold

Maui, Hawaii

July 25, 2006

# **Chapter 1**

## **Attitude Is Everything**

If you think you can do a thing or think you can't do a thing, you're right.

***Henry Ford***

He was born on February 12th, 1809, in a one-room log cabin on a farm near Hodgeville, Kentucky, a state allowing slavery at the time. When he was just nine years old, his mother, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, died. A year later his father, Thomas Lincoln, remarried a woman named Sarah Bush, who had a tremendous influence on the young ten-year-old.

In order to support his family, he had to work at a neighboring farm so he never had the opportunity to go to school. The amount of formal education he received totaled less than a year. Although his formal education was minimal, his self-education was only just beginning.

He was an avid reader and by studying grammar, he acquired sound reading and writing skills. He discovered the rhythm and cadence of language. In speeches before the New Salem debating club, he honed his orator's voice. In law and in politics, he

discovered the vehicles through which his passion for language could be engaged and in which his talent could emerge.

He lost his first job as a clerk in Denton Offutt's store. Shortly thereafter, Offutt's business enterprise collapsed. In 1833, he and partner, William Berry, purchase another local store. This store fails leaving other partners in debt. He spent the next seventeen years of his life paying off the money he borrowed from friends to start his own business.

In 1832, in his first campaign for the state legislature, he finished eighth out of thirteen candidates. In a campaign document, he stated that if he were to lose, he "was too familiar with disappointments to be very much chagrined."

In 1835 he was engaged to be married, but his sweetheart died and his heart was broken. In 1836, at the age of twenty-five, he had a nervous breakdown and spent six months confined to his bed.

The middle part of his life was spent in Springfield, Illinois. There he became a successful lawyer and made a brief foray into national politics.

He still faced identity issues. He broke off his engagement to Mary Todd and, as a result, experienced profound depression. However, a year later he reconnected with Mary. He went on to marry her in November of 1842. He and Mary eventually had four children.

In 1836, he won election to Congress. After his term ended, he spent the next five years focusing on his law practice. In 1854, he came back to the political arena. One of the first things he did was to oppose the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which threatened to extend slavery to other states.

In 1855 he ran for the Senate but was defeated. The next year he ran for vice President and was also defeated.

Nonetheless, his years of persistence and hard work eventually paid off. In 1860, he was elected as the sixteenth President of the United States of America. However, failure characterized the first two years of his Presidency. The radicals pushed him to declare emancipation as a war issue. The conservatives tried to prevent

him from making such a declaration. As a result, his party suffered losses in the mid-term elections.

Gradually, Abraham Lincoln grew into the President who saved America. But even in the summer of 1864, influential members of his party asked him to resign as the nominee for the November election. In August 1864, he wrote a sealed memorandum and sent it to his cabinet stating that, in all likelihood, he would be defeated. It wasn't until his re-election that the issue of his continuing leadership was firmly resolved.

The one thing that set Abraham Lincoln apart from the ordinary man was that he possessed a powerful attitude of great perseverance. He chose an attitude that would never allow him to quit. That is why he will always be listed among the greatest leaders the world has ever known.

## **The Power of Attitude**

Thinking about Abraham Lincoln and his indomitable spirit led me to an interesting discovery. I was thinking about the choice of automatic responses that we make to people everyday. If when you are asked by someone, "How are you doing?" for example, you changed your response from "not bad" to "pretty good," you would instantaneously shift thousands of neurons in your brain to a place of positive results and move further away from limiting negative results. If you always respond with, "I'm doing good," then you enhance it. If you respond by saying, "I'm doing great!" then you enhance it even further.

We all have automatic responses to what people say to us on a daily basis. If we change little phrases and responses, we change our brain chemistry, brain structure, and the responses that people will have to us. We increase our influence over others and make a more positive impact upon their lives and their minds.

We also set off a chain reaction that literally plants seeds in hundreds of people's lives. For example, imagine you are getting into a cab in New York City. You respond to the driver's question, "How's it going?" by saying, "I'm doing fantastic!" He might think that you are a bit abnormal. Nonetheless, it will have a positive impact upon him. It will influence him to be more inclined to be positive with his other customers.

Even if he doesn't go out immediately and exhibit a more positive attitude to someone who he normally wouldn't bother with, the process still affects his brain chemistry in a positive way on a subconscious level. And not only does hearing a positive statement have an effect upon his brain chemistry, but a positive attitude also raises his consciousness level and subsequently his I.Q. That's right. A positive attitude raises one's mental and psychological awareness and one's intelligence level. If he, in turn, responds to someone else positively, then there is a chain reaction of events that can and will take place. Literally, a positive attitude can affect and change the whole world.

Then I thought about the greeter at the restaurant that my friend, Larry, and I went to in Las Vegas recently. I asked him, "How are you doing?" He responded, "I'm better than I've ever been." Now think about this. I have shared that with thousands of people since hearing that young man say those words. Granted, some of them "get it" and some of them don't. Even if it has no effect on them at all on a conscious level, still affects them subconsciously.

Also, the message is likely to get diluted over the transfer from person to person. However, in my case, it didn't get diluted. It became far more powerful and affected thousands of lives of the people I interact with. I realize that not everyone has had the same platform of influence that I've had. Nonetheless, I have related this experience over and over again to thousands of people.

He doesn't know it, but that young man has literally touched thousands of lives by making that one statement on that one occasion to me. He didn't know that I would go on to influence other people's lives in the way that I have. He didn't know that I would be talking about what he said on television and from podiums around the world, with potentially tens of thousands more listening.

Now I'm talking about the reality of this kind of thing. I'm not talking pie-in-the-sky type of pipe-dreaming. This is just on a very conscious level and an observation of reality. Think about it. How do our attitudes and verbal responses affect the whole world? We've just seen that they can have a profound effect on all with whom we interact. Amazing when you break it down to a moment-to-moment level.

## **Why Another Book on Attitude?**

This book has been burning inside of me for years. It is one of many books that I know that I am to write in my years left on this planet. Much has been written on the subject of attitude. Do we really need another book on the subject? If so, why?

Let me start by telling you that you are an awesomely created being. Your potential is truly unlimited. Your abilities far exceed your present reality of life. Your mind is greater than any computer that has ever, or will ever, be designed, engineered, or built. Your ability to imagine, to dream, to create, and to accomplish is at least 1000 times more than your present life experience.

Whatever your current status in life, you can take a dramatic turn toward awesome success right at this very moment. You have the powerful ability to choose what you are going to do with the rest of your life beginning right now. Are you going to stay the same? Are you going to resign yourself to living the life that Thoreau described when he said,

**“The mass of men live lives of quiet desperation?”**

Your life can take an incredible turn in a new direction right now even as you sit reading this.

In my regular trips to Eastern Europe, I always come face to face with a major attitude check each time I go. In my mind’s eye, I look back to the west, over that great big pond (known to most as the Atlantic Ocean) and see a land filled with opportunity.

In fact, we have unlimited opportunities in this country to make of ourselves and our lives whatever we dream. The potential and opportunity that each of us has access to in America, is both inconceivable and inaccessible by most people in that seemingly forsaken land of the former Soviet Union.

The people of that land are also looking “across the pond.” They are looking to the West for answers and guidance. They are dreaming and are beginning to realize what can become a reality in their own lives.

However, life is changing there now, especially in Russia. As I write this, New York City is the only city in the world that is home

to more billionaires than Moscow. Think of that. Moscow indeed has billionaires.

Recent rhetoric from the Russian government has suggested that their country should return to the days of communistic rule. Yet in just over a decade, the inspiration, drive, and ambition of many Russians have propelled them to succeed in an incredible way.

The citizens of that land of political, social, and economic oppression are hungry to act upon the newfound freedoms that have been opened up to them. They possess the essential “burning desire” to succeed, to progress, and to realize their dreams.

After World War II, Japan lay in the rubble of defeat and humiliation. Characterized by the ruins of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, the pride of Japan was struck down at its core. Edwards Deming took his breakthrough, out of the box management theories, to that devastated land. His leadership and influence revitalized a nation. Japan came through the devastation of self-imposed national ruin to emerge a major global economic power.

The essential ingredient to every story of global, national, or individual success is attitude. Beyond the temporal benefits of pep rally-like motivational techniques, the adoption of a lifelong positive attitude will take you to levels of success that you could never hope to reach without it.

Attitude about yourself, your opportunities, your economy, and your abilities is the leading factor in predicting your future. Bad attitude equals a bad future. Good attitude equals a good future. Great attitude equals a great future. Awesome attitude equals an awesome future. Simple but true.

A man asked me once after I had just finished speaking, “Does a positive attitude guarantee that I will be rich and famous?” My answer was decisively: “No.” Attitude followed with massive action does guarantee success. However, I can tell you this—with a rotten, blaming, fault finding, always-a-victim, pessimistic mentality, I can guarantee your demise and ultimate failure.

Let’s look at some of the lives of people that I’ve observed who knew the power of attitude. Let’s examine the force it has been in shaping their lives.



## **From Unemployed to Millions**

I recently received a letter written by a man named Thomas Clive Bergen who had just boarded an airplane in Boston. He was bound for his home on the West Coast. Nine years previous to him writing and sending me this letter, he heard me speak at a church. He had been invited by relatives who lived in Texas.

He described for me his condition at the time that he heard me speak. He was broke (mentally, psychologically, spiritually, and financially). He had worked as an engineer in Texas and had become totally disillusioned by his life experiences. During the downsizing of a major government contractor, he was caught in the mass exodus imposed upon thousands who suffered his same fate.

His first choice, when invited to come to hear me speak, was that he was not ready to be sickened by a bunch of “rah-rah” shallow, emotionally charged nothing-ness (his exact words). Nonetheless, to please his relatives, he dragged himself to the event. He was completely unaware of what was about to happen to change the course of his life. I didn’t find out myself until nine years later.

This unemployed engineer heard words being spoken that let him know that he had the potential to do—what seemed to him at the time—the impossible. Feverishly, he wrote down everything he could capture from all he had heard. In addition, he was writing down his own thoughts beyond what was being said. That day he found a key to unlock his hidden potential.

Nine years later, he had built a company of 34 employees with gross annual sales revenue of \$14 million. His before-tax, personal profit the previous year amounted to just over \$1.2 million. He was writing me to thank me for the words that I had spoken to him on that day.

Now, let’s talk about you. Do you have the same opportunity to see that kind of turn around (or better) in your life? Wherever you are and whatever your present life experiences, is it possible to see it change to the same magnitude as this man?

## **From the Ghetto to the Surgical Suite**

Have you ever heard of Ben Carson? From a poor African-American boy growing up in the ghettos of Detroit, Michigan, to a world-renowned neurosurgeon, Ben Carson overcame incredible odds beyond what most people will ever face.

He was born in Detroit, where his childhood journey was filled with poverty. He struggled with poor grades and a violent temper. His mother, who only had a third-grade education, constantly challenged him to strive for excellence. Ben rose from the bottom to the top of his class. His achievements earned him academic scholarships to college and medical school.

Today, Dr. Ben Carson is director of pediatric neuro-surgery at The Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions in Baltimore, Maryland. He is world-renowned for leading a medical team that separated West German conjoined twins in 1987. He is also credited with leading a team of South African doctors in the first successful separation of vertically conjoined twins in 1997.

Dr. Carson holds numerous honors and awards, including more than 20 honorary doctorate degrees. He is a member of the board of directors of the Kellogg Company, honored by the Horatio Alger Society, as well as a fellow of the Yale Corporation, the governing body of Yale University.

Dr. Carson's remarkable story is told in his first book, *Gifted Hands*. *THINK BIG*, his second book, encourages others to develop their intellectual potential. His latest book, *The Big Picture*, offers an up-close look at a professional surgeon's life, together with his unique perspective on priorities, race, society, success, and living out a life of faith in a complex world. He travels globally to share his knowledge and philosophy with the hope of inspiring people of all ages and educational backgrounds to be—and do—their best.

Is Ben Carson the lucky exception to the rule? Let's find out.

## **Jason and Matthew versus Goliath**

Early in 1994, twin brothers Jason and Matthew Olim began creating CDnow.com, an Internet music store. Working in their parent's basement, on a shoestring budget, they competed against

Fortune 500 companies with millions of dollars to spend...and won. In 1997 CDnow.com earned almost three times as much as its nearest rival, and owned one third of the online music business. From first month revenues of \$387 in August of 1994, the company grew to sales of \$16.4 million in 1997, and currently enjoys over \$100 million in annual revenues.

## **Inspiring Billionaire**

Born in 1950, Richard Branson grew up in a traditional family and received his education at Stowe School. While there, at the age of sixteen, he established a national magazine entitled, *Student*. By seventeen, he had started a Student Advisory Centre aimed at helping young, troubled teens.

At the age of twenty, he founded Virgin as a mail order record retailer. A short while later, he opened a record shop on Oxford Street, London. In 1972, a recording studio was built in Oxfordshire where the first Virgin artist, Mike Oldfield, recorded "Tubular Bells," later released in 1973.

That first album on Virgin Records went on to sell more than five million copies. At the age of 27, Richard signed The Sex Pistols to Virgin Records after the group was turned down by every major label in Great Britain.

Over the years, he signed many superstar names including Steve Winwood, Paula Abdul, Belinda Carlisle, Genesis, Phil Collins, Peter Gabriel, Simple Minds, The Human League, Bryan Ferry, Culture Club, Janet Jackson, and The Rolling Stones. As is evident, Branson managed to turn the Virgin Music Group into a giant success.

In 1992, the Virgin Music Group—record labels, music publishing and recording studios—was sold to Thorn EMI in a \$1 billion US deal.

The interests of Virgin Group have since expanded into international "Megastore" music retailing, books and software publishing, film and video editing facilities. In addition, Virgin now has clubs and hotels throughout 100 companies in 15 countries.

Virgin Atlantic Airways, started in 1984, is now the second largest British long haul international airline. It operates a fleet of Boeing

747 aircraft to New York, Miami, Los Angeles, Orlando, Boston, San Francisco, Washington, Dallas, and Tokyo.

The airline was founded on the concept of offering competitive and high quality first class and economy services. The airline holds many major airline awards and recently earned "Airline of the Year Award" for the third consecutive year.

In 1993, the combined sales of Virgin Group Companies exceeded \$1 billion US. In addition to his own business activities, Branson is a trustee of several charities. These include The Healthcare Foundation, a leading healthcare charity responsible for the launch of a health education campaign named Parents Against Tobacco. This organization is aimed at limiting tobacco advertisements and sponsorships in sports.

Since 1985, Branson, while actively engaged in his vocations, has also been involved in a number of record-breaking land and air speed and distance attempts. In 1986, his boat, "Virgin Atlantic Challenger II," rekindled the spirit of the Blue Riband by crossing the Atlantic Ocean in the fastest recorded time ever.

One year later, the hot air balloon called the "Virgin Atlantic Flyer," was the first hot air balloon ever to cross the Atlantic Ocean. It was the largest ever flown at 2.3 million cubic feet capacity, reaching speeds in excess of 130 mph.

In 1991, Branson crossed the Pacific Ocean from Japan to Arctic Canada, the furthest distance of 6,700 miles. Again he broke all existing records with speeds of up to 245 mph in a balloon measuring 2.6 million cubic feet.

Branson admits that his success is simply in "believing that I can do what others believe they cannot do." Branson's key is a powerful attitude.

## **Success with a Smile**

One thing that you will always find in common with all highly successful people is that, when you view their pictures, they are smiling. Aha! Smiling is the key to making money. No, smiling comes from an inner attitude that says:

**I will attempt what others dare not try; I will succeed when others have quit.**

They all possess a powerful attitude.

Consider this example of attitude and how your attitude can change:

A professor brought a big glass jar into his class. It was a gallon container and it had a large mouth on it. He began putting some rocks into the jar. He held the jar up in front of his students and asked, "Is the jar full?" A couple of the students went up to his desk and they tried to put another rock in the jar and it just wouldn't go. The students declared that the jar was full.

The professor set the jar down and he began to pour some small pebbles into the jar. The pebbles went around the big rocks and filled in the gaps. He asked his students again, "Is it full now?" A student responded, "No, now we know what you are doing."

Then the professor poured some sand into the jar. The sand trickled down through the rocks and pebbles and filled up the jar. He asked, "Is the jar full?" The class answered, "No!"

Finally, the professor poured some water into the jar, full to the brim. He asked again, "Now is it full?" The students replied, "Yes!"

He then asked, "What did you learn from this?" One student replied, "I learned that no matter what you set your mind to, you can always do more!" Someone else shared another analogy. The professor let them go on and on until finally he said, "The real lesson that I want you to learn is... if you don't put the big rocks in first, you will never get them in, because the little rocks will occupy the space. And, if you don't have big rocks in your life and implement them first you will never get them implemented in your life. Your life will be consumed with small things...television shows, details, small insignificant facts that occupy your time, until there is no way to get the big rocks in."

Can you see the possibilities for your life? Do you accept things that you and/or others have deemed to be impossible? Is the glass half empty, half full, or running over?

Your attitude is your choice. It is a daily choice. Misery comes from internal dialogues of failure, limitations, blame, and excuses. Success and happiness come from internal dialogues of effort, energy, courage, wisdom, and persistence.

Is it this easy? For the one who practices inner and outer dialogues of limitation and failure, it is not. They've never experienced the power and results of positive, powerful attitude choices. For those who have been in both places and have persevered with a chosen positive attitude, the answer is emphatically, "Yes!"

As much as the fuel that is imperative for the propelling of your automobile, attitude is essential to your success. Let's look at how you are going to change your life in choosing your own "powerful attitude" for success.

## **Chapter 2**

# **Living in the Gap**

I think, therefore I am; I act, therefore I become. I become,  
therefore I have.

*Michael Murphy*

There is a place that you live, between where you are and where you want to be. It is a place called “the Gap.” It is a place that can be mysterious, frustrating, exciting, and interesting. It can create excitement, anticipation, interest, discovery, learning, failure, or success. It is a place that we all must live and as long as we have breath, we will live in the Gap.

In the distance, as we stand “in the Gap,” there is the horizon. We call this horizon the “Ideal” or “the ideal life” which we desire to live. Just like the physical horizon, though, the Ideal cannot ever be reached. It is a vision of the future which is inherent in human beings for the sake of motivating us and letting us know that life can and should change for the better.

At some psychological level, we are forever hopeful even when we display and experience negativity, failures, and setbacks. Chronically negative people still believe that they can somehow elicit enough sympathy from others or from God or from the universe in order to get what they want.

Both the universal concept of the future and our own specific concept of the Ideal help us in hoping that life can and will get better. We feel like ‘our’ lives can get better. If you were to script and had the resources to make a movie of what you wanted your future to look like, I can assure you that once you arrived at the place that represented your Ideal, it would look little like the

movie and follow the script only generally. The Ideal is there to motivate you in the present and aid you in enduring the hardships of your present reality in order for you to keep going and seek progress in your life.

The horizon is not a place at which you will ever “arrive.” It is a concept that does not exist except from a distant viewpoint. Have you, or anyone you know, ever reached the horizon? No, you haven't and neither has anyone else. No one ever will. The closest anyone will likely ever come is visiting Horizon City, Texas, population 5,233. Even once you arrive there, you will still be able to look in every direction and see the horizon at which no one will ever arrive. The same goes for the Ideal.

We keep looking ahead allowing the horizon, the Ideal or ideal life, to motivate us to keep moving towards a destination. The Ideal is a mental construct that is necessary for living. It isn't the carrot on the stick in which the horse is never able to partake of. It is a necessary tool for keeping us moving and to “keep on keeping on” in order to experience a better life.

The Ideal is also like a map. On a map you see little blue lines that represent rivers. You see oddly shaped areas colored in with blue which represent bodies of water. However, these only represent rivers, lakes, and oceans, and, if you touch them, you will not get your finger wet.

The other day, I took my daughter to a store where I saw globes for sale. I looked for Italy to again get a visual perspective of its proximity in Europe. To the north, I found Switzerland and noticed that the maker of the globe not only showed the Swiss Alps visually but also raised the material which the globe was made of, to give it a three dimensional effect. I could actually feel the rugged points of the raised area where the Swiss Alps stood.

Recently, in flying over the Alps, I can tell you that what I felt on the globe was a very nice “effect.” However, I can assure you that the Swiss Alps aren't anything in reality compared to what I felt on the globe.



## **The Map is not the Territory**

The horizon is not an actual place. The raised area on the globe was not the Swiss Alps. Your Ideal is not a place that you are ever going to 'arrive'. Goals are concrete milestones in the journey of life. The Ideal is not. It is a concept.

The problem that most people experience in their lives is that they compare their present reality to their Ideal. Having not ever "arrived" at their Ideal, they find it frustrating that their present reality is far from where they believe they want to be. They want to have a certain amount of money. They want to be with a certain person or want a certain kind of person in their lives. That is what their Ideal is and what they imagine will make them happy. They believe that if they could only afford to go on a European vacation or drive a new luxury car or live in a certain house in a certain neighborhood, that this would make them happy.

There is a concept that you have heard of which creates anxiety and a lot of pain in our lives. It is the concept identified as "keeping up with the Joneses." It is a frustrating and very ineffective way to live your life. The fact is, the ideal "Joneses" aren't real people. Oh, you may know someone, even of that namesake, who you want to be like or who possess the money, house, business, or material things in life which you desire to have. The fact remains, the Ideal doesn't exist. I think you get the idea regarding the Ideal.

So what do we choose when we face the reality that the Ideal doesn't exist? I'm glad you asked. I have an answer.

Let's use two places in life (demarcations) that reflects everyone's experience. Point A represents where you have been at some point in your past. It may have been 20 years ago, 10 years ago, 5 years ago or one year ago. Between 5 and 10 years ago is a good place for most of us who are over 30 years of age. Where were you living at Point A? How much money did you have in the bank at Point A? How happy were you at Point A?

Now, if you have been making much effort at all, you are at least wiser today. We will call the place where you are today, Point B. You are likely in a better job, with better pay, at least a bit more knowledgeable about your life and where you are headed. When

you compare your Point A with your present, Point B, then you will see some kind of progress that can motivate you to see your future from a more positive perspective.

I like the old saying that says, “To live and have not learned is the only true waste of one's life.” Learning from life is truly the process of conscious living. The problem that most people experience is that they compare their Point B, where they are now, with their Ideal that really doesn't exist. They become frustrated, discouraged, depressed, and anxious when they live with the ever present thought of comparing their Point B with their Ideal.

The Ideal is a map. It is not the territory. When you look at a map and then actually take the journey through the territory, you find that it is a far different experience than you ever imagined. The map cannot ever truly represent the territory.

My instruction to you is, “Stop comparing your Point B with your concept of your Ideal and start comparing it with your Point A.” Go ahead and set achievable goals and reach for them and attain those goals. However, there is no “I have now arrived” place in life. You will be positively motivated to know by the progress that you've made in your life, by comparing Point B with your Point A and not comparing your point B with your “Ideal.”

## **How True Transformation Happens in Your Life**

True transformation happens in your life when you choose to change only two things.

1. How you think
2. How you act

These two things are so simple that they are often overlooked. There is nothing more, nor nothing less, than these two things that must change in order to transform your life. The previous discussion on the Ideal will shift your thinking in a way that will motivate your actions to be different.

How do successful people produce success? They do it by thinking and acting a certain way. Is there some kind of special luck or mysterious blessing that falls on successful people? Yes and no. There is nothing mysterious that happens to them that can't and

won't happen to you if you think and act the way that successful people do.

So how do I change my thinking and my actions in order to achieve the success that I seek? You do it by, first, making a decision that you are going to make changes. Don't stick with the same old way you've been doing things if that way isn't working. Let go of your pride if your way hasn't been accomplishing your goals.

I've met many people who are living their lives to please a parent or an authority figure who has been a part of their lives. They think, "Because my dad told me this, then it must be truth." Friend, if it isn't moving you farther towards getting what you want in life, then you likely need to change the way you are approaching your life.

I like what a friend of mine once said. He stated that his father continuously told him, "Son, you aren't doing things right in your life." Now this guy wasn't breaking the law, acting immorally or unethically, nor hurting himself or anyone else. This was simply his father's opinion. The son told the father, "Dad, you be right and I'll be rich." Today, his dad is "right" (at least in his own mind) and the son is rich.

There are hundreds of people who will find their way into your life and tell you how to do things right (or better yet, these people are always experts in telling you how you are doing things wrong). If you are going to be rich and successful, you are going to have to do what rich and successful people do. If you don't know what they do, you are going to have to find a way to learn what it is that they do.

If you are going to become a lawyer in your life, you have to go to law school and learn to think the way lawyers do. You are going to be taught the law. You are going to have to learn to act like a lawyer.

Learn this little rule and set your priorities straight:

**You are going to have to think before you act.**

Didn't your mother always tell you to "think before you act?" Well, let me tell you. You 'must' think before you act. Mom was telling you to think about it thoroughly before you act. "Think it

through,” was likely what she was attempting to convey. Thoughts, at some level, consciously or subconsciously, always precede actions.

Let me tell you a way that everyone can learn the process of success and to think and act like successful people do. If you can read, then you can learn to think and act like wealthy, successful, happy people do. There are hundreds of books with clues left by rich and successful people. In fact, rich and successful people almost always see that leaving clues and instructions on how to do what they did is part of their purpose for living and being successful.

Charlie T. Jones says that, “Where you will be five years from now will be determined by the people that you associate with and the books that you read.” Why is that so? Because through books and through modeling yourself after successful people, you learn how to think and act like successful people do.

Coaching and mentoring has become a very popular practice in the personal development of thousands. These practices have become popular because they are effective in modeling success, personal fulfillment, and personal happiness.

The positive people that you meet change your life because they are able to model for you the mindset and habits that you need and are lacking in your life. They effectively do both because they challenge you to think differently and put into action what you have learned in order to make powerful changes in your life.

If you don’t have a mentor or personal coach in your life, find one as soon as possible. Find someone who is already successful in what you feel that you need improvement or desire expertise. Then do whatever it takes to expose your mind, will, and life experience to them. Open yourself up to allow them to influence your thinking and consequent actions.

If you aren’t a reader of books that show you how to live your life, invest your money, adopt mindsets, etc., then decide right now that you are going to become one.

If you don’t like reading it is probably because you aren’t a good reader. Do something about that right now! Go buy a book on faster reading and improving learning skills. If you aren’t an avid

reader, emphatically decide, at this very moment, that you are going to change that. If Charlie T. Jones is right (and I can guarantee that he is) then you have to make the choice to become a regular reader. You are also going to have to make the determination that you are going to find a mentor who can coach you in what need and want in your life.

If you can't find the mentor, then set up an account with the great Jim Rohn's organization or Nightingale-Conant, two incredible publishers and suppliers of personal modeling and positive personal development products. Start searching for local seminars and one-day workshops on personal success development and invest your money in yourself, your family, and your future by choosing to change your mindset (and your life). If you have an email address, go to [positiveattitudes.com](http://positiveattitudes.com) right now and start getting my free ezine. I guarantee it will change your life.

Your thoughts and actions must change if your experience of life is going to change. Get moving and make the decision that you are going to do something about your life's experience—NOW!



## **Chapter 3**

### **Do you have a Complex?**

Associated images and frozen memories of traumatic moments...are buried deep in the subconscious.

***C.G.Jung***

Have you ever felt like you have “some kind of complex?” Maybe your sensitivity level is higher regarding certain issues. You hear people bring up issues which disturb your inner peace and you are forced to confront them if only in your own mind. Possibly you have buttons that certain people know how to push and set you into a downward emotional, psychological, and/or spiritual spiral.

#### **Don't Push My Buttons**

Ralph, a friend of mine, told me once about a lady that he was good friends with and even dated at one time. They got along marvelously well except on particular occasions. She would say or do something that more or less “set him off” and made him angry. He often said to me, “She really knows how to push my buttons.”

She would begin to talk about men who were a bit controlling over their spouses or significant other. Much of the time, she would mildly mention something that remotely resembled a criticism about men acting this way.

Ralph said, “It was like she would have to ruin my day by starting all that. I thought that she did it on purpose and sadistically enjoyed getting me ticked off.”

Have you ever injured your body in a certain place only too bump into that very place over and over again, re-injuring yourself and making it even worse? From our experiences and through the history of our lives, we have emotional places which have never really healed completely. We sometimes describe them as “sore spots.” We hear someone on television say something that reminds us of our “sore spot” and it changes our mood, maybe causing us to feel depressed or simply irritated.

The renowned psychiatrist and a founder of analytical psychology, Carl Jung, described these “sore spots” as “complexes.” In fact, Jung’s writings are where we get this word when describing someone who, for instance, has an “inferiority complex.” These are weaknesses in our internal world that have likely been put there by trauma that we’ve experienced on some level.

Suzanne had been in several relationships and could never seem to stay in one longer than a few months. She was a successful attorney, always drove a new European luxury sedan, lived in a million dollar plus home, ate in the finest restaurants, and took exotic vacations. She showed up one day for counseling and right away, let me know exactly “what she thought of men.” Men, in Suzanne’s opinion, were unreliable, untrustworthy, and womanizing users. The way she described it to me was, “Every man I’ve ever known or have been with, is the same.”

Suzanne saw men through her own filter and enlarged that filter through her ongoing experiences with men. As I’ve said often, “When things are not right in your life and the same event is repeated over and over again, at some point, if you are going to get free of the reoccurrence of that undesirable experience, you must take responsibility. You must recognize that the common denominator in these events is YOU.”

Now, if I just hit a sore spot with you, my friend and beloved reader, please, stay with me. Prepare yourself to get free of having to continue repeating negative events, such as the one I’ve just described. I’m here to help, not to hurt. You can rid yourself of these sore spots permanently.

Come on. Say out loud, “Michael Murphy is my friend and wants to help me get better in my life.” Now, don’t you feel better?



(Seriously, I really do want to help you; that is why I've written this book.)

## **You Are Not Alone**

I heard a guy repeat a Biblical quotation once with a little bit of a twist. He said, "I know that the truth will set me free, but before freedom arrives, it always seems to first make me miserable." This is the case when facing things that push your buttons or what Jung described as complexes.

First, let's ask the question, "Does everyone on the planet have these same (or similar) events happening in their lives? Do others have crap that happens to them which causes them the same pain that 'I' feel and which it seems they can never get free from?" The answer, of course, is "Yes, they do." Maybe not with the exact same intensity or through the same kind of situations. But our hurts, mistakes, and wrong decisions, are common human experiences.

Yes, trauma is common among all of humankind; however, you may have something specific to you that seems to haunt you over and over again. So let's recognize that not everyone experiences the same obstacles that you may in exactly the same way as you. Nonetheless, the common ground we experience is much the same.

Second, let's face the reality that whatever it is that you deal with over and over again, is something that brings you enough pain that you want to get rid of it and move on with your life. Friend, let me say something here. Chronic pain is miserable to live with. Whether it is physical, mental or emotional, pain is not fun. You need to take the attitude that you are going to do whatever it takes to get rid of it.

Take a moment, right now, and let yourself focus on your desire to get rid of your emotional pain. Let your inner will open up to at least getting better in whatever area you feel that certain "sore spot."

Imagine your life without it. How would it feel to be able to not experience the pain that you've felt in the past? Now, start to imagine how it would feel to be free from it, on a deeper level. Let it soak in and even marinate your emotions. How would you view things differently if you were free from those negative emotions?

I'm not saying that you are going to be completely free the very first time you do what I've just led you in doing. I am saying that as you continue to give yourself some relief and quit torturing yourself with things that have happened in the past, you will move closer and closer to being free of the intense hurt that you've felt.

Beth had an extremely traumatic upbringing. Her father left when she was eight months old. He never came back or even acknowledged that he had a daughter until Beth reunited with him after becoming an adult.

Beth, her mother, two older sisters, and one older brother struggled for almost two decades. They lived on food stamps. Sometimes they were forced to sleep in their car and in homeless shelters. Her mother was determined to survive and she succeeded.

Beth eventually went to college and ultimately earned a Masters degree in sociology. Beth longed to have a happy relationship with a man but could never get past what her father had done to her family.

When Beth decided to seek help and attempted to get past what had happened earlier in her life, she came to see me. Her epiphany came two years after her father had died. Her "Ah-ha!" moment came when she faced the reality that she had let a live human being dictate her early trauma in life. Now she was allowing someone who was dead to continue to adversely affect her own happiness.

On that wonderful day, Beth rose up out of her chair and said, "My God, I'm letting a DEAD MAN control my happiness. How weird is that?!" For the next two weeks, Beth would call me and say, "Michael, do you realize that I have allowed a DEAD MAN to control my moods, how I feel about myself, how I feel about others, and almost completely control my happiness?"

She learned to let it go and make the change that was within her power to make, when she realized the true nature of what she was doing. That day, Beth's life started turning around. She learned to allow her emotional scars to be completely healed and got started on a new life.

I know. You want to know the rest of the story of Beth. She did meet the man of her dreams and from the last contact I had with

her, she is living a successful, highly productive, and very happy life with her husband and two children of her own.

Third, as I mentioned earlier, get brutally honest with yourself. Recognize that the problem is not someone else's problem. It is your problem and only you can take the steps necessary to fix it. You can fix it. In fact, only you can fix it.

Martin L. (Lenny) Skutnik III was a 28-year-old office worker for a federal agency who acted heroically following the crash of Air Florida Flight 90 on January 13, 1982. Seventy-eight people lost their lives in the disaster, but five survived due to heroic actions such as those of Lenny Skutnik. He was commended by U.S. President Ronald Reagan during his State of the Union speech later that month.

Skutnik, apparently a humble man, was quoted as saying, "I couldn't just stand there and do nothing to help. Someone had to do something. No one else was doing anything or couldn't. I could. I did. What else could I do?"

See yourself standing there. Maybe you're watching your life spiral down or going nowhere. All the time you are longing to be, do, and have all that you've envisioned. You know that the dream is deep inside and if you can only find the key, you can achieve the success you've always desired. You have to do something or nothing is going to change. No one else is going to walk into your life and do what only you can do for yourself.

Now, I want you to imagine that there are concepts in your mind that have been introduced into your life and which you have built upon through repetition of thought. Think about when you learned the alphabet. You cleared out a place in your mind and filled it with your learning of the alphabet. You built a structure in your mind that you can go back and retrieve by the mere mention of it here and now. If you learned the alphabet back in preschool, you put it in the exact same place that you go back and retrieve it from as an adult.

Just as you learned the alphabet and are able to retrieve it from the very location in your brain where you put it many years ago, likewise, you have places in your brain where trauma and negative events occurred and were stored.

In the foregoing example, I learned later that Suzanne, the attorney with the poor opinion of men, had experienced the trauma of her father walking out on her family when she was just eleven years old. She never saw him again.

Through that event, which she had no control over as a child, together with the constant reinforcement of her mother telling her how bad men were and regularly reminding the family of ‘what her father did’, Suzanne had built a complex in her brain that “men are not to be trusted.”

You might think that Suzanne should be smart enough to know why she repeated the negative experiences with men throughout her adult life when she considered what her father did. You might think it is obvious that this is why she couldn’t get along with men and all of her relationships ended up in disaster.

Most people, no matter what their intelligence level or status in life, do not recognize such things until someone else points them out. We may be academically intelligent but not necessarily emotionally or relationally intelligent.

Those words and remembrances were located in a particular place in her mind. She had to go back and clean out that place and replace it with something that was going to move her forward in her life.

## **How you ended up with a Complex**

Complexes are built and fed by the conscious mind taking the initiative to relive and replay certain events and dialogues. When something negative happens in your life, it doesn’t happen just once. If you replay the event over and over again, your negative experience happens several times. Your subconscious mind doesn’t know the difference if the negative event is communicated to it through your eyes or through the memory of the pictures, dialogues, and emotional impressions that are attached to it. Even a certain “feeling” attached to a negative event can come over a person and cause them to feel depressed and yet be unable to understand why they are feeling that way.

If negative events happened once and then it was over with, we wouldn’t build the complexes in our minds which cause us so much pain. Research scientists have shown that a network is built

up in our brains, which is comprised of individual elements of the details of negative events. They call these “neural nets” (networks).

As soon as a negative event is experienced, the brain makes room or finds a place to store that event. As the event is relived over and over again through memory recall, more room is needed and the neural net becomes bigger and stronger. It is fed by certain brain chemicals that strengthen and enlarge it. These networks are what Jung called “complexes.”

## **The “Witness Syndrome”**

The phenomenon which has become known as the “witness syndrome” also proves that these memories are often distorted by numerous replays of the event. When an accident or traumatic event is witnessed by several different people, invariably, they will remember the event differently. This happens as quickly as the memory itself is stored in the brain. The more the event is replayed by the brain, the more distortion it creates in the memory of the actual events which happened.

Not only do we replay and thus relive these events over and over, we also distort the memory and the brain begins to see and believe and accept the distortions as reality. So now we have neural nets (complexes) which are not true representations of reality but are comprised of distortions of reality.

Stop for a moment and let me give you a very strong piece of advice:

**Not only is it extremely detrimental to your future state of mind to replay the events immediately after the event happened, but, more so, when these events are distorted and mixed with emotions, which are also stored in the neural nets, it becomes even more devastating and damaging to your state of mind.**

So, not only is the repetitive replaying of events detrimental to your future state of mind, but also the interpretation of the events can have an equally devastating effect. The most powerful way to interpret traumatic events that I’ve ever heard of or experienced is to see every event as something that will ultimately take you to your desired goal.

Think about a time in your life when something seemingly devastating occurred. Think of how you may have felt like you wouldn't get through the event at the time. How many such events have taken place in our lives that we can look back upon and see that it really wasn't that big of a deal?

I don't agree with the old adage, "Time heals all wounds." It isn't time that heals, but it is perspective that brings healing and better ability to deal with those wounds. The perspective that you choose can strongly affect the number of times you replay a negative event and the subsequent long term effect it can have on you.

## **Your Goal to Get Better**

Your goals are to:

- (1) Stop reliving traumatic, limiting events, memories, and emotions that do not propel you towards a more fulfilling, satisfying, and successful life
- (2) Recognize the distortion which takes place in your memory of the event and how damaging that is to your life and
- (3) Realize the truth in the perspective that "what doesn't kill you, can and will make you stronger."

Imagine that there are literal structures constructed in your brain which represent negative or traumatic experiences in your life. These psychological strongholds taunt you and cause you to be depressed or experience some level of pain.

They also encourage you to create ongoing repetitions of these same events. The old proverb that says, "As you think, so you become and so you are," is validated by the actions that we repeat due to the presence of these neural net strongholds that have been erected in our brains.

## **The Power of a Decision—Now**

I want you to recognize a very powerful ability that you possess right now. One which will allow you to begin to take the wrecking ball of your mind and tear down these strongholds that are holding you back from success. Success that you deserve in every area of your life.

The power that you possess, at this very moment, is the awesome power of decision. As you make the decision to first acknowledge the presence of these strongholds in your brain and second, disassemble their structure. Your subconscious mind immediately begins to stop feeding this complex and begins the process of tearing it down.

The key is your incredible power to acknowledge and decide that this thing is coming apart and it is up to you to begin the process. After you begin to consciously tear down this complex, your subconscious goes into action to fulfill what your conscious mind demands.

## **Two things which determine what life gives you**

As I've shared with you already in this book, there are two things which determine your success or failure in every endeavor of your life. These two things are (1) thought and (2) action. Begin to shift your thought through your internal dialogues. Begin to take back your power over your own mind and do not allow these complexes to continue to sabotage your success and happiness.

Begin to consciously take the action of thinking positive thoughts about what you want in your life. Make your case **against** the force of these complexes to continue to haunt and sabotage your life. Change your internal dialogues and start the process **towards** personal transformation. As you begin this process, you will immediately begin to feel their power over your life start to diminish.

## **Adopt and Adapt New Ways of Thinking**

I love to think of it this way. "I will adopt and adapt new thinking patterns that are working for my good and for my happiness and success." Adopting and adapting.

Make a choice and a decision now, and then put it into action. Like anything else in your life, the more you feed yourself positive, constructive, loving and progressive thoughts and information, the more of the desirable emotions of love, happiness, and accomplishment you will feel. The complex got there the same way that you are going to destroy it. Through thoughts and internal dialogue, you will dismantle these demons of your mind and life.





## **Chapter 4**

# **Striving and Thriving**

The mind is its own place, and in itself  
can make a heaven of hell or a hell of heaven.

***John Milton***

Have you ever stopped and listened to not only what a person is saying, but how they are saying it? Do you know anyone with that perpetual “whine” in their voice? Have you ever known friends who not only always find themselves in a drama, but whose lives have become a drama? Always struggling. Never ever “getting there.” In fact, never getting “anywhere.”

I have counseled and coached hundreds of people who stumble from one adverse situation to another while never understanding why. Reality will eventually bring the message of personal accountability if their inner conditions are ready to accept the responsibility for the outcome of their lives.

You have to hurt enough to want to acknowledge your responsibility in your own happiness. Another way is to “learn enough” to realize that the one common denominator of our lives has a line drawn mid-space with the letters “ME” just below it.

There is no magical person who is going to come along in your life and make you successful. The lotteries of life are won by a very few people. When you realize that you are the common denominator to all of the outcomes of your life, then and only then will you be ready to start on the road to maximum success. Accepting responsibility for your life puts you back in control. With control comes confidence and with confidence comes power.

## **The Life of Strife**

You were not born to live a life of struggle and strife. You were not born to constantly fight against others, against the government, against life, against lack of money, against lack of opportunity, against fate or against lack of happiness and fulfillment.

## **Prophetic Voices of the Past**

A lady came to me one day explaining to me how she was going to end up “on the street, with nothing except the clothes on her back.” She gained this false prophetic insight from her mother who had been deceased for over two decades. She told me how the IRS was about to take everything that she had and she would eventually go to jail along with her husband. She owed them around \$3,000 in back taxes.

She told me how she was stealing from her employer and knew that some day soon they would close in on her and catch her. For over an hour, she laid out her entire future of how her life was going to end up in disaster.

After she finished talking, I began to build the case for her future success. I explained how all that she had just said was “not” going to happen to her. She could work a mutually agreeable deal with the IRS and her other debtors. As I began to give her the reality of her tax situation (the IRS was not going to put her in jail for not being able to pay her taxes) she grew angry. She was upset with me for not agreeing with the fatalistic predictive case she had built against her future.

I stopped in the middle of what I was saying and asked her, “Can you see what is happening here? I am giving you every reason why you are going to succeed and you are arguing with me about your own future!”

Most of the time, I find that people who possess such a perspective of their lives have built a “rock solid” case for their own demise and ultimate failure. They can contend with incredibly convincing arguments that what they fear most will be their fate.

As later revealed in our session, the truth was that she had survived years of uninvited adversity and that she would likely survive this, too.

People like this, insist that thinking and talking positively will not change their plight. Yet, they also insist on thinking and talking negatively about their situation. I’ve often wondered why, if thinking and talking positively has no effect, why do they insist on thinking and talking negatively. In most cases, they will be hostile with your suggestions of taking a positive attitude.

I have found that intuitively, they know that their thinking and spoken words are very powerful in determining the course of their lives.

## **Get Busy Living or Get Busy Dying**

In the sixties and seventies, there was a program on television starring comedian Red Foxx as Fred Sanford and Demond Wilson as Fred’s son, Lamont. Every time Lamont or the other cast of characters would do something that upset Fred’s life, Fred would grab his heart and look towards the sky and cry out to his deceased wife that, “This is the big one; I’m coming to see you Elizabeth!” Isn’t this the mode that a lot of people live in? Fear controls their lives. Negative expectations pervade their consciousness.

I love the old Clint Eastwood westerns. I guess my favorite was, “The Outlaw Josey Wales.” There is one scene when Josey (Clint Eastwood) is standing in a saloon when a bounty hunter, looking for Josey Wales, walks in and asks for him. Eastwood is standing in the shadows and simply responds, “Now, that’ll be me.”

The bounty hunter decides not to go for his gun, as he knows that Josey Wales will likely outdraw him. He walks back out of the saloon but his pride won’t allow him to leave it alone. Back into the saloon he walks and Josey Wales asks him why he became a bounty hunter. The bounty hunter responds, “It’s a living.” Eastwood counters with, “Dying ain’t much of a living boy.” Then he cuts him down with three pulls of the trigger.

I want to say to you, “Just surviving ain’t much of a life.” I know that there are things, sometimes horrendous things, that you may experience in your life over which you have no control. I also know that you have innate power in you to reach down and find that place that screams out that you were meant for more than just surviving. You are meant to “thrive.”

## **Get on with It**

I’m going to announce along with the pop band, Bon Jovi as they sing in their hit song: ‘It’s my life, it’s now or never, I ain’t gonna live forever’. You may have faith that life goes on after death, but you know that no one has tricked death forever. You’ve got to get busy living until that day comes.

## **What I know about You**

There are two things that I know about your future that you can’t change. First, you are going to die someday. Secondly, you are going to live until that day. The moment when you stop living in your physical body is not in your absolute control. How you live is. Fate plays no place in your life. I heard a lady say once, “Living and dying aren’t part of the options we are offered, but the choice to survive or thrive is.” How you are going to live is totally up to you. Why just survive when you can thrive?

I travel to Russia often. It is a great attitude adjustment for me. There are towns and cities in Russia which have existed for over 800 years. In all of Russia’s history, they served under some variation of totalitarian government until 1990. For generations they have known nothing other than some kind of dictator controlling their daily lives.

As I write this, they are attempting to establish democracy and capitalism. My recent trips have revealed to me that the free market system isn’t working like they imagined it would. I don’t know what their future holds. I have watched the price of certain articles of clothing more than double in the past four years that I’ve visited there. Hundreds of years of servitude to a dictator have been etched upon their hearts and their minds.

I hear people in America who complain about lack of opportunity, no money, and no hope of a better life. We have been lulled to

sleep by laziness and wrong thinking. The dirge of complacency, lack, and limitations has been sung for so long that millions of people here believe that their lives are beyond hope.

## **Get Up and Live**

If you rise up from where you are right now and choose that you are going to thrive in your life, major personal advancements can be guaranteed. How? Opportunity lies everywhere before you.

When my oldest daughter, Courtney, was a preschooler, she had a unique perspective on finding things that were lost. Each time we would go looking for a toy or anything that was missing, she would always say, “Dad, it’s got to be somewhere.” With my choice of a positive attitude, I would agree with her and keep looking until we found it. I couldn’t bring myself to give up when she imagined the thing that she was looking for does exist somewhere.

The knowledge that you need, to get from where you are to where you want to be, also exists somewhere. The great thing is, “You can find it.” If it is hiding from you, get up and get going. Set your heart and mind on a path that says, “I will seek until I find.” Decide that you are going to find it “no matter what.” A determined man or woman who is bent on success will always find it.

The world’s shortest success seminar is simple.

1. Get a target or a goal.
2. Take massive action towards it.
3. Learn. Learn what doesn’t work. Learn what does work. You won’t learn anything until you get going. Slap yourself right now. (I’m serious!) Break out of the rut you have been struggling to get free from.

Decide right now that you are going to thrive from now on.

## **Living and Dying are Choices**

The ancient Hebrews had to make a choice one day. Their leader presented them with a dual option. “Choose life or choose death.” No third option was offered.

**You can choose to die now and be buried later (the choice of countless tens of thousands) or you can choose to live now and die later.**

Most tombstones should read, “Born 1965, Died 1990, Buried 2024.”

Dead bodies begin to decay from the moment of death. They also began to stink up everything. No wonder so many describe their life experience as one that “stinks.” They are in a living death.

Will you have setbacks, obstacles, and detours? That is guaranteed. So what? Keep your feet moving forward. Your feet were created to walk forward. Do you walk faster and more assured when you are walking backward or when you are walking forward? Your eyes were put near the top of your head so you could see farther in front of you. Your knees bend forward, not backward. Your body atrophies if it isn’t used.

I love Zig Ziglar’s statement, “You were designed for accomplishment, engineered for success, and endowed with the seeds of greatness.” So do the most powerful thing that you can do right now. **MAKE A CHOICE. MAKE A DECISION. TAKE SOME ACTION.** Don’t argue over your own success. Get going on it now.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Oh, My Word!**

The words “I am...” are potent words; be careful what you hitch them to. The thing you're claiming has a way of reaching back and claiming you.

***A.L. Kitzelman***

I've given two chapters to talk about words and the power they have over your life. The age-old proverb says that, “life and death are in the power of the tongue.” Words are power. Power for healing. Power for inflicting great pain. Power for dividing. Power for uniting. Power for war. Power for love. Power for hate.

Words are not just spoken. They are thoughts of both the heart and the subconscious mind revealed audibly for all to hear. You constantly have a dialog going on inside of your head. You make expressions like, “You know, one part of me wants to do such and such and another part of me wants to do something else.” I've said on numerous occasions that people who do not visualize or dialog with themselves must be dead or at least brain dead. It is how we are designed and constructed. We constantly are in communication with ourselves. It is how thought and thinking occurs.

Spoken words have caused wars, divided countries, destroyed people, broken up families, separated friends, and split marriages. Words are rehearsed before they are spoken. Your thoughts become your words. Your words determine the responses, reactions, and results that you get from life.

## **What You Say To Yourself**

The primary focus of this book is obviously, attitude. Attitude is determined by internal dialogs. Internal dialogs are the voices that we use when we have conversations with ourselves. We think, analyze, strategize and carry on these internal conversations in words all of the time.

It was an odd experience for me when I was with friends from Europe to realize that they think and carry on internal dialogs with the same ideas and thoughts that we have. The only difference is, they do it in Russian, Italian, French, Latvian, German, Polish, etc. Concepts and ideas are the same even when the internal language is different.

No matter what culture or what language, people conceptualize and think in the same patterns that we as westerners do with few exceptions. The most influential dialogs have to do with who we are, what we can achieve, how well we can think, and what we feel that we truly deserve in life.

I've met people and have had friends who were well known around the world and who have achieved success in various fields and endeavors. These same people, likewise, often possess internal dialogs regarding their "self concept" that are tragically and desperately distorted. Just as those who haven't achieved pinnacles of success, they too have felt and seen themselves as failures due to a few bad choices that they have made.

The laws of "thinking and becoming" are common among all people—rich or poor, intelligent or ignorant, healthy and unhealthy. These laws are also independent of where you live.

The way that a bad choice is perpetuated is through internal dialogs. Think about what you think about. Think about how you think. You think in words and word structures. The words and words structures (phrases and complete and incomplete sentences) evoke and shape emotions in you.

If the words and word structures evoke negative emotions, we feel sad, mad, abandoned, unworthy, guilty, shameful, hopeless, and depressed. If the words and word structures evoke positive



emotions then we feel loved, accepted, blessed, happy, worthy, joyful, and hopeful.

## **Creating Positive Emotions**

As we choose our words and word structures, we use our internal discipline required to evoke positive emotions. The equation is simple. Positive words and word structures evoke positive emotions which evoke positive actions which create positive results. Is it really that simple? Is that all there is to it?

In most cases, the answers to these questions are “yes.” There are exceptions. The exceptions involve people whose brain connectors do not transmit the right chemicals in the proportion needed to fully benefit from positive words and thoughts.

The good news is that there is help for people like this. Their diagnosis, made by a medical doctor, may determine that they need chemical assistance to strengthen and cause the brain connectors to work in the way that they should under normal healthy conditions.

Bi-polar, chronic and clinical depression, paranoia and the like can be successfully treated in most cases. Medically, through the use of “synthetic” drugs, the transmitters of the brain can be strengthened and the bridges between these connectors realigned so that people with such conditions can experience the assistance needed to function and think more normally.

My father struggled psychologically and mentally most of his life. Early on in his twenties, he had what was then called, a “nervous breakdown.” Today, these kinds of episodes would be known as “panic attacks.” Heart palpitations would ensue at unexpected times and he would feel as if he were having a heart attack. I’ve had this experience once when I was younger and going through a major life crisis.

My dad was later diagnosed as being bi-polar. The synapses of his brain (the brain connectors) were not delivering a consistent supply of chemicals, and communication between the various parts of his brain was faulty. This condition had a serious effect on his moods and emotions. Thus he would experience very low depression and at other times, very high euphoria. There was no consistency to his emotional states.

Medical science has now come to the place of being able to substantially help someone like my father. In the time period that he experienced this, medical science had yet to fully understand the problem and properly treat the condition.

Today, medications such as Prozac and Zoloft do such an incredible job of this balancing act of the brain that many who are on them get to such a level of balance that they quit taking them. They don't feel (literally "feel") that they need these drugs anymore.

Though I am not trained nor qualified to diagnose medical conditions or prescribe medications, I do know that treatment is available. There are also alternative natural remedies for such problems. Dr. Harold Bloomfield, best-selling author and world renowned psychiatrist, has written much and advocated the use of what is commonly known as St. John's Wort or Hypericum. This natural herb will likewise deliver the needed assistance to the brain in order for it to function in a more consistent and productive way.

## **Our Words Create and Release Brain Chemistry**

Our internal dialogs—words and word structures— affect the brain in much the same way. They release chemicals which in turn set the environment for whatever thoughts or focus we experience. If we focus on negative outcomes, the chemicals feed and fuel more of these same types of thoughts and emotions. If we focus on positive outcomes and results, these chemicals create a positive state of consciousness resulting in a conscious mental environment of good, healthy, and wholesome feelings.

Let me state it again:

**Words create thoughts. Thoughts create emotions. Emotions create actions. Actions determine results.**

How do you change the results that you are getting in your life? You begin with your thoughts. Once you start choosing the right words for your internal dialogs, then you can and will change how you feel and ultimately you will experience better results.

Words are powerful. They create opportunity. They enable you to act upon opportunity. They create confidence. They create courage. They create tenacity. They create positive attitudes. They

make your life experience negative or they make your life experience positive.

## **The Process of Developing a Powerful Attitude**

The starting point of getting your internal dialogs in the place and shape that you truly want them is to acknowledge and become aware of what you are thinking. Oftentimes, the words eventually become obscured and we only feel the emotions. These emotions, however, can be reversed with positive words. The negative feelings got there in the first place with words. The way that you are going to turn them around is with your words.

Choose empowering words. It can be a maze that is difficult to break out of, when you look at the world in purely black and white terms. I love what one of my mentors from afar says. Motivational, inspirational speaker and writer, Jerry Clark says,

**“It isn’t about me attempting to judge something right or wrong; it is about whether it is empowering or not empowering.”**

It is somewhat astonishing when you train your mind to not see the world in terms of what is wrong and right about things.

I know of many people who advocate the “right” and “wrongness” of the world, events, companies, media, etc. If you believe the account of Genesis, this type of thinking came as a fruit of man’s disobedience to God. A lot of people believe that “right and wrong and the ability to choose right and avoid wrong” is what their religious and spiritual lives are all about. The truth is, according to the Old Testament, this temptation to know all about “right and wrong” is what messed man up in the very beginning.

Begin to look at your thoughts and thought patterns and decide if they are propelling you towards a greater experience of emotion and of life or whether they are creating a life-depleting experience. Are you more empowered by focusing on certain things or less empowered?

Choose words of positive empowering attitudes. Choose words like “love,” “gratitude,” “peace,” and “wholeness.” I have people who approach me in their greeting and say, “How are you, Michael?” One of my favorite responses is “I’m better than I’ve ever been.” As I mentioned earlier in this book, I picked up that

little phrase in a restaurant in Las Vegas from a bus boy (who will eventually be the boss by possessing that kind of attitude). When I asked him how he was doing, he turned and looked me straight in the eye and used this expression. I've been using it ever since.

## **You are better than you've ever been**

The truth is, you **are** better than you've ever been. First of all, you woke up this morning. Your body at least, is still alive. That is a huge start. The fact that you can receive and expel oxygen is a major feat. If you are in reasonably good health, then you are doing better than several million on this planet.

Consider 'that' with whatever you've been through and experienced in this life. Look at you. You are still at it. As the song says, "I'm still standing, better than I ever have." I possess a bit of belligerence in me that says, "I've made it through. They (whoever "they" are in your life) didn't win. I'm still at it."

Start talking to yourself about the fact that you have survived. You are still in the game. Talk to yourself and let yourself know that you have overcome incredible odds. You are a survivor. You are a "thriver" in your life.

Friend, it isn't just those who are in mental hospitals or who are psychologically impaired who talk to themselves. We all talk to ourselves. We all are engaged in internal dialog all of the time (it is called "thinking"). What conversations you have, will be chosen by you. You don't have to live the rest of your life getting the same pitiful, negative results that you've experienced in your past.

The eminent psychiatrist John H. Reitmann once said:

**"It takes an average person almost twice as long to understand a sentence that uses a negative approach than it does to understand a positive sentence."**

Negative language is such a destructive virus, starting with the user and spreading to listeners. Regrettably we all too often use negative words and phrases without any consideration to their potential impact.

Focus instead on **positive language**. Here are the steps...

- Actively listen to the words, tone, and intonation you use when you speak.
- Capture anything negative, “delete” it, and replace it with a more positive word, tone, or intonation; keep practicing this process until it reaches the point where the negativity is filtered out before it is expressed.
- Set a target to replace two negatives per day.
- Ask for support to stay positive from your partner/colleagues.
- Keep a record in a notebook or journal of all language changes made.

Positive language is like a tonic, starting with the user and spreading to listeners.

Let these words and observations enlighten and inspire you.

DID is a word of achievement  
WON'T is a word of retreat  
MIGHT is a word of bereavement  
CAN'T is a word of defeat  
OUGHT is a word of duty  
TRY is a word each hour  
WILL is a word of beauty  
CAN is a word of power  
(Anonymous)

Become aware of what you are thinking. Think about what you think about. Become aware of what words you are using. Start choosing words that will eventually turn your negative experiences into positive experiences. Start choosing internal dialogs that create “powertudes” or “powerful attitudes” for a more positive, successful, and fulfilling life.



## **Chapter 6**

# **Feel The Power Of Letting Go**

People have a hard time letting go of their suffering. Out of a fear of the unknown, they prefer suffering that is familiar.

***Thich Nhat Hanh***

Some people think it is holding on that makes one strong.  
Sometimes it is letting go.

***Sylvia Robinson***

Success is a natural process for all living things on this planet. Everything that is alive, here, is still growing. Nothing ever stops growing. Scientists confirm that even the universe continues to grow. The massive redwoods of Northern California were much larger than I ever imagined when I saw them on my trip there. Some of them have been there for hundreds of years and yet, they continue to grow.

From the second that you were conceived, you started growing. Though our bodies stop growing in size, they do continue to reproduce cells. They never stop. The cells in your body are reproducing and replacing themselves even as you read this.

A friend of mine said to me once, “Change isn’t optional; growth is.” You must accept that the only thing that doesn’t change is “change.” You can always count on it. Growth necessitates change.

There are two ways which change can occur in your life. One is through outside forces acting upon you to change you. Two is, your internal choice to grow and change for the better. The second way is the natural way for all living things. However, it is not the way that most ‘people’ experience change.

Tanya came into my office one day with complete disarray in her mind. In nearly every area of her life something was definitely missing. She began describing to me all the many things that her children “wouldn’t do,” what her husband “wouldn’t do,” what her mother and sister “wouldn’t do,” what her boss “wouldn’t do” and how she resented all of them for not living up to what she “knew” was “right.” The saddest part was that she had been trying with every bit of energy she could muster within her to get them all to do the “right thing” for the past 30 years of her life.

I often wonder how many times we need to hit our fingers with a hammer, slam our foot in the car door, beat our heads against a wall in order to learn the lesson I like to call, “THIS AIN’T WORKING.” Insanity has been defined as doing the same thing over and over and over again and expecting different results.

## **Dallas isn’t north of Kansas City**

If you live in Kansas City and decide to drive to Dallas and you head north, you soon find out that Dallas isn’t north of Kansas City. If you made regular trips from Kansas City to Dallas and continued to repeat this pattern of driving north, over and over again, you would be expected by friends and relatives to go see someone who could help you with the mental deficiency in your thinking. Dallas is not north of Kansas City unless you want to drive around the planet (across Canada, over the Arctic... I think you get the picture).

Life is naturally teaching you lessons. All you have to do is be awake enough to see what is directly in front of you. How many times in your life have you had one of those, “Ah-ha!” moments to



realize that what you were doing was making a difference for you? How many times have you had a moment where you were awakened to the fact that something that you had been doing for a long, long time was futile and unproductive? In fact, you suddenly realized that what you had been doing hadn't worked and never was going to work.

Holding grudges, reliving past hurts and hating other people doesn't work to get you what you want in your life. It doesn't work now, never has worked in the past, and will not work for you in the future. It is like traveling north out of Kansas City and hoping to get to Dallas. It's a long, long trip. It's a very tough trip. You might eventually get there, but it's not likely.

### **Does it really matter?**

Richard Carlson did the whole world a favor by titling his great book, "Don't Sweat The Small Stuff: It's all small stuff." Just the title alone teaches the lesson for one who is awake and listening. When you live your life in constant discontent and with constant conflict, you are engraving memories in your mind that set you up for continuous failure. You fail now and in the future.

How many things really matter? Not many. There are some that do really matter but they fall within about 10% or less of the things that people frustrate their lives over.

There is a powerful secret to letting go. Let me share some things with you that you need to let go of so that you can achieve the attitude that will get you more of what you want in your life and less of what you don't want.

### **Let go of the past**

What is "passed" is gone now; that is why they call it "the past." I have met friends and clients who carry on arguments in their heads with people they haven't talked to in years and even people who are deceased. When I realize that someone is in this mode of thinking, I try to show them how absurd it is to continue to hear and heed the voices of people who are no longer a part of their lives or who are actually dead.

Some people are still listening to the voice of a domineering or verbally abusive parent or authority figure who plays no active

role in the person's present experience. They are merely a voice that they continue to hear in their head. I made a choice that people whose bodies were now in the grave, have no say in my life unless the words they shared were positive, encouraging or in any way uplifting. Dr. Wayne Dyer put it well, "I want to feel good. I don't want to talk about or think anything that doesn't make me feel good."

Another problem that I see people struggling with is wrong decisions they've made in their lives in the past. I had a father come to me once with his head down to tell me that his 17 year old daughter was pregnant and he didn't know what to do about it. He was worried what people would think and how they would view him as a parent. He was brutally beating himself up over the incident.

I told him that the only "thing" he could do about it was to get ready for a baby. It wasn't the most ideal situation but it was real. I told him that most people who find out that someone near them is pregnant start to collect baby clothes, strollers, car seats, pacifiers, diapers, bottles, and the like. They start preparing a nursery in their homes.

We often act in the belief that if we can talk about and feel bad about it long enough, it will make it better. The only real thing to do when a woman is pregnant is to "go get ready for a baby." Start interviewing baby sitters if you think that you will need one. Start visiting day care centers if you think you might need one. Start reading books on how to give this child every opportunity that could be afforded him or her.

This father looked at me and said, "That's all I need to do?" I asked him, "What more do you want to do? First off, stop shaming your daughter. She knows what she has done. Go to her and start preparing her for motherhood." He was concerned about "her punishment." I told him that morning sickness, gained weight and the birth itself would be all the pain she needed to go through. Why inflict more pain on her?

Mistakes, big or small, are all part of the process of life. People who don't make mistakes are in the cemetery. Everyone above ground makes mistakes. None of us like it that way but that is how

life is. The key in making mistakes is, “what have I learned?” Making mistakes is not optional. Learning is.

What other people think really isn’t your concern. Again, as Dr. Dyer says, “What you think of me isn’t any of my business.” Friend, people don’t see you as “you are.” They see you as “they are.” Everyone is dealing with their own quirks, personality flaws, prejudices, opinions, and self-esteem. What “they” think of you has nothing to do with you. It has all to do with them.

I know I’m writing this for someone who is reading right now. Look at what you have to do with your present reality. Stop logging in a bunch of your time with what you think about what others think of you. Deal with your life now.

I love what I heard a few years ago. Someone said, “When I was 20 years old, I was wondering what people thought of me; when I turned 40, I didn’t care what they thought of me; then when I turned 60, I realized they were never thinking of me in the first place.”

## **Let go of the future**

The future can be as much or more of a prison than the past. Goals are wonderful. Knowing where you are going and charting an action path to get there, is a necessary thing to do. But if all you ever do is talk about “someday,” this kind of perspective can disempower you for what you need to be about “to-day.”

People who have a plan and are pursuing their plan won’t live in a fantasy called “some-day.” They will live right here and now. I heard someone say that to live in the past or to live in the future is torture to the soul. To live right now is an awesome gift; that is why they call it the “present.” What can you do right now that will be added to other actions and dreams that will cumulatively add up to where you want to go in your life?

Success is experienced in the lessons learned, the character that is built, in the process of living. Do what you can do now that will affect your future. Take massive action today towards an incredible future. This is indeed what it is to be alive.

## **Let go of past hurts**

Whatever happened adversely to you in the past, needs to stay in the past. Hurts and wrong doings, which you are responsible for doing or others have done to you, need to happen once, not thousands of times. Each time you relive a hurt from the past, your emotional system gets to experience the situation over and over again.

There is what I call “pop remedies” which are being practiced and promoted in a lot of books, seminars, and media programs. They basically say this: “Relive your hurts until you are okay with them or until you arrive at a place of peace with them.” Well, if you’ve been through abuse, physical, verbal, psychological, or spiritual abuse, reliving it only makes a deeper, more permanent impression in your subconscious mind.

It is like getting a cut on your hand, taking a knife and making the cut deeper. More blood. More injury. More pain. Is that what you really want? I don’t think so.

When you relive a past hurt a hundred times, it didn’t happen to you once; it happened to you 101 times. Stop running the scene over and over in your mind. We all have the choice and ability to not hit “rewind” and watch again and again. Don’t do it with past hurts. The remote control is in your hand.

After the first time something adverse happens to you, each time thereafter that you replay it in your mind is optional. Stop replaying it over and over. It builds resentment, encourages depression, and sets you up for future failures. Why torture yourself over and over again?

## **The power of “NOW”**

What you do today will determine your future. What you choose to focus on will determine where you end up. Focus on hurts, wrongs, and the like and you end up in a place you really didn’t plan on going to. Live in la-la land, always dreaming about the future and you won’t take the time to get going now.

***Dream about the future, take action in the present, and reconcile the past.***

What is most pressing in your life right now? Write it down. In fact, journal all the thoughts that are running through your mind.

I have a mind that is active enough that I can come up with a dozen or more new business ideas and potential books to write each day. I work on discovering what my biggest need is right now. I act upon filling that need. I have to make a list of all the other ideas. I make one list of ideas that I'm going to trash. I make another list of ideas that I'm going to put on hold for now.

Live in the present moment. Read Eckhardt Tolle's book, "The Power of Now," if you have problems with trying to live in the present moment. Make it a habit to do what you can do now and what is most important now.

## **Let go of people who have hurt you**

It was the doctrine of Marcus Aurelius that stated the idea that most of the ills of life come to us from our own imaginations. He believed it was not in the power of others to interfere with the calm, temperate life of an individual, and when a fellow being did anything to us that seemed unjust, he was acting in ignorance. Instead of stirring up anger within us it should stir our pity for him.

Aurelius also believed that the man having the most intelligence ought to be very generous to the other who lives in ignorance and without light. Being thankful that he has been blessed in so many ways, he should do all in his power to enlighten his less favored fellow, rather than be angry with him on account of his misfortune. Is he not sufficiently punished in being denied the light? Isn't the mere fact that he sees things, thinks, and acts in ignorance his greatest punishment?

Aurelius said, "I have often wondered, how it is that every man loves himself more than all the rest of men, and yet sets less value on his own opinion of himself than on the opinion of others." (That perspective is worth rereading at least a half dozen times right now).

When you hold hatred and do not forgive someone who has hurt you, they move in with you and set up house in your brain. It would likely be easier for you if they moved into your house rather than your mind. At least in your house, you can go into another room. You might be thinking, "Yes, but they are still in my

house.” You might be able to even “feel” their presence. But you can at least physically avoid them.

But when they are in your mind, you take them everywhere with you. If you choose to hate them, then you are choosing to think about them. You are choosing to take them everywhere with you. When you take a shower, there they are. When you are using the restroom, there they are again. When you lay down in your bed at night, they are there for a sleepover. Get the picture?

When you hold grudges against them in your “mind,” they are living with you there. They go with you everywhere you go. They haunt your every thought. If they hurt you in the past, don't let them live with you in the present through the repetition of your thoughts and emotions.

It is you that can make a heaven of hell or a hell of heaven by what you choose to focus upon. If you don't control your own thoughts, other people, and other situations will. You choose what you will focus on. Don't leave it up to anything or anyone else. It is your mind. Take responsibility for it. Play the game of life on your own terms, not someone else's.

When you allow negative situations to make you better, instead of making you bitter, you grow. You become more of who you need to be in order to take you to where you want to go. Let situations make you and not break you. Choose the filter through which you want to see.

I stood up at an event, where I was the keynote speaker, with yellow tinted glasses on. The type that are used at a gun or shooting range. I tried to convince everyone that the world had a yellow tint to it. They argued that it did not. However, the way I saw it, everything had a yellow tint. What was the problem? I needed to remove the filter that I was looking through to see things the way that they really are. It is the same with our thoughts.

## **Let God breathe**

I read a quote once that said, “As you release the worry and control that you feel that you must control inwardly, you allow God to breathe.”

My dad spent most of my childhood attempting to control my behavior while trying to mold my character. As I have always told people, our parents did the very best that they could do, given the information (or the lack thereof) and the experiences they had. He did the best he knew to do but was unbelievably overbearing and controlling.

As it does in most young people, constant restriction incites rebellion. It did with me. I first got involved with drugs and petty crimes at the ripe old age of 12. The more my dad tried to control me, the more I resisted and acted the opposite of what he wanted and demanded.

The greatest gift my father ever gave me was when I had just turned 17. Having been raised to attend church at least three times a week, I felt that religion had been stuffed down my throat (which in fact it had been). He tried to control my every movement with constant negative input while leaving me with a sense of, "I am bad; I might as well live up to it."

At 17, my dad sat me down and had a talk with me. His actions that day turned my life around. He told me that I didn't have to go to church anymore unless I wanted to. He told me that he was finished attempting to control me and "make me do the right thing." I was 6 foot, 2 inches tall by then (my dad was 5'9") and he said to me, "Michael, you are too big; you can drive a car; I can't handle you anymore." That day my dad let me go.

In the moment that he released his control over me, an overwhelming sense of responsibility came over me. I was now responsible for my own life.

Within a few months, my life turned around drastically. I changed my habits. I had smoked regularly since the age of 12. I quit with little struggle. I walked away from the "friends" that I had been around that didn't influence me in a positive and empowering direction. In short, my life changed. Why? I believe it was because my dad made the wisest choice that he had ever made over my life. He let me go.

When you choose to let your inward circumstances go, you free your soul to grow.





## **Chapter 7**

# **Give It, Get It, Love It**

Give away your life; you'll find life given back, but not merely given back—given back with bonus and blessing. Giving, not getting, is the way. Generosity begets generosity.

### ***Jewish Carpenter's Son***

Don asked me one day how to get everything that he wanted in life. That was easy. I learned the truth of this principle a long time ago. In order to achieve the fulfilling life that you hope for, you need to possess an attitude of giving and improving the lives of others.

I learned many things from the great Zig Ziglar. Zig said, “If you want to get everything that you want in your life, then help enough other people get what they want in life.”

The value that you get back from life is commensurate with the value that you put into life. Since man learned to farm the ground, this principle has been in existence. The farmer who wants wheat, plants wheat. The gardener who wants tomatoes, plants tomatoes. The investor, who wants to make money, must first make the investment of money. The law of sowing always precedes the law of reaping. To get something, you must first give something.

Thousands of people over many, many years have attempted to circumvent this principle. It has never worked. It can't be fooled. If you go to the observation deck of a tall building (or climb upon your house for that matter) and drop an object from there, the "law" of gravity is going to take over. This is how giving and receiving works. To get anything at all, you must abide by this law and learn to give if you expect to receive.

I have watched people who finally laid hold of this law and began to work it in their own favor. They are almost always amazed when it works. It works every time.

### **Charley now believes**

Susan and Charley came to me at a social event we were both attending. They had heard me talk about "giving and getting," "sowing and reaping." Charley said that he thought it was the biggest bunch of nonsense he had ever heard. How could he "give" something and expect to get back more of what he gave? He said that he wasn't buying into some lame opinion by an apparently ill informed man such as me.

Soon afterward, Charley had an opportunity of a lifetime facing him, but first he had to make an investment of an amount of money that he didn't have and couldn't get. He knew the rarity of this kind of opportunity.

About the same time, he had an employee who could not pay tuition for their child at the college that he was attending. He went to Charley and told him of his dilemma. Charley's first thought was to give this employee a lecture about thinking he could do something that was beyond his reach and "out of his league."

Then Charley remembered what he had heard me say about sowing and reaping. He had an intuitive feeling that his business opportunity would dissipate if he didn't give the employee the money and see if the principle would prove true.

Well, you know the rest of this story. Charley gave him the money and astonishingly, Charley received payment on a substantial outstanding debt that was owed to him. It was curiously near the exact amount that he needed for his investment.

Many people have asked me “why” this principle works. I tell them that it is like a light switch on the wall of your home. I don't know how the switch works or how the electricity is connected. I do know that when I flip that switch upward, the light comes on. Who cares how it works? It works every time.

Let's discover the fascinating facets of this principle.

First, you put in little and get back much. A farmer sees a seed. What lies within that seed? Potential. Potency. Latent power. The farmer drops the seed into the ground. He covers it. He cares for it. He checks his fields. In due time, the seed begins to send sprigs and eventually stalks rise above the ground.

What started as a small seed below the ground ends up being something very visible “above” the ground. What started as something of very little mass, now turns into something thousands of times its size. You plant little. You get much.

If you want more, you plant more seeds. That's how it works.

## **Call it what you want it to be**

Second, the farmer looks at his newly seeded field and declares that ‘corn’ is planted out there. You may look at his field and say that there is only seed planted in the field. Some may simply see dirt.

Now imagine taking a small seed and laying it alongside of just one ear of corn. If asked to identify these two objects, you would say that one is a seed and the other an ear of corn. What is the difference between the two? Well there is a vast amount of difference. Size. Substance. Ability. Usability.

Nonetheless, when the farmer looks on a field where nothing is visible except dirt, he says, “I have corn in that field.” If you asked him what is planted there, he won't tell you “seeds.” He will say “corn.”

Dr. Stephen Covey, in his great book, “7 Habits of Highly Effective People” reveals that people who achieve the most in life are people who “begin with the end in mind.” The farmer is an expert at this. He sees it and calls it by what he sees. Not with the physical eye but with the inner eye of belief and knowing.

Your seed may be an effort that you have put forth to accomplish something important to you. It may be a commitment that you've made to achieve a specific goal. It might be the money that you invested in order to make a profit. Look to the outcome, the fruit, the harvest, and call it by the name that you know it will become in due time.

## **Setting yourself up to receive**

My father taught me as I was growing up that, "If you have a need, plant a seed." If you want to grow, you need to sow. These aren't trite clichés but powerful truths. When you choose to participate in some kind of benevolence, you set your mind to thinking that you have more than enough. It is a mindset of abundance that you establish in your subconscious mind.

Your subconscious knows how to go and fulfill whatever you set it up to do. Some people call it a spiritual principle. Others will say it is a subconscious or psychological principle. I call it an effective practice. Bottom line is—it works.

Someone asked me one day, which it was, spiritual or psychological. I responded, "It is both." It affects you spiritually, psychologically and emotionally.

## **Philanthropy reaps great returns**

It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself.

***Ralph Waldo Emerson***

I have never found where philanthropy ever caused anyone to go bankrupt. I have heard of people who have become wealthy through the practice of this principle. Small fortunes turn into huge fortunes when this principle is acted upon.

Andrew Carnegie set out his plan, early in life, for becoming abundantly wealthy. He made it his life's goal to spend the first half of his life making money and the last half, giving it away. He did just that.

The public library system in America owes a great deal of thanks to Andrew Carnegie and the Andrew Carnegie Foundation for its existence. I went to the old library building in my hometown in

Texas and noticed that the cornerstone of the building paid tribute to Andrew Carnegie for donating the money for its construction. He repeated this act of giving us public libraries thousands of times across our nation.

When you give to someone who can't repay you, you open a vacuum that can only be filled with the same substance that you gave. It is how we are designed. You give love; you open yourself up for getting love in return. You give hate; you open yourself up for getting hate in return. You give time, you find that your life runs more efficiently and you get more things done with the time that you have and with some left over. You give money, you open yourself up for more money to come and fill the vacuum. This principle may not make perfect sense to your left-brained, rational thinking but neither does gravity. It just works. It works all of the time.

The room that I'm sitting in right now has several items in it. It has books, furniture, lamps, and carpet. Why aren't these items floating around instead of being pulled downward? We all know that it is because of gravity.

What does gravity look like? We don't know. We just know that it "is." Why isn't everything on this planet floating around? You might think this kind of talk is absurd. It is because we know something is happening but we can't see it or touch it. You've never "seen" gravity. But you've seen the results of it and you "know" that it exists.

The same principles apply to the law of sowing and reaping. That's why the farmer says, "I have corn in that field" instead of saying, "I have seed in that field." He can't see any outside force, a mysterious haze, or power acting upon the seed to make it grow. He does know that when he puts corn seed in the ground, he can expect corn stalks to come up at the time of harvest.

## **The reward of giving**

The greatest reward for giving is the inner satisfaction of knowing that you have positively contributed to improving other's lives or situations through an action that you have taken. It opens your heart up for so much more than you've ever imagined.

I've seen people reluctant, with hands shaking, when they decided to give something away. Then I've seen them come alive like never before once they took that step.

## **The eccentric millionaire**

Recently I was sitting near a large window in the main public library in Dallas, Texas. From the fifth floor, I was peering out over Dallas City Hall directly across the street. I saw a large limousine slowly driving in front of this magnificent building. It circled the block a couple times and on its third time around, it stopped. A man got out with a cane and soon I noticed a group of people gathering around him. I was trying to see what was going on but was too far away.

My thoughts were that it was some celebrity visiting Dallas and that he was giving out autographs. I noticed that he was handing each person something. In a few minutes, after a lot of hugging and seemingly a celebration by all those who had gathered there, he got back into the limousine and drove away waving at all the people as he left.

No more than five minutes had passed when an African American man got off of the elevator on the floor that I was on. He had a crisp new \$100 bill in his hand. I could see the excitement on his face. I asked him what was going on down there. He said, "Man, I really don't know. All I know is that white man in the limo was crying and handing everyone a \$100 bill."

There must have been 75-100 people down there. He must have given out \$7,500 to \$10,000. I saw humanity at its best that day. No attitudes about who he was giving it to. Most of the recipients were homeless people. No one had to qualify for this Santa and his Christmas in July.

Who received the most value that day? The people who each collected \$100 or the guy in the limo? I think the answer is obvious.

Start giving to someone or something that cannot give back. Watch what happens with the chemistry of your brain. Watch how your "happiness" and "personal fulfillment" quotient goes up. Notice the change that takes place inside of you.

## **The Process of Giving and Receiving**

There is a path to follow when enacting this principle. Sow the seed or the deed. Believe that it will come back to you. Expect it to work and it will.

There is no crop unless there is a seed. I always encourage people to sow in rich soil. Find a charity, a church, a synagogue or some worthy cause and give to it. If you think that someone is “just out to get my money” then don’t give to them. Find someone or something that you can have confidence in. Find rich soil.

## **Intuition will guide you to the right places**

Another way of finding the right soil to sow in, is to follow your intuition. Your intuition can be trusted much better than you think. Your subconscious, your heart, or your spirit will guide you to the right places to give.

I was with a guy once as we had just exited off the freeway. As we were driving down the freeway, he was telling me in great detail about all of the financial woes that he was experiencing.

At the first traffic light, there stood a man with a sign that indicated that he was homeless and needed assistance. Now a lot of people I know have become expert cynics given this situation. I always stay open.

My friend began to say something derogatory about the man with the sign. I like to counter intense negativity with something powerfully positive (it’s the rebel in me).

I reached into my pocket and pulled out a large roll of money. My friend’s eyes lit up. I asked him if he knew how I had gotten this large roll of money. He said that he didn’t. I reached in and pulled out two large bills and pushed the button for my window to go down. I called the man over and spoke a brief blessing on him and his family and handed him the two bills.

I told my friend that the reason I had a roll of cash in my pocket was that I wasn’t afraid to give it away. Was this homeless man good, rich soil to plant a seed into? I don’t know but I do know that my friend needed to see this principle in action. To me, that made a situation and an opportune moment that I couldn’t pass up.

My intuition told me that it was time to give to someone who I can't get anything back from. I did. My friend has since, started practicing the principle of planting financial seeds.

I know the argument against this type of action. That's why I encourage you to follow your intuition. I believe that there is an ample supply of money. I also believe that an ample supply of money finds me when I am not afraid to give something away.

Highly successful entrepreneurs do many things that others never understand. People who achieve great things do not follow the status quo of accepted behavior and actions of life. I never wanted to be ordinary. I love doing things that defy reason especially when it comes to giving.

## **Watch over your fields**

Next, watch over your fields. The farmer doesn't sow the seed and then go on vacation. He has to watch over what he has planted. Weeds come. Insects come. Droughts come. Birds can eat the seed. He has to watch over his seed if he is to get a crop.

I believe that my giving will bring back huge returns in my life. I believe this first of all because I've lived it and done it (and still do it) over and over again.

When I plant a seed, I watch over that seed with positive words and positive expectation. I want the person or organization that I give to, to thrive and be successful. I never forget that I have planted seed in that field. I watch over my seed by affirmations and positive confessions of personal abundance and wealth.

Weed out negative thinking. Weed out negative comments that you hear in the economic media. Weed out what others think and expect of the economy, their jobs or their businesses. Keep a "prosperity consciousness." I believe that I am always going to be successful. Will there be setbacks? Yes, there will. Let your setbacks become your setups for success. Never ever quit believing.

The third principle is, "wait in expectation." Expect new opportunities to open up. Expect the unexpected in your life. Expect to meet people who can influence you to be more effective and more profitable in your life. Expect to be successful. Plan to



*Michael Murphy*

attract right and profitable situations in your life. Live with expectancy.



## **Chapter 8**

### **Say, Pray, Stay**

For me, words are a form of action, capable of influencing change.

*Ingrid Bengis*

Every great enterprise, every great discovery, every great event, every great invention starts with creative ideas. None of these ideas are carried out unless words are spoken. The ancient proverb says, “Life and death are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it, will eat the fruit thereof.”

Words express love. Words start wars. Words draw people together. Words tear lives apart. Words create empires. Words create poverty. Words create abundance. Words heal. Words wound. Words manifest creativity. Words destroy dreams. Words build civilizations. Words destroy nations. Think about the power of words.

Another great proverb says, “As a man thinks in his heart, so is he.” It follows in kind with “as a man speaks, so he gets in his life.” Similarly, “Ask and receive.” And by contrast, “Don’t ask, don’t receive.”

“Speak up and be counted” was a phrase I always heard as a child. Stay quiet and forever wish you had said something. Words change things.

I think about the power of words. I am moved to tears and inspiration when I hear the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., saying, “I have a dream today.” This man’s words set our country on its heels. The immortal words that he spoke August 18, 1963 on the Mall in Washington, D.C. will forever ring in our ears. His words were powerful and changed institutions, government, economics, people, and indeed, the world.

## **The Power of Seeing and Saying**

Bill Gates had an idea. His idea was to put a personal computer on every desk of every business in America. He didn’t create or sell computers. In fact, as of this writing, Microsoft has never been directly involved in the selling of computers. Gates owned the software operating system that was essential to the running of the computers.

He had no company. He had no major funding. He didn’t even finish college. But he had an idea and a goal. I’ve asked many people the following question and have received some rather curious looks. “If Bill Gates had never talked about this idea, would he have ever accomplished his goal?” The answer is obvious.

Bill Gates had a concept that did not exist in reality but did exist in his own mind. He “saw” something that did not exist in the material world. Though I am confident he knew that it would have a major impact on our society, I don’t think there is any way he knew the extent that impact would have on the world. Bill Gates “talked about things that didn’t exist.”

How many times do you think that Bill Gates told his story and vision for what the future could be? Hundreds? At least. His ideas and words created something larger than the world had ever seen. His ideas and words have truly changed the world.

## **Words Release Power**

Ideas have power but not until they are released into the world through words. By the words that he spoke, Gates drew people to himself who also caught his vision and believed in the possibility of achieving it.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe said, “When ideas fail, words come in very handy.” Words are, in fact, the vehicle for ideas to come to fruition and material substance in the physical world. Without words, ideas are impotent.

I like what Nolan Bushnell, the founder of Atari said. He said, “Anyone who has ever taken a shower has had a world changing idea. It is those who get out of the shower, dry off and do something about their ideas that ever achieve anything in this world.” You have to begin by conveying your ideas through words.

We often live behind the curtain of shame, modesty, false humility, and the like because we are expected to do so by certain authority figures or by our culture. When your children or grandchildren or friend’s children talk about doing great things, never underestimate their potential. Encourage them to talk more and dream bigger.

I knew a man once who told me that his newly graduated 18-year-old son came to him and announced that he didn’t want to attend college. The father asked the boy what he wanted to do with his life. The son said, “Dad, I want to be a professional musician.” Instead of the expected lecture of how musicians end up poor and having to get a “real” job, the father told the boy to go up to his room right now and write a song.

The boy obeyed and brought it to his dad. His dad then told him, “go and write another song.” The boy again obeyed. Today the boy and dad both own and operate a successful studio and production company.

This father acted wisely and did an awesome thing. The words of encouragement and the inner belief that the dad had in his son, produced success.

Have you ever watched weight lifters in the gym? When they are going to a new level of weight, the spotter and others around get loud and aggressive in their encouragement. They don’t scream out, “You’re a wimp” or “You can’t do it.” They scream out “Go, go, go. Push, push, push!” Words have power. Positive words have positive power.

## **Wishing and A-Worrying**

My grandmother used to always talk about how we are “hoping and a-praying” regarding certain things that we wanted to see happen in our family’s lives. I finally figured out that “hoping and a-praying” was, in fact “wishing and a-worrying.”

When you speak words of belief and desire, let your words be positive and full of faith. If you believe in prayer, use the exercise of “seeing the accomplishment of the thing” by visualizing it while you are praying.

Once you make a declaration of faith and belief, continue in faith and belief with a positive expectation. Does this actually work? There is no doubt that it does.

Continuing to imagine it complete, draws you towards its completion, whatever your dream may be. Seeing it complete through prayer, visualization, or meditation allows your subconscious mind to go to work on fulfilling your imagination’s desire.

Having made your declaration or affirmation of what is you want in your life, pray the fulfillment of it. Then stay with it until you see it materialize in your world.

## **Learn to Push**

Someone asked me once how long I was going to stick to a goal that was long in being fulfilled. I told them that my resolve was to stick to it “until.” I heard a wonderful speaker say once, “I believe in P.U.S.H. That is “Pray Until Something Happens.”

When a woman is pregnant and giving birth, they tell her to “push.” That is how babies are born. That is also how ideas, dreams, and goals are manifested in your life.

How long do you affirm your desired outcomes? UNTIL. How long do you “keep the faith” and believe for the fulfillment of your desires? UNTIL. How long are you going to see it in your incredible mind’s eye? UNTIL. How long are you going to make affirmations about it both privately and publicly? UNTIL. How long are you going to take

action towards the fulfillment of your goal? UNTIL YOU SEE IT HAPPEN.

Speak it. Acknowledge the power of your words. Pray it, visualize it, and meditate upon it. Then take action UNTIL.

### **Nothing can resist persistence.**

Persistence will help any one succeed no matter what their intelligence level, opportunity, or abilities. Nothing can take the place of resolve. A common misconception about success is that it takes luck, abundant opportunities, genius, or incredible abilities.

A person who is seemingly lucky (I believe that you make your own luck by your actions), talented or simply seems to have the “Midas” touch, will never succeed without perseverance.

The myth of Midas, the Phrygian king, was simply that in response to a wish granted by the Greek gods, everything that he touched turned to gold. This turned against him and became a curse. The “Midas” touch is indeed a “myth.” You are literally believing a myth if you believe that some people seem to have the “golden touch” while others seem not to possess “the gift.”

Opportunity, most often presents itself, when you have refused to give up on your dream. As long as you have breath in your body, you must eventually achieve what you pursue. If you pursue your goals with a powerful, positive attitude, an open mind to learning, and a quick response to act, there is nothing impossible for you to achieve. Nothing succeeds like perseverance.

## **The Genius of Edison**

The greatest example of the power of perseverance has to be Thomas Edison. He said,

**Many of life's failures are people who did not realize  
how close they were to success when they gave up.**

As holder, singly or jointly, of 1,093 patents, Edison knew what he was talking about! For 50 years, the incandescent electric light had been the despair of inventors. Edison himself failed over 9,000 times before perfecting the light bulb! Here is how he achieved where others failed.

**The three great essentials to achieving anything worthwhile are first: hard work, second: ‘stick-to-it-iveness’, and third: common sense.**

It is all too easy to be downhearted and dispirited when you encounter obstacles in the way of your goals and dreams. Obstacles are an essential part of the journey in the pursuit of any worthwhile goal. Obstacles are usually there to test your resolve, your belief, your faith, your passion, and your determination.

**Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before which difficulties and obstacles vanish.**

**John Quincy Adams**

Perseverance has an awesome payoff. Nothing succeeds like a willing determination to never give up, never give in, and never give out.



## **Chapter 9**

# **Your Awesome Self**

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.

***Marianne Williamson***

I received an email recently from a lady who lives in the Philippines. Not ever having been to the United States before, she asked me if anyone living here could be poor. I wrote her back and told her that in America (as in much of the free world) a person can be anything that they want.

That statement is accurate with few exceptions. Opportunities exist everywhere. I've tried to discover why some people come from the most impoverished, dire circumstances and go on to achieve wealth and abundance while others do not.

Everyone that I've met who came from disadvantaged circumstances and subsequently rose to achieve great things has one thing in common. They possess an unshakable belief in themselves and their abilities. They have chosen to be, what I like to call, "yes people." The powerful attitude which they possess is one that is replete with a positive, "yes" perspective. Their internal dialog is saying "yes" when others are saying "no." Their inner dialog is saying "I can" when others are saying "I can't."

## **How we end up with our belief systems**

Researchers have estimated that a child is told the word “no” over 144,000 times by the age of 18 years old.

The word “no” has such a powerful hold over our lives that it takes a minimum of five “yeses” to counteract the devastating effect this simple, two-letter word has on us.

So what are you waiting for? Get started now saying “yes” to your life. Get started now saying “yes” to your future and your destiny. Get started now saying “yes” to the incredible genius that lives in you.

## **She knew the Power of Resolution**

It was a standard fourth-grade classroom. It looked like many other fourth-grade classrooms. Students sat in five rows of six desks. The teacher’s desk was in the front and faced the students. The bulletin board featured student work.

In most respects, it appeared to be a typical traditional elementary classroom. Yet, something seemed different in this classroom. There seemed to be an undercurrent of excitement.

Donna, the teacher, was a veteran, small-town Michigan schoolteacher, and only two years away from retirement.

In addition, she was a volunteer participant in a countywide staff development project. The training focused on ideas that would empower students to feel good about themselves, and to take charge of their lives.

The observer in this classroom said, “I took a seat in the back of the room and watched. All the students were working on a task, filling a sheet of notebook paper with thoughts and ideas.” The ten-year-old student closest to him was filling her page with “I can’ts.” “I can’t kick the soccer ball past second base.” “I can’t do long division with more than three numerals.” “I can’t get Debbie to like me.” Her page was half full and she showed no signs of letting up. She worked on with determination and persistence.

Walking down the row, glancing at students’ papers, everyone was writing sentences, describing things they could not do. “I can’t do ten push-ups.” “I can’t hit one over the left-field fence.” “I can’t eat only

one cookie.” By this time, the activity engaged the observer’s curiosity. He decided to check with the teacher to see what was going on.

As he approached her, he noticed she, too, was busy writing. He felt it best not to interrupt. “I can’t get John’s mother to come in for a teacher conference.” “I can’t get my daughter to put gas in the car.” “I can’t get Alan to use words instead of fists.” Thwarted in his efforts to determine why students and teacher were dwelling on the negative instead of writing the more positive “I can” statements, he returned to his seat and continued his observations.

Students wrote for another ten minutes. Most filled their pages. Some started another. “Finish the one you’re on and don’t start a new one,” were the instructions the teacher used to signal the end of the activity.

Students were then instructed to fold their papers in half and bring them to the front. When the students reached the teacher’s desk, they placed their “I can’t” statements into an empty shoebox. When all of the student’s papers were collected, the teacher added hers. She put the lid on the box, tucked it under her arm and headed out the door and down the hall. The students followed the teacher. The observer followed the students.

## **Bury your limitations**

Halfway down the hall, the procession stopped. The teacher entered the custodian’s room, rummaged around, and came out with a shovel. Shovel in one hand, shoebox in the other, the teacher marched the students out of the school to the farthest corner of the playground. There they began to dig. They were going to bury their “I can’t’s.”

The digging took over ten minutes because most of the fourth graders wanted a turn. When the hole approached three feet deep, the digging ended. The box of “I can’t’s” was placed in position at the bottom of the hole and quickly covered with dirt.

Thirty-one fourth-graders—all 10 and 11 years old—stood around the freshly dug gravesite. Each had at least one page full of “I can’t’s” in the shoebox, three feet under. So did their teacher.

At this point, the teacher announced, “Boys and girls, please join hands and bow your heads.” The students complied. They quickly formed a circle around the grave, creating a bond with their hands.

They lowered their heads and waited. The teacher delivered the eulogy. “Friends, we gather today to honor the memory of “I can’t.”

“While he was with us on earth, he touched the lives of everyone. Some more than others. His name, unfortunately, has been spoken in every public building—schools, city halls, state capitols, and yes, even the White House.”

“We have provided ‘I can’t’ with a final resting place and a headstone that contains his epitaph. He is survived by his brothers and sister, “I can,” “I will,” and “I’m going to right away.” They are not as well known as their famous relative and are certainly not as strong and powerful. Yet, perhaps, some day, with your help, they will make an even bigger mark on the world.”

“May ‘I can’t’ rest in peace and may everyone present pick up their lives and move forward in his absence. Amen.” The man observing this said, “As I listened to the eulogy, I realized these students would never forget this day. The activity was symbolic, a metaphor for life. It was an experience that would stick with those students, forever, in their unconscious and conscious minds.”

Writing “I can’ts,” burying them, and hearing the eulogy was a major effort on the part of this teacher. And she was not done yet. At the conclusion of the eulogy, she turned the students around, marched them back into the classroom, and held a wake.

They celebrated the passing of “I can’t” with cookies, popcorn, and fruit juices. The teacher made a huge tombstone that covered one wall. It said, “I can’t, RIP,” and the date. When a student forgot and said, “I can’t do this,” all the teacher had to do was point to the tombstone and they rephrased their statement.

Radical actions to discover who you are, what you can do and where you can go in your life, are often necessary due to the constant bombardment of negativity that comes at us. Radical events, of our own choosing (like the one above with the school children) serve as milestones to upward movement in our attitudes and in our lives.

## **You are a Phenomenal Creation**

Consider your biological journey into this world. The release from the male sends millions of seeds on a swimming frenzy into the female. The strong and healthy seeds proceed on a 2-to 7-hour journey through

the cervix into the uterus and into the fallopian tubes. Several hundred are able to make it to the egg floating through the fallopian tube. The seed from the male can survive and remain capable of fertilizing an egg for up to 72 hours or longer.

When the hundreds of strong seeds reach the egg, they surround it and together clear a path through its outer covering enabling one lucky seed to penetrate the egg completely, losing his tail in the process. As soon as this occurs, a protective layer is immediately formed to prevent any other seeds from penetrating the egg. All the seed's comrades are then sacrificed in the name of species survival!

The nucleus of the seed joins the nucleus of the egg combining the chromosomes from the two parents into one nucleus. At this point the egg has become a zygote and all genetic characteristics from eye color to disposition have been determined.

## **You are one in at least 10 Million**

Your mother might have told you with endearing affection that you are one in a million. Please brace yourself but I need to inform you that your mother was wrong. Biologically, you are one in tens of millions. Had that one seed not fertilized that one egg, you wouldn't be here reading this today! Yet you are here and you were the lucky one that was conceived and later born. You are an undeniable miracle. That is how you got started. (That's why you always felt lucky. Hmmm....)

You didn't choose to be here, but you are here. You had no choice in your existence but you do have a choice on how you will use your existence. Get this and get it good.

## **YOU ARE A MIRACLE! YOU HAVE AWESOME POTENTIAL!**

Contemplate these truths. A machine can move a mountain. A machine is a creation of the human mind. Which is more powerful?

A computer can do billions of calculations and even beat the world's chess champions. Who created the computer? Which is more powerful?

An automobile can carry you thousands of times faster than your legs. Where did the automobile come from? An airplane can fly at 35,000 feet. A man can't fly at all without mechanical assistance. How did the airplane get here?

A television can literally allow you to see around the world. Your eyes can only see as far as the horizon or the outer walls. Where did the television come from?

It was rightly stated by the late, great Napoleon Hill, that “whatever the mind of man can dream or conceive, it can achieve.” We want to measure each other by our intelligence quotient. Why not measure each other by our endurance quotient, our commitment quotient, our potential quotient and our perseverance quotient? Consider this carefully.

## **What is Real Intelligence?**

One man has a high intelligence quotient but never studies, reads, or explores. He spends 20 years of his life never using the awesome gift he has been given.

Another man has a much lesser intelligence quotient. He spends 20 years reading everything that he can put his hands on; he spends 1-2 hours per week at the library, he searches the Internet for information, he reads almanacs, encyclopedias, and the like. He attends workshops, lectures, and seminars. Which of these two kinds of men are indeed “smarter” or more intelligent?

Whatever you believe about your limitations can be disproved. There are things more valuable to human intelligence than what we seem to focus on, measure, and esteem. What is possible with you? Anything. Everything. Whatever you want to do, you can do.

## **Chapter 10**

# **Winning Is A Lifestyle**

If winning isn't everything, why do they keep score?

*Vince Lombardi*

It is not whether you win or lose; it is how you play the game. Good philosophy? Not for life. You didn't engage in this world to lose. I don't want to lose. I don't want to lose at the game of life. I don't want to lose at the game of "afterlife." That's why I believe like I do.

I've heard a lot of people say, "Money isn't everything." However, my friend, Paul Pogue, who owns one of the top ten commercial construction firms here in Texas says, "Wealth isn't everything. However, I've been poor and I've been rich. Rich is better." (Paul then smiles with a definite look of satisfaction on his face.)

I love what the great Zig says about money. Zig says, "Money isn't everything; but it does rank right up there with oxygen." I concur with Paul and Zig. I will also make the same statement about money. Winning isn't all about money, but I have learned that the more money I have, the more I can help others.

Also, winning is not so much about competition with others. It is about competing with your yesterdays and your past progress. That is what I believe life is about. Winning is not whether I'm better than you or not. It is whether I'm better than who I was yesterday. I believe that this is the true intent in the statement of 'how you play the game'!

You and I are alive as long as we are growing and making progress. Progress is made by dreaming and then acting. How quickly you progress is determined by your attitude.

## **Living in the Flow of Life**

One of my mentors, Jeffrey Combs, author of the book and success system, “More Heart Than Talent,” said to me once, “Michael, it’s not about fight or flight. Life is about flow.” When I first heard about Jeffrey, my intuition told me that this guy lives “in flow.” Jeffrey coached me and modeled for me how to live life in the flow.

Water is a powerful substance. It exists in a non-resistant flow. Water can carry away large houses, cars, and trucks in a flood. When coming down a mountain, it hits rocks and keeps going while all the time wearing the rock down. It obeys the law of gravity and accomplishes much through just being what it is.

This little poem about water relates the message well.

**Be,  
as water is,  
without friction.**

**Flow around the edges  
of those within your path.  
Surround within your ever-moving depths  
those who come to rest there—  
enfold them,  
while never for a moment holding on.**

**Accept whatever distance  
others are moved within your flow.  
Be with them gently  
as far as they allow your strength to take them,  
and fill with your own being  
the remaining space when they are left behind.**

**When dropping down life's rapids,  
froth and bubble into fragments if you must,  
knowing that the one of you, now many,  
will just as many times be one again.**

**And when you've gone as far as you can go,  
quietly await your next beginning.**

*Noel Frederick McInnis*



Life is to be lived in the same kind of flow. That “flow” invariably takes you towards success and accomplishment. You were truly “born to win.” You were born to live in a state of peace and prosperity. Jeffrey says that “peace is spiritual.” I know that to be true.

## **Oh, what a feeling!**

I love what Tony Robbins says about money and life. He says that no one is really motivated by accumulating small pieces of green paper with numbers and pictures of dead presidents on them. He goes on to say that we don’t labor and toil for extravagant houses, luxury yachts, exotic vacations, or elaborate automobiles. We do what we do for a “feeling.” That’s right; no more than to feel something.

You want to “feel” successful. You want to “feel” significant. You want to “feel” appreciated. You want to “feel” that your life counts for something. You want to “feel” happy. You want to “feel” fulfillment. That is truly what we are all after. Winning and feeling like our lives count for something good is innate in us.

Your life is to be lived to overcome the odds. It is lived to disprove limitations. You are here, not to avoid obstacles and setbacks, but to overcome them. You are put here to win! As I mentioned earlier, you got started as a winner at conception. Why stop? Why not continue the “winning tradition” in the game of life?

How do you win at this game? You know that I’m going to tell you that you must, must, must, must (get the point?) have a winning, awesome, powerful attitude. Your attitude about life itself is the most important starting point.

## **Is God really necessary for me to succeed?**

Emilio told me that he didn’t believe in God and “all that mystical, spiritual, and religious stuff.” I told him that I could accept that he felt that way but I did want to ask him some questions about life.

First off, I asked him what his life was like. Married three times. Children estranged for decades. Financial setback after financial setback. Business failure after business failure. Broken friendships stacked higher than you can imagine.

Now, was Emilio's life history being determined by his lack of faith in God? No, it wasn't. But Emilio didn't have faith in anything. Why would anyone want to take his philosophy of life given the results of what he has produced?

Someone asked me, "Is faith in God essential to winning in life?" I must honestly say that I've never met anyone who was winning in life that didn't have faith in something bigger than themselves. Religion, as you perceive it, may not be essential to winning in life, but faith is.

## **God is the target of your faith**

The renowned psychologist, Carl Jung, in an interview that I saw with a British journalist many years ago, was asked the question, "Dr. Jung, given that your father was a Christian minister, do you believe in God?" Dr. Jung emphatically said, "No!" He went on to explain that there are some things that you 'believe' and some things that you 'know'. (The great apostle from Tarsus said once, "I know in whom I have believed.")

Dr. Jung taught his students and treated his clients with an understanding that their belief in God would change the course of their lives and vastly improve their level of happiness. I must say that it worked for him and his patients.

## **You got to have faith**

One thing I know about winning in life is that you can't live without faith. Faith in yourself. Faith in others. Faith in your future. Faith that you can and will experience growth and change. Faith that your life can and will improve. Faith that you can have a better lifestyle. Faith that you can experience peace. Faith that you can do whatever you set your heart, mind, and actions to do.

My response to people who don't believe in God or who don't want to have faith in God is "why not?" You don't have to have faith in a philosophical or theological prescription that points out "everything that is wrong with this world." You don't have to believe just like the miserable few who are standing in judgment over the world, over you, over me, and over others. But who wouldn't want to believe in a living

force, who can help you, strengthen you, and enable you to pursue and achieve all your dreams, and who is far more powerful than you?

When you find out that God is for you and not against you; when you find out that God wants you to be healthy, prosperous and totally and completely fulfilled; when you find out that God wants you happy; when you find out that God lives within you and wants to empower and help you; why wouldn't you want to believe?

## **A winning lifestyle**

A winning lifestyle is a lifestyle of attitude. A winning lifestyle is a choice that you make for yourself. A winning lifestyle is a life of faith, hope, positive expectations, fulfilled dreams and belief.

Brian Cavanaugh tells the following story in *A Cup of Chicken Soup for the Soul*:

Jerry was the kind of guy you love to hate. He was always in a good mood and always had something positive to say. When someone would ask him how he was doing, he would reply, "If I were any better, I would be twins!"

He was a unique manager because he had several waiters who had followed him around from restaurant to restaurant. The reason the waiters followed Jerry was because of his powerful attitude. He was a natural motivator. If an employee was having a bad day, Jerry was there, telling the employee how to look on the positive side of the situation.

Seeing this style really made me curious, so one day I went up to Jerry and asked him, "I don't get it! You can't be a positive person all of the time. How do you do it?" Jerry replied, "Each morning I wake up and say to myself, 'Jerry, you have two choices today. You can choose to be in a good mood or you can choose to be in a bad mood.'

I choose to be in a good mood. Each time something bad happens, I can choose to be a victim or I can choose to learn from it. I choose to learn from it. Every time someone comes to me complaining, I can choose to accept their complaining or I can

point out the positive side of life. I choose the positive side of life.”

“Yeah, right, it's not that easy,” I protested. “Yes, it is,” Jerry said. “Life is all about choices. When you cut away all the junk, every situation is a choice. You choose how you react to situations. You choose how people will affect your mood. You choose to be in a good mood or bad mood. The bottom line: It's your choice how you live life.”

I reflected on what Jerry said. Soon thereafter, I left the restaurant industry to start my own business. We lost touch, but I often thought about him when I made a choice about life instead of reacting to it.

Several years later, I heard that Jerry did something you are never supposed to do in a restaurant business: he left the back door open one morning and was held up at gunpoint by three armed robbers. While trying to open the safe, his hand, shaking from nervousness, slipped off the combination. The robbers panicked and shot him. Luckily, Jerry was found relatively quickly and rushed to the local trauma center. After eighteen hours of surgery and weeks of intensive care, Jerry was released from the hospital with fragments of the bullets still in his body.

## **Jerry chose to live**

I saw Jerry about six months after the incident. When I asked him how he was, he replied, “If I were any better, I'd be twins. Wanna see my scars?” I declined to see his wounds, but did ask him what had gone through his mind as the robbery took place.

“The first thing that went through my mind was that I should have locked the back door,” Jerry replied. “Then, as I lay on the floor, I remembered that I had two choices: I could choose to live, or I could choose to die. I chose to live.” “Weren't you scared?” I asked. “Did you lose consciousness?”

Jerry continued, “The paramedics were great. They kept telling me I was going to be fine. But when they wheeled me into the emergency room and I saw the expressions on the faces of the

doctors and nurses, I got really scared. In their eyes, I read, 'He's a dead man'. I knew I needed to take action."

"What did you do?" I asked.

"Well, there was a big, burly nurse shouting questions at me," said Jerry.

"She asked if I was allergic to anything. 'Yes,' I replied. The doctors and nurses stopped working as they waited for my reply. I took a deep breath and yelled, 'Bullets!' Over their laughter, I told them. 'I am choosing to live. Operate on me as if I am alive, not dead.'"

Jerry lived thanks to the skill of his doctors, but also because of his amazing attitude. I learned from him that every day we have the choice to live fully. Attitude, after all, is everything.

You, like Jerry, can choose a powerful attitude no matter what you are facing or what turn your life has taken. Indeed, it is in the most trying times of our lives when attitude determines the level of character that we will allow life to develop in us.

## **Mind your Mind**

**How you see is how you be. How you be, is how you believe.**

*Author Unknown*

A young student approached the famous French scientist and philosopher, Blaise Pascal, and declared, "If I had your brains, I would be a better person."

Pondering the depth of that statement, Pascal paused momentarily before replying, "Be a better person, and you will have my brains." (from the book, *The Sower's Seeds*).

Your mind serves your ability to "think outside of your brain." Your mind is contained within your brain, but works to perceive that which is outside of your brain.

Your brain is a functioning organ. Your mind is a mystical function of your brain. Your mind allows you to examine even your own brain. As you use your mind to contemplate things beyond your natural and normal world, your academic and intellectual abilities increase in capacity and potential.

## **See yourself succeeding**

In Mark Victor Hansen and Jack Canfield's, *Second Helping of Chicken Soup for the Soul*, they share the following story.

Major James Nesmeth had a dream of improving his golf game—and he developed a unique method of achieving his goal. Until he devised this method, he was just your average weekend golfer, shooting in mid-to-low nineties. Then, for seven years, he completely quit the game. Never touched a club. Never set foot on a fairway.

Ironically, it was during this seven-year break from the game that Major Nesmeth came up with his amazingly effective technique for improving his game—a technique we can all learn from. In fact, the first time he set foot on a golf course after his hiatus from the game, he shot an astonishing 74! He had cut 20 strokes off his average without having swung a golf club in ten years! Unbelievable? Not only that, but his physical condition had actually deteriorated during those seven years.

What was Major Nesmeth's secret? Visualization. You see, Major Nesmeth had spent those seven years as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam. During those seven years, he was imprisoned in a cage that was approximately four- and one-half feet high and five feet long.

During almost the entire time he was imprisoned, he saw no one, talked to no one, and experienced no physical activity. During the first few months he did virtually nothing but hope and pray for his release. Then he realized he had to find some way to occupy his mind or he would lose his sanity and probably his life. That's when he learned to visualize.

In his mind, he selected his favorite golf course and started playing golf. Every day, he played a full, 18 holes at the imaginary country club of his dreams. He experienced everything to the last detail. He

saw himself dressed in his golfing clothes. He smelled the fragrance of the trees and the freshly trimmed grass. He experienced different weather conditions—windy spring days, overcast winter days, and sunny summer mornings.

In his imagination, every detail of the tee, the individual blades of grass, the trees, the singing birds, the scampering squirrels and the lay of the course became totally real.

He felt the grip of the club in his hands. He instructed himself as he practiced smoothing out his down-swing and the follow-through on his shot. Then he watched the ball arc down the exact center of the fairway, bounce a couple of times and roll to the exact spot he had selected, all in his mind.

In the real world, he was in no hurry. He had no place to go. So in his mind he took every step on his way to the ball, just as if he were physically on the course. It took him just as long in imaginary time to play 18 holes as it would have taken in reality. Not a detail was omitted. Not once did he ever miss a shot, never a hook or a slice, never a missed putt.

Seven days a week. Four hours a day. Eighteen holes. Seven years. Twenty strokes off. Shot a 74.

Your mind and what it is disciplined to focus on, can and will change the course of your life. It can transport you from an experience of hell to the bliss of heaven in an instant. It can focus upon certain targets and can change people, outcomes, and events.

Along with many other proverbial yet truthful wisdoms, you will become what you think about, and you will experience what you plan for, through the power of your mind. Positive, powerful attitudes clear away the clutter of past negative experiences in order for you to experience new possibilities and new realizations in your life.

The old cliché “the mind is a terrible thing to waste” doesn’t fully encompass the entire picture. If you waste your mind, you are literally wasting your life. Instead, use your mind; use it intentionally to focus or you will lose your ability to create anything different in your life than you have previously experienced.

## **Read**

I love to read because I love to learn. I started as a very slow, below average reader. I read around 180 words per minute. The average reader reads at 230-250 words per minute. I knew that in order for me to get where I wanted to go, I had to change my reading level. I sought out the information that I needed to increase my reading skills. I practiced those things which I discovered about reading faster. Now I read at a level of speed and comprehension that is far above average.

I love what the great business sage, Jim Rohn says about books and building a library. Rohn encourages you to buy books. Rohn points out that ‘homes costing more than a million dollars almost always have a library in them. That should be clue. Rich people read.’ A famous quote of Socrates’ philosophic wisdom says, “I buy books and then if I have money enough left over, I buy food.”

Following Jim Rohn’s suggestion, I decided long ago not to loan my books. When someone asks to borrow one I tell them “no,” but that I will buy them a copy of the same book. Not my copy. I mark up a book and it becomes mine.

## **Buy a Person’s Life**

I’ve heard some people talk about the “waste of money” that is spent on buying books. I love what Dr. Michael Murdock says, “For the cost of a book, typically no more than \$25, I don’t really buy a book; I buy a person’s life.” Think about it. All of their life experiences are summed up in 150 to 300 pages.

I tried for years to write a book. I couldn’t get it done. I hadn’t lived enough in order to come to the place where I was ready. I hadn’t read enough to be where I needed to be.

I’ve learned to turn many nights where sleep didn’t visit me into times for personal growth. I read an article once that was called, “Insomnia: God’s Night School.” I liked that and adopted a positive approach to my middle of the night awakenings. I decided that if I was going to have physical awakenings, I might as well



allow myself to have spiritual, emotional, and psychological awakenings as well.

Those who read, succeed. Read the great biographies of Abraham Lincoln, Benjamin Franklin, George Washington Carver, in addition to other great figures of history. I took Jim Rohn's advice and have engaged in multiple readings of "The Lessons of History" and "The Story of Philosophy" by Will Durant.

One of the most powerful and spiritually enlightening books I've read was recommended by my mentor, friend, and success coach, Jeffrey Combs (author of "More Heart Than Talent"—another great book). It is Florence Scovel Shinn's book, "The Game Of Life And How To Play It." I've read this book over ten times to date and plan on giving it many more readings.

If you want to replicate the experiences of the characters of a romance novel, read romance novels. If you want to replicate the experiences of successful people, read biographies and non-fictional books about people's lives. Read "How-To" books.

Vic Johnson has made it his entire life focus to get you to read the original self-help classic, "As A Man Thinketh" by James Allen. Go to Vic's website [asamanthiketh.net](http://asamanthiketh.net) and download a free copy.

Other great books are part of my own "Success Series." They are classics like "The University of Hard Knocks" by Ralph Parlette, "The Power of Concentration" by Theron Dumont, "Acres of Diamonds" by the great Russell Conwell, "The Art of War" (a powerful book on leadership) by Sun Tzu, and "An Iron Will" by Orison Swett Marden. (All of these can be found at my website, [positiveattitudes.com](http://positiveattitudes.com).)

Add to your reading list, "Think and Grow Rich" by Napoleon Hill. Read all of John Maxwell's books on leadership. "Developing the Leader Within" is the greatest leadership book I've ever read. Read "Success through a Positive Mental Attitude" by the late W. Clement Stone. Find and read anything and everything that Tony Robbins has written. His book, "Awaken the Giant Within," is a life-changing masterpiece.

## **Attend seminars**

The very best education that you can receive in America today can be obtained, not from institutions of “higher learning” but from meeting rooms in hotels, namely, seminars.

I’ve attended many seminars, even one that cost \$1,000 per day per participant with a 4-day schedule. In 2003, when I attended that particular one, that was a considerable amount of money for most people. Still is. How can a 4-day seminar be worth \$4,000? I will tell you that it can be worth thousands of times more than the \$4,000 you paid to be there.

The seminars in America’s hotels and meeting rooms are compact gold mines for learning how to live your life, make more money, make a lot more money, have better relationships, face and overcome limiting issues in your life, in addition to many other “life skills.” One seminar could be worth millions of dollars to you.

Seminars, for the most part, are being taught by those who have “been there and done it.” They haven’t just studied their topic from an academic viewpoint. They have studied it, been through the school of hard knocks, made the mistakes, made the right choices, found a better way, found a short cut, uncovered the higher profits, discovered the success secrets of real estate, stock market investing, having great relationships, raising children, doing your job better, developing people skills, developing leadership skills, etc.

I hold the same attitude towards public seminars as I do towards books. They are an investment in you. When you choose to invest in your own mind, you build not only knowledge, but confidence and self-esteem. These latter benefits are more valuable than anything else you will ever gain in your life. It is indeed a privilege to lay down the cash to attend a seminar of an expert in the given field.

Make an investment in your mind. Buy books. Read the books you buy. Attend public seminars, which can better your life, your

attitude, and your personal skills. Become a collector of awesome ideas. Become a collector of other people's awesome experiences and stories.

## **Learn to meditate, pray and experience peace**

Mind your mental health. Do you allow yourself to meditate? Do you ever choose to shut up that "chattering monkey" (as the Chinese call it) in your head? Do you ever stop the bombardment of "have to do's," "should have done's," "could have done's," inside your head? Do you ever say "no" to the pressure you place on yourself from the endless barrage of your own thoughts? Do you ever give yourself the gift of peace?

Peace is a gift that only you can give to yourself. No one else can give it to you. You have to choose peace for yourself. It will not sneak up on you. It will not come searching you out. You have to seek it, find it, and choose it for yourself. If you can maintain a certain level of peace in your mind, you can be free to be successful without the strain and constant toil that so many people experience on a daily basis.

If you find peace and solace in going to church or synagogue, by all means, attend regularly. If you find peace, solace, and refreshment by going to the mountains or to the beach, then go there as often as possible. A powerful attitude can only be maintained in a mind that finds peace consistently.

You have an awesome gift that was given to you at birth. Your mind can dream, analyze, and figure out difficult situations. Take care of it. Feed it. Nourish it. Let it rest. Let it expand. Let it dream and believe. Let it motivate you to do and create more.



## **Chapter 11**

### **Get Goaling!**

Every single life only becomes great when the individual sets upon a goal or goals which they really believe in, which they can really commit themselves to, which they can put their whole heart and soul into.

***Brian Tracy***

Goal setting has an almost magical, mystical essence to it. Goals set the course of your destiny in a way which nothing else can approach. In our psyche, there seems to be a void that only goals can fill. Goals fill this void with incredible accuracy and detail.

Some time ago, I was at a personal growth seminar where the speaker told everyone present to write out 100 goals that they wanted to achieve over the next year. Being a willing participant, I gladly wrote out my 100.

The next challenge was to put them in a drawer or a safe place where you know that they wouldn't be thrown away or misplaced. We were all instructed to "not look at these goals for the next year." If most of the participants were like me, they wrote their goals and basically forgot that they were there.

From time to time I would come across my list of goals but consciously chose not to get them out and read them. Months later, I was cleaning out the drawer and decided to take a peek. I chose to get them out and review them one-by-one.

Here is what I found. I had fully achieved 8 of the 100 goals. I also noticed the date that I had set and written these goals and realized it had been just over six months ago. Then I realized that of the 76 remaining goals, I had made major progress towards their achievement and was at least 50% on the way to completion.

I didn't reach, what I would determine to be, 100% of my goals—more like 72 of them by year's end. However, I was much further along than I ever would have been had I not set any goals at all.

Do goals always get 100% achieved? The answer is, “not most of the time.” However, the real power of goals is the incredible pull that they have on your subconscious mind in the direction of their attainment.

## **Who needs to set goals?**

I had a young man come up to me after I had finished speaking at a corporate event and ask me, “Who really needs to set goals in their life?” I responded, “Only people who want to move forward and attain more in their lives.”

Goals are only for people who want to do more. Goals should be set by those who want to be more and who want to have more in their lives. Another way I like to say it is, “The only people who should set goals are people who are planning on going somewhere.”

Only people who want to achieve any level of success. Only people who want to get more than they presently have. So who needs to set goals? Everybody needs them. You need them.

What would happen in your life if you set your goals and reviewed them each day? Well, what would happen if you set out on a trip that you knew would take several days and you reviewed your map at least a couple of times per day?

Put another way, what would happen if you didn't review your map at least a couple of times each day? You would get lost. That is where most people are in this journey called life. They are lost.

## **Write Your Goals Often**

Although goals will work for you even if you write them once and forget about them, they work even better when regularly reviewed. Written and regularly reviewed goals get you where you want to go. They keep you on track and keep you from getting lost in the journey.

I encourage those who I've coached to set different kinds of goals for each significant area of their life. I tell them to set big dream 'life goals,' as well as 5-year goals, and 1-year goals.

"Big dream goals" are goals that you want to achieve in your lifetime. I call them "life goals." When formulating this list of goals, you totally let your imagination run wild. You allow your wildest fantasy of success to "come out and play." This kind of goal setting can be very fulfilling. Begin with the "big goal" in mind. Know ultimately where you want to go in your life.

Life goals can create consistency in how you think and what you do each and every day. Life goals should always be set before 5-year and 1-year goals can be identified. Life goals look to years beyond the attainment of retirement or achieving your long-term financial peak. These goals determine who you want to be and how you want to look back upon your life in your later years.

## **Don't Be Like This Guy**

I heard the biography of Norman Grundy recently. It isn't long and will likely not captivate much of your attention or excite your soul. Nonetheless, here it is:

Norman Grundy was born on Monday,

Christened on Tuesday,

Graduated on Wednesday,

Married on Thursday,

Fell ill on Friday,

Died on Saturday,

Buried on Sunday,

And that's the life of Norman Grundy.

I love what Dr. Myles Monroe says in his book, "Understanding Your Potential":

"The greatest resource of wealth doesn't lie in the uranium mines of Russia, the diamond mines of South Africa, or the rich oil friends of Saudi Arabia. It isn't found on Wall Street, Hollywood Boulevard, or Fifth Avenue. You will not read about it in Forbes, Fortune, or Money magazine. It is not to be found in the halls of the Ivy League.

The greatest resource of wealth is likely found just a few blocks from your house. You probably pass it up all the time never giving any thought to it at all. Chances are that you've visited there and one day you will go there permanently. You got it. The greatest resource of wealth is found in the forever untapped potential that lies six feet below ground level in your local cemetery.

Songs unsung, books unwritten, miracle inventions lying dormant, world leaders that never got beyond their own limited thinking and mental poverty. There in your cemetery lies stories of what could have been, what would have been and definitely what should have been, but wasn't."

## **God's Investment in You**

God made an investment one day. God knew the potential return and decided to take the risk. God knew of the great dividends that it could pay. You see, God had a goal of getting a vast return on this investment.

What was the investment? God allowed you to be born. You didn't get here by accident. You are here for a purpose. The most interesting thing is that God left it up to you as to determine the return of the investment.



God expected to reap a fortune choosing you to be born. God believed in you even before your great, great, great-grandparents were born.

How do I know that God believes in you? You were given an incredible mind. You were given phenomenal abilities. God gave you the capacity to dream big dreams and the tools it takes to achieve them. God took the risk and believed that you will take what was invested in you and turn it in to a fortune. The choice is up to you. If you are going to fulfill your purpose, you will need to set goals.

As you set goals, you set into motion the plan for your life. I've had many people ask me, "What if I set the wrong goals for my life?" You can't set the wrong goals for your life.

If you set goals that you later determine are things you really don't want to do, be or have after all, then you have just eliminated what you know that you don't want for your life. An essential part of you finding what you are supposed to be about in your life is determining not only what you do want but also what you know that you don't want.

**I have learned that if one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.**

*Henry David Thoreau*

Did you know that when the pilot of a commercial airline sets his autopilot, he is off-course over 90% of the time? Winds, air pockets, jet stream directions, are all resisting the auto-pilot. Nonetheless, the auto-pilot continues to make corrections in the heading of the aircraft.

Your life journey is much the same. You have a goal. You make a few judgments that prove to be in error. You make adjustments and continue flying. You don't stop because you know your intended destination. You will get there.

When you set a goal and begin to act and work towards the fulfillment of that goal, you ignite a certain momentum that will

open up opportunities that you previously have never experienced. You set into motion not only unexpected opportunities for the fulfillment of that goal but other avenues will open up that you hadn't imagined.

Goals are set to get you moving towards something rather than sit there doing nothing. Get up and get goaling! Write your goals down. You want a really powerful nugget of advice? Write them down daily. A goal that is never set will never be achieved. To develop a powerful attitude, start setting goals today. Do this and you will skyrocket your success.

## **Chapter 12**

### **The Past Is Passed**

“Life has unexpected tragedies and injustices. The fact remains that if you choose to take whatever you’ve been dealt, you can play it right and win!”

*Michael Murphy*

Frederick came to me after a number of business failures, failed marriages, failed relationships with his four children, failed friendships, failed attempts at just simply living his life.

The day that he walked into my office, I heard the longest most unbelievable story of his life as a victim. After listening to him blame virtually the entire world for over forty-five minutes, I stopped him and told him that it is impossible for him to be a victim. His perspective and response was simply, “You haven’t lived with the folks I’ve been so unlucky to encounter in my life.”

I remember the old song from the now almost infamous show, Hee-Haw. It went something like this:

**“Gloom, despair and agony on me, deep dark depression,  
excessive misery, if it weren’t for bad luck, I’d have no luck at  
all, gloom, despair and agony on me.”**

(You'll have to hear me speak in person if you want to hear me sing it; if you do hear me or meet me in person, I will sing it for you; you will never be the same again. Ha!) I remember another, now infamous (at least in my view) song that B.J. Thomas sang. It went like this:

**"I'm gonna play, another, somebody done somebody wrong song; it makes me feel at home; cause I miss my baby, cause I miss my baby."**

## **What Song Are You Singing?**

That is about the only type of song that a lot of people can sing. The fact is, "You cannot be a victim for long if you make the right choices about your pain, predicaments, and problems." You might differ with me by citing the many bad things that happen to good people that they didn't cause nor instigate. You could cite all the bad things that happen to people as children or who are simply innocently living in this world before fate struck them down with some kind of terrible deed, event, or illness.

Let me say that anything that can ever happen to you, short of death, can be turned around and used in a positive way to live out your destiny and to effectively touch the lives of others for the better. It doesn't make the tragedy that occurred to you right, good, or necessary. Unbelievable and appalling things may happen in your very own neighborhood, to your family, or even to you. However, you can take it and use it in a positive way to benefit yourself and others.

You can take your tragedy and turn it into your own personal triumph. As my grandpa used to say, "You're gonna live until you die anyway. You might as well make the very most of it." Story upon story reveals that you can make whatever you want out of unwarranted and unexpected tragedies and malicious acts against you.

## **Turning Tragedy into Triumph**

During the Massachusetts winter of 1997, Rachelle Beaton was driving to a swim meet at a high school in her hometown of

Farmington, Connecticut, having just finished teaching a swim class at the local YMCA. It was mid-day and had just started to snow. From that point on, Beaton's mind is a blank.

She doesn't remember the car skidding across the road, hitting a tree. She doesn't remember suffering a sharp blow to the right side of her face or being airlifted to a local hospital, where she lay in a coma for a week. Beaton had suffered a severe head injury that left her with little memory and the cognitive abilities of a third-grader. Her future looked bleak.

But now, after enduring years of intensive and often painful therapy, Beaton has achieved her long-awaited goal of graduating from Northeastern University in Boston, with honors. "It feels like a sigh of relief," Beaton says, as she was looking ahead towards her commencement exercises in the Fleet Center. "It was tough—not just the education, but the maturation process."

Beaton's recovery has been nothing short of miraculous. When she awoke from the coma, her physical and mental abilities were greatly diminished. She couldn't walk a straight line, she had little use of the right side of her body and she couldn't read or write. "I even had to re-learn how to say the alphabet correctly," says Beaton, now 24. "And all I wanted was to be a senior in high school, to have some fun. That was all I could think about."

As she contemplated her road to recovery, Beaton had difficulty coming to grips with her injuries. "At first, I didn't even know why I was in the hospital," she says. "I was in complete denial." Beaton eventually came to accept the painful reality of what the rehabilitation process would entail.

By September 1991, she was ready to begin as a freshman at Northeastern, where she'd been accepted into the physical therapy program before her accident. But Beaton wasn't out of the woods yet. The noise and lack of privacy in the dorm was difficult for her. Since she was slow at reading and writing, she needed to plan her studies very carefully.

"Things began to hit me—this wasn't going to be easy," she recalls. "I was different."

Beaton credits the Disability Resource Center with helping her make it through the college experience. Staffers there helped her

find a quieter place to live, provided her with note-takers for class and arranged for her to have extended time to take tests.

Still, Beaton struggled socially. “It was difficult for me to relate to other people my age,” she says. “I couldn’t go out and party. I couldn’t handle drinking. People would hand me a cup and I would sneak into the bathroom and fill it with water.” She was self-conscious about her looks. The injury had left her with one droopy eyelid and permanent scarring on her face. “I was sometimes very down on myself about how I looked as a person,” Beaton recalls.

In her entire stay at Northeastern, Beaton revealed the true extent of her injuries to just one friend. She says she felt particularly uncomfortable around her physical therapy classmates. “I thought they would ridicule me or look at me differently [if they knew I had a head injury],” she says.

She eventually switched her major to human services, which she says provided a more comfortable atmosphere for her to learn and socialize. So comfortable, in fact, that she was able to stand up in one of her classes one day and talk about her head injury. That experience made her realize she wanted to do more public speaking about her circumstances and perhaps work as an advocate for others with head injuries just like her own.

She worked on co-op with the Massachusetts Statewide Head Injury Program and was recently named to an advisory council for the group. Now she’s planning to take her licensing exam in social work and begin looking for a “real” job.

Before that, though, she was one of the featured speakers at a luncheon for human services graduates the day before her commencement. “Things in my life are kind of up in the air right now,” says Beaton. “But I feel I’ve sort of come out of my shell.”

She smiles. “I’ve matured.”

## **Lemons into lemonade**

Never trivialize another person’s tragedies. Neither should you ever underestimate the buoyancy of the human spirit. Your weakness can become your winning strength. This is how most

people succeed. They overcome their tragedies and turn them into triumphs.

My daughter, Ashley, is one of the greatest inspirations in my life when it comes to overcoming obstacles. Being my second child, we pretty much knew what to expect as far as the labor process and the events of her original “birthday.”

After she was delivered on July 1, 1993, the nurses cleaned her up and handed her to me to carry to the hospital nursery. About half way to the nursery, I sensed that something wasn’t right. I cannot explain how I knew this but I had a definite intuition that something wasn’t right, even though she checked out fine in the initial evaluation in the moments after birth.

The first thing that I noticed about Ashley was that she didn’t seem interested in a pacifier or bottle. Shortly after she was born, the challenge began. Ashley wouldn’t eat and persistently cried most of the time.

We went to our local pediatricians and were given the advice that, “She would eat when she got hungry.” We spent a little more than a year attempting to do everything we knew possible to get her to take a bottle, breast feed, or whatever. She would eat for a while but would never seem to get enough. Likewise, the crying persisted for that entire year.

When we finally found a doctor at the Dallas, Texas Children’s Medical Center who could help, we seemingly were out of options. The doctors at the center, though never really being able to give an exact diagnosis, did determine that somehow during pregnancy, Ashley had been deprived of oxygen to part of her brain.

The section of her brain that controls body growth and development, in particular that of the muscles, had failed to form properly during gestation and showed signs of cells which were inactive. The good news was that Ashley’s situation would not get chronically worse. The bad news was that she would never likely develop normally or be able to walk properly, along with all the other activities a normal healthy child would be expected to do.

I never accepted the negative news about her prognosis. I refused to resign her to a life of being handicapped. It was more than simple parental denial of the facts. I know that it was faith in action.

Ashley is today a bundle of energy who I can expect will come through my bedroom door tonight and ask me to play a game with her. Though she didn't walk until she was three, today she runs, plays, and goes to public schools. She is a little behind in her development and in her size. Nonetheless, she is bright, creative, and goes after her young life with gusto.

Ashley has a past of predictions of limitations, inabilities, and handicaps. She is living proof of the power of a powerful attitude to overcome anything. Did she do it alone? No. She is a child. But the positive power of faith and belief in her, resulted in her overcoming what could have proven to be a very debilitating experience.

Ashley's problems are in the past. Her once tragedy is now her greatest triumph.

I believe in overcompensating for weaknesses. Champions are born when your lemons are cut and squeezed to make lemonade.

## **Overcoming Discrimination and Limitation**

The phenomenal story of Wilma Rudolph stands as a shining example of the power of turning your past into your most prized possession. She was an exceptional American track and field athlete who overcame debilitating childhood illnesses and went on to become the first American woman to win three gold medals in a single Olympics.

Wilma Rudolph was born in 1940 in Bethlehem, Tennessee. The twentieth of 22 children, she was born with polio and suffered from serious bouts of pneumonia and scarlet fever as a young child. All these ailments contributed to a bad leg that some said would prevent her from ever walking. But Wilma had a loving and devoted family who made sure she got medical attention and who provided physical therapy themselves four times a day.



She wore a leg brace from the time she was five until she was 11 years old. Then, one Sunday, she removed it and walked down the aisle of her church.

When Wilma was 13, she got involved in organized sports at school, including basketball and track. Soon she was running and winning races. She was invited to a training camp at Tennessee State University by coach Ed Temple, who coached numerous track and field athletes. He became Wilma's most important professional influence.

In 1956, when she was still a sophomore in high school, she participated in the Olympic Games in Melbourne, Australia. She lost the 200 meter race, but her relay team took home the bronze medal.

Wilma became more determined than ever. In 1958, she began college at Tennessee State University and became a member of Ed Temple's "Tigerbelles" track team. In 1960, she set a world record for the 200 meter dash during the Olympic trials.

During the Olympic Games in Rome, she became the first American woman to win three gold medals in the 100 meter dash, the 200 meter dash, and the 400 meter relay. When she returned to Tennessee, she was honored with her hometown's first racially integrated parade.

The next year she received a Sullivan Award, which is given annually to the top amateur athlete in the United States. Subsequent honors included the Black Sports Hall of Fame, the U.S. Track and Field Hall of Fame, the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame and the National Women's Hall of Fame. In 1993, she became the first recipient of President Clinton's National Sports Award.

Wilma had worked her way through school and later became a coach and teacher. Her autobiography, "Wilma Rudolph on Track," was a bestseller, and in 1977 it became a television movie, starring Cicely Tyson. Wilma's greatest pride was her four children.

On Nov. 12, 1994, Wilma Rudolph died of a brain tumor at the age of 54. The Olympic flag covered her casket at her funeral. She will always be remembered for her inspirational determination to overcome her physical disabilities. Through the love of her family

and her spiritual convictions she rose above the racism and segregation of her time.

She recognized the importance of good teachers in her own life, and later became a teacher herself. Wilma Rudolph was not only a sports hero; she was also a family hero, and a hero to many as a teacher. Wilma's past propelled her into her future. The greater her obstacles, the greater her victories.

## **Your choice determines your future**

You have a choice. You can reject your past and let it negatively affect your present, thus determining your future, or you can accept your past and use it to become whatever and whoever you want to become.

I love to use an expression that is so prominent here in the South. When a friend, relative, or acquaintance has died, we say that they have "passed on." I want to say the same thing about whatever has happened to you in your past. See it as dead. It has passed on.

Your past is passed. Decide today that you will leave it there and forge ahead into your future with your new powerful attitude.

## **Chapter 13**

### **Put Off Procrastination**

“Do it now, with a positive mental attitude.”

*W. Clement Stone*

W. Clement Stone was a pioneer in the promotion of “positive mental attitude.” He founded and led the Combined Insurance Groups of America for several decades. He lived to be just over 100 years old. With his curiously distinctive voice, his ever present bow ties and his Clark Gable mustache, he was unique in his ability to motivate people to change their lives. As the founder of Success Magazine, he spread his own gospel of positive attitude and true wealth to thousands.

I never had the opportunity to hear him speak in person, but I have listened to several of his recordings that he made including his most popular, “The Success System That Never Fails.” I can hear him say when someone asked how he was doing or how he was feeling, he responded in that curious voice, “I feel healthy, I feel happy, I feel terrific; how do you feel?”

I believe that the greatest impression Stone made on me was those three simple words which incited action, “Do It Now!” This little phrase was one of many simple statements that he used to motivate himself and others into immediate action towards goals and dreams. I’ve used it hundreds of times when I was either afraid to

do something or just not “motivated in the moment.” It works every time.

When I left the security of my parent’s home and went away to college, I was fearful that I would never be able to get out of bed in the morning when my alarm clock went off. Now I’ve learned that an alarm clock is generally designed to “shock” your heart and get your blood flowing so that you will wake up. I also knew that as a teenager, it didn’t matter whether or not a bomb went off next to my head or not, I simply wasn’t getting up.

I asked my father what to do about this problem. First of all he told me to forget that the alarm clock had a snooze button. In fact, he encouraged me to find one that didn’t come with a snooze button (you could actually buy them that way).

The next thing that he told me to do is to put both feet on the ground and stand up before turning it off. If you have or have had a roommate as I did, you will do this quickly. “Both feet on the floor and body vertical before I hit the off button” was the advice I received.

You may have no problem getting up in the morning but if you put off the more important things in life (like your destiny, your future, your career, your dreams) you need to first understand “why” you procrastinate before you can really know “how” to fix the overall problem of procrastination. Once you deal with the root cause of procrastination, then acting in the moment will become natural to you.

Let me cite for you, the major reasons why people procrastinate.

## **Fear of Failure**

One reason we procrastinate is that we fear failure. This is actually not as widely known as most people believe. Nonetheless, if you have lived past the age of twenty, you have probably established a certain aversion to failing. You might think, “Of course I don’t want to fail. Who does?”

Let me say to you right now, failure is never final unless you quit. I heard someone say recently, ‘The only time that really counts is the last time that you try.’ We have a failure avoidance epidemic instilled in the American mindset. It is a good thing we didn’t take that same attitude when we were learning to walk. It is a good thing our parents and authority figures didn’t have that attitude towards us.

When you were learning to walk, someone stood you up, and let you gain a little strength in your legs. You stood there and bounced a little, springing up and down with the excitement that something was about to happen (on the floor and not in your diaper, again).

While they left you there holding on to a piece of furniture, they went across the room or a few feet away and began to beckon you to come to them. When you finally figured out what they wanted, you took a step and likely, fell down. Now here is the place that I really need to get your attention.

Did your parent or authority figure berate you, chew you out for falling? Did they get disgusted and walk away and say, “That kid fell! He/she will NEVER WALK!” It is a good thing that was not their response to you falling, huh? What did they say? GET UP. YOU CAN DO IT! LET’S TRY IT AGAIN!

They repositioned you and let you try it again. How many times did they encourage you to try? Repeat this after me. AS MANY TIMES AS IT TOOK TO START WALKING. Very good! If you got your life started this way, why do we not repeat it in every other endeavor? Are you afraid you will look like a child? Well, you are that same child in a little older and larger body. If a child can learn to walk, then you can learn to make your life successful.

## **Jim Rohn’s Ant Philosophy**

I love the ant philosophy that the great Jim Rohn talks about. He says that an ant has a four-part philosophy. First, it is virtually impossible to stop ants unless you kill them. You put an obstacle in front of an ant and they figure out a way to go around, climb over, or tunnel under.

That makes me think of the “Possibility Thinker’s Creed” that Dr. Robert Schuler developed.

**“When faced with a mountain, I will not quit.**

**I will keep on striving until I climb over, find a pass through, tunnel under, or simply stay and turn the mountain into a gold mine, with God’s help”**

Thousands have acted on this philosophy and found a gold mine. People who choose a powerful attitude will take the very obstacle that they face, overcome it, and then teach others how to do the same. They become authors, conduct seminars, develop mentoring programs, coaching programs, and subsequently make fortunes teaching people what they learned to overcome and do themselves.

The second thing that the ant does is that he thinks “winter all summer.” He knows that the seasons will change. They always do. You can change a lot of things, but you can’t change the seasons.

There will always be winters to face. The very best thing that you can do is “prepare for them.” You can’t avoid them. You are going to have challenges as long as you are six feet “above” your final resting place. Prepare for them. Learn to flow and not fight the seasons. Winter will come.

The third part of the ant philosophy is that the ant thinks “summer all winter.” He knows that “this too shall pass.” There are brighter days ahead. The sun will shine again. The ant stays ready for the brighter days ahead. He may have to go back down in the ground at some time but he is in the starting gate ready when summer comes.

The fourth and last part of the ant philosophy is that the ant gathers all summer. How much does he gather? Say this with me out loud. ALL THAT HE CAN. That is a great rule to live by. Gather all that you can. Why? Why not gather just enough for you?

A huge part of the joy of living is gathering more than you will need. If you have more than you need, you always have something to give. Likewise, if you have more than you need, you will never

need more than you have. An awesome philosophy for those who possess powerful attitudes.

## **Fear of Success**

I've seen many people get a quizzical look on their face when I start to talk about this fear. It is a very prevalent fear that many people possess.

I recently bought a very nice car for my daughter who had yet to get her driver's license. When faced with the offer of buying what I considered to be a lesser quality car for the same price, I chose instead to buy the more luxurious. One of the concerns that she had (and I must admit, that I thought of) was, "What will people think if I buy this nice of a car for my teenage daughter?"

Here I am faced with the decision to buy what others "might" find more acceptable or spend the same amount of money and get the much better value of the more luxurious car. What do you think I did? I bought the car that was more luxurious, spending the same amount of money and thus, getting the better value.

Much of the fear of success involves thinking that says, "What will people think?" My friend, let me tell you now, 'what others think should never make your decision for you'. People who are likely not to approve of whatever you do, are not true friends to you. Your friends and family, who truly love you, want you to have the very best in your life.

A good friend of mine is the author of twelve books and well known in certain circles around the world. His life has been scrutinized and analyzed by front porch critics as well as major television reporters. He gave me advice one day that I value dearly. He told me, "Michael, your friends don't need an explanation for your life and actions and your enemies will never believe one."

If someone is a true friend of yours, they will not be jealous or envious of your success or of you bettering your life. Your true friends will applaud you and encourage you. Your enemies (and often times, just small minded people) will do whatever than can

to keep you down at a level closer to where they are. It will make them feel better about their mediocre lives. This may sound like harsh words, but it is the truth.

When success comes, those who thought that “you would never make it” often get envious of what you’ve achieved. In fact, I can guarantee that when you decide to embark upon your quest for success, you will likely get a new set of friends.

Charlie Jones says that the two determining factors which decide where you will be five years from now are:

- (1) the books you read and
- (2) the people, with whom, you choose to associate.

When choosing friends, especially if you have to choose a new set of friends, find people who themselves are seeking to be, do, and have more. Those are the kind of people who will likely never want to see you do anything but succeed and flourish.

I was on a trip to Europe some years back, and was doing a lot of soul searching about my life. One decision that I had to make was whether I was going to hang on to some of my relationships that I had before I left America or let them go. I had to reevaluate who was good for me and who wasn’t good for me.

I can tell you now that those who sap your energy and disempower you through negative attitudes, will need to have a very limited role in your life, if any at all. If you are going to achieve what you know you deserve and want, there are some relationships you are going to have to let go of. It is a difficult decision when deciding who you are going to spend your time with and who you aren’t going to spend your time with. It will have an overwhelming influence on your future and determine your destiny.

I made the decision that I was going to limit the time that I was going to spend with those who were not empowering me in my life. I came back to discover that one of my dear friends for many years had himself gone through a transformation in his life. He had



made a very similar commitment to himself. He has since had a huge impact upon me in an extremely positive way.

Friends who are jealous of you now will become more so as you achieve your goals and dreams. Here is what I say. If they can't handle your success, they were in the relationship only to take from you anyway. Face the reality that these kinds of people aren't your true friends. Friendship is always based on mutual benefit. That's why we have them.

On a deeper level of the subconscious, you may fear that you will lose your friends. It may sound trite to tell you that you will get new ones. I would rather say it this way. You will get "real" friends when you begin to achieve your dreams. You will get friends you can keep for the rest of your life.

I heard a lady describe this fear as she talked about her battle in overcoming it. Her father had been a successful entrepreneur. She was also gaining a certain distinction due to her own success. She had to face the reality that on a deeper level, she feared becoming more successful than her father. She feared losing his love, affection, and approval of her. She had a big choice to make. She had to acknowledge, define, and deal with this fear.

She made the decision that her father likely never worried what anyone thought of him in his own success quest. He had always instructed her to not concern herself with 'what others thought'. So she followed suit and decided to achieve more than she already had.

What she found in the end was that her father gained a new respect and admiration for his 'little girl'. She told me that he even later took credit for having 'raised her right and taught her how to be successful'. She was wise enough to let her proud father gloat a bit over her own success.

## **Magnifier of true character**

I want to share a lesson I learned many years ago about success and about life in general. Success and money are magnifiers of true character. I've said it this way for several years. If you are a

socially impoverished, obnoxious, arrogant, egotistical jerk when you are poor, you will be a bigger obnoxious, arrogant, egotistical jerk when and/or “if” you achieve success or make large sums of money.

On the other hand, if you are a caring, compassionate, giving, humble, and loving person before you achieve success or gain money, you will become more of that kind of person after you begin to achieve your dreams. Again, success and money are magnifiers of who and what you already are.

I’ve had people tell me that they knew they never really wanted to make a lot of money because they knew what money would do to them. Then they will tell you a story of someone they knew who used to be a very nice person. Now that they have achieved some level of success or made a certain amount of money, they weren’t very nice anymore.

I’m saying that I don’t buy that reasoning. They had whatever negative attributes in their character “before” they gained success or wealth. Their success just brought it out. Remember, success and money are merely magnifiers of true character.

## **What if I get it and lose it?**

There is another fear that I have observed that is a combination of the fear of failure and the fear of success. It is the fear that, “What if I succeed and cannot sustain the success?” I have met hundreds of people who have this fear.

A cliché I’m sure you’ve heard is that, “It is better to have never had success or money than to achieve it and lose it all.” This is an attitude that will do nothing but encourage and stir up more apathy in your life.

Let me say right here that all of these are excuses and not reasons for the lack of success. Reasons have substance behind them. Excuses have “what if” negative predictive imaginations behind them. Excuses are simply copouts to never trying. Nothing great has ever been accomplished when you give excuses for your

mediocrity and lack of endeavor. Excuses effectively say, “What’s the use?”

Let me tell you what the use is. When you achieve success and make the amount of money that you truly do deserve, the use is, “You now have something to use.” When you do nothing, you have nothing to make the world a better place. You have nothing that you can teach others and assist them in reaching their full potential in life.

I shared with you earlier what a good friend of mine, Paul Pogue said. He said, “I’ve been poor and I’ve been rich. Rich is better.” Why is rich better? Who can you help when you have no-thing? The answer: no-one. (Okay, I’m showing some attitude here.)

Paul takes his philosophy to a level that is unimaginable. He is the most perfect example of why a person needs to succeed and then benefit others. Paul gives away ten times as much money in a year as most households earn. Paul is a multi-millionaire yet he takes regular trips into the poverty regions of the world discovering new ways that he can benefit those who are less fortunate.

There is one thing I take sheer delight in. I love to give! I really, really do. It is “more blessed to give than to receive.” Why? Because I fulfill a greater psychological, spiritual need inside of me when I give. Do I enjoy receiving? You bet. Just for the purpose of giving, do I also enjoy the finer things of life? Well, whoever said that it can’t be for both reasons?

I was talking to a lady one day who told me that she felt it was okay if people gained influence and became great leaders to help others. However, she didn’t want them to be “too” rich and have “too” much money.

First, being “too” rich is a very subjective issue. A minister friend of mine was serving in a church that made all of its financial records known to the congregation. In these records, they revealed his personal compensation. The janitor, who made \$30,000 a year, was upset because the minister was making \$20,000 a year more than he was.

The surgeon who served on the church board was upset because the minister was making \$350,000 a year “less” than he was. The surgeon reasoned that he was able to help people improve their health while the minister helped people deal with their spiritual lives. In the surgeon’s view, the minister’s position was more important than his own.

The bottom line is, you aren’t going to make people happy who don’t know, in the first place, what would make them happy. If their happiness is tied to your success, they have a focus in life that is going no-where.

### **It wouldn’t be right if I were successful**

Another fear that some have (even though I really question the legitimacy of this fear) is that somehow God doesn’t want them to be successful and/or rich. I am going to rephrase what my friend Paul said. “I’ve been a failure and I’ve enjoyed success. Success is better.” Beware of those who do not hold this view. As my grandmother always said, “They will lie about other things as well.”

If you believe that God doesn’t want you to be rich, then you need to cross out much of the Old Testament. As one of my buddies from down south says, “Those brothers over their in the ‘front’ part of the Bible were some rich dudes, man.”

One of the first guys that the Bible talks about was named Abraham. This guy took his nephew under his wing and into his mentorship. The nephew gained so much wealth and grew his business so large that the two of them had to part ways because the land could not sustain their massive livestock holdings. God even made a promise to them to give them massive amounts of wealth and real estate.

I’ve always been amazed when people who would talk about heaven and streets of gold and faith, would then turn around and say that “God doesn’t want me to have much.” I like what Bono of the famed rock group U2 says. He says that the God he serves isn’t short of cash, “mister.”

When I was a child, we used to sing a song that said that the whole world is in God's hands. Isn't it wonderful that God wasn't selfish with it? God has shared it, in fact given it, to us.

## **I don't deserve to be wealthy, successful, and happy**

As I've shared about procrastination, it is simply an avoidance of dealing with what I call the "deserve" mechanism of your subconscious mind. You do deserve to be wealthy. You deserve to be healthy. You deserve to be happy. You deserve to have a more than adequate supply of money and resources in your life. You deserve to love and be loved. You were not put here to struggle and barely get by. You were put here to live life to the fullest. You were put here to achieve and succeed.

Put up an argument with that part of you that tells you that you don't deserve it. Come on now. I know you can build a case for this if you allow yourself now. Build a case for why you deserve it.

One piece of evidence that you deserve it is, YOU ARE HERE! I've already shared with you that your life is a miracle. You showed up on this planet. There are things here that were put here for you. Decide today that you deserve it. When you build a strong enough case for your own success, procrastination will be put off forever.



## **Chapter 14**

### **If It Is To Be, It Is Up To Me**

People are always blaming circumstances for what they are. I do not believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and if they cannot find them, they make them.

*George Bernard Shaw*

Attitude is indeed the greatest miracle-working power imaginable. A powerful positive attitude never fails a person; we fail when we give up on our faith.

A powerful positive attitude is like a seed with five phases:

1. **Nesting Phase:** This is the place where you are starting to awaken to the power of your awesome attitude. It is a lot like waking up in the morning and stretching. It has been happening since you started reading this book and considering your own attitude and how it has affected your life.
2. **Testing Phase:** This is the place where you begin to take your new powerful attitude into the real world. You begin to test it. You begin to see things differently. You start noticing that others respond to you differently than in the past. You start to see some definite changes take place in your life experience.

**3. Investing Phase:** This is the time that you begin to show some consistency in your new powerful attitude. You start showing others the new you—the you that has a powerful, positive attitude. You show them that the change that has taken place in you is “here to stay.” This is the place that you start realizing that there will be a return on the new attitude that you now possess.

**4. Arresting Phase:** In this phase, your awareness has grown to the place that you are able to “arrest” your limiting and negative thinking. You “bring negative thoughts into captivity.” You take responsibility for your life, thus taking responsibility for the thinking that has brought you to where you now are. You “catch yourself” in the middle of a negative thinking pattern and immediately redirect your thoughts to the positive.

**5. Cresting Phase:** During this phase is where brain momentum is created. This is the place where right thinking creates new habits and you begin to experience the vast rewards of a powerful attitude.

Something that must take place for your life to begin to turn around is, “you must take responsibility for your life and your thinking.” It is a tough pill for some to swallow but you are who you are, you are where you are, and you have the power or lack of power that you have, because of your choices and your attitude.

The first argument against such thinking is that there are a lot of things that happen to us that we have no control over. That is absolutely a true statement. No question about it. However, what you do with what happens to you (as long as it doesn’t lead to your death and if you are reading this, you are still alive) is completely up to you.

Silvia Gomez was a 16 year old cheerleader, student council leader, honor role candidate every semester, beautiful and extremely popular in her school. On that foggy Friday night as she left her cousin’s house in Southwestern Louisiana, she had no idea how her life was about to change.

Marshall Stedman, a truck driver out of Houston, Texas was driving the big rig filled with gasoline fuel when he hit a patch of wet road around 9:15 p.m. His rig skidded out of control and



directly into the path of Silvia's Toyota Tercel. Silvia lived through the ordeal but was paralyzed from her waist down.

When Silvia faced this unforeseen life-altering situation, she knew that she would have to make a choice regarding her attitude and what she was going to do with this crippling tragedy that life had dealt her. Silvia took her message of courage, of compassion, and of love to the local high school and set out on a campaign to do what author, Dorothea Brand told the world to do a number of years ago: "Wake Up And Live." Brand said to 'act as though it were impossible to fail'.

Silvia has inspired thousands with her positive words of faith and encouragement. She took her "powerful attitude" and is letting the world know, one high school student at a time, that life is to be lived to the fullest no matter what hand you are dealt.

## **You are the only one who can make it happen**

If you are going to be happy, successful, wealthy, and fulfilled in your life, you are the only one who can make it happen. You are the only one needed to make it happen. Your indomitable spirit cannot be suppressed. A determined focus cannot be denied. As the ancient text says, "You will reap if you do not faint."

See yourself successful. Take the time and imagine where you want to be, what you want to be doing, and who you want to be there with. Let yourself dream about it. Formulate the picture in your mind. Take responsibility for what goes on in that awesome computer in your skull.

I made a decision a long time ago that since I didn't appear to possess the natural talents for study and learning, I would work harder, study further, and persevere longer than anyone and everyone else. I recently talked to a dear lady who told me that she was not 'good at' a certain thing. I told her, 'If you aren't good at it and have to work 3 times harder than others, then work 4 times harder and be better than them.'

You don't have to be born with the intelligence of Einstein. You don't have to be born with the physical ability of a great athlete or the talent of a musical prodigy. But you do have to play your own role in your own success.

Choose your thoughts. If you don't choose what you are going to focus on, and think and dream about, someone else will be dictating to you your future. Responsibility is your ability to respond.

## **React to life or respond to life**

I have shared with hundreds over my lifetime that the difference between a “reaction” to life and life’s surprises, and a “response,” is a plan. If you have a plan on how you are going to conduct yourself in life, in situations or in adversity, then you can respond to life. If you don't have a plan, you will react and your outcomes will be far different and far less than what you desire.

## **Learn forgiveness as a way of life**

One choice of responsibility is to decide now that you are going to forgive people who wrong you—quickly and easily. You get hurt once by a single situation or you can get hurt thousands of times by a single situation. You can play it over and over and over in your mind or you can choose to forgive and go on with your life.

## **Thinking determines feeling**

As you take responsibility for how you think each day, you will realize that what and how you think determines how you feel. How you think makes you feel the way that you do. Brain chemistry is influenced every bit as much by chosen thoughts as it can be affected by prescribed medication. You can choose the emotional and psychological states in which you choose to live and allow it to change the way that you feel about life, about yourself, about your past, and about your future. Remember, words (internal and external dialog) create emotions, emotions fuel action, and action determines results.

Deal with how you feel each and every day. If persistent positive input into your conscious and subconscious mind doesn't seem to be working for you then you might need to see a medical doctor and get whatever prescriptions are needed to assist you. If you couple the doctor's prescription with positive, powerful attitudes, you will greatly enhance the effectiveness of getting yourself in a productive and happy state of being.

Everything begins, though, with you taking responsibility. If your life is going to be any different, I can assure it won't be dependent upon when 'good luck' visits you or some miracle takes place. Like Napoleon Hill once said, "You make your own miracles." The greatest miracle you can experience is to realize that if your life is going to change, it is going to be because you decided and made it so.

This attitude needs to be, as I like to say, adapted and adopted. You need to "buy into it" right now. If you will "buy into it" and then assimilate it into your thinking, (planted deep in your subconscious mind) then you will see change take place in your life.

## **Blaming others hurts you**

Bobby blamed Diane for a number of years over his own lack of achieving all that he felt he had the potential for. He stood there in front of my library with his chin almost down on his chest and lamented to me how he had "married badly."

Now he couldn't pay his electric or phone bill and was asking me to help. I told him that I was going to do more for him than he could imagine. I flat out told him that I wasn't going to pay his bills for him. He was going to pay them.

I had his attention as I sat him down to explain. I told Bobby that as soon as I saw his "garbage dump thinking" turn around, I was going to reward his behavior with an opportunity to get the money that he needed. I told him that if he didn't change his attitude immediately, there would be no money for him.

He protested saying that I was treating him like a child. I told him that I only paid electric bills and telephone bills for my children. They certainly didn't pay mine. At first, he almost refused to "put on this act" for me just for some money. I told him that if he would "put on the act" and keep putting it on, he would never want for money to pay his bills again.

Oh, the rest of story? Bobby did what I told him to do and turned his life around. Why? Because he started choosing an attitude that was conducive to his success and he took responsibility for his life.

Most people who see themselves as a “victim” are primarily handicapped in their thinking. You are what you think you are. What you focus on is what you get. Focus on failure; reap failure. Focus on success; reap success. Focus on lack and poverty; reap lack and poverty. Focus on abundance and prosperity; reap abundance and prosperity.

People who tell me that they don’t believe what I say about attitude have never tried it. I’ve been on both sides. I’ve been in the place of constant bombardment of negative and powerless thinking. I’ve now come over to the side of empowering my life and getting my thinking straightened out.

Come on. How can you be “in the know” or an expert in something you’ve never tried or done? You can’t. You can get a hold of your mind and take responsibility for your life and turn it around right now.

The very moment that you choose to take responsibility for where you are, what you have, and who you are in your life, your life changes. In an instant. Don’t ever look back. That other way of living with bad and negative attitudes doesn’t work and never will. Take responsibility and adopt and adapt the powerful thinking, “If it is to be, it is up to me.”

## **Chapter 15**

### **Success Armor**

A thick skin is a gift from God.

***Konrad Adenauer***

Success armor begins with strength of character. Much of our society has falsely believed that it has to do with those who are the most ruthless, devious, and unscrupulous among us. True success comes only from the strength of inner virtue and character.

Character determines the amount of balance that you possess in your life. With balance comes assurance and confidence. With balance comes the peace of mind and clarity of thinking and focus that is required for lasting success. A powerful attitude is built upon a solid foundation of character.

When I began my focus upon who I really am, down deep, then I began to uncover a remarkable and essential key to my own success. I began to daily check up on myself to find out if there was anything lacking in my character. Where I found weakness, I chose to go into isometric character building.

#### **Mental Isometrics**

Physical strength training is best done in isometric exercises. These types of exercises target a muscle or group of muscles in a

given workout segment. It is found to be the most effective means of building and maintaining muscle.

Through meditative practice, I went inside of my own subconscious mind to discover what was holding me back. I made discoveries both to enhance my journey of life and in achieving success. While I was contemplating my potential obstacles, I also chose to tap into the power that I knew was there. I searched for that which would propel me to my ultimate success.

I was recently talking with one of my mentors, success coach Jeffrey Combs, about this daily discipline that I started doing after a prompting by my own intuition. Jeffrey and I made the discovery that it was not so much in finding specific answers to obstacles and keys to success that was important. It was, in fact, that we chose to look at all.

It is then that we are rewarded by seeing major progress in our lives. The fact that you are simply looking for what is holding you back in achieving all that you desire is a quantum step forward in getting to where you want to be.

I started getting myself in a comfortable place and started taking an imaginary tour of my subconscious mind. I imagined that I was able to shrink myself down to a size that allowed me to enter into my own mind and look around. I saw the inner view of my mind, through my imagination, much like one would view the inside of a cave. I saw the stalagmites and stalactites (calcite mounds deposited inside of caves from dripping water) of my mind. I went in like an explorer but I was searching for the truth.

I was specifically looking for “what is holding me back from success?” and “what is it here inside of me that I can tap into that will propel me to success?” The most interesting discovery about doing this daily meditative discipline was that I never found any specific answers. The answers that I sought were simply the actual search itself. It was like my mind was rewarding me for having the courage to ask.

The answers that I did derive from this practice were quite ambiguous and obscure. What I found was that “the search

becomes the answer.” I cannot fully explain this because of the spiritual and esoteric nature of it. It has to be experienced to be understood. I encourage you to attempt this discipline on a regular basis and see what happens for you. You will find the results amazing.

The practice is very simple:

1. Find a place where you can be quiet and uninterrupted for 20-30 minutes.
2. Begin to see the inside of your brain in whatever way that your imagination portrays it; feel yourself in the environment surrounded by your brain.
3. If it helps, see it as if you are inside of a cave.
4. Become aware that in this place, you have stored all of your experiences and memories of life.
5. Recognize that who and what you have become in your life is a sum total of the memories, experiences, and feelings that you have collected over the course of your life.
6. Now, ask yourself, as you look around, “What is it in here, inside of me, that is holding me back from my success and my ultimate destiny?” Take your time and look around. (If this seems at all strange and out of the ordinary to you, it is because it is a bit strange and out of the ordinary. It’s okay, do it anyway; you will see results).
7. Next, ask yourself, “What is it in here that I know is here, which will propel me to the success I know that I deserve and I know that I am destined for?”

You will feel something that feels good. It will likely feel like you are getting some pieces of the puzzle put into place. It will feel right—like you are getting your house in order. You will sense that you’re getting on the path to where you want to go in your life.

When you start doing this exercise as a daily routine, you start building your success armor. You find yourself exposing and facing whatever fears you possess that have kept you from experiencing success, while at the same time tapping into your incredible inner power.

## **You already possess success armor**

Success armor is something you already possess. It is the ability to keep going when others quit. It is the strength to ignore your detractors without having to prove anything to them and without you ever slowing down. It is your own courage to make a decision or several decisions about your life. It is your ability to get on course and remain there until you reach your destination or achieve your goals.

Success armor is the mental toughness and the psychological resolve to achieve and succeed, while maintaining a heart of compassion for those who don't understand you, who don't agree with you, and who aren't going there themselves. Success armor is not developed to make you a robotic monster with a "dare the devil" attitude. It is not developed to make you emotionally cold or calloused. It is an inner resolve that you are going to go where you know you must go.

I have a friend whose family made fun of him for being the "daring entrepreneur" and trying to succeed at several different businesses. He usually had little to no money and seemingly, less direction in his life. They called him a dreamer. (If you were born in my era, you would be familiar with an old song by the great Kenny Rogers with the lyrics "Don't fall in love with a dreamer because he'll leave you every time"). Nonetheless, he stayed the course and never gave up. He was the scourge of his family until he finally started realizing his dreams and watched them pay off.

After he became a multi-millionaire, his family took a new view of him. (I know you are smiling now and you should be). Now, he was selfish, greedy, and obviously dishonest or he would have never been able to "get that much money."

The point here is people are going to have attitudes, and talk and act from where they are in life, not from where you are. You are at the level you are at and they are at the level that they are at.

We inherently expect people to act more mature and be more mature in their lives than they generally are. There is part of our nature that expects more of others than what they are generally able to deliver. Don't get disappointed when others attempt to divert and thwart your efforts for success.



Decide that you are going to deal with you, and you alone. You are going to ask yourself the tougher questions like “What in my character is holding me back?” And “What in my character will carry me to the success that I know I deserve and can achieve?” Jim Rohn says that, “You need to become a millionaire in your life, not for the purpose of making a million dollars, but for what you will become in the process.” Isn’t that what really counts?

The challenge is maintaining the level of compassion, understanding, and tolerance of those who are not at the level of life that you are at, while at the same time never slowing down yourself. This takes resolve. This takes focus. This takes inner peace. This takes character.

## **Character Equals Balanced Living**

The traits of character that you possess will determine who you will be in your life, how much true power you will have, and what you will achieve in your life. I’ve found part of my character to be challenged by what others call “impossibilities.”

I was different to many kids when I was growing up, although I know you will possibly identify with what I am about to say. Most often, I performed best when challenged and stirred up. My coaches would make me angry to get me going. It worked. (I would have rather had a “powerful attitude” that fueled my passion but at the time, I used whatever worked). I loved for someone to tell me that such and such was impossible. I went at it with abandonment to prove that they were wrong.

Jesus of Nazareth said that “all things are possible to those who believe.” I choose to be a believer. To most people, that phrase only states that they are of a certain religious creed. To me, it means that “I believe.” I believe that the seemingly impossible is possible. I believe that you can go from nothing to abundance in your life. I believe in the opportunities that are available to us as citizens of the free world. It inspires me to action when others talk about what’s not possible.

I read this recently from an email I received.

**Impossible is just a big word thrown around by small men who find it easier to live in the world they’ve been given than to explore the power they have to change it. Impossible is not a**

**fact. It's an opinion. Impossible is not a declaration, it is a dare. Impossible is potential. Impossible is temporary.**

Success armor looks at adversity as an opportunity to get stronger and get better. Success armor is built in the tough times. Success armor views obstacles as opportunities. It is the inner resolve of character built upon self trust, faith, commitment, integrity, personal reflection, devotion, discipline, action, and a powerful attitude. It is self-mastery over your choices and decisions.

## **Chapter 16**

# **What Do You Love About Life?**

Do what you love; the money will follow.

***Marsha Sinetar***

One of the greatest stories of following what you love is the story of Milton Hershey. Milton loved chocolate. Who doesn't? The food products that bear Milton S. Hershey's name represent an ongoing dedication to quality and value—a commitment established by Hershey Foods' unique founder.

In the early 1900s, Milton Hershey made one of the great American fortunes through dogged persistence and the courage to pursue a dream. Though he was modest and unassuming in appearance, Mr. Hershey was a shrewd and determined businessman. He had a genius for timing and an instinctive ability to choose loyal and able people to help him.

The early years of Milton Hershey instilled in him the value of hard work. He was born on September 13, 1857, in a farmhouse near the Central Pennsylvania village of Derry Church. He was a descendant of people who had come to Pennsylvania from Switzerland and Germany in the 1700s. Raised as a Mennonite, he attended school only through to the fourth grade before his father, Henry Hershey, put him to work as a printer's apprentice in Gap, Pennsylvania.

It soon became apparent his talents did not lie in printing, he went on to become an apprentice to a Lancaster candy-maker. In 1876 at

the age of 18, he opened his own candy shop in Philadelphia. The business failed after six years. The next stop was Denver, Colorado, where he accepted a job with a local caramel manufacturer. There, he learned that superior results could be achieved when fresh milk was used in the caramel-making process.

Mr. Hershey moved on to Chicago in 1883, then to New Orleans and later to New York City—attempting to establish his own candy business in each location. He returned to Lancaster, in 1886, where, after raising the necessary capital, he began the business which established his reputation as a candy-maker—the Lancaster Caramel Company.

## **Knowledge and Foresight**

Mr. Hershey became fascinated with German chocolate-making machinery on exhibit at the Chicago International Exposition in 1893. He bought the equipment for his Lancaster plant and soon began producing his own chocolate coatings for caramels.

In early 1894, the Hershey Chocolate Company was born as a subsidiary of his Lancaster caramel business. In addition to chocolate coatings, Mr. Hershey made breakfast cocoa, sweet chocolate, and baking chocolate.

In 1900, Mr. Hershey sold the Lancaster Caramel Company for \$1 million. However, he retained the chocolate manufacturing equipment and the rights to manufacture chocolate, believing a large market existed for affordable confections that could be mass produced. He proceeded to prove his case.

He returned to his birthplace, Derry Church, and located his chocolate manufacturing operation in the heart of Pennsylvania's dairy country. There he could obtain the large supplies of fresh milk needed to make fine milk chocolate.

In 1903, with the money he received for his caramel business, he began to build what is now the world's largest chocolate manufacturing plant. It opened in 1905, and Mr. Hershey's great contribution to the American food industry had begun—the mass production of milk chocolate. Milton Hershey's employees were

manufacturing and selling products which would become American traditions.

The chocolate business continued to thrive under Mr. Hershey's guidance, as did the community he established around it. A bank, department store, school, park, churches, golf courses, zoo, and even a trolley system (to bring in workers from nearby towns) were all built in rapid succession. Although the town was well established by its 10th anniversary in 1913, Mr. Hershey started a second building boom in the 1930s. During the Depression, he kept men at work constructing a grand hotel, a community building, a sports arena, and a new office building for the chocolate factory.

Mr. Hershey's belief that an individual is morally obligated to share the fruits of success with others resulted in significant contributions to society. Together with his wife, Catherine, he established the most prominent of his philanthropic endeavors—the Hershey Industrial School—in 1909. It is now called the Milton Hershey School. Saddened because they had no children of their own, the Hersheys were anxious to put their growing fortune to good use.

Today, the 10,000-acre school houses and provides education for nearly 1,100 children whose family lives have been disrupted. Through the Hershey Trust Company, the School owns 31.4 percent of Hershey Foods' Common Stock classes outstanding, controls 76 percent of the corporation's voting shares, and is a direct beneficiary of Hershey Foods' success. In addition, Hershey Trust Company owns 100 percent of the stock of Hershey Entertainment and Resort Company, another firm developed from several smaller businesses established by Milton Hershey.

A man of principle, Mr. Hershey was a “doer” not a philosopher. He never wrote and seldom spoke about his beliefs. Nevertheless, he obviously thought a lot about such matters as success and the value and purpose of money. Throughout his life, he was committed to the highest standards of quality, honesty, fairness, and integrity. His imagination and drive, his ceaseless labor and his care and concern for others were an inspiration to all who worked with him.

Milton Hershey was the rarest of men—both a dreamer and a builder. He had the genius to develop his chocolate business in the right place at the right time. His personal convictions about the obligations of wealth and the quality of life in the town he founded have made the company, community, and school a living legacy.

Milton Hershey did what he loved to do. He discovered his passion and pursued it relentlessly. Think about him again. How many people would warmly accept you and embrace you if you told them that you were going into the business of making chocolate? Wouldn't most people consider you insane?

A golden key to long-term happiness in whatever you do in your life is, "You must love it enough to possess a passion for doing it." Milton Hershey loved chocolate. I know...you love chocolate too. But Milton Hershey loved it so much that he created a dynasty that reached farther than most could dream. He affected people's lives and made an impact that has changed, not just Derry Church, Pennsylvania, but the whole world.

Do what you love to do. Don't just go and do something for the money. Do it because you feel passionate about it. Then and only then can true success and happiness fill your life.

## **Chapter 17**

# **You Deserve It**

Is it okay with you if I succeed?

*Noah St. John*

Having been told the word “No!” thousands of times, and having been denied anything that seemed fun and pleasurable, most of us go through life thinking that we deserve nothing but pain, misery, and poverty. We are never given permission to succeed by authority figures, thus we won’t allow ourselves the freedom to be happy and to pursue our purpose and our dreams.

Suzanne came to me beaten down as a result of being beaten up by life. Suzanne had lived as tens of thousands of women live in the world today. She had a wonderful lifestyle. Marrying Don, the president of her high school senior class, honor student in college and all but “breezing” through medical school, she had married herself a surgeon.

Don grew up in an upper middle class home, the son of an overbearing and verbally abusive tyrannical father. Like so many people that I have encountered, Don had a genius I.Q. but the emotional security and maturity level of a newborn. He made more money than he and Suzanne could’ve ever imagined when they started out their life together. This provided a lavish style of living for his wife and their two kids.

Suzanne spent a large portion of her days involved in various social events with local civic organizations and at the posh country club. Her cell phone was her lifeline to Don and he used it to control almost her every move.

Don kept an occasional mistress, never hiding it, explaining it, or apologizing for it. He claimed it ‘was natural’ for a man of his standing, social stature, and means. Suzanne simply learned to adjust in order to keep up the facade of contentment and happiness.

Don’s darkest secret was that he was an abuser like his father. His tirades were taken out upon Suzanne and his children. Suzanne became a prisoner to the lifestyle that she had grown so accustomed to over the past 15 years. When she finally let down her, “Everything is beautiful and my life is wonderful” mask, she was an emotional zombie.

She first came in with a few things that she needed to talk about. The inner depths of the darkness she lived began surfacing after the second appointment.

Suzanne had never been given permission to be herself. She was what Don had molded her into and what he thought she should be. When I started telling her that she deserved to be happy, she looked at me puzzled as if I had just told her that she was in line to be the next Queen of England. According to the life belief she carried, she didn’t “deserve” anything.

Many of the people that I have counseled over the past 15 years feel that all they deserve from life is pain and punishment. Whether they feel that they owe their parents, they owe the world, they owe God or whatever, they are living in an emotional nightmare. They feel that they owe someone for their lives.

Go with me for a moment and visualize this scene. However you view it, God decided to make an investment. God saw the potential that lies within you. God decided to make an investment into history, into the world, and into our society. The decision was made to take an incredible asset and set it in place where it could flourish and reap the returns of its incredible value. God’s investment is YOU!

God made the investment of YOU with the expectation of getting a substantial return. God made the investment of YOU in order to grow a great fortune. I heard a saying once that said, “The fact that



we are given life is God's gift to us; what we do with the life we are given, is our gift to God." I would go further and say that it is not just our gift to God, but it is our gift to the world and our gift to ourselves.

## **You Deserve Happiness**

Let me say that by virtue of the fact that you were born, you deserve to be happy. You deserve to experience peace, love, joy, and abundance. It is your right to be happy. In fact, it is your responsibility to be happy. I mean genuinely happy from within. At peace with yourself, at peace with others, and at peace with God. You deserve happiness!

Let's stop here for just a minute and do a little exercise. Sit up straight for just a moment. Set your gaze at about a 45 degree angle above the horizon. Smile for just a minute. (If you have nothing to smile about, imagine seeing the President of the United States wearing pink underwear or if the President is a woman by the time that you read this, see her wearing a thick dark mustache; now I've got you smiling).

Now, say to yourself out loud, "You know, Michael Murphy is right. I do have the right to be happy. I deserve to have peace, love, and abundance in my life. I do deserve to feel good about myself and my life." Having done that, notice how you feel upon completing that last syllable. You feel good, don't you?

## **Is Feeling Good Important to Life?**

Let me give a detailed explanation as to why you feel good when doing this little exercise. Let's look at this in minute detail and examine why you feel wonderful, empowered, and encouraged by making those statements. Are you ready to find out why these words make you feel that way? Here is the secret. Are you ready? Okay. You feel good about saying those things about yourself, "BECAUSE IT IS THE TRUTH!" That's right. You got it. IT IS TRUE! If it were not true, it wouldn't feel that way.

You deserve happiness. You deserve peace. You deserve love.

Let me ask you, do you deserve oxygen, food, clothing, shelter? Of course you do. Why? Because you were born. Because you showed up. You weren't put here under some kind of special circumstances to be miserable and unhappy. You were put here to live life; to thrive; to get the most out of this short journey. Happiness isn't a wage that you receive being perfect. It is a right that you have.

Why accept standards set by people you may not even know? Why accept standards set by this mysterious force called "society"? Why accept standards set by circumstances? Can circumstances change? Yes they can. Can you change circumstances? Of course you can. You simply make a decision and act on it.

I grew up thinking that I was average. As long as I believed that, listened to others, and went along in order to "not rock the boat," I was exactly what others expected of me. In time, that belief changed. I sought long and hard enough, dug deep enough, and found out that I was more than what others thought I was. I found out that I was more than I thought I was. I found out that I deserved happiness.

There is no sin that you can't be or aren't forgiven of. There isn't any deed that you've done that can't be a seed for experiencing a greater life. Whatever you've done to mess up your life or the lives of others, get up and do something about changing it. Do it right now!

You deserve to have an exciting, achievement-filled, productive, fulfilling life. You are the investment of something far bigger and greater than yourself. You are here for the purpose of growing in value, discovering your genius, and being successful (whatever "success" is to you).

You can sit there like a rock and occupy space on this earth. Or you can get up and do something with your mind. Your mind is the most powerful computer on the planet. What are you doing with it?

I like what the great Jim Rohn says. "The books you never read will never impact your life or change the direction of your

destiny.” I started out with low self-esteem, lack of initiative, a learning disability, and with no faith in myself. I have worked at this project called “ME” now for over 25 years. I’m starting to like what I see. I’m starting to see some pay off for my efforts.

Let me tell you that until you begin to change your thoughts, change your words about yourself and change the way that you feel, you won’t do anything to change the destiny of your life. However, when you do change your thoughts, change your words, and change your feelings and actions, your results will start changing as well.

Specifically, what you get out of life will start changing. Your finances. Your love needs. Your emotional needs. Your spiritual needs. It will change when you make the decisions required for them to change.

Start by saturating your mind with permission to win; permission to succeed. Take on the attitude that you are going to “marinate” your mind with permission to have all that you want from life. Like sweet wine into a luscious filet, let your awesome attitude seep into and marinate your thinking. Hold your thoughts in your consciousness until they begin to replace the limiting beliefs in your subconscious.

Start telling yourself that you do deserve your heart’s desire. Change the “deserve factor” in your thinking and get started on all that you were meant to do, have, and accomplish.



## **Chapter 18**

### **Why? Why Not? Why Not You? Why Not Now?**

Some men see things as they are and ask, ‘why?’ I dream things that never were and ask, ‘why not?’

**Robert Francis Kennedy**

For years I have used “Aslan” as the name of one of my organizations. I’ve had people look at me and wonder what it meant. I’ve had people who have called it some kind of “New Age” name or word. Others have thought it to be Greek or Hebrew. With the advent of the movie, “The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe,” many are now understanding what I’ve been talking about over the last two decades.

In the movie, Aslan asks some very personal, reflective, thought-provoking questions. He asks, “Why? Why Not? Why Not You? Why Not Now?” Awesome questions.

#### **Why?**

“Why?” represents purpose. I love what my daughter says to me when I ask her certain questions. When she has no good excuse or

reason for whatever it is I am asking her, she simply says, “Because I can.” (She likely learned that from her father—“Moi”).

“Why?” demands an answer that is usually related to your life purpose. Purpose is destiny. Though I appreciate the positive attitude reflected in my daughter’s response, your “why” needs to be strong if you are going to do all that you were put here to do. There needs to be an underlying reason that supports the subsequent action or deed to be accomplished.

A purpose is motivating. A purpose demands action. Action comes easier when you know your “why.” When pursuing something great, you might simply come up with the same answer as my daughter. “Why” do something great? Because you can. “Why” write a book? Because I have something to say. “Why” start that business? Because you can. “Why” attempt to do what others dare not? Because it’s there.

When Sir Edmund Hillary was asked “why” he wanted to climb Everest, he simply replied, “Because it is there.” There is obviously much more to his “why” than just the fact that the mountain existed. The fact that it seemed unconquerable was enough “why” for Hillary. It was a test of the human spirit. No one had ever done it before. It beckoned a human being to conquer it. This was the motivation that Sir Edmund needed. It was all that he needed.

## **Why Not?**

Aslan's second question was, “Why not?” “Why not” attempt great things?” “Why not” set big goals? “Why not” attempt to do that which most believe to be impossible? “Why not” become wealthy? “Why not” dare to do what others have only dreamed about? “Why not” get started right now? “Why not” take the first step? “Why not” believe in yourself, in your talents, and in your abilities? “Why not” dream big? “Why not” do big things?

When others say what cannot be done, you say instead, “Why not?” When others act, talk, and think about failure, you say “why

not” succeed instead? Most people will wrongfully reason that they “can’t” do a certain thing. “Can’t” really means “I won’t.”

Enjoy this little poem that speaks volumes of truth.

**“The Thing that Couldn’t be Done”**

Somebody said that it couldn't be done,  
but he, with a chuckle replied  
That maybe it couldn't but he would be one  
Who wouldn't say so till he tried.  
So, he buckled right in with a trace of a grin  
on his face. If he worried, he hid it,  
He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
That couldn't be done and he did it.

Somebody scoffed: “Oh, you'll never do that:  
At least, it has never been done,”  
But he took off his coat and he took off his hat,  
And the first thing we knew he'd begun,  
With the lift of his chin and a bit of a grin  
Without any doubting or quit it,  
He started to sing as he tackled the thing  
That couldn't be done and he did it.

There are thousands to tell you it cannot be done,  
There are thousands to prophesy failure;  
There are thousands to point out to you, one by one,  
The dangers that wait to assail you.

But just buckle in with a bit of a grin  
Then take off your coat and go to it;  
Just start in to sing as you tackle the thing  
that cannot be done and you'll do it.

I believe that at this point, Aslan was saying “why not” to stir up within each of us the latent abilities that beg to be called upon and put into action. This question, as well as the others, were not questions to which he was awaiting an answer. These questions are challenges to you and me. In fact, Aslan is pronouncing that there is no reason “why not” to attempt great things. There is every

reason, as Jim Rohn says, that “you can become wealthy, powerful, and wonderful.”

I see people building cases against their own success and happiness. Like an attorney, they interview others who will support their case for failure and mediocrity. They seek out witnesses to support their case. They take depositions from like-minded people.

Have you ever noticed how negative people attract people like themselves? Have you ever noticed how positive winners also attract people like themselves? We are all attorneys, proving our case for success or failure. For peace or chaos. For happiness and fulfillment, or for depression and frustration.

What case in life are you trying to prove? Do you want to prove that you can be successful? Do you want to prove that you can be wealthy and highly successful? Do you want to prove that you possess awesome value, abilities and talents? Then you will find like-minded people and take their depositions, testimonies, and “eye witness” (“I” witness) accounts of success and achievement.

Do you want to validate your failure, misery, and frustration? Then go find people who have chosen, along with you, to stay small and do nothing in their lives. There are plenty of people like this. You shouldn't have to make much effort (which, if you are this kind of person, you obviously don't want to have to put forth much effort). There are plenty of people who love their misery and choose to stay in it.

Ah, but that's not you. You wouldn't be reading this if that were you. Failure might be for someone (in reality, it's not for anyone), but it is definitely not for you. Mediocrity might be for someone, but not for you. Others can act small, be-little and the like, but not you. You've chosen to live at a higher level.

## **Why Not You?**

That brings us to the third challenge that Aslan set forth. “Why not you?” So...why not you? Why shouldn't you be happy, wealthy, and fulfilled? Why shouldn't you achieve all and more than you



ever imagined? Why can't you be successful? Others have. Is there some kind of curse that you can't overcome that is keeping you from success? The only curse that you or I have is that which we pronounce upon ourselves.

If someone is going to do something great, then "why not you?" You will prove your case in the courtroom of your life. Let's list some reasons "why you can" be great, wealthy, wonderful, and fulfilled.

I've met numerous people who think that somehow things are just not going to work for them. They've read story after story of people coming from far greater disadvantaged places in life than they have, yet they persist in feeling that somehow, things wouldn't turn out the same for them. This is erroneous thinking. I should also say blatantly, it is wrong thinking.

If someone else can do something great or wonderful, why can't you? You are unique. You fulfill a role on this planet that no one else can fill. There is no one just like you.

I believe that if you don't do what you were put here to do then something isn't going to get done. There is no one else to "take up the slack" for what you didn't do. Oh, it might eventually get done some time in the future. But why should you or anyone else have to wait? If you don't do what you were put here to do, I believe that progress for all of mankind will be delayed. Your role in this world is "that" important.

## **World's Best Golfer at Night**

I read a story yesterday about an Israeli golfer. In fact, he is the top golfer in his class in the world. There are thousands who play in his class although there are only about a hundred who do so competitively. He is the very best in his class.

His name is Zohar Sharon. He is known to hit birdies often, a few eagles and last year, a classic hole in one. He has won championships in Scotland, Australia, the United States, and Canada. He has even paired off with former President Gerald Ford.

Why is he in a special class of golfers? Zohar is blind.

Thirty years ago, as a paratrooper in the Israeli army, a fellow soldier accidentally sprayed a chemical in Sharon's eyes causing his blindness. At the age of 28, he found himself more helpless than an infant. He attempted to play golf for a few years but became frustrated and quit.

He later met Ricardo Cordoba-Core, a sports psychologist from Bolivia. Cordoba-Core became his coach. For nine months, Cordoba-Core taught Sharon how to visualize the ball, how to move when he swung a club, and the intricate details of his game. Then, and only then, Cordoba-Core allowed him to hit his first ball.

Sharon gains tremendous satisfaction out of knowing that other “seeing” golfers become a bit disturbed and frightened when thinking of facing off with him. He declared himself to be “the greatest golfer at night.”

What is special about Sharon’s daring and courageous spirit? Despite being blind, this man has adopted the attitude of “Why not me?” He admits that he has had a severe battle with depression and self-pity. Yet despite all that he has gone through, he has maintained a positive attitude and accomplished what others would deem impossible.

Doesn't that story inspire you to say, “If a blind man can play golf like that, then I can do whatever I set my mind to do!” If you aren't thinking that right now, you should be.

What is it that you long to do in your life? What is it that stands as “your dream” in your heart and mind? What is it that you’ve seen others attempt and achieve? Why not you? Why can’t you do it?

I like what Dr. Robert Schuler has so wisely proclaimed. Dr. Schuler says, “Inch by inch anything’s a cinch.” You may not be able to do great things today but you can do something.

## **Why Not Now?**

That brings us to the fourth and last challenge that Aslan set forth. “Why not now?” You may not step upon the podium of champions

today to receive the gold medal, but you can get started. The glory of being a champion is in knowing the relentless spirit and work that has gone into achieving something worthwhile.

I hear people say all the time, “I don't know what to do to fulfill my dream.” I've used something with my children which is quite effective. I ask them, “If you did know how, what would you do?” Invariably, they say, “But dad, I just said I don't know what to do.” I reply, “But let's pretend that you did know what to do. What would it be?” I persist until they come up with something. They eventually will.

As adults, we live in the fear that we are “going to do the wrong thing.” The only “wrong thing” that you can do is to do nothing. Every action you take that doesn't work out like you wanted is something you won't have to repeat later. You at least now know one more thing that doesn't work. Success is often simply a process of eliminating what doesn't work on the way to discovering “what does and will work.”

I heard someone once say that getting started is half the battle. I don't know how accurate that statement is but I will say that getting started and keeping going is at least 99% of the battle. You don't have to possess the IQ of Einstein to be successful. Persistence is always of much greater value than intelligence.

## **So why not you and why not now?**

Get up and get going. Make the argument for your success. Stop building a case against your success. Start building a case for it. Use these four powerful questions as challenges to help you achieve all and more than you've ever dreamed.



## **Chapter 19**

### **Quit Playing Small**

There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

*Marianne Williamson*

Bobby told me that he felt like he was lower than a snail's belly. "Everything is upside down in my life. My wife doesn't like me. My boss despises me. My children don't respect me. I can't get ahead. Every time I try to do something to improve my life, it seems to be doomed before I begin. My whole life has been this way. It is my fate to be nothing, do nothing, and have nothing."

Isn't it amazing that when a person gets in to the place that Bobby found himself, somehow, if we verbalize all that we feel, we still sense that there can be some kind of payoff even if only soliciting sympathy from those who might listen to us?

### **Take Inventory of Your Life**

Let's take an inventory of your life—who you are, where you've been, how you got here and most importantly, where you are

going. First, you were conceived miraculously. That's right. Your birth was a miracle. As I've shared with you, the chances of you being here is at least several million to one.

Secondly, you own a computer that would rival the great Kray computer or any other computer that will ever be designed and invented. Your brain has the ability to do more than the most powerful computer in the world.

One example of the power of your mind is that, at this very moment, you can decide to change your life and take action in order to start the process of transforming your life experience. No computer can do that.

I was recently staying in a hotel in downtown Los Angeles, California. The hotel is the famed Biltmore Hotel, which was once a favorite playground for the rich and famous of Hollywood. I looked at a map of downtown and saw that just a few blocks away stood the old Grand Central Market. My hotel was directly across the street from a lovely downtown park called Pershing Square.

Next to the square is the street that the market is located on. I looked at the map and then set it aside, trusting my memory to get me to there. The park was full of people and a reggae band was playing some songs on a sound stage. I got sidetracked with the events taking place in the park for about an hour. I then set back out on my intended destination, the old Grand Central Market.

Inadvertently, I walked out of the park and started walking in the opposite direction of the market which was only about three blocks away. I ended up in an area of town where I saw several homeless people.

One guy was crouched in a corner next to some buildings yet still on the main sidewalk. I couldn't tell what he was doing until I turned around and headed back to where I had just walked after I realized I was going the wrong way. For the first time in my life, I experienced a man smoking from a crack cocaine pipe right there on the sidewalk.

I also came into face to face contact with numerous people who were asking for money. I saw dozens of mentally ill people talking to themselves. It was a far cry from the small town in Texas where I grew up.

I stopped on one corner just to take in everything that I was experiencing. I had gone the wrong way. But I believe it was for a reason.

Like on many of my trips to Europe, I had an “Ah-ha!” experience. Standing there, I realized that aside from those who suffered mental illness, the opportunity is only just out of reach for the rest of those people to have, do, and be anything that they want in this great land of opportunity in which we live.

As I shared earlier, the only thing that is truly holding most of us back is our thoughts and our actions. When we learn to think right and then take action towards goals and what we want in our life, then our lives can be and will be transformed. We are truly amazing beings with phenomenal opportunities.

Your playing small will not get you what you want in life or from life. Self pity and taking actions that do nothing but lower your concept of your self worth and personal esteem will not make you rich, happy, fulfilled, or successful. Your excuses and reasoning for not being where you want to be in your life will not get you there either.

I’ve met a lot of people with an “if only” mindset. “If only I had a new job.” “If only I could do what so and so does.” “If only someone would help me and see my potential and my present predicament.” “If only I could get a break.” “If only I could find that one person who would love me the way that I need and deserve to be loved.” “If only I had more money.” “If only I could do this, have that, be someone else.”

Friend, an “if only” mindset is a “not ever” guarantee for your life. It keeps you small in your own heart and mind. It has never worked for anyone and you are no exception. It won’t work for you either.

Whether you currently realize it or not, you have all the abilities right now to be more than you can dream or imagine. Right now, within your heart and mind, you have what it takes to go from where you are to where you want to be. You have the power to decide, in this moment, that you are going to see your life change.

I met a guy once who was visiting the college where I was attending. He shared with me how he was about to start going to college there. He said that he already had it figured out that he was going to be able to do his undergraduate work in two and a half years and then go on to medical school and become a doctor in six years. He was attempting to convince me (and himself) that he was going to skip what most people had to go through to become a well respected and well compensated medical doctor.

I too wished that I could jump over all the hurdles of life and get everything I want without having to do what others have to do. I'm not saying that you won't get some breaks along the way. I am saying that breaks come after massive shifts in thinking and action occur.

If the 'wishing well' concept worked, millions would become highly successful in life. I'm not knocking the wishing well but I am saying that until you change your mindset, how you see yourself and the actions that you must take, your life isn't going to change.

Begin to visualize yourself being where you want to be. Recognize how far you've already come towards being, doing, and having the things that you've dreamed of. How would you feel in that moment of fulfillment? What would your environment look like? Begin right now to imagine yourself "there."

## **Act Now**

Now, get up and do something about it. Start taking small steps towards what you want in your life. Make the first step and then the second step. If you don't know the "exact" steps to take, at least start taking "some" steps. If they turn out to not be the "right"



steps, then at least you will know what steps don't take you to where you want to go.

The key here is that you have to get moving. Do what you have to do now to provide for yourself and your family. While doing that, take back control of your mind and your imagination. No one can control your inner world unless you allow them to. You have complete authority over how you think and how you use your imagination.

If you find yourself in self-pity often, I want to help you up out of this debilitating hole as well. The most compassionate thing that I can say to you right now is, "self pity will not get you what you want nor get you where you want to go in your life."

If you've been wronged by someone or even by a group of people, only you can decide what you are going to do with that. If you've faced setback after setback after setback, only you can decide what you are going to do with your experiences. Use your experiences as stepping stones for your success.

Rather than allowing yourself to wallow in the mire and muck of self-pity, decide that you are going to allow your pain and your hurt to work as steps to your mountain of success. Trade in your "if only" mindset for a "if I will" mentality. Say this right now.

"If I will change my thinking, my experience will change."

"If I will change my inner dialogue, my outer experience will change."

Then turn that dialogue into the most powerful "I am" dialogue. Say this right now.

"I am changing from the inside out."

"I am thinking clearer, more positively, and more creatively than I ever have before."

"I am more than I've ever imagined."

"I am highly able and capable."

“I am a miracle.”

Friend, I feel the power of these statements even as I write them here for you. Use your power and quit playing small. You aren't small. You are big in power, big in creativity, big in imagination, big in ability, skill, and talent. Whatever your mind can think of or imagine, you can do and become, starting right now. Believe in yourself. I believe in you.

Begin to shift your concept of yourself and get up and get going. You are going to be successful, fulfilled, and joyful when you do so.

## **Chapter 20**

### **Extreme Attitudes**

“The ultimate key to being enormously successful in any endeavor is to be extreme in owning your attitude for success.”

***Michael Murphy***

The moment that I heard this single phrase come out of my mouth, I knew that it was the ultimate key to success in anything and everything that a person wants to be, to have, or to achieve in their life. It turned on within me the true innate power of success that I had long sought. I can give you my ironclad guarantee that when you adopt this attitude, you will be successful in whatever you set your heart, mind, and hand to for the rest of your life.

You have to have some kind of leverage over your own inertia to not only motivate you, but to get you over the hump of “knowing” that you can achieve all that you desire. This is the leverage that you need. Ready?

The ultimate key to getting anything and everything that you want in life is to take the attitude:

**I’m going to achieve my goal or I’m going to die trying.**

This phrase first struck a perfect chord in my mind when rapper, 50 cent, came out with the movie using this phrase as its title. I honestly don't know what 50 cent is all about or what the movie is about. There has been a lot of controversy regarding his quite controversial background in drugs and crime. Whatever his background, I am confident that when he took this attitude, his success as a hip-hop megastar was guaranteed. Your success is also guaranteed when you adapt and adopt this same attitude.

Let me begin by saying this—you won't die trying. Success never killed anyone. Having more money than you will ever spend doesn't kill you. Worry, anxiety, frustration, disappointment, low self-respect, can and will kill you. Success won't.

I met an elderly man on a flight from Los Angeles to Dallas who said something to me that I think many people feel but are afraid to admit. When he asked me what I did, I told him, "I do everything in my power to help as many people as I can to achieve their dreams and goals in their lives." He said to me, "You're not one of those rah-rah, you-can-have-anything-you-want-in-life type nit-wits that go around building a bunch of false hope in people are you?" I said, "No, sir. I've never built false hope in anyone. The hope that I build in people's lives is real and will help you achieve all you were meant to achieve in your life."

I have found that people are afraid of the "price" they may have to pay for success. I can tell you right now that the price of success is far less than the price of life-long failure, disappointment and "I wish I had of." When you adopt the former attitude, you will succeed. It doesn't matter whether you have a dime in the bank or not. Once you make the internal decision that "I'm going to stake my life on my success and achievement," you **MUST** succeed.

When I was a kid, my mother said of me, "That boy will do whatever he sets his mind to do." Now what I did wasn't always what was good for me. I was, what they called back then, "hard headed." I like to call it "iron willed."

Much of the time we need to get leverage on all the negativity that has been put into our subconscious minds. The key of taking on the attitude of "doing it or die trying" is just the leverage that you need in your life.

## **You Do Have You**

All you really have in your life is YOU. You have a brain. You have a will. You have dreams and desires. You have the ability to visualize where you want to be right now and who you want to be there with. It doesn't matter whether you're handicapped or in perfect health, whether your skin is dark or light, whether you live in Brooklyn or BelAir. Whether you are massively wealthy or living on the streets, you still have YOU. And I know, my friend, that you are powerful and valuable beyond anything you've ever imagined.

There is a switch inside of you, right now, that can be flipped on and will change the course of your life. There is a decision that you can make to transform your experience, right now.

## **What If You Think You're Too Old?**

Just a few days before I wrote what you are reading, I was in a local megastore with my mother. As she shopped, I sat down on a bench with a much older gentleman who was sporting a lot of turquoise jewelry, a cane with a brass lion's head atop it, flowing curly white hair, and the brightest of blue eyes.

We started talking about life and he shared with me his many travels around the world. He told of adventures in Antarctica, Alaska, Russia, and other places around the globe. He told me how he was a retired military officer and shared many wonderful stories. He asked me what I did and I told him.

He asked me, "Do you think you could do anything with an old coot like me?" I told him that I knew that deep down inside of him, he still had dreams and desires he had not yet realized. I told him, "Sir, there is a little pocket down inside of you that contains a little ball. The mass of the ball is made up of an ingredient I call 'greatness'. You have inside of you right now, a dream, a goal or something that says that your life still counts and that you possess a massive gold mine in your soul."

This older gentleman's bright blue eyes sparkled and began to glisten as I started drawing out of him what I knew he still possessed.

He said, “You know, I always wanted to write a book about all I’ve done in my life. Do you think I could still do it?” I emphatically told him, “No! I don’t think you can do it. I ‘know’ that you can.” I said, “Sir, I’m going to give you something that will get you started.” He had turned to me and given me his complete attention at this point.

I continued, “Sir, I’m going to give you permission to go get started on your dream of writing about your incredible adventures around the world. Now, go get started right now.”

I got his phone number so I could check up on him. He’s going to write that book. He’s either going to do it or he is going to hate me for badgering him until he does.

I was pulling through drive through at Arby’s one day, getting a sandwich. When I ordered a regular roast beef and a cup of water, the young lady seemed to get terribly confused. When I approached the window, she was attempting to ring my order up but seemed to be having trouble.

I asked her, “Is there a problem with my order?” She said, “Sir, there is no place on the register for water. I don’t think we can sell a cup of water.” I smiled and replied, “Yes, you can. In fact, just grab a cup and go over to the fountain and find the water spout and fill it up. Put a lid on it. Get me a straw and bring it to me.” She smiled big and said, “Oh, okay.” I think all she needed was permission to do what she could do all the time.

That little story might sound ridiculously simple, but I bet that if you aren’t in pursuit of your dreams right now, you have excuses that are just as ridiculous as that young lady expressed that day.

People become experts in explaining why they can’t succeed. They take depositions and testimonies from themselves explaining why they can’t be successful, happy, and fulfilled. This kind of thinking sets off brain chemistry that makes them feel bad physically which in turn supports all the excuses as to why they can’t have what they want in life.

I think all you need right now is permission to go and live a wonderful, successful, and happy life. I’m giving you that permission. Make a decision right now that you are going to attain and achieve all your goals or you are going to die trying. Go ahead

and allow yourself to go there right now. Imagine your life as you know it can be and will be after you own this new attitude.

You deserve to be happy, healthy, and wealthy in every aspect of your life. Prosperity is your right. Happiness is your right.

Adopt and adapt the powerful attitudes of success that you've learned here in this book. One day, I believe that you and I are going to meet and you are going to tell me your story. I see that day now. You are going to tell me where you were and how your life has been transformed when you made the decision to take responsibility for where you were and what you were. You are going to tell me how you were transformed by adopting the powerful attitudes that I've shared with you.

Let me say one last thing to you. Always know this:

### **I BELIEVE IN YOU**

I believe in your awesome potential. You have a gift that no one else has. You have a destiny that is just waiting for you to fulfill. I believe that you are going to get there and go beyond all that you've dreamed of and imagined.

Get up. Get your attitude up. Get your hopes and expectations up because you are about to go up to a place where you deserve to be.





## **MY FINAL ENCOURAGEMENT TO YOU**

“What if I told you that you are already more than enough to complete the job of fulfilling your dreams? What if I told you that you have been waiting all your life for this moment right now? What if all you’ve really ever needed is someone who would tell you that you deserve to be healthy, wealthy, successful and fabulous? What if all you’ve ever dreamed of becoming or doing, is on your doorstep at this very moment? Have you been waiting on someone who will believe in you? Have you been waiting for a person to drop their mask and tell you point blank that you are awesome? That you can do and be all you’ve ever imagined. What if I am that ‘someone’ that you needed, to give that little extra ‘ump’ to take you over the top? What if all your life, you’ve been waiting to meet me here, in the pages of this book?

My friend, you are not limited by the place of your birth, the color of your skin, the creed of your culture, the flag of your country or the circumstances of your past. You are only limited by the magnitude of your vision, the extent of your faith and the vastness of your willingness to take action. If your dream haunts you day and night, makes you stay up late and get up early, it is likely that you have discovered your life’s purpose and reason for being born. If you can’t break it, shake it or shirk it; if you dreamed about as a child or despaired over it as an adult, it is probably that you have discovered your destiny. If no one believes in you, then believe in yourself and as long as I live, I will believe in you. If it is your dream, then it is important. If you are crying on the inside with quiet desperation, then know this. I was born to be here with you

now, in person or in print; you and I had an appointment to be here now. You are now at the crossroads of destiny, your destiny. I kept this appointment to say to you, 'YES'. 'Yes, you can. Yes, even you!' When no one else will give you the encouragement that you so long for, then take hold of the podium of your own heart and encourage yourself. Your day has come. Your time is now. Get your dream off the shelf, out of the trash and decide now, by the help of the Almighty, that you can and will live your dreams and fulfill your destiny."

**Michael Murphy** is a personal and corporate empowerment coach, author, dynamic, gifted speaker, powerful encourager and friend to tens of thousands of people around the world. Over 100,000 people in 23 countries receive his twice weekly 'E-Couragers' and 'Instant Success Immersion' ezines. Along with the tens of thousands Michael touches and encourages through his ezines, he has likewise given over 2,000 life transforming, live speaking presentations.

Michael lives his life by his vision of empowering you to be more, to learn more, to have more and to do more. Michael loves pushing himself and those he influences to heights of success that most believe unattainable.

You are encouraged to go now to [positiveattitudes.com](http://positiveattitudes.com) and sign up to receive your free powerful, personal, empowering 'E-Courager' in your email box on a regular basis.

All inquiries to personal or corporate coaching and/or speaking engagements should be sent as described below.

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