

The background of the cover is a photograph of a man and a woman in silhouette, embracing and looking at each other. They are standing on a beach or shore, with the sun setting behind them, creating a bright orange and yellow glow that reflects on the water. The overall mood is romantic and serene.

Drop Your Goals *And Manage Your Life!*

**A plan for giving back the
quality your life deserves.**

By Michel Fortin
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Preface

Have you ever felt overwhelmed? Have you ever tried to accomplish as much as possible but felt you were going nowhere? Well, you're not alone.

I felt like that many times in my life. And today, unfortunately, many people who follow this "do-as-much-as-you-can" philosophy never get to enjoy the really important things or the things that really matter.

Drop Your Goals and Manage Your Life! is a book dedicated to those kinds of people. It has served me well and I have practically turned my life around because of it. However, the ideas discussed in this book are not born yesterday. Benjamin Franklin, Jesus, the Buddha, Socrates, and Aristotle have also taught them in their own times. However, it seems that they are now needed more than ever.

Enjoy the book. But most important, enjoy your life. To me, that's the true meaning of life. If the book has helped you as much as it has helped me, please drop me a note. Write me or email me at michel@successdoctor.com. I welcome any comments or suggestions, even those I can use in future works.



Dynamically,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michel Fortin". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a thin horizontal line.

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Your Successfulness

“When we think of failure, failure will be ours. If we remain undecided, nothing will ever change. All we need to do is to want to achieve something great, and then simply to do it. Never think of failure, for what we think will come about.”

— **Maharishi Mahesh Yogi**

What’s true success? What’s real, authentic, fulfilling success? Is it achievement? Is it made of goals, efficiency, and deadlines? Is it the kind that says, “The level of one’s success is measured by the depth of one’s wallet”? I’ve asked myself that deeply intriguing question for many years.

In fact, I used to be a go-getting, goal-setting, efficiency-minded, try-to-get-as-many-things-done-as-possible type of person; the type that never seems to have enough time for anything. And I do mean “used to be,” since one day the answer to that million-dollar question became as clear as crystal.

You see, success is who you are right now at this moment, regardless of where you’re going, what you do, or what you have. This might seem a bit abstract to you, but the truth is that success is not what you think it is.

Since time immemorial, the word “success” has been long equated with get-it-done-yesterday kinds of people. Especially in the entrepreneurial world in which we are emerging where business success has taken over what we used to call “job security,” success is highly over-hyped, excessively overtaxed, greatly misinterpreted, and oftentimes frustrating if not self-effacing.

We now live in a world that encourages a results-oriented, “get-to-the-point” mentality while at the same time we see some all too common themes appearing in our society. For instance, the family unit is slowly disintegrating. People are getting sicker and sicker. And crime statistically increases with every passing year where they used to be low. These things, of course, are not success.

Strangely, success in some areas seems to parallel failures in others. As time management guru Alec McKenzie once pointed out, we are now seeing in today’s culture the rise of many “successful” failures.

I do agree that success can be measured in many ways. For instance, a person may have achieved business success. Another may have won some important competition. A corporate “soldier” may have earned a senior executive promotion. And another may work long arduous hours in trying to make a living and feel productive by accomplishing many tasks.

But in all of these cases, once they've achieved so much some people fail in other areas, such as their marriages, the relationship with their kids, their health (mental or physical), or, paradoxically, their businesses.

While less tragic but worst, some stop and wonder where their time has gone or why they are not happy with what they have achieved up to now. They've climbed the ladder of success and, as Lao Tse once said, "Discover that their ladder has been leaning against the wrong wall."

Some achieve success and ask, "Why am I not happy?" "Where has my time gone?" or, "I've worked hard (or all my life) for this?" In essence, *outer* success can be (and most often is) the catalyst in creating a lot of *inner* turmoil. This is why the kind of success I'm referring to, this true authentic success, is not what a great many people think.

For instance, real success is not about achieving more, doing more, or getting more. While that's the way most people measure success, those things are *not* real for the measurement does not constitute the essence. Now, I know that some of you may not agree with me, especially if you're a goal-oriented, achievement-minded type of person.

"Goals are essential to success!" is a rebuttal I'm often given in my seminars. I do not mean to contradict and I certainly agree that goals are essential for *external* success. I used to be a high achieving salesperson with a daily planner the size of my suitcase. With notes, to-do lists, project planners, goals, and date tabs protruding the dog-eared pages of my day-timer, I was always doing more or taking on more than what I can handle.

My defining moment, you might say, was when I lost everything; yes, every major thing in my life. During one cold fall weekday in 1995, everything happened in what seemed to be a matter of hours. The repo man came to take away my beautiful, fully-loaded Honda. I was evicted from my three-bedroom townhouse. My wife packed her bags, took my daughter, and left me. And then, the lowest of the lows for any high achiever, I was forced into bankruptcy.

I had to start all over... Literally. Whether this has happened to you or not is irrelevant. But if you have goals, live constantly in the future, and always seem to never have enough time, then after you've given me the privilege to explain myself you will probably discover that this book may in fact be one that you desperately need. Maybe your whole outlook on success will change. I hope it will.

Successfulness Defined

“Success is always temporary. When all is said and done, the only thing you’ll have left is your character.”

— Vince Gill

Today, when one is considered “successful,” that person is usually labeled as such according to some external criterion. This is only natural, for along with the majority of the human race you have the tendency to judge a book by its cover. What you perceive or observe through any of your five senses is oftentimes interpreted as reality or truth. And the problem, however, is that when you distinguish that which is success to you, you are only scratching the *surface*.

To show you that there is a greater success, one that goes beyond all of this stuff, let me enlighten you for a moment. First of all, I must admit that there’s nothing wrong with external symbols of success. But the reality is that things like these are in and of themselves sheer *opinions*; are they not? An expensive sports car is just a car. A gold diamond encrusted watch is just a watch. The vice-presidency of a large corporation is just a title. A fat bank account is just a bunch of numbers. And a goal achieved is but a moment in eternity. These things do not constitute true success. They are opinions or external *measurements* of success.

To prove my point, here’s a forinstance: Try to give a luxurious 50-foot yacht to a Tibetan monk and then see what he thinks about your wonderful gift let alone what he’ll do with it. “Nice firewood,” he’ll probably say.

The same goes for the opinions you hold. If owning an expensive sports car means a lot to you, do you think, “That car *is* success” or “buying that car will make me successful?” Of course not. What you are truly saying, though, is that the car *represents* success or that it symbolizes success, affluence, or whatever.

The problem, however, is that the car is not only a personal symbol but also a symbol one wishes to project to the outside world. Besides only being a means of transportation, which in my estimation is also debatable, a sports car doesn’t have any value in itself except for the value that *it has been given* — by others as well as by you. This is where the ego often gets in the way. If you owned one, more than likely you are trying to show how successful you are rather than just “being” successful.

A sports car doesn’t have any intrinsic worth. To make it valuable, you must give it value — and that’s *your* value. And your value is what you want other people to notice. So, it all boils down to self-esteem. And this goes for any-

thing in the material or physical world. Your goals, your achievements, or your performance are infallibly tied not only to how you feel about them but how you want others to feel about you.

This is the reason why all external forms of success are merely constituted of opinions. Success represents different things to different people, and a symbol is only an expression of a feeling about success and does not constitute this true success I am referring to. Therefore, success is but an illusion and this illusion is the cause of so much frustration, anger, pain, and lack we see in the world today.

The point I'm trying to make here is that success is not what happens on the outside, because anything that exists in the physical dimension is what it is. It is a symbol of an opinion. It doesn't mean anything except for the meaning it has been given and, on top of all that, only to the person this meaning comes from. If you give your value to some external thing, it is because you are seeking to bring value to your life somehow. Whether it's drugs, alcohol, sex, or, of course, success, you are trying to increase your self-image through some external process. If so, that means that deep down inside you feel you don't have any real value — which, of course, is absolutely false.

Your real value, your *spiritual successfulness*, is the source of all that you are. It is your greatness, your true potential, this higher part of you that makes you truly successful, and is so with or without symbols. It is with “in” you and not with “out” you.

For example, if you feel that you are worthless without these external symbols, or in other words if you are projecting your inner value through outer “things” (be it accomplishments or possessions), you are ignoring your inner value. In plain English, you don't believe in *yourself*.

If the value you assign to that which is outside of you is meant to replace that which comes from within, then you are never going to feel fulfilled no matter what. You must replace it constantly. This is what Wayne Dyer calls the “Psychology of More” because you will never be satisfied. You will always want more since you are but merely leasing some outer value.

Like a drug, external success will only be temporary. And once you come down from the high, you will constantly crave your next “hit.” Similarly, that thing you consider as success is but an illusion, a form of stimulus, for true successfulness, which is your spirit, comes from within — not from the outside.

Therefore, to answer the question “What is true success?” here's the million-dollar answer: True success is none other than the simple ability you have to connect with that “You” within. That's it. Nothing more and nothing less. While material, physical, or “visible” success is made up of things such as outcomes or

acquisitions, what I call *true* success is the ability you have to continuously reach your highest spiritual potential. It's how successful you are inwardly rather than how successful you are outwardly.

It is *real* success. It is *spiritual* success.

You are a “You” Potentiality

“We are hoarding potentials so great they are just about unimaginable.”

— **Jack Schwartz**

“Humanity has only scratched the surface of its real potential.”

“You are within God. God is within you.”

— **Peace Pilgrim (1900-1981)**

Come to think of it, by definition success is an end-result or an achievement of some sort. But true success, however, doesn't stop after you've reached a goal or cease once you've attained a certain rank. If you want to be successful, you will have to accept that success is an *ongoing* process.

For instance, once (you think) you've achieved all that you can, have you really reached your true potential? Are you truly successful then? Of course not, unless you died at that exact, very moment! I don't mean to sound facetious, but for as long as you live you can never fully achieve that which is infinitely *possible*. And your spiritual nature is indeed *infinite*.

In essence, your successfulness is and will always be greater than what you can ever possibly conceive. Look at the word “potential,” for a moment. “Potential” implies that which is not yet attained or that which has not yet been realized. And the truth is that you always have a potential; you always have a *spirit*.

So, as long as you have a potential — which you *always* do, of course — you will never be able to fully achieve this infiniteness that you are in truth. You can not measure the measureless nor can you add form to the formless.

Therefore, when I refer to “reaching” your potential, I'm not referring to success as a result or an event but to the process of *connecting with* or *tapping into* your innermost essence, or in other words of gradually translating your spiritual nature into reality. You see, you *always* have a potential. Always. It never dies, it never changes, and it is always expressing itself.

As a result, you are constantly evolving, growing, changing, with every single moment of your life. What you express is a symbol of that which can not be measured. Your potential successfulness is invisible. It is your higher self. It is your spiritual nature. Try to remain idle and you'll see that it's impossible. Try not to change and, in the very least, you will be growing older... But you are still growing nonetheless, no matter how hard you try to stop it.

The proof that you're always reaching your potential is the fact that you are not the same as you were before, whether it's a second ago or a decade ago. Hence, your highest potential, that thing that was you before you were born and lives on after you die, is eternal and changeless. In other words, your higher self is intrinsic. It is infinite. It is *invaluable*.

Paradoxically, you may accomplish some great thing and categorize that as success, but true success doesn't come from something outside of you but from connecting with that which is within. Therefore, when you trust in your highest nature you are bringing to your life a sense of purpose. Whether you achieve something or not in the external world is of no importance.

True success comes from living on *purpose*. It's something you already have and was never outside of you in the first place. Your success doesn't come from the value you have associated to some external accomplishment but from your inner, intrinsic value. Simply put, success is no more than a connection. It's the process of retrieving into that limitless part of that which you really are.

You can not seek what you already possess. Therefore, you are — or have the means to become — successful right here, right now. You are a success because you will always be a “You” potentiality, a potential waiting to emerge. You can surely observe the physical “You,” but you can't see, hear, touch, taste, or smell a “potential,” can you?

Whether you try to do as much as possible, own as much as possible, or get as much approval as possible, those things may seem real to you because they are dimensional, tangible and measurable. But they do not make the real you. These external results are only glimpses of who you are potentially, but glimpses never give you the “big picture.”

So, never underestimate yourself. Never. And most important, believe in yourself because you are worth it whether you know it or not. Thinking that you are a failure is just as worse as thinking that you are a success, especially when you justify either one according to some external event or result.

Always remember the “big picture.”

How to Become Successful

“What’s money? A man is a success if he gets up in the morning and goes to bed at night and in between does what he wants to do.”

— **Bob Dylan**

“There is only one success: To be able to live your life in your own way.”

— **Christopher Morley**

In truth, when one seeks an external form of success, what a person truly seeks is its *essence* such as happiness, peace of mind, a sense of fulfillment, and so on. What is success without any of these anyway?

Think about it. If one seeks to earn a million dollars, is it the money or the security that is sought? Is it the monetary value or the peace of mind? Is it the cash or the comfort? People do not seek to achieve goals but to achieve the essence of their goals. It’s not results, material possessions, or accomplishments but the *value* people attach to them that are aimed for.

Is happiness this thing far out there that dangles in front of you like an elusive carrot? Is your thinking such that happiness only occurs when you’ve reached a certain goal? Should you feel fulfilled only after you’ve achieved a certain level? Obviously, if success is the reason for your happiness and not the other way around, then there’s a change in your thinking that must take place.

If goals, for instance, represent an inner yearning for happiness and peace, and if you are expressing it through your desire to achieve your goals, you are in fact ignoring that which you already have. A fulfilled goal will never give you a *sense* of fulfillment. Never. Remember that it is only a symbol of your potential’s expression and it is not the real thing. A sense of purpose comes from within while goals are merely tools to help you remain on purpose, to remind you of that which you already are in truth. They should be *guides*, not goals.

A goal is not an end but a process. I’m not saying that goals, success, or the trappings of success are dishonorable or wrong. It’s your feelings about your goals or your attachment to them that are wrong. To know if this is you, ask yourself: “Am I addicted to symbols of success? Do I feel that I’m not prosperous unless I’ve accumulated ‘X’ amount of money?”

In Buddhism, they say that the cause of all suffering is attachment, and I feel that the path to true success is *detachment* or freedom from attachment. In other words, success doesn’t come from that which you crave. It’s OK to desire or

to want. It's OK to achieve and acquire that which represents success to you. What's wrong, though, is to turn those wants into *needs* or to let your cravings become *crutches*.

You can recognize the same metaphysical meaning when you study one of the Ten Commandments, which says: "Thou shall not worship any other Gods besides the Lord thy God." Jesus himself said that you can not worship two masters. "If you worship money, you can not worship God." If you worship that which you desire rather than who you really are, the spirit of God within you, you will truly be living a life of hell. You will live a life of unhappiness and slavery because you are giving your power and control to something outside of you.

I'm sure you've heard that "money is the root of all evil." Money is not the root of all evil but the *love* of money is. If you want to reach a goal as in making a lot of money, buying the latest sports car, or taking a luxurious cruise, that's wonderful. The universe is abundant and it is your right to acquire all that you can. But if you attempt to reach a goal out of a yearning to feel a certain way, or in other words if your happiness always lives in the future, then your success will always be a step ahead of you. You will never feel fulfilled no matter what.

True success is not about reaching goals. It's about *being*. And this is where most people become frustrated since goals can become extraordinarily deceptive, not to mention addictive.

The ability you have to manifest the successfulness that lies within you is what will bring that sense of fulfillment to your life, and it is not so much what you do or have but who you are right now. This ability to connect with the highest that's within you is your true success, and ability is more of a choice than it is an actual skill or competency.

Your full potential can never become a reality because you wouldn't be able to deal with its infiniteness. You can only *tap* into it. You are today what your potential was yesterday, and so on. Since the essence of your being is beyond space and time, your source of happiness and fulfillment are thus available to you right here and now. You don't have to search for it or wait for it to happen. The source is *within* you.

Here's an old Hindu story. I may be paraphrasing it a little bit because I don't remember it exactly. But its message is truly appropriate at this point.

Shortly after the beginning of man, the gods were debating on where to hide man's divine essence in order to prevent him from ever discovering who he really is (either out of jealousy or fear of mutiny, I suppose). So one day, the deities conferred with Brahma, the godhead, and said, "We should hide it at the peak of the highest mountains." Brahma answered, "No, for man will eventually go

there and find it.” “Let’s hide it deep inside the darkest forests,” another suggested, “or how about the lowest depths of the ocean? Surely, man will never go there,” another one added. “No,” Brahma retorted, “man will eventually find it there also.” Perplexed, the gods asked Brahma, “Where, then?” “We shall hide it where man will never think of looking for it,” Brahma replied. “We will hide it deep within their *own* selves.”

So, you don’t need to seek success and happiness for they were never outside of you in the first place. You can not find that which you already have. But if you truly want to be happy, if you truly want to be successful, then stop looking for symbols to make you feel successful and start bringing your substance, your inner you, your Godforce, into expression. Stop searching and start *knowing*.

The Inner You

“Successful people make money. It’s not that people who make money become successful, but that successful people attract money. They bring success to what they do.”

— Dr. Wayne Dyer

Let’s take a look at the inner self and the outer self respectively. First, what is your inner self? As you can deduce up to now, your inner self is your spiritual nature. It is the Higher Consciousness within from which your external reality springs. Some people call it soul, spirit, God, the Infinite Intelligence, the Lifeforce, the Holy Spirit, the Christ within, the Buddha within, etc.

It doesn’t matter what you call it. Your inner self is nameless, formless, limitless, and measureless. It is that part of you that is infinite. I am by no means attempting to proselytize for any particular religious point of view. While people may call it different names, it is and has always remained beyond description.

So, for the sake of simplicity, I refer in this book to this inner dimension as your uppermost “values,” those small voices within you that guide you and guard you on your journey called life.

Your outer self, though, may be any goal you achieve, situation you experience, or activity you engage yourself in. It’s what goes on outside of you. It’s what you can perceive through your five senses. And contrary to the inner self, it is that which can be measured, that which has form, and that which has boundaries for it is constrained by the limits of space and time.

However, the way you feel, think, act, and experience your life, even the way you relate with other people, are but reflections of the inner you. Ultimately, your outer self is a mirror. It is the expression of your innermost values. While your outer self is a reflection of your conscience, your consciousness is the ability you have to act in accordance with instead of in opposition to your conscience.

Your consciousness, therefore, is the wisdom you have of the highest that’s within. You are conscious when you are congruent with your inner self.

What do I mean by being congruent? Quite simply, when you’re balanced or when you act in accordance with that still small voice within, you create this true success to which I am referring. When the inner and outer selves are connected or in alignment with each other, then the quality of that connection is what makes a person truly successful.

While the inner and outer selves are independent, they are also interdependent. That interconnection gives you the ability to realize happiness and success right now, right where you are, in the present moment. Essentially, you are truly happier and more successful to the degree to which your connection is harmonious or of a higher quality.

Ultimately, you are truly successful when you follow your priorities (your prioritized set of personal values) and not your goals. If you *feel* that you are not successful, you're simply not making the connection. Period.

Let's say you used to ride a bike when you were young. You balanced yourself on that bike and probably never fell, except as you were in the process of learning to ride it. And let's say you didn't ride a bike for several years. If you picked up a bike today, you will stay in balance no matter what. That balance or your ability to ride that bike is rooted in your consciousness.

However, let's say you didn't ride a bike for several decades. You get on your bike and fall. But after the first few tries, you regain balance and ride your bike again. Now, when you were out of balance, is it because you were unable to ride the bike? No. You were simply and temporarily unconscious of that which you already know. You were just not making the connection.

Happiness is the same thing. If you're not happy now and you are seeking it outside of you, it's because you are not following your conscience; you're not tapping into the "You" potentiality that's within.

"There is no way to happiness. Happiness is the way." This is an old proverb, but I think it's one of the most powerful ones I've ever heard because, if you are seeking happiness through success (i.e., goals, accomplishments, or possessions), then you will never find it. I guarantee it.

The Connection

“People say that what we’re all seeking is a meaning for life. I think what we’re really seeking is an experience of being alive, so our life experiences on the purely physical plane will have resonance within our innermost being and reality, so we can actually feel the rapture of being alive.”

“Follow your bliss.”

— **Joseph Campbell**

Over the years, I have read many books on mind power, self-empowerment, time management, success and achievement, philosophy, and spirituality. I’ve attended many seminars, listened to mountains of tapes, and took numerous classes. And the one common thread I have found in all that I have learned was that they all taught in some way that a person’s outer world is somehow connected to his inner dimension.

However, since the greater part of my career involved business development consulting in the field of cosmetic surgery, I became convinced of the fact that not only there is indeed a connection between the outside and the inside but also that one either affects or reflects the other. You don’t need to become a cosmetic surgeon to recognize this obvious truth.

For instance, many patients ask, “If your procedure is so good, why isn’t everybody having it done?” Doctors usually answer by using a car analogy, such as, “Why does a person drive a Chevrolet when he can afford a Cadillac?” In other words, it’s all a matter of *priorities*.

A person, therefore, will never need let alone appreciate cosmetic surgery unless he or she *thinks* they need it. I’m neither condemning nor condoning anything that can help a person in any way. But whether it’s improving what one does or how one feels, I believe that true success goes beyond all that. Paying greater attention to one’s quality of life, to the connection between what one does *and* how one feels, is more effective than simply focusing on one area alone.

People who do so are what I call congruent people. People whose inner and outer selves are in harmony or in *alignment* with each other are happier, more peaceful, and live more purposeful lives compared to people who need to constantly focus on goals.

Goals are important, but not at the expense of your priorities. When you are aligned or when your life is in tune with your spiritual successfulness you are then truly successful (with or without any goals, for that matter). In fact, to a con-

gruent person, a goal is a complement or a tool and never a necessity. In other words, the goal to him is a means and not an end.

Your consciousness of the highest that's within you is what connects you to it. When you're in touch with that which is within, when you have created an inner harmony or an inner peace, you also create a powerful channel through which the highest that's within you may flow. And ironically, when you're detached from your goals and when you bring to your life a sense of purpose and peace, all that you desire will come to you *naturally*.

The bottom-line is that the better the relationship you have with yourself, the more open the channel to that which is within you becomes. It's like saying that your inner self is the electricity while your outer self is the lamp. Once you've made a connection with that source, it's like uncovering the outlets within you through which you can plug into and shine upon the world.

When I write about the connection with the inner self, I am not referring to meditation, prayer, creative visualization, daily affirmations, or some sort of esoteric path or ritual. The path you choose is your own and there's no specific "one" way of doing it. However, before going into any of these areas, you must know why you are worth the meditation, prayer, or whatever.

Before connecting with your inner successfulness, you must first recognize and realize that you are valuable. Ignoring your personal worth is, in my estimation, the greatest denominator of all failure. Hence, a healthy self-esteem is the number one key to opening the doors to your successfulness.

A poor self-esteem, on the other hand, is the greatest deterrent in your attempts to become truly successful because it is from which many self-imposed lacks and limitations stem.

Lack and Limitation

“Argue for your limitations and they are yours.”

— **Richard Bach**

“There are no limitations to the mind except those we acknowledge.”

— **Napoleon Hill**

Throughout my career, I’ve met people who are truly congruent and lived life to the fullest. They always seemed to get what they require or desire. They are happy with who they are, what they have, and what they do. They have high levels of self-esteem and are the kinds of people I would certainly classify as the truly successful.

Now, the question is: “Did they have a high self-esteem *after* they’ve reached their goals or did they reach their goals because they have a high self-esteem in the first place?” Think about it.

On the other hand, I’ve met many others for who this was not so. They constantly *live* in the future. They always seem to be searching. They always seem to be striving and never arriving. They are never satisfied with their situations or themselves. They may reach a goal or two and feel a moment of exhilaration, but then they quickly feel unchallenged and need to go for more.

For instance, in cosmetic surgery when a patient’s self-image is poor, there is no cosmetic enhancement in the world that can be done to that person that will change his feelings about himself. If he did have surgery, he’ll look at himself in the mirror and say, “You know, doc, I still *feel* ugly.”

So, what causes lack and limitation? The commonest if not the single underlying source of all lack and limitation is this thing called a low self-esteem. I also believe that fears and doubts are the mascots of a poor self-esteem. They close the channels through which your greatness can materialize, prohibit your successfulness to manifest, and place unnecessary limits on your potential.

On the other hand, the surest way to eradicate lack and limitation is to achieve inner peace. And the inevitable consequence of attaining inner peacefulness is the increase in your self-esteem. Through a knowing that you are worth much more than you think, you will bring about all that you desire.

Now, you might find this a bit strange because you probably thought to this point that trying to fill those lacks and to work within (or trying to remove) those limitations are the keys to success, such as reaching goals, getting as much

done as possible, seeking outside stimulus, etc. This is not true. Doing so only deals with the symptoms and not the source of the problem.

Instead, you should make peace of mind the greatest goal in your life for it is the absence of all fear and, of course, guilt. Peace of mind increases self-esteem that opens the connection, because a low self-esteem is the greatest manufacturer of all these negative limitations. By choosing peace of mind as your highest goal in all your endeavors, you are enhancing your self-esteem let alone your success.

If you have a low self-esteem, you are, like Jesus for example, crucified between two thieves. One is called “yesterday” (i.e., guilt) and the other one is called “tomorrow” (i.e., fear). They are indeed thieves because they are both robbing not only your ability to realize your potential but also (and most important) your present moments.

People who constantly live in the past or in the future (or both) are, day after day after day, wasting that precious enjoyment of life. They’re the ones who usually wake up at some later point and realize that it’s all too late.

Whether you are religious, a spiritually-oriented person, or a student of truth, it doesn’t matter. I know that you have within you a conscience, a deep set of values by which you live your life. Science has proven that having a set of guiding principles is not only reserved for theologians or scholars but a natural and instinctual component of every *Homo Sapien* on this planet.

Incidentally, “Homo” is a Latin word which stands for mammal, and “Sapien” comes from the word “sapience” (i.e., conscience, wisdom, intelligence, etc.). Because you’re a “conscious mammal” (or, in other words, a human being), you have within you an inner voice and the ability to follow it.

What it all boils down to is that by adhering to a system of clearly defined personal values, in other words by working on your priorities, you will have a clear conscience and a clear purpose, and you will increase your true potential by removing the limitations fears have created.

Simply put, you can create a harmonious relationship with yourself, between what you do and what you value, in order to achieve all that you truly desire without fear or guilt. You will make the connection and everything that you need or want will flow to you as a result.

Goal Achievement

“We are at our very best, and we are happiest, when we are fully engaged in work we enjoy on the journey toward the goal we’ve established for ourselves. It gives meaning to our time off and comfort to our sleep. It makes everything else in life so wonderful, so worthwhile.”

— **Earl Nightingale**

“Success is a journey... Not a destination.”

— **Ben Sweetland**

Goal achievement is considered by some to be success, for it is true that success is defined by the achievement of a desired objective. But you may have noticed that I like to use words such as “potential,” “alignment,” or “successfulness” to describe this true success to which I am referring. As you can understand, goals are personal and success is relative to the individual.

There are as many types of goals as there are people in the world. Not only that, but some people consider themselves as successful with or without any goals. If a person works and lives with some special purpose, that person may consider himself as successful.

For instance, to the painter, who is engrossed in his work and doesn’t care if whether or not his work is completed let alone worth anything, could very well mean success. Another example is a person who devotes his life to charity. If giving of himself is his purpose, even if that person has no specific goal in mind, he will find a sense of fulfillment in what he does.

This is why I will not show you specific techniques on how to achieve your success but to help you make your journey more consciously purposeful. Just as “failure” is not the person who failed but the result of failing, “success” is not the result of reaching goals but the process of living a worthy ideal. Hence, the trick is to become purposeful, regardless of the outcome.

Goals, therefore, are not really meant to be achieved but to bring meaning and purpose to an individual’s life. They are not meant to be objectives in and of themselves. A quote by psychoanalyst Erich Fromm sums it beautifully: “There is only one meaning to life; the act of living itself.”

In essence, true success is the journey and not the goal. You must bring passion to your life rather than find goals that bring you passion. Whether or not they are achieved is of no importance. Success does not occur after goals have

been reached but during the process of working on them. In other words, success is in the *living* and not in the *achieving*.

Just as death is a result, you don't live in order to die. Life is not meant to be lived out but to be *lived up*. In the same way, a goal is not meant to be reached but to be enjoyed. Forget the rush, the expediency, and the do-as-much-as-you-can attitude. This is where so much frustration and anxiety in the world is created. People think they can not be or do or have something until they get it in its physical form, in which case they will never fully achieve a *sense* of fulfillment.

If mountain climbers strive to climb Mount Everest, do they do so just to be at the top? Of course not. For instance, I'm not a mountain climber. I have no love for the sport. Therefore, I can easily take a helicopter to get there if this was (and if I were to focus strictly on) my goal. But to a mountain climber, the passion is in the challenge and not in the peak. It's in the climb and not in the summit.

Harold V. Melchert once said, "Live your life each day as you would climb a mountain. An occasional glance toward the summit keeps the goal in mind, but many beautiful scenes are to be observed from each new vantage point. Climb slowly, steadily, enjoying each passing moment; and the view from the summit will serve as a fitting climax for the journey."

That is why I can not define success but only generalize it as being a process and not a result. In essence, success is being your best at doing your best to enjoy life; it's in the living and not in the winning. If your life has greater meaning and purpose, then you are truly successful. Even if you failed along the way, it is of no importance at all.

How much more willing are you to keep on keeping on when you follow your bliss, when what you do has intrinsic value? The answer is obvious. Failure is not the end of a goal but a form of feedback on your journey. Success is not the end of a goal either, for it is the continuous process of living out your inner you.

Your successfulness does not lie in producing results or in achieving goals. Success is in the essence of a goal. In other words, if you love what you do or do what you love, what you seek will come to you as the result of what you believe in and not what you do. When you're connected, you are naturally attracting the essential qualities you seek and your life will have greater meaning.

I believe that goal achievement has been overly sensationalized in today's hectic and fast-paced culture. Consequently, goals — and not the purpose behind them — have become priorities. Today, output is the name of the game and goals have become as necessary as oxygen. While they are important because they can be used as outlets through which one can achieve a sense of purpose, the level of importance people attribute to their goals is what causes some people to fail in

life. Dr. Stefan Rechscafften, in his book *TimeShifting*, said, “Trying to accomplish more and more takes away the most precious resources in the world...

“... Your present moments.”

Focusing on goals will usually cause a person to wonder, “Is this it?” “Where has the time gone?” or, “There must be more to life than this!” Goals can become inconspicuously misleading and may end up causing more harm than good. I’m not saying they’re wrong but that the reason people put behind them is.

Goals are meant to bring you a sense of fulfillment now and not at some point in the future. So, the key is not to have goals but to have — and cherish — one’s present moments. Now, let’s take a look at what can be done to counter this situation and to live “in the now.”

New Time Management

“The secret of success is constancy of purpose.”

— **Anonymous**

I agree that, if one wants to achieve more, the most important tool for doing so in today’s world is time management. The challenge in dealing with an incessantly increasing demand on this scarcer commodity that we call time is prevalent in our society. People are busier than ever before and seem to never have enough time to do what they really want.

However, if you study truly successful men and women, you will recognize that they always seem to have lots of time. They live in the moment, are happy and love what they do, and are intrinsically very productive. Moreover, they have intense focused concentration on the task at hand and seem to manage their time almost instinctively. And they do so with passion, zest and fervor.

Everything seems to “flow” for these kinds of people. Why? I believe it is because they are congruent. Their inner selves and their outer selves are in tune with each other. What these successful people are telling you is that you must not look at trying to get more things done but at improving the quality of your life.

Concentrating solely on the future or dwelling on the past takes your present moments away from you. In other words, high levels of activity — let alone anxiety — can limit your potential.

So, there is more to time management than just being productive or trying to get as many things done as possible. There is a clear difference between *purposefulness* and *productiveness*.

Your potential is infinite and, therefore, there is no real limitation other than time itself. If you don’t agree, ask yourself: “Why do some people achieve their goals with so little effort while others struggle endlessly?” The answer lies not in the *how* but in the *why*. In other words, if you want to become successful, asking “why for” is more important than knowing “how to.”

As such, don’t search for how success can be achieved or a set of specific techniques that will succeed. Start by developing and clarifying the reasons why you want success in your life instead. Find out what are the purposes in your life. And if you don’t know, then make *that* your purpose. While working harder does create more opportunities, working purposefully is like working smarter, for it makes it easier for you to recognize and seize those opportunities.

I'm not attempting to teach you some new time management method. To me, time management is just another way of making you work more and more — for nothing. In this book, you will be forced to look at time management in an entirely different way. I call it “present moment” management. I also refer to it as life management because it focuses on quality of life instead of quantity of time.

It's the proper clarification of your innermost values (i.e., your priorities) and, contrary to the usual goal-setting process, to systematically convert them into activities. This way, you can discover and follow your priorities at all times. You will learn how to go from “set your goals and manage your time” to “drop your goals and manage your life.”

Confusion comes from the lack of clarity. Dr. Stephen Covey, in *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, says that, “What is important and what is urgent get easily confused;” so confused, in fact, that what is urgent may seem like shortcuts to success when they actually are what I call “cornercuts.” Obviously, you can't take a shortcut if you don't know where you are to begin with.

Therefore, successfulness is to have definitive *clarity*. With a clear conscience, you can develop a clear purpose. Helen Keller once said that, “People have the wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness; it is not achieved through self-gratification but attained through fidelity to a worthy purpose.”

Change in Perception

“Success is being at peace with yourself.”

— **Anonymous**

“Inner peace can be reached only when we practice forgiveness. Forgiveness is letting go of the past, and is therefore the means for correcting our misperceptions.”

— **Gerald Jampolsky**

The earth was once thought to be the center of the universe. As we all know today, this is not true. But for millions of years, only a trifle few would suspect any different. However, when Galileo proved Copernicus’ theory that the earth was indeed not at the center of the universe, the door that forever changed the world opened. In the same way, our perception of time has changed.

Time management used to focus on what has been done or what needs to be done — on how one can become more productive. And goals were long considered to be essential tools for doing so. Goals were at the center of one’s universe so to speak, while values were considered as peripheral or secondary.

Today, a shift is slowly taking place where values (and not goals) are considered to be at the core of life. In other words, time management is — or has shifted to — life management. It has gone from quantity of time to quality of life; from *stress* management to *self* management.

Those who have not yet shifted their thinking are people who have a tendency to think that getting as much done as possible is the way to free up time. The more people do, however, the more they will attempt to fill up this “free” time by constantly doing more.

In essence, who you are and how you feel is much more important than what you are doing or what you want. Since time is perishable and if you want more of it, you should therefore increase the quality of your life right now instead of just trying to manage your time.

Conversely, if you feel you are not getting enough time, it is not because you are managing it poorly but because you’re living a life of poor quality. You may be productive and achieve many great things. But if you’re unhappy or feel unfulfilled, then you are *productively wasting time*.

And unfortunately, it’s how most people conduct their lives today.

Attachment to goals often leads to stress, unhappiness, disease, procrastination, workoholism, and, of course, failure. I know that intimately since I've been there. These things happen more so in our modern world not because people are poor time managers but because the conventional ways they were taught to manage their time are wrong. They think that time freedom boils down to getting as much done as possible.

For example, you may be incredibly efficient, be motivated by your goals, and attempt to do as much as possible. You may even feel a certain degree of satisfaction out of the results you are currently producing. However, it doesn't matter how skilled or efficient you are, time management can not ensure your happiness and its conventional approach can also lead you to failure in the long run.

Failure? Yes.

You may become successful but still live an unhappy or stressful life. Unhappiness or anxiety may be the failure to grow or to enjoy life, but it is failure nonetheless. What's the point of being successful when at the same time you are stressed out and can't enjoy that which you've achieved? What's the point of working hard to achieve a goal when, once you've reached it, you die as a result of over-exhaustion? Therefore, true success has nothing to do with the quantity of your time. True success has everything to do with the quality of your life.

Quality of Life

“The more tranquil a man becomes, the greater is his success, his influence, his power for good. Calmness of mind is one of the beautiful jewels of wisdom.”

— James Allen (1864-1912)

This paradigm shift in time management has led me to the understanding that goals by themselves are simply no good. If you ask me, they’re all a bunch of caca. The concept of goal achievement today is so clouded in misconception and uses up so much misguided energy that it literally takes people away from their true success.

If you focus on the future or dwell on the past, you can become distracted from what’s genuinely important in your life right now. Most goals are set because people have certain needs or wants. However, once those lacks have been filled, more often than not others were created or overlooked in the process.

Realize that it’s not the goal you really want but the feeling that comes with its achievement. It is the *essence* of the goal and not the *object*. For instance, if you want a \$100,000, isn’t it because you value freedom, whether it’s the freedom of following your dreams or the freedom from debt? If it’s becoming vice-president of a large firm, is it because you value recognition, respect, or leadership, and not the position in and of itself?

Conversely, it’s not lack that creates anguish but the feeling of lack. This is why so many people achieve goals and wonder why they’re still not happy. So, a goal should not be looked upon as a way to fill a need but as a way to help you design the course you can take to enjoy — and give a meaning to — life.

For example, if you set out to achieve goals, are you only going to feel fulfilled after you’ve reached it? Do you, for example, work five days a week in order to enjoy the remaining two? Do you work with retirement in mind and dread — or, worse yet, waste — those remaining years just because of that one goal? Do you say, “Once I get these miserable years behind me I can start enjoying what’s left”? Ugh! That’s worse than having no goals at all.

Today, I see too many people who “work for a living” or for some future goal (such as retirement) and waste their lives in the meantime as a result. In the case of retirement, for instance, I ask myself why do people work two-thirds of their lives just so they can enjoy the remaining one-third — when that remaining one-third is guaranteed to no one!

As Lao Tse, the Chinese prophet, once said, “Many climb the ladder of success only to find out at the top that it was leaning against the wrong wall.” If you believe that your goals will bring you happiness and fulfillment, your success will always be a step ahead of you. You are but running a race against time, a race in which you’ll always end up losing in some way or another. In other words, true success hinges on how you feel about what you do right now at this very moment and not after you’ve “climbed the ladder.”

Are you loving what you do or doing what you love? If not, then you know that even if you managed your time effectively, even if you achieved many of your goals, you would never really accomplish much or feel that you have (let alone be happy with the result).

The truth is simple. Success without happiness is failure. Fulfillment and a sense of fulfillment are different. The more valuable the *essence* of what you seek is to you personally, the more value — or sense of fulfillment — you will automatically get from the journey. One is directly proportional to the other.

Reggie Leach said it this way, “Success is not the result of spontaneous combustion; you must set yourself on fire.” In other words, you are successful because of your happiness and not the other way around. Do what you love and enjoy the things that really matter. If not, you might not live long enough to get — let alone enjoy — that which you so desperately seek.

Corner Cutting

“You do not pay the price of success, you enjoy the price of success.”

— **Zig Ziglar**

Again, the inner you is your conscience while your connection to it is your consciousness. While you can act in accordance with or in opposition to your conscience, you can't betray your conscience for it is the wisdom of the highest that's within. Therefore, if your goals ignore your conscience, they will unconsciously bring unnecessary turmoil in your life. But if your goals follow your conscience, you are then consciously purposeful.

If you're like most people, you have certain needs and aspirations at this moment. You probably want to reach higher goals, get promoted, make more money, spend more time with your family, find a better job, lose 10 pounds or so, take that vacation in the Caribbean, start a business, etc. In other words, you want to improve your quality of life right now and not at some point in the future.

I'm not saying that those things are not important. You may truly value their attainment and you have every right to want more out of life. However, if you are focusing on goals alone, you are blinding yourself from that which makes you truly successful right now. You are ignoring the highest that's within you and, in the end, will achieve nothing that's of any real significance.

For instance, urgencies will crop up from time to time and they can take you away from what really matters in your life right now. When they appear, what do you usually do? If you're like most people, you will cut corners (i.e., you will act in opposition to your conscience or, in other words, act unconsciously).

Thereafter, you may have reached the goal but failed in some other way. Although you can be successful by cutting corners, your success will not materialize without somehow being at the expense of other goals or, more important, of other people (including yourself). Cutting corners can only cut you down. They can also rip you off.

Remember, there is a price for everything. Whatever you choose to focus on carries with it a price. But what's important is not to avoid paying the price but to ensure that you are getting a return on your investment. Instead of cutting corners, you should find out what you truly value in your life right now and focus on *it*. Billionaire H.L. Hunt once said, “All my life I have learned that there are only two keys to success. The first key is to find out what you really want and the price you must pay to get it, and the second one is to resolve yourself to pay that price.”

You might think that the area in which most people fail is Mr. Hunt's second key. While it may seem that way, the problem actually originates with the first and not the second. In other words, if you knew what you wanted (I mean, if you *really* knew), you would have paid the price (i.e., had the patience, took the time, made the effort, etc.) to get it, wouldn't you?

As Jim Rohn said, "When the promise is clear, the price gets easy." Wayne Dyer also said, "When you are certain of what you want, patience comes easy." So, think of connecting with your successfulness as a form of investment. You're like an intelligent consumer looking for best *value* for your investment and not the best *price*.

Having a clear purpose will make your journey more cost-effective, so to speak. If you have a clear understanding of the essence of what you want, then you will get a better return on your investment of time and energy. If you either focus on or ignore your innermost values, you'll always end up getting what you pay for. As Michael Angier, the president of *SuccessNet*, once said, "There is a price for success but there is also a price for failure. Given the choice, the price of success clearly has the best return on investment."

So, the crux of life management is doing what is important and not urgent, or to change your perspective on that which you consider as important and to make *it* urgent. It is to focus on your priorities and to give them a sense of urgency. Consequently, when you stick to your priorities you will be taking *shortcuts* rather than taking *cornercuts*.

Your Self-esteem

“Perfect self-expression will never be labor; but of such absorbing interest that it will seem almost like play.”

— **Florence Scovel Shinn**

In *Succeeding Through Inner Strength*, Dr. Nathaniel Branden says that people unconsciously lower their self-esteem through their goals. They usually start by writing down some nebulous wish and may start working on it with the best of intentions. They may even know exactly what they want and work really hard in order to get it. However and more often than not, they quit and do so sometimes just as fast as they have written it down.

They feel that their goal is unachievable, abandon their efforts out of feeling belittled by such a lofty ambition, or quit due to the accumulation of stress and frustration they’ve acquired in the process. And the worst part is that they usually rationalize their decision by referring to the goal’s seeming unfeasibility or, worse yet, to their inability.

They say things, like, “I knew I couldn’t do it,” “it’s not for me,” “I’m just not cut out for it,” “I’m not worth it,” and so on. Seldom do they know that the problem has nothing to do with the goal in itself — or with themselves, for that matter. It’s in the “why,” not the “how.” It’s what they focused on to start with.

“Setting goals just isn’t enough,” Dr. Branden says. “Ask yourself: ‘What am I going to do next week in order to reach my goal? What about tomorrow? What about now?’ You must become *consciously* purposeful.”

The point is that you shouldn’t set a future goal and just leave it there. If you do that, I promise you that it will stay there. And the worst part is that it will, more often than not, take you away from your present moments.

Be mindful what’s important during every single moment of your life and not at some point in the future. In other words, make your priorities your goals and then make them a part of your life. Translate your priorities into activities. Make your goals your “conscious purposes,” as Dr. Branden says.

People who live in a state of unconsciousness set goals haphazardly and never achieve much. They let circumstances dictate their lives. They usually work hard and long hours thinking that their actions are somehow contributing to what’s important when very often they really don’t have a clue. They’re the kinds of people who keep *striving* but never seem to be *arriving*.

If you want to become truly successful, then be aware of what you do in the way of how important it really is to you. Translate what's important in your life into whatever you do. At the end of this book, I will teach you a system for helping you to do just that. It's called the GOAL system and it's a simple priority-setting tool that will help you to systematically convert your values into actions. But for now, simply know that being congruent is the key to true success.

As a result, you will learn to love what you do or do what you love. You will raise your self-esteem and make your goals achievable. You will develop an appreciation for life as well as enhance your quality of life. You will attract those things you so desperately seek that have eluded you in the past. And most important, you will sleep better at night. As an old proverb says, "A clear conscience makes for a soft pillow." Simply, you will be *arriving* rather than *striving*.

Nevertheless, find out what's important in your life and make it a part of your life right now. That's what being consciously purposeful is all about. If you don't know what you really want, then make *that* your conscious purpose.

Understand that success, happiness, purpose, and meaning are not things that you either find or achieve but *bring* to life. If you're mindful of your priorities, you will also have greater peace of mind in *whatever* you choose to do. So, stop working around your goals and start working around your priorities. Goals don't make you who you are. It is the essence of your goals or the things you value the most in life that make you who you are.

Your goals should be an expression of your inner you, of how you want to feel right at this very moment, and not at some later time. As I said before, rather than dwelling on the past or focusing on the future you should be conscious of your present moments.

If you love what you do or do what you love, not only will work seem like play but also success will flow to you in unexpected ways. All that you require to reach your goals, all the skills, knowledge, attitudes, people, and experiences you will need, will come to you *automatically*.

Calculating Your Risks

“Often the difference between a successful man and a failure is not one’s better abilities or ideas, but the courage that one has to bet on his ideas, to take a calculated risk — and to act.”

— Maxwell Maltz

Realize that whatever you choose to focus on affects your quality of life, or what Zig Ziglar calls your “standard of life,” and not just your standard of living. For instance, if you focus on the future by setting goals, you may be forcing yourself to remain in your comfort-zone and probably without ever knowing how far you can really go.

Jim Rohn said, “To know how far we can go is to risk going too far.” To reach your potential therefore, you will unquestionably need to confront risks. They are inevitable. They are unavoidable. You simply have to take them if you want your successfulness to manifest, and there’s no way of tiptoeing around it.

However, instead of asking yourself “*how* do I eliminate risk?” ask, “*why* do I avoid risk?” If you’re like most people, you’re avoiding risk because of fear and especially the fear of the unknown. Fear is a powerfully persuasive force that can not only put your goals on the backburner but one that can also put your life on the backburner as well.

In fact, your goals may be unconsciously reinforcing your fears.

A goal is not something separate from you or outside of you. It is something that is within you, something that should be made a part of your life right now. You see, the more passionlessly separated you are from the goals you set, the more unknown the unknown becomes and the more fear will build on itself.

Unknowingness creates unwillingness. As a Spanish proverb goes, “I fear not the man who tried and failed but the man who failed to try.” You can not eliminate risk but you can certainly eliminate the fear with which it is associated. Granted, the elimination of fear is not an instant process. But you can certainly reduce it by *calculating* your risks.

People who take calculated risks are people who turn *chance* into *choice*. If you take a risk you will be taking a chance, but if you take a calculated risk you will be making a choice. You don’t need to plot every single detail of your life in order to do this. All you need to know is what’s important to you rather than where you’re going.

This knowingness doesn't have to be in the form of some great goal backed by an elaborate action plan with to-do lists and so on. It is to simply be consciously purposeful. It's like a map with checkpoints that tell you where you are along your journey. Each checkpoint tells you exactly how close you are to your goal instead of how far you are from reaching it.

Moreover, rather than being unconscious of a problem until it's too late, it is much better to know when you have one and that you can deal with it right away. If you're too busy or focus strictly on your goals, it might pass you by unsuspectingly and blow up in your face at some later point in time. Therefore, think of your conscious purpose as your map where you can chart the course you want your life to follow.

Another way to look at working on a conscious purpose is like eating a big meal. You can't eat it all in just one bite but you can certainly cut it down into bite-size chunks that are easier to swallow and digest. In the same way, by converting your values into a system of gradual steps, you will bring those things you truly want into everyday consciousness.

By calculating your risks, so to speak, you are making the unachievable achievable. Ultimately, by removing much of the unknown you will automatically remove — or in the very least, reduce — the fear of it.

Dealing with Fear

“If you don’t attempt to get over your doubts and fears, you’ll never discover how wonderful it is to live without them.”

— **Colin McArty**

“Of all base passions, fear is the most accursed.”

— **William Shakespeare**

Beyond the unknown, you may have other kinds of phobias you will need to deal with. All fears, great or small, prohibit you from reaching your potential because they create self-imposed limitations. Since fear is generally the product of a low self-esteem, the most effective way to deal with your fears is to improve your self-esteem.

I’m sure there are countless ways to improve your self-esteem; there is no “one” way of doing it. But the way I raised my own is by giving my life a purpose. By giving it a meaning rather than looking for one. More often than not, what enhances your self-esteem is purposefulness, for purpose grants you ammunition (i.e., strength, courage, determination, persistence, faith, etc.).

When I grew up in a small town of Aylmer, Quebec (Canada), I was abused by an alcoholic father and my childhood was mostly spent locked inside my bedroom. I did so willingly in order to isolate myself from the world and more so from my father. I was afraid of rejection. It was debilitating. I feared it so much that I became a recluse in order to avoid it.

I was labeled as an agoraphobic (i.e., a person who fears being with people or in public places) and always sought approval. Let me give you a brief history so that you can understand why and, most important, how I fought my fears.

When I was born, I was a mammoth of a baby weighing close to 12 pounds. Being cramped inside my mother’s tiny womb — my mother is a petite woman measuring only four feet tall — has caused me to be deformed at birth and my legs to have grown crookedly. After numerous visits to the hospital and until the age of three, I had to wear corrective braces to fix my misshapen legs and feet.

However, I’ve been told that my father, a perfectionist, was enormously troubled by my handicap. He resorted to drinking to deal with his emotions.

After my sister’s barely survived birth five years later, my father’s alcoholism and mental health deteriorated. He now suffers from a mental illness called “Korsakov’s Disease.” Fortunately, today he is under professional care

where a series of medications now manage his emotions that have been aggravated by decades of alcoholism. Incidentally, I have not seen my father since that time and was told not to do so, specifically because of his violent nature.

Nevertheless, regardless of the fact that I was a straight “A” student, I was always told how much of a failure or how stupid I was. Nothing I did was good enough for my father. As a result, my grades slowly fell and I eventually dropped out of school. In spite of all that, I wanted to prove my father — and myself — wrong. I wanted to succeed and, in order to do so, I had to eliminate my fears.

To me, the fear of rejection was a greater handicap than that of my physical one because it reinforced my father’s beliefs. As I grew older and wiser, I decided that I didn’t want to end up like my father and later made a pledge to myself that I would indeed succeed. My father, therefore, gave me a reason. A purpose.

It was the greatest gift I could ever have.

Today, as an author and professional speaker, I speak to large audiences at least once a week and run a very successful business. That is to say that my fears have completely vanished. Now, I’m not trying to get your sympathy or boast about my success. I don’t even consider my childhood as “dysfunctional” — whose childhood is functional anyway?

The reason I’m telling you my story is to show you that the more consciously purposeful you become, the more ammunition you find. Purposefulness, therefore, increases your self-esteem, which in turn leads to fearlessness.

Incidentally, there’s another true story that’s similar to mine and you may have heard of it. It’s about two brothers whose father was an alcoholic. While one turned out to be an alcoholic, the other became a successful executive. When they were each asked why they became that way, they both gave the same answer: “My father’s an alcoholic. What other choice did I have?”

All that you need to fight your fears or at least reduce that which stops you from reaching your potential is *right where you are*. It’s your self-esteem. It doesn’t come from outside of you and it’s not the result of positive thinking. People who hear my story say that I was a positive thinker, but a positive mental attitude is not something you can dictate or change on a whim. Positive thinking is merely a byproduct of purpose. If you live on purpose, you don’t need to think positively. It just becomes a part of your life.

Taking the Time

“Commitment is what turns a promise into reality. It is the words that speak boldly of your intentions. And the actions that speak louder than words. It is making the time when there is none. Coming through time after time after time, year after year after year. Commitment is the stuff character is made of; the power to change the face of things. It is the daily triumph of integrity over skepticism.”

— **Un sourced**

“Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet.”

— **Anonymous**

You may have heard of Thoreau’s advice, “Do what you fear and the death of that fear is certain.” I figured that becoming a salesperson was the best way to fight my fear since rejection is commonplace in sales. In the beginning, though, I certainly was no sales superstar. Working solely on commission and with no income to show for, I filed for bankruptcy (one of two, if you recall). You might say that I became what my father programmed me to believe.

Slowly but surely, however, I manage to overcome my setbacks and eventually became the number one salesperson in Canada for a large, multinational insurance company. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Now, the point I’m trying to make is that becoming purposeful won’t make you an overnight success let alone guarantee it. It takes time. Jim Rohn said, “Part of success is preparation on purpose.” Alec MacKenzie said, “A bad decision is usually the result of a hasty one.” Ideally, you must take the time to learn *why* you should reach your goals and not *how* you can reach them.

Once you’ve defined your uppermost values, you will know which goals are important and why they are. This is what being conscious is all about and it’s not something you achieve at some point in the future. You will never be satisfied with your goals or with yourself after their achievement if you haven’t properly mastered your life right now.

Like it or not, the gratification you will receive out of any goal is directly proportional to the quality of your life, for how you focus on your priorities will affect your results as well as your appreciation of those results.

So, take the time to know or at least discover your values. In other words, your goals should not speed you up but slow you down. At first, it may seem hard

to take the time you need to create a better plan for your life. Otherwise, the lack of planning will cause you unnecessary stress, frustration, and the possible abandonment of your goals.

You may also cut corners and get what you want, but as the Law of Balance says, “What goes around, comes around.” If you take a “bite” out of what’s important in your life, it will always come back and “bite” you somehow. Poet Nancye Sims, in *The World Needs More Dreamers*, wrote: “Dreamers are patient for they know a goal is only as worthy as the effort that’s required to achieve it.”

Don’t confuse eagerness with impatience because they are entirely different. It’s OK to be eager, but don’t get so impatient that you don’t take the time to prepare your goals let alone *for your goals*. Unsure, you might end up doing what may seem relevant when very often your actions will only be smoke-screens.

Abraham Lincoln once said, “If I have to chop down a tree and only had six hours to do it, I would take four hours to sharpen my ax.” If you are impatient, it might take you more time if not more effort to get what you want. Being prepared may seem like a lot of work, but it really isn’t if you are genuinely eager.

In *The Power of Desire*, one of Jack Zufelt’s students wanted to get a black belt in Karate as did his mentor. The student asked what he must do and Jack replied that, although he can do it, he would need to practice an hour each day for four years. Disappointed, the student abandoned his goal, saying, “I just don’t have the patience.”

To this person, although it may seem as an important goal to him, getting the black belt was not a genuine core value. If it really were, no matter how much time or effort it would have taken he would have achieved his black belt by now. Additionally, he would have enjoyed the process.

True Motivation

“Strong lives are motivated by dynamic purposes.”

— **Kenneth Hildebrand**

While statistics prove that 90% of heart attacks happen on Monday mornings, it goes to show that motivation doesn't come from work. In reality, most people find themselves working in jobs they hate.

Some wake up in the morning feeling lethargic and hit the snooze button one too many times. Some work only “for the weekend” and take more time to prepare their vacations than they do their own lives. And some who become “workaholics” end up working themselves either out of a job or into a grave. In short, getting motivated by one's work is impossible. In fact, getting motivated by anything outside of oneself is impossible.

If people are not first internally driven to reach their goals, then other goals as well as other priorities will go by the wayside. People who focus strictly on goals usually compromise other more important things, such as health, family, relationships, job security, and so on. They procrastinate that which is more important in their lives and place quantity of time above quality of life. They generally get *stressed* out, *burned* out, or *left* out as a result.

Is this really motivation? Isn't motivation supposed to be positive, joyful, and rewarding? Therefore, goals are not the motivators we think they are. For instance, if you think that having goals will jump-start you, you will be very disappointed if you haven't been already.

The key to becoming more efficient, productive, as well as effective is to have and work on an intensely burning desire. Motivation comes from within and not from without. It comes from a sense of purpose. Your values are the real motivators and not your goals. If you fail to recognize this simple axiom and focus only on your goals, then rather than motivate you your goals will hurt you.

How much more motivated will you be if what you do has a meaning and a purpose? How can you procrastinate when you do what you love or have a clear understanding of how important are the things you do?

Confucius once said, “Do what you love and you will never have to work a day in your life.” Marsha Sinetar, author of *True Wealth*, said, “Do what you love and the money will follow.” And Peter McWilliams, author of *Life 101*, said, “Do what you love and the necessary resources will follow.”

Essentially, they are all true since goals do not bring us motivation; we must bring motivation to them. We must be *self-motivated* from the beginning.

You see, you may not necessarily love some of the things you do or need to do. But if they are relevant to your priorities and if you had a clearer understanding of how *truly* important they are, you will begin to look at what you consider as perfunctory or drudgery from a whole new perspective.

In his seminars, for instance, motivational speaker Roger Dawson talks about those famous bumper stickers that say “I’d rather be skiing” or “I’d rather be fishing.” Roger asks, “If they really wanted to ski, fish, or whatever else they’d rather be doing, why aren’t they doing it at that moment?”

You might say: “Yes, but the consequences are great. That person might lose his job, his spouse, his credit, or this, or that.” Of course, you’re absolutely right. But in reality, if a person *really* wanted to ski, fish, or whatever, and if that person is not doing it at that moment, then it is because he has made a choice on doing what he is currently doing.

Circumstances are never the culprits. What that person has chosen to do reflects what he inherently values, which is preserving his credit, marriage, job, and so on (and not skiing or fishing).

Some of you might say, “Yeah, but I must go to work everyday and slug it out just to keep up with my bills. Clearly, *survival* is not a choice.” Not so. If you *value* your standard of living, then the choices you are making reflect that specific value. If you are not doing what you love or if your bills are too high, you are purely living out the choices you’ve made up to that point.

I agree that some of the alternatives you are left with may not be as appealing. But when you focus on your values, you will be able to look at what you’re doing from a different perspective and understand that whatever you must do is really what you are *choosing* to do.

The fundamental, underlying truth in success is that you alone are responsible for the choices you make, and that you always have the ability to either change or accept what you have chosen. Invariably, your actions and your decisions reflect your innermost values. Often, if you’d rather be doing something else, it is because you are not conscious. In life, you are always making choices at every given moment. Even reactions are choices, albeit unconscious ones.

Don’t blame your circumstances for where you are. You alone are responsible for your life and in finding this motivation that so fuels it. If you don’t like what you have to do, then don’t blame “it” because it’s not “its” fault. John Randolph Price once analogized, “If you are drowning, don’t blame the water but

blame yourself for not having learned how to swim.” In other words, don’t blame the outside when the fault comes from ignoring the inside. Jim Rohn once said, “If you’re not happy where you are, then change it! You’re not a tree.”

Positive Productivity

“Do not measure your life by your goals but what you are actually doing to achieve them.”

— **Peter Drucker**

“The ultimate goal of life is death — the experience of life is where the value is, not the results we achieve.”

— **Anonymous**

When people refer to productiveness, they usually refer to “busy-ness.” Positive productivity, on the other hand, is the result of doing what’s important and will hinge greatly on how well you adhere to this process of alignment. Alignment can also help you to discover not only what you need to do but also provide you with shortcuts as well.

Recognizing your intrinsic values will most likely aid you in finding better ways to reach your goals and greater results that you can produce along the way. When you translate your values into actions, many alternatives and opportunities will naturally jump out at you. While they were always there to begin with, alignment merely makes them more visible to you.

The difference between the production of results and the completion of tasks is in most cases a very subtle one. When I ignored my core values, I eventually became stressed out, less productive, disorganized, busier, and irritated. Lacking motivation, I tried to find and felt compelled to use encouragement or inspiration from other sources. However, the most important downfall was that I had generated a great deal of distress on the people around me, especially those who were central to my life.

I certainly made myself busier and more efficient, but I wasn’t truly productive. Sometimes, I procrastinated doing what was important and even ignored some of my priorities because I was not internally driven. I said to myself, “I have to do this?” or “I have to do that?” I was frustrated even at the onset.

However, when I found out what was important in my life and worked in reverse, I was naturally enthusiastic, produced better results, had greater satisfaction with the littlest of results, and had a deeper understanding of what was required from me. I also faced challenges with greater ease and patience. Solutions came to me in an instant. My quality of life soared. And the people in my life encouraged and supported me.

Working in reverse is indeed the key to effectiveness and success. As one of Dr. Stephen Covey's habits, in his truly exceptional book *The Seven Habits Of Highly Effective People*, the idea is to "begin with the end in mind" or to plan your way on backwards, from the final result to where you are now.

You see, the dynamics of success are not a matter of talents, skills, or attitudes but a matter of priorities. Arm yourself with the knowledge of yours in all you do and you will, directly or indirectly, make the best choices for your life and do so with greater inner peace. Making the right *choices* is the active outcome of consistently focusing on your true priorities.

The Law of Correspondence says that your outer self corresponds to your inner self, or that the outside is but a mirror reflection of the inside. Therefore, when you work in correspondence with your true priorities, it will produce enough self-motivation to empower you to act on those desires. Simply, your actions will be — as it should be — a mirror reflection of how you feel deep inside. As a result, you will be congruent and lead a balanced life.

When people look for outside stimulation or encouragement, whether it's from pep rallies or drugs, it's because they do not appreciate what they *must* do in order to reach their goals. This is the misalignment I discussed earlier. It happens when there is the lack of a clear purpose.

For instance, if people get pumped up on the outside, their inner selves will eventually find ways to downplay that external motivation. It's really a fake sense of enthusiasm. They may appear excited and enthusiastic, but some say that people who appear too happy or excited are phonies. I'm not saying this is true all the time but it is certainly true when the motivation or the reason for their excitement does not come from deep within.

The Power of Alignment

“Try not to become a man of success, but to become a man of value.”

— **Albert Einstein (1879-1955)**

“When your values are clear to you, making decisions becomes easier.”

— **Roy Disney**

People say “change your attitudes” or “have a positive attitude,” but I don’t agree since attitudes can not be changed. They are results and not causes. They are byproducts of your innermost convictions. They are reflections of your deepest values. You can’t just change them on a whim because your outside is but a mirror reflection of your inside.

If you’re going to change your outside, you must stick to your values. If you remain consistent with them, you remain true to yourself and will become genuinely motivated. You will naturally have a positive attitude because you are connected with your higher self.

Like I said earlier, many people achieve their goals only to ask themselves in the end, “Is this it?” “Is this what I really wanted?” “I worked hard for this?” “Why am I not happy?” or, “Where do I go from here?” Obviously, goals alone can create a great deal of frustration even after they have been reached.

If you plan activities that revolve inexorably around your core priorities, your sense of purpose will therefore guide you in creating better goals and activities with which you will be much more productive in executing. How do you do that? First, you set your values and prioritize them — these are your priorities. Then and only then, you set your goals and *align them with your priorities*.

So, before you climb the ladder of success, you must ensure that it is leaning against the right wall by aligning your goals with your true priorities. Ultimately, goals and values should become one and the same. We, as individuals, are different not only by our core values but by the hierarchy of those values.

Let me give you an example. Hyrum Smith, author of *The 10 Natural Laws of Successful Time and Life Management*, uses an imaginary “I-beam” exercise in his seminars. An I-beam is a steel beam used in the construction of building frames. While they can be as long as several hundred feet or even more, they’re only about a foot and a half wide. In fact, they are called “I-beams” because a cross section of the steel beam would look like the letter “I.” (If you put the beam on its side, it would look like an “H.”)

Mr. Smith tells his audiences, “Let’s say we have an imaginary I-beam stretching across the conference room floor. You’re at one end of the beam and I’m at the other.” Mr. Smith then asks, “Can you walk across the beam without falling off?” “Sure,” the audience replies.

Mr. Smith then changes the scenario. He says, “What would make a difference in your thinking is if I took the beam and hung it between the two World Trade Center towers in New York city, dangling several thousands of feet above the ground and braced at both ends.” At this point, he asks, “Would you cross the beam now?” The audience shouts, “Of course not!”

“Would you do it for a hundred dollars?” adds Mr. Smith. “Would you do it for a thousand or even a million dollars?” Now, the last figure does cause some people in the audience to hesitate a little bit. But even then, most people refuse the offer. They value their own life far more than they do the money. “They would far rather be alive than be rich,” as Hyrum would say.

Nevertheless, what Mr. Smith tried to do in this particular situation is to have people reveal their true priorities, especially to themselves. In an instant, money, which was long thought to be a priority, became secondary when their own lives are placed in the scenario.

However, it didn’t end there.

Some people value other things even greater than their own lives. For instance, after asking the parent of young child to participate, he conducted his exercise and then said, “What would you say if I kidnapped your child, held a gun to your child’s head, and asked you to cross the beam or else the child suffers the consequences? Would you cross it then?” Many parents would cross the beam, obviously with a great deal of fear and trepidation, but without question. They value their children’s lives before their own.

Mr. Smith, who had been doing this exercise flawlessly many times in the past, encountered a snag one day. He did his I-beam test with a mother of a two year old and asked her to cross the beam. To the amazement of both Mr. Smith and the audience, she refused to cross. When asked why, the mother answered, “If I die, I have nobody to take care of my seven other children.”

As you might imagine, there was a tremendous sigh of relief that could be felt across the entire room. Nevertheless, the point is that every single person has not only a different set of values but also a different prioritization of those values. In this case, the mother didn’t want to deprive her seven children of a mother.

While each person’s set of values may resemble one another, the order of importance in which they are placed is clearly an individual process based on

many different factors. One's experiences, education, philosophies, upbringing, culture, sex, race, religion, and of course, conditioning play very dynamic roles.

This is why there is a third element to this disparity between us humans. In addition to personal values and their prioritization, a person's uniqueness is also defined by the manner in which he is aligned with his distinct hierarchy of values. This is the reason why some people are genuinely motivated and love what they do, while others need constant reinforcement or a "carrot-and-stick" support system. It's also why some people can deal with their challenges very easily while others quit or cut corners when they feel challenged or overwhelmed.

Luck and Motivation

“Success is simply a matter of luck. Ask any failure.”

— **Earl Wilson**

Goals properly aligned will give you an impelling momentum that, like a snowball rolling down a snow covered hill, increases in size and speed along the way. The more you work on your priorities, the more motivated you will become and the more timely the results you will produce. They will increase and keep on increasing.

Pam Lontos once wrote, “Momentum creates more momentum as motivation actually feeds on itself.” Each little success achieved will increase your self-esteem, your effectiveness, and of course, your efficiency.

Alignment will also grant you the ability to discover hidden opportunities and resources; opportunities and resources you thought you never had. An aligned person somehow has more of everything. Through the Law of Attraction, working with a sense of purpose ignites this inner magnetic force that positively attracts the right kinds of people, situations, experiences, ideas, and opportunities you will need along your journey. Ultimately, serendipity is the result of alignment.

You might think that this is a whole bunch of “mumbo-jumbo.” But in fact, when people are aligned, they are often considered “lucky.” Is it because of some metaphysical magic? Is it the result of some supernatural event? Is it really luck? Or is it because opportunities pass them by every single day and that such an alignment creates a heightened sense of awareness that causes them to discover what has been there all along? Of course, the latter is the right answer.

Alignment is opening yourself up to a whole new dimension, one that is and has always been there ready for you to enter when you are truly prepared for it. As Earl Nightingale once said, “Luck is when opportunity meets preparation.”

Management guru Peter Drucker once said, “Efficiency is doing things right while effectiveness is doing the right thing.” I say that luck is the result of both. It’s doing the right things in the right way.

By aligning your goals with to your values, you are doing things right. Then, when you work on your goals (i.e., follow your values), you are in fact doing the right things because they reflect your priorities. In the end, what you choose to do *at any time* will respond to your uppermost values *at all times*. This is where luck often comes in. You will have more desire, energy, and courage, and you will get a greater feeling of fulfillment both while you’re working on

your goals and once they're achieved. And you will attract all the necessary resources, events and people you need at that point.

Contrary to the traditional way people set goals, the process discussed in this book is in fact showing you how to do so in reverse. You are breaking your core values down into smaller, more digestible goals. These are called "pipeline goals" or "point-to-point goals" (or what Brian Tracy calls "benchmark goals"). If you just set goals, for instance, you will seldom if never be effective and, as often is the case, you will lower your self-esteem.

Therefore, you must first find out what your priorities are and then you use them to back up your goals. Together and properly aligned, you will be able to develop your goals into the right tools, skills, relationships, attitudes, and activities that you will require in order to achieve your goals. Thus, when working on your goals in reverse, you will become lucky.

Self Management

“In addition to self-awareness, imagination and conscience, it is the fourth human endowment, independent will, that really makes effective self-management possible. It is the ability to make decisions and choices and to act in accordance with them. It is the ability to act rather than to be acted upon, to proactively carry out the program we have developed through the other three endowments. Empowerment comes from learning how to use this great endowment in the decisions we make every day.”

— **Stephen Covey**

“**M**otivation,” the author of *The Psychology Of Winning* Dr. Dennis Waitley wrote, “comes from within and not from without; all motivation is self-motivation.” You can not find motivation outside of you but can develop motivation inside of you. Oftentimes, it is sleeping within you. People can get pepped up, enthused, encouraged, or even inspired by others, but they can never get motivated by them.

Effective personal managers are efficient, satisfied, motivated, and happier. They have higher self-esteem, are more likely to get promoted, and find more and better opportunities in life. All great achieving men and women are effective self-managers. They master their lives instead of manage their time. In fact, they do so almost instinctively without it being a goal in itself. On the flip side, however, ineffective personal management leads to procrastination and under-achievement.

It’s like the typical workaholic who manages to accomplish many tasks in an expedient fashion but must work long hours in order to do so or falls “sick” more days in the year than the average. Usually, an ineffective personal manager is moody, restless, sleepless, stressed, irritated, or sick. These are some of the natural side-effects of working *without* a sense of purpose.

For instance, if a salesperson is excellent in selling, he can close on a larger number of presentations than the norm. But if he is a poor self-manager, he only finds poor quality prospects or sells using unethical tactics. Therefore, he will have to work harder in order to find more people in order to meet his sales goals. Additionally, he will compromise his peace of mind that will ultimately affect his presentations and the relationships with his clients.

If he works very hard, meets a lot of potential customers, manages his time well, and accomplishes many tasks efficiently, but works on lower priority activities or on low priority values, it will cost him precious selling opportunities.

He is limiting himself as a result.

Truly successful people live in a way consistent with their personal values. They also know how to reach their goals without having to work themselves into the ground. Remember that what is urgent is seldom important and what is important is seldom urgent. Having goals that are aligned with one's priorities will cause a person to do what is important and not necessarily urgent.

However, the beauty of following such a process is that it will help to create a *sense of urgency* with what is important. It may not necessarily be urgent, but it is to that person. That person will *positively* procrastinate. In other words, he will delay that which is not important to him and urgently attend to that which is. He will focus on quality of life rather than quantity of time. He will drop his goals and manage his life.

Jim Rohn once said, "Without a sense of urgency, desire loses its value." In essence, activities that follow one's uppermost values become *priorities* as well. The things that are really important in one's life are given a sense of urgency rather than left on the back burner.

Nevertheless, if you say "I wish someone would come by and motivate me," what happens if he doesn't show up? As Jim Rohn said, "You've got to have a better plan for your life." You have to become an effective self-manager. You have to manage your life and not your time.

Natural Laws

“There are many who are living far below their possibilities because they are continually handing over their individualities to others. Do you want to be a power in the world? Then be yourself. Be true to the highest within your soul and allow yourself to be governed by no customs or conventionalities or arbitrary man-made rules that are not founded on principle.”

— **Ralph Waldo Trine**

“Take away the cause, and the effect ceases.”

— **Miguel de Cervantes**

In everything you do or want to do in life, you are always governed by law and not by chance. Natural laws are principles or explanations of why things are the way they are. Principles defined by Webster are “fundamental laws or facts of nature.” Out of the many you have read or will read about in this book, there is one, however, that is the foundational principle to all success.

It’s the Law of Cause and Effect, the Socratic Law of Causality enunciated by Socrates in 410 BCE. It is the one I want you to focus on most. It says that every event has a root cause as well as every event is also a cause set in motion, and so on. Everything happens for a reason. Everything is a matter of choice, and how you turn chance into choice depends on how well you recognize this law.

True success is not reaching a worthy ideal but in living it. It is to evolve. It is to become and not to have. As one sage put it, “Success is measured by *who we are* and not *what we have*.” Success is a label you put on a person who has achieved something that in your eyes is of significant value.

For instance, should you consider a person who meets a certain criteria to be successful? If so, all you are doing is looking at the end-result, one based on your *perception* of success. Do you know, for instance, if that person is living his worthy ideal? Do you know if that person is happy? Or should you, when you look at others who do not seem to lead affluent lifestyles, consider them failures?

The answer to all of these questions is *no*. You are only labeling them and doing so by merely scratching the *surface*. Literally.

Remember that the path to true success is an inward one. We will never be successful when we feel that we have to measure it against something outside of ourselves, including and more importantly the perceptions of others. In fact, many have achieved success but are often not considered successful. This is why I con-

sider success and achievement as two separate entities. All successful people are achievers but not all achievers are considered successful. One is measured by its end-result while the other by its process.

Let me illustrate. One person has reached an annual income of \$120,000 while another has reached only \$25,000. Which one do you think is the more successful person? Most of you will have a tendency to say the \$120,000 income earner is more successful because you are comparing end-results (or goals). You are not considering the process.

However, let's say that the \$25,000 earner went through a bankruptcy, suffered an illness, or had a series of accidents. Who's more successful now? Not convinced yet? How about if I added that the latter also has greater peace of mind, feels a deeper sense of joy, loves his work, and finds a profound feeling of satisfaction with only \$25,000. In other words, his \$25,000 means more to him than \$120,000 means to the other.

Now, who is the more successful person? You see, the \$25,000 means more to the latter. The taste of success is sweeter to him. The value behind the achievement is greater. And that's the key.

Essentially, success is not and should never be measured by the end-result or by how others feel about it, because the level of one's success is deeply personal and based on how one feels in achieving it. It comes from neither the size of the goal nor its value to others. Ultimately, the level of your success is measured by how you personally value its achievement. Period.

"Mike," some interviewer once asked me, "if you had to live your life over, what would you have changed?" I responded that I wouldn't change anything. If I had to choose my parents or the way I wanted to live, I wouldn't be where I am if I did, and I would certainly have to experience what I did in order to think that way in the first place.

Some of you may categorize that as having a positive attitude, but a positive mental attitude is more than simply being optimistic. It is based on the understanding and the application of natural laws. Stephen Covey illustrates this point extremely well. He says, "Some may be lost in their lives. If they have a positive mental attitude, they may be able to carry that loss. But they are *still* lost."

In essence, positive thinking is the result of alignment and not the other way around. If you accept your setbacks as things that have happened to you for a reason and use them as propelling forces to reach that which you seek, you will become much more effective and, of course, successful.

Growing in the Right Direction

“Are you green and growing, or ripe and rotting?”

— **Ray Kroc (Founder of McDonald’s)**

What is a problem? There’s a saying, which says that obstacles are what happens when you take your eyes off your goals. I don’t agree because problems can occur even when you are focusing on your goals. However, I would certainly agree that obstacles are what happens when you take your eyes off your priorities. In fact, to the congruent person, problems are not problems but considered as growing pains.

You are always growing no matter what. Change is, in essence, the result of growing. A “Help Wanted” ad caught my eye when it said: “We embrace change by hiring people who create it.” We do create our own changes. We are always growing, always evolving, always changing. Therefore, since we can not stop that growth, the key to living a fulfilling life is to choose how to grow and to grow in the right direction.

Like a plant that must first be tied to a stake in order for it to grow straight, you must learn to accept life’s garden stakes. Stakes are your teachers; people who have taught you or who are teaching you the things you need to learn. They can hold you back, make it tough for you, hurt you, say nasty things to you, or push you, but what they are really doing is *teaching* you.

Ultimately, they are making you stronger. They include your parents, spouses, bosses, mentors, teachers, government agencies, partners, customers, bankers, lawyers, competitors, friends, etc. They are like garden stakes that hold you as you set out to reach your goals, because they have something to teach you first and do so whether they intended it or not.

Now, failure and loss are also a part of life. You may lose money, time, people you love, even confidence in yourself. You may fail in business ventures, in reaching goals, in relationships, or in the course of your life. You may even lose sight of your values at some point in time, especially when you have to start all over (as most successful people have). As life’s pruning processes help you to lose that which will make you grow stronger, you must translate those failures and losses as part of the pruning process of life that will help you grow healthier.

In addition to life’s garden stakes and pruning processes, you probably have to deal with negativity thrown at you from time to time. You must deal with challenges, setbacks, difficulties, and problems. Now, you know what fertilizer is

made of, right? It takes that kind of negativity from which can grow into a beautiful tree. Therefore, you must accept getting fertilizer occasionally thrown at you so as to grow stronger.

Life is indeed like a garden. If you want to grow in the right direction and especially in the direction of your own choosing, you must learn to recognize life's stakes, fertilizers, and pruning processes. You not only have the ability to grow, because we all do no matter what, but also you have the ability to choose *how* to grow. That's what really important.

To grow either in age or in wisdom, in wealth or in poverty, in health or in sickness, in love or in fear, or in knowledge or in ignorance is all but a matter of choice. You have the ability to choose how you want to grow and to create the results you want. Benjamin Disraeli once said, "Men are not creatures of circumstances, circumstances are creatures of men."

From the Inside Out

“The trouble with so many of us is that we underestimate the power of simplicity. We have a tendency it seems to over complicate our lives and forget what’s important and what’s not. We tend to mistake movement for achievement. We tend to focus on activities instead of results. As the pace of life continues to race along in the outside world, we forget that we have the power to control our lives regardless of what’s going on outside.”

— **Robert Stuber**

“First, all relationships are with yourself — and sometimes they involve other people. Second, the most important relationship in your life — the one you have, like it or not, until the day you die — is with yourself.”

— **Peter McWilliams**

Remember that your inner self is your greatest source of all that feeds you along the road of life. It’s what builds you as a person. It’s your values, your priorities, your mind, and especially your peace of mind. Most important, it’s your self-image. Since your image is a mere reflection of your self-image, then what goes on outside of you is an indication of what goes on inside.

As Denis Waitley in *The Psychology Of Winning* once wrote, “What is impressed on the inside is expressed on the outside.” That is why, throughout this book, I often refer to self-esteem as the key determinant in your success. Inextricably, it affects who you are, what you do, and the people around you. You can never do what you love or love what you do if you don’t love yourself firsthand. Rumi once wrote, “Let the beauty of what you love be what you do.”

In addition, you will love others to the exact same degree you love yourself. Relationships are a mirror reflection of the relationship you have with yourself. Therefore, the more aligned you are, the better your relationships will be.

Stephen Covey once wrote, “People who are constantly repressing, not transcending feelings toward a higher meaning find that it affects the quality of their relationships with others.” The way you treat others is directly proportional to the way you treat yourself, and the relationships you maintain reflect the quality of the relationship you maintain with yourself. If your relationships are less than desirable, then the problem lies within you — not outside.

In essence, if you ignore others, you ignore the fact that people contribute to your quality of life. As the cliché goes, “Nobody on their deathbed wished they spent more time at the office.” The level of success you achieve in your life is

wholly dependent on the relationship you have with the people you know, serve, and love. And that, my friend, all starts with you.

For instance, if wealth is one of your values, remember that you can not buy happiness let alone friendship. Stuart Wilde once said, "People are the custodians of the world's wealth. If you want to be wealthy, you've got to be nice to people." Money is but an energy, and it is not and should never be a goal in itself. Therefore, if you neglect others in the process of reaching your income goals, it is because you are neglecting yourself. You may become rich but you can also become poor in other ways.

If you don't believe me, you should take a quick trip to your library. You will find that there are many rich men and women who, although being successful in a material sense, have failed in many other ways. They've failed in their businesses, in their partnerships, in their marriages, with their peers, with their kids, and even with themselves through suicide.

Bob Proctor, in the introduction of his book *Born to be Rich*, provides some very interesting statistics. To make a long story short, he listed the names of many of the world's greatest self-made millionaires who have committed suicide, became mentally insane or incompetent, were killed, or died due to an over-consumption of drugs or alcohol.

Jim Rohn said, "Don't become wealthy at the expense of others but rather at the service of others." Wealth, therefore, is but a byproduct of love. If you seek to accumulate wealth, do so through doing what you love and not by setting it as a goal in itself. In other words, wealth is a value and not a goal. Love yourself and you will love what you do as well as other people. In the end, success, happiness, wealth, and many other wonderful things will come to you in unexpected ways.

Be True to Yourself

“Your only obligation in any lifetime is to be true to yourself. Being true to anyone else or anything else is not only impossible, but the mark of a fake messiah.”

— **Richard Bach**

“This above all: to thine own self be true, and it must follow as the night the day, thou canst then be false to any man.”

— **William Shakespeare**

I believe that the path to true personal greatness can be found through the use of a personal journal. Remember that you will never be as successful as you will be to your own self, and the journal can enlighten you in more ways in this area than you would have ever thought possible. Many great successful men and women have kept personal journals.

As a young salesman, the one thing that kept me hanging on was through writing and reviewing entries in my personal journal. In essence, knowing how far I've grown was the fuel that helped me grow further. My journals contain thoughts, feelings, inspirational messages, and all sorts of information about myself as well as about the people around me.

This book, for instance, is the result of years of journal-keeping. You can use your journal to reflect on, develop, and prioritize your personal set of values. Better still, you should use one to develop and integrate the GOAL system you will learn later in this book. You can use your journal to help associate feelings to thoughts and thoughts to feelings. And most important, a journal can help you to discover the motives that motivate you.

Never underestimate the power of keeping a journal. In fact, look at it as your personal bible; it contains the commandments and the prophecies you want your life to take, respect, and adhere to. Make your journal your personal gospel.

Use it to capture ideas, flashes of inspiration, new skills, different strategies, situations you are facing, questions about yourself, and answers you come up with. You may think you know yourself well but this is rarely if ever true. You only know yourself to the degree that you learn about yourself. And the journal can positively and profoundly impact this important learning process.

Moreover, the journal can help you in developing your intuition. Recently, psychologists have discovered that we do not operate at a single level but at three.

In other words, we don't have just one mind but three distinct minds. For example, beyond the conscious and subconscious minds, we also have an all-powerful, all-knowing super-conscious mind. Some people call it the "infinite intelligence." Some people call it "soul" or "spirit." But if you remember, I prefer to call it the conscience. Your intuition. It is the place from which all flows.

In other words, your mind is like a computer. For example, the random-access memory (RAM) is your conscious mind in which you sort, calculate, and process data. The subconscious mind is the read-only memory or hard drive (ROM) where information is stored, coded, and retrieved. However, the super-conscious mind is the programmer on which the other two depend, since the computer can not operate without it being programmed in the first place.

Thus, your super-conscious mind, being perfect and all-knowing, can help you along your journey and maybe more than you think. As such, your personal journal can become a great tool for tapping into the source that lies within you.

Additionally, it is of paramount importance for you to be able to keep records and refer back to them. References can help you to become more resilient and flexible in times of challenges. In other words, if you had a bad experience and overcame it in the past, the journal can help to remind you of your successes or of the learning experiences when another confronts you.

The best way to do this is to use the "best-better" technique. Look at what is the best thing you can pull from or liked about a given situation, and then look at how you would do better next time or how you can better yourself from the experience. Don't write what you hate about an event or how terrible you were in dealing with it. And don't justify it by saying, "I have to know what I did wrong so I won't do it again."

Finding out what's wrong about any situation is in fact emphasizing it as well as reinforcing it. Instead of what you did wrong, write down what is the best thing you can pull from what happened or what you liked best about your experience. And look at what will make things better or how you would handle the situation better next time.

Understand that you must first work on your strong points instead of your weak points. Often, people work on their deficiencies and, as a result, unconsciously lower their self-esteem. However, if they had focused on their strengths, many of their weaknesses would have been self-corrected in the process.

Nevertheless, building your strengths will increase your self-esteem, which is the key to understanding your weaknesses and how to correct them. And the journal can be a wonderful tool for helping you do exactly that.

Your Life's Foundation

“If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where there should be. Now, put foundations under them.”

— **Henry David Thoreau**

“When you don't know where you are going, any road will get you there.”

— **Jim Rohn**

A question people often ask me in my seminars is, “Why are there so many people who succeed, have everything a person can ever wish for, yet still feel unhappy, unsatisfied, or unfulfilled?” Why, in other words, do so many people successfully fail? You might wonder what this question has to do with self-esteem. To explain, let me draw on an analogy.

You see, life is like a building. And whatever we need, want, or do in our lives, there is one thing in this world that we will absolutely need and can never ignore, no matter what kind of “house” we dream of building for ourselves. Obviously, it is the *foundation*.

A foundation needs to be solid, reliable, and consistent with the size and type of building you want to build. In other words, a foundation must be “true” to your building. The bigger and greater the building, the more solid the foundation should be. Therefore, if you want a life that is richly rewarding, it is commonsensical that you will need a stronger foundation to work from.

For instance, did you know that towers have foundations as deep as the height of the tower itself in order to prevent it from shifting or vacillating? Likewise, being true to yourself means working from a foundation that is as strong as the life you are capable of building. But if you vacillate from your values, your life will have a tendency to vacillate as well.

Without support or a proper one for that matter, then regardless of how great the goal you want to reach your building just won't stand up. Likewise, your achievements won't stand up to your expectations when they're built on a poor foundation. In addition, you can not add to your building with a foundation that was meant for a smaller or a different kind of building.

Therefore, doing as much as possible is like building too hastily, using poor materials and shoddy construction work. And reaching goals that are not consistent with your uppermost values is like a life that is built a foundation of sand; it may stand up but it won't stay up — at least, not for long.

That is why you must ensure that you are building upon a reliable foundation that is consistent with the life you dream of building. The only thing that will keep your building standing through the challenges of time and the storms of life that come sweeping by is to start from a foundation that is made of solid concrete.

Your foundation is thus made up of your personal set of innermost values. Brian Tracy, author of *The Science Of Self-confidence*, says that the foundation of a fulfilling life is “to recognize, respect, and reach that which we are capable of *in consistency with* our uppermost values.” Therefore, the size and the strength of your foundation must be consistent with the size and the weight of your success.

Remember that clearly defining your values is the foundation of success. How can you stick to your priorities when you don’t know what they are or what they mean? Our lives are, more often than not, cluttered with pressing needs and urgencies, other people’s needs as well as their priorities, or goals that do not correspond to any of our values. In order to manage your life effectively, you must first define your values. Then, when you align yourself with your values, you will have greater peace of mind.

Remember that if the foundation upon which you live your life is the wrong one, or in this case a weak one, you will either fall short of your expectations or never feel fulfilled. Your success, in other words, won’t stand up. You must be organized from the onset by clarifying exactly where you stand before deciding where you want to go. How can you reach any goal if you don’t know why for? In other words, how do you get to where you want to go when you don’t know where we are to start with?

So before you start reaching any goal, you must first manage your life. In other words, you must begin by clearly defining your deepest values. If not, you might produce some results and reach some goals, but ignoring your true priorities will cause you to never be able to reach that which you are truly capable of.

The key to effective personal management is absolute *clarity*. Clarity increases self-esteem while clutter decreases it. If your mind is cluttered, your life will be cluttered as well. If you do not have a clear sense of your personal values, that is if you don’t know what’s important to you and your life right now, then regardless of how great the goal, how productive the day, or how effective the system, you will never be truly happy let alone successful.

If your deepest values are not clearly defined, you are probably following someone else’s values instead. Think about it. Have you ever worked on some of your goals but saw your successes as part of someone else’s plan? Have you ever reached some of your goals but somehow got deviated along the way? Have you ever worked so hard but felt you were going nowhere?

When I was in school, I remember my 6th grade teacher who once said, “Looking inside your lockers will tell me a great deal about who you are.” This applies to every dimension of life, as it is true that a person will become a high achiever to the degree to which he is organized.

In this context, how one is organized on the inside will determine how well one will do on the outside. To paraphrase my teacher, “If I could look inside your mind, it will tell me great deal about who you are.” In essence, you first need to put your life in order before you attempt to make something of it.

Your True Priorities

“Unless you live consistent with your deepest values, you’ll achieve but still lack the ultimate fulfillment you truly deserve.”

— **Anthony Robbins**

“The secret to success and happiness is to translate your values into everyday life.”

— **Hyrum Smith**

Everybody has a set of deep core values that governs a person’s actions and a person can never ignore his core values. When confronted with emergencies, pressure, important decisions, or challenging situations, the actions he invariably takes will directly stem from his personal set of values.

Wayne Dyer said, “If you cut an orange and squeeze it, all you will get is orange juice, not apple juice.” When a person is under pressure, what will come out will be without exception consistent with his deepest values; and this, no matter what a person wants or how that person acts under normal circumstances.

Therefore, working on goals that do not answer to your values or their specific order is like “going against the grain.” It’s like trying to maneuver your car when your wheels are out of alignment or pointing you in a different direction. In the end, you will lose control of your car and become prone to accidents along the way. In the same sense, if you’re aligned with your values, you will have greater control over your life. As the Law of Control says, “People are happiest to the degree to which they are (or feel they are) in control of their lives.”

Ed Bernd, co-author of *The Silva Method*, once wrote: “When you know where you’re going, you can take shortcuts. Or at the very least, you can stay on the right path and not be distracted by unproductive activities.” This is what the system I will teach you will do. It is called the GOAL method, which is an acronym that stands for *Guides, Objectives, Actions, and Livelines*.

The first step in the GOAL system is to set your values and develop goals from them. (That’s why I prefer to call them your *priorities*. They are your “guides” rather than your “goals.” They guide you along your journey rather than become targets to reach.) If you already have goals, then it would be to align your goals with your priorities. If your goals are not aligned with your prioritized values (or, worst yet, if they are improperly aligned), you will end up reaching a destination you might have never wanted or none at all.

As well, stress, procrastination, hard work, poor relationships, and unhappiness often results from the lack of proper alignment. Always remember that your values are more important than your goals because they are helping you to understand the value behind your goals.

To understand the importance of alignment, let's illustrate with the example Brian Tracy uses in his seminars. Let's say you meet persons "A" and "B." They both have the same three core values, which are family, health, and career. However, person "A's" values are in the following order of priority: Career first, family second, and health last. Person "B's" priorities, however, are: Family first, health second, and then career. Now tell me, even if both have the same three values, would you notice a difference between the two? The answer is invariably *yes*.

While one places career above all else, the other values his family first and he would sacrifice his career for his family if the need ever rose. While the other's career is more important to him, even if family values are important, urgencies at work will take precedence. One's higher value-oriented activities inherently dominate over all others. If goals do not correspond to one's uppermost values, it can threaten the entire process.

Misalignment can be dangerous. Very dangerous. For example, person "A" has goals in the following specific order: 1) To spend more time with spouse, 2) get promoted, and 3) to improve cardiovascular condition. His number one goal, according to the preceding order, is a family goal when his number one priority, if you recall, is career. By placing career as a secondary priority, this will cause challenges along the way and he will feel that something's wrong, which may indirectly cause distress on his family and thus defeat the purpose.

Another scenario is that he will probably have a tendency to procrastinate in the process and not feel as motivated as he should be. He will be unhappy, frustrated, neglect his family or deviate from any of his family goals when confronted with urgencies in his career. His wheels are pointing his car in a totally different direction and he is trying to maneuver against it. He must unnecessarily work harder to reach his goal. He might even abandon his family goals altogether without ever knowing why. Frustration, unhappiness, and guilt often ensue.

So, to manage your life effectively, you must start by setting your values, prioritize them, and then set your goals. This will prompt you to create goals that have more meaning, sometimes goals you may have never realized you wanted to achieve. Oftentimes, it will also create an entirely new vision for your life.

However, it may not be as easy as you think. Setting and prioritizing your values may take a while. It may take some time to think them over and it may require serious reflection. And, as you go along the road of life, you may have re-

shaped your thinking and need to reset your values altogether. Don't fret if this happens to you. It's all part of the process of growing that I mentioned earlier.

As well, this new vision created by your personal values may cause you to eliminate some of your goals or misconceptions. In reality, these goals were never meant to be accomplished in the first place. Either you would have never reached them in the first place or they would have deviated you from the accomplishment of other, more important goals.

Your Values

“The most important things in life aren’t things.”

— **Francis the Talking Mule**

“One of the symptoms of an approaching nervous breakdown is the belief that one’s work is terribly important.”

— **Bertrand Russell**

“Often people attempt to live their lives backwards: they try to have more things, or more money, in order to do more of what they want to they will be happier. The way it actually works is the reverse. You must first be who you really are, then do what you need to do, to have what you want.”

— **Margaret Young**

First, take a sheet of paper and write at the top “My Values.” Start by listing your top ten values. Ask yourself what kind of feeling, value, or personal meaning you would like in your life right now. What are your innermost convictions? What do you really value in life? What are you truly passionate about? What are your core desires?

They can be health, wealth, excitement, career, spirituality, integrity, happiness, peace of mind, love, appreciation, financial independence, prestige, etc. Most important, your values can and should also be the important people in your life. They can include your mother, your father, your spouse, your lover, your children, your friends, etc. Don’t look at what you want but at what’s important to you. Consider the ultimate benefit in the accomplishment of *any* goal.

Then, prioritize your values from one to 10 (or more), where one is the most important value you cherish and 10 is the least. Write beside each of your values the reasons why you’ve chosen this value as well as why you’ve prioritized it in its respective order. For example, you can say, “I’ve chosen financial independence as a value number one because I do not want to ever go bankrupt again,” or, “I’ve chosen health as my number two value because I want to live my life to the fullest and, since heart-related problems run in my family, I refuse to be stricken with this kind of disease.”

A person to whom I taught this technique chose security as one of her values because of an experience she had after being robbed and losing everything she owned. She chose wealth as another value because, after losing everything she owned and lacking proper insurance, she was homeless for several months.

She was repulsed by this kind of living and rebuilding her life was a priority. As you can see, values as well as their order of importance are strictly personal.

So let's start the entire process by first listing your prioritized set of innermost values. You can take a new sheet of paper and rewrite them in proper order. These are your rock-solid values that live in every single cell and fiber of your being. They are what make you unique. They are your purposes in life. They are your priorities. They are the fuel that will propel you along your journey. They will help you determine your "guides" rather than your "goals."

As time goes on, you may need to review and reset your values. We all change with time and growth is a normal and expected part of life. While some if not all goals may never change, your values or their new order of priority can, and this will conflict with your goals or cloud your perception of their importance.

For example, you are probably single and value career as a number one value and family as a number two value. Years from now, you may meet that special someone and start a family. More than likely, you will start to value your family first rather than your career. If your goals are not reevaluated or realigned properly with your priorities, this will cause some distortion in your perception of the importance of your career goals. In addition, it can create some challenges along the road of achieving both career and family goals.

To remain consistent, you must therefore continually ensure your activities respect your personal set of priorities. Reviewing your values from time to time will cause you to reassess your goals, re-prioritize them, or realign them with your values. Don't worry if this happens to you.

Remember that your values are your guides along the voyage of life. Nobody can change them but you. They govern your actions and will grant you the necessary determination, courage, and motivation you will need to be successful. In fact, as you break your goals down into smaller easier-to-digest activities, you will add value to what you do. Ultimately, why should you earn a living when you can design a life worth earning?

The G.O.A.L. Method

“I practiced the art of getting more things done rather than getting the really important things done well.”

— **Alec MacKenzie**

“We can no more afford to spend major time on minor things than we can to spend minor time on major things.”

— **Jim Rohn**

Now is the time to set your GOALS. Your “guides” are goals that will most likely stem from your personal values because, having gone through the process so far, you will have a pretty good idea of what kind of goals you *truly* want. Take a new sheet of paper and write at the top the words “My Guides.” Then, write down what you want to be, do, or have.

By taking your values you have listed and prioritized, associate a goal to each value and prioritize your goals according to the order your values have taken. Place a goal to which a value corresponds best. In other words, don’t look at the goal in itself but at its meaning. Some goals will end up with no value at all, which means exactly what it says — they have no real value whatsoever.

You should write them off completely and forget about them immediately. These goals can cause you to feel unsatisfied, unfulfilled, and unhappy. If not, just having them around can take your focus away from other goals that are more valuable and stop you from reaching them.

After you’re all done, re-prioritize your goals according to the specific order you have given them through their alignment. They may not necessarily respond to the exact value number. They simply follow suit according to the level of importance you have placed on them by harmonizing your goals with your personal set of prioritized values.

Now, take a new sheet of paper and re-list your newly prioritized goals. After that, you can start working on your goals with greater peace of mind and assurance. As Carl Trumbell Hayden once wrote, “Success is getting what you want while happiness is wanting what you get.”

The next step in the GOAL method is “O,” which stands for objectives. Objectives are mini-goals or milestone goals. Objectives come as a result of breaking a larger goal down into bite-sized chunks that are easier to achieve. They are like checkpoints where you will be able to track your goals and easily detect

and correct any deviations. They help to ensure that you're on the right track since, after you've reached an objective, you can make appropriate corrections, focus on what's important, change your objective, or change your goal altogether.

So, take a new sheet of paper again for each and every goal, and write at the top the words "My Objectives For (the goal you are working on)." Divide the goal up into as many parts as possible. Instead of working on a goal with a deadline and probably feeling frustrated because you procrastinated until the last minute, you are achieving smaller goals within smaller time frames. You will become more productive and know where you're going rather than be distracted by unproductive and oftentimes urgent activities.

We now get to "A" of the GOAL method for defining your actions. These are activities that will lead to the accomplishment of each objective. Ask, "What are the 'causes' I need to produce the 'effects' I want?" "What steps must I take in order to reach my objectives?" By breaking your goals down, you will likely discover what activities are truly important rather than urgent. In fact, some activities you never thought of will come to you almost *automatically*.

However, blindly taking massive amounts of action hoping someday it will produce the results you want can be very time consuming and frustrating. As Alec MacKenzie once wrote, "If you're flying a plane and you're lost, you may be accomplishing a lot just as the plane is going 600 miles an hour... But the bottom-line is that the plane is still lost." Jim Rohn also wrote, "If someone is going down the wrong road, he doesn't need motivation to speed him up; what he needs is education to turn him around."

So what you do now is take a sheet of paper for each and every objective and write at the top the words "My Actions For (objective)." For each individual objective, write down all of the activities that are required for reaching your objective. You're preparing an action plan, so to speak, and by developing action plans you will be able to tell how well you're on track towards your goals (i.e., how well you are sticking to your priorities). If objectives are milestone goals, then actions are like stepping stones towards your objectives.

At this point, you need not concern yourself with deadlines. You need only concern yourself with the knowledge of what you must be doing, and how important it is, at any given time. To do this, you must put "livelines" on your activities, which is the "L" portion of the GOAL method.

Livelines are dates by which your activities are to be initiated. They help to streamline and concentrate your focus on what's important at any given time, and make sure that you're sticking to your priorities at all times. In other words, livelines are meant to guide you and not force you into action.

With each action plan, put a start-date on each activity. Remember that livelines are guides that will tell you what's important and when they are important, rather than what's urgent or when they are to be finished by. You do not need to prioritize them because, in reality, they have already been prioritized. But in order to put *realistic* livelines on each activity so that you don't end up with a mountain of them, ask yourself this powerful question: "Does it matter? Does it matter right now? And if so, how much?"

Tackling or hoarding lists of unimportant activities can deter you from following your priorities. They will cause unwanted grief by causing you to not reach your goals and, worse yet, to step over other goals let alone other values.

Conclusion

“I conceive that pleasures are to be avoided if greater pains be the consequence, and pains to be coveted that will terminate in greater pleasures.”

— **Michel Eyquem de Montaigne (Circa 1500)**

Remember that it's not your goals that really count but how you live your life according to what's important to you. If you feel you can not incorporate this system with your current job or other responsibilities, you should first try it out. You might find out that your job is indeed part of your priorities or that it doesn't mean anything at all to you. If the first is true, then you will have a greater zest and love for what you do. However, if the second is true, then start looking for something you love or would love to do.

One friend I know got involved in different functions with several local associations thinking that doing so was essential in her business. However, she felt stressed out because she couldn't keep up with all of the demands on her life. She had pressing needs at home, less time at work, and more work than she can handle. But when she went through the GOAL process she discovered that attending these meetings were not important at all because they were not in tune with her values. What was surprising to her was the fact that she had a wrong sense of what her real values were all along. This might happen to you!

The philosophies and strategies you have read in this book are not some sort of path-breaking dogma or the only road to success. But one thing is for sure in that it is the surest way to discover why one should (and not how one can) achieve one's personal success.

Remember that if you live in a way consistent with your deepest values, your success is assured no matter how small or how grand the purpose is in your life. If you focus only on your goals and not on your priorities, you are placing a ceiling on your potential.

Remember that the essence of you, the “You” of you, is your successfulness. You don't need anything outside of you to prove it. So dump your goals — more specifically, change the way you used to look at them. And instead, love what you do or do what you love. Either way, work on your goals that revolve around a clear purpose in your life, and reaching them will be merely a byproduct of your love. As well, peace of mind, happiness, and absence of stress will equally become the result. When you realize this, you will grow in the right direction and enjoy a much greater quality of life.

Don't just read this book once and forget about it. And don't discount the power of clarifying your priorities. Try the techniques out. You will never fully understand the reasoning behind their use until you put what you have learned into practice. You will never really achieve the freedom you deserve.

Confucius once said, "I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand." Remember that this is not a "how-to" book but a "why-for" book. Try the GOAL method before you judge it. It might reveal many things about you, about your life, and about your deepest convictions. The result of trying the system may grant you a whole new perspective on life.

Jim Rohn said this, which has been hanging on my wall, above my desk, for years: "There are some things you don't have to know how it works. The main thing is that it works. While some people are analyzing the roots, others are picking the fruit. It just depends which end of this you want to get in on." Oprah Winfrey once said, "The hardest things in life to learn are which bridges to cross and which ones to burn." This is what the techniques in this book will help you to do, which is to learn more about your own personal bridges. To paraphrase Stephen Covey, "Seek to understand yourself before being understood."

If you translate what is important in your life into what is urgent, then what is important will seldom if ever be placed on the back burner of your life. All in all, you will be happy and not just successful. You will find peace of mind as well as peace of time. You will improve the quality of your life during the passage of time. You can not control time, therefore enjoy it while you can. If you don't, one day you might just be too late...

Good luck to you. Be kind to yourself.

May you be blessed with many opportunities, the wisdom to recognize them, the courage to seize them, and the ability to live them. But most importantly, may you be prepared to grow from them!

Namasté,
Michel Fortin

About the Author

“Success is not a matter of talents, skills, achievements, acquisitions, or attitudes, but a matter of priorities.”

— **Michel Fortin**

Michel Fortin owns and operates a company called *The Success Doctor, Inc.* He is an award-winning salesperson and internationally-acclaimed copywriter and marketer for over 20 years. In the last 10 years of his career, he has specialized in direct response copywriting, sales training, business development consulting and Internet marketing.

Michel’s portfolio includes a diverse range of businesses and individuals, such as hair transplant surgeons, plastic surgeons, dermatologists, general practitioners, corporate executives, computer consultants, management consultants, salespeople, internationally franchised firms, beauty salons, trade schools, Internet marketers, direct marketers, entrepreneurs, and government agencies.

From the individual to the multinational, many of Michel’s clients have operations of an international caliber while others are recognized as leading authorities in their respective fields. He has worked with or alongside marketing greats such as Mark Victor Hansen (creator of the *Chicken Soup For The Soul®* series), Yanik Silver, John Reese, John Assaraf, Jay Abraham, Armand Morin, Mike Litman, Michael Kimble, Gary Halbert, and many, many others.

In order to help clients achieve business success, his services range from compelling copywriting, action-driven web design, innovative video production, profitable lead generation systems, profound business enhancement strategies, and practical sales and marketing training, to outstanding seminars, books, and tapes. In addition to his consulting practice, he has also lectured at conventions, trade shows, trade schools, universities, and colleges.

From a humiliating bankruptcy to skyrocketing success, Michel Fortin has learned that which he teaches the hard way. In other words, his practical wisdom comes from pure, unadulterated “frontlines” experience. In fact, Michel became the number one salesperson in Canada for a large multinational *Fortune 500®* company and has generated over \$40 million in sales in the last 10 years. Consequently, his successes and sought-after proven teachings are the reasons why Fortin is often dubbed as “The Success Doctor.”

He is the author of *The 10 Commandments of Power Positioning*, *Power Positioning Dot Com*, *How To Write Profit-Pulling Copy In Three Simple Steps*,

The Profit Pill, The Copy Doctor: Astonishing Shortcut Secrets of a Direct-Response Copywriter In Action!, and Drop Your Goals and Manage Your Life!

If you wish to obtain more information about Michel Fortin or would like to hire him to speak to your group, or if you would like to know more about his consulting or copywriting schedule, please call him at (613) 261-4881.

Michel Fortin also offers special considerations for churches, charitable organizations, faith groups, and fundraising events.

Want More?

Here are some of the products and services offered by *The Success Doctor*.™ For more information, please contact Michel Fortin at (613) 261-4881, or visit his main website at SuccessDoctor.com.

- **Main website:** www.SuccessDoctor.com
Copywriting, consulting and speaking services. *Free articles.*
- **Free discussion forum:** www.CopywritersBoard.com
Free discussion board for copywriters and/or about copywriting.
- **Membership website:** www.TheCopyDoctor.com
Copywriting videos and membership website. *Free 3-day trial!*
- **Free email newsletter:** www.TheProfitPill.com
Copywriting tips and tactics email newsletter delivered online.
- **Personal blog:** www.MichelFortin.com
Michel Fortin's personal blog about copywriting and marketing.
- **Downloadable interviews:** www.BoostMyResponse.com
Recorded interviews with copywriting giants Gary Halbert and more.
- **Latest book:** www.PowerPositioning.com
Michel Fortin's latest book on positioning your business/product.

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