

Personal Excellence

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The Magazine of Personal Leadership



November 2012

John Maxwell
Consultant

**Listen
to Lead**

**Your Spiritual
Journey**

Laws of Growth

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Personal Excellence

November 2012

The Magazine of Life Leadership

INSPIRATIONAL • JOURNEY

Your Spiritual Journey

Stand up and speak out for your beliefs, causes.

by Marianne Williamson

PEOPLE ON A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY ARE THE *last* people who should sit out social and political issues since they know that the mechanics of the heart and mind drive transformation. If you know what makes one life change, then you know what makes a nation change.

People involved in the *inner journey* discover the value of the spiritually receptive aspect of human consciousness. Everyone archetypically is a parent to future generations. And a motherly love—putting the care of children before every other consideration—is the ultimate intelligence of nature. Yes, women are homemakers—and the entire earth is our home. Yes, we are here to take care of the children—and every child in the world is one of our own. We are ready to say these things in a meaningful way and with a collective voice. Making money more important than your children is a pathological way for individuals to run their affairs, and for a society to run its affairs.

Albert Einstein said we would not solve the problems of the world from the same level of thinking we were at when we created them. We need more than *new politics*—we need a *new bottom line*. We need to shift from an *economic* to a *humanitarian* organizing principle for civilization. And women should be saying so.

The US incarcerates more of its people than any nation in history. Our military budget is almost *twice* that of *all other nations combined*. At 23.1 percent, our child poverty rate is second only to Romania among the 35 developed nations, and 17,000 children on earth die of starvation daily. We're the only species sys-

tematically destroying its own habitat. And two billion people—about a third of the world's population—live on less than 2 dollars a day. Those facts will only change when we bring to our problem-solving a more committed heart.

Currently, the US Congress is comprised of 17 percent women. Our State legislators are comprised of 24 percent women. Would our legislative priorities be what they are today—serv-

ing those with economic leverage first—were those legislative bodies gender equal? Would the *war on women* exist? Would poverty be given such short shift? I think not. But the political system is contrary to everything a feminine heart stands for. It lacks poetry. It doesn't nurture or love. And without those things, the feminine psyche disconnects.

If we simply shudder at politics and then ignore it altogether, we will have gone from men telling us condescendingly to not bother about politics, to not bothering *without even being told not to!* Our challenge is to create a new political conversation by speaking our truth in our own way.

As we awaken individually, we'll act more powerfully collectively; legislation and political campaigns will embody new thinking only if we engage *en masse*. If we don't engage the political system, we allow it to become something other than *what we are*. What we engage, we transform. And what we engage with our hearts is transformed forever. Martin Luther King, Jr. said that the ultimate goal of the Civil Rights movement was to establish *the beloved community*—to inject a *new dimension of love* into the veins of civilization. I don't think mak-



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ing *love* the new bottom line is naïve; I believe that thinking we can survive the next 100 years doing anything less is naïve.

Restoration of True Feminism

While women were powerfully liberated by *feminism*, we also made serious mistakes. In some ways we denigrated the *feminine* in the name of *feminism*. Too often we took *liberation* to mean simply that we were free now to *behave like men*. In the name of *feminism*, we denied some essential aspects of our authentic selves. While feminism should have been a celebration of our own unique characteristics, we insisted that we had no unique characteristics, that gender differences were hogwash, and a *feminine woman* was nothing more than a plaything for men. Calling a woman *feminine* was practically an insult! Traits like *nurturing* and *maternal* were viewed as *weak*. If men could be *tough*, then so could we. If men could have sex and not get emotionally involved, then so could we. If men could make business their bottom line and not factor in the welfare of children in formulating social and economic policy, then so could we. Yippee. We were liberated to become their clones.

In the last two decades, a great correction has been underway, as women have seen the psychic scars left by our self-inflicted wounding of the feminine self. Too often, having become men, we then had a harder time with men. And having denied our feminine yearnings, we too often lay havoc to what is for many women a natural yearning of the heart to make a home and raise a family. Choosing to be a *traditional housewife* was seen as *relatively unimportant* compared to having a *real job*. I looked at my mother—at her passionate devotion to husband, children, home and extended family—and I thought I could improve on that! I would go *out into the world*—out where *important things* were happening. How wrong I was!

I came to understand that spiritual, mythical and archetypal forces are just as powerful and influential as political, cultural and social ones. We overemphasize either category at the expense of something precious that the other has to offer. And in a metaphysical sense (as Einstein said, *time and space are illusions of consciousness*), you come to realize that there is no difference between being *out in the world* and *being at home*. The concept of *out there* or *in here* becomes meaningless once you realize that everything *out there* is simply a reflection of your consciousness. If anything, if we tended to the *within* better, there wouldn't be so many problems *without*: if we raised our children better and tended to our own psyches more effectively, then we wouldn't have so many political and social problems.

I realized that my mother's role was far from meaningless. I now see that it is a woman's God-given role to tend to the home and take care of the children: it's just that *the entire planet is our home and every child is one of our children*. Yes, women need to be *out in the world* if that's where we feel led to be, *but not at the expense of our spiritual mission*. Rather, we're in the world to fulfill that mission, by proclaiming that *the world is our home and that we are responsible for all of its children*. Just as we wouldn't tolerate elements to enter our home that endanger our own children, we shouldn't tolerate elements that endanger anyone's children. *Homemaker* and *motherhood* are not just material conditions that belong to a few—they are states of consciousness that belong to *any woman* who assumes them. Women should be the *keepers of the conscience* of the world, *keepers of the internal flame*—the light of humanitarian values and the primacy of love—and our *greatest power* lies in keeping it lit. *Profits* should not be our economic

bottom line—the *safety and welfare of this planet* should be our bottom line. On this, we should insist. We are the *homemakers of the world*.

Money should not be our societal bottom line—the welfare of our children should be our bottom line. We are the *mothers of the world*.

If any mother, should she see something dangerous in her home, she would say, "No, *not in this house!*" As women become a strong moral force, then when dangerous elements born of greed and aggression enter the world, we'll cry, "*Not on this planet!*"

Imagine if we were to insist—as with our *political and financial power* we could insist—that the amelioration of unnecessary human suffering become society's new bottom line. From the 17,000 children who starve to death daily to the millions who lack a basic elementary education, from the complacency of the industrialized nations to the brutalization of women to the billion souls living as best they can on less than \$1.25 a day, *the sleeping giant of awakened womanhood* can provide the *only sustainable solution*: putting civilization back on the survival track by giving back its heart.

You have a *moral responsibility* to speak out loudly for our planet and children, and for those who can't speak up for themselves.

You're here to love and be loved, and your soul in its native intelligence knows this. As you accept the magnitude of your function, your reignited *spiritual intelligence* will spark your *body's intelligence*. You will no longer be at the effect of your compulsion. You will become a *master* at living your life. PE



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ACTION: Make "love" your bottom line.

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Healthy Ego

Risky is the new safe.



by Randy Gage

YOUR EGO IS WHAT SEPARATES you from all the elements that comprise your physical body. Yet conventional wisdom says *the ego is bad*. It has been characterized as everything from *edging God out*, to running amok, to actually being the devil.

Yet when you look at Hill's magnum opus, *Think and Grow Rich*, a mesmerizing realization jumps out at you: The successful people on whom he did his powerful 20-year study all had strong egos. Ford, Firestone, Wrigley, Wannamaker, Alexander Graham Bell, Thomas Edison, Charles Schwab, Andrew Carnegie, Woolworth, Rockefeller—these were powerful, strong-willed, confident people. People with *healthy egos*.

The New Billionaires

Fast forward to some successful entrepreneurs of our time: Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Mark Cuban, Richard Branson, Meg Whitman, Michael Dell, Ross Perot, Mark Zuckerberg, Larry Ellison, and Oprah. *Have you ever heard any of them accused of being egoless?*

If we look at politics, sports, or even the arts, we see the same pattern: High-level achievers have a strong ego. You can make a convincing argument that *a powerful ego is required for powerful success*.

What is egomania? An inflated sense of self is not what the ego really is. An easy way to discern *egomania* is by *the desire to control others*. When you're trying to control others, you have an *unhealthy* ego. And if you are always talking about how great and amazing you are, your ego is out of control. And it's not because you're cocky or confident. In reality it's just the opposite . . .

Narcissism or self-absorption comes from *insecurity*. People who are always boasting about themselves to convey confidence are insecure. They don't have a healthy ego, and they're acting that way to hide their fears.

People with a strong, well-balanced ego want to be great. They don't have to brag about it or look for validation from others. They are usually their own strongest critics. Their drive is internal and intense. They see stepping into their greatness as part of their mission. Their life is about getting to that next

level of greatness, and they're okay with being recognized for that. They don't make it all about them, and they get involved in service and contribution. But a healthy ego is necessary for success and prosperity.

To step into your true potential and do something epic, you must lose the perception that *ego* is about *vanity* or *self-love*. The *real ego* is simply the part of your mind that controls consciousness. And ***the desire to be great and to be recognized for being great is healthy***. That requires having a strong ego. The key is *controlling your ego*. When you take charge and direct your ego, it can play a key role in achieving your purpose in life and helping you reach great accomplishments.



This necessitates becoming *the thinker of the thought* and developing and controlling your ego to create the kind of life, success and prosperity you want.

How Geniuses Harness Ego

There is much to be learned from how genius entrepreneurs channel and harness their ego to attain results. Here's an excerpt from what Napoleon Hill says in *The Master Key to Riches*:

- An Edison develops and guides his ego in the field of creative investigation, and the world finds a genius whose worth can't be estimated in dollars.
- A Henry Ford guides his ego in the field of automotive transportation and gives it such a stupendous value that it changes the trend of civilization by removing frontiers and converting mountain trails into public highways.
- A Marconi magnetizes his ego with a keen desire to harness the ether and lives to see his wireless communication system evolve into the discovery of the radio through which the world becomes akin, through instantaneous

exchange of thought.

"These men, and all others who have contributed to the march of progress, have given the world a demonstration of the power of a well-developed and carefully controlled ego.

"One major difference between men who make valuable contributions to mankind and those who merely take up space in the world is mainly a difference in egos because the ego is the driving force behind all forms of human action.

"Liberty and freedom of body and mind, the two major desires of all people, are available in exact proportion to the development and use one makes of the ego. Every person who has properly related himself to his own ego has both liberty and freedom in whatever proportions he desires."

Two things jump out about that statement. The first thing you might have noticed is he is speaking exclusively about men. That's simply a reflection of the bias of the times. Today we find both men and women at every level of the workforce, so the point he makes applies to both genders.

The other important thing about Hill's insights is the focus upon the positive results produced. In each case he is referring to the "valuable contributions to mankind" that resulted. Even more interesting is to hear Hill, one of the most positive people who ever lived, use the language "taking up space" to describe a certain type of people. He's using the term to illustrate the contrast between people with an unhealthy ego versus driven people with a healthy one.

A critical element of a healthy ego is making a decision to do good. If your ego is just about being recognized, getting on TV or the big screen at Times Square, it's not healthy. It is a sign of the disease of our society today that there are *so many people famous simply for being famous*. That leads to *notoriety*, and a savvy manipulator can milk that attention for money. But it will never bring lasting success. Such superficial pursuit of attention isn't based on anything of value. All true prosperity is based on *providing value*; each interaction is a value-for-value exchange.

Lasting success can also never come from exploiting people or plundering resources. It's about creating win/win scenarios that benefit both parties. To be congruent with these *universal laws of success* as you develop your ego, seek to *contribute*, not just *receive*. PE

Randy Gage is author of *Risky Is the New Safe* (Wiley). Visit www.randygage.com.

ACTION: Cultivate a healthy ego.

You Can Buy Happiness

Move toward a simpler lifestyle.



by Tammy Strobel

EVERYONE HAS A DIFFERENT definition of *simple living* and *happiness*, but I find that *living simply* and *happiness* are intertwined. Living with less stuff and no debt gives me control and makes me happy.

Start taking small steps today to live more simply. You might clear off one surface or organize papers that clutter a space. You might watch less television to have more time to do things you love, like taking a walk or reading a good book. And give away your excess stuff to friends or to a charity of your choice.

Most people assume that I was the one to suggest downsizing our lives. But my husband, Logan, brought up the idea. At the time, we were having money problems and realized that we could never afford a dream-home. Logan said, "Let's try moving into a one-bedroom apartment and use the money saved to do whatever we want." With my hands on my hips and a snarky look on my face, I replied: "We can't fit into a one bedroom, we have too much stuff. Plus, where will I put my parents when they visit us. On the couch? I don't think so!"

Logically, I knew *simplifying our lives* was the best option, but it took time for me to come around. If your partner is not keen on downsizing, try these ideas:

- **Communicate.** Talk about all the costs and benefits of downsizing together and make your intentions known so there is no room for assumptions. Make a pro-con list and ask *why* questions: Why do you need to keep a particular item? Why not try something new? Why are you feeling so freaked out by this idea?

- **Encourage your partner to read inspiring books.** While deciding if downsizing was the right option I read some life-changing books (*The Culture of Make Believe*, *Your Money or Your Life*, and *The 100 Thing Challenge*). This convinced me that downsizing was the best action.

- **Inventory your personal stuff to see what comes into and out of your life.** When I did this, I asked myself: *Do I really need 50 sweaters? Or a library of books?* Maybe you do, maybe you don't. This challenge will change your view of stuff and your buying patterns. Try new things, and question *conventional wisdom*.

- **Consider the financial benefits of downsizing your abode and what you can do with the money you save.** Crunch

the numbers with your partner to see how much money you can save by living in a smaller place with less stuff. With greater savings comes *freedom and flexibility* to make other choices. Sweeten the deal by offering to sacrifice something your partner isn't happy about.

- **You can always move.** If you don't like your living situation, move. Moving into a tiny house was an iconic way for us to pursue a simpler life. We started taking steps, like paying down our debt, selling our two cars, and giving away stuff. It gave us a new perspective and empowered us to live life on our terms.

- **Dial down the gift deluge from well-meaning friends and family.** Let your friends and family know what you and your kids need. Consider leaving the toys with the person who gifted them. You might leave most new toys at Grand-

ma's house and create a play area there.

- **Compromise.** If you don't want to sell your house, try treating your current place like a smaller home. You might then be convinced you could go smaller.

- **Start small.** You don't have to declutter your house overnight. Set manageable goals based on your circumstance.

- **Take action!** Start the decluttering process and celebrate your accomplishments. Admire the simplicity of your clutter-free home.

I now have more time to focus on doing things I love, like writing, taking long walks, and visiting with friends. And I'm happier being debt free. PE

Tammy Strobel is a writer, simple living advocate, and author of You Can Buy Happiness (And It's Cheap) New World Library. Her blog is www.rowdykittens.com.

ACTION: Start simplifying your life.

SOCIAL • FAIRNESS

A Little Extra

Be fair—and then some.



by Zig Ziglar

FOR YEARS PEOPLE TALKED about *going the extra mile*. Little things make a big difference. In fact, the *and-then-some* philosophy is the best approach to life and business. If you sell a product, goods or services, your offering should cover all the advantages you say it does—and then some. When you commit to do a certain job, do what you said you would do—and then some.

Yes, little things do make a big difference. If my watch were *two hours* off, I would know something was fouled up; but if it were *two minutes* wrong, I would not know—and might miss a flight.

Little things—like saying *please, thank you, you were very helpful and I appreciate it*—make a big difference in building winning relationships. When you put all the *little things* together, they bring you a lot of *big extras* in life. So, adopt the *and-then-some* approach to life!

The General's Rules

General Colin Powell, son of immigrants from Jamaica and retired Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Secretary of State, represents an extraordinary American success story. I've had the privilege of knowing General Powell personally. The qualities that impress me most are his consis-

cy, integrity, intellectual capacity, genuine friendliness, and his ability to balance confidence with humility.

He tells the story of how his first job was scrubbing floors at a Pepsi Cola plant and that he always gave it his absolute best, which he's continued to do all of his life. From his life experiences, he put together these **13 rules**:

1. *It isn't as bad as you think—it will look better in the morning.*
2. *Get mad—then get over it.*
3. *Avoid having your ego so close to your position that when your position falls, your ego goes with it.*
4. *Believe: It can be done!*
5. *Be careful what you choose—you may get it.*
6. *Don't let adverse facts stand in the way of a good decision.*
7. *You can't make someone else's choices—and you shouldn't let someone else make your choices.*
8. *Check small things.*
9. *Share credit.*
10. *Remain calm, and be kind.*
11. *Have a vision—and be demanding for the sake for the mission.*
12. *Don't take counsel of your fears or naysayers.*
13. *Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier (always look for ways to increase or multiply your forces).*

As you apply these 13 rules, you will come closer to being *at the top!*

We're so action-oriented today that we seldom pause to think through which actions we should take, which ideas we should develop, or which problems to work on. When I want to create something, I take a *thinking walk*. As I walk and concentrate on the matter, ideas and solutions come to my mind—and I can complete the task. PE

Zig Ziglar, aka America's motivator, is author of 32 books, including Born to Win. Visit www.Ziglar.com.

ACTION: Be fair . . . and then some.

Getting Things Done

Practice the Yin and Yang of it.



by Nick Vaidya

YOU LIKELY KNOW WHAT YOU need to do to achieve your goals, and often, even though you are capable of doing all that is required, you don't do it. This prevents you from being successful.

Take the simple matter of *exercising regularly*. You don't need to spend much time exercising to stay fit, yet few do it. They come up with *excuses*. Sadly only serious health calamities force some people to begin exercising regularly.

When you examine situations where you're not doing what you're supposed to do, you're likely wasting your energy on non-essential activities, never doing vital activities with a *do-it-now* attitude.

You might indulge in *self-destructive behavior* for two reasons: 1) you set yourself up for failure by wanting more than you can handle—wanting to achieve too many things and spreading yourself thin—or set unachievable goals; and 2) you dilute commitment by becoming awestruck by the enormity of the challenge of attaining your goals. So, you're always thinking about the end result and *never get started*.

Combating and dissolving these two reasons paves the way for a disciplined approach to success—the *Yin and Yang of Discipline*. *Yin* stands for *Self-awareness*, and *Yang* stands for *Practice*. When *self-awareness* and *practice* are applied together with consistency they yield increasingly better results.

YIN of Discipline

Some goals may not be attainable for you. It's demoralizing and is a useless drain of energy to feel *self-pity* on realizing that you can't achieve certain goals. When you face this bitter truth matter-of-factly, you can focus on more worthwhile and satisfying pursuits, on goals that are attainable, purposeful, and fulfilling. Being *self-aware* helps you choose goals that are achievable and satisfying. Evaluate your goals using the SMART yardstick—*Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic* and *Timely*. Reduce the number of goals until you gain control

enough to take on more responsibility.

Developing *self-awareness* happens progressively over time. For example, if you want to maintain good health, you need to embark on an ongoing journey of health education and management. The more you learn and apply, the better you become at ensuring good health. You need to check if your goal or idea aligns with your true self, or is just one of those *nice to have* ideas if it doesn't cost you much. Don't go window shopping—it is a waste of time.

Developing *self-awareness* requires you to be brutally honest with yourself. You need to evaluate your personal and environmental strengths and limitations. You need to understand your motivations. Why are you inclined to do certain things? You need to develop a better understanding of who you are. Easier said than done! Yes. But you can start with taking 20 minutes each day to sit on a *Nothing Chair*, away from distractions and reflect on your *Self* and



on the day. See yourself from the eyes of another person. This will help you make better choices. To know why you are really inclined to do certain things, you need to develop a better understanding of who you are.

YANG of Discipline

Establishing a *habit of regular practice* is as difficult as developing *Self Awareness*. The first step involves developing a clear idea of *Actionables*—the *actions that need to be taken to achieve specific goals*. Seeking perfection at the expense of doing the work at hand will take you nowhere. Similarly, looking at your goals in terms of the *entire effort* it requires *over months* can demoralize you. Think about attaining goals like you would think about planting a sapling. Don't think about the *total time* you need to devote to watering the sapling, pruning it, fertilizing it and ensuring that it stays on a healthy growth path. Simply do what is required daily and *derive satisfaction* from the progress.

Approach goals with a similar attitude. Assess your goals to determine what you need to do to achieve them.

Then you need to break the requirements into actions that can be achieved and measured daily. It's likely that even after you decide what you need to do daily, you would keep postponing doing them and spend time on other activities that might not be important. Since you tend to be reluctant to commit to activities that take substantial time and effort, first get used to *doing the required action*.

I follow a method I call *3-Minute Reluctance Breakers*—doing a specific activity that I've been postponing or avoiding for *3 minutes at a time*. During this time, I disengage my thoughts from other concerns, and focus on the task at hand. Working devotedly for 3 minutes gets you over the hump. These *3-Minute Reluctance Breakers* help you develop a disciplined approach to achieving goals.

To utilize the *3-minute system*, list a few personal and professional activities that you should be doing regularly—from exercising to making sales calls. Ensure these are all important activities—don't fill up your to-do-list with too many items and stretching yourself thin. Once you've noted these activities, allocate suitable time to each. If you want to begin an exercise regimen, allocate at least half an hour daily. Use *3-Minute Reluctance Breakers* to dissolve your initial reluctance. Suppose you allocate *half hour of exercise* when you wake up, but you tell yourself that you don't have to exercise for a half hour, just for *3 minutes* with full focus. Then it's up to you to continue or move on to something else.

Similarly, you can allocate time to professional activities. If you're a sales person, you can allocate an hour for making sales calls, but remind yourself that *you just have to do it with focus for three minutes* and then decide whether to continue or move on to something else. Try doing 100 sit-ups in 3 minutes and see the difference in your life. Try making one cold call in the morning, one in the afternoon, and one at the end of the day and see the difference in revenue.

After you have *comfortably completed* your three-minute activity list, you should raise the bar. When you start doing certain activities for three minutes regularly and derive satisfaction from them, start stretching those minutes, working with total focus for longer periods. At first, set only a *three-minute goal* so that you experience the pleasure of checking the activity off the list. Soon, you'll get things that need to be done, when they need to be done. PE

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ACTION: Combine *self-awareness* with *practice*.

Laws of Growth

Live them to reach potential.



by John C. Maxwell

ONE QUESTION CHANGED MY life: *Do you have a plan for your personal growth?*

I fumbled for answers. I listed my accomplishments, talked about how hard I worked, and outlined my goals. All my answers were based on *activity*, not *improvement*. Finally I had to admit—I had no plan to become better.

This exposed a flaw in my approach to work and success. When I started my career, I was intentional about working, reaching goals, and being successful. I had a strategy—hard work—and hoped it would get me where I wanted to go. But *working hard* doesn't guarantee success. And *hope* isn't a strategy.

My mind was racing: *How do you get better at what you do? How do you improve your relationships? Gain more depth and wisdom? Gain insight? Overcome obstacles? Work smarter?* I had believed that success would come to me by pouring myself into my career. It occurred to me that if you focus on *goals*, you may hit them—but *that* doesn't guarantee *growth*. If you focus on *growth*, you'll hit goals.

If you have dreams, goals, or aspirations, *you need to grow to achieve them*. But *eight misconceptions about growth* may be holding you back:

1. Assumption gap—*I assume that I'll automatically grow.* As children, our bodies grow automatically. Many people carry into adulthood a subconscious belief that mental, spiritual, and emotional growth follows a similar pattern. Time goes by, and we simply get better. But we don't improve by simply living—we have to be intentional about it.

2. Knowledge gap—*I don't know how to grow.* Do you learn only from the school of hard knocks? Difficult experiences teach you lessons the hard way, and change you—for the better, and for the worse. The lessons are random and difficult. It's much better to *plan your growth* and decide where you need or want to grow. Choose what you will learn, and then follow through with discipline, going at the pace you set.

3. Timing gap—*It's not the right time to begin.* If you don't act as fast as you should on things, you are subject to the *Law of Diminishing Intent*: *The longer you wait to do something you should do now, the greater the odds that you will never do it.* Whether you feel prompted

to or not, *now's the time to start growing.*

4. Mistake gap—*I'm afraid of making mistakes.* Growth can be messy. It means admitting you don't have all answers. It requires making mistakes. It can make you look foolish. That is the price of admission if you want to improve.

5. Perfection gap—*I need to find the best way before I start.* Yes, you desire to find the *best way* to start a growth plan. But you must *get started* to find the best way. It's like driving on a road at night. As you move forward, more of the road is revealed to you. If you want to see more of the way, get moving now.

6. Inspiration gap—*I don't feel like doing it.* We hear it daily: "I just can't get motivated to lose weight." Motivation won't strike you like lightning, and no one else can bestow or force it on you. *Motivation* is a by-product, like love and happiness.

When you're *actively engaged* in doing something, it sneaks up and zaps you.

7. Comparison gap—*Others are better than I am.* You can learn only if others are ahead of you. The first 10 years that I was pursuing personal growth, I was always behind trying to catch up. I had to learn to become comfortable with being out of my comfort zone. It was a difficult transition, but well worth it.

8. Expectation gap—*I thought it would be easier than this.* Growth rarely comes quickly and easily. It all starts with *preparation*. To reach your goals and fulfill your potential, become intentional about growth. It'll change your life. **PE**

John C. Maxwell is author of *The 15 Invaluable Laws of Growth: Live Them and Reach Your Potential* (Center Street/Hachette Book Group). Visit www.johnmaxwell.com.

ACTION: Correct these misconceptions of growth.

PHYSICAL • FITNESS

Holiday Fitness

Maintain healthy habits.



by Derek DeGrazio

WITH THE HOLIDAYS JUST around the corner, millions of people will feel the stress of shopping, traveling, and maintaining a fitness routine. I share a few *fitness tips* to help you maintain healthy eating habits and squeeze in fun and meaningful exercise.

I encourage you to apply these *seven fitness tips* during the holidays:

1. Set realistic exercise goals.

Don't beat yourself up if you can't schedule a long fitness session in a stress-induced calendar of holiday travel, gift giving, and parties. A simple 20-minute exercise regimen will reduce stress, increase your energy, and foster a more festive mood.

2. Maintain your fitness routine, no matter where you are for the holidays. Whether you travel to grandma's house, check into a cozy bed and breakfast or stay at home, you can easily maintain a fitness program by joining CoachClub.com to do one of my Bootcamp or Ultimate Six Pack programs.

3. Focus on maintaining good eating habits vs. trying to lose weight on a crash diet. Eat the foods you enjoy most but in appropriate portions and avoid foods that will not satisfy your hunger. You can also eat small, healthy snacks before attending cocktail parties to avoid overindulging on the buffets of



tempting, rich, calorie-filled foods.

4. Go offline and create your own jingle bell dash. Rather than shopping site to site, make a run for the local mall or main street shops to find the perfect gifts. With those extra steps, you'll burn more calories and re-energize while multitasking.

5. Change up your game plan. The most important football game this season is not watched in front of a TV but a pickup tag football game you and your friends and family play to get your blood flowing, heart rate up and bragging rights started.

6. Check out your community calendar and get involved. Start off on the right foot during the holiday season and get involved with the holiday-themed fun runs like *Turkey Trots* on Thanksgiving or the *midnight 5k* on New Year's Eve. These events give you a little more room to indulge at the parties later on! Switch between alcoholic beverages and water at those holiday parties to avoid

dehydration, bloat and empty calories (and you'll wake up feeling better).

7. Give the gift of giving. The holidays are a perfect time to give back. Luckily there are many charitable activities that require physical activity—heavy lifting at the local food pantry, getting a long walk in at the local dog shelter, or helping an elderly neighbor rake leaves or put up their decorations. Volunteering certainly warms the heart, but it can also keep it healthy! **PE**

Derek DeGrazio is a coach and certified personal and group fitness trainer of celebrities. www.CoachClub.com.

ACTION: Maintain healthy habits on holidays.

Imagination Expertise

Follow these eight tips to unleash it.



by James Mapes

THE WORD IMAGINATION HAS always resonated deep within my soul. In my imagination, I can go anywhere, be anyone and accomplish anything. As a child, I lived and dreamt within my imagination. As a young man, I trained as an actor, threw myself into studying the mind, wrote two books on creativity, and performed a one-man show entitled *Journey into the Imagination*. Later, I developed programs on creativity and leadership and have devoted myself to studying brain science and researching the true nature of the imagination.

When you think of the *imagination*, do you automatically connect *imagination* with *creativity*? There's a difference. **Creativity is the quality or ability to create.** Look at *creativity* as the rearrangement of the old into the new—having original ideas that lead to innovation and distinctive achievement. **Imagination is the act or power of forming a mental image** of something not present to the senses or never before wholly perceived in reality. You can imagine scenes that bear no resemblance to reality or project in the future and imagine alternative paths to achieving a goal. The imagination is unlimited. It is your greatest gift.

To be creative, you first have to imagine something. "Create a vision of what you want to be and then live into that picture as if it were already true," said Arnold Schwarzenegger. Being creative is taking *something imagined* and finding an effective way to communicate it in a way others can interpret it. Until you turn what you imagine into reality, it remains trapped in fantasy. When it is transformed into something tangible, then it is truly a creation.

Think of creativity as applied imagination—putting your imagination to work in a purposeful and strategic way to make something new and, hopefully, unique. Imagination enables you to generate ideas, conceive something new, think divergently, and solve problems.

However, you are *genetically designed* to identify anything that is a threat or a challenge to your survival and to deal with it. Your *survival programming* will influence you to notice *what doesn't work* instead of *what does*, to see *lack* instead

of *abundance* and *fear* instead of *love*.

You must learn to direct and apply your imagination for a *possibility-based life*. The greatest proponent of imagination, Albert Einstein, said: *Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life's coming attractions.*

Follow Eight Tips

Follow eight tips to unleash, harness and apply your imagination:

1. Be aware. Be aware of *how you imagine yourself and your future*. Looking in the mirror of your mind takes *courage* and *honesty*. Before you can transform the *negative* to a *positive*, you must know what you need to transform. So take a breath and ask: *How do I see myself as a (fill in the blank . . . parent, partner, leader, salesperson, athlete)?* Then ask, *How do I see my future?* Imagine six months, a year or five years into your future. Include how you see your relationships, job, health, goals, desires, and dreams.

2. Turn negative thinking into positive action. Write down one thing you fear about the future. Then apply your imagination in a *positive* way by asking: *What steps can I take to prepare myself, my family or my business for a worst case scenario?* This is using negative thinking to trigger your imagination for finding a positive solution and preparing for the worst-case scenario. Only then can you mute worry and let fear go.

3. Reduce negative stress. By using your imagination, you can either create *stress* or *calm*. Negative stress kills creativity, crushes motivation, and harms your health. Being centered enhances creativity. It's your choice. Here's a simple exercise. Close your eyes, take three deep breaths, and imagine the most relaxing, peaceful place. Within seconds, your heart rate will slow down, and soon you are centered.

4. Reframe. The imagination can magnify or mute your fears. If you are trapped in a *fear-based frame of mind*, close your eyes and notice the mental movie of fear or negativity. Take the picture or image and make it black-and-white, put a frame around it and

then slowly push it away, making the image smaller—until you make it disappear. Then, think of someone you care for deeply. Open your eyes. Notice how your mindset has shifted to the positive.

5. Test your imagination. Choose one goal you want to achieve. It could be completing a project, healing a relationship, boosting up your sales numbers, growing your business or improving your golf game. Write it down and visualize your goal *AS IF it has already been achieved*. Imagine it in the greatest detail possible. What would it look like, feel like, sound like or smell like? Detail triggers the imagination to come up with ideas on how to complete your goals.

6. Free your imagination. When you use your imagination to generate ideas



or picture your path to achieve a goal, avoid allowing reality to stifle possibility and keep you stuck in the status quo. The tendency is to allow negative judgment to kill a possibility before it can be explored. *Yes, that is a good idea but . . .* (you fill in the reason something cannot work). Keep saying: *I understand this . . . but what*

if it is possible? Keep saying, *What if it is possible?* and you'll override negative judgment and give your ideas a chance to develop *without limitations*. Eventually, you have to bring reality back in the equation but before you do keep your energy and enthusiasm sparked by asking, *What if it is possible?*

7. Go for the second or third right solution: It's natural to pursue the first good idea you come up with. But using imagination, you can project into the future and imagine multiple paths to take and many ways to get there. Brainstorm to come up with as many ideas before you choose the most interesting and energizing one to pursue.

8. Feed your imagination: To feed and free your *imagination*, be curious about everything. Learn all you can about subjects you are interested in. Read something that stimulates your imagination, even if for 15 minutes. Listen to music, see a play, or watch a movie. Hang out with people who are enthusiastic. Proactively seek and talk with individuals in different professions. Widen your world and feed your imagination daily. Follow these eight tips. PE

James Mapes is a life coach and creator of The Transformational Coach program and author of Quantum Leap Thinking. Email James@JamesMapes.com.

ACTION: Gain imagination expertise.

Solving Problems

Unleash the power of the mind.



by Jim Jensen

TO SOLVE YOUR BIGGEST problem, write it down, then take a break, sleep on it, and when the time is right, trust your gut. When you unleash the power of your subconscious mind, unbelievable breakthroughs can result. We now have compelling evidence about the relationship between our conscious and subconscious mind—and new tools that can help you solve your biggest problems.

There is a treasure trove of power in your mind. You must use your *conscious mind* intentionally and take action to direct what your *subconscious mind* focuses on. You are the captain; your subconscious mind is the crew. You decide where to go; the subconscious is your *personal servo-mechanism* to get you there.

Here are two useful ways to get your subconscious mind working optimally:

1. Utilize the power of suggestion and self-talk. I've seen people under hypnosis be told that a piece of chalk is a lit cigarette. When they are touched on the arm, they recoil in pain. A red welt and blood blister even form! You can use the *power of suggestion* constructively. One powerful technique is *autosuggestion* or *affirmation*. You describe your intended desire to yourself, supported with a clearly defined mental picture of how that result would appear, along with the positive emotions associated with that end result. As you repeat this process many times, your body, mind, and soul begin to believe and become comfortable with that new idea. The mental objections start to drop away. The world and your expectations begin to change before your very eyes. When your mind truly believes, so it is.

2. Utilize the power of visualization. My wife and I took unusual ski lessons at Copper Mountain a few years ago. To learn how to ski moguls, the instructor had us lie down on the floor in the hotel ballroom each morning. We were told to close our eyes and visualize ourselves skiing. We began each day eyes closed on the floor visualizing our perfect skiing performance. Only then were we allowed to go outside and ski. As we skied down the mountain, the instructor's only question was, "How did that compare to your visualization from this morning?" The open identification of

discrepancies against the perfect visualizations guided us so well, that on the last day, we could ski flawlessly on the most difficult run on the mountain, with our boots unbuckled. When you visualize your performance, you see yourself performing at your best without errors. That visual *picture* becomes an *imprint* in the subconscious mind.

Creative Problem Solving

Use five steps to solve problems:

1. Define the problem. Write it down. Clarify the problem and know as best you can what needs to be resolved.

2. Gather data. This could be data stored in your subconscious. You may also hire experts or consultants, research written material, or browse the Internet. Get the input you need quickly.

3. Try to solve the problem conscious-

ly. Work on the problem. Ask yourself, is there a clear solution here? Are there options I can look at? What are they?

4. If you don't have a clear solution, take a break and sleep on it. Turn it over to your *supraconscious* mind. Let your inner mind go to work for you. Tell it you need the best solution and when.

5. Get your conscious mind busy elsewhere. Take a break. Go do something else. When the time is right, the best or right answer will come in a *blinding flash of the obvious*.

When you know how your mind works, you can boost performance. **PE**

C. James "Jim" Jensen is former Intl. Sales Manager with Encyclopedia Britannica and CEO of Great Books of the Western World, and author of Beyond the Power of Your Subconscious Mind (Waterside Publications). Visit www.beyondthepower.com.

ACTION: Engage in creative problem solving.

Procrastination

It's the top cause of failure.



by Jay Earley

PROCRASTINATION IS THE TOP cause of failure. The most common impact of procrastination is missed deadlines. If you are self-employed or work at home, procrastination can mean lost wages or reduced income. In some cases, the failure to act can cost you a job or cause problems in a relationship. For students, procrastination can impact grades and future options.

How can you break the procrastination habit? You tend to avoid a task or a project that needs to be done if some part of you doesn't want to do it. In most cases, this part is *unconscious* and rooted in prior experience. You may be unconsciously afraid of what will happen if you try to do the task. You may fail, be judged, shamed, rejected, or suffer other painful consequences. You may be also afraid of succeeding, and getting rejected or attacked if you do.

Even if you might fail or be shamed, what can you do to not procrastinate?

• Deal with it. Get in touch with what you are afraid of. This will take a little introspection because these fears may be subconscious. Recognize that you aren't in the danger your unconscious part thinks you are. Or you can handle whatever hurt might come your way. You aren't a child any more!



• Create a plan of attack. If you might be shamed or rejected, devise a plan for how to handle this by asserting yourself and setting limits.

• Pay attention to how you avoid. Now you are ready to change your behavior. Become aware of exactly how you procrastinate. Do you get distracted, forget, become busy with other things, put it off? When do you procrastinate? Related to what tasks?

• Change your approach. Create a practice to change your procrastination. First notice when you are procrastinating. Then remind yourself that you don't have to be afraid of tackling the task. And get started on it, right then!

• Work with others. Find a friend who will help and support you in this practice. Tell them your plan, and check in with them every few days to let them know how it is going. This will help keep you on track.

• Track your performance.

Track your success by taking notes on what happens. Reward yourself whenever you breakthrough and get something done that you have been avoiding.

Overcoming procrastination can be a very rewarding change. The breakthroughs and benefits to be achieved can improve your career and personal life. You can have more opportunities, less frenzied work hours, reduced stress, less guilt, and most important, more success and self-confidence! **PE**

Jay Earley, Ph.D., is a psychologist, psychotherapist, and author of Taking Action: Working Through Procrastination and Achieving Your Goals. Visit www.personal-growth-programs.com.

ACTION: Overcome procrastination.

Listen to Lead

Communicate effectively.



by Eric Papp

YOU'VE LIKELY HEARD THIS before: *You're not listening to me. You don't understand.*

So, develop the skills of effective listening and then of asking questions.

Once, on a speaking tour, I discovered something that changed me forever. It was a skill that I had, but had not yet mastered. When I started to put it into daily practice, my audience evaluations went up dramatically. What was it?

I looked back on the lesson that I learned as a student at Notre Dame from a house keeper in O'Neill Hall named Ms. Leitha. She taught me how to listen effectively.

Take These Four Steps

To become a *master listener* and increase your influence, take four steps:

Step 1. Listen with liking. Over 70 percent of all altercations are due to some communication mishap—often a *direct result of poor listening or prejudging people before they speak.* Miss Leitha listened to everyone. It didn't matter if you were a popular football player, book worm, or a shy person. She liked people, and her listening showed this.

Once I would mainly speak to people who were friendly. I focused on them and neglected others. If I liked you, I would give you time and attention. I soon discovered that some people might not outwardly show their liking, and so I had to be open to all folks. When I stopped judging and started connecting with everyone, I saw an increase in my speaker scores and sales.

When you *listen with liking*, you open up both ears and don't judge before the conversation begins. What does *listening with dislike* look like for you? Not fully listening to co-workers because you don't really care for them? Preaching to your children instead of listening? Listening with one ear to your boss because you dislike him?

Step 2. Listen with your eyes. In our society filled with iPhones, Blackberries, and computer screens giving someone our eyes can be a forgetful habit. Miss Leitha always made eye contact and reflected your feeling with her eyes. It was incredible, it's like her body language said, "I understand you."

At seminars, I would often multi-task when people came up and talked to me at the break or at the end of the day—until I discovered that it was frustrating to the person talking. When I made eye contact with people, they would open up to me more—and we had a more meaningful conversation.

I find that small children will open up a lot more when you are eye level (you don't come off so tall and intimidating). Ever try and tell your children something when they were in the next room? Do you find yourself having to repeat it? It can be frustrating because you're not sure they understand you. Our eyes allow us to send a signal of confirmation.



Step 3. I'm not the focus. The next time you listen to someone, count how many times you say the word *I*. When we listen, we like to dump advice: *I would do this . . . , I went through the same thing, if I were you . . .* You only frustrate the other person when you jump into *I mode* without understanding them.

Listening requires you take the focus off of *you* and put it on *them*. When people want your advice they'll usually ask for it. Unsolicited advice is like talking to someone in a foreign language. Even though Miss Leitha was full of wisdom, she always put the focus on who she was listening to.

During my seminars I found myself referencing my own history rather than making it about them. I discovered I was more influential when I stopped advice dumping and just listened.

Step 4. Another Time. When you become a world-class listener, people come back to you. Your employees will keep coming back if you listen to them. This connection is key since they not only enjoy talking to you, they also

place greater trust in you.

As I became a better listener, people opened up to me. During breaks at a seminar, they would share information with me that they wouldn't tell their boss or other co-workers.

By applying these ideas in your life, you will not only become a better listener but you will have better relationships.

Ask Questions So People Open Up

Listening is only the first part of the equation; the second part is to ask more questions. Have you ever asked a question and got half an answer? Or do you find yourself asking one or two questions, and then going into lecture mode?

A great way to get people to open up is to think of an onion with many layers. Think of every layer as a question that you ask to get to the core of every issue.

For example, suppose that your 16-year old son comes home from school and is upset. He tells you that he wants to quit school. You ask why? He responds, "I got a bad grade on my math test." You only uncover one layer and then go into lecture mode: *You need to stay in school. Do you know how hard I work to support you? When I was your age . . .* What do you think the outcome will be?

Instead of going into lecture mode, or listening biographically and saying, *When I was your age. . .* Uncover the layers to get to the real meaning by asking questions and keeping your emotional intelligence (your cool).

Another way of handling the situation with your son is to ask questions: *What happened at school today that triggered this reaction? So, you want to quit school because you got a bad math grade? How much did you prepare for the test? How did other people do on the test? What would you do differently next time? Is there anything else going on?*

By asking these questions, you discover that the real reason he wants to quit school wasn't the math test at all. The real reason your son wants to quit school is so he can get a job, start making money, and buy his first car to impress his friends. You would never know this unless you ask questions and keep asking questions.

Each question represents a layer of information leading you to the core—the real reason. So, don't jump into lecture mode. You'll communicate better if you *listen intently and keep asking questions.* Start unpeeling those layers. **PE**

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ACTION: Take four steps to better listening.

Good Intent, Bad Impact

Lead with CLOUT to get results.



by Chuck Inman

MARCIA WAS RECENTLY promoted to head the communications department in her company. She was excited. She had a big project due in eight weeks and decided to delegate it to Ron, one of her top performers. She met with Ron and told him to clear his workload for this project. As she got involved in the project, she realized the impact of bringing it in on time. She decided to keep the project to make sure it met the deadline and didn't turn it over to Ron.

She noticed that Ron's attitude turned negative and his performance dropped. Should she be concerned with her initial impressions of Ron's performance?

Of course. We judge ourselves based on our *intent*, and we usually have good intentions. However, others judge us based on the *impact* we have on them through our actions and words. Ron was told to get ready to take over a big project, but when Marcia didn't hand it over, Ron felt betrayed by his new boss.

Clout is the power to influence people and events while leading them toward shared goals. Many leaders have good intentions, like Marcia, but they don't realize the negative impact they have on people by not following through on their intentions. As a leader, you have the power to unleash the best performance in people or to sabotage performance. Remember that people don't leave companies, people leave people.

Here are *five key areas* to help you lead with CLOUT:

- **Clarity.** Make sure you have a clear idea of where you are headed and the ability to articulate that direction with your direct reports. Also, make certain you understand the impact you are having on those around you as you move in that direction. Communication does not mean clarity. Never assume people have all the information they need or that they understand the overall goal. One of the best ways to check if your people know the direction you are heading is to simply ask them and see what they say. It sounds like a simple leadership tool and it is, but it just doesn't get used all that often.

- **Leadership.** It all starts with *personal leadership*, and one key area is understanding how you perform during times of difficulty and stress. People

may not listen to what you say, but they will definitely watch your actions. Take notice of how you handle difficult situations. Do you get desired results during these times? Be *honest* with yourself. If you aren't getting those results, try determining the results you want to achieve before the meeting and then be consistent in reaching those results.

- **Opportunity.** By staying in the game during difficulty, you help others come to solutions. Sometimes you have to step back and regroup in order to re-emerge more powerfully. When others come up with solutions, they *take ownership* and hold themselves accountable.

- **Understanding.** Think of *understanding* as the ability to get to the other person's side of the situation and understand their position. This takes a shift in thinking from conveying information to oth-

ers, to gathering information from them. Ask non-threatening questions like, "Can you help me understand what you think the impact of this completed project will have on the department?"

- **Trust** enables you to have *difficult* but *much needed* conversations on direction, motivation and accountability. It creates a culture that allows the free flow of productive and dynamic communications. To build trust, ensure that your intent and actions line up with the positive impact you want to have on people.

Most of your success as a leader is based on your ability to interact effectively and positively with others. So, learn to *lead with clout*. PE

Chuck Inman is a leadership and emotional intelligence specialist, speaker, trainer, coach and founder of Crystal Clear Motivation. Visit www.ChuckInman.com.

ACTION: Lead others with CLOUT.

Stoppportunities

Start achieving your goals.



by Joelle K. Jay

LEADERS ARE KNOWN FOR their ability to see and seize opportunities. The visionary mind always seeks ways to improve capabilities, develop new streams of revenue, better market services. *Progress* is often defined as *moving forward*. However, progress also can be achieved by *learning when to stop*.

Stoppportunities are actions you should *stop doing* because they do not help you achieve your vision. It's an opportunity to stand back and compare your daily *to do* list with your overall strategy for success. Do your actions align with your goals? By creating *stoppportunities*, you streamline your schedule to concentrate on activities or projects that will enhance your performance. *Stoppportunities* create golden opportunities of time during which you can focus on the big picture.

- **Do what only you can do—tap into your brilliance.** Respect your talent by refusing to waste it doing what other people can do. Identify projects or action items that can effectively be handled by other team members. By empowering others, you create time to focus on your priorities. When creating your list of *stoppportunities*, consider which projects benefit most from your unique skill set. Tap into your brilliance and build on areas of inherent strengths, where the

possibilities for your potential are greatest. *Lead with your strengths* and delegate activities that can be handled better by others to others. This self-reflection and clarity makes you a better leader and gives others the chance to develop and refine their areas of expertise and contribute more powerfully to the success of the team.

- **Do a little pruning.** Trees and plants need pruning to stay healthy. So do you. Write down everything you are now trying to achieve professionally and personally. You'll find many tasks have nothing to do with reaching your goals. They are just jobs you assign yourself out of habit. Prune your list to

key priorities. For example, do you really need to meet with your executive team daily or can you convene once a week, assign responsibilities, and hold people accountable to achieve *clearly defined objectives* that week? This exercise gives you perspective about which actions

enhance your ability to meet your goals and which impede your growth.

- **Take advantage of stopportunities.** You need to learn *what to do*—and *what to stop*. It may feel uncomfortable at first, but you'll also find *lots* of time for the critical actions on your list.

Stoppportunities also give you *the gift of time* to do non-work-related activities that enable you to feel rested and renewed, recognize new opportunities for growth, and to *sustain success*. PE

Joelle K. Jay is an executive coach, speaker, author of *The Inner Edge* and a principal at Leadership Research Institute. Visit www.joellekjay.com or call 775-324-5377.

ACTION: Stop doing what limits your growth.

Be a Billionaire Mogul

Focus on highly leveraged activities.



by John M. Hawkins

WHAT DO DONALD TRUMP and Oprah Winfrey have in common? It's simple; they are billionaires who have grown empires based on their larger-than-life personalities. They have developed brands based on their image and likeness. With their personal brands, they are able to develop and market products and services. The products they develop have instant credibility based on those brands, giving them the ability to sell them at premium prices. The net result is billion dollar empires, which then catapults them to top moguls. So, what does it take to become a mogul? Do you have what it takes?

In our lifetime, new moguls will be created while others drop off the radar. Getting to mogul status is a challenging road should you choose to take it. The differences between moguls like Oprah and yourself, at this point, are fairly obvious. So let's start with the similarities. You both have 24 hours in a day. You both have 365 days in a year, and most likely, you too have a hectic schedule, full of activities.

The difference is that Oprah or Donald's daily activities provide much more professional leverage than your daily activities. That's because the mogul's daily routine tends to be more strategic and less tactical in nature. These strategic activities align with the vision the moguls have set for their empire. The more strategic activities they do, the bigger their empires grow. Compare this to the activities you do on a daily basis. Chances are, you focus on more tactical activities. And while these tasks are likely important to your daily life, they are not aligned with your vision of becoming a mogul.

The key is to find a way to do more strategic activities, rather than the tactical activities you base your current existence on. So, why not quit all tactical activities and only perform the strategic ones? Unfortunately, it's not that simple. If you quit tactical activities cold turkey, you might lose your job. Your family

could be affected and, who knows, you might end up down on your luck and forced to return to tactical activities, helping to build someone else's strategic vision.

Becoming a strategic thinker takes practice and patience. You will need time to establish support systems, so before you quit your job, let's analyze what the moguls are doing that has helped them make good decisions and focus on the right activities.

A key 'mogul activity' is self-promotion and marketing of their personal brand. Moguls have a keen business sense. They are in business to make money, not to lose it. Moguls have great intuition and know how to relate to people. Moguls take calculated risks. Moguls are able to create and maintain their businesses by finding reliable, strategic people to run the businesses they create. Moguls are driven and often spend their time strategizing about how they can continue to grow their brand. Moguls, in essence, are the CEO and primary spokesperson for their brand.

Have a strategic vision and a plan of action. With the right personality and a solid plan, you, too can rise to mogul status. So, let's see what's important to build this plan to get you to the mogul status:

- **Start with the vision.**

We need to develop the vision of what you, as a mogul, are going to be. The important aspect of developing your vision is that it must be something realistic and something you are passionate about. You will be in front of the world sponsoring your personal brand, so choose something you like, and are good at. You should also pick a vision that is in an alignment with your core values. Picking a vision of becoming a cupcake mogul or the next cookie mogul might not be the best choice if you despise cookies. So choose carefully because this will be your life.

- **After developing a vision, you should start to put some goals in place** to help you attain the vision of becoming the next mogul. We said moguls are all about self-promotion, so it's time to get

your name out there. In this century, social media is a great place to start because it's effective and affordable.

- **In addition to self-promotion, you need goals to develop your business sense and people skills.** Are you comfortable with constantly being in the public eye? Have goals for taking risks so that you can become CEO of your own brand!

When you build your plan, consider breaking your goals down into manageable chunks. Focus on the activities that support the goals you can achieve now, the ones that are going to give you the most leverage. As you accomplish more and more goals you will need to update your plan to reflect the changes.

At times you will run into goals that you know must be accomplished but have absolutely no idea where to start. You are going to need strategies to accomplish these important goals. If you are at the mogul level or a few rungs below, you can hire high-powered consultants and have the best and brightest working for you. In the interim, you will need to research, ask others and do some trial and error until you have mastered the ability to create strategies to attain your goals. Use your creativity to get your goals accomplished.

At this point what you will have built is the framework for your strategic plan. The plan will help guide you to accomplishing the mogul vision you have been dreaming of. But, before you start down the path you will need a few more tools to help you become that mogul.

The next step is to determine what activities you need to do to realize that future vision. You will need to take the activities identified and organize them into initiatives and projects that you can work on. As you complete your projects you will get closer and closer to your goal. Achieving the vision will require your constant attention. As previously stated, you are going to be running a small business; this means that you will need to perform every role in a small company; the strategy, marketing, financial, operational and more.

A lot of hard work and a solid strategic plan can help you organize the activities you need to work on to achieve the mogul vision. Your strategic plan won't be complete until you create a road map with the initiatives to guide your activities and achieve your goal. And if you decide to not become the next big mogul, you can still use the strategic plan to build a vision for your life. **PE**

John M. Hawkins is author of Building a Strategic Plan for Your Life and Business. Visit www.johnmhawkins.com.

ACTION: Develop your strategic financial plan.

What Is Success?

Learn five simple lessons.



by Patrick Daniel

IN A CULTURE HIGHLY MOTIVATED by money, *success* is commonly misunderstood. I offer *five simple lessons* as a guide in hopes of bringing you back to the true meaning of *success* (hint: there is much more to success than money and fame).

1. Success, like DNA, is unique for each person. Everyone has different desires in life, so *no one can define success for you*—you have to do it yourself. If you don't think about *what success means to you*, and define your success, then it will be defined by your family, friends, society, or other influential forces. Then you may not be motivated to achieve success because it's not your own and has no true meaning to you. Once trapped in someone else's definition of success, you'll likely feel like a failure. So, define what success means to *you*. "If your success is not on your own terms, if it looks good to the world but does not feel good in your heart, *it is not success at all*," said Anna Quindlen.

2. Success is a personal feeling. When thinking or talking about your success, be careful with the words you choose. If you said "I am successful," others could disagree. They might not understand that *success means more to you than money and prestige*. They could compare you to Bill Gates, and argue that you're not successful. But if you say "I feel successful," no one can tell you how you feel, challenge your statement, or prove you wrong. Many will try to rob you of this great feeling because they're envious, but don't let them get to you. Remember: *you, and only you, define your success*. You're the only person who knows what it takes to *feel* successful. "Success is a state of mind. If you want success, start thinking of yourself as a success," said Dr. Joyce Brothers.

3. Having money is not the key to success—happiness is the biggest key to feeling successful. It's not money, since money can't buy you true happiness. Money has many limitations. For example, money can buy you a visit to the doctor, but it can't buy you good health. It can buy you a nice bed, but not a restful sleep. Money can buy you momentary satisfaction and a short-term thrill, but such happiness is short lived and easily lost. The biggest happiness comes

from the quality of your relationships. Once you realize this, you might make a career change or create more time to do things that make you happy. "Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you do, you'll be successful," said Herman Cain.

4. Success is a journey that requires a map with destinations. Without destinations, you won't know where you need to go. You'll just go *around in circles*, not knowing what direction your life needs to take. When you encounter *obstacles*—potholes, closed roads, construction, accidents, detours, and one-way streets—keep in mind that there's always an alternative route that you can take to your success. "A good plan is like a roadmap: it shows the final destination and usually the best way to get there," said H. Stanley Judd.

5. Success involves fun. Life is meant to be enjoyed. If you aren't having fun along the way, you probably won't reach your final destination because, somewhere along the road, you'll get bored and turn back. So, make your game of life, your quest for success, fun. Think of yourself on an around-the-world trip. Every day is like a small section of your travel route. Make many enjoyable stops at all the interesting sites along the way. They'll bring you much happiness. With happiness comes *better health and longer life*, more time to fulfill your goals. "People rarely succeed *unless they have fun in what they are doing*," said Dale Carnegie. **PE**

Patrick Daniel is author of *Finding Your Road to Success: How to Get There Without Getting Lost*. Visit www.FindingYourRoadToSuccess.com.

ACTION: Apply these five lessons.

FINANCIAL • WEALTH

Do You Deserve Wealth?

It depends on your personality.



by Ilona Jerabek

YOUR PERSONALITY IMPACTS your potential *financial success*. Financially successful people have the *wealth mindset*.

What enables a person to go from abject poverty to a wealth, while another remains in dire circumstances? When most people hear a rags-to-riches story, they glean some inspiration from it, but the idea of going from *just getting by to success beyond my wildest dreams* falls under the category of *Things that will never happen to me*.

So how does it happen? We compared the *personalities* of people who earn \$75,000+ with those who earn less than \$25,000 in six areas:

1. Fear of success: People with this fear tend to walk away from opportunities. They're afraid of getting their hopes up, or that success will bring responsibilities and expectations that they can't handle. They also tend to believe that *they don't deserve success* to begin with.

2. Fear of the social consequences of success: The basis of this fear is the impact that personal success will have on loved ones. There is a fear of jealousy, of being ostracized or, on the contrary, of becoming the center of attention.

3. Fear of failure: This is a straightforward fear, and is often tied into the belief of *not being good enough* (low self-esteem). A fear of failure can be very de-

bitating, holding a person back from taking risks, setting goals, and doing anything outside their comfort zone.

4. Drive and ambition: This is the impetus that moves a person forward. A person who sets goals and puts the effort into achieving them increases their success potential exponentially.

5. Self-esteem: Those with low self-esteem are less likely to succeed—and even if they do gain some success, it is likely to be short-lived because they won't feel like they deserve it.

6. Locus of control: Those with an *external locus of control* believe that success is not within their control. They feel like victims of their circumstances.

Those with an *internal locus of control* believe that their actions determine their success. They show less fear (of success and failure), and higher ambition and drive. They also have higher self-esteem and take a more proactive approach to life, believing that whether they succeed or fail is entirely in their hands.

People in a high salary range are not above failure—but they don't let failure dictate how their life will be. When they lose money, they know that they'll find a way to get back on top. They set challenging goals; believe that if they try hard enough, they can succeed; feel that they can handle wealth; take on difficult challenges; push themselves to be the best at what they do; and believe that they can rise above their background and be successful and wealthy. **PE**

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ACTION: Rate your wealth mindset.



Acts of Kindness

Try doing them every day.



by Jamie Graceffa

THEY SAY DOING SOMETHING nice for somebody else makes you feel good. I know that to be true. On occasion I'll consciously do something nice. Usually these *random acts of kindness* show up in traffic, when I let somebody cut in front of me. Now here's where I think I lose the *true intention* of a random act of kindness: if the person doesn't wave a gesture of thanks, I get irritated and swear that I'll never let anybody cut in front of me again (something I need to work on).

In July 2012, I was vacationing in Germany with my husband. We spent three wonderful days in Munich and were heading to Frankfurt via the Inter City Express train (ICE). I speak almost no German, just the basics: hello, good-bye, please, thank you, this is delicious. While we were settling into our seats, an older woman sat behind us. She said something in German—I had no idea what. My best guess by her gestures was that she was telling us we could put our suitcase above her seat. I smiled and replied, "Dankeschön." About five minutes into the 3.5 hour trip, I pulled out a bag of chocolate covered marshmallows we bought earlier that morning from a fabulous chocolate shop in Munich. I offered one to the woman. She smiled, took the marshmallow, and thanked me in German. I smiled back and nodded.

About 15 minutes later, the woman handed me a bag with two bakery rolls. I smiled warmly and thanked her in German. She said something back, which I couldn't understand. I replied that I was sorry, I don't speak German. She kept talking to me, slower and a bit louder, so I just smiled and said, "Danke" and "Gut," two German words from my arsenal of 12 that I hoped would be an appropriate response. I turned back and ate a piece of bread which was quite tasty and sweet, almost like a donut. Her timing with this gift was excellent as both my husband and I missed lunch.

About 20 minutes later, a 2-liter bottle of water passed between my husband's seat and mine. I turned behind me and said in English, "are you sure?"

She nodded and uttered something in German, I think it was "drink, drink." I thanked her warmly, smiled and took the bottle. I was so touched by her kindness that I reached into my bag and pulled out two bars of chocolate, milk and dark, and handed them to her. She took them and thanked me.

Later in our journey, the woman saw me drink water from the bottle she gave me. She said something I couldn't understand and took out a glass from one of her bags, a real glass, not paper. I asked her in English if she was sure. She must have read my expression as she gestured with her hands for me to take the glass. I thanked her again and was unsure of the etiquette when one gives you a glass on a train . . . do you give it back, if so, do you wash it first? I decided to



hold on to it for the time being.

When we reached our destination, Frankfurt, travelers started to gather their belongings and prepare to off board. The woman had two full luggage bags and a BMW shopping bag. She must have visited the BMW museum in Munich, as did we. She handed me the BMW bag. I knew this wasn't a gift, she was asking for help. I handed the BMW bag to my husband and grabbed her other bag. She said something to me I almost understood, it was either the bag is heavy or I was strong. I'll go with the latter.

Off the train we handed the woman her bags and out came another 2-liter bottle of water she handed to us. We thanked her again. She smiled and thanked us. I put my hand out, she took it. I was so touched by our whole exchange on the train that I went in to kiss her cheek, she kissed mine in return, and we then repeated the kiss on the opposite cheek. She went over

to my husband and they kissed good-bye as well. I smiled, waved to her and said in my best German accent: "Auf Wiedersehen!" And, we left.

Now you can argue that she gave us all the water to lighten her load, could be, the bags were heavy. Even if that were the case, it's irrelevant to how our encounter left me feeling and how I sensed she felt, too.

Kindness has no cultural or social boundaries. Doing something kind for someone is universally understood and speaks clearly, regardless of any language barrier.

Still on a high from meeting the lovely woman that my husband and I affectionately named Sweet Helga, I posted about my experience on Facebook from our hotel room at the Kempeski. I received a lot of reaction from the post, mostly from people connecting to the story, saying that it was a beautiful tale and that my post made their day. Other reactions include that I stole her glass, and she spit on both my cheeks for doing so.

Since I work in the human resources field, I got to thinking, how could this experience translate to the workplace? Could *random acts of kindness* at work lead to deeper engagement, stronger teams, and increased collaboration? I decided to find out. Two days after meeting Sweet Helga, we were back on the ICE, our destination, Zurich, Switzerland. On that train ride I planned my experiment, titled: *The Chocolate Covered Marshmallow Theory*.

The experiment goes like this: A select group of employees are asked to perform at least one random act of kindness every work day for two weeks. The *acts of kindness* are of their choosing; they will not be prescribed. Participants are asked to record the act of kindness, the impact on themselves, the other person and any other data they deem relevant. They are encouraged to include a few people with whom they may not have the best interaction. They must keep this experiment confidential, not even their managers will be informed of their participation.

Can employees self-engage without manager interventions? Can a *random act of kindness* improve working relationships and increase collaboration and team work? I hope so—we'll soon find out. PE

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ACTION: Do daily random acts of kindness.

Become Inspiring

Practice four leader behaviors.



by Michael Beck

MASTER THE ABILITY TO inspire people. To *inspire* means to exert a stimulating or beneficial effect upon, or to arouse with a particular emotion. And to *motivate* means to provide with an incentive, or move to action. We inspire people by who *we* are and what *we* do; people are motivated by who *they* are or what *they* want. To be inspired, people need to see who you are as a real person, and become aware of what you're doing or what you've done in the past.

An inspiring leader elicits an *emotional response*. People are moved more strongly by emotion than they are by logic. When people are inspired, they desire to accomplish more and to overcome their challenges and fears.

Inspirational leaders spark the imagination of people. When they deliver an *inspiring message*, the message becomes the catalyst for a new, innovative future. Inspiration causes people to align with your vision, passion, and cause. Inspirational leaders create *belief, enthusiasm, and hope* in people. When people are inspired by you, they admire you, respect you, and strive to emulate you and to gain your respect and admiration.

Think of people who you find inspiring and reflect on why they inspire you. These people may be historic figures, present day figures, or family members. You might consider: Theodore Roosevelt, Abraham Lincoln, Harland Sanders, Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, and Martin Luther King.

What is it (or was it) about them that makes them inspiring? What causes you to feel that way about them? When someone has a vision, passion, purpose, or a philosophy and communicates it well, they draw people to them. They inspire them to dream bigger and achieve more. Even more inspiring is when they act on that vision, passion, or purpose. We're inspired by people who stand up for someone or something. People who overcome adversity and succeed inspire us onward to greater things. We all have challenges. Sometimes we overcome them, and sometimes they overwhelm us. An inspiring leader can make all the difference in someone's life.

We are all inspired by people with integrity—people who not only do what they say they will do, but speak and act

in alignment with the values and principles they say matter to them.

Four Insights on Inspiration

Here are four ways you can be more inspiring to the people around you:

1: Become clear about, effectively communicate, and act upon your vision, passion, purpose, or philosophy. People are attracted to and inspired by someone who believes in something and is passionate. Having and expressing a vision can be impactful, but *taking action on what you say matters to you is more powerful. Actions speak louder than words.* Take opportunities to share what matters to you. Use stories to make your point and paint a picture with your words.

2: Let others know about an adversity you overcame. When people hear a story of how you overcame adversity, they are inspired to overcome their challenges.

3: Stand up for what you believe. People will admire you for standing up for what you believe—even if they don't agree with you! Don't compromise on the principles you believe in.

4: Act with integrity. When you do what you say you'll do, and speak and act in alignment with the values you say matter you, it creates a positive impression and causes people to notice you. **PE**

Michael Beck, Executive Coach and Strategist, is president of Michael Beck Intl. Visit www.michaelbeck.com.

ACTION: Be an inspiring service leader.

SERVICE • HANDICAP

What's Your Handicap?

We are all differently-abled.



by Katherine Zhang

IN GOLF, THIS QUESTION OF *handicap* refers to the average number of strokes over par that amateur golfers score when playing several rounds over time. It is safely assumed that most golfers have some handicap and that they want this factor taken into account when they play a round against other (better) golfers.

In life, some people are born with handicaps (physical, mental, emotional, social, financial or professional); others become disabled or handicapped; and many others handicap themselves in some way, shape or form. And so, we might say that *we are all handicapped, disabled, or differently-abled.*

Personally I'm concerned about two common trends: 1) the assumption that only people with *physical disabilities* are *handicapped* (when, in fact, physically disabled people may perform as well or better in most areas of life); and 2) the lack of recognition of how other people handicap themselves in some way, shape or form (often since their disability is not so obvious or visible at first glance, they may try to deny or hide their handicap). We may tell ourselves, "I can't do it" or "They won't agree to do it." With this presumption, we set too many limits for ourselves.

For example, I used to believe that cross-stitch was beyond my capability. I observed and admired those who could do it and told myself, "Well, that's too much for me. I can never do it. It looks

too complicated." One day I wanted to challenge myself. So I bought the materials and studied it. Although it's time-consuming, technically it's easy!

Now I'm doing a *masterpiece* (I call it that way to make my work *more meaningful*). I look forward to completing it in three months. I will put it up on the wall when I finish it to remind me of how easy it was to learn to cross-stitch.

When I was dating the man who became my husband, I was asked by members of my family and my friends, "Why would you want to marry that man? He's handicapped!" (He walks with a noticeable limp). I replied, "Yes, I know that he has a physical disability, but I can also see his many strengths

and virtues. I know that he will work hard to support me and our children and be loyal, faithful, and honest with me. I know he's the man for me." Today, 17 years later, he is now General Manager of an American company in Shanghai, a caring husband, and a loving father.

What's your handicap? Are you aware of your areas of disability, blind spots, weakness, vulnerability, ignorance, or incompetence? Look into your heart and be true to yourself. It might be embarrassing or even painful, but that's the way for you to face it, accept it, deal with it, and live calmly with it. You might take a 360 assessment or seek another way to boost awareness.

What is your plan to overcome or compensate for your handicap? With practice, your *handicap* might even become a strength; indeed, you might cross-stitch your own masterpiece. **PE**

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ACTION: Compensate for your handicap.





GOAL GETTERS



Have you worked hard and made sacrifices to achieve your career ambitions only to discover that what you were seeking left you empty, unfulfilled, and lost? Many people are successful but unhappy, since success does not always equal fulfillment.

Imagine: Things are running like clockwork. Profits are high, salary is excellent, perks are plentiful. The media is calling, coverage is positive. Then poof—it's gone.

Career ambitions often overtake everything—*family, friends, happiness, and fulfillment*. As the former CEO of three companies, managing thousands of employees and raising millions of dollars, I know this firsthand. Like many entrepreneurs, I once lived in a bubble filled with delusions of grandeur and a sense of import.

True meaning of success. I became fascinated by the workings of the psyche and committed myself to dissolving the illusions that kept me from seeing what was true about myself and the world. Something deep inside told me that *my life is no accident; that I am uniquely equipped to help people discern what truly fulfills them*. So, taking what I learned about *transforming human behavior*, I created the Q7 Process to help people move from *success to fulfillment* and achieve both success and happiness.

The Q refers to the *quadrant*, one quarter of the four-dimensional grid comprised of *Feeling, Acting, Thinking, and Being*; the 7 refers to seven steps of the process that span three stages: *Preparation* (steps 1, 2, and 3); *Transformation* (steps 4 and 5); and *Integration* (steps 6 and 7): *Step 1:* Take a fearless inventory of your life; *Step 2:* Create a vision for your life; *Step 3:* Remove the barriers to fulfillment; *Step 4:* Burst your bubble; *Step 5:* Build your court of support; *Step 6:* Create a personal-practices regimen; and *Step 7:* Draw a road map to your future.

I invite you to move through these seven steps, closely evaluating yourself and identifying areas for change. This will integrate your leadership responsibilities with a

whole-life view; tap unused skills; create better ways to respond to stressful situations, generate powerful results; and create a roadmap to success and fulfillment.

—Brian Gast, *QuadrantInternational.net*



Lies ruin relationships and cause other calamities. The most damaging lies are those we tell ourselves. *Self-lies* cause us to perpetuate a cycle of failure, and the first step in reversing the pattern is recognizing them. So, I developed a three-question *Lie-Q* test. *Take the test to see if self-lies are holding you back:*

- **Have you ever told yourself, "I'm too old for that"?** This is just one common *self-lie*. Others include, *I will never find true love; I'll never get out of debt; I can't change who I am*. These lies are illogical—people find true love, get out of debt and change every day. If you tell yourself you *can't*, you won't make the effort required to succeed.

- **Do you pretend to be happy when you're not?** Many people pretend to be happy on the job or at home when, in truth, they are very unhappy. We might pretend for the sake of others; or we worry about the consequences of expressing our true feelings; or we do it to convince *ourselves* that we're happy. If you're not sure you're happy, or sure you're unhappy, get into *self-discovery* mode. Identify what hobbies, relationships, activities and work you enjoy—and work them into your life to feel more content.

- **Do you think you can't find a more satisfying job?** If you don't find satisfaction in your work or if your work feels tedious, meaningless and dead end, you will be happier if you're working on a Plan B. The mantra, *Be grateful if you have any job* is the wrong attitude. If you have an exceptional skill and work hard, you can find something that makes you happier. If it's not a paying job, perhaps some volunteer work. List your skills and the things you enjoy. Do any of these match job descriptions? Your dream job—or something close to it—may be out there. So, go for it!

—Cathy Holloway Hill, *chollowayhill.com*

PersonalCOACH



Doing vs. Trying

Do what's right—not easy.
by Barry Eisen

THE DAY IS DONE. YOU'VE DONE MANY THINGS. Everything went well. You had loads of energy, and you're stoked. Clients listened to you and acknowledged the clarity and positivity of your suggestions. Your kids paid attention. Even the dog obeyed. *Great feelings!*

A new day dawns. You wake up groggy, you become a magnet for clients' frustrations, you feel invisible, the dog spits up on the rug, an associate points out a stain on your shirt, a selling appointment cancels—and it's not even 10 a.m. Know what you are? Normal. If you look around you will find a lot of *normal*. Stuff happens to us all. To some, who seem to attract more stuff than the rest (something to be said about self-fulfilling prophecies) the distractions feel overwhelming and continuous. Some try their best to turn the tide. Trying doesn't work. Doing does. For some who seem to attract more "stuff" than the rest, consider that the more challenges we accept, the more "stuff" we encounter.

One sure way to become a victim is to try. When we commit to trying to do something and fall short of a success, we can claim, "I tried." Even in failure we can claim victory as we achieved what we committed to, I tried! Be careful of *the words you use* as they become converted into action. *Trying* doesn't pay the bills—*doing* does. The *doer* takes the bigger risk of making extra effort. Without the risk to continue and create a victory, you create *normal*. It's safe but unsatisfying. And worse, settling for the lazy way out develops into whining, excuse making, low energy, and irritability. Do what's *right*—not what's *easy*. Your best intentions won't create a better relationship or make you more money.

Try these seven ideas: 1) leave every part of your day with a positive accomplishment (even a small one) 2) smile and make eye contact with way more people than usual. 3) read or listen to positive books or recordings at least 30 minutes each day—spend as much time with personal development as you do growing your business 4) write out your to-do list every night before you go to sleep, whether you feel like it or not and prioritize it. 5) go out of your way to do something really nice for someone every day. 6) develop strong enough *whys* and the *hows* answer themselves. 7) follow through and do it not because you *have to*, but because you *get to*. **PE**

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ACTION: Become an accomplished Doer.

Daily Meditation

It changes your set point.



by Stephan Bodian

TODAY, YOU MAY FEEL THAT you are in a race: to check off all items on your to-do list, to climb the next rung on the career ladder, to ensure your kids have the perfect life, and to pay all the bills. If this manic life sounds familiar, I invite you to practice *meditation*. It helps you live your *best, most healthy life* for 12 reasons:

1. It lowers stress. In trying to achieve the mythical *perfect life*, you become overstressed, overscheduled, overstimulated, and overtired. Your body and mind respond with stress, anxiety, and dissatisfaction. Through meditation, you can *program yourself* to experience inner peace, harmony, equanimity, and joy.

2. Improves your mental and physical health. Meditation lowers blood pressure, reduces heart attacks and strokes, reduces cholesterol levels, relaxes muscles, reduces pain, facilitates happiness and peace of mind, promotes loving and harmonious relationships, enhances creativity and self-actualization, reduces acute and chronic anxiety, and heightens perceptual clarity and sensitivity.

3. Awakens you to present moments. When you rush breathlessly from one moment to the next, you miss *the beauty and immediacy of the present*. Meditation teaches you to *slow down and take each moment as it comes*.

4. Makes friends with yourself. When you try to *live up to expectations* (yours or someone else's) and adapt to a changing, competitive environment, you rarely get to know yourself just the way you are. When you meditate, you welcome every experience and facet of your being without judgment or denial. You treat yourself as you would a close friend, accepting (even loving) the whole package.

5. Connects you deeply with others. As you awaken to the present moment and open your heart and mind to your experience, you extend this quality of awareness and presence to your family and friends, accept them the way they are, and open the channels for a deeper love and intimacy to flow between you.

6. Relaxes the body and calms the mind. An agitated mind produces a stressed-out body. As the mind settles, relaxes, and opens during meditation, so does the body—and the longer you meditate, the more relaxed and at peace you are.

7. Lightens you up! When you worry yourself into a frenzy, fears feed on one another, problems get magnified, and soon you feel overwhelmed, panicked, and desperate. Meditation brings *inner mental spaciousness* in which difficulties and concerns don't seem so threatening, constructive solutions naturally arise, and objectivity, perspective, and humor return.

8. Enjoying more happiness. Daily meditation makes you happier and can permanently change your *emotional set point*—your level of relative happiness that stays the same throughout your life, no matter what you experience.

9. Experiencing focus and flow. When you're fully involved in an activity, self-consciousness, time, and distraction dissolve. You experience a state of *flow*. You are *in the zone*. With meditation, you can

give the same focused attention to—and derive the same joy from—every activity.

10. Helps you feel centered, grounded, and balanced. Living in a fast-changing world fosters feelings of insecurity. Meditation offers an inner-grounding.

11. Enhances your performance. Meditation enhances your perceptual clarity, creativity, self-actualization, and performance in a variety of activities.

12. Aligns you with a deeper sense of purpose. When you shift from *doing* and *thinking* to *being* (fully experiencing the present moment with love and without ego), you discover how to align yourself with a deeper meaning and belonging. **PE**

Stephan Bodian is a psychotherapist, a practitioner and teacher of meditation, and author of Meditation For Dummies (Wiley). Visit www.stephanbodan.org.

ACTION: Meditate for 10 minutes daily.

Crisis of Confidence

You can recover from setbacks.



by Rabbi Daniel Lapin

ONE DAY YOU'RE ON TOP OF your game—and the next you're not. It happens. Suddenly, simple day-to-day tasks that must be done loom as giant obstacles. You're overwhelmed with hopelessness.

Watch how one of history's greatest men, Moses, overcame this challenge. Only three months after God miraculously took the Israelites out of Egypt, Moses discovered them worshipping a golden calf. He punished the people, then begged God for forgiveness on their behalf. He cared deeply about them. Though they grumbled about him, he advocated on their behalf. When they complained about water or hunger, Moses interceded. Even his anger was meant to educate and improve their behavior.

About a year after these events, a year during which God sustained the Israelites with the daily ration of miraculous manna, the people again complained. This time, instead of engaging with Israel, correcting their behavior and asking God to solve their problem, Moses seems overwhelmed. He asked God, "Why have you afflicted your servant? Why have I not found favor in your eyes, that you place the burden of this entire people upon me? I am not able to carry this entire people alone, because it is too heavy for me. If this is how you deal with me, then kill me now . . . let me not see my failure."



God assures Moses that the next day He would supply more meat than the people could eat. Instead of joyously conveying this to his people, Moses doubtfully asks how God could supply enough meat for so many. Moses suffered a temporary *crisis of confidence*. In a lapse from his assertive leadership, he felt weak and hopeless. Unsure of himself, he momentarily doubted God's power to help him! Yet he recovered and led Israel for 38 more years.

How did Moses rise above his negative mood? By *acting in the opposite way to how he felt*. Pessimism makes you *feel small and inadequate* to your challenges. When *insecure*, we tend toward *pettiness*.

When two interlopers, Eldad and Medad threaten Moses' position, even Joshua pleaded with Moses to destroy them. Yet Moses judged them favorably. His magnanimity banished the depressed feeling and restored his strength.

When what Churchill called his *Black Dog* strikes us, the remedy is to *act in a way that enlarges us*. Rather than *acting small* because *you feel small*, you can behave in a way that indicates greatness. And, your feelings will rise to match your actions.

When you have emotional setbacks, you can lessen the severity by being confident in who you are. Timeless truths are a source for optimism. They are spiritual weapons you need to feel optimism and confidence rather than depression and hopelessness when faced with implacable foes. **PE**

Rabbi Daniel Lapin, aka America's Rabbi, is a noted rabbinic scholar, best-selling author of Clash of Destiny and host of the Rabbi Daniel Lapin Show.

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