

# **MIND *SHIFT***

A stylized illustration of a human brain, rendered in a light gray, almost white, color. The brain is positioned centrally and is surrounded by a network of glowing white lines that radiate outwards, connecting to various bright, glowing nodes. These nodes are distributed across the brain and the surrounding space, creating a sense of neural activity and connectivity. The background is a solid, light gray, which makes the glowing elements stand out. The overall aesthetic is clean, modern, and high-tech, suggesting themes of neuroscience, psychology, or cognitive science.

A Force of One

Gary Summers CHt, CCBT

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## MINDSHIFT

*"Each choice in life leads to unlimited possibilities. A positive choice would be to introduce oneself to his book and Gary's six laws."*

**Susan Manion MacDonald**, Author of BALANCE nature's way to heal your body

*"This book is a must read for anyone looking to improve their health. Gary Summers has hit the mark by creating a how to guide for getting healthy. This is a wonderful resource I can use in my training."* **Carl George** , Personal Trainer and Wellness Specialist

*"Gary takes us on a journey to help reach and maintain our individual health goals."* **Tara K. Antle**, BSc., AHN, RHN, RNCP

*"I see, first hand, the complications caused by inactivity and a poor diet. I highly recommend this book to anyone serious about leading a long and healthy life."*

**Susan Ralph R.N.**, Cardiac Nurse

*"I highly recommend this book to anyone looking for self-acceptance and peace in their lives. It can help you reach your full potential on all levels."*

**Nora Squires**, Holistic Healer

*"An inspiring book that can help guide people on their journey to spiritual fulfillment."*

**Tanya O'Brien**, BSc., N.D.

*"This book is a gem of spiritual wisdom. It is the perfect guide for those who would like an introduction to spirituality as well as those who have a deeper knowledge but want to expand their horizons."* **Heather Ann Scott**, Massage Therapist

## Foreword

It came as absolutely no surprise to me when I learned that my friend, Gary Summers, was writing a book. It takes discipline to write a full-length manuscript; it takes commitment and drive to see it through. Most importantly, you've got to have something compelling and worthwhile to say. Libraries are full of self-help books, all promising to improve our health, the way we look, the way we feel, the way we communicate with each other, and the strength and depth of our many relationships. But I have read none so precisely focused as this book on the power within us all to change our mental, physical and spiritual wellness. It is that power which determines whether we go through life victims of a poisonous mindset or are cleansed of it.

It is perhaps true that the mere process of living, meeting our many obligations and duties, steals from us the time necessary to stop and to think about who and what we are and maybe more importantly, how we got here. Sometimes we lose our way along the *clichéd* path of life. Things become muddled - the things that are most valuable are not so easy to see anymore. The tragedy might be that while we spend most of our existence expending energy in the procurement of life's basics, like food and shelter, we are forced to neglect or abandon that which defines us in a more meaningful way. It is the way we relate to our environment, to ourselves and to the people around us. What we lose sometimes in the process of survival is a piece of what makes us human.

As a counsellor, hypnotherapist and exercise physiologist, Gary Summers has studied the mind, body and soul connection and understands how each part is an integral component of a total well adjusted individual.

He also has seen the demons which exist in us all. He understands the role that attitude plays on our own stage and the toxic consequences of our negative thought processes. Gary uses lessons of both student and teacher to enlighten us. As a result, these pages are rich in content, clearly stated, easily absorbed and honest.

I have always known Gary as a man of ideas, someone who keeps comfortable company with the ideals of reason, compassion and betterment for us all. Now in his new book, he invites us on the journey of a lifetime, a journey of footprints and horizons, beginning as it should, with a willingness to travel and a dedication to the fundamentals of **MindShift**.

Glen Carter, author "Angels of Maradona"  
Host, NTV

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## **A SIMPLE PHILOSOPHY**

I have had a number of my friends say, “I have never seen you upset. You are always calm and nothing seems to bother you.” I have always responded by saying, “That’s because I go to all my own seminars.” What I meant was that I practice and live by the principles outlined in this book. Do I make mistakes? Absolutely! But I learn from my mistakes. If you are not making any errors, you are spending too much time in your comfort zone. It is time to think about moving out of this zone and challenge your limits. This is how we grow and improve our lives.

In fact, social psychologists tell us that challenge is very good for our intellect. They say it is better to start a crossword that you may not finish because of the difficulty, rather than do one that is so easy it is not demanding for you. By creating that opportunity, you continually generate new brain cells.

I have always been eager for an opportunity. As a child, I had many dreams and I continue to dream and visualize every day. I had always wanted to run a marathon and in 1983, completed my first and only marathon (twenty six miles). I had always had an interest in magic and finally performed my first show at the age of thirty eight. Most magicians start much earlier. I knew I always had a sincere interest in helping people so I investigated becoming a hypnotherapist. In 1997, I became a certified hypnotherapist, completing my studies with the American Institute of Hypnotherapy. I continue to learn obtaining certifications in Rational Living Therapy and Psychological Kinesiology. My latest dream was to write a book. I completed this book in July of 2010. I look forward to many other opportunities during my life and will face them with the same determination and attitude as the others.

I will continue to dream and look for opportunities to grow because personal development is important. It helps us grow into something better and stronger. How boring would life be if we knew everything? I enjoy waking up wondering what life will teach me today.

I also think that as we learn and grow, we must be continually aware of morals like honesty, sincerity and integrity. We all know the definition of honesty and sincerity. What is integrity? I believe integrity is what you are doing when no one else is watching. This means that you have to be true to yourself before you can be honest with others. You may be able to deceive other people but you can never fool yourself.

I spent close to thirty years in sales and marketing, attending many sales training courses and workshops. Most of these sessions taught sales skills such as: how to portray a positive mental attitude, how to influence decisions in your favour, how to close a sale and how to adjust your behavior to best suit your customer. Some of these courses taught me a great deal but the one thing that was missing was the emphasis on character, ethics and morals. Stephen Covey was right when he said in his book “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, “You have to have an internal victory before you have an external one.” He believes that we must work on ourselves first and become the best we can become. You will learn how to be the best you can.

My philosophy is reflected in the following statement. “A true indication of oneself is your core being. It is much more important to be of strong moral character and true to your word than it is to adopt a fake persona.” This is my guiding principle and how I want to live my life. A person always striving to be the best he can possibly be.

In other words, the individual you are inside is a much better indicator of your morals and principles. Our inner voice says so much more than what we say or do.

As Zig Ziglar once said, “You can have anything in life you want, as long as you help enough other people get what they want.” As you lay your head down at night, reflect on your personal performance. By the end of this book, I will provide you with a few simple guidelines. Using this process can really set you up for success and help you stay on the road of empowerment.

I am not a special person. I just managed to figure out how life works and if the strategies you are about to learn worked for me, they can also work for you.

This book is a reflection of my morals and beliefs. They have made myself and my life better and I truly hope that as you read through each chapter you will become mindful of how just a few simple changes can make dramatic improvements in your life.

You will learn why visualization is a critical part of success and I will explain how to use visualization so you can benefit from this remarkable gift.

Read this book with an open mind. Be mindful of the ideas and don’t be afraid to experiment.

## **PREFACE**

Winding your way through your journey of life, you will encounter four very different types of people. Sometimes it is easy to recognize them and other times more difficult. Some people have a very unique way of disguising their true motives because manipulation is a big part of what they do. Let's take a look at these four groups.

Firstly, there are the WIN-LOSE people. I call them self-serving. They care more about being right than doing what works. These people focus on winning, usually at the expense of others. They believe that the end justifies the means and they will do whatever it takes to be triumphant. They WIN while the people they interact with LOSE.

Secondly, there are the LOSE-WIN people. They have difficulty saying no and will usually burden themselves with extra work for fear of rejection or failure. These people feel that their opinions are not important and put others ahead of themselves. They are more concerned about how other people feel and usually dismiss their feelings as unimportant. They LOSE while the people they encounter WIN.

There are the LOSE-LOSE people. These people are more concerned with getting even than doing what works. Revenge and lashing back appear to be their motive. They have to be right, even if it means losing themselves. Both these people and those they meet always lose.

And finally there are the very special kind of people. The WIN-WIN people. They create an atmosphere that allows everyone to win. They look at life as a sharing of ideas and they value the opinions of others. Although opinions may differ, they value these differences and learn from each experience. These people never talk behind people's backs, never judge others and always look for the good in people. The WIN-WIN people make everyone they interact with feel better about themselves.

As you read over these four very different types, reflect on what category you belong to and ask yourself these questions. Is my thinking getting me what I want from life? Do I want a better life? Are there some things I would like to do differently? Do I want to change? Is it possible to change?

I grew up as a LOSE-WIN person. My opinion always came second or never at all. I just went along with whatever my friends wanted to do. My needs were not being met. I then thought about WIN-LOSE situations, where I would win and everyone else would lose. That way of thinking did not appeal to me. Then I had a revelation and asked myself, "Why can't everyone win?" Instead of looking outside for the problem, I started to look inside and realized that I had all the answers within myself. I started to look at situations as WIN-WIN, where everyone can win. There does not have to be any losers. Once I started looking at life from this point of view, everything fell into place.

I started to look at circumstances not as good or bad, right or wrong, but as situations I could make better. By taking control, I now had the power to make life-altering changes. This WIN-WIN concept is about looking at solutions instead of focusing on problems. It is about how to fix the situation as opposed to why we have

a situation in the first place. If we keep asking ourselves why, we focus on the problem and we have no time to figure out how to make our lives better.

Some of the clients I see in my practice have the same excuses: I cannot change, I am just like my mother, I have been this way too long or it will be difficult. Change is possible. I was able to change and I do not consider myself any different than anyone else. I just managed to figure out how life works. If I can do it, so can you.

I am not an optimist or a pessimist. I am a realist who believes that everyone can achieve whatever they want to achieve. It all depends on the choices we make. Some people believe they have been dealt a bad hand and cannot control what happens to them. I believe that it is not what happens to you but your reaction or response that causes all of life's problems. Life is ten per cent what happens to you and ninety per cent how you deal with what happens to you. Of course, some of us will have more challenges than others, but challenges make us stronger. It is important to look at all obstacles and challenges as opportunities. This is the way to true empowerment and total control.

This book is about changing the way we think about life. It is about creating awareness of our thoughts. It is about developing a winning attitude toward yourself and those you meet. This book is about you and how to become the person you want to become, someone with limitless possibilities.

There are few guarantees in life but I can make you this promise. If you apply the techniques and strategies in this book, you can live your dream-life. By using my six immutable laws, you will be able to accomplish anything you set out to do.



## INTRODUCTION

What if I told you that you could produce extraordinary results, increase your capacity for learning and guarantee success? Would you be interested? Would you listen? Would you want to? Of course you would. Well, the fact is you can. We all have the ability to be and do whatever we choose. That's right, you have unlimited potential and you are about to find out how to maximize that potential. I am privileged, excited and honoured to lead you on a journey where you will discover the strategies to maximizing your inner potential.

I have been doing a presentation in the school system since 1996 called "DISCOVER THE MAGIC WITHIN YOU." This program teaches our youth about the dangers of smoking, drinking and drugs. It provides ideas and suggestions on how they can have well informed good choices. I gave my program this name because I tell our youth that everyone has a special magic inside of them. You just have to work hard to make that magic the best it can be.

My motto is "YOU CAN HAVE ANYTHING YOU WANT, BUT NOT EVERYTHING YOU WANT." In fact, if you always get what you want most, you have never failed. That's right. Whatever you have today in your life, you have it because you wanted it more than something else. If you were to take away just one piece of information from this book, the motto stated above is it. Write this motto down because I will be referring to it time and time again.

As a hypnotherapist, I use hypnosis to help people deal with eliminating negative behaviour whether that behaviour is smoking, over eating, under eating. I have also had clients who had fears about flying, elevators, public speaking and many other phobias that have caused problems in their lives. Many people rely on me to get them to change. I remember a gentlemen who attended one of my Stop Smoking seminars. He said at the beginning of his session that I was his last hope for quitting. Obviously, this is not going to work for him, as he is relying on outside sources to eliminate his problem.

I use hypnosis because it allows people to reprogram their subconscious mind with a set of new beliefs that help as opposed to beliefs that hinder.

We have a conscious mind as well as a subconscious mind. Our conscious mind is the mind that we use everyday. We use it to think, make decisions, determine right from wrong and make judgements. Our conscious mind is capable of remembering between six to eight things at any one time. It has limited capacity. On the other hand our subconscious mind does not judge. It accepts everything that is suggested. It is a giant computer that stores all of our emotions, feelings and past experiences. Every single thing that has happened to you is locked away in this fantastic computer. Our subconscious mind is, therefore, more powerful than our conscious mind because of its storage capacity. Our conscious mind contains about five per cent of our brain power while our subconscious mind contains ninety five per cent. When we have a conflict between our conscious and subconscious minds, guess which one wins – our subconscious.

This is why I have included a section in this book on self-talk. We have all experienced negative behaviour in the past. It has happened to us and we have seen it happen to others like friends, family members, co-workers and acquaintances. It is this negativism that stifles progress, digs holes and ruins our lives. The section on self-hypnosis and self-talk explains how to write powerful statements that create positive changes in our lives.

You are going to learn how to replace negative thinking and behaviour with positive thoughts and actions. Even as a positive person you will learn ideas that will keep you on this positive track for the rest of your life. You will be so energized that you will begin to put this new thinking into action immediately. You will become the person you have always wanted to be.

I am not a motivational speaker. I consider myself a human capacity or human potential coach. Motivation must come from within. I can provide you with an over abundance of encouragement however, unless you are prepared to accept this support, things will remain the same. When you make the commitment to making your life better, only then is change possible.

I have been doing a seminar called “Controlling Stress through Personal Empowerment.” This seminar is a detailed presentation of this book. I had a young lady approach me six months after one of my seminars and told me that she quit smoking and has not smoked since. She decided to get her husband to attend one of these seminars. He is still smoking because he attended for all the wrong reasons. He attended because of his wife and not because of himself. He did not have the motivation to quit nor could he see himself as a non-smoker.

Whenever I do hypnotherapy for smoking or weight loss or any other area, I always get the attendees to visualize and think about how their lives will improve. If you are doing something for someone else, it is hard to see the results. If you are doing something for yourself, then it is easy to see the results.

As I said before, you already have the potential to produce great results right now. You may need the proper techniques and strategies. This is what you are about to discover. A whole new way of seeing, thinking and doing.

I would like you to have an aha moment while reading this book and a light will go on in your head while you say, “Wow, I never thought about life like that.” These moments don’t happen very often but when they do, the results can be life altering.

## Chapter I

### SETTING THE STAGE

“What lies behind us and what lies ahead of us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.”  
RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Before we get started, I want you to study the chart below. There are three columns. The left column represents something negative that happened. The middle column explains the thought behind this situation and the right column shows what was done or how it felt.

Take a piece of paper and draw three columns similar to the one below. Write down in the left column something negative that happened to you. It may be a pet peeve or something that upsets you. Maybe it was being cut off in traffic, dealing with chronically late people or being bothered by loud obnoxious individuals. In the middle column write what you thought about this situation. Finally, in the right column explain how you felt and what you did. You can use the example below to help you with completing this task. Give careful consideration to this because we are going to revisit this chart at the end of the book to see how your thinking has changed.

WHAT HAPPENED	WHAT YOU THOUGHT	HOW YOU FELT AND WHAT YOU DID
Someone cut me off in traffic.	What an idiot to do that.	Felt frustrated and mad. Blew my horn and made several obscene gestures.

In this chapter I want to give you some basic information that will act as a foundation for each subsequent chapter. The concepts I will talk about form the building blocks as we explore how our thinking carves our destiny.

#### ***Attitude***

Please study the graph below. Look at each of the equations and think of the first thing that comes to your mind:

1+1	=	2
2+2	=	4
4+4	=	8
8+8	=	16
16+16	=	34

I suspect you are thinking the equation  $16 + 16 = 34$  is wrong. The correct answer is 32. I am correct aren't I? Why didn't you think that the other four were right? Whenever I pose this at my workshops, the response is always the same. Most people focus on what is wrong with their lives and then wonder why their situation keeps getting worse. We do fifty things right and one thing wrong and the focus is on the one thing that we did incorrectly. Many of us have a negative attitude and this pessimism overflows into many aspects of our lives.

If we are to move away from negativity and become empowered with a positive attitude, it is important to understand the meaning of possibility. Within the realm of physical capability, anything is achievable. This is our ability, our potential, or what we are capable of doing. Yet ability is only part of the equation. More important than ability is motivation or our driving force. Motivation determines what we do. I have seen people waste their ability because of lack of inspiration. Again, motivation is not enough. Many people are motivated but in the wrong direction. These individuals are motivated for all the wrong reasons. Our prisons are filled with these people. So if ability and motivation are not the answer, what is? It is attitude. Attitude determines how well we do something. So ask yourself, "What kind of an attitude do I bring to life everyday?" Do you see the good in people or look for what is wrong with them? Do you bring a positive attitude to life or do you have everyone in your household irritated by the time you leave for work in the morning? You can find the good in everyone or the bad; it just depends on where you are looking. Many people do not realize that attitude is a choice. You choose how you want to be everyday.

Sometimes it is easy to spot a bad attitude. Whenever I do workshops, I ask attendees to fill out an evaluation form. This feedback gives me insight into the effectiveness of my seminars. One question on the form asks for additional comments about the workshop. One participant said, "This workshop is not reality." I assumed this meant that my concepts about how to live a positive life were not realistic and therefore not achievable. This is a prime example of an individual whose attitude depicts someone who has given up and feels there is nothing they can do to improve their life. They have an attitude of failure. Just remember you create your own reality.

So what is your reality? Can you see your potential or do you consider yourself a failure? Some of us never reach our true potential because of our greatest weakness – our EGO or our need to be right. We have a compulsion to be correct. We spend more time trying to be right instead of doing what works. Whenever someone disagrees with our opinion, they are always wrong and we are always right. Drop your ego, watch and listen and see if you can learn something from the situation.

Whenever I think about a proper attitude, I am reminded of a quote from William Shakespeare and a lesson I learned from my daughter Megan.

Shakespeare said, "There is nothing good or bad but thinking makes it so." Some of us may think it is terrible that the weather forecast calls for three days of rain yet there are many farmers who need the rain for their crops. Circumstance is all about how you think about the situation.

My daughter Megan and I were watching a minor hockey game back when she was eight years old. She asked if she could run around the perimeter of the rink. I said yes, but I kept a watchful eye as she skipped around. I noticed she stopped at the far corner and looked up into the stands as though someone was talking to her. She then continued around and stopped in front of me and said, "Daddy, do you know what that boy said to me?" I said, "No, what did he say?" Megan said, "He called me a fathead," and she skipped off without breaking a smile. I knew then that she had a great attitude toward life and was not going to let someone else's ignorance bother

her. She had life figured out at that early age. Megan was not prepared to take on other people’s problems and assign blame to herself.

**Regrets**

I expect that at some time over the span of your life you may make a statement of regret. That statement is, “I wish I had my time back.” Most of us only learn how to live when we learn how to die and by that time it is too late. On our death beds we won’t wish we had more money in the bank or that we worked longer. We will be thinking about what is truly valuable. We will be thinking about the special people we have in our lives. Don’t wait until your deathbed to spend time thinking about what is truly valuable and precious. This book is about teaching you how to think differently about life and how we can cherish the things in our lives that are precious.

**Intelligent Quotient vs. Emotional Quotient**

I saw a documentary on television a while ago about I.Q. and E.Q. The program stated that E.Q. or Emotional Quotient is more important than I.Q. or Intelligence Quotient. In other words, the ability to interact with people is more important than the amount of raw intelligence you have. This documentary then went on to place labels on I.Q.’s.

The table below shows the various categories of I. Q. and their associated label:

<b>I. Q.</b>	<b>Label</b>
0 – 25	Moron
26 – 50	Idiot
51 – 75	Imbecile
76 - 90	Borderline Deficient
91 – 109	Average
110 – 120	Above Average
121 - 140	Excellent
>140	Genius

If you look at the labels above, you will find no mention of stupidity, so I developed my own definition. Stupidity is allowing your beliefs and attitudes to hinder you from learning something new. There are people who think they know everything. I am sure you have met some. These people spend more time talking than listening. They are more interested in what they have to say and are indifferent to your opinion.

Speaking of stupidity, Albert Einstein once said, “Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, expecting a different result.” I say the same thing only a little bit differently. My version is, “If you are still doing what you have already been doing, you are going to get what you already got.” So what you do today becomes your practice for tomorrow and the next day and so on. It becomes your habit and ultimately your destiny. The key is to determine if what you are doing is getting you ahead in life.

### ***Life's Greatest Lesson***

The most important lesson you will take away from this book is this. You can have anything in life you want but not everything and you will always get what you want most. In fact, you have never failed to get what you wanted most. Everything you have in your life right now you have because you wanted it more than something else.

Here is a good example of someone getting what they wanted most. I had a gentleman approach me saying he had two cancer spots on his lung. His doctor told him he needed to quit or suffer serious consequences. I told him to call me and set up an appointment for hypnosis. He never called. Did he get what he wanted? Absolutely. He had a choice. Be healthy or smoke. He could not have both. He chose smoking over health and he got what he wanted most.

### ***The two greatest human gifts are:***

1. **Visualization** – If you can see yourself doing something, you have most of your work completed. You just need to go and do it. Whenever I have clients wanting to lose weight, my first question is, “Can you close your eyes and see yourself at the weight you want to be?” Studies have been done on two groups of people with one group visualizing doing an activity and the other group actually doing it. When both groups were tested to identify any improvements, the results showed no significant difference in performance between the two. This proves that powerful effects happen when we see ourselves doing something.

How can you visualize? There are a number of ways. Closing your eyes and painting a picture in your mind of a desired result is one way. Vision boards are another way and are very powerful. They have been proven to help achieve your goals. To get a good idea of how a vision board works see the diagram on the next page. A vision board consists of pictures and words about how you want to live your life. To construct a vision board, get a piece of 2' x 3' construction paper. Either download images from the internet or cut out pictures from magazines and paste them on the vision board. Place the board somewhere in your home where you can see it everyday. This board will provide you with focus and get you moving in the right direction.

Also understand that the pictures on a vision board can change depending on what you see as important. Goals are accomplished and they can also change as your direction in life may change. The picture on the following page will give you a good indication of what is included on a vision board. The important point is to make it personal and include pictures and words that mean something special to you.

## VISION BOARD



2. **Goals** – There are four important points when it comes to goals:
- **Having them.** If you want to be successful, it is critical to set goals. Without goals life becomes meaningless.
  - **Being enthusiastic about them.** If you cannot get enthusiastic about your goals, there is a good probability you will not have the commitment to see them to completion. Many people fail because they are not excited about their goals.
  - **Writing them down.** Social psychologists tell us that we have an 85% better chance of achieving our goals if we write them down because we then become committed to them. A very powerful influencing factor in all our lives is commitment and consistency. When we write down our goals, we become committed to seeing them completed. Most people just keep their goals in their heads and wonder why they fail. Seeing your goals on paper is a powerful driving force that keeps you on track. The second part of this influencing factor is consistency. As humans, we prefer life to be stable and predictable. We do not like change. When we put our goals on paper, it has a two-fold effect. It provides the commitment we desire and it evokes the need to be consistent with our goals.
  - **Moving towards them.** At a subconscious level, we naturally move towards goals as opposed to running away from them. Our body chemistry is goal-seeking so we tend to have a much greater chance of achieving our goals if they are stated in terms of forward movement. Study the following two goal statements and see which one sounds better:

- 1) To lead a healthy life.
- 2) To lose twenty pounds.

The first goal statement is much more effective because it encompasses a forward moving objective. It focuses on the solution of a healthy lifestyle. The second one is stated as running away from a weight problem. When you focus on the problem, other issues surface like not getting proper nutrition or eating too little. We have now complicated the problem.

Many people confuse goal statements with strategies. The second statement would be a strategy that supports the objective of leading a healthy life. Other strategies to keep you on track would be regular exercise and eating nutritiously.

Let's look at another example of an effective goal statement and a strategy that supports the objective:

Goal Statement	To be a good parent
Strategy	To be involved in all aspects of my children's' lives

I will spend some time later in this book talking about well formulated goal statements when I discuss mission statements. I will show you how to develop your life plan by using a few simple ideas. It is these strategies that maintain your focus.

Of the thousands of people who attend my workshops, I have only met two individuals who had a personal mission statement or a life plan. We work for corporations who have vision statements. We plan our vacations better than our lives. We decide where we want to travel, what airline to use, where to stay and the length of the vacation. We get totally involved in the vacation process yet wander through life.

Clients come to me and want to retire at fifty-five and I ask how they are going to do that. They don't know. They want to be mortgage free but don't have a plan. Without a personal mission statement and life plan, you have no idea where you are on your road of life. It becomes hit or miss and you are not sure if you are succeeding or failing. A life plan makes life work. It becomes the driving force that helps us get out of bed in the morning.

I see many people who let life pass them by. When something happens, they usually make a statement like, "Everything happens for a reason." I never liked that statement because I felt it was an excuse for doing nothing to control life. Then I thought, "NO, that statement is correct." Here is the reason. You either let things happen or you make things happen. Life rewards action. If you do not act, then life will act upon you. If you let a dripping faucet continue without doing something about the problem, it will become a bigger issue. Eventually you will not be able to turn off the tap. I have never seen a problem disappear by doing nothing to resolve it. We can alter our results by realizing that we do have choices.

I could never understand when people say things like, "I had no choice." Statements like this set you up for failure because the thinking process is flawed. These people



believe they have little control in life and their results are a series of random events. These people feel they are dictated by what life throws at them.

There may be times when you feel there are no options but we always have choices. Allowing yourself to step back from the situation and evaluate your choices gives you time to reflect and ensure you make the right decision. Life truly is ten per cent what happens to you and ninety per cent how you deal with it.

You know life is about options. As human beings, we have this ability to make decisions. Everyday of our lives we are faced with different challenges. Some people make all the right choices while others seem to make questionable decisions. You made a choice to purchase this book. I happen to think that was a good idea. Now you have an option to read the book. Once you have done this, you have to decide whether to believe in my strategies and use them everyday.

I don't believe in quick fixes but I do believe that we can make tremendous changes by believing in ourselves and expecting to achieve great results. By taking small steps we manage our workload and don't become overwhelmed. Life then becomes a journey and not a destination and we get a chance to learn along the way. We begin to enjoy our expedition. Life becomes a walk instead of a run and we begin the process of truly living and being the best we can.

Take your time and really absorb all the information. You will find that each time you read in this book you will gain further insight into a new way of thinking. The chapters are designed to assist you in creating a new mindset or building on the one you already have.

You know the best time to do something was yesterday. The second best time is today. So roll up your sleeves and let's get to work. By the time you finish this book you will have the knowledge and tools to achieve your dreams.

## Chapter II

### HOW OUR BRAINS WORK

“People are like sticks of dynamite. The power is on the inside but nothing happens until the fuse gets lit.”  
MAC ANDERSON

In order to get the greatest fulfillment from life, I believe it is important to understand the workings of the brain. The brain is split into a right and left hemisphere. As a hypnotherapist, I deal with the conscious mind by using Cognitive Behaviour Therapy or the subconscious mind by using hypnosis. Cognitive Behaviour Therapy uses the left or logical brain while hypnosis uses the right or emotional brain.

Below is a diagram that explains the different functions of these two parts:

<b>RIGHT BRAIN</b>	<b>LEFT BRAIN</b>
<b>Fantasy</b> <b>Imagination</b> <b>Emotions</b> <b>Feeling</b> <b>Pictures</b>	<b>Reality</b> <b>Facts</b> <b>Logic</b> <b>Words</b> <b>Sentences</b>

Most children are very right-brain oriented. They are creative, have imaginary friends and play with toys. As a result, they enter school with creative minds. Because the school system is focused on proper language and math skills, a large percentage of these school children finish school as left brain focused people. They have to in order to survive and adapt to the traditional school system.

Here are some very important facts to understand about the brain:

#### ***Thinking Brain***

Everything starts with a thought. It is your birth right to think whatever you want to. You can think that the world is round or flat. You can think that there is an abundance of everything and you are entitled to your fair share or you can think that you are not deserving of anything.

#### ***Proving Brain***

In addition to a thinking part of the brain, you also have a proving part which sets out to prove that your thinking mind is right. It will gather evidence to confirm that you are correct. I have never met anyone who has set out to prove themselves wrong. We want to prove ourselves right because of our EGO or our need to be right. Remember the old EGO problem.

#### ***Gatekeeper***

Besides a thinking and proving mind, there is also, at the base of your brain, a gatekeeper. It is called a Reticular Activating System or RAS. This RAS looks for information that is only important to you. If the data is not significant or meaningful to you, your RAS will not bring it to your awareness. If you are worried about something, your RAS will make sure you are aware of it. Have you ever wanted to buy a certain model of car and then it seemed that every second car you noticed was that model? That is your RAS at work letting in data that supports your thought process.

If you look for success your RAS will make you aware of opportunities. If you focus on failures opportunities will pass you by.

### **Auto Pilot**

You also have a set point or an auto pilot. If you set the auto pilot on a boat to go west and you turn the steering wheel north, the boat will automatically return to its setting once you release the wheel. Our set point works the same way. It is your belief system but more on that when we get to the subconscious mind.

### **Processing Negatives**

The normal brain process is as follows:

*THOUGHT – PICTURE – BEHAVIOUR.*

1. Your left brain has a thought.
2. Your right brain imagines a corresponding picture of that thought.
3. You act out the picture formulated in your right brain.

There is only one word that the right brain does not have a picture for. It is the word **NOT**. It does not understand the word because the right brain does not have a picture for it. Read this next sentence carefully and then put the book down for a minute and think about what you just read. **Imagine not reading this book.**

You either imagined doing something else or you had problems with this statement. You see you cannot do a negative. You cannot imagine not reading this book. You have to imagine doing something else. Negatives confuse our brain.

If I say to you, “Don’t think of a pink elephant.” See what happens. You think of a pink elephant because your brain throws out the “Don’t” and uses the remaining words. So you end up focusing on the very thing you don’t want to.



The picture on the left contains Mandarin Chinese symbols for both Danger and Opportunity. We can look at all situations in either of these two ways. Here is the key. Taking into account how our brain works, a thought in your left brain deemed, by you, to be dangerous or challenging is going to form a picture in your right brain of a difficult task and you will act out that picture making the job more difficult. Your behaviour is based on your perception of that left brain thought. Now imagine that same chore and your thought is one of opportunity, the picture in your right brain will be one of promise and optimism thus making the task easy. It is that simple to turn a problem into an opportunity. It is based on your thought process.

We can now look at failure as a pathway to new ideas, a stepping stone to success and a springboard to move outside our comfort zone because we don’t see failure, only growth.

The other points to remember about your brain are these:

1. It does not care what you plant in it. It can be either a positive or a negative thought. It will grow whatever you plant, just like your flower garden - roses or weeds, it does not matter.

2. It does not know the difference between what happens inside or outside your head. The stimulation can be internal or external. That is why dreams are so powerful. They happen in your head but your brain does not know the difference. So when you have a particularly bad dream, you wake up and find your heart racing or your forehead sweating. Physically, it appears that you actually lived the experience when in fact it all happened inside your brain. This is why visualization is so powerful. Your brain does not know the difference.

3. It does not care what you mean; only what you say. I remember a workshop I gave several years ago. I mentioned that I like to meditate in the mornings. I go into my living room after my exercise session and sit down on the sofa with nothing on. The audience started to chuckle and I realized what I said. I quickly rephrased the sentence and said, "I sit down and don't have the TV, the radio or the stereo on." It is easy to be misunderstood because of our different perceptions of what we heard.

Besides your left and right brain, you also have a conscious and subconscious mind and they both have very different functions.

See diagram below to see the functions of the conscious and subconscious mind:

<b>CONSCIOUS MIND</b>	<b>SUBCONSCIOUS MIND</b>
Critical thinking Sets goals Deals in facts Captain Past/Future Will 5%	Accepts everything Achieves goals Deals in emotions Crew Present Imagination 95%

People say we use only 5% of our brain power. This represents our conscious thinking. We actually use 100% of our brain. Our subconscious mind is 95% and is therefore more powerful. It is there that resides our imagination, our emotions and our feelings. Everything we have experienced in our lifetime is locked up in this powerful computer. When there is a conflict between our conscious mind or willpower (5%) and our subconscious mind or imagination (95%), guess who wins – the subconscious.

Many people try to force their subconscious mind into submission but it never works because in your subconscious mind resides your belief system, your auto pilot. Your conscious mind instructs your subconscious mind. It is like the captain telling the crew what to do. If your subconscious mind is not in agreement with your conscious mind, you end up falling short of your goal because you make up excuses. These excuses come in the form of statements like, "I am not smart enough to do that," or "What if I fail?" You wind up doing nothing.

Your subconscious mind makes no value judgements. It accepts everything as long as it does not harm you. So you have to be careful how you talk to yourself because your subconscious mind is listening and remembers everything, both positive and negative. When you go to sleep and have negative thoughts, your subconscious remembers those thoughts. The key is to harness the power of your subconscious mind when your conscious mind is not alert. That is why hypnosis is so powerful. It eliminates the judgement of the conscious.

Your subconscious deals with the five senses so when you want to create power statements, it is important to talk to your subconscious mind in a way that it understands. Saying I am happy can mean a lot of things as it depends on your definition of happiness. It is important to define happiness so your subconscious mind understands.

When you talk to your subconscious mind, talk in terms of what you will see and what you will hear (from yourself and others). This is the language that your subconscious understands. For example saying something like, "I am happy," is not clear. The definition of happiness is abstract and means different things to different people. Your subconscious mind does not understand the meaning of happiness so you have to clearly explain it by using sensory language. Happiness may mean to have a happy smile on your face, or to have a bright glow all over. When you talk to yourself you would say, "I did it," and others would say, "Boy you look so happy all the time. Your face is one big smile." By using this type of sensory language, your subconscious keeps working until it sees these exact results.

Imagine going to Toronto and getting in a cab and saying to the cab driver, "Take me out of the airport." He would not know where you wanted to go. You would have to give more specific directions. Unless you are explicit with your statements, your subconscious mind will not understand.

Treat your subconscious mind as you would your best friend. It knows what is best and wants to help you but you have to be clear what you want. For example:

- 1) You have a tough break-up and your best friend wants to set you up on a blind date. That is the last thing on your mind but you neglected to tell her.
- 2) Your mother-in-law bakes you a date cake for Christmas. You never told her you hate these kinds of cakes.

If you are not clear with your subconscious about what you want, it will never know and you will end up getting misleading information just like the examples above.

One way to harness the power of your subconscious mind is to construct good power statements and repeat them at the two most influential times of the day. Just as you go to bed and when you awaken. This can get you amazing results because it is at these times that your conscious mind is the least critical and judgemental. There are three things to keep in mind when composing these statements:

1. Always use the first person present tense. In other words use "I Am." If you are not comfortable with this statement use, "I am in the process of." Phrasing

your statements this way allows you to feel the emotion of already achieving your desired result or moving in the right direction.

2. Do not use “I will” because that is some time next week or next year.

3. Do not use “I want” because that creates the state of wanting. When you create the condition of wanting, this means you don’t have something. Using “I am,” creates the state of already having it. When you evoke these feelings of success, you can use those powerful emotions to keep you motivated to reach your goal. It is those feelings that get you to your end result.

There will be many times your subconscious mind will send you signals. The key to success is to trust it. If not, two things will happen:

1. You will either talk yourself out of applying action to the thought; or
2. You will ask other people for their opinions. If you ask ten people for their advice, you will get ten different suggestions. You then become confused and procrastinate.

The following story illustrates my point:

A man was stranded on his rooftop during a terrible flood. The flood waters were rising and he had nowhere to go. A helicopter comes and the pilot drops a ladder and tells the man to climb up. The man refuses because he says he is waiting for God to save him. Next comes a motor boat and again the man refuses saying he is waiting for God to rescue him. Finally, a canoe comes to save the man and again he refuses saying he wants God to save him. The flood waters rise, the man drowns and goes to heaven. Meeting God he says, “I am very upset with you. I waited and waited for you to help me and you did nothing.” God replies, “I sent three people to save you. What did you want?”

If you are not looking for these messages, you will miss them the same way the man on the rooftop missed them. Allow your subconscious to do its work of guidance and suggestions and you will get amazing results.

## Chapter III

### THOUGHT AWARENESS

“Time flies. It’s up to you to be the navigator.” ~ ROBERT ORBEN

I would like to spend some time on conscious awareness. We sometimes say things without realizing the negative impact on ourselves and others. Below you will find a number of ideas. Being aware of them will help you understand how your thinking can influence your behaviour.

#### ***Your focus***

Whatever you focus on becomes your predominant thought and becomes your fixation. The things you do not focus on become insignificant. If you are dwelling on the negative things in your life, they will become amplified. If you are thinking about how bad your job is, you will see all that is wrong with your job. Remember your gatekeeper; it only lets in what you are looking for. If you look for the bad in people, then that is what you will see. Now ask yourself, where is your focus? Do you see the good or the bad in people?

Remember how we process information:

#### **Thought – Picture - Behaviour.**

If you want a bigger bank account, just focus on that and see what happens. If you want to be a better employee or better supervisor, focus on that possibility. The thought in your left brain will form a picture in your right brain and you will act out the picture formed in your right brain.

#### ***“Should” statements***

“Should” statements cause two major problems. 1) They imply that there is a magical world where everything turns out the way you expect. When you say something like, “I should have gotten the job,” you are saying that you did everything possible to get that job. If you had then you would have gotten the job. This thinking gets you disappointment after disappointment because you are not prepared to look at how you can become better by accepting your shortcomings.

2) Whenever your subconscious mind detects need, it automatically pushes back. Saying things like should, have to, must and need to, evoke a part of your subconscious called the “neediness factor.” It detects need. Your subconscious is a warehouse that contains all the information you require for success. All you have to do is ask and your subconscious will give those things to you. The problem is we do not trust ourselves.

#### ***Negatives***

When we use negatives, our brain becomes confused because it does not have a picture for the word NOT. Words like try, can’t, maybe, don’t and hope are struggle words. Hope the noun, is fine. Having hope is good. Saying I hope, is not.

Imagine asking someone over for a barbecue on a Friday night and they say, “I’ll try to make it.” What does that mean? Either they are coming over or they are not.

Imagine your doctor telling you that you have a ruptured appendix and he is going to try to take it out. You would probably get another doctor. I was in the dentist's office and heard a man talking on his cell phone to his son and he said, "Yes, I will try to pick you up after school." How do you think his son felt? In the act of doing something, you have to try to do it. Just don't say, "I will try," because you are setting yourself up for failure.

I was doing some sales training a while back and a salesperson said, "I am going to try to make more sales calls this year". So I said "Wouldn't it be better to say, "I am going to make more sales calls this year." He felt that my phrasing put too much pressure on him and he would fail if he did not make more sales calls. He was setting himself up for failure simply by using the word try. He was not prepared to make the commitment to make more sales calls because he used the word try.

I always say – talk in terms of the behaviour you want to elicit, not the behaviour you want to eliminate. Instead of saying, "Don't be late," say, "Be on time". Instead of saying, "Don't slam the door," say, "Close the door gently." When your child jumps on the bed, instead of saying, "Don't jump on the bed," say, "Play on the floor where it is nice and safe." I hear commercials stating that thousands of customers can't be wrong. I believe rephrasing that statement to say thousands of customers must be right is so much better. So the next time someone asks you "How are you today," instead of saying "Not bad," say "Good."

### ***The "but" word***

Whenever you use the word "*but*", you negate everything that came before it. Have you ever had a conversation with someone and you sensed a "*but*" coming. "That is a good idea but I think we will do this instead." I am not saying never use the word "*but*", just be careful because you may upset the person you are talking to. Using the word "*however*" to replace "*but*" is no better. "*However*" is just a but with a bow tie. I have also heard phrases like, "Be that as it may." That is a but statement. If you want to dismiss what the person said, use but. If you want to make the person feel his contribution is important, use the word "and". Here are a few examples for using the word "*and*." "That is a good idea *and* here is something else to think about." "Your proposal on the new computer system is great *and* here is another option for us to consider."

### ***The "why" question***

"*Why*" or another version "*why Not*" is a great question to use when you want someone to explain their reasons for not doing something. For example: a friend says, "I can't apply for that job." You ask, "*Why not?*" They will give you a list of reasons, excuses or their rational explanations as to why they cannot apply for the job and their answer will further justify their limiting beliefs for not applying. From the person's view of their limited beliefs, they are right - they cannot see how the problem can be solved because their thinking is inhibited by the problem itself. "*Why*" is the perfect question to ask when you want to reinforce a person's own set of limiting beliefs because their answer can only be developed from their limited perception of their world. Their rules about life limit how they answer the question "*Why*." We have good reasons for asking the question "why?" You may want to learn what caused something to happen, or you may want to know how decisions are made. You might



also want to motivate someone or help them along by asking, "Why don't you do that?" The question "*Why*" brings attention to the very problem and makes it bigger and usually impossible to solve in that person's mind.

Why are you reading this book? Why aren't you doing something else instead? Why can't you figure out the answer to that problem? Why did you make that choice? Were those questions of any use to you? Try these questions instead. How did you decide to read this book? What would you achieve if you were doing something else? What is stopping you from solving that problem? How did you come to that conclusion? These questions are asking for the same information, but they are causing your brain to work differently by looking at the solutions instead of the problems. So don't ask, "Why did I get this lousy job?" Instead ask, "How can I make this job better?" "What can I contribute to my job?" These are empowering questions. They set you up for success by focusing on what you can do to move forward instead of acting like a victim.

### ***Wants***

The best question to ask yourself is, "What do I want?" or when asking someone else, "What do you want?" When I ask clients this question, they usually tell me what they don't want. I don't want this job, this house or this car. We tend to focus on all the negative things in our lives and then wonder why we get more of them. The key to success is figuring out what you want. Here are the three key questions for success:

1. What do I want?
2. What do I need to do to get what I want?
3. Am I moving in the right direction? Check your progress.
4. Adjust your plan if you are not moving in the right direction.

I had someone attend one of my seminars who did just that. Her son was in high school and not doing very well so she asked him, "What do you want". He said he wanted to move to another town with his grandparents and finish high school there. She moved her son to live with his grandparents and he prospered. His marks improved and he became a better student and graduated with excellent grades. Asking "What do I want?" or "What do you want?" gets you moving in the right direction.

### ***Labels***

I do not believe there are any stupid people in the world. I believe there are people who do stupid things. There are no alcoholics in the world; there are individuals who have trouble with alcohol. No one is perfect. We all make mistakes and have flaws. When we label people, we think of them as the label and because of how our brains work - Thought – Picture – Behaviour. We then treat them as though they are the problem when in fact; it is the behaviour that is the problem.

### ***Knowledge and power***

People say knowledge is power. It is not. Knowledge is awareness of the right thing to do. You can read all the empowerment and self-help books you want and attend all the seminars you can but until you use the information you have learned to make life better, all that knowledge is useless. It is the application of that data which is power. In other words, wisdom is power because wisdom is actually doing what is right.

## ***Letting go***

I see many people spend too much time wanting to be right and they forget about doing what works. In most cases our EGO gets in the way and we just want to be right. I could make several attempts to scale a six foot high fence not realizing that opening the gate would be easier. I am so focused on climbing the fence and wanting to succeed that I did not realize there was a better way to get to the other side. Ask yourself, are you doing things that are just not working for you. If so, stop. I will spend some time later in this book on communications strategies and make you aware of some of the most common communications pitfalls.

## ***Yourself***

Because of our EGO, it is difficult for people to accept their flaws. In fact we are all FHBs – fallible human beings. We all have flaws, some small and others large. When we expect perfection, we set ourselves up for failure. Once we accept ourselves as we are, we create an atmosphere for change. These adjustments can make life better. What you resist persists. By refusing to accept the fact that you are bull headed will only make it difficult for you to change that negative trait?

## ***Now***

Social psychologists tell us that to be truly happy it is important to spend eighty five per cent of our time in “NOW”. This moment is eternal. It will always be here. Yes, it is important to plan ahead, to have goals and objectives. Many of us never plan because we are thinking about the things that have happened to us in the past or the decisions we made in the past. We also spend too much time worrying about the future. Red Skeleton once said, “You cannot stand around with your hands in your pockets. There are a thousand yesterdays, one today and maybe a tomorrow so live for today.” Trust yourself that if you do the things you need to do now, you will achieve your goals. Statements like “what if”, get you looking at what can go wrong. What if I fail? What if I am not smart enough? What if people think badly of me? These statements create an atmosphere of doubt. By changing the “what if” to “what now”, we learn to forget about the past, stop worrying about the future and become present. When we do this we begin to focus on what we need to do to make life better.

## ***Regrets***

If we always make the best decision available to us at any one time then we always make the best decision available to us. How then can we have any regrets? Many people look back to a particular time in their lives and wonder, “What if I had made a different decision back then, my life would have been so much better.” For example, several years ago you had two job offers, job A or job B. You chose job A but that choice did not work out for you. Today, you look back and wish you had chosen job B. You reflect on how your life would have been so much better if you had made a different decision. You have regrets. You think about how you made a big mistake. When we have two choices, we weigh the pros and cons of each option and based on that evaluation, we make a decision. That decision encompasses all the facts available to us. When we finally make that conclusion, we assume that it was the best choice available to us. Who would decide on the second best option? No one would do that. Maybe we have different information now. Possibly, that new option you are now thinking about was not available to you back then. This is why regrets

are so useless. They are based on information that you could not possibly have had while making the original decision. You may not get the result you want but that does not mean the decision was faulty. Learn from the result and figure out how you would think about the choice if faced with something similar in the future.

### ***Gratefulness and fun***

When you are grateful and appreciate your life with all its positive things like family, friends, possessions, and values, you get more of them. Remember that gatekeeper. It only lets in what you are looking for. When you complain about how bad it is, you get more of this negativity. Life is about the journey and not the destination. Have fun along the path of life and enjoy the ride.

Let me leave you with six promises to make to yourself. Use these promises as a yardstick to guide you through the rest of this book:

### ***Choose your words carefully***

This reminds me of the saying, “Sticks and stones will break my bones but names will never hurt me.” Words can hurt deeply. Steven Covey in his book, “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People,” refers to emotional maturity as the ability to balance your feelings with the feelings of others. When we negatively talk about others, judge people in a harmful light or apply labels like “stupid or idiot”, we do more harm than good. Ask yourself, “Is what I am about to say going to make life better for everyone involved?”

### ***Never make assumptions***

The biggest mental mistakes we make are jumping to conclusions, fortune telling and reading minds. When a negative thought enters your mind, ask yourself this question, “Is this a fact or am I just thinking it?” Most times we are just imagining it so stop thinking it. I hear many people say, “That is easier said than done.” Well, isn’t everything easier said than done. Phrases like that are an excuse. An excuse hinders you from stepping out of your comfort zone. It is a limiting belief. When someone cuts you off in traffic, what is the only thing that is a fact about that situation? The only truth is that you were cut off in traffic. Everything else is an assumption. Is it possible the driver is acting like some jerk? Absolutely. I recall hearing a local disc jockey on the radio complaining that she had seen a car weaving in and out of traffic. She said, “I saw this idiot weaving in and out of traffic, going absolutely crazy. If I had gotten the licence plate, I would have called the police?” How did she know he was an idiot? Here is a classic case of making an assumption. Could there be other possible reasons for this irregular driving? Maybe the driver was on the way to an accident because he received a call. There could be many reasons for this erratic driving. The only fact about this situation is that you were cut off. Everything else is an assumption.

Whenever someone cuts me off in traffic, I simply say to myself, “I don’t know why you are in such a hurry, but I hope that you get to where you are going and you don’t hurt yourself or anyone else in the process,” and I just let it go.

Life throws us enough curve balls. When you react to issues like these, you are taking on other people’s problems and you complicate your life.

### ***Always do your best***

Some days your best is going to be good enough and some days it is not. Here is how I approach life. When my best is good enough, I see how I can improve even more. When my best is not good enough, I see what I can learn from the situation. Some of the greatest lessons in life, I have learned from the most adversity I faced. I was able to reach through all the negativity and find something positive. By finding something good and holding on to that, I was able to find my way through some very difficult situations.

Your best will vary from day to day depending on how you feel. It is unrealistic to feel great one hundred per cent of the time just as it is impractical to feel bad one hundred per cent of the time. Aim for eighty five to ninety per cent. Bob Proctor once said, “I don’t have bad days, I just have bad moments.” He means that there are moments when he is not at his best but he does not let those moments stretch into hours or days or even longer. I will show you later how you can create great days most of the time with a simple exercise to keep you focused.

### ***Discover your purpose***

Why are you here? Why were you put on earth both personally and professionally? What is it about your job that is important? Someone is relying on you for your work. Take some time to understand how what you do affects others and you will find more meaning to your work.

Later in this book you are going to develop your mission statement and life plan. This declaration will help you discover your purpose. I had one gentleman state his purpose as, “I want to be the best husband, friend, father and neighbour I can.” That says it all. So many people let life pass them by without discovering their reason for being. My passion is magic and hypnosis. I enjoy being able to make people laugh, to take them to a magical land and let them enjoy the experience. My purpose, however, is helping people. It is there I get the most satisfaction.

### ***It’s not about you***

When we encounter people who lash out and say derogatory statements toward us, we have a tendency to become defensive and fight back. People who make these offensive comments are saying more about themselves than about you. The issues are theirs and can be put in one of two categories.

1. They have low self-esteem and would rather drag you down to their level than pull themselves up to yours; or
2. They feel intimidated and decide to go on the offensive by attacking someone.

Unfortunately, you just happen to be on the receiving end of their wrath. Remember no one can make you feel bad unless you give them permission to do so. Once you take responsibility for your own feelings, you can begin to control your thoughts especially when being verbally attacked.

Sometimes we can gain perspective by attempting to understand the other person and where those derogatory comments came from instead of reacting and becoming defensive.

Most of us landed in a pretty good place. Others were not so lucky. Some people do have it rough and everybody has a story. We did not ask to be born, did not choose our parents, our country or when we were born.

There is a difference between sympathy and empathy. When we have sympathy for the beggar on the street, we feel sorry for him. When we have empathy, we sit with him for a while and attempt to understand the difficulties he is encountering.

### ***Focus on yourself***

A Parable ..... Matthew 20: 1-16.

For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. And after agreeing with the workers for the standard wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When it was about nine o'clock in the morning, he went out again and saw others standing around in the market place without work. And he said to them, "You go into the vineyard too and I will give you whatever is right." So they went. When he went out again about noon and three o'clock that afternoon, he did the same thing. And about five o'clock that afternoon he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, "Why are you standing here all day without work?" They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You go and work in the vineyard too."

When it was evening, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, "Call the workers and give the pay starting with the last hired until the first." When those hired about five o'clock came, each received a full day's pay. And when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more. But each one also received the standard wage. When they received it, they began to complain against the landowner, saying, "These last fellows worked one hour, and you have made them equal to us who bore the hardship and burning heat of the day."

And the landowner replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am not treating you unfairly. Didn't you agree with me to work for the standard wage? Take what is yours and go. I want to give this last man the same as I gave to you. Am I not permitted to do what I want with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous? So the last will be first, and the first will be last.'

There are a number of teachings in this parable. Here is one of them. Focus on the one thing over which you have total control. YOU! Give yourself quality time and you reap tremendous benefits. Here is the problem. Some of us spend too much time worrying about other people. We are more concerned about our neighbours than ourselves. We wonder how they can afford extra vacations, expensive clothes for their children and luxury cars for themselves. When we spend our time thinking and comparing our lives with others, we don't have enough time to reflect and think about how we can make life better for ourselves. When we assess their situation, we usually ask ourselves the question why. This enquiry has us thinking as though we are victims; and when we think about life that way, we feel as though our life is out of control. Just remember there will always be people who are better and others who are worse than us. Focus on the one person over whom we have total control. Ourselves.

It is important to stop asking questions like, “Why is my life like this?” or “Why can’t I get ahead in life?.” When we start asking questions like, “How do I make my life better?” or “What have I learned from this situation?” we approach life differently. We become empowered; and with this new way of thinking, we reinvent ourselves and make our lives better.

## Chapter IV

### WINNING ATTITUDE

“A winner is big enough to admit his mistakes, smart enough to profit from them, and strong enough to correct them.” ~ JOHN MAXWELL

Attitude is a choice. It is something that we decide each day. What kind of attitude do you bring to life every day? Do you see the good in people and the good in the circumstances you find yourself facing? Do you allow situations to get you down or do you figure out what you can learn from them.

Have you ever worked for an intolerable controlling supervisor? You know, the kind of person who has to be right, sees the negative in everybody, watches your every move and always puts people down. I am sure most of us have dealt with a person like this.

I had a supervisor just like this. He was controlling and impossible to work for. He was told by his previous subordinates, on two occasions, that he was impossible to work for. He would temporarily change and then revert back to his old habits. Working with him was not a pleasant experience. He continued his controlling ways watching for people to make mistakes so he could pound his chest. I decided to talk to him to see if I could understand this person. He very bluntly said he did not trust me or anyone else and made it clear that I should do what I was told and there would be no problems. He was more interested in making people miserable than doing what worked. Now I had a number of choices:

- I could become depressed and hate going to work everyday.
- I could accept my situation and do whatever he asked of me.
- I could change my thought process.

There are underlying reasons for this type of bullying controlling behaviour. Not wanting to make assumptions, I decided that someone who wanted that much control needed to be pitied so I felt very sorry for him. I was thankful that I decided not to live my life that way and that helped me get through a terrible time.

I have another exercise for you. This exercise can help you determine your attitude. Read the descriptions below and on the next page. Note the ones you can identify with:

- I have a very low opinion of myself, even though others tell me how wonderful I am.
- I cannot say NO.
- I find it easy to start something and hard to finish it.
- I find that most people don't respect me.
- It is important for me to be liked by everyone.
- I think that I am not as good as others.
- I pressure myself to succeed.
- I always feel that I will make mistakes.
- I worry what others may think of me.
- I expect myself to be perfect all the time.

- I usually take on other people's problems.
- Success is for others.
- Everyone else is right and I am wrong.
- People never say something nice about me.
- I don't set goals because I know I will fail.

How many did you tick? Let's see how to remove them. A winning attitude means understanding the other person's point of view. I would rather talk to someone who has a different opinion than mine because maybe I can learn from them. I want you to take a look at the picture below and tell me what you see. Sometimes we tend to argue about the same point of view.



So do you see an old lady or a young lady? In fact you see both. This is a good example of people looking at the same picture seeing two different images and both being right. Just because someone has a different opinion than you does not mean that you are right and they are wrong. It just means that your opinions are different. The parable below illustrates my point.

An elderly peasant in China had two large pots, each hung at the ends of a pole which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a crack in it while the other was perfect. At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house, the cracked pot arrived half full, while the intact pot delivered its full volume of water. For two years this went on daily; the bearer delivering only one and a half pots of water to his house. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of achieving its full potential, but the poor cracked pot was ashamed of its imperfection and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do. After two years of abject failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself because this crack in my side causes me to leak all the way back to your house." The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there are flowers on your side of the path but not on the other pot's side? That's because I have always known about your flaw so I planted flower seeds beside your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you water them." "For two years I have been able to pick those beautiful flowers to decorate the table. Without you, just the way you are, there would not be this beauty to grace the house."



Each of us has his own peculiar flaws, but it's our cracks and flaws that make our lives together so interesting and rewarding. We've just got to take each person for what they are and look for the good in each of them.

So, to all my CRACKPOT friends--you know who you are--have a great day and remember ... enjoy the flowers.

So **Value the Differences** in people. That is what makes this world such a wonderful place.

God gave us two ears, two eyes and only one mouth. I believe he wanted us to use them in proportion. Many of us tend to do the opposite. Most people listen to respond, instead of listening to understand. How often do I find people just waiting to extol their experiences instead of truly listening to what the other person has to say? In most cases we are not the least bit interested in what others have to say, we are only interested in what we have to say. How can you learn if you do not listen? I believe we can learn from every instance that happens to us and from every person we make contact with if we use our eyes and ears more than our mouths.

Here are a number of suggestions that will help you develop a positive winning attitude:

### **Show Forgiveness**

Isn't it amazing how anger, hatred and revenge can eat you up from the inside out. If you want to be a winner, you must learn the power of forgiveness. One of the greatest gifts you can give yourself is this ability, the ability to forgive and to let go. You may recall the auto accident involving Dan Heatley and Dan Snyder, two hockey players. Dan Heatley was charged with vehicular homicide after Dan Snyder died as a result of injuries while a passenger in Dan Heatley's car. Dan Snyder's father forgave Dan Heatley, not only because it was the right thing to do, but because it was the empowering thing to do. Forgiveness is all about you. It is never about the other person. Anger keeps you focused on the past. When you walk around with anger and hatred in your heart, there is no room for love or forgiveness. When you forgive someone, forgive them with love and allow peace to enter your mind. Anger eats you up from the inside out so who is the anger really hurting. So decide who is the better person; the one who offers an apology or the one who rejects it.

### **Be NON Judgemental**

I was in the only checkout line at a local store. The line-up was getting long so an additional cash was opened. The cashier gestured to the next person in line, who was just ahead of me, to move to her cash but the person behind me jumped ahead. First impressions may tell us that he was ignorant. This is one explanation. Maybe he was unaware of his actions. Possibly he was in a rush. There are many possible reasons for certain behaviour. It is easy to judge yet we have no right to be judgemental. No one is perfect. Judging comes in all forms:

- Being critical of what someone is wearing, saying or doing.
- Frowning on someone less fortunate than you.
- Feeling money makes you better.

It may be our justification to prove we are better than others. When we judge, it usually says nothing about the person being judged and everything about the person who is judging. When we judge there are two things usually present about the person judging:

1. Low Self-esteem – They would rather drag someone down to our level than rise above.
2. Intimidation – The person feels intimidated so decides to lash out and find fault with someone.

### **Keep Commitments**

One of our most common faults is breaking promises. It is astonishing that 90% of the world's problems result from people failing to keep their commitments. From people in authority, campaign promises, family members to friends, every missed goal or uncompleted task can be traced back to someone not keeping their end of the bargain.

We make commitments every day. Some seem small and unimportant. These range from a time to meet, a promise to run an errand, to an assurance to follow-up or a guarantee that you will be at your son's or daughter's soccer game. It is important to realize that all commitments are important. It is our way of building and maintaining trust. Our reputation is built upon our ability to make and keep these commitments. Life simply works better when we make and diligently keep them.

According to Dorothy M. Neddermeyer, PhD, there are five key factors in making and keeping commitments.

1. All Commitments Are Important: When you agree to do something, do it as agreed. When you agree to meet someone, be there on time. When you fail to keep a commitment, you fail yourself first and the other person second.
2. Be Careful What You Agree To: Many people find it easier to say yes instead of no. It is far better to agree to what you can do rather than saying yes to please someone at the moment and later fail your commitment because of being over-committed or because you have difficulty saying no.
3. Manage Your Commitments: Keep a log of your commitments and write them down. You may have great intentions, but if you forget to do what you agreed to do, the result is the same as your 'choosing' not to keep your commitment.
4. Renegotiate When You Are Unable to Keep Your Commitment: When you discover you are unable or unwilling to complete an agreement, go to the other party/parties and renegotiate.
5. Manage By Agreement: Instead of telling someone to do something, ask if they would agree to doing it and by when. You have a greater chance it will get done if you ask rather than tell.

By paying careful attention to the commitments you make, tracking them and developing the habit of keeping all your commitments you will be known as a person of integrity. Your life and the world around you work in direct proportion to the quality of your commitments.

I believe it is about integrity and doing our best. It can take years to build trust and only a few seconds to destroy it.

### **Have Good Intentions**

When you do a favour for someone, what is your intention? There are two reasons for intended action:

1. We do favours because we can and we want to. We do not think of what we can get in return.
2. We do favours because our motive is getting something in return. It is self-serving or selfish.

What are your intentions? Do you think more about what you will gain? When we are unselfish, life gives us back more than what we give.

### **Be Understanding**

Stephen Covey says "Seek to understand before being understood." I say listen to understand instead of listening to respond. Simon and Garfunkle wrote a song entitled, "The Sounds of Silence." There are two phrases in this song that speak volumes about human nature. "People talking without speaking." Some people just want to hear themselves speak and many times say nothing. "People hearing without listening." Some people's definition of listening is what they are doing while they are waiting to talk. They hear but don't listen. So the next time someone talks about the terrible night they had last night, stop yourself from saying, "Really, you should hear about the night I had," and truly listen. You would be amazed at how much you can learn if you just stop and listen. You learn nothing by talking and a great deal by looking and listening.

### **Show Compassion**

James Lane Allen once said, "Adversity does not build character, it reveals it."

All of us "can" go that extra mile and do something special for people dealing with hardship but there are only the select ones that actually want to.

There will be times in all our lives when we are going to face some kind of adversity. It is inevitable because no one is exempt. It can happen anytime, to us and to our friends and family. When we see those in our lives face adversity, some of us rise to the occasion while others just flounder. Some of us do the maximum while others do the bare minimum. There are also some who do nothing.

During the writing of this book my father passed away. Our family was so grateful to those who made an effort to be with us during this sad time. I will always remember our friends and neighbours who showed us they care through phone calls, hospital visits, meal preparation and extended funeral home visits. Many made time to attend Dad's funeral. They did not have to be there, they wanted to. This kindness showed me and my family the true meaning of friendship and I made a promise to always be there for those who go through the same suffering. So when life presents you with an opportunity, rise to the occasion and do something special for someone who is dealing with turmoil. It will be the best gift they could ever receive.

## **Have Tolerance**

Some of us have it while others don't. Those who are tolerant, show compassion and can empathize with those less fortunate than themselves. Those who are not, are very narrow-minded people who view the world only from their perspective. Anything or anybody that does not fit their model is ignored or discarded.

Most of us were lucky. We managed to be born into a stable home environment with loving, caring parents who nurtured us. We received the proper attention and grew up well adjusted. Unfortunately, there are others not so lucky. They face hardship and suffering most of their lives. They deal with situations and circumstances that can give them a pessimistic view of life. Everyone has a story, so be kind to negative people because they have a lot going on in their lives.

## **Eliminate Guilt**

There is no universal law that states you have to feel guilty. How long do you have to feel that guilt? Would it be days, weeks, months or even years? Does it accomplish anything? Guilt has you focused on the problem. When you centre your attention on the guilt it causes more problems and becomes a vicious circle.

Have you ever felt guilty over something you have done? Perhaps you were ashamed of your behaviour. It may be a careless word or an un-thoughtful action. You have difficulty getting past this transgression, feel ashamed and find it hard to forgive yourself. Well, do just that. Give yourself permission for self-forgiveness. What is done is done. Turn it into something positive. Learn from your mistake, grow as a person and move on. We will always become better when we turn a positive thought into action. It all begins with a thought but nothing gets accomplished until we decide to do something.

## Chapter V

### RATIONAL LIVING

“Recognizing a problem or weakness is the first step in remedying it.” ~ DONALD LAIRD

**Cognitive behavioral therapists** say that it is not what happens to us but the belief in what happens to us that creates the problem. It is called the ABC of emotional freedom with:

A=the ACTION or event that happens, B= the BELIEF or our perception of the event and C= the CONSEQUENCE. Change the B or belief and you change the outcome. My goal is to help you understand the reasons behind these emotions so that you can deal effectively with them. You cannot dispute a feeling or an emotion but you can question the thought or the logic behind it.

Psychologists tell us that eighty five per cent of stress is emotions based. The four emotions contributing to this stress are fear, anger, resentment and guilt. Saying, “What if,” is the cause of many problems. What if I fail, what if people think badly of me or what if I am not intelligent enough for this task. Just imagine being able to eliminate these fears. Our stress level would decrease and we would have a better quality of life. My goal is to help you understand the reasons behind these emotions so that you can deal effectively with them.

You cannot dispute a feeling or an emotion but you can question the thought or the logic behind it. You cannot feel something unless you have a thought first. Your feelings and emotions follow. I cannot tell you to be happy, that is a feeling. You have to do something to create the feeling of happiness. I cannot tell you to laugh, I must tell you a joke that you consider funny. Maybe then you will laugh. When you master your thoughts, you master your feelings.

The problem with feelings is we do one of three things:

1. We suppress them and become resentful or angry.
2. We express them which turns to guilt.
3. We escape by turning to drugs and alcohol.

Look at the following graphs and see how the belief causes the problem.

#### IRRATIONAL

A – Action	Lose temper with my kids.
B- Belief	I should never get angry with my kids so I must be a terrible mother.
C- Consequence	<b>GUILT or</b> Self-Downing = Self-Criticism

#### RATIONAL

A – Action	Lose temper with my kids.
B- Belief	Wish I didn't but I am a good mom and I do a lot
C- Consequence	<b>DISAPPOINTMENT</b> - Self Acceptance

## Here are some examples of distorted and irrational thinking

TARGET EMOTION	Anxiety
FEELING BASED THINKING	Going out in public makes me nervous Don't enjoy shopping anymore Hate bumping into people
FEELING BASED BEHAVIOUR	Stay home, watch TV, take nap
EFFECT	Feel lonely and isolated. Give myself a hard time Feel something wrong with me – more anxious

ACTIVATING EVENT	Failing an important test
BELIEF	I'm a total idiot for failing. I should not have failed
CONSEQUENCE	I'm a loser and won't retake it.

Thoughts and Beliefs affect how you feel, Feelings affect how you behave, Behaviour affects how you feel. The question to ask yourself is this. Is my BELIEF

ACCURATE, FAIR and BALANCED or INACCURATE, BIASED and RIGID.

This chapter looks at the most common mental mistakes that cause stress and provides strategies to reduce that stress considerably.

As a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist, my job is to point out a logical approach to life and to help people remove most of the emotion from a situation. I would like to introduce you to the most common mental mistakes and later in the chapter provide you with a number of strategies to help you get beyond these problems.

### Below are the most common irrational thoughts and distorted thinking.

#### **All or Nothing Thinking** - Either really good or really bad

This type of thinking is perfectionism. When we are precise, everything has to be just as we envision. Any slight deviance is translated into failure and we eventually give up. For example, you are doing great with a new lifestyle and eating properly. While attending a party you eat one chocolate and then decide to eat the whole box because you faltered. You associate one small setback with failure and focus on that one setback instead of looking at all the positive things you have done.

What Happened – I answered 1 question in an interview badly

Result - You think you won't get the job – ASK YOURSELF AM I

1. Focusing on one aspect of interview
2. Giving one aspect more importance

#### **Emotional Reasoning**

Your mood influences your thoughts. Your resultant feelings are proof that your thoughts are accurate. Here are some examples:

1. I am afraid of flying so it must be dangerous.

2. I woke up anxious so there must be something to worry about.

ASK

1. How are my feelings leading me to distort the facts
2. What facts am I ignoring due to my feelings?
3. If I let my feelings subside I will draw a more accurate conclusion

### **Upset at the Idea and Not the Facts**

This happens when we are upset at some idea that a physical characteristic will limit our happiness. Saying, “I am overweight and won’t get a partner,” or “I am bald and no one will find me attractive,” are a few examples that place limitations on ourselves. Ask yourself, “Is this really denying me anything,” or “Is it just the thought.” There are many overweight, bald people in very happy and healthy relationships.

ASK

1. Have others with my issue succeeded?
2. What are my strengths?

### **Catastrophizing**

This occurs when we exaggerate the importance of an event. As an example, some people may feel that getting thirty millimetres of rain tomorrow is going to be terrible. Terrible for whom? There are farmers who would welcome rain. When we create terrible images in our minds, we tend to exaggerate and say things like, “This is the worst thing that could happen to me,” or “There is nothing worse.” You then act as though what has happened is the most horrible thing that could happen. By thinking this way, we formulate a picture in our right brain of a catastrophe and act as such. Avoid these exaggerated statements. Instead use phrases like, “It is unfortunate for me at this time.”

ASK

1. What evidence supports my claim?
2. What evidence disproves my claim?
3. Can I adopt a more accurate perspective?
4. What are some better conclusions I can make?
5. What practical steps can I make to deal with this?

### **Minimization**

Thinking that everything will work out has a tendency for us to overlook problems.

ASK

1. Will this matter tomorrow?
2. What happens if I do nothing?

### **Magnification**

This happens when you exaggerate the importance of a personal characteristic. When you say, “My weight will stop me from getting that job,” or “My height will prevent me from being successful.” Now being 4’ 9” will probably prevent you from being a professional basketball player but would not prevent you from being successful at something else. Therefore it is important to put slight imperfections in perspective.

ASK

1. Has anyone done this before?
2. What do I need to do to make this happen?
3. Do I need help?

### **Personalization and Blame**

When you continually focus on yourself as the cause of any problem, you personalize the issue. In other words, you are always at fault and may feel guilty. When you continually look at others as the cause of the problem, you blame them and become angry. Rarely is one person at fault all the time. It is much better to focus on how to make the situation better. So instead of blaming someone, you look to make things better or you seek to find a solution. You develop a positive attitude toward adversity.

ASK

1. What/Who else has contributed to the outcome?
2. Am I taking personal responsibility for what is out of my control?
3. Are there other reasons?
4. Is anyone else affected?

### **Mental Filtering**

You only see the aspects of somebody or something that you agree with. It fits into what you believe or want to believe.

ASK:

1. Am I seeing the total picture?
2. Can other opinions be accurate?

### **Discounting the Positive**

This type of thinking allows your judgement to be clouded by your self-perception. For example, if you get an A in a test, you believe you were lucky, the test was just too easy or the teacher really likes you and marked your test leniently. You never give yourself any credit for achievement. You fit your results with the limiting beliefs you have formed and you refuse to accept anything positive.

ASK Yourself

1. what did I do to deserve the A
2. what evidence is there the teacher favors me

### **Projection**

We believe if we have a belief then everyone has the same belief. If I think I am unattractive then everyone will.

ASK

- How do I know that?

### **Irrational Meanings**

We have a distorted view of an idea and think our meaning is the only right one. "If my husband does not spend every moment with me, there is something wrong."

ASK

- Is my thinking flawed?



## **Overgeneralization**

This happens when you exaggerate the occurrence of an event. Using words like always and never are rarely correct and can cause issues when used frequently. Making statements like, "You are always late," implies the perception that the person does not have the capability of being on time. Saying, "I can never do anything right," implies that you do not have the capability to do anything right.

ASK

1. What is the specific thing I am basing my judgement on
2. Am I making A total judgement based on one incident?
3. What other aspects am I ignoring?
4. Can I suspend total judgement and judge this incident?
5. How can I benefit by being more specific?

## **Extremes**

Thinking in terms of NEVER, ALWAYS, NO ONE

ASK:

1. Does this always happen?
2. Have there been other times when it did happen?

## **Nonsense Arguments**

Statements like, "If only I had made a different decision five years ago," or "If only my parents had worked harder," hinder you from achieving your true potential. These are regret statements and cause you to live in the past. They get you absolutely nowhere because you are focused on something you cannot change. You become a victim of circumstances and you get stuck. It is more empowering to look at what you can change and move forward with strategies that can help make your life better. Remember, you can't shovel last year's snow and you can't get stuck in it either.

ASK

1. How have the facts changed?
2. What new evidence do I have?

## **Magical Worry**

Thinking never changes anything, action does. Mark Twain said, "I have been through some terrible things in my life, some of which actually happened." We evoke anxiety by thinking about events that may never happen. In some cases, we can influence this event simply by focusing on it and we bring it into our lives. Worrying about catching H1N1 won't prevent you from getting the virus and may in fact influence you actually getting it. Ask yourself if this is a thought or a fact. Because it has not happened yet, it is only a thought so stop thinking. If you are worried about a possible event happening, be concerned and do something about it.

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change

The courage to change the things I can and

The wisdom to know the difference

ASK

1. What is the likelihood of this happening?
2. Has it happened before?
3. What proof do you have?

### **Hard Work = Just Reward**

We think that our hard work automatically gets us a reward. We think in terms of result instead of effort.

ASK

1. Am I pleased with what I have done?
2. Does this reward build my EGO?
3. What have I learned from this?

### **Confusing Inability with Unwillingness**

Saying, “I can’t apply for the job; what if I don’t get it,” gets you absolutely nowhere. In many cases, it is the fear of stepping outside of your comfort zone because of a fear of failure. You are anxious. You never grow with this type of thinking because you are in protection mode. Remember, there is no failure if you can learn from the situation. Within the realm of individual physical possibility, anything is achievable.

ASK

1. Do I have the ability to do this?
2. If I absolutely had to would I?
3. What is really stopping me?
4. What happens if I did?

### **Cannot Change**

We think that because we are a certain way for a long time, we are stuck.

ASK

- How can I make this better?
- What belief about myself is making me stuck?

### **Horizon Trap**

We focus so much on the end result we forget to look behind and see how far we have come.

ASK

- What have I learned so far?
- How much better am I from when I started?

### **Confusing Needs with Wants**

According to Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, the only things we truly must have are food, water and shelter. Everything else is a want. When we tell ourselves we need something, it causes anxiety and panic. We become stressed because of this perceived need. I remember speaking to a client of mine who said that her job meant everything to her. When she lost that job she said she lost everything. She confused needing the job with wanting the job and once that job was lost, in her mind, everything was lost.

ASK

1. Do I really need this?
2. How important is this?
3. How much will my life change?

A rational statement: To get an “A,” I need to study 3 hours a night for the next month.

An irrational statement: To be happy, I need to have one million dollars in the bank.

### **Depending On vs Relying On**

We tend to confuse getting someone to do something you cannot do as opposed to trusting someone to do something you can do yourself. Just because you haven’t, does not mean you can’t.

ASK:

1. Can I do this myself?
2. What will happen to me if this does not happen?

### **Making demands**

This happens when you insist on my rules for me and my rules for you. You make demands and want everyone to think and act as you expect. You want everyone to have your beliefs, attitude, standards and ideals and get upset when they do not.

ASK

1. Am I using must and have to?
2. Am I accepting that others have their rules?
3. Is it okay to accept other people’s standards?
4. Is my demand realistic?
5. Is my demand helping me?

### **Unrealistic Expectations**

We think life is always fair and we expect everything to be as we want it to be. We get upset when our normal is altered.

ASK

- Do I expect everyone to think like I do?
- Aren’t people entitled to their views?

### **Shoulding**

This word means you expect everything to work out exactly as you want it to. When we say, “I should have known better” means you are scolding yourself. Life will never always work out the way we want it. We tend to be a bit harsh on ourselves (guilt) and others (resentment). WE tend to say you have to or you must do this.

ASK:

1. Does it have to be this way?
2. How did I get this belief?

### **Confusing Possibility with Probability**

There are many fears; fear of flying, fear of elevators and a fear of high bridges to name just a few. Some people have a fear of flying. These people are confusing possibility with probability. It is possible that the plane will crash, but not probable.

ASK

1. What is the likelihood of this happening?
2. Has this happened to you before?
3. Do you know anyone who had this happen to them?

### **Confusing Choosing To with Having To**

When you tell yourself, “I have to do this,” there is an implication of force and no one likes to be forced to do anything. When you feel as though you have to go to work, this causes subconscious pushback. It makes working life more difficult because there appears to be no choice available. A better approach to life is to think in terms of possibility or option. This opens up a whole new way of processing information. By saying, “I choose to go to work because I want a certain lifestyle, I want to give my children nice things or I want to live in this nice neighbourhood,” you think about work differently and it is no longer a major chore.

ASK

1. What are the benefits of doing this?
2. What is my motivation for doing this?
3. How will this make my life better?

### **Labelling**

When we label someone we act as though they are the label. There are no stupid people only human beings who do stupid things or no alcoholics or drug addicts only human beings who have trouble with alcohol and drugs.

ASK

- Who really is this person?
- What are their good qualities?
- They certainly were not born this way?

### **Confusing Hopelessness with Helplessness**

Being hopeless means you have given up. You think that because you have not found an answer, then one does not exist. You feel that there is no solution to your problem. When we change the thought from hopeless to helpless, we now feel as though an answer exists and we just have not found it yet. When you think this way, you continue to look for solutions because you realize that there is a remedy to every problem.

ASK

1. What are my options?
2. Where can I look for answers?

### **Making Assumptions**

Include in this category, mind-reading (what someone is thinking), jumping to conclusions (won't get the promotion) and fortune telling (my friend will be upset if I). This is the biggest mental mistake most people make. Stick to the facts and ask yourself, “Am I thinking this or is it a fact?” The only fact about someone cutting you off in traffic is that he cut you off in traffic. Everything else is an assumption.

ASK

1. How do I test my assumption?
2. What can I gain by taking action? (Applying for that job)
3. What past events are causing this?
4. How can I adjust to a poor outcome?

## **NEGATIVE AUTOMATIC THOUGHT**

**Take a look at the following negative thought and see how destructive it is.**

<b>What was the trigger</b>	Tripped in the door, people noticed
<b>What the negative automatic thoughts?</b>	Everyone saw and will laugh I am so clumsy The whole night is ruined
<b>What were the emotions</b>	Self-conscious and anxious

- Unhealthy thinking leads to unhealthy emotions like depression, guilt or anger.
- Rigid thinking leaves no room for human error
  - I must not fail this exam & if you do = DEPRESSION
  - I don't want to fail but there is a possibility & if you do = DISAPPOINTED
- **DOES MY THOUGHT LEAVE ROOM FOR ERROR?**
- **DOES MY THOUGHT REFLECT REALITY OR WHAT COULD HAPPEN?**
- **DOES MY THOUGHT ACCURATELY REFLECT THE SITUATION?**

**Here yourself the following questions:**

1. What is my negative thought?
2. Can I prove it is true?
3. Is my thought extreme/rigid or balanced/flexible?
4. How will I feel and act if I continue to think this way?
5. Would I encourage a friend to think this way?
6. What evidence can I find against my thought?
7. How could I change my thought to feel better?
8. How would thinking in a more flexible way help me?
9. What is my healthy new thought

**PRINT THIS PAGE**

**FEELINGS & BEHAVIOR**

**Think of the situation that caused you anxiety and stress.**

**I have given you an example to help. Complete the 3 columns by writing between the dark lines. Once you do that ask yourself the 3 rational questions listed below under the BELIEF column and circle YES or NO to each.**

AWARENESS	BELIEF	CONSEQUENCE
What Happened? What was going on? What were you aware of?	What went through my mind? What you thought about it.	How I felt, what I did? Your reaction.
A co-worker ignored me in the corridor.	What did I do or say to them to treat me that way?	Felt terrible, self-conscious and guilty. Went home depressed.
	<b>Rational Questions.</b>  1) Is my thinking based on fact?  2) Does my thinking help me achieve my goals?  3) Does my thinking help me feel the way I want to feel?	Circle YES or NO  YES                      NO  YES                      NO  YES                      NO  * Must answer YES to all 3 to keep your thought * Any No responses = replace with new thought

## PRINT THIS PAGE

### New Feelings and Behaviour

Think of the situation where you were upset. Complete the table below with a new thought and outcome. List as many situations as you can think of that cause you stress and anxiety.

A	B	C
AWARENESS What is the Situation	New Thoughts to Practice I'll think This	As a Result of My New Thinking I'll Feel & Do This
1)		
2)		
3)		
4)		
5)		

#### NOTES:

1. Practice imagining yourself in the **A** section. (Visualize once a day for a month)
2. Thinking the **B** section and
3. Reacting like the **C** section and act **AS IF** you believe the new thoughts.

Read OUT LOUD the thoughts in B section every day for one month

There are a number of rational things you can focus on, to prevent this chronic process from happening.

**Here are ten ways to untwist your thinking.**

Let's say someone makes a derogatory comment about your performance. "You never do anything right; you are such an idiot." Most people with a chronic way of thinking will say to themselves something like this: "I never do anything right. I am such a fool. I should know better." Let's examine this response and use the following ways to untwist this irrational thinking.

**1. Identify the distortions**

What words are irrational in your thinking? Words like "Never" and "Fool" are distortions. A healthy way to look at the negative comment would be to say something like, "That was an odd comment. I wonder was it something I said or was it something from their past that caused this comment." Too many times we assign the problem to ourselves when in fact it may be someone else's issue.

**2. Examine the evidence**

Look for the Logic – Emotional reasoning

"What is the evidence for this thought? Is this true? Did I contribute to this problem? What do I do right? What are my shortcomings?" How can I fix this?

**3. The double-standard method**

Sometimes we are too critical of ourselves. We want to be better so we set higher standards. Ask yourself, "Would I say this to a close friend?" Have the same standards for everyone, including yourself.

**4. The experimental technique**

Test your negative thoughts to see if they are true. Do something and see how well you did it. Think of something positive you accomplished and focus on your strengths.

**5. Thinking in shades of grey**

Learn to modify all-or-nothing thinking. Think of the self criticism in terms of 0-100 and where you feel you stand.

**6. The survey method**

What would other people think about the criticism? Ask a close friend or someone you trust and respect about the negative comment. Many times getting a different perspective on ourselves can provide great clarification and can be quite uplifting.

**7. Define terms**

Define a fool. A fool is someone who does something foolish. Everyone does at some point in their lives. A fool does something foolish more than normal. What is normal? There are degrees of everything and most of us fall into the majority.



### **8. The semantic method.**

Many times the language we use can be crippling to our ego. Change your self-talk into something less harsh. Replace “I should” with “It would be nice to.” Should statements are self defeating. They leave an impression that you are scolding yourself.

### **9. Re-attribution.**

Assess the cause of the problem. What other factors were involved? Maybe you did contribute to the issue. Instead of causing more concerns, accept your part, learn and move on.

### **10. Cost Benefit Analysis**

Identify the pros and cons of your thinking. Ask yourself these questions, “How will it help me to believe this negative thought,” and “How will it hurt me.” This will help you evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of your negative feelings and limiting beliefs. If the cons outweigh the pros, change your thinking into something that benefits you.

## Chapter VI

### ELIMINATING PROBLEMS

“It’s not where you start but how you finish.” ~ ZIG ZIGLAR

I am sure we can all agree that having as few problems as possible is good. I have never met anyone who wanted more problems, yet we do things that create more trouble in our lives. There are problems that just happen and there are others that we create. As I said, life is ten per cent what happens to you and ninety per cent how you deal with it.

Many times problems are caused by our ego or our need to be right. When we accept the reality that we can be wrong, we acknowledge the fact that we are capable of learning something new. When we allow our ego to get in the way, we enter into protection mode and become defensive. When we are self-protective and constantly on guard, we cannot grow and learn.

I wake up each day looking forward to what I will learn from the people I meet and the situations I face. I appreciate other points of view.

The first problem we create is having the mindset, ***my rules for me, and my rules for you.*** This causes issues because each person’s opinions and beliefs are just as valid as others. The healthy way to approach life is to have the mindset, my rules for me, and your rules for you, so let’s see how we can work together as a team in order that we both can benefit from this relationship.

So let’s talk about problems and how they can be reduced.

There can be three kinds of problems:

1. Firstly, there is the practical problem. That is the problem that stops you from getting somewhere or hinders you from getting what you want. For instance, being stuck in traffic or getting a flat tire.

2. Some of us add a second problem to this practical problem by getting angry. Now we have an emotional problem. Have you ever seen some people get out of their car and take their frustration out on the flat tire. They kick the tire because it is flat. Maybe there are one hundred thousand kilometres on the tire. Possibly, the tires were not rotated.

Social psychologists tell us that one minute of anger suppresses the immune system for six hours. Anger changes the brain chemistry so you are more inclined to do something unintelligent when you are angry. Social psychologists also tell us that venting is the worst thing you can do because you are not thinking clearly.

3. Then, of course, we can add a third problem which is the imaginary problem. My boss is going to be upset, I may get fired and on and on you go.

Now you can over react to what life throws your way. It is your choice to do whatever you want to. I would merely point out the problems that this behaviour can cause.

Stoic philosophy states that the world does not care if you have a flat tire and no amount of anger will change that. You can vent but you will still have that flat tire.

There are four stages of problem solving. Let's say for example, you are leaving the mall and you check in your purse or pocket and you cannot find your car keys. You go through the following process:

**1) DENIAL** – You think to yourself, “Please don’t tell me I locked my keys in the car.” You look inside your car and see the keys dangling from the ignition and you say “I can’t believe I locked my keys in the car.” - The next step is:

**2) FRUSTRATION** – *You have a few choice words, and finally,*

**3) BARGAINING** – Then you say, “Please, let one of the doors be open. I promise if it is open, I will be more careful.” You check each door and they are all locked. - Then comes:

**4) ANGER** – Who knows what happens. It depends on the individual. There are three essentials to a positive life.

- **Enthusiasm** – about your direction.
- **Enjoyment** – about your activities

Now I know you cannot be enthusiastic about getting a flat tire or enjoy the activity of changing the flat tire, but you can:

- **Acceptance** – Once you accept the fact your keys are locked in, you find a way to fix the problem. It would save a lot of time and effort if you just went to acceptance right away. Acceptance removes two problems and allows you to think clearly so you can efficiently and quickly fix the problem.

Most people think that if they are not happy, they must be sad. Their thinking looks like this, “I am not happy about this flat tire, so I must be sad.” These people think two dimensional. Things are either black or white. There is a third emotion available to us and that emotion is calm. The opposite of happy is not sad, it is calm. When you are calm while facing life’s issues, you remove two problems and are able to deal with the circumstances in a logical and efficient manner.

Another way to remove problems is to understand that life will sometimes be unfair. You will continually be faced with situations in which you have very little control over its onset. Unfortunate things happen to people everyday, to people like you and me. The hospitals are full of these people. Life can change in an instant. Look at Christopher Reeve, a man in the prime of his life, cut down by a single fall from a horse. This is why I never take chances. I am always aware of how precious life is and how easily it can be taken away.

Just as life can be unfair, it is also important to understand that there are no quick fixes to any problem. Most people want to believe that there are but life does not work that way. We have to work for everything we want. Anything worthwhile in life takes hard work. Although marketing executives and advertising companies would like us

to think otherwise, there is no other way. They are continually dreaming up quick fixes like: you can get rich quick schemes or you can have that flat stomach in just 30 seconds a day. You have to pay your dues and you have to put in the work to get your reward. Once we accept the unfairness of life, we can start to acknowledge life's challenges and look at them as opportunities that will help us learn and grow into someone better.

In order to learn, it is important to look inward. Most people look outward and blame the world for the situation in which they find themselves. This leads to a feeling of being powerless. Instead of looking outward, look inside. It is not the situation that causes the problem but our reaction to this situation. As I said before, our thinking controls our behaviour. Control your thinking and you control your behaviour. All of our answers are inside. We just need the courage to go there and find them.

Another way to deal with life's challenges is laughter. One of the most powerful medicines for life's troubles is amusement. Every chance I get I inject humour into a situation. I remember a friend of mine asking for advice on house insurance. He was denied insurance because his house was not up to the electrical code. They eventually had the electrical upgraded but still had trouble getting insurance. Apparently, if you let your house insurance expire, insurance companies can refuse to renew your insurance policy. At the time of this discussion, they had not had insurance for three months and could lose everything in the event of a fire. I was reading a book by Hal Urban called "Life's Greatest Lessons" I looked at them both, pointed to the book and said, "I am going to add another lesson, never let your house insurance expire." He found it funny. I am not suggesting that you laugh at every situation. Life is not one big joke, but I believe it is important to take time out to have fun. Richard Carlson wrote a book called, "Don't Sweat the Small Stuff." In many cases things that happen are small. Ask yourself, "Will this matter in two weeks."

Some people create problems because they don't learn. I remember a friend of mine telling me about someone who had received three speeding tickets in one week. He thought that was unlucky and it reminded me of a wise saying. If you are still doing what you have always been doing, you're gonna get what you already got. Some people just never learn from life's situations and continue to make the same mistakes over and over again. They blame the world for the circumstances they created for themselves.

Here is a great story that explains this quote:

There were three men working together on a high rise building. Every Friday they would eat lunch together. The first Friday, Bob would open his sandwich, notice it was ham and say, 'I hate ham sandwiches. I wish my wife would not make me ham sandwiches.' Then Jim would open his sandwich, realize it was tuna and say, "I hate tuna sandwiches. I wish my wife would stop making them." Then Fred would open his sandwich and notice it was bologna. Fred would say, "I hate bologna sandwiches."

This would happen every Friday. One particular Friday, there was a change in what the men did. Bob, when noticing his ham sandwich, did not eat it but threw it in the garbage. Jim upon opening his sandwich did the same. Fred, however, reached into his lunch bag, picked up the sandwich and instead of opening it, just threw it into

the garbage can. Both Jim and Bob looked at poor Fred and said together, “Why did you do that, it may not have been bologna”. Fred politely said “Sure I knew it was bologna, I make my own sandwiches.”

How many of us make bologna sandwiches every day of our lives? We make the same incorrect decisions everyday and then wonder why life has not gotten any better. We do the same things day in and day out and expect different results. Problems are created with a certain mindset. Solutions are developed using a different mindset. You cannot expect to get a different result if you keep doing the same things day after day after day. What has to happen is a change of thinking.

So challenge yourself everyday. Do something that moves you closer to your goals and you will find that life can be very rewarding with fewer problems than before.

## Chapter VII

### EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS

“You can’t talk yourself out of a problem you behaved yourself into.” ~ STEPHEN COVEY

When my daughter, Megan, finished high school, I asked her if she would like to go to her favourite restaurant. I had a plan. We went to a Mexican restaurant and had a wonderful meal. After the meal, I took out two pages of note I had written about things like relationships, finances, friendship, love and values. I asked her to take it and to read it carefully because it was that advice that helped me get where I am today. Five years later after graduating university with a Commerce Degree, Megan mentioned our dinner and the advice I had given her. She said that one thing in those notes drove her to be successful and it was when I stated, “If you think getting an education is hard, try living without one.”

By setting the stage properly and beginning the process from a helpful rather than from a forceful point of view, I was able to capture my daughter’s attention.

This chapter is about becoming an excellent communicator and setting the stage for success.

Before we get into this topic, I have a comprehension test. Please answer the following 10 questions and then check the answers on the next page. Only turn the page when you have answered all ten questions. I give this test at all my workshops. The average is fifty per cent correct. Let’s see how well you do.

- 1) Tom’s mother had three children. Two were named April and May. What was the name of her other child? \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) A) If you are in a race and overtake the runner in second place, what position are you in? \_\_\_\_\_ . B) If you overtake the runner in last place, what position are you in? \_\_\_\_\_  
½ point for each answer.
- 3) A boat is at anchor. Over the side hangs a rope ladder with rungs a foot apart and the bottom rung resting on the water. The tide rises at a rate of twelve inches per hour. At the end of six hours, how many rungs of the rope ladder will be touching or under the water? \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) A town is under a blackout. Not a street light on for hours. No moon or stars are out. A black Buick with two broken head lights drives down Main Street. A black dog with its eyes closed runs in front of the car, yet the driver sees the dog – HOW? \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) A man has two Canadian coins totaling 30 Canadian cents and one is not a nickel. Name the two coins. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) Two blood sisters apply for the same job. They have the same birthday, in the same year. They are not nuns and not step sisters. They are related but are NOT Twins HOW IS THIS? \_\_\_\_\_
- 7) We all know that Christmas Day and New Year’s Day fall on the same day of the week. In 1939, the year World War II started, Christmas Day fell on a Sunday and New Year’s Day fell on a Monday. Why was this? \_\_\_\_\_
- 8) How many animals of each kind did Moses take on the Ark? \_\_\_\_\_
- 9) If there are 10 identical black socks and 10 identical white socks in a drawer. If you cannot see what socks you take out, what are the least amount of socks you can remove before you are sure you have a pair of white or a pair of black socks? \_\_\_\_\_
- 10) Before Mt. Everest was discovered what was the Highest Mountain in the World?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Here are the answers.

1. Tom, but you knew that didn't you.
2. a) Second Place. b) You cannot overtake the runner in last place.
3. One. The boat rises with the tide.
4. It was during the day.
5. A quarter and a nickel. I said only one was not a nickel, it was a quarter.
6. They are triplets.
7. Christmas Day and New Year's Day never fall on the same day of the year. Christmas Day 2009 may be on a Sunday but New Year's Day 2009 was 51 weeks before. You were thinking New Year's Day 2010.
8. None it was Noah's Ark.
9. Three. You may take out one black and then one white so the next one has to be black or white. If you answered 10, that is 5 pairs. If you said 2, then you are not sure as you could have one black and one white.
- 10 It was still Mt Everest. It just was not discovered.

How did you do? How well did you read the questions? Many times we jump to conclusions before we hear the whole story.

Here is the template:

0-2	Need Work	3-5	Average
6-8	Good	9-10	Excellent

This chapter is about becoming an effective communicator. It is about the exchange of ideas which includes both speaking and listening.

There are three ways we assimilate or gather information. We use "generalization," "deletion" and "distortion." Let me explain how these affect our lives.

1. Generalization - Allows us to learn similar tasks. If you can write with a pen, you can write with a pencil, a crayon, a marker, etc. We do not have to re-learn similar tasks.
2. Deletion - Allows us to selectively listen to what is important to us. We can block out a conversation while we watch our favorite television program.
3. Distortion - Allows us to drift into a fantasy world when we read a book or watch a movie. This is like daydreaming.

These three areas can be helpful or harmful depending on how we view the situation. Let's look at the following examples and how the interpretation of an event can have various consequences:

A little girl was attending her first day of school. Her teacher asks her to read a paragraph. After reading, her teacher says, "What a wonderful job you did. You are a terrific reader." The little girl **generalizes** that she is a great reader and can read anything. She is then able to read at home and **delete** all the noise being made by her siblings. She is then able to drift off into a fantasy world by using **distortion**. She

grows up and becomes a great literary novelist based on a simple interaction with her teacher.

Now this same girl is playing on the playground that same day and several boys tease her. She falls down and cuts her knee. This same girl **generalizes** that all boys are bad. Growing up she meets some nice boys but **deletes** them because of her negative experience. She then **distorts** the facts and ends up having trouble with relationships.

Depending on how you view a situation, the resultant behavior can be vastly different from person to person.

When I studied hypnotherapy I was introduced to a process called NLP or neuro linguistic programming. It is a communications language that moves a person to a more positive outlook on life.

John Bandler and Richard Grinder, the originators of this concept, say the following about NLP.

“NLP is a communications protocol, characterised by the sense of curiosity and adventure and a desire to learn the skills to be able to find out what kinds of communication influences somebody and the kinds of things worth knowing; to look at life as a rare and unprecedented opportunity to learn.

NLP is a methodology based on the overall operational presupposition that all behaviour has a structure...and that structure can be modeled, learned, taught and changed (re-programmed.) The way to know what will be useful and effective are the perceptual skills.

NLP has evolved as an innovative technology enabling the practitioner to organize information and perceptions in ways that allow them to achieve results that were once inconceivable.”

NLP has been shown to influence people by setting the stage for positive outcomes. It involves a constructive outlook on life.

NLP stands for the following:

### **Neuro**

The nervous system, including the brain and the five senses.

### **Linguistic**

The verbal & non-verbal language symbols with which we code & transmit meaning.

### **Programming**

The ability to structure our neurological and linguistic systems to achieve the results we prefer.



The fundamentals of NLP are straightforward:

### **1. Know what you want (Outcome)**

One of the key NLP questions is, ‘What do you want?’ The human nervous system can be thought of as goal-seeking and you tend to get what you focus on. Well-formed outcomes are an important tool for ensuring that you get more of what you want in your life.

### **2. What do you need to do? (Direction)**

Now you need to figure out the day to day things you need to do to move you towards your goal. Here is where your goals and objectives define your path and provide a blueprint for success.

### **3. Know whether you’re getting what you want (Sensory Acuity)**

Once you know where you want to go, you need to be able to notice (using one or more senses) whether or not you are going there. Sensory acuity refers to the ability to notice the signs that you are moving in the right direction or not.

### **4. If not, adjust what you’re doing accordingly (Behavioural Flexibility)**

“Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, expecting a different result.” When you notice that you are not getting what you want, you need the flexibility to change what you are doing. Intelligence is the ability to have a fixed goal and be flexible about how you achieve it.

Below are some NLP techniques you can use in your daily language and behaviour to help you become a better communicator. Some of these may not suit your personality but I am sure you will find some.

#### **1. The “BUT” Flip**

We talked earlier about how using the ‘but’ word can cause problems however you can use it to your advantage. This works well in personal situations. I have never used it in business. Your spouse says, “I would like to take you to Florida, but it is too expensive.” The focus is on the expense or what came after the “but.” If you flip the two phrases around, you can change the focus of the sentence. You respond with, “I understand it is a bit pricy but you want to take me to Florida do you.” If they insist on price say, “Now that we both agree a Florida trip is good, let’s figure out how we can get there.”

#### **2. Pre-framing**

This technique is used to start a meeting or conversation and helps to set a positive atmosphere. Let’s say someone has set up a meeting with you to identify a problem in the office. You start by saying, “Thank you for taking the time to meet today. The fact that we are here discussing this issue shows the importance we have placed on it and how quickly we want to resolve this problem.”

#### **3. Re-framing**

This technique means that every situation has a positive outlook; you just have to find it. This works well when dealing with a perceived negative behaviour. I remember a friend of mine saying, “My wife thinks I have trouble dealing with authority.” I said,

“Maybe you work really well by yourself.” He felt better. The idea with reframing is to think of the opposite of what the person is thinking. Seek ways to inject a positive spin into the conversation. Instead of, “Boy he really takes forever to make up his mind,” say, “Yes, but when he does he is usually right.”

#### **4. Reciprocity**

The subconscious need to repay someone is the most powerful influencer in the world yet we let the power of this go a lot. When you do someone a favour and they thank you, most times I hear people say, “No problem, it was no trouble really.” You diminish what you did and you let the person off the hook. Say, “You are welcome, I know you would do the same for me.” Use this technique wisely and never with family.

#### **5. Will You NOT Can You**

The psychological meaning behind these 2 words is CONSISTENCY and people want to do what they said they will do. “Will you check on the expiry date of your contract?”

#### **6. Tag Questions**

These are questions you add to your sentence to get agreement from the other person. Notice the difference in the following two statements. “Can you see how beneficial tag questions are?” or “You can see how beneficial tag questions can be, can’t you.” or “I am sure you will find ways to use tag questions, won’t you.” and “I am sure there are many ways to use them, aren’t there.”

These are just a few of the positive ways you can influence people. By being consciously aware of what we say, can have a big influence on our outcomes.

It is not only what we say but your tone of voice and body language that is critical to effective communications. By changing our tone or body language, we can alter the meaning of what was said. We communicate both verbally and non-verbally. Here is the breakdown.

55%	Tone of Voice
38%	Body Language
7%	Words

With email here is the breakdown:

82%	Tone
18%	Words

As you can see, ninety three per cent of our communication is non-verbal, so it is critical to focus not only on the words we use but the tone of our voice and our body language. A simple emphasis on certain words can send mixed messages and can cause problems.

Read the following statement:

I did not say that he stole my car.

Now read it again emphasizing the word in bold.

Sentence	Interpretation
I did not say he stole my car.	Someone else said it.
I did not <b>say</b> he stole my car.	I wrote it down.
I did not say <b>he</b> stole my car.	Someone else stole it.
I did not say he <b>stole</b> my car.	He borrowed it.
I did not say he stole <b>my</b> car.	He stole my wife's car.
I did not say he stole my <b>car</b> .	He stole my truck.

By changing the emphasis on certain words, we can change the meaning of a sentence.

We can also help our communications by gaining rapport with someone. Sometimes this comfortable feeling is automatic and we feel as though the person we just met has been our friend for a long time. We feel this way because this person acts, talks and has a disposition similar to our own. We have instant rapport. We can also consciously develop this rapport by noticing certain behaviours the other person portrays. For instance, if the person talks slow, do the same. Talking fast will cause problems. If the person uses short sentences, do the same. By matching the other person's behaviour we can instantly gain rapport and can then develop an atmosphere of trust as we develop a friendship or working relationship.

Besides developing rapport, it is also critical to understand that there are three types of statements we can make.

- 1) We can tell a joke
- 2) We can lie
- 3) We can make a sincere statement.

Most people know when a joke is being told. Most of the people we have relationships with are truthful and do not lie. So in the vast majority of cases, people are making sincere statements.

The problem occurs when someone says something we perceive as insulting. They say, "You care about no one only yourself." What happens? Your ego kicks in and you get defensive. You can argue and yell for two hours that you are not that way, yet the person who made the comment still feels they are right. In their mind, they made a sincere statement. Let's analyze this issue. If the person is being sincere about what they said, you must have given them the indication that it was true.

There are a number of pitfalls we can fall into which can block communications. Here are the most widely used. Once I discuss these, I will give you a simple strategy to vastly improve your communications skills. Look at the list and see if you are guilty of any of these communications errors:

**Truth** – We all want to be right and can jeopardize a relationship when our ego gets in the way. The truth is irrelevant if you want to get to the bottom of a problem. Who

is right? You or them. Does it really matter? Probe by asking questions to see how the person came to this conclusion.

**Blame** – Saying that the problem is always someone else's fault does nothing to fix the issue. It is never one person's fault. It usually takes two to create a problem.

**Martyrdom** – Wanting to be a martyr and never wanting to express your feelings.

**Put Downs** – Constantly telling the other person they are no good.

**Hopelessness** – Throwing your hands in the air, giving up and letting the other person have their own way.

**Demanding** – Wanting it your way all the time. You never have a desire to meet the other person half way.

**Denial** – Putting your head in the sand and refusing to accept that there is a problem hoping it will disappear.

**Passive Aggressive** – Giving the person the silent treatment or going around slamming doors.

**Helping** – Offering advice when you were not asked. Maybe the person just wanted you to listen.

**Sarcasm** – Using cutting words that hurt. Using labels like "idiot" or "moron". Saying phrases like, "It figures," or "That is so typical of you."

**Scapegoating** – Always pointing to the same person as the root of the problem.

**Defensiveness** – Being insulted that someone would say such a hurtful thing about you. Not taking responsibility for your part.

**Counterattack** – Someone calls you bull-headed and you say they are stubborn.

**Diversion** – Dwelling on the past. Saying, "I wish things were like they were twenty years ago."

When faced with a communications problem, the most important question to ask is, "Is it worth it?" If you can answer "yes" to that question, then it is important to have open and honest dialogue and to quickly get to the cause of the problem. If the answer is "no" and sometimes it can be, then the following does not apply.

Someone says, "You care about no one only yourself". Wow! That can hurt but remember the three types of statements; a joke, a lie, a sincere statement. In order for that person to make the above statement, you must have given them some indication that you are uncaring. Don't fall into the traps outlined above.

The best way to open up dialogue is to find some truth in what the person said about you. Remember in their mind they are right. They made a sincere statement. The term we use is “disarm.” In other words, remove the aggression by agreeing with what was said. Your response would be something like, “You are right, sometimes I can be a little selfish and you don’t deserve to be treated that way. Please let me know what I can do to make things better.” Right away the lines of communication open and you can quickly move in the proper direction to resolve the issue before it builds to resentment.

When we disagree it is a confirmation about what was said about us.

Here are some helpful guidelines:

- Don’t get defensive and lash out.
- Don’t act out your feelings – state them.
- Avoid right or wrong statements.
- Use “I feel” not “you” statements.
- Put yourself in their shoes & listen.
- Accept their feelings and ask questions.

When we use understanding and empathy all problems can be resolved and we build a strong relationship instead of resentment.

Here is another technique I find very useful. This can correct a behavior that you find annoying.

- Explain how you feel.
- Talk about the behavior.
- Provide a suggestion.

Let’s say your teenage son always leaves his boots in the foyer and it bothers you. Nagging doesn’t work. Say this to your son.

Feeling	I feel as though I am treated like a maid
Behavior	Whenever I see boots lying around the hall.
Suggestion	I would really appreciate it if you would place your boots in the closet whenever you come in the house.

Here is another example

Feeling	I feel as though I am a second class citizen
Behavior	Whenever we have a disagreement and you constantly raise your voice at me.
Suggestion	I would really appreciate it if you would talk to me in a normal tone of voice whenever we have a discussion.

When you begin with “I” statements, you focus on your feelings and how you are affected. Beginning a conversation with a “You” statement focuses on the other

person and their faults and can be perceived as aggressive and attacking. This usually causes the other person to become defensive and once this happens most discussions turn into a shouting match and nothing gets accomplished except bad feelings and resentment.

“I” statements focus on you instead of the other person. Here is what you can resolve by using this strategy.

Explain how you are feeling	If you bottle up your feelings you become resentful and it becomes a lose lose situation. You eventually just give up.
You identify the problem	There is a possibility the other person is unaware that a problem exists and it becomes corrected very easily.
You communicate what you need to resolve the issue	In many cases, people are not aware of what you need to resolve a problem until you tell them. Don't assume the other person knows what you need.

### ***Communication Faux Pas***

There are many times I hear people using phrases that have a negative connotation. The words we use can have a very positive impact on the people we interact with and it can also have a negative impact.

Read the phrase in the left column and then look at how they can be interpreted. If you want to set yourself up for success and portray a positive image think about how your language can influence the thoughts of others..

Phrase	Interpretation
Don't get me wrong	Someone will think that what you are going to say has something wrong with it because you let them to think that.
This may sound stupid	Again, they will look for something stupid in what you are about to say.
I have to be honest	That is a safe assumption isn't it or up to now you haven't been.
When ending a letter with – please do not hesitate to call.	What about ending the letter with, please call. The other words are unnecessary and add nothing to the letter.

Here are some examples of negative phrases and suggestions on how they can be re-stated in positive terms. The concept here is to approach life from a positive position. When we talk in terms of the behavior we want as opposed to the behavior we don't want we tend to focus more on empowerment.

As you read the following examples see if you can think of negative phrases you have used and take some time to re-word those phrases so they have a more positive tone. You will be amazed at the results you get.

<b>Negative</b>	<b>Positive</b>
That's not a bad idea	That's a good idea
I can't see why that won't work	I can see that working.

I don't have a problem with that	That looks good to me.
I don't disagree with you	I agree with you
I don't want you to think that I love her more than I love you	I love you just as much as I love him

We can also look at behavior and either phrase a statement in a negative or a positive tone. Here are some examples:

Negative	Positive
Don't slam the door	Close the door gently
Don't be late	Be on time
Don't yell at the kids	Speak to the kids in a soft voice

Re-Framing is taking a negative phrase and making it positive. Here are a few examples.

Negative	Positive
He takes a long time to complete his projects.	Yes but when he does the project is top notch.
She takes forever to make up her mind.	Yes but when she does, it is usually the right decision.

Once you learn to speak more positively, and begin to see the good in the people you meet and the situations you encounter, you will notice a difference in how you approach life.

Let's see what you have learned. Below are a number of phrases that focus on the problem. How can you re-write these sentences so they get you moving in a positive direction and have you focused on the solution?

- 1) I hate my job.
- 2) If only we had our mortgage paid off.
- 3) I do not like where I am living.

***I hate my job*** focuses on the problem. By thinking this way, you attract into your life more of how bad your job is. This gets you nowhere. A better way to think about this problem is; "What is it I like about my job," or "Maybe it's time I looked for a better job. One I will enjoy."

***If only we had our mortgage paid off*** again focuses on the problem of debt. How about saying, "Let's see how we can pay off our mortgage sooner."

***I do not like where I am living*** is another problem statement. Instead say, "What do I like about where I am living," or "Let's look at moving somewhere that I will enjoy."

By focusing on the solution, you can set in motion a series of events that will start you in the proper direction for solving your problems. Learn to set yourself up for success instead of failure. Use positive language that states a good intention. I am also amazed at the number of commercials that focus on the negative. I believe that

there can be much more accomplished if we had a more positive implication. Here are a few examples.

“Thousands of people can’t be wrong.” I would think that the people who approved that commercial could have made a better impression on the public by saying, “Thousands of people must be right.” The result may be a bigger sales volume.

Here is another gem. *“If you don’t shop with us, we can’t save you any money.” Don’t you think a better way of saying this would be, “If you shop with us, we will save you money.”*

These are just a few examples of how we commonly use negative words in every day speech. Once you become aware of this unconstructive language you begin to re-think your approach and start to develop a more positive language style.

There are times when we inject certain words into our conversation that can cause problems. Pay close attention to the words that are underlined and see how they can create issues.

Phrase	What you really mean
“It’s <u>only</u> a game.”	There is something wrong with you. Relax.
“ <u>Now</u> , what do you want?”	You are really getting on my nerves.
“Are you <u>still</u> here?”	I wish you were gone.
“You did your best, <u>I’m sure.</u> ”	Maybe you didn’t do your best.
You worked late <u>again</u> last night.	Your priorities are all screwed up.

As we become more aware of our everyday language and begin to express our feelings in a positive manner, we learn to become more effective communicators.



## **Chapter VIII**

### **ACHIEVING YOUR LIFE GOALS**

“Regardless of your lot in life, you can still build something beautiful on it.” ~ ZIG ZIGLAR

As a former rower and coxswain in the Royal St. John’s Regatta, I can relate to the following story.

The coxswain’s job is to motivate his crew and to steer a straight course. Usually the coxswain will pick a marker at the bottom of the pond and keep the boat aligned with this marker. It could be a tree, a house or anything that is visible.

The veteran coxswains knew each marker and were sought after by many crews. There are also many rookie coxswains who are not familiar with the course so they rely on the veterans for help.

One young coxswain was eager to do well so he asked the coxswain who won the race previous to his, what marker he used. The veteran told him to steer for the cow in the field. It served him well and he was able to make a great turn of the buoys and win the race.

The young boy did just that. He steered right for the same cow only to find that the cow had moved about twenty feet and he found himself off course. He ended up losing the race because he could not recover from the mistake. Goals change, targets change so it is important to focus on the right target and modify your plan if your objectives change.

A cross section of college graduates were surveyed and asked two questions. In order to be considered successful or having a chance at success, these people had to answer “yes” to both questions. Here are the two questions.

- Do you have goals?
- Are your goals written down?

The results were quite amazing. Only five per cent of the people answered “yes” to both questions. This left ninety five per cent of people who either:

1. Didn’t have goals, or
2. Had goals but didn’t have them written down.

In the introduction I talked about goals and explained their importance in achieving success. There were four important aspects of goals and those who are considered successful follow these guiding principals:

1. To actually have goals.
2. To write them down.
3. To be enthusiastic about your goals.
4. To set effective goals.

So what is success? Is Donald Trump successful? Is Bill Gates successful? That depends on their definition of success. Being successful is different for different people. People are motivated for different reasons. For some, it is possessions, for others it is money and for other people like Mother Teresa it was a driving ambition to help people.

I have seen a number of different definitions of success. Here is one that I found to be accurate and concise. It incorporates all the essential elements that make up success:

Success is choosing, developing and achieving personal accomplishments and goals in a balanced and moral way. It is the progressive realization of a goal.

The following chart breaks down each of the elements of success

<b>CHOOSING</b>	This means deciding what goals are important to you.
<b>DEVELOPING</b>	Creating a life plan that assists you in moving towards your goals.
<b>PERSONAL GOALS</b>	Success is different for everyone so it is important to decide how you measure success.
<b>BALANCE</b>	Having a good balance in all areas of your life.
<b>MORAL</b>	Living your life with honesty, sincerity and integrity.

Success is about leaving a legacy by adding value. It is about leaving the world a better place because of your contribution. This contribution starts and ends with what you have to offer the world.

Each of us was born with a set of talents, I call life tools. We choose to use these life tools in a variety of ways. Some of us use these tools to build anger and resentment, while others use these tools to build peace and contentment. Some of us build hostility and revenge while others build joy and forgiveness. How have you chosen to use your life tools?

What I am about to introduce to you is a simple six step approach to success. I call these steps my Six Immutable Laws of Life. I call them immutable because you cannot argue they exist just like you cannot argue that the laws of gravity or physics exist. You can only choose not to live by them.

The important point to remember here is to apply all six laws to each area of your life. Ignoring any one of these concepts will create a breakdown and can cause problems on your road to success.

Life is simple. As humans we have a tendency to complicate our existence by doing irrational things. We contribute to our problems by neglecting to do what is required in order for us to be successful.

I have developed a simple plan that is easy to follow. This plan will guide you through a process that will set you up for success. Use this map and you can accomplish anything you set your mind to do.

My six Immutable Laws start with a foundation and each law builds on the next. In addition, each subsequent law is only as strong as the ones that go before and after.

I call these laws immutable because they exist even if you decide not to follow them.

Here are my Six Immutable laws.

<b>Focus</b>	It is critical to know where you are going. To have a clear idea of how you want life to unfold. It is about the Big Picture
<b>Priority</b>	Seeing the Big Picture is important but you need to know what you need to do to get you there.
<b>Belief</b>	Having self-confidence and self-belief is essential otherwise you would do nothing.
<b>Action</b>	Thoughts never accomplished anything, doing is what is required.
<b>Persistence</b>	Being action oriented is great but you have to press through the tough times especially when you encounter roadblocks.
<b>Responsibility</b>	Once you accept total responsibility for your life you now have total control of your life.

## **LAW I – FOCUS.**

“The best way to predict the future is to create it.” ABRAHAM LINCOLN

The best way to begin this first LAW is by quoting a wonderful poem by Linda Ellis. At your grave site, there will be a grave stone. On that grave stone are two dates; one is the date of birth while the other is the date of passing. In between those dates is a dash which represents your life.

This poem is entitled:

### **How Do You Live Your Dash?**

I read of a man who stood to speak at a funeral of a friend.  
He referred to dates on her tombstone from the beginning to the end.  
He said first her date of birth and spoke the following date with tears.  
He said what mattered most of all was the dash between those years.  
For that dash represented all the time that she spent alive on earth.  
Now only those who loved her know what that line is worth.  
For it matters not, how much we own, the car, the house, the cash.  
What matters is how we live and love and how we spend the dash.  
So think about this long and hard, are there things you'd like to change?  
You never know how much time is left, that can still be rearranged.  
If we could just slow down enough to consider what's true and real,  
and always try to understand the way other people feel.  
We'd be much less quick to anger, and show appreciation more,  
and love the people in our lives like we've never loved before.  
If we treat each other with respect, and more often wear a smile  
remembering that this special dash, might only last a little while.  
So, when your eulogy's being read, with your life's actions to rehash.  
Would you be proud of the things they say, about how you spent your dash?

What a wonderful verse? How are you living your dash? Do you have focus? Do you have a clear picture of how you want to live your life? Many times we let our lives get out of focus because it is either blurred or non-existent.

**The Law of Focus** forms the basis for all other laws. Without focus, there is no purpose. I believe this is the fundamental reason why some young people turn to drugs. They have no focus or purpose. They are like goldfish swimming in circles, very busy but not getting anywhere. They have no reason to get out of bed in the morning.

We are all very busy but are we really accomplishing anything. Can we truly say that we are closer to our goals as each day passes or are we living life one day at a time?

I would like you to visualize something. I want you to imagine that this is your judgement day and in order for you to get into heaven you have been given the task of returning to earth and interviewing all the people you have come in contact with

during your life. Their responses will determine your fate. You interview your friends, your co-workers, your parents and finally, your children and spouse. What would they say about you? What would you want them to say? Would it be the same? If it is the same, then you are on the right track. If it is not, you are out of focus. You are looking at the world through the wrong lens.

When you focus in a positive manner, you focus on what you want, not on what you do not want. So many times I hear people expounding on all the things they do not want, I do not want this job, I do not want to be in this marriage, I do not want this relationship. When you focus on what you do not want, you are reinforcing all that past negativism. When you focus on what you want, you empower yourself to move forward to do something positive. When you centre your attention on what you want, you are looking at solutions.

Focusing on what you do not want makes you become problem centered. When you are problem centered, there is no time to look for solutions as your time is wasted on asking yourself why, instead of asking yourself, "How do I make this better." Victor Frankl wrote a book entitled "Man's Search For Meaning". It detailed his capture and years spent in the concentration camps in Germany. He saw his family gassed and many of his friends die from starvation and exhaustion. It details his ability to focus on life and see purpose. This was the only way he was able to survive the terrible tortures he endured. Focusing on what he wanted saved his life.

Whenever I have clients, I ask them to visualize how they want their life to be. If someone wants to lose twenty pounds, I ask them to see themselves the weight they want to be. When you focus on the end result, you get in touch with your emotions and it is your emotions that carry you through to your goal. Whenever I talk to students, I have them visualize themselves walking on stage and accepting their degree or diploma. When they do that, the menial day-to-day tasks of classes, tests and assignments seem trivial.

So how is it possible to influence an outcome? It is possible to change your physiology just by changing your thinking. Just imagine a professor walking into his class and being noticeably nervous, shy and lacking confidence. His students would probably learn less as a result.

I want you to try this experiment. Read this next paragraph and then close your eyes and visualize what you just read:

I want you to imagine taking a big bite out of a juicy ripe lemon. Feel the juices just explode in your mouth and feel the shutters run down your spine. Now imagine taking another big bite and again feel the juices and the bitterness. Now stop and notice how much extra saliva you have in your mouth. You can change your physiology simply by changing your thoughts.

Let's take a minute and look at where your focus has been. If your focus is money, you feel great when you have it and terrible when you don't. If it is possessions, you continually look at acquiring more material things because you compare yourself to

others. I agree that having a bountiful life is wonderful but it pales to what is truly important. Our lives can become out of focus.

I believe that the focus of our lives should be very simple. A simple life without complications is easy to manage. A life based on honesty, sincerity and integrity should be our main focus. Honesty and sincerity are easily identifiable but integrity is more intrinsic. Here is my definition of integrity. Integrity is what you do when no one else is watching. You may be able to fool some people but you can never fool yourself. What we are communicates more than what we say or do. It is not what you think of me or what I would like you to think of me that matters most. It is who I am. It is my inner being that creates my destiny. Once you discover your inner spirit, life becomes much easier.

I would like to share with you a story I am quite proud of. When I was eighteen, I had a big date. Unfortunately my date lived quite a distance from my house and I was not able to borrow my father's car as he had to use it. My neighbour kindly offered her car so I gladly accepted. After the date, I felt an obligation to pay for the gas I had used. I pumped ten dollars into the car. I went to the window to pay, however, as I approached the window, I noticed the attendant sound asleep. I knocked on the window several times. Once he stirred, looked up at me but quickly laid his head back down on the desk. I owed him for the gas so I managed to pry open the sliding portion of the window and manoeuvred the money into his space. I could simply have walked away without paying but I didn't. The point is I knew what I had to do. I was guided by my inner values and principles.

You see this is why we are always in crisis mode. Our focus is blurred. We spend so much time running around putting out fires we neglect the most important things in our lives. This is why there are some powerful, successful people who have wealth, fame and notoriety yet their marriages are failing and they no longer know their children. This is why we have unhappy workers because supervisors are not empathetic.

If you want a happy marriage, then get rid of all your negative energy and be positive. If you want a pleasant teenager, be empathetic, see things through their eyes and spend time with them. If you want to be a better supervisor, portray an honest and sincere image. If you want to be trusted, be trustworthy. The concept is quite simple. You get what you give.

Some people feel that one way to focus is to day dream. I realize that dreaming is important but dreaming is only part of the solution. You must also have a vision and a set of realistic and achievable objectives and goals. Dreaming without vision gets you no where. Goals and objectives are useless without a clear concise vision. What happens is we set goals and use our willpower to see us through and as we all know, willpower alone just does not work. If we have a clear vision, our vision is what will pull us through.

I spoke to a young lady who attended one of my empowerment seminars and as she spoke to me, I clearly could see tears in her eyes. She told me that she wanted so badly to have a baby but her doctor said she needed to lose eighty pounds because of

her blood pressure. I told her to focus on seeing herself holding, feeding and rocking her baby. By doing this the daily tasks of dieting would seem trivial to the birth of her child.

Without focus, activities seem senseless. For instance, getting to the top of a mountain so you can ski down makes the trip up most enjoyable. You anticipated the thrill of the ride. What if you had no expectation? If every time you made that same trip and there was no anticipation, the journey would be boring and senseless.

It is also important to revisit your goals and objectives at least once a week. This keeps you focused and on track. You may also have to alter your goals and action plan from time to time.

You also need to understand that distractions are inevitable; they are a fact of life. The truly successful people are the ones that can re-focus and adapt to change but never quit. Quitting is for losers and you are a winner.

Here is another exercise for you to do.

I want you to get a piece of paper and write down all the positive things in your life. Do not leave out any thing. I want you to make three columns. One for your family, another for your possessions and another for your values. I want you to include your personal, business and family life. Include things about your job, your relationships, your family and your health. Once you have the list completed, read through it and see what a wonderful life you have. I want you to carry this list around with you for the rest of your life. For the next week I want you to read the list two times a day, just before you go to sleep and just as you awaken. This is the time you are most susceptible to suggestions. Read the list any time you feel yourself getting down and remind yourself of your blessings.

I would like to leave this first law by quoting a verse called TO REALIZE: author Saffron.

To realize the value of a sister,  
Ask someone who doesn't have one.  
To realize the value of ten years,  
Ask a newly divorced couple.  
To realize the value of four years,  
Ask a graduate.  
To realize the value of one year,  
Ask a student who has failed a final exam.  
To realize the value of nine months,  
Ask a mother who gave birth to a still born.  
To realize the value of one month,  
Ask a mother who gave birth prematurely.  
To realize the value of one week,  
Ask an editor of a weekly newspaper.  
To realize the value of one hour,  
Ask the lovers who are waiting to meet.  
To realize the value of one minute,

Ask a person who has missed the train or plane.  
To realize the value of one-second,  
Ask a person who has survived an accident.  
To realize the value of one millisecond,  
Ask the person who has won a silver medal in the Olympics.  
To realize the value of a friend: Lose one.

Time waits for no one. Treasure every moment you have. You will treasure it even more when you can share it with someone special. Each day that passes is another day gone forever. Maintain your focus and you will be rewarded with a wonderful life full of fond and loving memories.



## **LAW II - PRIORITY**

“Choice not chance determines our destiny.” ~ JEAN NIDETCH

I will start this Law with a quote from the late John Lennon. “Life is what is happening to us while we are busy making other plans.”

There are a lot of successful people out there, enjoying all aspects of their lives. They are reaping the fruits of their labour. They have figured out how life works, yet there are others who have not figured out life.

Focus is a great starting point but it is useless unless you can prioritize. What is the point of focus if you cannot figure out what you need to do to achieve your goals?

So, how do you set your priorities? You focus on what is positive and your motivation comes from these positive thoughts. You know exactly what you want and you aim for success because you have a clear undoubting vision. Priorities are based on honesty, sincerity and integrity. All other goals and objectives are derived from these principles. I am not saying that having a net worth of one million dollars is insignificant. It is but it pales to basic human integrity. Everything in life should be based on this foundation because these are things that are totally under your control.

So often I see people with their priorities out of focus. We talked about the importance of focus in the right direction. It is not the decisions we make but the consciousness of those decisions that determine our success as human beings. How often do we see certain personality traits that are dishonest? People make self serving comments in the hope to sway your decision. These comments are not based on goodness but rather on a need to control and influence. I have taken courses on “Power Persuasion” and “Power Selling.” These courses are ineffective without goodness.

How many of us have a personal mission statement? I suspect not many. We work for large corporations who have mission statements. These companies know exactly where they are going and how they are going to get there. Most of us plan our vacations better then we plan our lives. I hear many people want to retire at age fifty five and when asked how they plan to accomplish this they say, “I have no idea.” These same people want to be mortgage free in ten years but have no ideas on how to do it. Without a life plan, how will you be able to measure success or even know if you are headed in the right direction? A plan is a way to prioritize and keep you on track for success.

Your life plan would include every important aspect of your life. How do you want to interact with those around you? Your personal mission statement is your personal game plan for success.

Below you will find an outline for a personal mission statement. Here is your next exercise. I want you to now complete your personal mission statement by following the guidelines below.

## VISION or MISSION STATEMENT

It is important to do something everyday to make yourself a better person. In order to move ahead in life you need to direct your focus in a positive direction. People fail to succeed because they are focused on what they do not want instead of what they do want. There are five areas in a mission statement. Each component becomes more specific.

- 1) **General Statement** - This provides an overall summary of how you want to live your life. The other four areas flow from this general statement.
- 2) **Objectives** – You will have many depending on where you are in life and can include areas like:

Area	What to include
Financial	Mortgage, retirement, education fund, travel.
Spiritual	Church, death
Personal	Friendship, passions, relaxation, volunteering, neighbourhood, self-improvement.
Physical	Exercise, nutrition, stress relief, sleep.
Mental	Reading, visualization, meditation, practice.
Emotional	Empathy, listening skills

- 3) **Strategy** - Your strategy explains how you plan to accomplish each objective. It is simply a course you choose to take to achieve your goals.

- 4) **Action Plan** – This is your daily log of what to do.

- 5) **Possible Roadblocks** – It is important to identify anything that may prevent you from achieving your goals.

Below is an example taken from my mission statement.

### VISION OR MISSION STATEMENT

I will ensure on a daily basis to be the best I possibly can be in all aspects of my physical, mental, spiritual and emotional life, in both my personal and business relationships. I will apply these principles as an individual and through my interactions with friends, co-workers, family members and as a parent and spouse. I will live my life with honesty, sincerity and integrity every day without compromise.

### OBJECTIVE

- To be a good parent.

### STRATEGY

- To be involved in all aspects of my children's lives.

### ACTION PLAN

- Eat breakfast and dinner together.
- Help with homework nightly from 7 - 8pm.
- Spend 5 hrs/week in activity as a family.

### POSSIBLE ROADBLOCKS

- Spending too much time at the office.
- Too much leisure time away from home.

**PLEASE PRINT OFF THE NEXT PAGE  
AND USE AS A TEMPLATE FOR YOUR LIFE PLAN**

**PERSONAL VISION STATEMENT (general statement)**

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**OBJECTIVE (you will have many)**

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**STRATEGY (your general plan)**

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_

**ACTION PLAN (daily activities)**

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_

**POSSIBLE ROADBLOCKS**

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_

I spend some of my spare time listening to music. When I do my seminars, I always play a few songs that are very special to me. Desiderata is a wonderful song you could use when writing your mission statement. You can read this wonderful verse in the appendix.

I would like to leave this law by quoting a wonderful verse by George Carlin. He was a comedian and entertainer in the nineteen seventies. Here is what he wrote.

“The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints. We spend more, but have less; we buy more, but enjoy less. We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences but less time. We have more degrees but less sense, more knowledge but less judgment, more experts yet more problems, more medicine but less wellness. We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom. We have multiplied our possessions but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often. We've learned how to make a living but not a life. We've added years to life not life to years. We've been all the way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet a new neighbour. We conquered outer space but not inner space. We've done larger things but not better things. We've cleaned up the air but polluted the soul. We've conquered the atom but not our prejudice. We write more but learn less. We plan more but accomplish less. We've learned to rush but not to wait. We build more computers to hold more information, to produce more copies than ever, but we communicate less and less. These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion, big men and small character, steep profits and shallow relationships. These are the days of two incomes but more divorce, fancier houses but broken homes. These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throwaway morality, one night stands, overweight bodies, and pills that do everything from cheer, to quiet, to kill. It is a time when there is much in the showroom window and nothing in the stockroom. A time when technology can bring this letter to you and a time when you can choose either to share this insight or to just hit delete. Remember spend some time with your loved ones because they are not going to be around forever. Remember, say a kind word to someone who looks up to you in awe because that little person soon will grow up and leave your side. Remember to give a warm hug to the one next to you because that is the only treasure you can give with your heart and it doesn't cost a cent. Remember to say, "I love you" to your partner and your loved ones, but most of all mean it. A kiss and an embrace will mend hurt when it comes from deep inside of you. Remember to hold hands and cherish the moment for someday that person will not be there again. Give time to love, give time to speak, and give time to share the precious thoughts in your mind.”

## **HOW TO STAY YOUNG**

- “1. Throw out nonessential numbers. This includes age, weight and height. Let the doctor worry about them. That’s why he gets paid.
2. Keep only cheerful friends not. The grouches pull you down.
3. Keep learning. Learn more about the computer, crafts, gardening, whatever. Never let the brain idle. An idle mind is the devil's workshop and the devil's name is

Alzheimer's.

4. Enjoy the simple things.

5. Laugh often, long and loud. Laugh until you can only gasp for breath.

6. The tears happen. Endure, grieve, and move on. The only person who is with us our entire life, is ourselves. Be ALIVE while you are still alive so you can enjoy the journey.

7. Surround yourself with what you love, whether it's family, pets, keepsakes, music, plants and hobbies, whatever you cherish.

8. Cherish your health. If it is good, preserve it. If it is unstable, improve it. If it is beyond what you can improve, get help.

9. Don't take guilt trips. Take a trip to the mall, to the next county, to a foreign country.

10. Tell the people you love that you love them at every opportunity.

### **LAW III -BELIEF**

“The world is moving so fast these days that the man who says it can't be done is generally interrupted by someone doing it.” ~ HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK



Michael Jordan made the most game winning shots in the history of the NBA. He also missed the most game winning shots in the history of the NBA. He did not always get the result he wanted but he believed he would.

Wayne Gretzky has amassed quite a number of records including the most goals in a hockey season (92). This record will stand for quite a long time. He once said “You will always miss 100% of the shots you do not take.”



I would like to share a true story about how they train elephants for the circus. I can understand why animal rights activists are so outraged by this behaviour. When a baby elephant is trained for the circus, the trainers shackle a ball and chain on the elephant's leg. Because the elephant is only several hundred pounds, the ball is heavy enough so the elephant cannot move it no matter how hard it tries. This leads to severe damage to the elephant's leg and results in the elephant giving up and learning not to attempt this because the activity of pulling on the chain is associated with pain. Now the elephant grows up and becomes a huge animal. The trainers have to increase the size of the shackle but they leave the ball the same size. Why because the elephant has learned not to try. Is the elephant right or wrong? The elephant is right because he believed he could not move the ball.

Henry Ford once said, “Whatever you believe you can or you cannot do, you are right.” Bruce Lipton says in his book, “The Biology of Belief,” that it is not our heredity or our environment but our beliefs that carve our destiny. What happens, according to Bruce Lipton, is a conflict between our conscious desires and our subconscious beliefs. When there is a conflict between the conscious and subconscious, the subconscious always wins.

Here are other examples of perception and beliefs:

Over in England there were two streams of students in a school. One group were over-achievers with above average I.Q.'s while the other group were underachievers with below average I.Q.'s. As both groups were moving to a different school, their reports were misplaced and the high achievers wound up with the low achievers reports. The mistake was not found for 6 months. By then the low achievers marks had improved and the high achievers marks declined. Why was that? The teachers believed they were dealing with a certain group of students and treated them that way so the low achievers were treated like high achievers and they responded to the treatment.

Several years ago, Coke introduced a new product called "NEW COKE." They re-branded the traditional Coke as "Coke Classic." New Coke never lasted. Why? Coca Cola could not understand how this happened because they did one hundred thousand taste tests with both products and New Coke performed better. This was irrelevant because people believed that Coke Classic was better. So how do we acquire these beliefs?

We were born with two fears: the fear of falling and the fear of loud noises. Everything else is acquired. Usually these fears or beliefs are acquired from conception to age seven because we tend to believe everything we are told. Our brains are not yet fully developed and we are influenced by the outside world.

For example, you wander too close to the water at age five and your mother panics, runs into the water and drags you back to safety. You associate your mother's fear with water and you now have the same fear.

You drop a plate on the floor and your mother yells and says you are stupid. You make an instant connection and formulate that you are stupid. You manage to maintain these fears and beliefs throughout your life.

Besides beliefs and assumptions, we live in a very negative world. Just listen to the news or watch T.V. The media is filled with fires, break-ins and assaults. It is not only the news that focuses on negativity. By seventeen we are told one hundred and fifty thousand times, "No you can't," and only five thousand times, "Yes you can." No wonder we spend our life in negativity.

During our lives, most of us face traumatic events. These stressful parts of our life cause us to develop a set of beliefs that determine how we perceive life. These subconscious beliefs usually run parallel with what is actually true and they limit our ability to achieve our true potential.

In extreme cases, these beliefs run in series and cause schizophrenia and dual personality disorder. So how do we rewrite your autopilot so you can re-chart your life course?

The most common excuses that prevent change are:

- It will take a long time



- It will be hard
- I need to know why

All of these are merely excuses that prevent you from challenging your limiting beliefs. They hold you in your comfort zone. So how do you become the person you want? Is it possible to change your beliefs? Absolutely! You did it in the past. What about Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny and the Tooth Fairy. You knew it was time to change those beliefs because they did not fit into your world.

Aerodynamically bees cannot fly. This has been scientifically proven. So how can they fly? No one told them they couldn't. They have no negative perceptions about their ability to fly. What could you be if no one told you who you are? You could be anyone you wanted.

To understand how you become the person you want to be, it is important to comprehend the concept of reality and perception in reference to your capability and potential. Your perception becomes your reality. You make an assumption about your chances of success at a particular task, based on your beliefs. If you believe you cannot accomplish a particular job, you won't. If you meet a very shy person, you may perceive him to be a snob, when in reality he may be very nice. Guard against false perceptions because they become your reality.

To understand our perceptions, we need to understand the filters we use to analyze our experiences. Your perceptions are your interpretations of those events. Through your filters, you assign meaning to those events. This interpretation could be good or bad, uplifting or devastating. Your attention determines the meaning you apply to your experiences.

When we say something is going to be a challenge, we assign a meaning that it will be difficult. By altering our perception of this same event and look at it as an opportunity, we approach the task with enthusiasm.

Beliefs are choices we make. The problem is once we choose to acquire a negative belief, we look for evidence of its truth and we reinforce it by our behaviour and our actions become our habits. What we do today becomes practice for tomorrow.

Beliefs become a self fulfilling prophesy. If you surround yourself with negative thoughts, you will get negative results. If you believe you will fail, you will talk yourself into failure. On the other hand, if your conviction is success, you probably will get that result. What do you think is going through Tiger Woods mind as he tees off? Do you think he is saying, "Don't slice, don't slice, don't hit it in the sand trap, don't hit it in the woods." Of course not, he visualizes a perfect shot every time. When I played basketball many years ago, every time I shot the ball I saw it go in. When I was bowling, every ball was a strike.

I have had a number of hypnosis miracles that resulted from my stage show. A volunteer at my show called me the next day saying she had no more pain from fibromyalgia.

Another time a volunteer came to me after the show saying her bursitis pain in her hips had disappeared while another lady said that the neck stiffness she was experienced from a car accident had gone.

These are just a few of the many incidents of self healing I have witnessed over the years. Your subconscious mind knows where it needs to go to heal itself. It wants to protect you but many times we get in the way. You just need to let it do its work because it knows what is best for you.

There are a number of words that contribute to negativity and failure. The graph below identifies these negative words. I call them struggle words. Replace the words in the left column with the more positive words from the right column:

Try	Will
Maybe	Always
Don't	Do
I hope (verb)	Having hope (noun)
Can't	Can

Like Yodi from Star Wars said, "Do or do not, there is no try." Can you imagine going to your doctor and him saying, "You have a ruptured appendix and I am going to try to take it out." You would look for another doctor.

In the act of doing something you have to try but don't say, "I will try." This sets you up for failure.

This leads me to a critical part of your beliefs. You have no weaknesses, only strengths. I was always told I wear my heart on my sleeve and I will get hurt this way. That was perceived as a weakness but this trait has allowed me to do what I am doing. My character has developed trust with my family, friends, co-workers and clients.

This strategy reminds me of the story about the boy who was very shy. He was born with no left arm and was the brunt of ridicule. His mother enrolled him in judo classes to help him grow and develop self-esteem. The instructor taught him only one move. Several months went by and still only one move. The boy was enrolled in a competition and could not understand how he would compete using only one move. The instructor told him he had mastered that one move and he would do fine. He proceeded to win through each round and eventually won the competition. He was astounded and asked his instructor how he could have won using only one move. His instructor told him the only known defence against that one move was for his opponent to grab your left arm. I suggest you understand your weaknesses and start using them as strengths.

Your beliefs control every aspect of your life. Your beliefs and your perceptions become your thoughts and eventually your destiny. You have to be one hundred per cent sure you can do it. Letting one shred of doubt enter your mind and it quickly becomes an epidemic.

Let me give you an example:

I want you to imagine you are standing at the edge of a ravine that is ten feet wide and fifty feet deep. I told you that you will get one hundred thousand dollars if you can jump across. You would not jump if you had any doubts. But if you knew from the deepest recesses of your soul that you could do it, you would not hesitate. The only way to conquer fear is to always be aware of your strengths and talents. Replace those old negative self defeating thoughts with positive thinking and you can overcome every challenge.

Here is a six step approach to changing beliefs. Ask yourself these questions:

<b>Question</b>	<b>Reasoning</b>
Has anyone done it before?	There usually was and they are no different than you.
Why do I think this way?	Usually someone said something to you and you agreed with them.
Am I getting something from this belief?	If not you need to change the belief into something that helps.
Why change?	When we can see how our lives can be better, we have motivation to change.
What if I could not fail?	If you learn from each experience you can't
Visualize success and repeat it over and over.	Repetition changes outcomes.

Repetition is not good enough. You have to repeat it perfectly every time. This perfection becomes your norm.

Here are some examples of limiting beliefs.

- I cannot change. I am too set in my ways.
- I cannot help it. I am just like my father.
- I just cannot do it. I am not smart enough.
- No matter what I do, it is never good enough.
- The decisions I make are usually wrong.
- I blame others for my problems.
- My opinions usually do not matter.
- What I do is usually not important.
- I should not try anything too risky, I will fail.
- I am not smart enough.
- I have been like this too long to change.
- It's not my nature.
- I'm too scared.

Once you identify these beliefs, write a counter belief.

## PRINT THIS PAGE

The graph below shows how you can take a limiting belief and re-write it so it works for you.

Limiting Belief	Counter Statement
I am not smart enough to accomplish that task.	I always do my best and my best is good enough.
This is going to be a big challenge.	This is a wonderful opportunity.

Below you can list your negative beliefs and rewrite your future by stating a new belief.

YOUR LIMITING BELIEFS	YOUR NEW COUNTER BELIEFS

Once you have your counter beliefs, it is important to reinforce them through visualization and repetition. In chapter two, I explained the best times to change a belief. These are just as you are going to bed and just as you awaken. It is during these times that your conscious mind is at rest and usually won't get in the way.

## **LAW IV - ACTION**

“Even if you are on the right track you will get run over if you just sit there.” ~ WILL ROGERS

A bunny rabbit was bounding through a field on a hot sunny afternoon. He stopped under the shade of an elm tree. Looking up he noticed a crow perched on a limb so he asked the crow what he was doing. The crow said, “Nothing, just sitting around. It is too hot to do anything.” The rabbit, enjoying the shade, decided to lie down and quickly fell asleep. A fox running by saw the rabbit and quickly ate him. The moral of the story is, if you are going to sit around and do nothing, you better be high up.

In other words, life rewards action. To succeed you must be a DO-ER. I have never seen a situation where doing nothing solved a problem. Steven Covey calls it “Sharpening the Saw.”

You need to do something everyday to make you a better person. Let’s say you are having a house built and you are paying the carpenters by the hour. You visit the job site daily and although the men are working at a feverish pace, the work is not progressing very well. You notice that the men are spending way too much time sawing and you realize that they need to sharpen their tools. You make this suggestion only to have the foreman say to you, “We are too busy to stop to do that, we have too much work ahead of us.” You would probably look for another group of workers, smarter workers. You need to renew yourself every day in all aspects of your life.

We need to take care of ourselves in every aspect of our lives. If you were the CEO of an organization, you would want every department working towards one vision, wouldn’t you? Of course you would. If someone was jeopardizing that vision, you would let them go and find someone else who would. Well, you are in charge of your own life and you cannot fire yourself. When you do the things that need to be done, you win at life.

You win at life by thinking like a winner. Over achievers think differently than under achievers. Over achievers are action oriented. They look for solutions and are always searching to make their lives better. They assign payoff to doing something and pain to doing nothing. They go to sleep feeling better than when they woke up.

A main reason people are inactive is procrastination. They assign pain to doing a particular activity and as a result of this thinking, they postpone. I am not a morning person yet I exercise in the morning. My motivation comes from this way of thinking. I focus on how great it will feel after I run, how I am maintaining my fitness, increasing my longevity and keeping my weight under control. That is my priority. I leverage the payoff to activity and the pain to no activity. If I focus on the payoff of doing nothing, what am I thinking? The bed is warm, I am so comfortable here, I need more rest. Remember that nothing worthwhile is easy. It takes hard work and determination. If you have a clear cut vision, you will put things in perspective and start leveraging pain and payoff and being proactive.

We can associate this pain and payoff with procrastination to every aspect of our lives. Doing laundry, cutting the grass, shovelling the driveway, the list goes on. Just

remember to associate pain with doing nothing and payoff to doing something. You then begin to think like a winner.

Here is a technique I use to stop procrastination. I use the “robot” technique. Instead of thinking about doing something, I just do it. I act like a robot. If it is mowing the grass, I tell myself just mow the grass and I focus on how nice the lawn will look. The more we think about something, unless it is very positive and beneficial, chances are we eventually talk ourselves out of doing it.

Social psychologists tell us that it takes about ninety days to adjust to a new behaviour. The feeling of being uncomfortable is temporary and will disappear.

We see over achievers and under achievers every day. People are promoted through an organization because they take initiatives, they are proactive. They do not wait for things to happen, they make things happen. Others coast through life and then complain about their situation. Those of us who have happy fulfilling marriages take the initiative and work at marriage. Others create false expectations and when these expectations fail to materialize, they look elsewhere. Those people who are financially stable are there because they were prepared to plan and budget. The people who have money problems have these problems because they acted irresponsibly and lived and spent beyond their means. You cannot solve a money problem with money. Money did not create the problem and it surely will not fix it. If you gave someone ten thousand dollars to pay off all their credit card debts, in six months they would be faced with the same problems. If your son or daughter is continually borrowing money from you, you need to look at what you are doing. I believe it is not what you do for your children but what you teach them that makes them successful in life. In this case, what are you teaching them? How to be careless with money. Your fear of losing their love has caused your vision to be out of focus.

## **LAW V - PERSISTENCE**

“Most people who fail in their dreams fail NOT from lack of ability but from lack of commitment.” ~  
ZIG ZIGLAR

My step-daughter Vanessa moved to Ontario with her new boyfriend and as a trained firefighter began the process of looking for work. Below is her story in her own words:

“Moving to Ontario in 2008 was intimidating enough. There was a new province, new life and new boyfriend. On top of that, I was competing against thousands of young hopefuls to live my long time dream and become a firefighter.

My resume paled in comparison to others, my credentials, at the time, fitting on one page while others needed a binder to keep the pages together. Within two days I acquired my DZ licence (every fire department requires this here). I then enrolled in high angle, confined space and water rescue courses to beef up my resume.

Shortly after that, my first fire department, Oakville, was writing their entrance exam. Walking in the lecture hall, I was shocked to see hundreds of people doing what I was doing. I had never written a test like this before and with a passing grade of seventy per cent, I then thought, "How hard can this really be?" Apparently, hard enough. Although they don't tell you the marks, I never heard from them.

Determined, I went to Oakville and spoke with their training officer. I asked questions and was given advice and learned very quickly that I was a very small fish in a very large sea. It was an uphill ride from here on in, but I was ready. I wanted to be a firefighter, plain and simple.

Recognizing my testing skills weren't stellar, I purchased books, called other firefighters, went to write tests every chance I had, sometimes writing five or six times in a week until finally, not only did I get seventy per cent, I finished in the top twenty out of hundreds with a ninety six per cent for the Niagara Falls fire department.

Two interviews later my lack of practice showed. I never got the job and I was devastated. Six months of hard work gone just like that. So, as I did before, I went to Niagara Falls and spoke with the lady about my interview. She told me what I already knew. I had to practice my interview skills. I bought a book of firefighter interview questions, researched online and asked other firefighters. Before I knew it, I had a binder of interview questions. I practiced in the mirror, while I drove, while I showered and recorded myself so I would know how I sounded.

I had to pick my head up, dust off my shoulders and get ready because the job postings were coming. The written test was difficult but the endless physical training to keep fit can really wear you down. Thirteen jobs posted over the next few months, all followed with the same result, getting to an interview on most but receiving the “thanks but no thanks” letter in the mail.

Now I was taking it personally and so many times I wanted to quit. It was so much easier to quit and not have to deal with the roller coaster of emotions. I was becoming more and more frustrated, feeling sorry for myself and wondering, why me.

Then I realized that each process taught me something. I stopped looking at the negative side and started realizing that I was getting stronger each time, learning more and more, developing as a person and appreciating more things.

Then Mississauga posted. Two years applying and a boat load of disappointments, I went to the lecture hall like I did the very first time. I wrote the test with hundreds of people, eighteen hundred to be exact. I looked around, kind of shook my head and said, "All I can do is my best," and I did. I received a call for the first interview, then the second. Shortly after that, the practical and physical testing was conducted. I was determined to do my very best every single time. Then on Saturday, March 6 at 10:52 in the morning I received the call I had dreamed about. All my determination and perseverance paid off. I started my recruit training March 22, 2010 and I have never been so proud of myself.

What have I learned? What you may think are disappointments and setbacks are really small bumps on a road to reaching your goal. I am a stronger, more confident person. Now I thank those that that never hired me because they helped me learn and grow. I never once failed in my pursuit to being a firefighter. Failure only happens when you quit."

The Law of Persistence is so critical because without determination you give up once you hit several obstacles. You must be totally one hundred per cent involved in all aspects of your life. You must say to yourself every day, "I will persist until I succeed, it is all I know."

How do you keep a positive attitude when you continually miss your goal? You realize and understand that everything that happens to you empowers you. You do not dwell and focus on why something happened. You ask questions that move you forward in life. In every situation, you look for the positive and seek ways to make things better. You ask questions like:

- How do I make this situation better?
- What can I learn from this?
- What do I want?
- Can I do this differently?

These questions get you focused on the solution and not the problem. It is like the little spider that spins his web only to have it destroyed. It starts again and again and again, never giving up no matter how many times he rebuilds.

Thomas Edison failed one thousand times before he invented the light bulb. Did he stop? NO! He simply said, "I have found one thousand different ways how a light bulb did not work."

You would not stand in line to get tickets to see your favourite band only to leave once you got to the front. Of course you would not. You were in line because it was



important to you. Yet, so many of us stop short because life got a little uncomfortable. How do you think Wayne Gretzky got to be so great? He persisted until he succeeded. He kept going because he had a vision and he let nothing get in his way. He succeeded because he wanted that success more than anything else. He achieved because he was a do-er. The more you do something the easier it gets. The first time you attempted something new it was uncomfortable. The first time you dated someone was uncomfortable. The first day of your new job, learning to swim or, riding a bicycle.

This reminds me of a quote by David Landes:

“No empowerment is as effective as self-empowerment. In this world, the optimists have it, not because they’re always right but because they’re positive. Even when wrong, they’re positive, and that is the way of achievement.”

We can learn something from every experience. We can choose to be positive and learn or we can choose to be negative and drown in self pity. The choice is always yours to make.

Do this. Clasp your hands together. Now notice whether your right or left thumb is on top. For me my left is on top. Now change your grip so the other thumb is on top. Now unclasp your hands and re-clasp them with this new grip. Do it ten times. The more you did it the more comfortable it became. Of course it did because you got more familiar with doing it. As long as you maintain focus on your vision and you persist, you will succeed every time. It is what I call determination. Some people have it, many people do not. They falter at the least bit of resistance. Determination is the difference between dreams and reality.

I remember reading about this salesperson who calculated that he would make a successful sale every ten calls. It would not bother him if his first five calls resulted in no sales. He would say, “I am five calls closer to a sale.” He knew that he would get a sale from the next five calls. He took something positive from not making a sale. He learned from this experience. We need to have the same mindset, the mindset that nothing gets us down; nothing stands in the way of success. As long as we maintain focus on the end result and visualize the end result, getting there won’t seem so difficult and any setbacks along the way will not deter us from reaching our goals.

I remember watching the Olympic Games several years ago and watching a young lady who was competing in the marathon. Her last few yards were completed by crawling to the finish line yet she was determined to finish.

In 1983, I decided to run a marathon (26.2 miles). It had been a lifelong dream of mine. I trained very hard but I was not built for running. I remember hitting the wall (having my body depleted of all energy stores) at mile twenty. I also remember making a promise to myself that I would finish the race and not stop running. My brother in law ran the last five miles with me. I remember the last mile or so it seemed as though I was in a dream. I remember looking down at myself running as though my mind had left my body. It had to be the most excruciating pain I have ever experienced. It would have been so easy to give up and quit but I did not. I finished the race without stopping. I remember collapsing into an official’s arms totally exhausted but able to say. “I did it.”

I saw a biography on television about a speed boat racer who suffered a terrible accident while racing and attempting to eclipse the speed record. The accident caused quite a bit of injury. Once healed this racer went back to work and eventually broke the speed record.

These are wonderful stories of achievement and never giving up. Why do some people persist while others just stop? I believe there are three factors that play a part.

1) I mentioned earlier in this book about goals. It has a lot to do with being excited and enthusiastic about your goals. Without thrill and enthusiasm most people will just stop short.

2) Secondly, failure has a lot to do with being uncomfortable about stepping outside your comfort zone. Many people refuse to do something new because it makes them uneasy. They fear failure. You can never fail if you learn from every experience. The problem is not reaching too high and failing but reaching too low and succeeding.

3) Finally, look at each adventure as an opportunity for growth, a chance to learn something about yourself, a means to become a better person. By thinking about life this way, we open ourselves up to possibilities and we become a never ending story of achievement. Our lives become enriched and filled with stories instead of excuses and we look forward to what life has in store for us.

If you have a dream or a goal, let nothing stand in your way. If you can dream it you can do it. Do not let yourself or others talk you out of being the best you possibly can be. The only way you can be the best you possibly can be is to think like a winner because a winner refuses to give up.

## **LAW VI - RESPONSIBILITY**

“It is easy to dodge our responsibilities but not the consequences of dodging our responsibilities.” ~  
JOSIAH CHARLES STAMP

This law ties together the other five because without it, none of the other laws work. In order to accomplish change in your life, it is important to accept responsibility. This means taking full accountability for your past, present and future existence. When you accept the fact that your position in life is a result of your decisions, you have created an atmosphere for growth. You do not place blame on anything or anyone. With responsibility comes control. Placing blame only causes a feeling of helplessness or a feeling of no control of your life. By taking full and total responsibility for all aspects of your life, you now have created an atmosphere to do and be whatever you want.

Of course, when we speak about responsibility, we also need to understand that this accountability extends to how people treat us. If you have a disrespectful teenager, an uncaring spouse, an ungrateful friend or acquaintance, then you have allowed them to behave this way. Every time we allow negative behaviour to go unchallenged, we give permission to those who initiate that behaviour to continue.

We all want and deserve respect. The greatest human need is acceptance, while the greatest fear is rejection. I realize that sometimes we accept behaviour because it is the easiest action to take. That does little for our self esteem. You are saying, “My opinion is not important.” Do you make decisions based on rejection? When you do, you are more concerned with what other people think and you fear a negative response. When you discount your feelings, you dismiss the value of your input. You are important and your opinions do count. There will never be another person like you and you have a contribution to make to this world. I suggest you start making that contribution, whatever you feel it may be.

Can you imagine going to the doctor and him asking, “So how are you feeling?” and you respond, “Oh just fine,” refusing to tell him about your feinting spells. The doctor prescribes nothing and your condition gets worse. How often do people deny they have medical problems only to discover that it is too late and nothing can be done. It is not too late for you. In order for you to change, you must be brutally honest about where you are in life right at this moment in time. Denial kills dreams and stifles growth.

Let’s summarize and see how these Six Immutable Laws fit together.

We started with **focus** and determined where we wanted our lives to go and how we want the result to look like. Focus starts with writing your mission statement. This provides you with a basis on which to build your life plan.

Of course focus is only beneficial if your **priorities** are correct. These are determined by deciding what is important in your life.

Once you have your priorities identified, it is critical that you **believe** in yourself and your capabilities. Start talking yourself into things as opposed to talking yourself out of things. This starts with trusting yourself.

While believing in yourself is important, it is pointless unless you put your words and beliefs into **action**. Make sure you do something everyday to make you a better person

These four previous laws are useless if you just give up when faced with challenges. **Persistence** or determination plays an important role in this whole process. If you start something, make sure you finish it. Failure is not an option. Become committed to your goals and follow them through until finished. There is no greater reward than the successful completion of a project.

We tie the whole process together by accepting full **responsibility** for our lives and the decisions we have made. We now have control over our destiny.

Each law builds on the previous one. You now have a process that works by using all six laws.

Apply these six laws to your life and you will be amazed at the success you can achieve.

## Chapter IX

### FEEDING YOUR BRAIN

“The chief function of the body is to carry the brain around.” ~ Thomas A. Edison

We spent eight chapters talking about mental wellness and how to improve our lives by changing the way we think. Understanding that everything begins with a thought can have a profound effect on our lives and when we control our thinking we can control our destiny.

One way to take control of our destiny is to learn how to take care of the thing that houses our thoughts?” Maintaining a well functioning brain is essential to mental wellness. Keeping this vital information processor in tip top shape is the focus of this chapter.

We eat processed food and wonder why our blood pressure is too high, we have too much fat in our diets and see our cholesterol continue to rise. We take better care of our homes and cars than we do our own bodies.

There are five factors that control the quality and longevity of our lives. They are nutrition, exercise, stress, sleep and genetics.

#### **NUTRITION**

Scientists know that certain nutrients and other key chemical compounds are essential to human brain function. Serious deficiencies in some vitamins can lead to impaired cognitive function. Cognition can be defined as the ability to use information to meet the challenges of our daily lives

Although people naturally lose brain cells throughout their lives, this cell loss process does not necessarily accelerate with aging. “There is a lot of individual difference,” says neuroscientist James Joseph. “Loss of mental agility may be less due to loss of brain cells than to the cells’ failure to communicate effectively.” Joseph heads the Neuroscience Laboratory at Tufts University in Boston. Researchers are looking at how certain dietary plant compounds affect brain function. “Vitamins and minerals in plant foods provide protective antioxidants,” says Joseph. “but fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, and grains contain thousands of other types of compounds that contribute significantly to the overall dietary intake of antioxidants.”

There are three main food groups. The Canada Food Guide recommends obtaining nutrients from all three of these food sources. The chart below explains these groups and some of their functions:

Food Group	Function	% of Diet
Carbohydrates Sugar, starch, fibre	Energy source	50-60
Protein Fish, chicken, beef	Cell repair and formation,	20-25
Fat Butter, Cheese, oils	Metabolism and digestion	20-25

Here are some facts to consider.

- To lose one pound you must burn 3500 more calories than you consume. That works out to 500 calories a day to lose a pound a week.
- If you retain 100 calories a day, you will gain ten pounds a year.

### **Here are some helpful hints:**

Eat Breakfast – When you don't eat breakfast, your body will think that you are in starvation mode and will conserve calories.

Eat Low Calorie/Low Fat – Just because a particular food is low in fat does not mean you can eat as much of it as you want. Low fat may mean high in sugar so check the label.

Eat Slowly – Studies have shown that fast eaters have a tendency to gain weight. This is due in part to your brain not getting the signal of being full until it is too late.

Purge Your Pantry – It is easier to go to the cupboard to get a snack than it is to get in your car and drive to the store.

Eat Frequently – Eat smaller portions around five to six times a day.

Reduce Salt – Use seasonings instead of salt to help with blood pressure control.

Animal Meat – Limit your intake of red meat as it can contribute to high cholesterol.

### ***EXERCISE***

"Physical activity may be beneficial to cognition during early and middle periods of the human lifespan and may continue to protect against age-related loss of cognitive function during older adulthood," said Charles H. Hillman, a U. of I. professor of kinesiology and of community health and the lead author of the study, published in the current edition of the journal *Health Psychology*.

Hillman said the findings support the need to promote the benefits of regular exercise across the lifespan, beginning in childhood. And, he said, more research is needed to gain a better understanding of the relationship between physical activity and cognition for people of all ages.

The advantages of exercise not only affect what we have below the neck but it also improves memory and brain power. Physical activity improves concentration and motivation, decreases stress and anxiety and eliminates cognitive decline during old age. Motor and visual functions are also increased.

Your brain can actually get bigger and you smarter by simply moving more. The brain's frontal cortex size, responsible for executive functions is greatly increased by regular exercise probably because of an increase in blood flow.

Neuro-transmitters like serotonin and dopamine are significantly increased by exercise and these can drastically affect our moods.

Simply put exercise makes you feel better. When you feel better your performance is enhanced at all levels.

There are a number of exercise myths and I would like to touch on a few:

- There are no quick fixes – Exercise equipment that claims miracle cures want to sell you an easy fix. There are none. There is no substitute for hard work. Equipment that claims you can get six pack abs in only ten seconds a day is false.
- Muscle will turn to fat - Fat and muscle are two different types of tissue and therefore cannot change from one to another.
- It has to hurt to be effective – Many people think that it has to really hurt to be effective. Some soreness is okay but if you really hurt after a workout, you are either doing something wrong or you overdid it.
- Gym Time is Important – It is not the quantity but the quality that counts. If you are going to use a personal trainer, check their qualifications and obtain references so you are sure you get a qualified trainer.
- Muscle weighs more than fat – One pound of muscle weighs the same as one pound of fat. Muscle happens to be more dense and therefore takes up less space.

Before starting any exercise program consult your physician. You want to make sure that your heart is strong enough to sustain an increase in activity.

Your heart is a muscle and gets bigger and stronger with exercise. The only way to achieve this is to increase your heart rate. A stronger heart is more efficient and does not beat as often as a weaker heart.

I recommend at least three 30 minute aerobic workouts per week. Walking is a great activity. If you choose this, make sure you make a strong enough effort so you elevate your heart rate a minimum of twenty beats.

Besides cardio training, it is also recommended to do strength training at least two times per week. This increases lean muscle mass which burns fat.

A normal resting heart beats about sixty-eight to seventy-two beats per minute. Here is how to check your resting heart rate. Before you get up in the morning, check your pulse at your wrist just above your thumb. Count the beats for thirty seconds and double that number. This is your resting heart rate. If it is higher than seventy-two beats per minute, your heart is working too hard. In fact lowering your resting heart rate by five to ten beats per minute can add five to ten years to your life.

Based on a one hundred and fifty pound person, the chart below shows the calories burned per hour per activity. Notice how important it is to choose the right activity.

Activity	Calories Burned
Sleeping	64
Sitting	90
Walking	143
Weight Lifting	219
Biking	292
Mowing lawn	323
Aerobics	365
Gym Workout	378
Snow Shoveling	432
Running 6 mph	501
Swimming	511

### **Here are some helpful hints:**

Program your life to get you moving – Instead of driving around a parking lot looking for the closest parking space, park as far away from the entrance and walk. The extra calories burned add up over a year. Also, take the stairs instead of the elevator.

Vary the workout – A combination of aerobic training and strength training works best. Resistance training builds bone density and we need this as we get older.

Personal Trainer – If you choose this route ask for references and check to see how the person became certified.

## **STRESS**

How often are we aggravated by things that go wrong during our day? These annoyances stay with us usually throughout the night? These disruptions leading to erratic sleep patterns all have a cumulative effect on your brain, especially its ability to remember and learn.

As science gains deeper knowledge about the consequences of stress on the brain, the picture can be very pessimistic. A chronic overreaction to stress overloads the brain with powerful chemicals and can lead to damage and death of brain cells.

Cortisol, called the stress hormone, is linked to major physical problems when present for long periods of time. Stress in our lives needs to be controlled. Here are some helpful hints.

Regular Exercise	Three to four times per week has been known to relieve stress.
Regular Life	Going to bed and waking up at the same time helps when things feel as though they are getting out of control.
Diet	Eating properly and getting calories from all food groups is essential. The Canada Food Guide is a great resource.



Relax	The greatest human need is acceptance. Because of this we sometimes take on more than we can handle. It is okay to say NO.
Avoid Sugar Highs	A chocolate bar at break can give you temporary relief but it is not good long term.
Deep Breathing	Taking 10 deep breathes can help alleviate some stress.
Meditation	Twenty minutes of daily meditation is equivalent to two - three hours of regular sleep.

## ***SLEEP***

Sleep is necessary in order for our nervous system to function properly. Too little sleep can possibly cause a reduction in memory. Some scientists believe sleep gives neurons a chance to shut down and repair themselves. Without sleep, these neurons may malfunction.

During sleep our learning processes are largely inactivated. This allows the brain a chance to reorganize and store more efficiently the information we have gathered during the day.

It is recommended that we get approximately eight hours of uninterrupted sleep a night. Here are a number of suggestions to help you get a good night sleep.

- Sleep only when sleepy. This reduces the amount of time you are awake in bed.
- If you can't fall asleep within 20 minutes, get up and do something boring until you feel sleepy. Sit quietly in the dark or read the classified section of the paper. Don't turn on the lights while you are up. The light gives cues to your brain that it is time for you to wake up and you will remain alert.
- Avoid naps. This will ensure you are tired at bedtime. If you can't make it through the day without a nap, keep it to less than an hour.
- Get up and go to bed the same time every day. Even on weekends! When your sleep cycle has a regular rhythm, you will automatically start to feel better.
- Refrain from exercise at least four hours before bedtime. Regular exercise is recommended to help you sleep well, but the timing is important. Exercising in the morning or early afternoon will not interfere with sleep.
- Develop sleep rituals. It is important to give your body cues that it is time to slow down and sleep. Listen to soft music, read something soothing for 15 minutes, visualize a great day or just do something relaxing that works for you.
- Only use your bed for sleeping. Refrain from using your bed especially to watch TV, go over your bank records or read. When you do go to bed, your body knows
- Stay away from caffeine and alcohol at least four - six hours before bed. These are stimulants and interfere with your ability to fall asleep. Caffeine is found in coffee,

soft drinks, chocolate, tea, and some prescription and non-prescription drugs. Cigarettes and some drugs contain nicotine. Alcohol may seem to help you relax initially but you will wind up having a night of disturbed sleep.

- Have a light snack before bed. If your stomach is too empty, that can cause problems as well. However, if you eat a heavy meal before bedtime, that can also interfere.
- Make sure your bed and bedroom are quiet and comfortable. A hot room can be very uncomfortable. Keep the room cool and have extra blankets on hand.
- Remove cordless phones and digital alarm clocks from your bedroom. These devices emit electrical impulses that can interrupt healthy sleep patterns.

## **GENETICS**

Genes play a huge part in our longevity. This is why we all need to be aware of our family's medical history so we can notice and be aware of the danger signals and keep on top of our health.

Some diseases inherited from either your mother or father's side of the family may make you prone to certain medical conditions.

Researchers are continually studying possible genetic links to various health conditions. Recent studies conducted at the University of Florida show a possible genetic link between certain brain cells that make some people feel full faster than others after a meal. This research may help us understand the cause of obesity.

Knowing your family health history can help you take the necessary precautions and possibly prevent the onset of diseases because of your genetic makeup. Providing your family doctor with information about family conditions will help with your medical care and can help the doctor in suggesting a number of alternative lifestyle changes.

Start by creating a family health tree. Sit down with your mother and father and trace back their family medical history to see your risks. Take this information to your doctor and let him decide if further tests are required to verify your risks.

## **Chapter X**

### **WORKLIFE BALANCE**

“Things that matter most must never be at the mercy of things that matter least.” ~ Goethe

There will always be the pressures of everyday life, parents getting older, health issues, teenage children, not enough time or money, conflicting opinions or the pace of life itself.

Today we receive work emails at home, our cell phones are constantly ringing and we are addicted to our blackberries. Add to this, employers who are focused on cost containment and downsizing. Everyone is expected to do more with less.

What is Work Life Balance? When do you know you have it and when do you realize you don't? Work Life Balance is different for each person. It can vary from day to day or through different periods in your life. It can also change as your circumstances change.

Work Life Balance is a self determined state of harmony that allows you to effectively manage multiple roles and responsibilities with respect to family, work, time, money, yourself and your community. It involves your healthy contributions to each of these areas with minimal stress or negative consequences. It is the feeling of being in control by making informed decisions as opposed to forced sacrifices.

Life is about the journey and not just the destination. It is about creating a life with balance so there are slight imperfections instead of high peaks and very low valleys.

Balance means you understand the difference between being effective and being efficient. An efficient carpenter builds good houses and his workmanship is impeccable however he manages to build incorrect homes because the plans are wrong. He is efficient but not effective. The effective carpenter also provides good workmanship but builds homes to the exact specifications of the home owner.

Many times we are efficient without being effective because our priorities are wrong and we wind up expending energy on trivial and unimportant things.

Balance also involves the two most important aspects of living: enjoyment and achievement. When we can enjoy each aspect of our lives and feel a sense of fulfillment from each area, we create balance. It is all about having a sense of calm.

The benefits of life balance are many: a sense of inner peace, better health and more energy, happier with improved relationships, a feeling of personal respect and of being in control of your life. You are making life happen instead of life being a series of random uncontrollable events that cause our stress levels to go through the roof. In looking at the different areas of our lives and focusing on how we can achieve success, enjoy life and become effective individuals, there are four important concepts that are critical to achieving this balance:

### 1. **Clarify Your Expectations**

How you measure determines your degree of success. The first question to ask is, "Are my expectations realistic for myself and my family?" It is important to get achievable goals but not so lofty that they are unattainable.

### 2. **Maximize Your Results**

Are the results you have created what you really want? Are your decisions helping you achieve your goals? We can be very busy yet not accomplishing anything. Why? Because we are spending time on unimportant matters. One way to see progress is by developing a list of priorities and labelling them A, B and C. The A's are the must do's, the B's are somewhat important and the C's are nice to do but not necessary.

### 3. **Develop Good Judgement:**

Do you recognize the things that are most important in life? It is imperative to develop good analytical skills so that when life throws you a curve ball or drops something unexpectedly in your lap, you are able to make the correct decision. You do this by being principle centered, learning from each experience so that you can become stronger and better. You value the opinions of those who have travelled the same path and have faced similar obstacles.

### 4. **Create Safety Nets:**

Do you have any protection mechanisms in place? When something unexpected happens, do you have any reserve available for times of stress? Here are some guidelines to consider:

*At work are you:*

- Consistently doing good work?
- Always being a good team player?
- Always on time?

*At home do you:*

- Spend quality time with family members?
- Focus on your time at home leaving work at work?

*With money do you:*

- Have a reserve for unexpected expenses?
- Have an education fund for your children?
- Set aside money for retirement?

As you create realistic and achievable expectations it is critical to maximize your results by doing what is important. When you make good decisions, you make your life better and you take the necessary time to create safety nets for when they may be required.

Here are a number of suggestions to help you apply these four areas to the various parts of your life. I have included some questions that will help you identify your attitude toward the various areas of your life followed by a number of suggestions to help with these questions.

As you read through the following six areas of life, carefully consider the questions and be honest with yourself. Take time to evaluate the action items and develop some of your own. Decide how you are going to create an environment of enjoyment and achievement for each area.

### **1) Work**

We spend a lot of time at work but not much time thinking on how to make it better while we are there. We look at work as a burden, getting in our way of doing what we want to do. We feel by working harder there will be a reward and then get frustrated when there are none. We become complacent and just punch in time waiting to retire.

Here are some things to consider:

1. What are your expectations with regard to promotions and salary?
2. Do you see yourself in the same job for the next ten years?
3. How do you see your work performance?
4. What is your purpose for going to work each day?
5. How do you rate your decision making ability?
6. Do you create problems or provide solutions?
7. Are you a team player?
8. How much consideration would you get from your supervisor if you were faced with having to take time from work?
9. When do you plan to retire?

#### **Action Items:**

- Make sure you set reasonable goals for work and regularly check the progress of these goals.
- Evaluate your decisions and encourage feedback. Think about having a mentor.
- Go that extra mile and be the one who volunteers for projects. Always be a step ahead by anticipating problems.
- Figure out your work purpose and how you can make a contribution.
- Spend time to figure out how you can get enjoyment and achievement from work.
- When your best is good enough figure out how you can do it better and when your best is not good enough see what you can learn from the situation.
- Be strict about work/home boundaries.

### **2) Family**

We look forward to starting a family and then can't wait until the kids are ready to leave home. Once they leave we wish they were back with us. We spend most of our time with our family and the least amount working on making our family better. We spend more time trying to keep up with the neighbours and very little time focusing on our own family. We wonder why the neighbours can afford certain things and forget to be grateful for what we have in our lives.

Here are some things to consider:

1. What are the roles of each member?

2. Is the family unit getting stronger?
3. Are you a good listener?
4. Do your children have good judgement?
5. Do you have a good understanding of the problems facing your children?
6. How do you rate yourself as a parent?
7. Have you developed a protection strategy for them?
8. Do you have regular family meetings?

**Action Items:**

- Develop clear and consistent guidelines for your children and lead by example.
- Make it clear that your children come first.
- Address the behaviour, and **NOT** the individual. In other words, talk about how inappropriate something was as opposed to how inconsiderate the person is.
- Leave your work at the office.
- Decide how many times per week you eat together as a family.
- Schedule family nights.
- Teach your children to be happy, healthy and honest.

### **3) Time**

We do a lot with time; we spend it, look at it, sleep it, waste it, wonder where it went, wish we had it back or had more of it. There is one guarantee with time; there are only twenty-four hours in a day. You cannot manufacture time or wish you had more time. No one gets more than others, so it is important to be effective with the time you have.

Here are some things to consider:

1. How well are you using your available time?
2. Are you early, on time or chronically late for appointments?
3. Do you plan your days and weeks?
4. Do you feel there is never enough time?
5. Do you often feel rushed?
6. Do you live for weekends and vacations?
7. How much time do you waste?

**Action Items:**

- Use some sort of planner whether it is electronic or manual.
- Plan to be fifteen minutes early for meetings and appointments.
- Get up earlier.
- Write down everything you are doing and ask yourself: Why am I doing this? Is this a priority? Do I want to continue? We spend way too much time on trivial matters at the expense of doing things that can make a major impact on our lives.

### **4) Money**

We are happy when we have it and sad when we don't. We look for ways to make more. When we can't afford something, we use credit and then take most of our life paying it off with huge interest.

Here are some things to consider:

1. Do you live from pay check to pay check?
2. Do you have a reserve for unexpected expenses?
3. Do you know where your money is going?
4. Do you constantly acquire material things?
5. Are you happy when you have money and unhappy when you don't?
6. What are you teaching your children about money?
7. How many credit cards do you have?
8. Do you carry a balance on your credit card?
9. Do you try keeping up with the neighbours?

**Action Items:**

- Consider creating a budget.
- Monitor your spending so you have some idea where the money is going.
- Think about an allowance for your children and stick to it.
- Only buy things on credit that you know you can pay off in full when your payment is due.
- Understand the difference between wanting and needing something. Many people want but don't need.

**5) Yourself**

We continually look outward for answers and get upset when we don't find them. We look for opinions from others because we don't trust ourselves. We constantly compare ourselves with others.

Here are some things to consider:

1. How is your health?
2. How much time do you take for yourself?
3. Do you feel pulled in many directions and always in a hurry?
4. What values do you hold dearest?
5. Do you try to be perfect or do too much?
6. Are you a good role model to your children?
7. Do you have difficulty saying no?
8. Are you doing your best?
9. Do you practice what you preach?

**Action Items:**

- Assess your general lifestyle (eating, drinking, exercise habits.) Are they contributing to a healthy you?
- Devote a portion of your week to me time.
- Meditate at least three times a week for 15-30 minutes.
- List all your good qualities and figure out how to maximize them.
- Include daily rituals such as exercise.
- Read a self-help book.
- When having to say NO to a request for your time, consider these options:
  - i. I have another commitment. (Doesn't matter what it is. Just be truthful)

- ii. I don't feel qualified to do that but I may be able to suggest someone more suited. (You don't want to get in over your head and check before volunteering someone.)
- iii. I am focusing all my spare time on my family right now. (If your family suffers, so do you.)

## **6) Community**

We see problems in our community as police problems. We wait for others to do the work yet complain when it does not get done. We live in big neighbourhoods yet don't get to know our neighbours.

### ***Here are some things to consider:***

1. What is your role in your neighbourhood and your community?
2. Are you a good neighbour?
3. Do you volunteer or recycle?

### ***Action Items:***

- Decide how you want to contribute to your community.
- Get involved in some small way.
- Start a neighbourhood watch program.

## ***Wisdom***

I mentioned earlier in the book that knowledge is not power, wisdom is. Wisdom is the ability to make proper choices concerning the most important things in your life. We all know not to burn the candle at both ends or not to spend your money as fast as you earn it. Some other decisions are more personal:

- Will I work late on this project or go home?
- Will I work through lunch or take a break?
- Will we send the children to private school?
- Will we get a new car or a bigger home?

These are questions we all face during our lives and having the ability to use proper judgement is critical to balance.

Here are some considerations:

1. ***EVALUATE***. Look at what life has taught you each day and become better from these experiences. Decide what things worked for you and those that didn't. Remember that insanity is doing the same thing over and over and expecting a different result. The only way to learn is to be receptive to new ideas. Drop your ego because it only gets in the way.
2. ***EDUCATE***. Devote time each day to becoming a better person. Study the wise people of this world and apply their guiding principles. Ask questions and read as much as possible. None of us will ever know everything and that is a good thing. Life would be very boring.



3. **EVOLVE**. Devote your life to personal development and growth. Do something everyday that makes you better. Approach each day looking forward to becoming more than what you are now.

Here are a number of wise quotes.

"I do not think much of a man who is not wiser today than he was yesterday." ~ *Abe Lincoln*

"Wise men talk because they have something to say; fools, because they have to say something." ~ *Plato*

"Strategic planning is worthless -- unless there is first a strategic vision." ~ *John Naisbitt*

"He that never changes his opinions, never corrects his mistakes, will never be wiser on the morrow than he is today." ~ *Tryon Edwards*

"Too bad that all the people who really know how to run the country are busy driving taxi cabs and cutting hair." ~ *George Burns*

By three methods we may learn wisdom: First, by reflection, which is noblest; second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest. ~ *Confucius*

The only true wisdom is in knowing you know nothing. ~ *Socrates*

The serenity prayer puts life in perspective. Here is a part of that verse.

God grant me the serenity to  
accept the things I cannot change;  
the courage to change the things I can;  
and the wisdom to know the difference.

The chart below will give you a very simple approach to your day so you create balance. Carefully study each part of your day and reflect on how you can initiate calmness and also bring peace to what some may call a difficult day.

DRIVE TO WORK	Visualize a great day. If you can see a great day you can make it happen. See yourself calmly approaching each task. Listen to upbeat music. Plan being fifteen minutes early.
WORK DAY	Combine pleasant and unpleasant activities. If allowed listen to some good music while you work. Create a fun environment and be helpful. See interruptions as opportunities to help.
LUNCH	Plan a light lunch (sandwich, fruit and raw vegetables.) Brown bag it as much as possible.
DRIVE	Focus on what you did right. Look forward to a relaxing evening with

HOME	those you love.
EVENING	Focus on creating enjoyment and doing something with family or friends.
BED TIME	Focus on your positive outcomes, on what you learned and how you can improve.

Here is a six step plan to get you moving towards life balance:

### **1) Devote Time to Yourself**

You cannot do well if you don't feel good. Being the most successful person in the graveyard is not a goal you want to strive for. Here are some helpful ideas:

- Be a better human being. Get up earlier and work on your character. Re-connect with yourself and your dreams. Re-write your negative beliefs by dusting off your clouded lens.
- Keep a Journal. Jot down new ideas and note negative emotions and uncover the reasons for them.
- Plan Fun & Relaxation. Leave your work at work. Guard your private time and learn to say NO. Develop a passion and release mechanism that will keep you in balance.
- Write Your Own Eulogy. How do you want to be remembered? This can give you great perspective on how to become the best you can be.

### **2) Cherish Family & Friends**

The most important asset we all have, besides ourselves, is our family and friends.

Here are some ideas:

- Continually build your relationships. They can be a strong support system if ever needed.
- Schedule family time. This includes one-on-one time with your children. Get to know their likes and dislikes.
- Show Appreciation. The greatest human need is acceptance while the greatest fear is rejection. Remind those who are close to you how much you love them.

### **3) Discover What Truly Matters**

Most of us learn how to live when it is too late. If you fail to plan you plan to fail. The things that get scheduled are the things that get done. Here are some ideas to think about:

- Develop a Philosophy Statement. How do you want to live your life? Write goal statements for each of the areas of your life (work, family, time, money, yourself and your community).
- Write down your top ten priorities. These could include family, job, recreation, community, hobbies and travel. Now drop all activities not included in this top ten. Devote your full attention to each activity because if you chase two rabbits at the same time, you probably won't catch either of them.

- Develop a Plan. Start with a twenty or thirty year plan and work backwards until you have a weekly and daily plan.
- Write Power Points. Include things like: family first, learn something new each day, challenge myself and always do my best.

#### **4) Enjoy the Journey**

Life is NOT about the destination but the ride. As Zig Ziglar says, “It is not so important what you get by achieving your goals but what you become.” Here are some ideas:

- Develop a Gratitude List. Write down all the things you are grateful for.
- Celebrate Life. Take time to just enjoy all that life brings including the rain and the snow. There are many people would love to experience these things if they could.

#### **5) Have Fun**

Discover your passion and your release. Your passion is what you can get really excited about. Your release is what you do for relaxation. Here are some ideas:

- Do Something Different. Our brain cells crave novelty and grow when challenged.
- Laugh. Inject humour into your life. One minute of laughter boosts our immune system for twenty four hours.

#### **6) Practice Giving**

One of the greatest gifts we can give ourselves is to make others happy. Figure out how you can make an impact. Life is not just doing something but being someone. Here are several ideas:

- Consider being a mentor. Great pleasure can be derived by helping others with your wisdom and experience.
- Volunteer – how can you help others?

The building blocks of life balance are contained in the five P’s: Purpose, Passion, Power, Principles and Perspective.

- PURPOSE. Discover why you are here. Why do you get out of bed in the morning? What is your reason for living? What do you want to achieve?
- PASSION. What excites you about life? What activities give you the most enjoyment?
- POWER. What are your strengths? What do you do well? How are you using these strengths to make your life better?
- PRINCIPLES. What are your core values? What basic beliefs do you hold dear to your heart and never compromise?
- PERSPECTIVE. What are the most important things in your life? Remember, you can have anything you want, just not everything you want.

There are 2 important concepts not only for yourself but to teach your children.  
The 2 concepts are:

**1) Delayed Gratification**  
**2) Growth Mindset**

Delayed gratification is the act of resisting an impulse to take an immediately available reward in the hope of obtaining a more-valued reward in the future. The ability to delay gratification is essential to self-regulation, or self-control.

Studies show that delayed gratification is one of the most effective personal traits of successful people. People who learn how to manage their need to be satisfied in the moment thrive more in their careers, relationships, health, and finances than people who give in to it.

Being able to delay satisfaction isn't the easiest skill to acquire. It involves feeling dissatisfied, which is why it seems impossible for people who haven't learned to control their impulses. Choosing to have something now might feel good, but making the effort to have discipline and manage your impulses can result in bigger or better rewards in the future. Over time, delaying gratification will improve your self-control and ultimately help you achieve your long-term goals faster.

A well-known study conducted at Stanford University in the 1960s explains a lot about why it's beneficial to delay gratification. In the study, children were placed in a room with one marshmallow on a plate. The lead researcher gave the children an easy instruction: You can eat the marshmallow now, or wait 15 minutes and receive two marshmallows. The researchers found that the children who were able to wait for the second marshmallow without eating the first one scored higher on standardized tests, had better health, and were less likely to have behavior problems.

Consider the results of this study, and think about yourself and your actions. Are you able to wait for things you really want, even if it involves sacrificing pleasure and satisfaction now? Do you make decisions based on your life purpose or on what feels good now? Do you sometimes give up too soon? Can you think of a time when you accomplished a difficult task? How did it make you feel about yourself? What were the results of waiting?

The tolerance you exhibit when waiting for something you want says a lot about you. If there's something you want to buy, will you save now to pay with cash later, or pay with a credit card now and pay yourself back later? If you started school or own your own business and aren't seeing the rewards yet, will you keep going or give up when the going gets tough?

Think about it: The things in life that bring us immediate gratification, like food, drugs, gambling, sex, screaming from anger, or using our credit cards don't necessarily bring out the best in us. They just ease our discomfort for the moment. This is why we need to teach our children to work for things and to value a good work ethic. Having a child put their hand out and a parent just hand over money teaches children to be lazy, not value their talents and underestimate their ability.

The concept of a **growth mindset** was developed by psychologist Carol Dweck and popularized in her book, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (**I HIGHLY RECOMMEND THIS BOOK**). In recent years, many schools and educators have started using Dweck's theories to inform how they teach students.

A mindset, according to Dweck, is a self-perception or “self-theory” that people hold about themselves. Believing that you are either “intelligent” or “unintelligent” is a simple example of a mindset. People may also have a mindset related their personal or professional lives—“I’m a good teacher” or “I’m a bad parent,” for example. People can be aware or unaware of their mindsets, according to Dweck, but they can have profound effect on learning achievement, skill acquisition, personal relationships, professional success, and many other dimensions of life.

Dweck's educational work centers on the distinction between “fixed” and “growth” mindsets. According to Dweck, “In a fixed mindset, people believe their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. They spend their time documenting their intelligence or talent instead of developing them. They also believe that talent alone creates success—without effort.” Dweck's research suggests that students who have adopted a fixed mindset—the belief that they are either “smart” or “dumb” and there is no way to change this, for example—may learn less than they could or learn at a slower rate, while also shying away from challenges (since poor performance might either confirm they can't learn, if they believe they are “dumb,” or indicate that they are less intelligent than they think, if they believe they are “smart”). Dweck's findings also suggest that when students with fixed mindsets fail at something, as they inevitably will, they tend to tell themselves they can't or won't be able to do it (“I just can't learn Algebra”), or they make excuses to rationalize the failure (“I would have passed the test if I had had more time to study”).

Alternatively, “In a growth mindset, people believe that their most basic abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just the starting point. This view creates a love of learning and a resilience that is essential for great accomplishment,” writes Dweck. Students who embrace growth mindsets—the belief that they can learn more or become smarter if they work hard and persevere—may learn more, learn it more quickly, and view challenges and failures as opportunities to improve their learning and skills.

The conclusions based on Dweck's research are:

1. Praising effort is much more effective than praising the result.
2. Failure is part of the process.
3. Teaching children that life is about growth and learning.
4. Children with a growth mindset and praised on effort are okay with failure, see mistakes as learning opportunities, encourage feedback and gravitate to harder tasks.
5. Children with a fixed mindset and praised on intelligence or results dislike failure, look for the easy road, do not like negative feedback and are under achievers.

There are also a number of other mistakes some parents make. Below is a list with the top 3 being the most severe and cause the most problems. This is what the experts have determined.

<b>JUDGING</b>	No one likes to be told they are wrong even adults. Saying things like, "That's where you're wrong," creates pushback. It is much more effective if parents can get to the root of the problem.
<b>YELLING</b>	Raising your voice will cause children to shut down. Getting down to their level and figuring out a solution is what will work.
<b>FORCING</b>	Even adults don't like to be told they have to do something and studies have shown that when you force a child they tend to do the opposite.
<b>DERAILING</b>	Saying things like, "Yea Yea I heard that before," undermines your child's opportunity to explain a particular situation
<b>MINDREADING</b>	It works better if parents deal with the facts instead of attempting to read their children's mind.
<b>ORDERING</b>	Saying something like, "Go to your room," is just ineffective because you are saying I want you around when you are good but not around when you are not.
<b>THREATENING</b>	Phrases like, "You'll be sorry," can only push children away.
<b>MORALIZING</b>	Saying things like, "Nice girls don't do that implies that your daughter is not a nice girl and focuses on the child and NOT the behaviour.
<b>COMPARING</b>	Phrases like, "If only you were smart like your sister," implies they are stupid and can destroy a child's self-esteem.
<b>INEFFECTIVE PRAISE</b>	Praising on result instead of effort can lead to all kinds of problems.
<b>PITY</b>	Using words like, "Poor baby," is just not effective when dealing with an issue. Talking about feelings is though.
<b>SHAMING</b>	Labelling or saying things like, "You are disgusting," does more harm than good.
<b>INTERROGATING</b>	Saying, "Where were you last night," is the wrong way to start a conversation. Saying , "Tell me about last night is much better.
<b>DENYING</b>	Ignoring a problem or not allowing your child to express their feelings can lead to all sorts of problems. Encourage your children to talk about their feelings.

In addition to these concepts I want to bring your attention to the 10 biggest mistakes parents make.

1. **Don't let their children experience risk.** – Too often parents want to shelter their children hiding them from the world and its dangers when the reality is that it is the lessons we learn along the way that is so important.
2. **Rescue them too quickly.** – Parents tend to jump in too quickly and do the things their children are quite capable of doing themselves.
3. **Praise too easily.** – Some parents tend to praise for everything and anything leading their children to underachieve or think they are better than others.
4. **Let guilt get in the way.** –. All parents want the best for their children but parenting from guilt can lead to making the wrong decisions.
5. **Don't share their past mistakes.** – Letting your children know about your mistakes can be a big teachable moment in your child's life.
6. **They mistake intellect and talent for maturity.** – A child's brain doesn't fully develop until around 25 so maturity cannot be equated to talent or skill.
7. **Don't practice what they preach.** – It's the same old cliché. We expect our children to behave a certain way but we don't follow the same rules. It would be very difficult to justify punishing your children for smoking when you are a smoker.
8. **They put our children on a pedestal.** – Some parents set their children up for failure because they teach them they are better than others and cannot make mistakes. When you put your child on a pedestal they feel they cannot make a mistake and while you are looking up at them they are looking down at others.
9. **They give them too much without them working for it.** – Too many children do not understand the value of hard work. All they need to do is ask and they get it. Accomplishments build self-esteem and confidence so teach your children to work for what they get.
10. **They argue with children present** – The 2 biggest rules are:
  - NEVER ARGUE IN FRONT OF CHILDREN.
  - DON'T INVOLVE THEM IN ADULT MATTERS.When children see parents argue they somehow feel it is their fault and place the blame on themselves. This leads to low self-esteem and anxiety.

## Chapter XI

### PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

“Change is inevitable. Progress is optional.” ~ Anonymous

Psychologists tell us that there are four stages of learning. All of us go through each of these stages and some of us spend more time than others at each of the stages. This depends on our aptitude at particular skills and our willingness to learn. It also depends on how well we can put aside our ego and listen to what people and experience tell us. Let's look at these stages by examining what happens as we become exposed to the skill of driving a car.

#### ***Stage 1 - Unconscious Incompetence:***

This occurs when you are unfamiliar with driving. You have no idea of the skills required. You are not even aware of driving. It does not even appear as a blip on your radar screen. The word ignorance could apply here.

#### ***Stage 2 - Conscious Incompetence:***

This happens when you become aware of the skill of driving. You know that there is some skill involved but you still have no idea how to drive.

#### ***Stage 3 - Conscious Competence:***

People at this stage understand and know how to drive but they are beginners. They are novices. These people can drive but it takes a tremendous amount of focus while driving. This is why many people have accidents during their first few years of driving. Their attention wanders and they get themselves in trouble. They are not skilled drivers.

#### ***Stage 4 - Unconscious Competence:***

People at this stage drive effortlessly because of the practice. They have spent countless hours behind the wheel of a car and are automatically programmed to perform certain skills like turning on indicator lights, looking over their shoulders while changing lanes or checking the rear view mirror. They have conditioned themselves and are practically on auto pilot. These people can sometimes get from one place to another and be unaware of part of the journey.

In order to reach the fourth stage, we must spend a lot of time practicing. Repetition is vital to achievement but practice is only a partial solution. The crucial factor is to practice the skill perfectly every time. It may take hundreds, perhaps even thousands of times to attain perfection. If you have a flaw in your drive while playing golf, you can repeat this flawed drive for eternity yet you will only become an expert at a flawed golf drive. Doing it incorrectly again and again becomes your competence. The rehearsal has to be done correctly and flawlessly.

So whether it is a new skill, behaviour or thought, the key to success is repetition. Practice until it becomes automatic and habitual. That then will become your comfort zone.



## Final Thoughts

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It is important to unconditionally accept that we inhabit this planet called Earth, to rise above negative thinking and live a life filled with unlimited love, joy, and happiness. That is the true power of the human spirit. Promise yourself to make every moment special; live each day as though it is a miracle, because it is just that.

Take time to look back at your past and learn from your mistakes. Look to a bright future full of promise yet take time to live in the present because it is that moment that is eternal. There will always be a “now.” Continually show appreciation and be grateful for the bountiful life you are living, especially for what you have become.

Maintain a proper focus that helps you give love and respect to everyone you encounter and especially be gentle with yourself. Practice the art of forgiveness, because anger is a useless emotion. It eats you up from the inside out and solves nothing. Treat everyone the way you would want to be treated, and endeavor to have everyone you meet feel better because they have met you, not in spite of having met you.

Don Henley of the Eagles wrote in his song *Already Gone*, “Well I know it wasn’t you who held me down. Heaven knows it wasn’t you who set me free. So oftentimes it happens that we live our lives in chains, and we never even know we have the key.”

There are two aspects of life that build us up or break us down. There are our toxic thoughts that bring negativity into our lives and there are toxic people who can drag us down to their level. If we are to believe that our thoughts.

and emotions have an influence in our lives, it is to our benefit that we choose the right people to share them with. The reality of life is that negative thinking is useless mental energy. I remember a comment from someone saying, “What other people think of you is really none of your business.” We are all in this together, striving to make the world a better place.

So your mission is not to sleepwalk through life but to wake up and truly experience the beauty of living. Having a goal of inner wisdom teaches patience. Tranquility happens when we open up to a world of possibilities.

You have traveled the road towards mental, physical, and spiritual wellness. Now you know that life can be whatever you choose it to be. Take time to create the reality you want and reap the rewards of your effort.

Your journey with me is now complete, and your job with yourself is just beginning. We have traveled the road of mental, physical and spiritual awareness. Life cannot be lived to its fullest without the careful blending of all three working together in harmony. When this is accomplished, life balance is created and you achieve a level of peace and tranquility. Use the knowledge from these three books as a stepping stone to bigger and better things, and you will learn the secret to self mastery and success on all levels.

## THE SEED

The best way to summarize this book is by the following story:

A successful business man was growing old and wanted to choose a successor for his business. He decided to do something different so he called a meeting of his your executives.

He said, "It is time for me to step down and choose the next CEO. I have decided to choose one of you." The young executives were shocked but the boss continued, "I am going to give each one of you a SEED today, one special SEED. I want you to plant the seed, water it, and come back here one year from today with what you have grown from the seed I have given you. I will then judge the plants that you bring, and the one whose plant I choose will be the next CEO."

One man named Jim was there that day and he also, received a seed. He went home and told his wife the story. She helped him get a pot, soil and compost and he planted the seed. Everyday, he would water it and watch to see if it had grown. After about three weeks, some of the other executives began to talk about their seeds and the plants that were beginning to grow.

Jim kept checking his seed but nothing ever grew. Three weeks, four weeks, five weeks went by, still nothing. By now, others were talking about their plants, but Jim didn't have a plant and he felt like a failure.

Six months went by -- still nothing in Jim's pot. He knew he had killed his seed. Everyone had trees and tall plants, but he had nothing. Jim didn't say anything to his colleagues however, he just kept watering and fertilizing the soil.

A year finally went by and all the young executives of the company brought their plants to the CEO for inspection. Jim told his wife that he wasn't going to take an empty pot.

But she asked him to be honest about what happened. Jim felt sick to his stomach, it was going to be the most embarrassing moment of his life, but he knew his wife was right. He took his empty pot to the board room. When Jim arrived, he was amazed at the variety of plants grown by the other executives. They were beautiful, in all shapes and sizes. Jim put his empty pot on the floor and many of his colleagues laughed, a few felt sorry for him!

When the CEO arrived, he surveyed the room and greeted his young executives. Jim just tried to hide in the back. "My, what great plants, trees, and flowers you have grown," said the CEO. "Today one of you will be appointed the next CEO!"

All of a sudden, the CEO spotted Jim at the back of the room with his empty pot. He ordered the Financial Director to bring him to the front. Jim was terrified. He thought, "The CEO knows I'm a failure! Maybe he will have me fired!"

The CEO asked Jim what had happened to his seed. Jim told him the story. The CEO asked everyone to sit down except Jim. He looked at Jim and then announced to the young executives, "Behold your next Chief Executive Officer! His name is Jim!" Jim couldn't believe it. Jim couldn't even grow his seed. "How could he be the new CEO?" the others said.

Then the CEO said, "One year ago today, I gave everyone in this room a seed. I told you to take the seed, plant it, water it, and bring it back to me today. But I gave you all boiled seeds; they were dead, it was not possible for them to grow.

All of you, except Jim, have brought me trees and plants and flowers. When you found that the seed would not grow, you substituted another seed for the one I gave you. Jim was the only one with the courage and honesty to bring me a pot with my seed in it. Therefore, he is the one who will be the new Chief Executive Officer!"

Here is the moral of the story.

- If you plant honesty, you will reap trust.
- If you plant goodness, you will reap friends.
- If you plant humility, you will reap greatness.
- If you plant perseverance, you will reap contentment.
- If you plant consideration, you will reap perspective.
- If you plant hard work, you will reap success.
- If you plant forgiveness, you will reap reconciliation.

*"Whatever You Give To Life, Life Gives You Back"* So, be careful what you plant now; it will determine what you will reap later.

**"Never give up your right to be wrong, because then you will lose the ability to learn new things and move forward with your life."** John Di Lemme & Norman Hanley

There is a lot of self-help material published. You can fill your head with empowering thoughts and information. Knowledge is knowing the right thing to do but it is not power. Wisdom is power because wisdom is actually doing the right thing.

In the words of Don Henley, lead singer of the Eagles. "So often times it happens that we live our lives in chains and we never really know we have the key." I believe that each and every person has the ability to be whatever they choose. Just decide what's important in your life and work hard to make your dreams come true.

Now go back to the beginning of Chapter I and see how you would handle those pet peeves differently now that you have a new set of coping skills.

**GOOD LUCK!!!!!!!!!!**

## **APPENDIX**

## Suggested Reading

Albom, Mitch. Tuesdays with Morrie

Carlson, Richard. Don't Sweat the Small Stuff

Cialdini, Robert. Influence, The Psychology of Persuasion

Covey, Stephen. The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People

Dyer, Dr. Wayne. The Power of Intention.

Frankl, Victor. Man's Search for Meaning

Goleman, Daniel. Emotional Intelligence

Johnson, Spencer. Who Moved My Cheese

Kubler-Ross, Elisabeth. Life Lessons

Kyne, Peter. The Go-Getter

Lipton, Bruce. The Biology of Belief

McColl, Peggy. Your Destiny Switch

McGraw, Philip. Life Strategies

Morgenstern, Julie. Making Work Work

MacDonald, Susan Manion. Balance, Nature's Way to Heal Your Body.

McKay Matthew, Martha Davis, Patrick Fanning. Messages The Communications Skills Handbook.

Ray, James Arthur. The Science of Success

Sharma, Robin. Discover Your Destiny

Tolle, Eckard. The Power of Now.

Urban, Hal. Life's Greatest Lessons

## **What is success?**

Success is closing the door to your office at the end of the day with a smile of satisfied contentment crossing your face. It's knowing that you did a good job and that those who interacted with you had a positive experience.

Success is looking to getting home and seeing the people you love. It's being mentally and emotionally free to share yourself with them and to be interested in them.

Success is sitting down to pay the bills and knowing that you have enough money to cover them, this month *and* next month.

Success is knowing where to turn when it seems that there's nowhere to turn. Having a spiritual life is akin to eating food and drinking water.

Success is having interests or hobbies to call your own. It's things that you personally anticipate doing again and again. Having interests gives you joy and peace.

Success is waking up in the morning and feeling good. It's knowing that you eat right and exercise regularly to ensure continued good health.

Success is turning out the lights, slipping under the covers, and thinking to yourself, "It just doesn't get any better than this!" It's whispering a prayer of gratitude to your Creator before you fall into a deep, restful sleep.

What success isn't?

Success isn't calling home from work for the fourth time this week, apologizing because you're going to miss dinner with the family again.

Success isn't hurrying into the house and hiding behind closed doors or the television set because "After the day I've had, I need my space!"

Success isn't having all the riches in the world and still trying to figure out how to have *more* of all the riches in the world.

Success isn't physically going to worship service and mentally writing a to-do list for when you get home.

Success isn't burning the candle at both ends and living on a diet of food that's delivered through little windows

Success isn't spending mental energy figuring out how to explain why your project isn't going to come in on time, why you have to miss your child's school play, why you can't pay the bill in full as you promised, why your eyes are red and your blood pressure is going through the roof, why you're cancelling your golf game, and why you just don't find any joy in living.

Taken from "Success for Dummies" by Zig Ziglar

## **Personality test**

**Answer these questions then tally your score on the next page.**

1. When do you feel your best?

a) in the morning b) during the afternoon & early evening c) late at night

2. You usually walk...

a) fairly fast, with long steps b) fairly fast, with little steps c) less fast head up, looking the world in the face d) less fast, head down e) very slowly

3. When talking to people you...

a) stand with your arms folded b) have your hands clasped c) have one or both your hands on your hips d) touch or push the person to whom you are talking e) play with your ear, touch your chin, or smooth your hair

4. When relaxing, you sit with...

a) your knees bent with your legs neatly side by side b) your legs crossed c) your legs stretched out or straight d) one leg curled under you

5. When something really amuses you, you react with...

a) big appreciated laugh b) a laugh, but not a loud one c) a quiet chuckle d) a sheepish smile

6. When you go to a party or a social you.

a) make a loud entrance so everyone notices you b) make a quiet entrance, looking around for someone you know c) make the quietest entrance, trying to stay unnoticed.

7. You're working very hard, concentrating very hard, and you're interrupted, you.....

a) welcome the break b) feel extremely irritated c) vary between these two extremes

8. Which of these colors do you like most?

a) Red or orange b) black c) yellow or light blue d) green e) dark blue or purple f) white g) brown or grey

9. When you are in bed at night, in those last few moments before going to sleep, you are....

a) stretched out on your back b) stretched out face down on your stomach c) on your side slightly curled d) with your head on one arm e) with your head under the covers

10. You often dream that you are...

a) Falling b) fighting or struggling c) searching for something or somebody d) flying or floating e) you usually have dreamless sleep f) your dreams are always pleasant

POINTS:

1. (a) 2 (b) 4 (c) 6
2. (a) 6 (b) 4 (c) 7 (d) 2 (e) 1
3. (a) 4 (b) 2 (c) 5 (d) 7 (e) 6
4. (a) 4 (b) 6 (c) 2 (d) 1
5. (a) 6 (b) 4 (c) 3 (d) 5 (e) 2
6. (a) 6 (b) 4 (c) 2
7. (a) 6 (b) 2 (c) 4
8. (a) 6 (b) 7 (c) 5 (d) 4 (e) 3 (f) 2 (g) 1
9. (a) 7 (b) 6 (c) 4 (d) 2 (e) 1
10. (a) 4 (b) 2 (c) 3 (d) 5 (e) 6 (f) 1

Now add up the total number of points and refer to the explanation below.

**OVER 60 POINTS:** Others see you as someone they should "handle with care." You're seen as vain, self-centered, and who is extremely dominant. Others may admire you, wishing they could be more like you, but don't always trust you, hesitating to become too deeply involved with you.

**51 TO 60 POINTS:** Others see you as an exciting, highly volatile, rather impulsive person who's quick to make decisions, though not always the right ones. They see you as bold and adventuresome, someone who will try anything once; someone who takes chances and enjoys an adventure. They enjoy being in your company because of the excitement you radiate.

**41 TO 50 POINTS:** Others see you as fresh, lively, charming, amusing, practical, and always interesting; someone who's constantly in the center of attention, but sufficiently well-balanced not to let it go to their head. They also see you as kind, considerate, and understanding; someone who'll always cheer them up and help them out.

**31 TO 40 POINTS:** Others see you as sensible, cautious, careful and practical. They see you as clever, gifted, or talented, but modest. Not a person who makes friends too quickly or easily, but someone who's extremely loyal to friends you do make and who expect the same loyalty in return. Those who really get to know you realize it takes a lot to shake your trust in your friends, but equally that it takes you a long time to get over if broken.

**21 TO 30 POINTS:** Your friends see you as painstaking and fussy. They see you as very cautious, extremely careful, a slow and steady plodder, looking at everything carefully from every angle and then, usually decide against it. They think this reaction is caused partly by your careful nature. It would really surprise them if you ever did something impulsively or on the spur of the moment

**UNDER 21 POINTS:** People think you are shy, nervous, and indecisive; someone who needs looking after, who always wants someone else to make the decisions and who doesn't want anyone or anything! They see you as a worrier who always sees problems that don't exist. Some people think you're boring. Only those who know you well know that you aren't.



## 1000 Marbles – author unknown

The older I get, the more I enjoy Saturday mornings. Perhaps it's the quiet solitude that comes with being the first to rise, or maybe it's the unbounded joy of not having to be at work. Either way, I find the first few hours of a Saturday morning are the most enjoyable.

A few weeks ago, I was shuffling toward the backyard patio with a steaming cup of coffee in one hand and the morning paper in the other. What began as a typical Saturday morning, turned into one of those lessons that life seems to hand you from time to time. Let me take a few minutes of your time and tell you.

I turned the dial up to listen to a Saturday morning talk show. I heard an older sounding gentleman, with a golden voice. You know the kind, he sounded like he should be in the broadcasting business. He was telling whoever he was talking with something about "a thousand marbles". I was intrigued and stopped to listen to what he had to say.

"Well, Tom, it sure sounds like you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. Hard to believe you should have to work 60 or 70 hours a week to make ends meet. Too bad you missed your daughter's dance recital."

He continued, "Let me tell you something Tom, something that has helped me keep a good perspective on life and my own priorities."

And that's when he began to explain his theory of a "thousand marbles." "You see, I sat down one day and did a little arithmetic. The average person lives about 75 years. I know, some live more and some live less, but on average, most people usually live to be around 75 years." "I multiplied 75 times 52 and I came up with 3900 which is the number of Saturdays that the average person has in their entire lifetime. Stick with me Tom, I'm getting to the important part." "It took me until I was fifty-five years old to think about all this in any detail", he went on, "and by that time I had lived through over 2800 Saturdays. I got to thinking that if I lived to be 75, I only had about a 1000 of them left to enjoy."

"So I went to a toy store and bought every marble they had. I ended up having to visit three toy stores to round-up 1000 marbles. I took them home and put them in a large, clear plastic container right here in the shack next to my gear. Every Saturday since then, I have taken one marble out and thrown it away." "I found by watching the marbles diminish, I focused more on the really important things in life. There is nothing like watching your time on earth run out to get your priorities straight."

"Now let me tell you one last thing before I sign-off with you and take my lovely wife out for breakfast. This morning, I took the very last marble out of the container. I figure if I make it until next Saturday then I have been given a little extra time. And the one thing we can all use these days is a little more time." It was nice to meet you Tom, I hope you spend more time with your family, and I hope to meet you again.

You could have heard a pin drop on the radio when this fellow signed off. He gave us all a lot to think about. I had planned to work that morning. Instead, I went upstairs and woke my wife up with a kiss. "C'mon honey, I'm taking you and the kids to breakfast this morning." "What brought this on?" she asked with a smile. "Oh, nothing special, it's just been a while since we spent a Saturday together with the kids. Hey, can we stop at a toy store while we're out? I need to buy some marbles."

## DESIDERATA ~ Max Ehrmann

"Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible, without surrender, be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly, and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant. They too have their story.

Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter, for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble, it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is. Many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love, for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the council of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself.

Therefore, be at peace with God, whatever you conceive him to be. And whatever your labours and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace with your soul. With all its sham, drudgery, and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy."

## QUOTES

"None will improve your lot if you yourself do not." - **Bertolt Brecht**

"We either make ourselves miserable, or we make ourselves strong. The amount of work is the same." - **Carlos Castaneda**

"A person who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new." – **Albert Einstein**

"Success is the ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm." – **Sir Winston Churchill**

"Your life becomes the thing you have decided it shall be." – **Raymond Charles Barker**

"The tragedy in life doesn't lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach." – **Benjamin Mays**

"Don't carry a grudge. While you're carrying a grudge, the other guy's out dancing." – **Buddy Hackett**

"Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." – **Albert Einstein**

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Gary Summers is a professional hypnotist, hypnotherapist, author and speaker with an undergraduate degree in Education(Psychology) a Masters Degree in Exercise Physiology as well as certifications in hypnotherapy and cognitive behaviour therapy.

He conducts workshops on Stress, Work-Life Balance and Personal Empowerment as well as hypnosis seminars on stop smoking and weight loss.

We contributes a weekly wellness segment on VOCM every Monday at 2:50 called MINDBODY SOUL.

Gary has developed a number of school programs including “Discover the Magic Within You – Say No to Drugs,” where he uses magic to teach school children proper choices concerning smoking, drinking and drugs, and “Life Skills for Students,” where he prepares high school students for life after school.

He works closely with the RCMP and delivers a program called “Kids and Drugs,” which helps parents guide their children through adolescence by offering ideas and strategies about communications, effective problem solving and helping them make good decisions.

Gary also conducts personal and corporate fitness assessments and evaluations

Gary is owner of training4success, a company specializing in corporate training and employee evaluations. You can obtain more information by visiting his website at **[www.garysummers.ca](http://www.garysummers.ca)**



Ever had an A ha moment. You know the kind when that little voice in your head goes WOW!!!! I never really thought about life like that. It doesn't happen very often but when it does it can change your life.

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From understanding how our brains work, to creating more happiness. From achieving our life goals to creating life balance, Gary takes us on an incredible journey of self-discovery by examining our conscious awareness and subconscious programming.

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Imagine being able to change the beliefs that limit you into beliefs that support you. Learn to reprogram the software of your mind so you can change the printout of your life.

Gary's message is about creating awareness of our thoughts because he says, "When you change the way you think about things, the things you think about change. and creating