

Do This!

Be That!

Written by

Nicholas Townsend Smith

©Nicholas Townsend Smith, 2009. All rights reserved. None of the materials provided in this book may be used, reproduced or transmitted, in whole or in part, in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or the use of any information storage and retrieval system without permission in writing from Nicholas Townsend Smith. To request such permission and for further inquiries, contact Nicholas Townsend Smith, West Jordan, UT, 84088, USA. (Nick@ntsmotivations.com; Telephone: (+1) 801-280-4895)

Acknowledgements.....	4
Introduction: The Why Behind This Book.....	5
Chapter 1: Defining the Desire.....	8
Being Clear.....	11
Building Your Dream or Someone Else’s—Where Do You Fit In?.....	13
Finding What Truly is in Alignment with You—Is It What You Really Want?.....	15
Passion for What You Do is the Key to Success.....	16
Chapter 2: Accountability.....	18
Only I Can Be Accountable for Me and My Decisions.....	18
Perspectives—Actuality vs. Reality.....	22
History and Perspective.....	25
Cutting Through the Filters—Defining Filters and Labels.....	29
Taking It to the Source.....	31
The Four Quadrants of Outcome.....	32
Being Accountable.....	37
Chapter 3: Persistence.....	38
Swim Upstream—How to Move Forward When Everyone Else is Panicking....	39
Daily Steps to Affirmations.....	42
Language of Increase.....	44
Diligence.....	46
Committed Action.....	48
Chapter 4: Trust.....	51
Universal Order/Chain Thesis.....	51
Taking Risks/Intention.....	54
Attracting What I Desire into My Life.....	56
Chapter 5: Networking.....	62
Morphic Fields.....	63
Connecting the Network.....	64
Success by Association (The Rule of Five).....	65

Chapter 6: Synergy and Collective Action.....	68
The Ox and Candy Guess.....	69
Mastermind Groups.....	70
Chapter 7: Choices.....	72
Operating from Zero Point.....	72
Accountability for Choices.....	74
Chapter 8: Giving.....	76
Receiving.....	79
Gratitude.....	82
Chapter 9: Perpetuation.....	85
The Law of the Tenth.....	88
Chapter 10: Operating in Balance.....	91
Looking Inward to see Outward.....	95
Chapter 11: Do This! Be That!.....	98
Afterword: Who Am I?.....	102
I am no Different from You.....	105
Citations.....	106
Bibliography.....	108
Index.....	109

Acknowledgements

To my wife Amanda for her patience and absolute support in the undertaking of this project. To Deana Leighton of Cinnabar Media for the inspirations and insights into life. And to each of you who has believed in me and taught me your perspectives of life through your actions and choices. I thank each of you for your thoughts and prayers.

Introduction

The Why Behind This Book

I was pondering the “hows” that got me to where I am today. I found there were common themes that kept popping up for me and have been key contributors to my success.

“Do This! Be That!” is just that. The “That” for each person is different. Each of us has our own goals and motivations and although some may be similar, they will never be exactly the same. Doing the “This” as I show it in this book will assist you in reaching the “That,” whatever “That” is. By following the principles found in this book, you can reach your dreams, whatever they might be. You can accomplish anything.

I have had a passion for writing and feel it’s now time to introduce my unique perspective to the world. I know that although there are similarities in what I teach to what you have learned from other great teachers, it has never been taught by me, until now. This is what makes my work so great. It is another broadening perspective of the grand and confusing picture we call life.

My goal is to inspire you into your absolute greatness. I know that within each of us is the power to do anything. You see, I feel that we all come from greatness, are born into greatness and can live in that same greatness now. Many have forgotten who they are and how much power they hold within them. It’s time to bring that out. It is time for you to be who you truly are and step into it all the way.

Marianne Williamson said it best in her book *Return to Love: Reflections on a Course in Miracles* [1]:

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond imagination. It is our light more than our darkness which scares us. We ask ourselves—who are we to be brilliant, beautiful, talented, and fabulous. But honestly, who are you to not be so?

You are a child of God, small games do not work in this world. For those around us to feel peace, it is not example to make ourselves small. We were born to express the glory of god that lives in us. It is not in some of us, it is in all of us. While we allow our light to shine, we unconsciously give permission for others to do the same. When we liberate ourselves from our own fears, simply our presence may liberate others.

Let's make these amazing transformations together. It is up to you whether these principles will work for you in your life. Make the choice now to be open to the possibilities. Whatever doesn't fit into your working model, place in the puzzle box. I can tell you that it may not work for you in this moment, but someday it will. Would you ever throw away a piece to a puzzle just because you can't find its proper place in this moment? Don't throw away these puzzle pieces. Eventually, you will find the correct place for it and the picture will be more complete. It will come to you in one of those moments of pondering and will suddenly make sense. It is time for you to step into your greatness. No more excuses. No more reasons of "why it won't work for you."

Are you ready? If you're not, go ahead and put this book down and go about your life. Put it on a shelf. It may not work for you to read it in this moment, but someday it will.

If you're ready to move forward, take it on from a space of openness. It will meld with your perspective and create magnificent changes in your life.

If you could be anything in this world, what would you be? Would you be a firefighter, a billionaire, a humanitarian or a zookeeper? Would you be the president, a ballerina, an actor or a sports superstar?

Imagine being a young child again. There are no reservations, no plans for the future, no debts or obligations. You have a clean slate and can be whatever you would like to be. You're not concerned with the judgments of others, and if you want to sing, dance or play Barbies, you're going to do it, whether you're a boy or a girl, and hold nothing back. Parents praise you for doing

such amazing things as it brings back memories of their freedom years. The world is yours and you can make of it what you will. As you explore this abundant world of endless possibilities, you discover that you enjoy doing certain things more than others. These are the things that make you feel alive and invigorated. You could spend hours, days, months and years doing them. They are most enjoyable and when you are doing them; time soars by.

This is the space to operate from as you read this chapter, that area of absolute freedom and boundless opportunities. We are about to embark on a journey to discover what drives you.

Defining the Desire

Have you ever thought about what truly drives you? What gets you out of bed in the morning? What motivates you enough to keep you moving forward day by day? What you love to do more than anything? Have you wondered what it is that drives you and come up short in finding your true passion?

I have pondered these questions often during my life and have found myself shrinking at times in the face of what it is that I truly want to do. I felt that life was easier if I just put these things away and went after what was prudent. I did a lot of things I didn't enjoy because they were convenient and I needed the money. (No, I wasn't a prostitute.)

I have come to the realization that a great indicator of whether I'm doing what I want is the amount of joy and freedom that I feel when doing it. If it doesn't seem like work at all, that's where my passions lie.

In every business in which I have been, I have risen to the top levels very quickly. I was a hard worker and could be counted on in every moment. However, it was in these positions that I found that the life I was living was not what I wanted at all. As quickly as I found myself in those positions, I realized I had again climbed the wrong ladder. I felt the stress and turmoil of

knowing I was in a place that wasn't working for me, and I chose to leave that space and start something new, each time going through the same cycle. You see, I discovered that I was searching for what drove me and motivated me. I was looking for my own joy.

I have learned along the way that the universe will support me perfectly in what I truly want to do. Things that are not in alignment with my true desires become tedious and boring. They become "Have to do"s versus "Get to do"s.

Although I found success in those endeavors, it was never the true success that I was seeking. I now see success as being an abundance of all things: riches, love, health, freedom, family, friends, time and on and on. I used to view success only as having an abundance of riches. I figured that if I could obtain them, the rest would fall in line. What I know now is that riches only magnify what I am or have currently. They are not the end-all solution. I heard it mentioned that riches are not the most important thing in the world, but they're right up there with oxygen [2]. Riches are important, but so is everything else. I want to have riches and be healthy. I want to have riches and feel true love. What good are they if my family and friends don't want to be around me? Imagine having all the money you could ever want and never having the time to enjoy it. Does that sound like success to you? I say I want it *all* in abundance.

Do you find yourself following a similar path? Are you doing something that you used to enjoy and are finding that joy swallowed up in the mounting pressure of forced performance? Has your career lost its flavor? It's like chewing bubble gum well after the flavor is gone. It gets harder and harder to chew. You can't blow bubbles with it anymore or taste the sweet juices as they run down your throat. Nobody cares that you're chewing gum or asks you for a piece because they know how long you have been hanging on to the one you have. In fact, they pity you for sticking it out. Some may offer you a new piece, but you just want to keep chewing. "If it

ain't broke, don't fix it!" What will it take to spit that old piece of gum out and replace it with a new one? How long are you going to suffer through your "job" before you reach out to what it is you enjoy?

It's possible that you have said to yourself, "I have no idea what my passion is." Maybe this is the first time you are actually taking a look at it. It may take you some time to get clear on what your passion looks like. Be patient as you search. I invite you to look back at your life starting when you were very young. Were there things you enjoyed doing? What did you dream about when you were young? Did you love to dance, write, draw or paint? Did you love stories, songs, sports, acting or building things?

Now move forward in time to when you were a teenager. What were you really good at in school and leisure time? Was it math, sports, English, history, economics, dance, music, speech, management, organization, entertainment or socializing? Link your youth and the teenage years together. What common themes do you see? Keep stepping through this process until you recognize what it is that drives you. Be patient with yourself, as you are the only one who will know your passion when you find it. It's there inside of you. It's up to you to bring it out. It may be beneficial to seek assistance in finding your patterns through a coach who can work with you in discovering the one thing that motivates you more than any other. You can do it! Take the action to uncover your hidden strength.

Scruilly Blotnick, PhD, conducted a study with 1,500 people over a 20-year period [3]. Over 1,200 of these people chose to pursue money first and foremost and put what they enjoyed most secondary. The remaining participants pursued their passion first, and money was secondary. At the end of the 20-year period, the results were astounding. Out of the 1,500 people, 101 became millionaires. One of those people came from the first group, who pursued money as

their primary focus; the other 100 were from the second group. You succeed the most in the things that bring you the most joy.

Have you ever met a truly successful man—and I'm not talking about finances here—who was miserable? Would you rather work with a person who loves what they do, or the eternal pessimist who can find nothing right in the world? Which one are you? Fortunately, there is no fence-sitting here. You are either one or the other. Do you love what you do or hate it? Black or white please, grey answers are not allowed here. It's not fair to you or anyone else to say, "My job's not too bad, I can handle it." Get real! Why would you choose to do something that brings you misery?

Being Clear

Do you ever wish you could have a crystal ball and see your life's path as clearly as the fortune-teller who operates it? What if you could see the end now? Would you change some things, or would you implement your life's learnings now so you could be your future self quicker? Did you know that if you could see the future, there would be no future? Because if you could see all of the things that would happen, you would have them now and they would no longer be a part of the future. That's a crazy thought, isn't it? But true! There is no future, there is only now. It's the only time we can live. So having a crystal ball would mean we have the ability to see this moment clearly without the fogginess of the potential future or the haziness of the learning past. It is seeing our choices clearly moment to moment.

All of us have ingrained within us a passion so strong that it makes us feel more valuable than anything on this earth. Throughout our lives, we have been taught to put this passion aside and not stand out, to fulfill the American dream of having a great job, going to college, obtaining a steady paycheck, purchasing our own home and pursuing a great retirement plan so we can rest

after 50 years of labor. I wouldn't call myself a rocket scientist, but that doesn't seem like the dream I would like to chase.

Maybe this statement sounds familiar to you: "I would really like to do this, but..." Or have you heard other people tell you about talents and gifts that you have, only to have you say something like:

"I would do it, but there is no money in it."

"I really enjoy it more than anything, but it's not important because I need to make a living."

"I don't have enough time."

This may be your life's path. This may be that one thing in your life that fulfills you. Are you ready to shelve it just because there is no money in it? Since when did that become the primary focus in this world? It's time to get clear on what it is you really—and I mean *really*—want to do. Being rich is not a "want to do." Doing what you are passionate about will allow you and others to see your value and contribution to this desperate world. Believe me, when others see your value, they will pay you more than you feel you are worth. How can they see this value if you are hiding it behind the mask of mediocrity?

Let me ask you a few questions. Would you be doing what you are doing even if you didn't make any money at it? When you are doing whatever it is that you do, are you happy? Do you wake up in the morning ready to take on the day? Do you have a hard time sleeping at night because you are so excited about what you get to create when you wake up? Would you pursue the path you're on even if it took you years to see success? If you answered "No" to any of these questions, you may be chasing a dream, but I can promise you it's not yours.

So let's get clear! Write down the answers to these questions:

1. What is it that you love to do more than anything else in this world?

2. If you could fill your time doing the thing you love the most, what would that be?
3. If money was not an issue and you had accomplished all of your life's ambitions, you built all of your business aspirations to their fullest potential, you went on all of your favorite vacations, you have done it all and reached all of your goals, what would you do? How would you give back to the world? How would you make it a better place?

The answers to these questions will reveal your ultimate goal, your purpose. The question becomes, how do you accomplish it now? I will be discussing that throughout this book, and it is my goal that you will be very clear on what you get to do to make that goal an actuality.

Building Your Dream or Someone Else's—Where Do You Fit In?

Are you a dream builder or a dream enthusiast? Meaning, are you the one who goes out and carves new paths for others to follow, or are you there to support others in building their dreams? Neither position is more important than the other, for you cannot have one without the other and experience true success. Some people find great joy in assisting others in the actualization of their visions. Therefore I ask, are you a dream builder or a dream enthusiast? This will greatly determine which direction you ought to follow in order to reach your ultimate goal.

Do you love to work with others, not necessarily as the owner? Do you enjoy seeing your contribution move a work forward? Would you rather work for someone else than for yourself? Do you love being part of a team?

This, my friend, is a dream enthusiast.

If you are a dream enthusiast, it may be best for you to find a dream builder who has a common vision and align yourself with them. Find out what it is within their organization that allows you to fulfill your passion. Is it being the janitor, the accountant, sales, management or maybe customer service? Whatever it is that drives you, you will know it because you will feel it. It will be in alignment with your ultimate goal, and you will feel the joy that I mentioned. When a person steps out of alignment with their purpose, life starts getting complicated. The stress comes on with loads of dissatisfaction. Why on earth would you choose to work in something you don't enjoy? If it is truly your passion, the universe will align and say "Yes! Yes! Yes!" and you will get exactly what you desire. If you feel underqualified, get qualified. If you feel they won't accept you, apply anyway. You can never see how things will align if you don't take that first step.

Now, do you love to create new things? Is business ownership your forte? Do you have a hard time working for someone else? Do you want to direct a team? Are you innovative and pioneering? Does the blood of the entrepreneur run through your veins? Will you stand up for your cause no matter the outcome?

You are a dream builder.

If you are a dream builder, find those dream enthusiasts who have a similar vision to yours. They are out there and in abundance. Would it serve you as a dream builder to surround yourself with people who tear down your dream and say you can never do it? No! That, my friend, is what we call stupidity! You have the opportunity to find out if you are in alignment with dream enthusiasts. Just because they have a pulse and want to work for you doesn't make them an automatic shoe-in for the position. Ask them clear and specific questions. Questions are the easiest way to get clarity. Unfortunately, most people would rather walk around in mystery

and frustration than ask a person a direct question. If you as a dream builder want to succeed the way the universe intends, then you must align yourself with those whose vision is conducive to yours.

Finding What Truly is in Alignment with You—Is It What You Really Want?

There is a segment in one of my favorite movies when one of the characters is looking around the room, spotting a random item and saying things like “I love... carpet. I love...desk. I love lamp!” When the character is asked, “Do you really love that item, or are you just saying that because you saw it?” He quickly replies that he loves it [4].

Are you going through life, seeing an idea and saying “I love network marketing! I love construction! I love real estate!”? In actuality, are you doing it because you truly love it or have you heard you can make a lot of money doing it? Is it because of their benefits package? What is it that makes you want to do that thing? Take an honest look at what you perceive to be your dream career or business. Is it in alignment with you, the real you? What I know is that most of us go around pretending to be something we are not. Are you ready to play it differently, like you did when you were a kid? Are you ready to get out of your comfort zone and go for what you are truly passionate about? Until you get in touch with what you want, you will never be fully successful. I am not saying you won't be good at it. Being good at something doesn't make it your passion. Do you get that? *Being good at something does not make it your passion!*

Passion for What You Do is the Key to Success!

Too often passion is construed as a fleeting feeling. Something that is here in one moment and gone the next. That is not it at all! What is passion? Passion is defined as any powerful or compelling emotion or feeling. It also means to have a strong desire and to endure.

When a person has passion, that means they have a strong desire to accomplish whatever it is they have the intention to create. They want it done perfectly, and they are willing to persist as long as it takes to actualize their creation.

A friend of mine told me that when he was studying in college, he took a course he assumed he would like. At the end of each day he would be one of the first ones out of the room. He noticed a few of the students who absolutely loved the course would stay after and converse further with the teacher. He realized in that moment that in business he would be competing with those people, and no matter how well he would potentially do, his skills would be no match for their passion. He determined that he would find his passion first and gain the skills to match. Passion for what we do is stronger than anything we may know or pretend to know. Passion is what creates amazing results.

Michelangelo was commissioned to carve a statue that is one of the most recognized in the world. It took him three years of painstaking work and the finest detail to create what we know today as the statue of *David*. His passion for the project is what made this masterpiece eternal. Because of his desire to give the very best he had, we are given the opportunity to enjoy this fine work. This is passion!

One man in the face of adversity rose to free a nation from racial division and oppression. He was imprisoned for 27 years for his beliefs. When he was free, he led a revolution that

changed his country and lives throughout the world. He was an ordinary man who became a leader because of extraordinary circumstances. He was Nelson Mandela. This is passion!

When we are willing to commit to something that is good no matter what the cost, no matter how long it takes, without import to the trials we may have to face in order to make it a reality, this is passion!

Our passions drive us. They allow us to step into our greatness and be the contribution the world deserves.

If you will step into what it is that truly drives you, you will find true happiness. This world isn't about who has the most. This life is an individual game played in a team setting wherein we set out to find joy.

Do what you love, and all else will fall into place. Do what you don't love, and chaos will control you.

Accountability

What does it mean to you to be accountable? The dictionary defines it as the state of being able to report, explain or justify. It is synonymous with "Answerable," which means to be liable, to be asked to give an account. To be accountable is to literally *be able to account* or *answer* for one's choices and actions. Why would it be important to be accountable? This is an opportunity for us to look at the results of our choices. We can see clearly what is working and what is not. I feel that we can only take on responsibility in our lives in proportion to the accountability we are willing to give. This is a key to moving forward progressively in our lives.

Only I Can be Accountable for Me and My Decisions

Throughout the news and media we hear over and over, "This person needs to take accountability, that person needs to take accountability," and on and on. My question becomes,

when are people going to point the finger right back at themselves and say, “I will take full accountability for myself!”? In this no-fault world we are creating, people feel they can get away with anything as long as they blame it on someone else.

Accountability comes about when a person is given a responsibility, big or small, and is able to give an honest accounting of every action and choice relating to that responsibility. Let me clarify and say, this is not pointing out the need for accountability in others—it is pointing it out in ourselves.

In our culture, there are things that we do that oppose accountability. I call these “Accounta-killers.” The first of these is *assuming*. I feel that when people assume, it becomes a crutch for them to not investigate further and find out the actuality of a situation. When things don’t go as planned it becomes an easy out to say “I assumed this was the case...” If a person is assuming anything, that is a good indicator that it is time to ask for clarity. A person either knows or doesn’t know the actuality of a situation. Assuming tends to be that neutral ground between committing one way or another. Pay attention to that word! If you use it, see if you deserve to get clarity on a situation. Too often in life, people will hear or see something, pass it through their filters and create their own truth. This creates an assumption of what the truth is, when in actuality, the truth may be completely different. Assuming is a lazy mans way of skirting clarity and not doing! Assuming is also counterproductive to accountability in that it allows a person an escape if their decisions don’t go as planned.

Have you experienced a situation where someone told you they were disappointed in you or your decisions? Did you take on some guilt because you felt bad for the outcome?

Imagine someone does something very nice for you. They give you a gift that is very generous. You are having a difficult time financially and this gift, which comes in the form of

money, is a blessing. You come home that evening with this money in hand and tell your spouse immediately. You ask them if they want to use it towards past due bills or if you can buy something that you want badly. Your spouse tells you that they have the bills covered and it would be okay for you to go ahead and buy this item, as you're the embodiment of your gift. You go to the store that evening and feel like a kid in a candy store, full of excitement and beaming at the opportunity. You pick out your gift and feel very blessed to have been able to do this in such a financially difficult time.

A few days later you receive information from your spouse that the person who gave you the gift is dissatisfied with your actions. They feel you should have put the money towards your bills instead of spending it frivolously. You haven't verified with the gift-giver whether this is actually how they feel and you go around feeling disheartened. You think to yourself, "They gave me a gift and said nothing of the expectations they had with it." You went out and did what you felt was best with the money and heard later that they might be disappointed. You feel a bit angry and guilty at the same time. Could you have chosen differently? Yes, but why?

Think about this scenario. If the giver was holding expectations, would those expectations be unfair?

A gift is given out of the kindness of one's heart. When a gift is given and there is an expectation tied to it, that expectation gets to be shared. Can you hold someone accountable for something you failed to communicate? If you fail to communicate your expectations and the receiver fails to attain them, you feel disappointment and look to blame them for their carelessness and lack of responsibility. The reality is that in a case like this, you have set yourself up for disappointment through your failure to communicate. This is assuming that the other party will act the way you would like them to and not telling them this vital information. At the same

time, if the receiver of the gift hears that they have missed the mark, so to speak, they should verify with the giver that this is actually how they feel. Rather than going around feeling justified in their own perspective, the two parties deserve to communicate and find out what the situation actually is.

In this scenario, had the giver of the gift told you they had an expectation, you would have had the opportunity to choose an outcome more in alignment with their desire. You could have shown appreciation for the gift and potentially fulfilled their hope. If both parties communicated clearly by asking appropriate questions or issuing clarifying statements, the situation might have turned out differently. Questions of who, what, where, why and how are open-ended questions, meaning they can't be answered with a yes or no. By asking questions like "what would you like me to do with this gift? What expectations do you hold? Why are you giving me this?" you can get clear on the purpose of the gift, if there is one. Also, when you have an expectation, you can communicate with the receiver clearly and possibly say, "I know things are tight right now and I am giving you this gift to use towards your bills." When this occurs, the other party has an opportunity to agree to the terms and ultimately fulfill them.

In the example I used, you would *assume* the money could be used for whatever purpose you wanted. They would *assume* you would perform according to their expectations. Because both parties failed to communicate clearly, both experienced resentment and animosity.

Have you experienced a similar scenario in different aspects of your life? Have you held expectations of people without telling them so? Have you failed to ask for clarity in situations that have also created uncomfortable outcomes?

Assuming that someone knows something is a dangerous game to play. By asking simple clarifying questions, we can rid the world of mystery, disappointment, anger, frustration and

many other not-so-nice feelings. Are you going to wait for them to clarify or are you going to take the initiative? Find out people's rules for things and situations. Taking the unknown equations away from a scenario will create a more positive outcome.

Another killer of accountability is blame. I have heard so many times in my career, "If this person hadn't done this, then... If so and so had done their job then... You didn't tell me..."

When are you going to acknowledge your contribution? What did you do or not do to contribute to the situation? What I know is that nothing will happen in our space unless we consciously or unconsciously create it. Blame is prevalent in our society; it causes inaction and kills our desire to be proactive. The Republicans did this, the Democrats did that, I was born in poverty, the guy looked at me funny. Are you willing to be the one who stands up and takes accountability for your role in the situation? Are you willing to play it differently? Do we not have the opportunity to change our circumstances in every moment, and if not our circumstances, our attitude? It is up to each of us to take a deep look at what we have done to contribute to a situation. I honor the man who gets cut off in traffic, realizes he went briefly unconscious and slightly swerved into another car's lane, quickly apologizes and de-escalates the situation. I honor the man who realizes his role in the circumstances and takes action to change it. It is in these moments of accountability that men are reasonable.

Have you ever made a decision that you knew was stupid? Did you immediately regret that decision? I have seen, time and time again, men and women go into a situation knowing the risks involved by doing so, hoping for the absolute best outcome and planning to participate freely in the reward if it goes well. Yet the moment it goes out of plan, they forget everything they agreed to and blame the other person or party, shunning their own accountability in the decision. If you know the decision is not a good one for you, *don't do it!* If you go into an

opportunity and it goes bad, *take accountability!* Whether you remember or not, you knew what you were doing and by taking responsibility for your role, you will de-escalate a situation and receive an opportunity to learn. We have a tendency to receive lessons over and over again until we learn what is striving to be taught. Every time we ignore it, it gets louder and louder, stronger and stronger. It's time to learn the lessons being offered and be accountable.

In addition to these accounta-killers, there is judgment, dishonesty, procrastination, and the list goes on. Anything we do that keeps us from being responsible for our own choices and actions becomes an answerability issue and should be looked at and removed immediately so as to not spread into our lives like cancer.

So remember this statement and say it often: "Only I can be accountable for me and my decisions!"

Being accountable allows us to look at everything that is occurring in our lives and see how our choices created it. It is not to be used as a beat-up stick to pummel yourself over bad outcomes. It is only to be used to see how our choices contributed to them.

We do not have to be accountable for others. They are quite capable of doing that on their own. We just get to see that we choose our results through action or inaction. It awakens in us an awareness of our driving internal forces. The beautiful thing about accountability is that if we don't like how things are going in our lives, we can recognize our roles and choose differently.

"It is not only what we do, but also what we do not do, for which we are accountable."

—Moliere [5]

Perspectives—Actuality vs. Reality

In the story “The Blind Men and the Elephant” by John Godfrey Saxe [6], a story is told about six men from Indostan who are all blind and are attempting, without success, to describe an elephant. Each of them grabs hold of a different part of the elephant and ties it directly to a reference in his life. The first feels the side of the elephant, and it feels sturdy like a wall, so in his mind an elephant is like a wall. The second grabs a hold of the tusk, feels how sharp it is and sees the elephant like a spear. The third lays hold of the trunk, and to him it seems as though the elephant is a snake. The fourth, who touched the wrinkled knee, thinks the elephant is like a tree. The fifth, who happened upon the ear, feels an elephant is like a fan, and the sixth clutches the elephant’s tail and assumes it is a rope.

The reality of the poem he shares is that each man was right in what he perceived to be as truth, and it was as real as it would be to you and me. The actuality of the poem is that they were all looking at an elephant through blind eyes and their perceptions caused them to see it differently.

Actuality is the state of being actual or existing as it actually is and not what it is perceived to be.

Reality can include things that exist as they actually are and things that may not actually exist, but are perceived.

By combining the viewpoints of these different individuals, it is possible to arrive closer to the actuality of an item or situation.

It is impossible for each of us to see the same thing the exact same way. Since no two observers can occupy the exact same space at exactly the same time, one observer’s view of an object will vary slightly, depending on their position. The view may be skewed left, right, up,

down, in front or behind. Therefore, an object as it appears to one person will not be the same perceived object to another. It is very common for us to believe that people are seeing what we are seeing, hearing what we are hearing or learning like we are learning when in reality, they may be seeing the same object, but not in the same way. For example, I can see you and you can see me, but I can never see me the way you see me. Even if I looked in a mirror, I would see myself through my own eyes. This being the case, it is possible for every person to have a truly unique experience.

As you meet new people in life, remember that all of their experiences were different from yours. Because of this, they will never comprehend the world the same way you do. Imagine what the other people are seeing and put yourself in their positions. Realize, however, that as you do this it will be passing through your filters and will never be fully accurate to their experience.

Take this book, for example. Thousands of people have written on the same subjects I am teaching in my book. However, none of them have ever written it with my perspective. Only I can do that, and that is what makes me and this book unique. You may say to yourself that people have already contributed to the world in a way similar to what you are planning, and therefore it doesn't matter. Nobody will contribute the way you will. What's to say that you aren't the last piece of the puzzle needed to paint the picture clearly? You and your contribution are unique and needed.

History and Perspective

How many times have you heard someone say, "Why can't you be more like...?" Well, isn't it obvious? I am not that person and therefore I can never be exactly like them. Each one of us has a truly unique history and this history greatly affects our perspective.

Imagine a set of twins being separated at birth. These twins are identical in every way; to see them in person you could not tell the difference between them. There are no physical or genetic differences between these twins. One twin goes with a family who is the perceived “perfect” family. They are well off financially. They live in a nice neighborhood, they attend their church and they never fight. Let’s say for example purposes, they are a huggy family.

The other twin goes with a family who lives in a rundown neighborhood and everything they have, which isn’t much, comes about by extremely hard work. They believe all things are scarce and this family absolutely does not hug.

Envision them meeting one day when they are grown. What do you suppose would happen? I would imagine there would be a trading of some curious looks. After this would come a slew of questions. What? How? Why? Who? They would eventually find out they are genetically the same and, in fact, blood siblings. Upon hearing the news, the huggy twin goes to give the non-huggy twin a giant loving hug. As she goes to put her arms around the other, the non-huggy twin rejects the gesture and goes about being excited in a different way.

Let’s say these two decide they want to get an apartment together. At first everything is fantastic—they have been united after all these years. One day, as one of the twins goes to the refrigerator to quench her thirst with a glass of ice cold milk, the other shouts, “We don’t have enough milk for you to be drinking it like that!” The other twin, thinking that the first must be having a bad day, concedes, puts the milk back and goes about the day. One day they go shopping and the twin who was raised in the poor family wants to buy a shirt. As they are shopping, this twin finds the perfect shirt but doesn’t want to spend the extra money to get it. The other twin, seeing the dilemma, says, “Don’t be cheap, we have plenty of money. Go ahead and get it!” The other twin can’t justify it and they end up leaving the store empty-handed.

Do you see the pattern here? One twin sees abundance and the other lack. Not because of genetic differences, but because of historic differences. They were raised differently.

Now, allow me to clarify that studies have shown similarities in behavioral patterns between twins who have been separated at birth. However, because the twins in my example are experiencing different things in different places, this allows them to gain a unique perspective in life although they have similarities in genetic behavioral patterns.

People do things because of their history and genetics. I want to focus on the historical aspect here. We do a lot of the things we do because we were taught to do so by our parents and mentors. They were taught their behaviors by their parents and mentors, and a huge chain of historical events leads all the way back to our first parents. We are conditioned from the time we are babies to do or not to do certain things. Our minds are impressionable, and whatever we are taught as kids tends to stay with us through adulthood. The problem with this is that it becomes a genealogical game of pass it on. Few people stop to consider whether the information being taught is accurate. Because it has been such an integral part of their life, they never question its source or validity. Have you ever wondered where some of these beliefs come from? In the example of the twins, who taught the well-off parents they could be wealthy? Who taught the poor parents that there is never enough in this world? Was it in a book, a poem, an advertisement or something they or their ancestors experienced in their lives?

Allow me to share some idioms and their origins and see if this sheds light on the picture: “Money is the root of all evil.” This is a popular idiom used as a hedge against becoming wealthy. This comes from the Bible and the actual scripture states that the “Love” of money is the root of all evil. However, many people believe it to be the money that is the actual evil. Here

is another one: “Always a bridesmaid, never the bride.” Did you know this was actually coined in a Listerine advertisement? How much power do we place on a marketing tool?

Beliefs are interesting things. Did you know that the original meaning of this word is to hold something dear, to love something? Do we often hold our beliefs closely? Don't you find that they make you who you are? Your beliefs are unique to you and a lot of them stem from your history. Somebody somewhere found something they felt would work for them in their life and made it a part of who they are. They may have shared this with you, and you felt as though it could work for you so you plugged it into your internal database of things to hold on to.

Imagine a collection of something very important to you. You've spent a lot of time collecting this and it means the world to you. What if someone came in and started breaking or burning your collection? How would you feel? Would you be angry? Would it matter to you? Now, have you experienced these same feelings when you feel someone is attacking your beliefs? Like the collection, do your beliefs hold real value, or is it sentimental value? Meaning are they really worth hanging on to or are they worthless and have become a part of you?

Take inventory of the beliefs you hold. Write them down and let's take a look at them. What do you believe about money, power, fame, family, love, work, friends, persistence, poverty, peace, war, politics, religion...? Where did they come from? Religion, family, marketing and advertising, books, experiences, friends, leaders, politicians, school, work, movies, TV shows, songs, poems or spouses? Are they true? Are they accurate or are they filtered through your perspective of the world? Do they work for you? Are they holding you back? Do these beliefs apply to you alone or do a lot of people share the same beliefs? What experience gave you this belief? Is it lunacy? What do you feel now when you look at these beliefs in this light?

Each of us has an opportunity to create our own unique belief system. Because each of us is unique, we do not have to conform to another person's way of being. We get to choose what we would like to believe. There are some very persuasive people in this world who would like to influence you to believe their way, but they can never force you to see the world in their way exactly. The choice to believe or not to believe is ultimately yours. Allow people to believe how they want. It is their right, just as it is yours. Remember the analogy of the collection. What may seem like garbage to you will mean the world to another. Be respectful of their beliefs and they may just be respectful back.

At times when you feel you are communicating with people, they may not agree with you. Realize that you may not be communicating with them, but with their histories and beliefs. Some of those beliefs will be theirs and others will be generational. Be aware that they may be communicating with you the same way. Your beliefs and history will greatly affect the way you see and comprehend the world and those in it. The biggest keys to shifting this are to first become aware of what you speak as truths, and second to find out if you truly believe what you say and do.

Cutting Through the Filters—Defining Filters and Labels

Have you heard the idiom, “looking at the world through rose-colored glasses”? Suppose someone shares some important information with you and starts the conversation with some kind of statement like, “That person was such a jerk on the phone!” or “This is going to be very difficult!” or “Life is good!” These are filtered statements. They are generally an opinion of a situation and rarely reflect the true nature with all of its facts and details. This is seeing the world through filtered glasses, but they are not always rose-colored. Let's say, for example, I want someone to think an idea that is being shared is not such a great idea. I might say something

along the lines of, “Todd has an idea he would like to present and it’s interesting, I guess.” By adding the last part of that sentence, I have automatically conditioned the hearer to base their perspective from the negative filter “I guess.” Although they have the opportunity to see it differently, my words will negatively affect what they perceive. Filters are used in almost every conversation. Rarely do we take the opportunity to present just the facts and allow others to make an unbiased decision.

We have an opportunity to see something as it really is if we’re open to it. In order to do this we must recognize the filters as they are presented and set them aside.

Filters act as a way to skirt accountability. Although they are sometimes stated as fact, that’s not what they are. They are merely opinions, and those opinions can change. Picture yourself having an uncomfortable conversation in which someone tells you in no uncertain terms that they think you are the scum of the earth. From their perspective, they feel justified in saying this. You, on the other hand, may take offense at such a harsh judgment. Stop for a minute and take an outside look at this as though you were seeing yourself and this other person in the same conversation, but now you are an observer. What you would see is two people enveloped in a sphere of completely unique perspectives and filters. You would see that the perspectives and filters are communicating with each other and not the people. However, the people think they *are* their spheres of beliefs. So they don’t know it’s not them communicating. It is impossible for anyone to say anything that is directly about us because their filters are communicating with our filters. *Stop* taking things personally! There is no way it is about you.

Did you know it is hard to be held accountable for a statement of opinion? If you don’t believe that, look at our legal structure. There are two ways that our legal system looks at statements. One is as a statement of opinion and the other a statement of fact. The one holds

liability, the other none. I can say to someone “I think you are stupid!” and have absolutely no consequence other than maybe going to fisticuffs. I am merely stating my opinion. However, if I were to say “You are stupid!” I am stating it as a fact and can go to fists *and* have legal consequences.

Both cases present a type of filtering called labeling. When we label something either as an opinion or what we observe to be a truth, we cause a disturbance in the way others view the event, idea or person. We should be more conscious of the way we present things and present only the facts. This allows the other person to see it from a fair position without any preconceived notions. Be aware, as well, that what you perceive to be a fact may merely be an observation made through your filters. Judge the way you would like to be judged.

I challenge you to be aware of the filters you use and stop using them. Make it a point to present the whole story in its true form. I can promise you that if it is accurate, others will recognize it.

Taking It to the Source

One of the more popular ways to avoid accountability and clarity is to gossip. Gossip allows us to stay in mystery, which I define as the space we occupy when we do not know the actuality of a situation. When I don't know what is really going on, my mind creates some off-the-wall negative outcomes and scenarios. Rumors give us the opportunity to create and share all kinds of imaginations and stories about others without ever taking it to the source or finding out the truth. Marcia Lane tells a story about gossip that I feel displays the negative power it holds:

A man in a small village was a terrible gossip, always telling stories about his neighbors, even if he didn't know them. Wanting to change, he visited the Rabbi for advice. The Rabbi instructed him to buy a fresh chicken at the local market and bring it back to him (the Rabbi) as quickly as possible, plucking off every single feather as he ran. Not one feather was to remain. The man did as he was told, plucking as he ran and throwing the feathers every which way until not a

feather remained. He handed the bare chicken over to the Rabbi, who then asked the man to go back and gather together all the feathers he had plucked and bring them back. The man protested that this was impossible as the wind must have carried those feathers in every direction and he could never find them all. The Rabbi said, "That's true. And that's how it is with gossip. One rumor can fly to many corners, and how could you retrieve it? Better not to speak gossip in the first place!" And the Rabbi sent the man home to apologize to his neighbors, and to repent. [7]

We can never repair all of the damage that is done by gossiping. It causes so much pain and hardship for others. Who's to say that an event actually happened the way you are sharing it? I know that assuming something is a certain way is in no way justification. As I shared earlier, if we are assuming anything, it's a great indicator that we deserve to ask for clarity.

If you or I have a setback with somebody, we deserve to go to them directly and communicate it. Talking to everybody else while adding our filters and assumptions is cowardly and unacceptable! I know you will have fears about what the person might say or do. What I have come to know is that 90% of what I fabricate in my mind, that is associated with fear or worst case scenarios, never comes true. That means the majority of the time they will have a positive response when you or I confront them.

I issue this additional challenge to take your issues to the source. If they are not yours to deal with, stop the gossip chain! Are you open to that challenge? Take it on!

The Four Quadrants of Outcome

In every choice that you make there are two starting points and two potential outcomes. The two starting points are either positive or negative and the outcomes are either positive or negative. The beauty of the four quadrants of outcome is that the outcome of a situation is unknown until the results are manifest. It is up to us to choose where we will end up.

Have you ever had a positive thing in your life go right? Have you had a positive thing go wrong? Have you ever experienced the shock of a negative situation changing into a positive

one? Have you been in a negative situation that went from bad to worse? You are experiencing the four quadrants of outcome. The diagram on the next page will get us started in explaining this in the right direction.

Outcomes are free floating and in most cases carry a great deal of uncertainty. I call this being in mystery. Mystery is every thought or feeling experienced between the choice and the actual outcome. People have a tendency to go to worst case scenarios when they are experiencing mystery. The mind will come up with amazing justification of why it might be right. However, until the outcome happens as it actually is, mystery is just fantasy. I just said that 90% of the “What If” questions experienced by the mind never actually happen. Keep that in the forefront of your mind as we go through this section.

The Four Quadrants of Outcome

Positive	Negative
to	to
Positive	Positive
Positive	Negative
to	to
Negative	Negative

Positive to Positive—when a positive situation ends with a positive result

Negative to Positive—when a negative situation ends with a positive result

Positive to Negative—when a positive situation ends with a negative result

Negative to Negative—when a negative situation ends with a negative result

Let me give you an example of possible outcomes. Imagine you wake up in the morning and feel fantastic. This is your day; nothing will come between you and your dreams. As you are driving to work, you end up behind a 93-year-old grandma who thinks 20 miles an hour in a 45-mph

zone is scary. You have nowhere to pass and end up following behind her for the next 30 minutes, going slower than a snail's pace. Oh, isn't that frustrating? That thought just took you from a positive quadrant to a negative one. You decide that what has happened has happened and determine you'll have a good day regardless. So you shift back from the negative quadrant to a positive one. At work you walk in the door feeling you can do anything and your employer calls you in to tell you they are impressed with your work and are giving you a raise. You get so excited that you celebrate emphatically in your mind. You just moved from one positive quadrant to another positive quadrant. This is a positive to positive response. Your day is moving along smoothly and you get a call from a disgruntled client who tells you they are canceling their account. You just moved from positive to negative space. An associate walks in the door right at the opportune moment and says, "Did you hear what so-and-so did?" To lose your grief for a brief moment you start gossiping about someone in the office. You moved from a negative to another negative.

Does that paint a clear picture of moving from quadrant to quadrant? It is common for people to hang out in the third and fourth quadrants; Positive to Negative and Negative to Negative. Because the mind loves to hang out in the negative area, it is easy for us to think things like: a spouse is cheating; an investor stole money; businesses always fail; you'll never be rich; things never work out for you; what if you die; what if you get hurt.

The interesting thing to note about these fears is that they draw out a natural physical effect in the body that tends to snowball into more of these negative statements. There is a response in the body called "Fight or Flight." When your body is in danger, it will shut off the rational thinking part of the mind and turn on the survival part. The heart will speed up and adrenaline will be pumped to the organs. Your body is ready to fight in order to survive or run

away. When the body pumps adrenaline into your system, you will experience an upset stomach and what some would call butterflies. Robert M. Sapolsky, Professor of Neurology and Neurological Sciences at Stanford University, has shown repeatedly that sustained stress can damage the hippocampus, the part of the brain that allows us to learn and remember [8]. This damage occurs from chemicals known as cortisol released into the bloodstream from the adrenals. These chemicals have the power to damage and kill the brain cells. These symptoms are sometimes diagnosed as anxiety. When you feel the anxiety, your mind runs through a series of what-if questions and usually the response to those questions is negative. These negative thoughts trigger fear, the fight or flight response kicks in and you start the process over again. It takes several hours for the effects of these responses to subside. However, some people will continue this cycle over and over throughout the day and suffer what is called anxiety disorder. Some will turn to drugs and alcohol to quiet the rant in the mind, which conveniently kill more brain cells that are already under attack by the chemical cortisol. The stress created from the fear causes us to lose focus and ultimately control. For me being aware this is what I was doing was enough for me to manage it.

When a person feels that an outcome will be negative and their thoughts and focus are on that end, they will begin to lay the course for that outcome. Some call this self-sabotage. Without even knowing you are doing it, you will begin to make choices that will nail the coffin shut on a negative outcome. You will take negative actions, say the wrong things, do nothing and procrastinate, gossip, blame and everything else that will lead to the thought-upon negative outcome.

Knowing that an outcome is unbiased and wholly undetermined makes it easier to shut down the negative chatter. What if things go right? Have you ever considered that? What if the

perceived negative situation turned out to be a blessing? The actuality is that you don't know what the outcome will be in most cases until it occurs. The goal is to realize the outcomes are neutral and can be influenced by taking intelligent action. You can choose to take your outcomes to any one of the four quadrants of outcome by changing your perspective.

Have you ever bungee-jumped, skydived, cliff-jumped or anything else that a sane person wouldn't do? There is a rush of freedom that comes with these activities. Before embarking on one of them, a series of what-if questions will come to mind. You can guess that the answer to these questions always looks bad, but as you push through these questions and leap over the edge in full faith that you'll be alive when done, an amazing thing happens. The mind shuts up. Pure joy replaces it, and a sense of freedom. The idea that if you can do this, you can do anything blares at the forefront of your mind. The beautiful thing is that you almost always walk away from it unharmed.

Taking on the four quadrants of outcome from this space allows you to break through the chains of fear that so often beset you. Charge head-on into life and things will go right.

What if (Notice the "what if"!) you do everything right as you see it and the outcome is still negative? You could turn that into a positive by asking what lesson you get to learn. Sometimes you might experience a negative outcome, but again that all depends on your perspective. Say to yourself, "It is what it is. Now what?" If you have a what-if question, I can tell you what quadrants you are operating from in most cases. Start hanging out in the first two quadrants! You will see far-reaching positive changes in your life.

Being Accountable

As you see, being accountable comes about by being aware of our role in everything that comes into our space. There is nothing that happens in your life unless you have some

involvement in it. The car you drive, the home you live in, the clothes you wear, the amount of money you make, the friends you have, all come about because of your choices and actions or inactions. You bring this about consciously and unconsciously moment to moment. Isn't it time for you to wake up and bring about what you truly want? The only way to do that is to become aware, learn from it and choose in a manner that would bring about what you are truly seeking.

If reaching goals was as easy as setting a start and finish point and all we had to do was go from point A to point B, all of us would reach our goals every time. Some people are proficient enough to go from point A to point B with little or no effort. Most of us are starting out on a level of goal reaching that requires certain tools. In this chapter we are discussing some of these powerful tools. It is not our objective to just arrive at a goal, but to power through it to its absolute attainment.

Persistence

This is the toughest part for most people. Is it easy for you to give up in the face of adversity? For a lot of people, the motto becomes, "When the going gets tough, I quit!" I love what David Cottrell says about persistence: "*What separates winners from losers is the courage to persist long enough to win.*" [9]

Imagine you're in a race. The gun fires and you explode off the line with a huge amount of energy, determined that you will be the winner of the event. You give it everything you have, and it pays off by giving you a vast lead over your rivals. You think to yourself. "I've got this in the bag!" You round the first turn and begin to feel slight fatigue. You notice that the other competitors are catching up to you. Relentlessly you tell yourself to keep going, but little by little, you lose stamina. You become disheartened and slow down even more as you begin to ponder the reasons you're running out of energy. As quickly as the thought fills your mind, you

are passed by one of the other runners. The crowd starts cheering for him. “They should be cheering for me!” you tell yourself emphatically. Then another runner eases by you and another. “What’s wrong with me?” you ask yourself. “Why is everyone else succeeding and I’m not?” Seeing that the opportunity of being first across the finish line has escaped you, you begin to slow down even more. The rest of the group plows by you as you come to a standstill in the middle of the track. You decide in that moment this isn’t worth it, quit and walk, depressed, off the field. You never even cross the finish line, and go home to sleep for a few weeks to honor the depression you are feeling. Whenever anyone asks what happened, you blame something or someone for the results of that day.

How often do you run your life, relationships and businesses this way? You start out great with tons of excitement and energy. Everyone, including yourself, knows that you are going to come out on top. You jump into it full force and take an astounding lead in your life. Then it takes longer than you expected, a client says no, a girlfriend says she’s not interested anymore, a friend says the economy is going to make it difficult to succeed, and you begin to ponder the reasons these statements ring true for you. You begin to doubt. As you allow one event after another to confirm your why nots, you slowly decay mentally and finally succumb to the pressures of quitting. When people ask you what happened, you quickly blame everyone and everything, never looking at your role and accountability.

When people set expectations for what the end should look like, they quickly become disheartened when their lack of persistence causes it to take on the appearance of something else. An alternative ending so to speak! Rather than pushing through to the creation they had in mind, they quit.

Our biggest critic is our own mind. It will treat us more harshly than any other human ever would. It wants to hear those negative statements and make them true. It will beat on us until we finally believe that we are not good enough. It will torment us until we admit that we can't. It is more powerful than all of those naysayers put together. They are all on the outside and it is not.

The biggest key to persistence is learning to shut this mechanism off. The next few sections will provide you with tools for being unrelentingly persistent in the onslaught of negative thoughts.

Swim Upstream—How to Move Forward When Everyone Else is Panicking

Are you familiar with the salmon? Salmon are saltwater fish. They are born in fresh water, migrate to the ocean, then return to fresh water to reproduce. They overcome amazing barriers to reach their goal. They face horrendous predators, devastating waterfalls, body-destroying diseases and unearthly strong currents. They are relentless in their pursuit even in the face of so much danger. The salmon will stop at nothing to reach its destination.

An amazing piece of information about these fish is that they can lie motionless for any amount of time in the strongest current. They will not so much as wiggle a fin, and they won't move. If alarmed, on the other hand, they dart at lightning speed upstream against the current instead of allowing themselves to be carried downstream by it, which would seem to be more natural.

What do salmon have to do with you? In the face of many challenges when pursuing your goals, you have an opportunity to charge headstrong into the adversity or float downstream. Someone once said that even a dead fish can float downstream.

In difficult times, most people jump ship and swim or float like a dead fish with the current. Those who stand firm will see the possibilities that are available in the face of so much fear and negativity, because they will be ready to charge forward at lightning speed to take advantage of the opportunities that will arise. Are you one of them?

As in the example of the runner, in place of succumbing to the power of negative thoughts, he could have charged forward through the thoughts to the intended goal.

Like the salmon, when we are presented with a challenge we get to charge into it! The key to progress in difficult times is committed action: Action at lightning speed beyond the setback. What does it take to move forward when fear strikes? It takes courage, clarity of purpose, trust and passion.

When the crowd or your mind is running in the opposite direction, it is up to you to stand firm and, at the sight of opportunity, charge forward into success. There will be times when you don't see the opportunities before you. Your forward action will make those opportunities clear and bring about the rewards.

When I was selling real estate, I remember one bitterly cold winter in particular. I hadn't sold a home for what seemed like an eternity, and things were getting extremely difficult. I had no clients and no prospects. I had known for some time that when I take committed, lightning-speed action, creation steps in and fills in the gaps. I determined that I would go out in the dead of that obscenely cold winter and knock on doors. I had no idea if it would work or be a complete waste of time.

While everyone was comfortably warm in their homes on that frigid day, I was out trekking through the knee-high snow from door to door. I must have looked more like an Eskimo than a real estate agent, yet the people were kind enough to let me in. I gathered a lot of names

that day, and not one of those was ready to work with me. When I got home that night I felt like an utter failure. That same evening my phone rang. One of my past clients asked me if I would like to represent their friend in the sale of their home. I emphatically said “Yes!”

I gained a client that day. It came because I was willing to step blindly into the unknown regardless of the outcome. Because of my action, that client called me.

We may not know what the results of our actions will be. It is not up to us to know the mechanics or the hows. It is up to us to know that by our committed action the results we seek will come. We get to take action. This key to your success will push you forward into the actualization of your goals as you originally intended them.

Daily Steps to Affirmations

An affirmation is a positive statement that we repeat aloud or in private repeatedly to bring about the things we desire in our lives. This statement is always in the affirmative and may sound like this: “I am a powerful, wealthy man!” or “I am healthy now!” These statements, repeated over and over again, become a part of us. Not the external fleshy part, the deeper internal part.

In the case of our runner, he bombarded himself with negative thoughts. Although outside forces may say or do things to affect our course, none of these will take hold unless we allow our internal dialogue to accept it as its own. An affirmation is a way for us to take the thoughts off of what we don’t want and realign them with our goal. What we focus on, we create.

Our minds are wired for automation. When you were a baby, chances are you started like most of us, crawling. Not too many babies walk home from the hospital. Truth be told, they don’t crawl home either. As you were learning to walk it took a great deal of effort and focus to take that first step. You probably fell down a few times. With time and repetition, your body began to

take over. You didn't start each day at that very first step. The mind retained that information and you were able to progress from where you left off. There came a point in this process wherein you could walk effortlessly. Now, I would venture to say, you don't even have to think about walking, you just do it.

Our body has the ability to automate those things that are vital to our livelihood. Do you have to think or tell your mind to make your heart beat? Do you remember to breathe in and breathe out? Did you tell your body to maintain its temperature of 98.6°? How many things did you do while you were driving to work today? Did you talk on the phone, put on makeup or write some notes? As our body begins to experience repetition, it begins to notice that this is important and retains it in the "Keep" database. It becomes automated and we can begin to do it without any conscious thought.

Affirmations allow us to retain fresh in our minds those things we would like to actualize. They trigger what is known as the Reticular Activating System (RAS). This is a part of the brain that is believed to cause awareness and motivation. This is also believed to be the system that maintains the body's essential functions like breathing, heart beat and other automatic functions.

When we repeat something over and over again it becomes habit and this part of our mind will automate it. If I say for example "I only see blue Volkswagen Beetles," my Reticular Activator will show me all of the blue Volkswagen Beetles. If I repeat over and over again that I am powerful, the RAS will kick in and show me all of the reasons why I am powerful. This incredible tool not only keeps us alive when we are doing a million things and driving, it brings to our attention the things that are most important to us. It will also automate the habits that will be necessary in reaching our goals.

Alternatively, if we repeatedly say there is a lack of money, time or anything else, our RAS will show us the reason why those statements ring true. The RAS will automate those actions (or lack thereof) you would need to take to reach the actuality of a lack of money, time or anything else that seems lacking.

Imagine a baby wanting to walk. Let's suppose this baby had the use of affirmations. He determines that he will walk and every day he lies on his back moving not even a muscle, saying "I can walk smoothly now!" He repeats this over and over again, day in and day out. Months go by and he doesn't miss a day of his affirmations, yet he never moves a muscle. Do you think this baby will ever walk? Not if he never takes action. The RAS is not a magician. Just saying something over and over again doesn't mean it will come into your space. This occurs when we take action.

Many believe that by saying something over and over again, it will magically appear in their life. This is not true. Although we can create automation through repetition, we cannot bring about the item until we take some form of committed action.

It is unfair to say that one will be a millionaire while this same person sits at home watching TV. Yes, they may say their affirmations as they sit in front of their favorite reality show, but this will not bring the millions of dollars to their door. You cannot reap what you do not sow! Just talking about farming does not make you a farmer!

Affirmations must be welded to committed action. This allows your talk to become your reality. The repetition of both your affirmations and committed action will allow your RAS to become your biggest advocate. It will assist you in automating those things that will make your goal a reality. It is said that it takes 45 days to stop a bad habit and the same amount of time to

create a new good one. You must be consistent in your efforts, and the energy you feel towards creating the new habit must be equal throughout the process.

Language of Increase

Let me explain what the language of increase is by explaining what it is not. The language of increase is not scarce in any way. It doesn't think about the negatives of a situation. It doesn't associate with worst case scenarios. The language of increase doesn't feel as though everyone is out to get it. It doesn't wonder why everyone else is succeeding and it's not. It opposes negativity.

The language of increase is abundance. It is speaking in a way of accountability and plenty. When we use this language, we can do anything.

Some of the favorite words and statements of the language of increase are: I can, I will, I am, abundance, plenty, joy, happy, wealthy, share, assist, love, accountable—and there are many more.

When saying affirmations, it is rare that you hear someone say “I will be a wealthy if...” The language of increase dictates that we say things as though they already are even though it has not happened in this moment. Instead of the saying above, we would say, “I am wealthy now!” The language of increase doesn't doubt. It knows that what we say is as real as anything we might physically see.

When I use the language of increase, I am confident in my words. They are words of truth. I say them because I take the action necessary to make them a reality and they manifest.

Any words that cast a shadow of doubt on my plans or goals are not of the language of increase, but the language of decrease. Similar to the North and South poles, there are poles in the language we use. One builds us up. The other tears us down. There is no middle ground.

Moment to moment you are speaking one or the other. You are speaking yourself into abundance or scarcity.

To begin using the language of increase, you become aware of the words you are using. Every word is critical and absolutely revealing. As you pay attention to your words, notice the feeling you get when saying them. How does it feel when you say help vs. assist? Hate vs. love? Can vs. can't? Will vs. should? There is a strong power in the words we use, and by choosing the strongest words, we create that power within us.

The language of increase is the power of creation. The airplane didn't come into existence because someone said "I can't!" All things come into existence by the use of this language. Since that is the case, it is time for you to start using it in the creation of those things you desire most in your life.

"Since we cannot change reality, let us change the eyes which see reality."

—Nikos Kazantzakis [10]

Diligence

"What we hope ever to do with ease, we must learn first to do with diligence."

—Samuel Johnson [11]

This is stick-to-itiveness. I can never look forward to being like Tiger Woods if I don't get off the couch and hit balls every day. Not only do I need to hit balls, but I must have a goal of hitting them within six inches of the pin every time. With that goal I will make adjustments and take actions conducive to making that goal a reality. This is productive diligence. It's taking action on a consistent basis with a determination to accomplish a certain goal and adjusting appropriately until that goal is reached. Diligence is not quitting before the goal is obtained.

I talked about the runner quitting the race prematurely because he got into his head. When we choose to obtain a goal, feedback starts to come back at us in many forms. We may miss the mark, associates may offer advice or outside forces will present themselves.

The only person who can interpret your feedback is you. Will you filter it through the language of increase or decrease? Will you make appropriate adjustments or will you quit? Our interpretation of the feedback will greatly affect the amount of diligence we give to something. If I feel like something is going well, it's easy for me to remain diligent and continue in my pursuit. If I interpret it as going poorly, I have a tendency to lose focus and interest. Therefore, my attainment of that goal suffers. As feedback comes in, it is neither good nor bad. It is merely feedback. The classification I give it determines my interpretation.

Diligence is greatly affected by health. When I am in a healthy, energetic state, I can do anything. I feel as though nothing can stop me. However, when I'm tired or sick, nothing can get me out of bed.

The body works efficiently with proper nutrition and exercise. There is a direct correlation between my physical and mental health. When I feel healthy I think healthy thoughts. When I am unhealthy my body and mind go into chaos. My mind will have scattered thoughts and my body will experience anxieties and pains.

Are you eating properly? When you're eating that truck-sized burger, can you hear your heart slow down? I can. Don't get me wrong, a truck-sized burger may taste good once in a while, but when it becomes breakfast, lunch and dinner your body will suffer. The heart will pump slower and the brain will work less efficiently. Less efficient mind power equates to decreased desire and a reduction in diligence.

One of the biggest killers to my creativity is caffeine. When I drink it I experience an enormous amount of anxiety and tension, which in a lot of cases triggers the infamous fight or flight response. The littlest things annoy me. It is in these frustrated states that I give up on my goals or postpone them. I become a giant procrastinator. I say to myself “I’ll just wait until I feel more relaxed.” This would be fine as long as it’s not followed by another dose of the caffeine. Do you experience something similar?

Alcohol has a tendency to cloud focus. It is commonly used when one is attempting to quiet the mind. I feel that when someone becomes addicted to this drug, it is to find peace from the endless mental chatter. I can promise you that chatter is not the language of increase.

Both of these chemicals have the ability to change our conscious state and affect our nerves. Both can create a sense of loss of control and reduce our diligence.

To be diligent with something we must believe that it will come into reality. We find something we can put our heart and soul into. Every person is unique. Their goals are different. Not everybody wants to be a professional basketball player like LeBron James, and nobody will ever be as good at being him as he is. Find your unique passion. What is it that excites you the most? What would you do even if you never made a dime doing it? It’s easy to be diligent when you love what you are doing. When was the last time you said to yourself, “I love what I do”? It’s time to find that. It will be an enormous diligence boost.

Committed Action

A few years ago a few of us went golfing at a company party. My friend had just purchased a beautiful set of golf clubs that he unwrapped just before we arrived at the course. We pulled our cart next to the first tee and were accompanied by some other golfers. The tee was elevated above the course, and the fairway had a line of beautiful homes down the right hand

side. My other friend was the first one to tee off. He hit that ball like a missile straight down the fairway for what seemed like two hundred yards, just a gorgeous shot. I followed him with my shot and although not as beautiful, it made it down the fairway. My friend stepped up to the tee with his shiny new driver and took some practice swings. He lined up his club head with the ball and proceeded to extend back for what we all knew would be a powerful shot. He came down at that ball with everything he had, powered through the shot and spun completely around—almost like Goofy in the Disney cartoons—and nearly fell over as the ball stayed proudly poised on the tee without so much as shaking. We all fell out of the golf carts with laughter as he stumbled back into balance. He may not have hit that ball, but he was committed.

When you take action, are you going at it with everything you've got? Are you holding back? Being committed means you are taking it on with everything you've got no matter what the outcome. Whether it works or not, you are willing to give it your all.

There are some things that cause us to not commit. The biggest of these is doubt. Doubt can cause a person to hesitate, and hesitation tends to cause damage. The fear of the unknown keeps many of us from stepping out of our comfort zones into the new world we intend to create.

I repeat, 90% of all "what if" statements never come true! That means all that energy you are putting into worst case scenarios is wasted energy. If we know that 10% of the time something bad will happen and can say to ourselves "It is what it is. Now what?" we will always find a way to overcome the small amount of negative occurrences.

To be committed to our goal is the only way to reach it. All of our committed actions will go towards its attainment. It will consume our thoughts. We will find creative ways to attain it. We will create alliances. We will do whatever it takes to make it a reality.

Thomas Alva Edison never failed. He found 10,000 ways that didn't work. Are you ready to test the 10,000 ways that don't work to get to the one that does? That is the type of commitment I am talking about.

When a person is taking committed action they do not quit before reaching the goal. They know that the beginning actions are just as important as the last. It takes consistent effort all the way through the goal to accomplish what we desire.

As you can see, our minds are designed to assist us in reaching our goals. It is not as easy as plug-n-play. However, with repetition and commitment, we are able to use the tools in this chapter to power through our goals to their absolute attainment. By making a conscious effort to obtain our goal, we will speak and act repetitively in ways that will expedite this process. With practice, we will learn to go from point A to point B with less and less effort.

When our goals come to us easily, it's time to set bigger goals.