

Personal Excellence

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The Magazine of Personal Leadership

Ken Lindner
Consultant

April 2013

**Opt for
Optimism**

**Communicate
Effectively**

**Your Anger
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INSPIRATION • SUCCESS

The One Thing

Achieve extraordinary results.

by Gary Keller

WHEN I BEGAN COACHING PEOPLE, I WOULD end with a recap of the *handful of things* they agreed to accomplish before our next session. Sadly, few achieved what mattered most. Results suffered. Frustration followed. So, I shortened my list—to just *three things* . . . and then *two things*. Finally, I went as small as I could go and asked: “*What’s the ONE Thing you can do this week such that by doing it everything else would be easier or unnecessary?*” And results went through the roof.

I then look back, I see that where I had huge success, I narrowed my concentration to *one thing*; where my success varied, I had no focus.

Going small. Why do some people get so much more done than others? How do they do more, achieve more, earn more, and have more? If *time* is the *currency of achievement*, why can some cash in their allotment for more chips? They make *getting to the heart of things* the heart of their approach. They *go small*.

Going small is ignoring all the things you could do and doing what you should do. It’s recognizing not all things matter equally and finding the things that matter most. It’s a tighter way to connect *what you do* with *what you want*. It’s realizing that extraordinary results are directly determined by how narrow you can make your focus. So, *go as small as possible*. When your calendar and to-do list become overloaded and overwhelming, success starts to feel out of reach, so you settle for less. Big success comes when you do a few things well. When you try to do too much, you accomplish too little. Over time

you lower your expectations, abandon your dreams, and allow your life to get small.

You have only so much time and energy. You need to do *fewer things* for more effect instead of doing more things with side effects. Adding more to your life without cutting anything brings bad with it: long hours, lost sleep, poor diet, no exercise, stress, anxiety, missed moments with family and friends. All in the name of going after something that is easier to get than you might imagine.



Going small yields extraordinary results—and it works all the time, anywhere and on anything—since it’s only purpose is to ultimately get you to the point where you are staring at one thing. In bowling, you aim for the lead pin. In darts, the bull’s-eye scores the most points. In every endeavor, one action counts for more. It’s either the first thing you have to do or the most important thing you must do. Levers, cat-

alysts, multipliers—these are how careers are grown, businesses built, and industries dominated. It gets you there faster, keeps you there longer, and *returns the most* out of your efforts.

I’m talking about *The ONE Thing*. So when you think about success, why not shoot for the moon. Line up your priorities, find the lead domino and whack away at it until it falls.

This works because *success is sequential*, not simultaneous. You do the right thing and then you do the next right thing. Over time it adds up to the *domino effect*—success builds on success. What you build today lays the foundation for a bigger tomorrow. Success is built sequentially—one thing at a time.

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Successful people do the ONE Thing, knowing that high productivity is to achieve one thing at a time and that success begets success. They know success is built one step at a time, so in every situation they figure out what matters most and make it matter most.

Applying the ONE Thing will get the most out of you and the most out of any goal: it gets you doing what is critical for achievement. It makes everything else either easier or unnecessary. Building your life on the ONE Thing doesn't require you to be superhuman. It's a way to be ordinary, but succeed extraordinarily. It doesn't care about your background, education, knowledge, skills, or resources. It doesn't require you to change who you are or sacrifice anything you value.

Living the ONE Thing enables you to achieve the extraordinary. It doesn't just give you success, it gives you successability. Focusing on the ONE Thing is the ultimate success habit. So, build your life around it!

Stop trying to do too much—and start trying to do too little, to be single-minded, to put blinders on, to acquire a one-track mind and ride a one-trick pony, to have tunnel vision, to find your sweet spot and keep hitting it, to find your hot button and keep pushing it, to hammer one nail, grind one axe and pick one bone, to miss the forest for the tree, to go to the heart of success, to figure out what matters most and make it matter most—to live the ONE Thing.

Ask the Focusing Question

Ask one question, the Focusing Question. What's the ONE Thing I can do such that by doing it everything else will be easier or unnecessary? The Focusing Question is so simple that its power is easily dismissed by anyone who doesn't closely examine it. It is such a powerful question that it can lead you to answer not only big picture questions (Where am I going? What target should I aim for?) but small focus ones as well (What should I do right now to be on the path to getting the big picture? Where's the bull's-eye?). It tells you not only what your basket should be, but also the first step toward getting it. It shows you how big your life can be and just how small you must go to get there. It's both a map for the big picture and a compass for your smallest next move.

Extraordinary results come from the choices you make and the actions you take. The Focusing Question aims you at the best of both by forcing you to do what is essential to success—making the best decision. It ignores what is doable and drills down to what is necessary, to what matters.

To stay on track, keep asking the Focusing Question again and again and line up tasks in order of importance. Each time you ask it, you see your next priority. You set yourself

up to accomplish one task on top of another. When you do the right task first, you build the right skills, mindset, and relationships first. With the right sequence set, your actions become a natural progression of building one right thing on top of the previous right thing. You experience the power of the domino effect.

Anatomy of the Question

The Focusing Question asks: What's the ONE Thing I can do/such that by doing it/everything else will either be easier or unnecessary?

1. What's the one thing I can do . . . This sparks focused action. It tells you the answer will be one thing versus many. It forces you toward something specific. It tells you that, although you may consider many options, you're only allowed to pick one thing. The phrase, can do, is an embedded command directing you to take action. There are many things you should, could, or would do, but never do. Action beats intention every time.

2. Such that by doing it . . . This tells you there's a criterion your answer must meet. It's the bridge between just doing something and doing something for a specific purpose. It lets you know you need to dig deep, since when you do this ONE Thing, something else happens.

3. . . everything else will either be easier or unnecessary? This is the criterion your answer must meet.

Archimedes said, "Give me a lever long enough and I could move the world." That's exactly what this last part tells you to find. "Everything else will either be easier or unnecessary" is the ultimate leverage test. It tells you when you've found the first domino. It says that when you do this ONE Thing, everything else you could do to accomplish your goal will now be either doable with less effort or no longer even necessary. Many things don't even need to be done at all, when you start by doing the right one. This qualifier asks you to put on blinders. This elevates the answer's potential to change your life by doing the leveraged thing and avoiding distractions.

The Focusing Question does double duty: The Small Question, "What's my ONE Thing now?" keeps you focused on your priority work, aligned with your goals, and attentive to the needs of the most important people in your life. The Big Question helps you decide what direction to take, which long-term goals to set, what you want to master, how you want to be remembered, what you want to give to others, where you want to be in your career, and what relationships you want with friends, family, and colleagues. PE



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ACTION: Do the One Thing.

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Brainchild Critics

Did you just call my baby ugly?



by Joe Cala

DO YOU FIND IT HARD TO open yourself up to the opinions, criticism, and feedback of others regarding your life, your products, projects, ideas, children, and other personal creations?

I know that many people find this hard to do, including most of the pastors, ministers, and church leaders whom I work with. Like these leaders, you likely feel that many of the positive realities in your enterprise are there because of you—your influence, creativity, sweat, faith, hard work, time and sacrifice. You birthed these ideas, events or services into life.

Have you ever heard someone say, *That is my brainchild*. Of course, *brainchild* is defined as a *product of creative work or thoughts*. It's also said that once we discover a higher purpose for our lives, we become *pregnant with purpose*.

After we become *pregnant with that purpose*, we sense a responsibility to deliver that purpose into the world. *These purposes and ideas are like our babies*. And it's hard to grant people who had nothing to do with all of the work, commitment and sacrifice that you poured into making this baby become a living reality to give you criticism and feedback on how it looks, how it should look, how it acts, how it should act, and tell you whether it's a good or bad baby. *Nobody likes to hear someone call their baby ugly!*

This is especially true in churches. Many pastors, ministers and church leaders don't allow their members to give honest feedback about the church, simply because they don't want to hear that in some way *their baby is ugly*. So, instead of inviting or allowing others to give reasonable objective Feedback, they may ignore it, denounce it as negativity, or label it as a lack of faith. Many pastors look only through the lens of how they see things and how they think the congregation *should* see things.

Granted, nothing is more frustrating than volunteering to do an event for a church or community and later having someone tell you how it was okay, but could have been much better if you would have done this or that. After you spend all week preparing, setting up,

gathering resources, making connections, managing people and serving all day, you then hear, "Wow! That was a dud!" Talk about a punch in the gut!

Instead of asking follow-up questions of the critic, we take offense and walk away without receiving any feedback on how to improve what needs improvement. We could get valuable information to make changes for the better simply by taking time to ask a few questions: Why do you think it was a dud? What do you think we could do to make it better? What things about the event did you like?

We all need *honest feedback* from our family, patrons, customers, members, and visitors. What they see, how they see and their overall perception is



extremely valuable in helping us serve them better. I heard one minister say that attending church is like going to our grandparents' house for dinner. When we get there, they hug us, kiss us, and tell us how much they love us and miss us. But when it's time to eat, they say, "Now sit down, shut up, and eat what we're serving! And if you don't like it, don't tell us."

As leaders, we need to listen to the people who attend our church, work in our business, serve in our community, purchase our products, eat our meals, or contribute to our enterprises. We should listen to their perspectives and learn how they see things. As ministers, we will see better results and more engagement when we allow people to have a voice in the place of worship where they receive our guidance, correction, exhortation and instruction.

Try Using a Scorecard

In my work, I encourage ministers: Use a *ScoreCard* to receive *honest feedback* from people who attend your

church. Your members can then score you and your service to them, and this Feedback can be very useful as you seek to *improve* your services. This feedback shows you the perception of your congregation and visitors and enables you to see how they view and experience your services. You can either use the *ScoreCard* to improve your service—or ignore it and miss out on how to better serve people.

I invite you to use the Scorecard with your first-time guests and with randomly selected regular members weekly, monthly, or quarterly. To receive more feedback, you might have a *ScoreCard Box* to make it easy for people to access and fill out the form, *anonymously*, after the service. The *anonymous* status allows people to answer honestly, knowing they will not be identified. Even if they say something that may hurt someone's feelings, or call someone's baby ugly, they won't be confronted or chastised for saying things as they think, feel, see, or say them.

In your announcements, you might say, "We welcome our first-time visitors and guests, along with each of you in attendance today, invite you to use this *ScoreCard* to provide us with your comments and suggestions. Your honest feedback is welcomed, as we continuously seek to improve our services. Please place your form in the *ScoreCard Box* before you leave. Thank you for helping us better serve you!"

Using a *ScoreCard* provides transparency and gives you the suggestions and perceptions of the people who attend your church or visit your business. Such feedback, if received properly, can be a strong resource for you to improve areas to better serve members of your church, community, or family.

The *ScoreCard's 10 Questions* enable you to get a full range of input from the Scorer to get a better gauge of what is being seen, perceived and interpreted by those who experience your leadership while attending and visiting your services and events. Each *ScoreCard* also provides an area for the one who is Scoring to indicate their age. This will help you see how different age groups view each area.

The basic principle of the Scorecard is this: Your ideas, products and services (your *brainchildren*) improve when you invite and incorporate feedback from your members or users. **PE**

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ACTION: Seek objective feedback and keep score.

Dump Head Trash

Toxic emotions muddy thinking.



by Timothy I. Thomas

SEVEN TOXIC EMOTIONS CAN muddy your thinking to the point that you can't lead effectively: *Fear, Anxiety, Arrogance, Insecurity, Anger, Guilt, Paranoia and Control*. These seven demons can plague you and cause you to get stuck *personally and professionally*. By managing these emotions well, you gain self-confidence. When you mismanage them, *each self-defeating thought pattern can cause you to crumble* under the weight of an inner dialogue filled with irrational thoughts and feelings. For example, even though you are very talented and capable, your self-talk may say, "You're not really a leader." You may be convinced that you will be *found out as a fraud*.

As a leadership coach, I've observed many executives who carry themselves outwardly with great confidence yet suffer from many fears and insecurities. Sometimes their fears are based on legitimate economic, business or market concerns. Other times, however, their fears are irrational and compound their challenges. *They work against themselves, fighting their thoughts and emotions.*

HeadTrash consists of toxic thought patterns and emotional tendencies that hinder your ability to respond to challenges in a productive and professional way. It's the negative voice of the subconscious, engaging you in a damaging inner dialogue which only you hear, affecting everything you say and do, and impacting everyone around you. Ultimately, *HeadTrash* can drive you into making poor decisions, no decisions, or slow decisions.

HeadTrash results in you becoming stuck in one place, making safe and uninspired decisions, removing healthy criticism and debate from the culture, and doubting just about every decision you make. When you suffer from *HeadTrash*, you become paralyzed, spin your wheels seemingly forever, and can't make tough choices. Things that were once second nature become onerous, self-esteem is quickly eroded, and your effectiveness diminishes greatly.

Again, *HeadTrash* takes *seven forms*:

- **Fear:** You avoid taking action, delay or preventing growth.
- **Arrogance:** Your egocentric behavior becomes a blind spot and a roadblock.
- **Insecurity:** You grab credit, become

defensive, tear others down and cause your colleagues to disengage.

- **Guilt:** You do things you know are wrong or that you don't want to do, because of perceived pressure from others, eroding focus on your top priorities.
- **Anger:** You overreact to problems, explode, and transmit fear to others.
- **Control:** You refuse to let go, stifling creativity and preventing growth.
- **Paranoia:** You feel that *they*—some mysterious others—are out to get you. Your *paranoia* erodes *trust* and *teamwork*.

I've often witnessed the seven forces in action and helped leaders *manage* them (*HeadTrash* rarely disappears completely). While *other tendencies* in human emotional and mental patterns cause disruption (such as *jealousy* or *playing the victim*), we view these seven as the most destructive. Your *HeadTrash* can

spread rapidly to engulf others.

You can take specific actions to cut down on your *HeadTrash*. You hold the power within yourself to change, to manage and control emotions so that they stop being a *damaging liability* and perhaps become an *asset*.

To manage *HeadTrash*, you need to recognize and admit that the problem exists, and then demonstrate your willingness to change these ingrained habits. This requires *courage, discipline, and patience*. As you see what behavioral changes you must make, and commit to a structured approach and process for daily improvement, you'll see results. **PE**

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ACTION: Dump your head trash.

Mindfulness

Increase your awareness.



by Matt Mumber & Heather Reed

NOT TOO LONG AGO—JUST AFTER WORLD War II—few Americans brushed their teeth regularly. Now, the thought of going an entire day without brushing your teeth is out of the question.

Hopefully, soon, a similar attitude will prevail regarding *mental well-being*. Human happiness and well-being are rudderless without *awareness*, the quality of paying attention to what's going on in *the present moment* from an inquisitive, nonjudgmental, focused perspective.

An easy way to think of *optimal wellbeing* might be to envision a three-legged stool: physical activity, nutrition, and stress management, or a healthy mental state.

After checking off a healthy diet and exercise from the list, how can you ensure a healthy mind? The key is *mindfulness*: paying attention on purpose, non-judgmentally, as if our life depended on it—focusing on something without trying to change it.

Seven conditions are optimal for attaining mindfulness:

- **Beginner's mind:** seeing things with new eyes. The Bible warns against *putting new wine in old wine skins*—doing so risks tainting the new stock. A beginner's mind opens you to the

world of possibilities that exist in the present moment. That does not mean throwing away good ideas from the past; rather, it means to entertain new ideas with a truly open sensibility.

- **Trust:** Believe in your authority to know your own body, thoughts and feelings. You need to have the confidence to trust that your thoughts and feelings at any moment have value.
- **Non-judging:** the ability to *see things for what they are*, to hold an open and neutral place for whatever comes up within and around you, without thinking of anything as *categorically better or worse* than anything else.
- **Patience** is a willingness to continue with the process of paying attention on purpose even when it seems that no progress is being made. Learning and growing through mindful practice happens with time, and you can't force the outcome.



• **Acceptance:** allowing *whatever comes up in the moment* to be held in your field of awareness. This isn't the same as *giving up or being passive*; *acceptance* is merely *acknowledgement*.

- **Letting go:** refusing to attach to specific thoughts, feelings or behaviors. This can feel like losing something, but when you let go, you open yourself to something new and potentially, deeper.
- **Non-striving:** practicing mindfulness without expectation of some future goal or dream. This helps you better live in the now. **PE**

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ACTION: Gain a sense of optimal well-being.

Communicate Effectively

Recognize patterns, make distinctions.



by Tony Robbins

ONE KEY TO SUCCESS IN anything is the ability to make new distinctions, and *metaprograms* enable you to make crucial distinctions in deciding how to deal with people. The number of *metaprograms* you're aware of is limited only by your sensitivity, awareness and imagination. Become a student of possibility. Constantly gauge and calibrate the people around you. Take note of specific patterns they have for perceiving the world and analyze if others have similar patterns. Through this approach you can develop a set of distinctions about people that can empower you in knowing how to communicate effectively with all types of people.

For example, some people sort primarily by feelings and others sort by logical thoughts. Would you try to persuade them in the same way? Of course not. Some people make decisions based only on specific facts and figures. First they have to know if the parts will work—they'll think about the broader picture later. Others are convinced first by an overall concept or idea. They react to global chunks. They want to see the big picture first. If they like it, then they'll think about the details.

Some people are turned on by beginnings. They're most excited when they get a new idea off the ground, and then they soon tend to lose interest in it and go on to something else. Others are fixated on completion. Anything they do they have to see all the way to the end, whether it's reading a book or doing a task at work.

Some people sort by food. Almost anything they do or consider doing is evaluated in terms of food. Ask them how to get someplace, and they'll say, "Go down the road until you get to Burger King, make a left, and then continue until you get to McDonald's and make a right, and then make a left at Kentucky Fried Chicken until you get to that chocolate-brown building."

Ask about a movie they went to, and they begin telling you about how bad

the concession stand was. Ask about the wedding, and they'll tell you about the cake. A person who sorts primarily by people will talk mostly about the people at the wedding or the people in the film. A person who sorts primarily by activities will talk about what actually happened at the wedding, what happened in the film, and so on.

An undertaking of metaprograms also provides a model for balance. We all follow one strategy or another for using metaprograms. For some metaprograms, we may lean slightly more to one side than another. For others we may swing wildly to one strategy instead of the other. But there's nothing carved in stone about any of those strategies. Just as you can make the decision to put yourself in an empowering state, you can choose to adopt metaprograms that help rather than hinder you.

A metaprogram tells your brain *what to delete*. So if you're moving toward, for example, you're deleting the things

you're moving away from. If you're moving away from, then you're deleting the things that you could be moving toward. To change your metaprograms, all you have to do is become aware of the things you normally delete and begin to focus your attention on them.

Don't make the mistake of confusing yourself with

your behaviors or doing the same thing with someone else. You say, "I know Joe. He does this, this, and this." Well, you don't know Joe. You know his behaviors. But he isn't his behaviors any more than you are yours. If you tend to move away from everything, maybe that's your pattern of behavior. If you don't like it, you can change. There's no excuse for you not to change. You have the power. The only question is whether you have enough reasons to make yourself use what you know.

You can change metaprograms in two ways.

One is by significant emotional events (SEEs). If you saw your parents constantly moving away from things and not being able to achieve their full potential as a result, it might influence



the way you move toward or away. If you only sorted by necessity and missed out on some great job opportunity because the company was looking to someone with a dynamic sense of possibility, you might be shocked into changing your approach. If you tend to move toward everything and get taken in by a flashy-looking investment scam, it would likely affect the way you look at the next proposal that comes your way.

Second, you can change by consciously deciding to do so. Most of us never give a thought to which metaprograms we use. The first step toward change is recognition. The awareness of exactly what we are currently doing provides the opportunity for new choices and thus for change. Suppose, for example, that you have a strong tendency to move away from things. How do you feel about it? Sure, there are things you want to move away from. If you put your hand on a hot iron, you would want to move it away as soon as you could. But aren't there things you really want to move toward? Isn't a part of being in control making a conscious effort to make a move toward something? Don't most great leaders and great successes move toward things rather than away? So you might want to begin to stretch a little. You can start thinking about things that appeal to you and actively move toward them.

You could also think of metaprograms on a higher level. Do nations have metaprograms? Well, they have behaviors, don't they? So they have metaprograms, too. Their collective behavior many times forms a pattern, based upon the metaprograms of their leaders. The United States for the most part has a culture that seems to move toward. Does a country like Iran have an internal or external frame of reference?

Metaprograms can be useful on two levels. The first is as a tool to calibrate and guide our communication with others. Just as a person's physiology will tell you countless stories about him, his metaprograms will speak eloquently about what motivates him and frightens him. The second is as a tool for personal change. Remember, you are not your behaviors. If you tend to run any kind of pattern that works against you, all you have to do is change it. Metaprograms offer one of the most useful tools for personal calibration and change. And they provide keys to some of the most useful communication tools available. PE

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ACTION: Recognize patterns to communication.

Your Anger

Diffuse and channel it.



by Ken Lindner

LANCE ARMSTRONG ALLEGEDLY channeled his deep-seated anger for his dad—who deserted him as a child—into cycling and excelling in races. Tom Brady, the stellar New England Patriot quarterback who wasn't selected in the NFL college draft until the sixth round, effectively channeled his deep feelings of being disrespected, as well as his feelings of resentment and anger, into showing all of his detractors how very wrong they were about his ability to make a major impact in the NFL.

Both Lance Armstrong and Tom Brady appear to have used their anger to fuel them to reach extraordinary heights in their professions.

We all get angry. When you are making a life choice and your best judgment, along with your reasoning and evaluative processes become clouded, dismantled, or hijacked by your anger, the choice and action you make and take, respectively, may well not be ones that are best for you and your career.

In my book, *Your Killer Emotions*, I discuss *7 Steps of Emotion Mastery* that enable you to make beneficial choices—free from sabotaging emotions. An integral component of this process is diffusing your anger. Here are some suggestions to accomplish this:

1. Don't make an important decision or choice when you are overcome by anger! Always, stop, cool down, and, as they say, “take the pause that refreshes.” Additionally, DO NOT opt for an immediate, emotional quick fix, response, or retaliation, such as unthinkingly and destructively lashing-out. Oftentimes, we opt for short-term, anger-assuaging satisfactions, but in the big picture of our lives and careers, these reflexive, emotion-generated reactions are counter and highly detrimental to accomplishing what we truly want for our lives and/or careers in the long term (our “Gold Ring Dreams”).

2. Always strategically identify what you truly want in and from the choice you're going to make. You must know what you truly value the very most before you make your choice. This way, you will make a well-thought-out choice that reflects and affects your most treasured values and goals.

3. Try to understand where the other individual who is pushing your emotional buttons or evoking your anger is coming from. Strive to see things from their point of view. Chat with the person, in an open, non-defensive manner. Oftentimes, learning where others are coming from brings *understanding*, and *sympathy/empathy*, which can diffuse and thereby lessen the strong energy charges generated by your anger.

4. Take a moment to think about all of the blessings and positives in your life, job, and career. This can help you to cool down from the angst of the moment, so that you are then better able to think clearly and strategically.

5. Always be consequence cognizant. This requires you to think carefully about and vividly visualize: 1) the most severe and heinous consequences that a

poor/destructive, anger-triggered choice and act on your part can have on your life, career, and loved ones; and 2) the most positive, beneficial outcomes that you'll secure by taking the requisite time to strategically *choose*—anger free—the most constructive course of action.

Rather than react emotionally when you're angry, constructively *choose* your actions. Channel your anger-generated, negative energies into positive life or career-enhancing endeavors—thus using your anger as your valuable *ally!* You'll attain life and *career Gold*, and gain more self-esteem, self-worth, and self-confidence to achieve your cherished goals. **PE**

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ACTION: Channel your anger constructively.

EMOTIONAL • DEPRESSION

Are You Depressed?

Maintain balance in tough times.



by Gregory L. Jantz

NEARLY ONE IN 10 PEOPLE suffers from *depression*.

Top risk factors include being unable to work or unemployed; having no health insurance; suffering from obesity. Those topics dominate headlines. What's worse, by 2020, the World Health Organization estimates depression will be the second most debilitating disease worldwide.

These negative emotions along with *sustained, excessive stress*, can lead to depression. *Anger, fear and guilt* can all be underlying causes, even when you're unaware you're experiencing those feelings.

If you are at risk of depression, you can maintain your *emotional equilibrium* by counterbalancing negative feelings with optimism, hope, and joy. This is most effective if you do this holistically, addressing the *four main dimensions of human need*. By purposefully feeding the *intellectual, relational, physical, and spiritual* aspects of your life, you can achieve positive emotions.

I offer these suggestions:

• **Intellectual:** Be aware of what you are feeding to your mind. Try reading a positive, uplifting book, and setting aside time in your day to fill yourself up intellectually with constructive, encouraging messages. Be aware of what you are reading and listening to,



and seek to counter the negative input we all get with positive influences.

• **Relational:** Think of a person you really enjoy talking to, someone who makes you feel good about yourself or someone who's just fun to be around. Plan today to spend time with that person this week, even if it's just for a moment or two. Make the effort to verbalize your appreciation for his or her positive presence in your day.

• **Physical:** Physical activity is a wonderful way of promoting emotional health. Engage in some mild exercise this week. Take a walk around the neighborhood. Stroll through a city park. Get your body moving and focus on something other than yourself and

your surroundings. Greet your neighbors, stop at the park, watch someone playing with his dog, or cheer at a Little League game. Open up your focus to include the broader world.

• **Spiritual Support:** Take some time to nourish your spirit. Attend inspirational

services. Listen to inspirational or meditative music. Spend more time in quiet reflection, meditation, or prayer. Intentionally engage in an activity that replenishes and reconnects your spirit.

If you feel anxious and stressed, have trouble sleeping, or are discontent, start taking care of yourself. Depression is painful and debilitating. So, take steps to de-stress your life and to work on emotional balance. **PE**

Gregory L. Jantz, Ph.D., is a psychologist, mental health counselor, founder of The Center for Counseling and Health Resources, and author of Overcoming Anxiety, Worry and Fear. Visit www.aplaceofhope.com.

ACTION: Gain emotional balance.

Gamefilming

Develop high awareness.



by Tim JohnPress

ABOUT SEVEN YEARS AGO I was doing my *Leadership Circle* certification with my mentor Bob Anderson. I was distracted much of the time, preoccupied with a growing consulting firm and leadership responsibilities. However, my focus shifted quickly upon receiving the results of my 360 assessment.

"What do you think Bob?" I asked.

"It appears that you're *stressed out*, possibly *unhappy*, maybe *overwhelmed*."

"How do you know that?" I asked, shocked at his ability to see through me.

He smiled confidently. "I sensed it the moment you walked in the room yesterday. Your chest was fully expanded, and you had an intense presence about you. It looked as if you were ready to go into battle with the weight of the world on your shoulders."

Surprisingly, I laughed. It was not the response I had expected from Bob. It was more akin to how my martial arts masters would speak to me.

Bob's insightful feedback coupled with *The Leadership Circle's Reactive-Creative* model provided a framework that animated and aligned with many key principles and practices of martial arts, yoga, and competitive sports. And, my *Leadership Circle* results clearly indicated I was a white belt in the leadership arena. Though the news was disheartening, I quickly became excited. My years of training had taught me how to make changes quickly.

Having taught martial arts for 25 years, I've helped students transcend gripping fears, frayed self-images, and limiting inner narratives and rise to higher confidence, skill, and grace in their practice and in life. It became apparent that the same perspectives, principles, and practices I taught in the *dojo* could help leaders mitigate their *Reactive* tendencies and allow their natural *Creative* competencies to emerge.

The Body Knows

The early years of my martial arts training were focused on skill development such as kicking, punching, and blocking, yet the speed, precision, and power of my techniques were mostly ineffective when sparring with my

master. I always ended up on the ground defeated, usually in seconds. It was as if he could foresee every technique. When I inquired as to how, he said, "Tim, your body tells me everything—the way you stand, how you breathe, the pupils of your eye. You are so focused on what you're going to do you have little attention and focus for what is taking place in front of you. Your presence is fragmented, leaving you vulnerable and easy to defeat."

When I asked Bob how to improve, he said, "Learn to breathe. Your breath is the most vital energy in sustaining a healthy, enjoyable life. The more aware you are of your breath, the easier it is to manage, adapt, or change yourself or your situation. *If you can see it, you can manage it; if you can't see it, you'll be managed by it.*"

To become more effective, you need to become more aware of your physical body by practicing *Gamefilming*—watching films of your performance, becoming objective to subjective states, learning to see yourself as others see you, noticing and naming your current state (tense, agitated, excited—your *outer game*) and then changing your *inner game* (focus, intention, approach, and ideal outcome). By *Gamefilming*, you can *free yourself* from unconscious, arresting and self-preserving reactivity tendencies. This yields a subtle, confident, and extraordinary skillset.

I once coached a talented COO in a logistics company. A former NFL quarterback for the Chicago Bears, Brent Snyder brought a unique experience as a high-performance team player and leader. "A game film perspective," he said, "enables you to see dimensions of your performance that would otherwise be overlooked, to learn things about yourself, to gain an accurate evaluation of your capabilities and performance and more quickly adapt." He suggests asking: How do others perceive you? How do they perform when teamed with you? What strengths can be leveraged and what weaknesses can be exploited if you don't correct them?

Given the pace of change, increasing complexity, and information overload, you can grasp the value of *Gamefilming*. Cognitive horsepower, strategic prowess, and technical competence earn you the right to play the

leadership game; however, they're insufficient to sustain success. *Awareness*, *agility*, and *adaptability* separate highly effective leaders. It's not just about *what you do* it's about *how you do it* that makes you effective.

How to Gamefilm

Your physical body is the gateway to higher awareness, insight, and transformation. *Notice and name* your physical state. What are you physically aware of? Perhaps you notice your voice becoming louder. You may notice yourself getting physically tense or sighing desperately. You may notice and name hurt feelings. The practice of objectively noticing and



naming your subjective state unlocks you from the limiting behaviors, offering you a window of freedom to do and become something new.

After noticing and naming your current state, take a deep breath to relax your muscles, increase the release of endorphins, and improve the functionality of every system in your

body. By taking a deep breath, you create a *somatic shift* in your body, enabling you to avoid *Controlling*, *Protecting*, or *Complying* tendencies. With the somatic shift, you create a window into a new reality where you see more, think more clearly, and lead more effectively.

Once you make the subjective-to-objective shift in perspective and center yourself with deep breathing, you can make new choices.

Ask yourself three simple questions:

- **What are you doing?** Start being responsible and accountable for your actions. You need to take complete ownership for what you're now doing before you can create something new.

- **What do you want to be doing?** Create a *vision for something new*. Without *vision*, you have no energy to create anything new. You are destined to repeat what is.

- **What do you want to do about it?** This question moves you above the line into your full creative potential. This self-authoring perspective ignites new action. You create new experiences that support you in *creating results that matter* versus reacting to situations that don't.

You may face *moments of truth* daily. *Gamefilming* enables you to discover *what that truth is* and lead in a resourceful, sustainable and effective manner. **PE**

Tim JohnPress is a coach, consultant and founder of Ascendte Advisors. Visit www.timjohnpress.com.

ACTION: Start gamefilming your performance.

Reverse Diabetes

Start taking eight steps today.



by Mark Hyman

DIABESITY IS A MODERN epidemic, a deadly disease that afflicts one of every two of you, making you fat and ill, and yet you likely don't even know you have it.

Diabetes is the continuum of abnormal biology that ranges from mild insulin resistance to full-blown diabetes.

The entire spectrum of diabetes are downstream symptoms that result from problems with diet, lifestyle, and environmental toxins interacting with our genetic susceptibilities. These are the real causes.

These dietary and lifestyle factors lead to diabetes because they create a condition known as insulin resistance. Type 2 diabetes is a disease of too much, not too little, insulin. Insulin is the driver of problems with diabetes.

When your diet is full of empty calories and an abundance of quickly absorbed sugars, liquid calories, and carbohydrates (like bread, pasta, rice, and potatoes), your cells slowly become resistant to the effects of insulin and need more and more to do the same job of keeping your blood sugar even.

Thus, you develop insulin resistance. The higher your insulin levels are, the worse your insulin resistance. Your body starts to age and deteriorate. Insulin resistance is the single most important factor leading to rapid and premature aging and all its resultant diseases (heart disease, stroke, dementia, cancer).

As your insulin levels increase, it leads to an appetite that is out of control, increasing weight gain around the belly, more inflammation and oxidative stress, and myriad downstream effects including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, low HDL, high triglycerides, weight gain around the middle, thickening of the blood, and increased risk of cancer, Alzheimer's, and depression.

These are all a result of insulin resistance and too much insulin. And since insulin resistance (and diabetes) are outcomes of diet and lifestyle, diabetes is 100 percent reversible in most cases.

8 Steps to Reversing Diabetes

I invite you to stop managing symptoms and start treating the underlying causes of diabetes by taking eight steps to reverse this disease, starting today!

1. Get the right tests. The best test for

diabetes is an insulin response test (insulin levels are measured fasting and then 1 and 2 hours after a glucose drink).

2. Get smart about nutrition. Eliminate sugar and processed carbohydrates, include whole real foods like lean protein (chicken or fish), veggies, nuts, seeds, beans, and whole grains.

3. Get the right supplements. Include a good multivitamin, vitamin D, fish oil, and special blood sugar balancing nutrients like alpha lipoic acid, chromium polynicotinate, biotin, cinnamon, green tea catechins, and glucomannan.

4. Get relaxed. Stress contributes to insulin resistance and blood sugar imbalance. Push your pause button every day with deep breathing, visualization, yoga, and other relaxation techniques.

5. Get moving. Walk at least 30 minutes every day. For some, 30 to 60 min-

utes of more vigorous aerobic exercise 4 to 6 times a week may be necessary.

6. Get clean and green. Filter your water, look for green cleaning products, and avoid plastics when you can.

7. Get personal. You may need to take more steps to optimize key areas of your biology. The medicine of the future is personal medicine.

8. Get connected. Invite your friends, families, and neighbors to change their diets and lifestyle with you.

By taking these eight steps for eight weeks, you can begin to heal your diabetes, even as you enjoy tasty food. The most powerful medicine is at the end of your fork, not at the bottom of your pill bottle. **PE**

Mark Hyman, MD, is a family physician and author of The Blood Sugar Solution. Visit www.drhyman.com.

ACTION: Start taking these steps today.

Practice Self-Health

Enlist your doctor, family and self.



by Fabrizio Mancini

WE ARE BOMBARDED WITH messages that healing comes from sources outside ourselves. Patients are told that taking these drugs or having these medical procedures will make them well. As a result, many people have largely turned over responsibility for their health, to medical professionals.

Taking responsibility for your health does not mean turning away from healthcare providers, but making them partners, to unlock your body's natural healing powers.

People who take an active role in their health lower their medical costs by 20 percent.

The average healthcare costs for each American is \$6,280 per year, \$25,000 per year for a family of four. Imagine saving \$5,000 each year! And that is just a bonus to the fact that you enjoy a life of emotional, physical and social wealth far beyond the financial benefit.

To take charge of your health and well-being, start taking three steps:

1. Engage your family: Share your health goals with your loved ones. Are you dedicated to getting out and walking 30 minutes each day? Ask them to encourage you. Are you trying to cut down on junk food and sweets and focus on healthy, whole foods instead? Make it a family affair. Ask your spouse

and children their favorite healthy foods and together choose some meals and snacks that you all love.

2. Enlist your doctor: Many people are afraid to speak up when they visit their doctor or healthcare provider. They may feel intimidated and reluctant to assert themselves. Remember, you live inside this body. You know, more than anyone else, the state of your emotional, physical and spiritual health. Always ask what non-drug, non-invasive alternatives are available for your treatment. Ask what lifestyle changes you can make to relieve your symptoms and enjoy better health.

3. Take time each day for self-care:

Taking charge of your health begins with believing that your health comes from within, not from exterior sources. Find ways every day to take care of yourself and your health, whether it is drinking enough water, eating healthy regular meals, laughing with loved ones or walking to relieve stress.

You can choose each day to live a healthy life. Pay attention to your body and what makes you feel healthy, joyful and energetic. Your body's innate intelligence can guide you to healthy choices. Know that you are connected to something greater than yourself, an intelligence that is always acting in your best interest. But it's up to you, through your choices, actions and behavior, to support your self-healing. **PE**

Fabrizio Mancini is an acclaimed wellness leader, educator, speaker, authority on self-healing, and author of The Power of Self-Healing. Visit www.DrFabMancini.com.

ACTION: Engage in self-health and healing.

Career Change

Three keys for adapting.



by Marty Martin

WHETHER YOU WORK FOR yourself or are employed by others, you can be certain that at some point *your career will change*. It could be a *gradual change*, such as a job or industry slowly evolving or phasing out; or it could be a *sudden change*, such as the Board of Directors mandating a reduction in staff immediately. Regardless of the scenario, the key trait that will enable you to reposition yourself and thrive after a setback is your ability to embrace adaptation.

Many people distrust their ability to adapt and become immobilized by fear when facing change. Rather than adapt their mindset, approach, and skills, they stay stuck in their *comfort zone*, even though it's no longer *comfortable* at all.

Realize that adaptation is natural.

For example, when you travel to a location that has a different climate than what you're used to (such as going from Miami, Florida to Chicago, Illinois in the winter), the new weather feels harsh for the first day. But after a few days in the new climate, your body adjusts and the colder temperatures don't feel as frigid. Your body and mind acclimate and you get used to the new environment. This natural ability to adapt at a physiological level also applies to dealing with changes in the career environment. You simply need to tap into your natural ability to adapt and apply it to your professional life. The following suggestions will help you achieve that.

1. Reflect on your past. When change is upon you, reflect back on a few times in the past when you overcame an adversity and identify what you had to do to get through those events. Ideally, choose examples from your past workplaces. If you can't think of any, then go back to your school days and your personal life. If you really have led a challenge-free life thus far, then think about books or movies where you've learned about others overcoming adversity.

Once you choose a few situations to reflect upon, determine the actions and attributes that helped you or others in the past. There's a high probability if you repeat the mindsets and actions that worked in the past, they'll work for you now as well. This exercise helps

you shift your energy from victim to victor. You prove to yourself that success is possible.

2. Associate with like-minded people. To keep your mindset strong, surround yourself with individuals and groups who support you in doing something different, rather than those who try to keep you chained to the status quo. Of course, this step is always easier said than done, especially when your family or closest colleagues are the ones holding you back.

First, assess your transferable skills. For example, if you were a video store manager whose store closed, your skills likely include hiring and staffing, inventory, merchandising, and customer service. Look at how other stable



and growing professions and industries use those skills and join their leading association. This enables you to actively make connections with new people in a sector that has more optimism than the one you're currently in.

If your loved ones are contributing to your negative mindset, sit down with them and have an honest conversation about the current situation and your options for change. For example, if you realize you need to relocate to find a new job, and your spouse does not want to move, show the reality of the situation. You might say, "If we remain here we can't maintain our lifestyle. We'll have to downsize to a one-bedroom apartment or move in with family. But if we relocate to this area where jobs in my sector are plentiful, we can maintain our lifestyle, just in a different zip code. What makes the most sense to you?" Be calm and use specifics when you talk. Chances are the loved one will see the necessity for whatever change is needed.

3. Do scenario planning. Write out

detailed scenarios about what can happen if you adapt, if you fail to adapt, and if you somewhat adapt. You need to do all three rather than single point planning, because single point planning can set you up for frustration if the plan doesn't go exactly as outlined.

This triple scenario planning is based on stress inoculation training, which encourages people to anticipate a negative event and explore how they might deal with it in various ways. Should the negative event actually occur, the person has an idea of what to do to overcome, which makes the negative event less stressful. The scenario planning works a lot like stress inoculation training.

For example, if you've been laid off and can't find a new job in your area, you may decide that your best case scenario, if you adapt, is to find a job you love—one that pays great and offers high satisfaction—albeit in a different part of the country. If you fail to adapt, that scenario may include you moving back in with your parents and working at a minimum wage entry level job that you hate. And if you somewhat adapt, perhaps you find a good paying job in your town, but your work doesn't give you much joy or satisfaction.

With these three scenarios detailed on paper, you have the option of choice. Which scenario do you want to pursue? Now, instead of becoming paralyzed with thoughts like, "I don't know what to do next" or "Until I figure out what is the right decision I'm not going to do anything," you can make an informed choice of the best way to overcome your current situation. If you are involved in joint decision-making with loved ones, share what you wrote with them so they can be part of the choice process too.

Embrace the new reality. Everyone's career will be affected at some point in their life. This isn't an *if* scenario; it's a *when*. So even if your work life seems to be going well right now, start developing your capacity to adapt so that when change occurs, *you know what to do*.

Learning is inherently difficult since you often feel awkward, incompetent, and insecure for a time. However, eventually, you become so fluent in the new knowledge or routine that *you can't imagine your life any other way*. So, the sooner you start cultivating and embracing your ability to adapt, the sooner you can thrive in your new situation. PE

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ACTION: Adapt your mindset to boost your career.

Work-Life Balance

Debunk the myth and refocus.



by Marc Lesser

I ENJOY TEACHING A PROGRAM at Google called *Search Inside Yourself*. It integrates mindfulness with emotional intelligence. In *Working With Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman says, “Research by dozens of experts all points to the paramount place of *emotional intelligence* in excellence on the job—virtually any job”.

The good news is that emotional intelligence can be learned. Excelling in *nine emotional competencies* is a strong indicator of leadership success: *initiative, achievement drive, adaptability, influence, team leadership, political awareness, empathy, self-confidence, and developing others*.

At the start of the *Search Inside Yourself* program, we ask people to look at this list of qualities, rate themselves in each, and then choose two or three to work on improving over six-weeks.

As you look over this list, ask yourself, *Which of these qualities are my strengths? Which might I choose to work on during the year? What would I do differently, and what might the benefits be?*

There is a famous Zen dialogue from ancient China about a monk and a teacher. The monk arrives at the monastery and says to the teacher, “I’ve arrived. Please give me your teaching.”

The teacher says, “Have you eaten your breakfast?”

The monk responds, “Yes, I have.”

The teacher says, “Wash your bowl.”

If you were to ask, *How can I find work-life balance?* I might be inclined to ask if you have eaten your breakfast . . . And, then, I suggest you *wash you bowl*.

This dialogue and this terse instruction are meant to shift your attention from *looking for answers outside yourself to looking more directly within yourself*, beginning with your experience—*noticing, appreciating, and learning from the activities of your everyday life*.

Even the act of *bowl washing*, washing dishes, can become an incredible, even sensuous event; an act of discovery, a blossoming of the senses. What is the sensation of the water touching your hands; is the water hot or cold? Or washing dishes can be simply a chore to get done quickly to get to the next event, where the real action is—like sending emails or watching TV. The same activity can be different, de-

pending on *where you put your attention*.

Context matters. The story we tell ourselves is vital, both to our state of mind, and to our physical relationship and response to the events of our life.

Trying to achieve work-life balance, as if *something is missing or something is wrong*, (either with you or with your situation) is a *set-up for failure*. Instead, bring your attention to the activities that make up your work. Notice the activities and notice *your inner dialogue*, the stories you weave, as well as your feelings. Just paying attention can produce positive change—a bit of *slowing down*, a little more space—opening up the possibility of change, of more calm

and more appreciation.

Too much attention goes to the *what*—the content or story line—too much to do and not enough time. Try shifting the focus to the *how*—the quality of *your activity*, and quality of *your state of mind*.

Paradoxically, to get more done, try slowing down. To become more confident, try more questioning. To achieve more, accept what is. To know yourself, try forgetting yourself. How? Pay attention and *appreciate what is right in front of you*. Please, wash your bowl. PE

Marc Lesser is CEO of Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute and author of *Know Yourself, Forget Yourself* (New World Library). Visit www.marclesser.net.

ACTION: Refocus your attention.

Moving Up

Get out of that rut!



by John Tschohl

ARE YOU TIRED OF YOUR job, stagnating, sinking into mediocrity? If so, start taking control, to swim in the sea of opportunity. It’s time to move up. But nothing will change until you take well-planned action. So, first be honest with yourself. Assess your strengths and weaknesses, passions and goals, and then decide what you will do to leverage your potential.

Create a blueprint for your life, one that will guide your beliefs, determine your success, and help you overcome your failures. Include goals that will guide you in your pursuit of a better job and career. Since vague goals produce vague results, set clear—and measurable—goals, and develop timelines to track your progress.

Don’t have a backup plan. It’s like telling yourself that *it’s OK to fail*, that you have *something to fall back on*. Winners think differently. They fall forward, knowing there is nothing to catch them if they fall backward. They take risks.

Attack each goal with determination and dedication (non-negotiables). If you are not dedicated to what you are doing, you’ll lose sight of your goal. As you reach one goal, *move on to the next*.

One of your career goals should be to become indispensable. Indispensable employees don’t wait for instruction or direction; they figure out what needs to be done, generate ideas, and *take action*. They innovate on the fly. They create value. They’re vital to an organization’s

success. They’re hard to replace—and dangerous to lose. *Become one of them*.

Build a network of people who are more successful than you are as you work toward your goals. No matter what you are doing in life, you should be reaching up. That network might include your managers, friends, family members—even clients. Ask for their advice and *implement their suggestions*.

You also must believe in yourself. Many people give up on their dreams as soon as they encounter the first obstacle. They do not believe they have what it takes to realize those dreams. They let the negativity of others drag them down. Don’t waste energy by focusing on what others think about you and your goals. Develop the self-confidence to do what needs to be

done. Free yourself of fear and limitations, and you will unlock the hidden genius inside you.

While passion, clear goals, and dedication are critical to realizing your goals, you also need the right skills. Planning, communication, creativity,

and productivity are critical. So are time management, motivation, knowledge, and interpersonal skills. Commit to investing whatever time and money is necessary to strengthen your skills. Enroll in classes and workshops. Read books on leadership, management, customer service, sales, and personal development. Become the expert on your organization’s—and your industry’s—products and services.

Dream big. You can achieve great things, be the *driving force of the future*, challenge the status quo and *move up*. PE

John Tschohl is a service strategist, author of *Moving Up*, and president of the Service Quality Institute. Call 952-884-3311 or e-mail quality@servicequality.com.

ACTION: Move up in your career.

Opt for Optimism

You'll earn more, live longer.



by Marshall Goldsmith and Patricia Wheeler

WHY OPT FOR OPTIMISM IN LIFE AND at work? As an executive coach, I find that optimists are better at handling difficult challenges and setbacks, recovering from them, excelling beyond negative personalities, and creating more value for their organizations.

What's interesting about this is that many of us are already irrepressible optimists, at least when the subject is ourselves. This *optimism bias* is well-documented. When we judge our chances of experiencing a good outcome—landing a big account, getting promoted, having a successful marriage, making a good financial investment—we estimate our odds to be better than average. When we consider the chances of something bad happening—losing a big account, getting fired, getting divorced—we assume odds lower than what they estimate for others.

Optimism bias inflates our self-confidence. It's why 90 percent of drivers think they're *above average* behind the wheel of a car. It's why when people estimate their individual contributions to a partnership, the total often comes to more than 150 percent!

It's why almost all newlyweds believe there is zero chance their marriage will end in divorce, even when they know 50 percent of marriages self-destruct (true even for the newly remarried, who have already been divorced). It's why most smokers, despite the surgeon general's warning on every pack of cigarettes, believe they're less likely to die of lung cancer than most non-smokers. Their optimism extends to believing they are better than others at cheating death. It's why new restaurants in big cities continue to open, despite well-documented failure rates as high as 90 percent. Restaurateurs know the numbers, but they do not think they apply to them.

Successful people also tend to be optimists. That's a good thing too. Without it, people wouldn't get married, or plunge their life savings into a start-up business, or devote 10 years of research to developing a cancer drug. A society

that doesn't take risks based on optimism is doomed.

But something happens to our optimism when we stop evaluating ourselves and begin evaluating our peers' chances of succeeding. We're not as optimistic when we take ourselves out of the equation. In fact, we can become pessimists and cynics. As evidence, gauge your level of optimism when you present one of your cherished ideas in a meeting. It should be high, or how else would you have the courage to air the idea in public? Compare that to your level of optimism when an arch-rival presents his or her best idea in the same meeting. It's probably not as high.

You may greet the idea with skepticism, perhaps cynicism. You'll compare



its value to your idea and find it wanting, in part because of predictable envy and competitiveness. We don't mind a rival succeeding, but not more than us or at our expense. Part of it is the difficulty in being optimistic about someone else's abilities where we have no control over the outcome. But much of it is simply our failure to be generous in extending our optimism to others. That's the downside of *optimism bias*. We may see everything that could go wrong with the other person's idea while remaining blind to what could go wrong with ours. It's not a quality that we should hang on to.

If you can take your positive spirit toward what you are doing now and extend it to what other people are doing, *you make your optimism contagious* and you have a better chance of becoming a person who can rise from a setback that might crumble others, a person who doesn't yield to cynicism and negativity, a person whom others will gladly follow.

Be Positive, Live Longer

Research and experience show us that *positive attitudes* and *optimistic behaviors* produce better bottom-line results. How much more bottom line can we get than our own health and life span? If you knew that shifting your attitude could make you live longer (and happier), would you do something about it?

One interesting report involved a longevity study of a group of 180 people over the span of 50 years. These people all ate the same food, lived together, followed the same routine and experienced the same medical care. Where do you find such a group? Nuns! These were the Sisters of Notre Dame from Milwaukee, all born before 1917.

When they took their vows, the sisters wrote autobiographical essays. Fifty years later, researchers read the essays, wondering if they could find keys to why some nuns lived longer than others. They recorded such data as level of devotion expressed in the essay, the intellectual level of the writing, and number of positive emotions expressed.

They found that only positive emotion was related to how long the nuns lived. At 85 years of age, 90 percent of the nuns in the top quartile of cheerfulness were alive, as compared to 34 percent of the least cheerful. At 94, 54 percent of the *most cheerful* were alive, only 11 percent of the *least cheerful*.

Clearly good health was not the cause of cheerfulness; in their early 20s when they entered the convent, none of them knew how long they would live or how healthy they would stay. Rather, cheerfulness was a cause of good health.

These results don't negate the fact that some people, regardless of their outlook on life, do not live long, healthy lives. However, cultivating our attitude and outlook on life can add years.

Only 10 percent of our attitude is driven by our circumstances. The rest is largely shaped by our habitual outlook on the world, which we can change. Remember, like diet or exercise programs, attitude change does take discipline and practice. The good news is that we can conduct our attitude practice while we eat chocolate and relax!

Ask yourself: what's the benefit—to yourself, your colleagues and company—to be full of leaders who, even under adversity, see the proverbial glass as half full rather than half empty? **PE**

Marshall Goldsmith is a best-selling author or editor of 31 books, including MOJO and What Got You Here Won't Get You There. Patricia Wheeler is Managing Partner of The Levin Group, a global leadership advisory and development firm. www.marshallgoldsmith.com.

ACTION: Boost your optimism to boost income.

Savings Stalled?

Take steps to build security.



by Pamela Yellen

IF YOU STRUGGLE TO SAVE money, try using simple strategies to spend less and save more. You can start building a nest egg by following these four steps:

- **Get clear on the exact amount** of your net income and current expenses, including the inevitable *unexpected expenses* such as auto and home repairs. You can then design a *spending plan* that makes sense. Look at *income* and *expenses* line by line and decide where you can and will make necessary adjustments.

- **Plug money leaks.** You may look only at *large expenditures*, such as refinancing a home, when looking to save money, but finding small areas where you can save is important. These tend to be unconscious areas of spending: the latte on the way to work each day, the extra \$15 per month on cable channels you don't watch, the money spent on *name brand* groceries. To start plugging these leaks, identify them. Note each small spending habit and add up its annual cost. Next, ask yourself, *Do these small expenditures really make a difference to me? Do they add to the quality of my life? Or are they habits that could be changed?*

- **Use the 10/10/10 financial formula.** To build true financial security, you need to *save consistently*. I recommend the time-tested 10/10/10 *Savings Formula*. Work toward setting aside 10 percent of your income for short-term needs, 10 percent for mid-term needs and potential emergencies, and 10 percent for long-term retirement planning. This puts you in control of your money and finances.

- **Look beyond traditional saving and investing methods.** There are proven and time-tested ways to grow a substantial nest egg without the risk or volatility of stocks, mutual funds, real estate, and other investments. One asset class has increased in value during *every* economic boom and bust for more than a century: dividend-paying whole life insurance. This policy grows by a guaranteed and pre-set amount every year. They provide peace of mind for retirement planning, because you can know the minimum guaranteed value of the policy on the day you plan to tap into it . . . and at every point along the way. In addition, riders can be added onto the policy that *make the cash value grow much*

faster than a traditional whole life policy.

Start taking steps to move toward your financial goals. As you take positive action, *you gain more peace of mind.*

Get Financially Fit

I know what it means to face a financial crisis. My husband and I lost money investing the traditional way, then got stuck with \$15,000 of medical bills our health insurance didn't cover when he had emergency heart surgery. Luckily, we were *financially fit* enough to recover.

Financial fitness is about having predictability and security and having your *spending habits* under control. As a grandma who can leg press 250 pounds, I share financial fitness strategies:

- **Try the 10/10/10 reps.** Set aside 10 percent for short-term financial goals, such as vacations or gift giving; 10 percent

for mid-term needs and potential emergencies, such as a new car, replacing a major appliance or a new roof; and the final 10 percent for long-term retirement.

- **Pump up your rainy day fund.** Even if you have three-to-six months' worth of household expenses saved, that might not be enough, and you could be tempted to stop saving when you hit that number. That's why continually saving 10/10/10 is wise. Keep saving and save more than you think you need.

- **A better way to save.** Create a *strategic spending plan*. List *income* and *expenses* and track spending to see where you're *wasting money* that you could redirect to reduce debt or increase savings. **PE**

Pamela Yellen is a financial consultant and author of Bank on Yourself. Visit www.pamelayellen.com or www.BankOnYourself.com.

ACTION: Create a strategic financial plan.

Money Mindset

Identify your decision flavors.



by E. Ted Prince

TODAY, OBESITY IS A MAJOR public health problem. We eat too much because the *pleasure centers* in our brain become *addicted* to particular tastes or flavors like sugar, salt, and fat. Your preferred flavors trigger your pleasure centers and then suddenly you're 30 pounds heavier than you should be.

You can explain a lot about your behavior just by understanding your *pleasure centers*. You prefer to make decisions and behave in ways that trigger your *pleasure centers*. I call these *decision flavors*—**and they have a mind of their own.**

Your *comfort zone* comprises the *decision flavors* you resort to habitually since they trigger your *pleasure centers*. In a sense, your *decision flavors* represent an addiction. You operate in your comfort zone by *acting in a certain style* and *making certain decisions*.

You tend to be more effective when you are aware of your decision flavor preferences (addictions). For example, you may be addicted to emotional decisions, analytical decisions, fast decisions, slow decisions, technically-driven decisions, or money-driven decisions. The problem is not that you make decisions based on these factors—it's when you are so driven by one decision flavor and use it for all your decisions, even when the decision flavor is inappropriate



for the circumstance. Your portfolio of decision flavors should be well balanced, not a monotype, so you can decide using *the most appropriate flavor*.

Your brain spends most of its time doing things you know little or nothing about—some of it against your best interests. To progress, you need to become more *self-aware* because your *innate behavioral drivers determine whether you'll be wealthy or not*—whether you exert a positive impact on financial outcomes.

Most people (88 percent) don't naturally make money, and the 12 percent who do often become addicted to cash generation; and, like all addictions, this sometimes ends badly. You're unaware

of the cognitive biases that drive your *financial outcomes*. You tend to stick with behavioral comfort zones (addictions) that lead you to do things that are inappropriate to your circumstances. For example, you might use too many resources to accomplish certain objectives. If you are unaware of your biases and their impacts, you can't do anything about addressing and correcting them.

Since cognitive biases are leading indicators of financial outcomes, being aware of them is key, particularly if, for example, you want to ensure that your stock investments pay off. Once you identify your *cognitive biases, behavioral addictions* and *decision flavors*, you can do something about them to create wealth for yourself. So, identify your *decision flavor addictions* and then focus on managing *them* to create wealth. **PE**

E. Ted Prince is CEO of Perth Leadership Institute.

ACTION: Develop your money mindset.

False Accused?

10 tips for how to best cope.



by Michelle Gesse

IMAGINE BEING ACCUSED OF A crime that you didn't commit. Your life changes dramatically as you enter a frightening criminal justice system that in practice, if not in theory, considers the accused to be *guilty* until proven innocent.

I lived this nightmare after my husband, Steven, was falsely accused of threatening a neighbor's adult son with a gun. After the initial shock wore off, I sensed that Steven would face many obstacles as he tried to clear his name, and that his life would be very difficult. What I *didn't* realize was the extent to which my life would be impacted.

For seven months, the criminal justice system treated Steven as if he were guilty. He was in and out of court and had to meet multiple bail conditions, including obtaining special permission to leave the state, appearing for random breathalyzer tests, and meeting regularly with a drug counselor. We were forced to spend our savings to fund his defense. While I wasn't accused of a crime, I *felt* as if I, too, had been falsely accused. As I tried to support Steven, I often had no idea how to handle the situations and emotions, had few re-sources to draw on, and felt isolated.

Finally, Steven was found *not guilty* by a jury. Yet he had been treated like a convicted felon, and we endured financial, emotional, and social hardship.

I offer **10 tips** on how to cope with being falsely accused of a crime.

1. Treat the accusation like the diagnosis of a serious illness. Your mindset can help you to cope with an extended ordeal. Railing against how unfair the situation is or indulging in prolonged anger isn't healthy. Instead, think of the accusation as the diagnosis of a potentially lethal disease. Life as you know it will cease to exist as legal proceedings and obligations take center stage. Your loved one needs *unconditional support*, and you'll be the primary caregiver.

2. Maintain normalcy. When you are falsely accused—and treated as if you

are guilty—you feel that *everything in your life is out of your control*. You may be limited in where you can go and what you can do, may need to meet frequently with lawyers, counselors, and others to meet the terms of bail. This can make you feel helpless and desperate, and stressed. So, *maintain as much normalcy in your life as possible*. Stop dwelling on what you're missing and avoid moping and brooding.

Instead, *stick to your normal daily routine* when possible to feel in control of your life amid out-of-control circumstances.

3. Decide on how you'll handle your friends. Assume that family and friends will learn about the accusation, discuss with your spouse *and* lawyer how you want to handle these relationships. Do you discuss the trial? Will you keep the details secret? Gossip can be explosive (and damaging), so you need to know what to say when asked about the

charges, and stick to this script. Select one or two trusted friends or relatives with whom you can confide and vent.

4. All decisions need to be mutual. While only one of you is accused, *you must make decisions together* since they impact your family. Come to *mutual agreement* before moving forward. The odds are stacked against you—so,

you can't be at odds with one another. You need to stand together and support one another. Decide whether to go to trial or accept a plea bargain if your family has neither the emotional nor financial resources to go through a long trial.

5. Don't wallow in what-ifs. When your life is turned upside down, *it's easy to wallow in what-ifs*. As you watch a spouse, child, or other loved one suffer, you think through events and consider what could have been done. But *your only productive option is to look forward*. Dwelling on *what-ifs* only dredges up feelings of guilt and anger. Focus on the plan ahead—on *things you can control*.

6. Know that whatever you are feeling is normal. During the accusation and trial, expect your emotions to run the gamut—anger, resentment, guilt,

doubt, despair. *These feelings are normal*. Talk to a trusted friend or therapist. You will be judged and may feel paranoid, making it difficult to interact normally. You may feel that the false charges are somehow *your fault*. Emotionally, you look for somewhere to place blame and channel anger. However, remind yourself that the fault lies with the party who made the false accusations.

7. Keep the lines of communication open. At times, it's you and your loved one against the world. So, maintain a strong and trusting relationship. Set up an open-door honesty policy. Commit to being open and honest, and talk about everything—including aspects of your life that *aren't* impacted by the false accusations. At times, you won't feel like talking about anything. You may want to *protect* the other person by holding back. But you can best support one another when you're open and honest.

8. Take steps to care for yourself physically and emotionally. Dealing with the false accusation takes a tough emotional and physical toll on both of you. So, maintain the best possible health during the ordeal so that you can offer meaningful support. Eat well, exercise, and get enough sleep. Be aware of your feelings and those of your spouse. If you suspect you're suffering from depression or anxiety, seek professional help.

9. Ask for and accept help. If your friends or family members offer to help you by bringing in meals or running errands, say *yes*. Having the rest of your life in order will improve your mental and emotional states. So, ask for help from trusted, supportive friends and family if you need it. Reaching out isn't an admission of guilt or weakness. If you spread yourself too thin, you won't be any good to your spouse or yourself.

10. Manage your expectations for the future. As your ordeal moves forward, you'll be motivated by thoughts of the future; however, you need to manage your expectations of what the *post-trial future* will look like. Even if the outcome of your trial is good, don't expect your life to go back to the way it was before. You and your spouse will be different. Your marriage may need time to adjust. You may have lost some friends or family members. After devoting your life to the trial and outcome, you may feel lost for a time. Take each day as it comes, and make the present moment as well as the future as positive as possible. **PE**

Michelle Gesse is author of Bogus Allegations: The Injustice of Guilty Until Proven Innocent (Johnson Books). Visit www.michellegesse.com.

ACTION: Serve by supporting one falsely accused.



Extreme Makeover

Make your LEAP to excellence.



by Bill Dorfman

YOU CAN GENERATE AN *extreme makeover* in many ways; however, a positive

change in your *physical appearance* can have a lasting psychological effect that alters your perspective and improves your personal life and career. Whether that *makeover* change comes through cosmetic dentistry or some other form of aesthetic augmentation, improving only one aspect of your appearance can prompt a LEAP to success.

My focus has always been helping others. For me, that pivotal moment was in high school when my amazing teacher Mrs. Klehmet invited our class to make a week's worth of food for the less fortunate and distribute it in Watts, California. She said, "If we don't leave this world a better place, then what's the sense in having been here?"

From those humble beginnings, *helping others became my primary passion in life.* I began through my private dentistry practice. Providing beaming smiles and happiness to my patients was a step in the right direction, but it wasn't enough. How could I help people feel better about themselves on a grander scale? That was the inspiration behind Discus Dental. Through innovation, we created groundbreaking products to spread bright, healthy smiles to people all over the world—and partnered with the Crown Council and Garth Brook's Smiles for Life to help raise more than \$30 million.

Since 1997 I've partnered with the Los Angeles Battered Womens' shelter as well as Safe Passages to offer my services, complimentary.

I want to share my *secrets to success* with young people—the driving force behind the LEAP Foundation (*Leadership Excellence Accelerating Potential*).

There's no *definitive way* to guide people every step of the way on the *path of success.* We all can't have *coaches* who tell us what decisions to make. But, we can use our experiences to influence our instincts for future choices.

This is what LEAP is all about. The program picks up where traditional schooling falls short—teaching valuable lessons that many are forced to learn the hard way. Etiquette, effective communication, innovative and time-saving studying techniques, economic and

personal planning are some core subjects LEAP teaches in sessions at UCLA.

Have you ever heard of a *job interview class* in high school or college? What about a *first impressions* workshop? Or proven tips to win in the job market? These are *situational skills* that aren't taught in a traditional classroom.

LEAP emphasizes the magic behind teaching. Our teachers and speakers light a fire in students and provide a structured regimen to give them a sense of what lifestyle is conducive to success.

And it's working—from our humble beginning in 2008 with 97 students, to 2012 when we hosted 500 students from over 10 countries, making 2012's program the largest LEAP ever!

One great aspect of our program is mentorship! Participants receive guidance from mentors (professionals in their field) and create long-term relationships.

Social skills like these are another aspect of the program. To network, you need some experience and confidence in social settings. In designed improvisational classes, students exercise their creativity in their interactions and become more dynamic in conversational settings.

I use my experience to help guide tomorrow's future toward success. **PE**

Bill Dorfman, DDS, is the celebrity dentist on Extreme Makeover, father, author, philanthropist, visionary, business leader, and founder of Discus Dental, co-founder of the LEAP Foundation. Visit www.leapfoundation.com.

ACTION: Make your LEAP to excellence.

SERVICE • GENEROSITY

Why Be Generous?

Generosity has many benefits.



by Stan Craig

PEOPLE, IF GIVEN A CHOICE, prefer to buy from those who support charities and causes seen as *valuable to the community.*

Make *generosity* one of your values. People prefer to buy from good corporate citizens. Generosity demonstrates a *genuine corporate value* that benefits the company, employees and community.

Generosity is recognized if its goals are visible and more than a sales or morale booster.

If you're looking for ways to give back, *consider these options:*

- **Money works.** In Kentucky, Tom Monahan, chairman of the 2012 United Way Campaign, encouraged greater business participation "to blow away the stereotype of *greedy companies* interested only in *the bottom line.*"

- **Partnerships work.** Monahan enlisted the help of other community leaders and organizations to create a *Partners in Philanthropy* publication and awards banquet to showcase *examples of generosity*, among enterprises that contributed the most cash to non-profits in the city.

- **Gifts in-kind work.** Categories were designed to recognize companies for their cash gifts, nonprofit contributions, work in renovating housing, and other gifts in kind to complete the project.

- **Volunteering works.** Businesses that encourage *employee volunteer days* at local non-profits of their choice get a double bonus. Employees enjoy serving and local non-profits see the company in a

new light. With employee verification, write a check to an organization representing the value of an employee's work if a paid day-off can't be granted. Schedule an *employee generosity day* for employees to sign up for a community or team project. Helping build a house for Habitat for Humanity, spending a day at a soup kitchen or shelter or helping in a school or community center are *team-building events* and *acts of generosity.*

Such generosity and volunteering raises morale, boosts physical and emotional health, provides networking and career development, and builds loyalty. For more examples of creative ways to be generous, look around your community. How can what you do every day

benefit others? *Giving* actually multiplies what you are receiving (sales). Coupons for free items, free bonus gifts and prizes gain attention and build sales for products.

Generosity pays dividends: It is attention-getting. It is cost efficient. It builds *top-of-mind awareness.* Customers

perceive a benefit, and there is a spill-over effect to other areas and products.

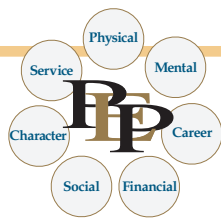
You can also be generous by: offering discounts to charitable organizations, giving time or funds to community projects or events, offering your place of business for community events, teaching a class on your specialty, speaking to senior citizens clubs, retirement communities, schools, and PTAs.

Generosity pays dividends for years to come and builds your balance sheet in ways that can't be quantified. Your bottom line is measured by *revenue received*, and by *resources shared.* **PE**

Stan Craig is a financial planner, executive coach and keynote speaker, and author of ForeTalk: Taking Care of Tomorrow Today. Visit www.ForeTalkSeminar.com.

ACTION: Make service part of your mission.





GOAL GETTERS



You can overcome your past to move from wounds to Wisdom: Don't just survive, shine. When I was a child I traveled to India with my parents and I could see all the suffering. I knew as a child that my purpose was to *heal others from the inside out*. Having gone through much pain and suffering, I realized that no amount of pain and suffering can stop you from living your best life unless you allow it to. I overcame addiction and bipolar diagnosis to achieve a brilliant life. I was inspired by the happiness and peace that existed among people who seemingly had nothing. I knew from a young age that happiness and peace were ways of being, not dictated by how much one had or did. To get past your past to take charge of your future, start using your fear as your compass. When you're scared to do something, it's a sign that you're going in the right direction. Any change is uncomfortable and scary. But it's all about shifting your perspective and doing it any way. When you take action, you experience true freedom in your life.

- **Beat what's holding you back.** Do you feel your energy is being sucked dry? Do you spend your days putting out fires, checking off every item on your to-do list or defending yourself in petty dramas? Learn to beat these traps so you can feel completely alive.

- **Shine and inspire!** It can be scary to shine 100 percent despite what people are saying or thinking about you. Standing strong in all of your awesomeness not only helps you overcome naysayers, but creates space for others to do the same.

- **Wounds to wisdom**—I was raised in a family that stressed obedience to Hindu principles through prayer and sober living, but as a young woman I struggled with drugs, alcohol and relationships. My biggest challenge came in 2002 when I was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. I learned that it's possible to view pain, illness and suffering as a gift that can make you stronger, wiser and more resilient.

—Vasavi Kumar, www.VasaviKumar.com



Today's unemployment is not a jobs crisis—it is a talent crisis. The new *Robotic Age* is taking every job that doesn't need *high creativity, humanity, or leadership*. How do you compete with automation? You need to develop *five meta-skills*—*human talents* that machines can't replicate, skills that accelerate your success: **1. Feeling:** including *empathy, intuition, and social intelligence*. **2. Seeing:** the ability to think whole thoughts, aka systems thinking. **3. Dreaming:** the metaskill of *applied imagination*. **4. Making:** mastering the *design process*, including skills for devising prototypes. **5. Learning:** the autodidactic ability to learn new skills at will. By taking my **10-question quiz**, you can assess which of these talents are your strongest.

—Marty Neumeier, talentfinder.metaskillsbook.com



You can still go from rags to riches. I came to the U.S. as a teenager with 17 cents in my pocket, and I worked my way from scrubbing toilets at a McDonald's restaurant to running a fast-growing financial firm, Gold Star Financial.

Impoverished, confused, feeling like an outsider and unable to speak English, I did what I knew best—work hard and study relentlessly. I continue to thrive, thanks in part to *four lessons* I learned as an immigrant: **1. See and seize opportunity.** I could see the positives and the opportunities in America, where individual effort and initiative could be rewarded. I continued to educate myself, and viewed low-paying jobs as steppingstones. **2. Work hard.** I often worked 15-hour days. Even today, I still work harder than anyone else in my company. **3. Understand the culture.** I had to recognize when my *old cultural tendencies* clashed with those in my *adopted culture*. I worked on being warmer, friendlier, and a better listener. **4. Listen to your elders.** My mother taught me to *work five times harder than others*, and my grandfather told me to *guard my name and reputation*. And a mentor taught me to *take time to enjoy life*.

—Daniel Milstein, www.danmilstein.com

PersonalCOACH



Joyful Manifestation
Happiness and Abundance.
by Sugandhi Iyer

GOOD THINGS SEEM TO COME WITHOUT EFFORT for some people. You might say they're lucky. But you too can make your own life one of abundance and empowerment through joyful manifestation.

I offer a glittering gift: true happiness and success. A life journey is all about getting into the space of true joy, and creating from that space. Life is meant to be lived free of stress, knowing that everything is in divine and perfect order. Life is magical, filled with infinite potential. Just tap into it. There is a 10-step process to finding that space and manifesting the joy and success you are meant to have. In a world that increasingly turns to violence and away from love and joy, connecting to your inner joy is vital in order to create external evidence of success.

Step-by-step, evaluate your universe to find out what works for you, and what does not and to change it. Joyful Manifestation helps you discover who you really are, and empowers you to have this universe work well for you. You'll understand how successful people think, and what makes them who they are. Until you wake up and take stock of what keeps happening to you, you can't bring in the change that you would like to see. This world is made up of dualities, and at any point you could experience the negative aspect of what you'd like to see happen, instead of the positive. You can change this through Joyful Manifestation.

Success starts with how you feel about yourself and then your world. Your material world is a reflection of your inner world, and when your inner world contains excitement, delight, power, and joy, whatever you do happens from this space and brings back manifestations that embody that happiness, giving you cause for celebration.

When you are in the space of joy, your dominant energy will be joy and will pull in more joyful events. With this joy you can spin the web of your life. The universe works in a particular way, and once you know how it really works, you can create your life with this knowledge. Joyful Manifestation shows you how. Real success is happy success, one that enriches the inside as well as the outside. You too can become a master joyful manifestor.

PE

Sugandhi Iyer is a Success Coach who enables people to attain their goals and author of Joyful Manifestation (Balboa Press). Visit www.SugandhiIyer.com.

ACTION: Engage in joyful manifestation.

Secret of Love

Expand beyond the personal.



by Deepak Chopra

IF THE SECRET TO LASTING romance could be shared, like a recipe, our problems would be over. But love isn't a fact, formula, or definable in words. Love is a process, somewhat mysterious. No one knows what creates love as a powerful and meaningful bond. If romance was only a heady brew of hormones, genetic inheritance and sex drive, all we'd need is better data to explain it. But love transports us beyond our everyday selves and makes reality shine with an inner light. The reverse can also happen. We crash to earth when the wear and tear of relationships makes love fade.

Love is kept alive by evolving, not getting stuck. Infatuation is an early stage. You bond with another person as if by alchemy, but in time the ego returns with claims of "I, me, and mine." At that point, love must change. Two people must negotiate how much to share, surrender, and stand their ground. It would be tragic if romance faded into everyday familiarity, but it doesn't have to.

Beyond the stage of two egos negotiating for their own interests, there is *deepening love*. It doesn't try to turn the present into the past. A married couple of 20 years isn't still infatuated with one other. So, what keeps the process alive? *Upanishads*, a spiritual text, says, "You do not love a spouse for the sake of the spouse but for the sake of the self."

We all love on a personal basis, and we expect to be loved the same way, for ourselves. But if *self* means your everyday personality, there is much that isn't lovable about each of us; as a marriage or relationship unfolds, our partners will see those unlovable things clearly. Even a *knight in shining armor* might want to save more than one damsel, and even a saint must use deodorant occasionally.

Love and self are both universal. They exist beyond the individual personality. *The secret of love is to expand beyond the personal.* When people say that they want *unconditional love*, they often imply that they want to be loved despite their shortcomings, issues and quirks. But that's nearly impossible if love remains at the personal level. At some point, if you begin to see love itself as your goal, universal love is more powerful and secure than personal love.

The poet Rabindranath Tagore described *the spiritual side of love*: "Love is the only reality, and it is not a mere sentiment. It is the ultimate truth that lies at the heart of creation." The gift of awareness is that we can locate the source of creation in ourselves. By going deeper into the self, asking *Who am I?* without settling for a superficial answer, the ego-personality fades. *A sense of the true self* begins to dawn, and this self exists in contact with love as the only reality.

The journey becomes more fascinating if someone else travels with you. If you have a beloved who stands for the feeling of love, bonding, and affection, your journey has a focus. Love brings such experiences as *surrender, devotion, selflessness, giving, gratitude, appreciation, kindness and bliss.* So if *universal love* seems

daunting or improbable to you, break it down into these smaller experiences. As you pursue them, you travel in the direction of your source, where the *true self* and *true love* merge. Become aware that *love is now your personal project.* Show *kindness and gratitude.* Speak of what your beloved means to you. Every step works on behalf of the two of you but also on behalf of the self that unites you.

True success comes from self-power—the progressive realization of worthy goals, the ability to love and have compassion, and to be in touch with the creative power in your inner most being at all times. PE

Deepak Chopra, MD is author of more than 70 books, including *The Path to Love, The Soul of Leadership* and with co-author Rudolph E. Tanzi of *Super Brain (Harmony)*. Visit www.deepakchopra.com.

ACTION: Expand beyond the personal.

INSPIRATION • PRESENCE

Fully Present

Practice meditation.



by davidji

PRESENT-MOMENT AWARENESS is when you are in the *still zone*—fully present, fully engaged in living life: you seem to channel *just the right words* in an effortless flow or you say or do *the perfect thing at the perfect moment.* You are not thinking about the past or the future—no memories, no fantasies, just the *now.*

When you experience present-moment awareness, you experience the same stillness zone you experience during deep meditation where you tap into a realm that is pure, unbounded, and infinite. In that space, you disconnect from activity—and connect to the part of you that is *whole, perfect, pure, abundant, and unconditioned.* You access the space between your thoughts—*pregnant with pure potential, infinite possibility.*

You experience it more when you have a *consistent daily meditation practice.* Meditation can transform your entire being over time. As physical and emotional presence unfolds, you view life in new and expanded ways.

Being in this still zone opens you to new realms of consciousness; higher creativity, spontaneity, intuition, empowerment, personal growth; and expanded states of awareness, compassion, and peace of mind. Touching *stillness*—even in small doses—allows you to connect to your *unconditioned Self*—your most

genuine self, having no limiting beliefs or boundaries of your potential.

You can cultivate your *still zone* by developing your meditation muscle through the practice of breathing.

Observe all your thoughts, and to the count of four take in a long slow breath. Gently hold it there as you count to four. Now slowly release it and follow it back up into your chest, back into your throat, up through your sinuses, and out your nostrils. In those 16 seconds, you were *fully present*, right here, right now. Imagine if you could have this experience daily. And instead of feeling stress from what will occur or anxiety about what did or didn't—you *have inner peace.* Yes things will still happen outside of you, but you can be *the stillness inside the storm, the calm amid the chaos.* You can live in



the *now* between the past and the future where you can *respond* rather than *react*; where you can have *clarity, not overwhelm*; where you think, speak, and act from an unconditioned space of stillness and *purity* rather than clouded by all the *activity* swirling outside of you.

By taking a few minutes daily to breathe and just BE, you connect to the stillness and silence within. Anxiety eases, stresses calm. The noise of your thoughts quiets, the swirl slows. Each moment unfolds with greater grace. Your thoughts are more reflective, less reflexive; your decisions more purposeful, less knee-jerk; and your actions more unconditioned, making you *the best expression of yourself in each moment.* PE

davidji is life guide, coach, and creator of visualizations, meditations, and spiritual journeys and author of *Secrets of Meditation (Hay House)*. Visit davidji.com.

ACTION: Practice being fully present.

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—TOM HOPKINS, AMERICA'S #1 SALES TRAINER

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