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The Experts Teach: Maximising Your Potential

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Preface

Introduction to "The Experts Teach: Maximising Your Potential"

In each of "The Experts Teach" series, we've gathered together some of the world's best thinkers to share their ideas with you. Their ideas offer new, refreshing, and insightful ways to look at old themes, allowing you to discover new perspectives, develop your understanding, and change the way you think.

Profile of Editor Eric Garner

Eric Garner is an experienced management trainer with a knack for bringing the best out of individuals and teams. Eric founded ManageTrainLearn in 1995 as a corporate training company in the UK specialising in the 20 skills that people need for professional and personal success today. Since 2002, as part of KSA Training Ltd, ManageTrainLearn has been a major player in the e-learning market. Eric has a simple mission: to turn ManageTrainLearn into the best company in the world for producing and delivering quality online management products.

Profile of ManageTrainLearn

ManageTrainLearn is one of the top companies on the Internet for management training products, materials, and resources. Products range from training course plans to online courses, manuals to teambuilder exercises, mobile management apps to one-page skill summaries and a whole lot more. Whether you're a manager, trainer, or learner, you'll find just what you need at ManageTrainLearn to skyrocket your professional and personal success.
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1 10 Little Words…that Have Kept Me on Track for Over 30 Years by Gregg Gregory

It was September 1973 and I was a junior in high school. From 1954–1994, my high school only had two principals and Frank Tracy took over in the fall of 1973. He wanted to leave his mark early on. It was a hot September afternoon when we had his first assembly in the gym.

My high school graduating class had 751 students and the classes before us and after us had about the same. This meant that in this assembly we had over 2,300 people including teachers, administrators and staff in the gym this hot September afternoon.

As Mr. Tracy began to speak, I noticed he was speaking to the students and not at the students. Somewhere into his speech he paused and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I want to share with you the secret to success. The secret to success is really quite simple and it comes in just 10 little words. Like the Gettysburg address delivered by President Lincoln in 1863, these are all simple words. In fact, each word has just one syllable and two letters. It is when you string these 10 little words in this particular order that they become the secret to your success. I don't mean just your success at High Point High School; I mean your success throughout life."

Now let's be clear, I am a junior boy in high school, so am I really listening to what he's saying? What is more important? Girls, Cars, Sports, and Food are way more important and, depending on the day of the week and time of day, will actually determine what is more important at any given time.

The fact is I am not sure whether I remember this from the fall of 1973 or if it was at the graduation for the class of 1974. Or maybe in the fall of 1974 (my Senior year) when he had the same assembly. Maybe it was at my graduation or at the graduation for the class of 1976. In fact, even after I graduated, many of my friends' younger siblings heard the same words. Several years later, as I became director of youth activities at my church, many of those kids were graduating from High Point and subsequently heard the words. I then heard them again at their graduations.

I did not realize I was actually living the words until almost 20 years after I graduated from high school. Somewhere along the line I realized I had never had a job where I relied on a salary to pay my bills. Every job in my adult life has either been 100% commission or my own company. As a manager, I received a small salary with the bulk of my income coming from the production of others on the team.

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After I came to this realization, I began to practice living the words on a regular basis. I even purchased a card with 10 little words on the card and sent it to Mr. Tracy.

High Point high school is located in the metropolitan area of Washington DC and I have had the pleasure of speaking on a regular basis. In a few of my workshops, I have had High Point graduates in the class and as I begin this story they look at their neighbor in the class and say "I know the words". That is the impact that Mr. Tracy had on everyone he met.

At the opening day for the 1999 Baltimore Orioles baseball season, I was walking and noticed a man coming towards me. As I looked closer, I realized it was Mr. Tracy. I stopped him and said "Good morning Mr. Tracy. How are you?" He responded, "Good morning Mr. Gregory. I am wonderful and how are you?" It was almost 24 years since I had graduated and he still remembered my name.

I can truly say that these 10 little words have been my personal focus on my life, both personal as well as professional. I guess you could say they have been the track I have been running on for years and I would like to continue the Frank Tracy tradition and share them with you now. Please write them down and read them every day in the morning before you begin your day. Remember there are just two letters for each word.

IF IT IS TO BE IT IS UP TO ME

It is not up to your mother, your father, your brother, your sister, your aunt or uncle, your cousin, your friends, your company, your boss or even your co-worker. It is up to you and only you.

About the author

Gregg Gregory helps organizations design cooperative teams that produce results and perform at peak levels. Through his interactive workshops and consulting, Gregg's clients achieve greater team focus, cooperation, productivity, and impact. His experience includes more than two decades of human resources, real estate, mortgage banking, as well as radio and television broadcasting. Please contact Gregg at 866-764-TEAM. http://TeamsRock.com

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2 The Harder It Is, the More You Must Love It by Steve Pavlina

Some goals are far more difficult than you first imagined. Perhaps you've tried all the easy and obvious approaches, but the goal simply won't succumb.

Sometimes you have to make a couple hundred failed attempts to find an approach that works beautifully for you.

Don't give up just because you missed 20 times or so. You may be 10% of the way to a brilliant solution.

Does that sound promising or annoyingly discouraging?

If you only want the end result but resist the difficulty of grinding it out, you'll likely give up long before you even reach the 10% mark.

For harder goals, you'd better find an approach to the daily grind that you can fall in love with.

You may need to make hundreds of attempts on certain goals, not necessarily because they require so much experimentation but because you need all that training to become strong enough to succeed.

The work may be hard, but can you love it anyway? Can you love it not in spite of the difficulty but because of the difficulty? Can you look at something really tough and say, "I love that you're so challenging because just attempting you will make me stronger"?

You won't accomplish much in life if you refuse to fall in love with the grind.

Stop trying to make everything in life easier. Learn to cultivate tenacious determination to conquer a goal because it's ridiculously tough.

If a goal isn't tough, it's probably beneath you.

If you learn to love difficulty, you reduce resistance to goals that you associate with hard work. This puts more options within your reach. Labeling a goal as "too difficult" as if the difficulty is something undesirable is the same as saying, "I'm not ready to receive this desire."

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Eliminate your resistance to difficulty, and you'll find, with much universal irony, that your resistance to difficulty was actually your greatest roadblock preventing the achievement of the goal.

The harder it is, the more you must love it.

About the author
Steve Pavlina (born April 14, 1971) is an American self-help author, motivational speaker and entrepreneur. He is the author of the web site stevepavlina.com and the book Personal Development for Smart People. Pavlina's blog covers topics such as personal development and success; consciousness and courage; productivity, motivation and goal setting; career, wealth and business; and spirituality. (Wikipedia)

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3 Eliminate the Negatives by Michael Beck

Stop reading the newspaper! Everyone acknowledges that the newspaper is mostly filled with negativity – murder, fire, war, disasters, etc. Stop feeding yourself with it! Believe me, you can't help but be informed about major stories one way or another. We are bombarded. There is no need to go looking for it.

Stop watching TV news! The same issues that apply to newspapers apply to TV news. And there is one more caution in addition… When you go to sleep at night, the mind starts processing the last things it was exposed to. So, what's the dumbest thing a person can do just before they go to sleep? WATCH THE TV NEWS!!! Stop watching it.

Stop seeking the negative on the internet! Ever hear the expression, "You get what you focus on"? If you seek out negativity, you find it and it becomes your reality. I had a friend who, as Y2K approached, was absolutely convinced that the world would come to an end (almost literally). Every night, he would spend hours on the internet reading about all the terrible things that were sure to happen at the stroke of midnight. He pleaded with me to stockpile food and water. He never spoke to me again after January 1, 2000. He really believed all his fears would come to fruition. He had sought out and focused on the negatives and came to believe them. Don't dwell on seeking out and reading about negatives.

Stop hanging around negative people! Ever notice that all the folks with negative, small-minded attitudes always hang out together and all the successful, big-minded people hang out together as well? Coincidence? NO! Remove yourself from the negative crowd. Avoid negative people as much as possible.

Introduce Positives

Start hanging around positive people! Positive association is one of the keys to success. Positive association leads to creativity, partnerships, solutions, and bigger dreams. Mark Twain once said, "Keep away from people who belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great."

Start reading! It's often said that the books you read and the people you associate with determine where you will be in five years. Where do you want to be? Start reading books about people you admire. Read personal growth books, books on success principles, books about others who overcame challenges, and motivational books.

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Start listening! Start using your windshield time as a time to learn and grow. Instead of mindlessly listening to music or talk on the radio, pop in a tape or CD. Listen to audio books, motivational CD's, or even music that lifts and energizes you. Create a mix of music on tape or CD that gets you and your attitude fired up for that next meeting, presentation, or prospect.

By acquiring, maintaining, and protecting a positive attitude, you will see your success grow and your enjoyment of life improve. You'll become more attractive (in every way) and will increasingly find other like-minded people to be around.

About the author

Michael Beck, Executive Strategist, is president of Michael Beck International, Inc. – a firm specializing in executive development, leadership effectiveness, and executive strategy. Connect on LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/mjbeck and visit www.michaeljbeck.com to learn more. Permission to reprint with full attribution. © 2012 Michael Beck International, Inc.

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4 Our Values Set Our Priorities by Jim Clemmer

"Don't part with your illusions. When they are gone, you may still exist, but you have ceased to live."
– Mark Twain, 19th century American author and humorist

Our values are what we value. Each of us has a hierarchy of values. This is our sense of what's most through to what's least important. Our values hierarchy is a lengthy one. It includes things like, health, family, security, wealth, cooperation, competitiveness, meaningful work, peace of mind, making a difference, friendships, innovation, status, happiness, freedom, adventure, spirituality, power, accomplishment, wisdom, love, creativity, integrity, participation, service, loyalty, pride, progress, teamwork, growth and development, helping others, physical or sensory pleasures, quality, order, control, respect, self-image, and the like.

Our values hierarchy sets our priorities. It determines where we spend our time. For example, do we choose to watch TV or invest that time in personal improvement? Do we sleep longer or go jogging? Do we spend time with our family or take on that extra project with heavy out of town travel? Do we take personal glory or share the recognition with our team? Do we trade up to that larger house now or invest that extra money to reap compounded financial rewards later? Who gets invited to important meetings? Which items get highest priority on the agenda? How much time is spent with customers and those doing the serving? These are important questions because we invest our time in those areas we value most.

Our values can conflict with each other. They create many paradoxes to be balanced and managed. For example, business success and family time are both high on my values hierarchy. One evening when our son Chris was about two and half years old, I was heading out the door on another trip, Chris turned in his high chair, focused his big blue eyes up at me and asked, "Are you going home now daddy?" (about six months later I called Heather from my hotel room. His younger sister Jennifer answered the phone and asked, "Are you my real daddy?" If Heather and I didn't have such a close and trusting relationship, I might begin to wonder…).

The conflict between my business and family has been my biggest values conflict. Both are important to me. But at that point in my life, I was drifting toward becoming a business success and a family failure. Unless I changed, I would become "Uncle Dad" and Heather would be a single mother with a part-time husband dropping in occasionally. To change that, I put a "personal travel policy" in place that said I wouldn't be away from home on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday night. I would also keep trips to no more than three nights away at one time.

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Over the years I have missed out on speaking, workshop, and retreat business using this approach. At times I haven't looked very responsive or accommodating to important customers (another key value of mine). But that travel change and moving my office into our house improved our family time. And my business has prospered.

About the author

Jim Clemmer has been writing and speaking about leadership, change, team, and organization effectiveness for over 30 years. His extensive research, broad experience with hundreds of organizations and thousands of people, and deep understanding of these topics makes him an internationally recognized leader in the field. Beyond his seven books, he's written hundreds of columns and articles for newspapers and magazines.

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5 How I'm Like a Pencil by Steve Goodier

It occurs to me that I have a lot in common with a pencil. That's right – a simple and humble little pencil. Not the fancy mechanical kind. That's too high maintenance for me. And I'm not as showy as a plume pen or as smooth as a ball point. I don't live in bold strokes like a heavy marker. But I'm a lot like a pencil. Here's how:

1. Like a pencil, I have a built-in eraser. I can correct my mistakes. No, I can't change the past, but I can make it right again. And if I can't erase history (after all, what's done is done) I can at least erase a great deal of guilt and anger with forgiveness.
2. Like a pencil, I do better if I'm sharpened once in a while. My mind and skills grow dull without occasional honing. Even my spirit and attitudes need refining if I'm to be at my best. And there is something else, too. I find that the difficulties of life wear away at me, and they can either grind me down or shape me into a person who is more capable and creative. The sharpening I get from living through tough times is often painful, but I know it can make me a better person.

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3. Pencils work best in a skilled hand. And like a pencil, I can do some pretty terrific things with a little guidance. Other people bring out the best in me, and with the help of others, I can do far more than I ever can alone.
4. Like a pencil, I should leave my mark whenever possible. I too often underestimate my influence on another. I have daily opportunities to leave something good behind. That is what it means to leave my mark. It may be in small ways, it may be in the lives of people I love, people I have touched or nurtured, or even in incidental conversations struck with strangers. But, I have a mark to leave and should use every opportunity to leave something good behind.
5. Like a pencil, it is what is on the inside that matters. A pencil without lead is useless. And a yellow pencil will not do when a black or red pencil is called for. What is on the inside is all important. My outer appearance matters less than I probably think, while it's the stuff on the inside that folks notice about me. Whether it is understanding or intolerance, love or bitterness, peace or unrest, kindness or self-centeredness, hope or despair, courage or fear, what is on the inside matters most.
6. A pencil works best on paper or canvass. It will never leave its mark on water and will wear itself down against a mirror. I do best knowing my strengths and limitations. I can't do everything well and that is okay. There is still plenty of good to be done by doing what I do best.
7. And finally, like a pencil, the biggest part of my purpose in this life can be summed up in three words: to be useful. When I'm too broken to hold it together, when everything is ground away or worn down, when I no longer have anything to contribute, I know my life is coming to an end. But until then, my job is to be useful.

Like I said, I have a lot in common with a pencil.

About the author
Steve Goodier holds a B.A. in anthropology and sociology (New Mexico State University) and an M.Div. degree from Emory University. He is an ordained United Methodist minister, district superintendent in the Rocky Mountain Conference UMC, and the author of numerous books about personal development, motivation, inspiration, and making needed life changes.

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6 Why the Squirrel Kept Winning by Victor Antonio G.

I had the good fortune (or misfortune depending on your climate perspective) of living in Minnesota for ten years. The Summers were beautiful, Fall was spectacular with the changing colors of the leaves on trees and winter was…well, damn cold.

My neighbor, Harold was a nice old guy who had retired many years ago who hibernated all winter but loved to garden during the summer. The only time I saw Harold come out of his house was to put some bird food in the feeder he'd setup on his tree in the front yard.

Every year, as winter began to set in, I would see squirrels all around our front lawns gathering food. They'd scurry around digging and prodding hoping to fill their jowls with some food and return to their hole.

One day I saw Harold putting some metal sheets around the base of his tree where he kept his bird feeder. I didn't understand why until another neighbor explained to me that Harold was trying to keep the squirrels from eating the bird food. By putting the metal sheets around the base Harold thought the squirrels wouldn't be able to climb up the tree. The next morning, the food was gone.

Later that week I saw him wrap a jagged funnel around the base of the tree. It looked like those funnels dog's wear around their neck so it won't bite or lick its wounds. Well imagine one of those wrapped around the tree with the wide part pointing down with jagged edged. It looked like something out of a Frankenstein flick. Yet, the next day, the food was gone.

The following week Harold figured he'd put the bird feeder on a string and hang it from the tip of one of the branches. I believe his thinking was that the squirrel couldn't go out to the edge of the branch because the branch wouldn't support the weight thereby not allowing the squirrel to get to the feeder. Next day, you got it, the food was gone.

This battle between Harold and the squirrel went on for at least the 10 years I was his neighbor. I wanted to tell Harold that his attempts were futile and that he would never win this 'War of the Feeder'; but I didn't say anything. I just watched. It was cheap entertainment.

As this was happening, I started thinking about how unfair the match up was between a man and a squirrel. I didn't feel sorry for the squirrel…I felt sorry for Harold. Although Harold was stronger and smarter than the squirrel, he lacked the one quality that would guarantee him victory, focus.

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You see Harold thinks about ways of preventing the squirrel from getting the food on occasion, when he has time. The squirrel on the other hand has its mind on getting that food 24 hours a day. The squirrel's very survival depends on it. Survival brings about, not just focus but an intense focus on solving a problem by removing an obstacle. Unless Harold shows that same level of 24 hour commitment and intensity, I have my money on the squirrel every time.

Success is not about who is stronger. Success is not about who has more money. Success is not about who has a better GPA. Success is about who is more focused and committed to achieving their objectives. You, the reader, can compete with any person no matter who they may be. The only thing you have to do is commit yourself to focusing in on the very subject that interests you. When you focus in on one thing, like the squirrel, all of your mind's resources are directed at attaining your objective and obtaining your rewards. With focus, you begin to take in more information quickly because you're interested in learning, you want know everything. You are consumed by your focus to succeed!

Harold was not an expert in stopping squirrels; it was a task that needed to be done and he attended to it when he had time. The squirrel on the other hand became an expert at bypassing obstacles and solving problems because he focused all its attention on obtaining the end goal, food.

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In today's market, too many people want to be generalist (i.e., good at a lot of things or jack of all trades but master of none). But the market DOES NOT REWARD generalists, they REWARD experts. The market wants people who are good at doing a particular task; an expert. You want job security? Become an expert in your field of expertise. How do you become an expert? Like the squirrel, you focus.

Harold was 92 and died the year we moved from Minnesota. I don't know how long Harold fought the 'War of the Feeder' but as I drove off on the last day I looked back and saw a squirrel scurrying around the front lawn still trying to get to the bird feeder that still hung from the tree. Harold was gone but the squirrel was still around, still strategizing and still focused. The squirrel had won!

About the author:
Born and raised in Chicago's inner city, Victor Antonio G. has achieved a level of success few would have expected: By the age of 35 he had become Vice President in $3B Fortune 500 company at the time and built-up an international market from $14M to $97M in two and half years, and went on to become President of Global Sales & Marketing to help build a $420M company. He is currently CEO of a privately held multimillion Cable and Satellite Company.
http://www.thelogicofsuccess.com/index.htm

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7 Don't Pull up the Seeds When You've Just Sown Them by Eric Garner

Why is it that 95% of people who set themselves goals fail to reach them? In one word: impatience.

The most important and difficult stage of goal-building is the immediate stage after you set your goals. In the first stage, there's a brief blip of euphoria. But this soon passes and then you hit the arid plateau of learning. It's in this phase that most people lose their way and give up.

But this is the phase when you have to hang in there despite appearances. Otherwise, it's like digging up the seeds a week after sowing them. So, here, for those who need a roadmap through the arid plains of goal-building, is a 6-step guide to managing your impatience and keeping your plans on track.

1. Have Plenty of Motivation Reminders
   One of the cruel tricks that life plays on us is to make goal-setting easy and goal-building hard. This is no more true than in the opening phases of working towards a new goal. When we choose a new goal that seems within our reach, we are full of excitement and anticipation. It's like the start of a marathon when everyone cheers us over the start line. But the cheers soon become a distant memory when we move into the second phase, the hard slog. It's in this phase that we need to have a ready supply of motivation reminders to keep us going. Here's one I often use. It's from Ray Kroc, founder of the global restaurant chain McDonald's. Kroc was an amazing entrepreneur. He says that it is in the early stages of working towards a new goal that you learn the most: "When you're green, you grow. When you're ripe, you rot."

2. Be a Fly, Not A Bee
   The chief problem with the early stages of goal-building is that you can never be sure of the right way forward, particularly if you are breaking new ground. You try something and it doesn't work. You try again and it doesn't work again. And again.And again. That's tough. But it's essential. Because you're learning. Karl Weick says that in this situation it is much better to be a fly than a bee. When you place a fly and a bee in an upturned jam jar, the bee will head straight for the light and repeatedly buzz against the bottom of the glass. The fly on the other hand will dive frantically around the jar exploring every corner until he finds a way out. That's the example to follow when you want to succeed: be a fly, not a bee.

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3. Accept the Struggle

   Those who are eager to succeed often treat the second phase of goal-building as an unnecessary waste of time. They would prefer to skip it and jump to the next phase of success. But this is to misunderstand the whole point of the second phase. It's there to toughen you up. You may have heard the story of "The Man and the Butterfly" about the man who saw a butterfly struggling to emerge from its cocoon. To help it out, the man cut a bigger hole in the cocoon and pulled the butterfly through. However, instead of flying away, the butterfly was unable to fly. Its body was too swollen. What the man did not understand was that the butterfly's struggle to emerge through the hole forces fluid from its body to its wings and thus makes them strong and ready to carry its weight. Like the butterfly, we need to struggle to succeed.

4. Be Objective

   In stage two of goal-building, it's valuable to stand back and distance ourselves from what's going on. We need to be tripeds not bipeds. Bipeds are people who see only themselves and others. Risk-taking is a do-or-die undertaking. Progress is either a triumph or disaster. Life is black and white, winning or losing. Tripeds, on the other hand, can distance themselves from their situation by finding a third position where they can observe things with objectivity. Life isn't either-or any more. It has depth, colour, and many angles.

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5. Don't Judge Yourself
   Our win-lose culture puts great pressure on us to consider ourselves at any moment in life as either winners or losers. This means that failure is a bad thing and winning is everything. One of the most quoted expressions in our modern culture is: "Failure is not an option". But this is to misunderstand the real nature of success. We need to fail in order to succeed. And we need to fail big-time in order to succeed big-time. Practically every successful entrepreneur, from Thomas Edison to Walt Disney, experienced failure many times over. But they didn't judge themselves. They interpreted failure as "not succeeding yet" and saw it as just one more step on the road to success.

6. Manage Your Morale
   Of course, it's not always much fun to be stuck in the hard slog phase of goal-building. Nobody's cheering any more. You have nothing to show for your efforts. And the dream still feels as far away as ever. That's when you have to manage your morale. That means managing your stress, keeping things light, and working on the things you can't see: your thinking patterns, your emotions, and your spirit. And, like the fluid in the butterfly, these may just be the things that will make you fly. I can say: "I am terribly frightened and fear is terrible and it makes me uncomfortable, so I won't do it." Or I could say: "Get used to being uncomfortable." It is uncomfortable doing something risky. But so what? Do you want to stagnate and just be comfortable?" (Barbra Streisand)

We human beings are very similar to the plant world. We grow best when we work with Nature and time. Don't be in too much of a hurry to achieve your goals. If you hold on with faith, certainty, and determination, you'll get there in due course when the time is right.

About the author
Eric Garner runs ManageTrainLearn, the site with the biggest and most original range of management training materials on the Internet.
http://www.managetrainlearn.com

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8 Imagination Power by Steve Goodier

One of your greatest powers is…your imagination.

Let me explain. William James was a philosopher and one of the leading thinkers a century ago. He said this about the power of the mind: "Anything you may hold firmly in your imagination can be yours." He believed there was tremendous power in imagination and wrote in length about how humans can bring about significant positive changes in their attitudes, behaviors and relationships by first holding a vivid image of their best selves, or the person they want to become, in their imagination.

In his book The Winner's Edge, writer Denis Waitley tells of high school basketball players who learned the power of holding something firmly in their imaginations. The students were divided into three groups. Group One was told not to practice shooting free throws for one month. Group Two was told to practice shooting free throws in the gym every afternoon for a month. Group Three was told to IMAGINE shooting free throws every afternoon for one hour for a month. (Frankly, I can hardly "imagine" a group of athletes, after sitting in class all day, dressing out, going to the gym, sitting in the bleachers and just thinking about shooting free throws for an hour every day. I suppose it's all in the name of research.)

But look at these results. Group One, the no-practice group, slipped slightly in their percentage free-throw average. Group Two, the students that practiced, increased their accuracy by about two percentage points. Group Three, the ones who imagined shooting, also increased about two percentage points – the same as the group that practiced.

Neuroscience is just now discovering that there are biological reasons for this phenomenon William James talked about so long ago. But here is the point. Do you want to excel at some endeavor? Do you want to improve your outlook? Is there a skill you'd like to perfect? Do you want better relationships? Or would you like to replace your fear of something, such as speaking in public or heading up a project, with more confidence and courage? If so, then mental practice, holding a vivid image of what you want in your mind, is as important as physical practice. The time you spend "seeing" in your mind what you are trying to accomplish actually helps to bring it to pass.

I don't mean we have to sit down and imagine something for an hour every day. It's as simple as holding a vivid mental picture of what you truly desire and returning to it as often as possible.

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Imagine your success. Visualize doing that thing you fear. Get it in your mind. Then imagine your success in that area again and again, like free throws going into the basket. What does it look like to be confident? How does it look to be actually doing the thing you're afraid to do? How does it feel? Can you imagine it in detail? In a short time, you will discover that things really are changing for you.

And after that, well, just imagine what else you can do.

About the author

Steve Goodier holds a B.A. in anthropology and sociology (New Mexico State University) and an M.Div. degree from Emory University. He is an ordained United Methodist minister, district superintendent in the Rocky Mountain Conference UMC, and the author of numerous books about personal development, motivation, inspiration, and making needed life changes.

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9 To Dream the Possible Dream by Alan Arthur

What did you want to be when you were a kid? When I was around 10, I dreamed of being a great journalist. When I was a teenager, of being a great writer.And when I left home, of gracing the acting boards at the Old Vic.

None of these dreams came true for me, (well, not yet anyway), but for most of our youngsters such dreams are still alive and kicking.

According to a recent survey, the top 3 dreams of today's youngsters are to be

1. a sports' star
2. a pop star
3. an actor or actress

This contrasts with the ambitions of their parents, who, 25 years ago, wanted most to be

1. a teacher
2. a banker
3. a doctor

Naturally, like me, the overwhelming majority of these children will be disappointed. They'll have neither the natural talent, determination, or luck to become top footballers, athletes, singers or film stars. And, like me, they will come to a day when they have to give up on their dreams.

When that day comes, although it can be filled with huge disappointment, it can also be filled with renewed hope. For as the impossible dream fades, the possible dream can take its place.

Martin Luther King knew this. Speaking to young people whose dreams may have been shattered by the reality of their situation, he said, "If a man is called on to be a streetsweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michaelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, here lived a great streetsweeper who did his job well."

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In the film, "What a Wonderful Life", James Stewart, as George Bailey, aspires to conquer the world. He wants to see continents and do great deeds. But circumstances conspire to keep him in his little mid-West town where his deep-seated integrity and regard for his fellow human beings makes him a star without knowing it.

In truth, few of us can realistically expect to be a star to millions.

But, a star amongst our friends, our families, our customers, and our colleagues?

I think I'd settle for that.

About the author
Alan Arthur is an article contributor to ManageTrainLearn, the site that will change the way you learn forever. Download free samples of the biggest range of management and personal development materials anywhere and experience learning like you always dreamed possible; http://www.managetrainlearn.com

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10 Why Predict the Future? by Paul Lemberg

Do you ever try to predict the future? Are you ever right? Why do you even bother?

Do you ever try to predict the future? Are you usually right, or wrong? If so, then read on.

Can you predict the future of your industry? Can you predict the future of your business? No one can say with certainty what will happen next week much less one year from now. And five years? Not a chance.

Yogi Berra reportedly said, "It's hard to make predictions, especially about the future."

Everyone agrees. Predicting the future is hard. It is so hard that a fifty percent success rate is considered extraordinary for a professional futurist. In other words, the professionals are wrong at least half of the time.

And yet businesses try to predict the future all of the time. In fact, there are three basic business tools which require future predictions:

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Future Revenues. At the most primitive level businesses predict future revenues. For better or worse "estimated future revenues" figures govern many of our proposed business decisions. These estimated figures are often wrong but we nonetheless establish spending patterns for years to come based upon this guesswork.

Industry Scenarios. One level up from revenue predictions is the prediction of industry scenarios in which we try and guess what are competitors are likely to do in the future.

Strategic Planning. The most complex level of predictions takes place in strategic planning. Most high-performing businesses set annual and long-term objectives and develop plans to meet those objectives. Resource planning, financial planning, market planning, sales planning and project planning all depend upon how well businesses predict the future in their strategic plans.

One of the problems with these business tools is that businesses end up developing "planned reactions" to guessed-about future events instead of creating their own plans. A second problem is that businesses usually measure the success of these "planned reactions" based upon whether or not they produce the predicted results.

Now here's the rub: All of those estimates of future revenues, industry scenarios and strategic plans are based upon predictions which are more than likely wrong. By measuring success against faulty predictions how can a business do anything but fail to achieve its goals?

Why should you predict the future if it is such a losing game? Well, I have a saying: "The best way to predict the future is to invent it."

Instead of using future estimates, predictions and plans to be reactive to the future be proactive about the future by creating your own. To move your business Faster Than The Speed Of Change™ declare the direction in which you want your business to go-invent your own future. Pick a direction and set plans in action to take advantage of and profit from that direction.

You may end up exactly where you said you were going. Then again, you may not. Along the way you may shift completely-your northward heading now facing east and your west now facing south. But you will get somewhere and that somewhere will probably be much farther along and much closer to your declared direction than if you had no direction and only "reaction plans."

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Declarations, predictions, and, yes, even strategic plans have a way of focusing our attention and mobilizing our efforts far more effectively than random action, or worse still, just plodding along with no sense of the future. A boldly conceived and declared future energizes everyone in your enterprise. We never fail to be excited and inspired by what art historian Kenneth Clark called "the shock of the new." And, by inventing the future you may alter the competitive landscape ands bring into being changes so great that they didn't exist before.

You see, the future is really whatever we say it is going to be. Once we decide what is possible, become inspired by the possible, commit our resources, time and energy to achieving specific objectives, we can turn future possibilities into reality.

Better than even money says you'll be wrong if you predict the future. I say, you'll be right if you invent your own future.

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About the author
Paul Lemberg is the president of Quantum Growth Coaching, the world's only fully systemized business coaching program guaranteed to help entrepreneurs rapidly create More Profits and More Life(tm). To get your copy of our free special report with detailed steps on how to grow your business at least 40% faster, even when you aren't sure what to do next, let Paul help you find your business development strategy.

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11 Building a Boat by Steve Goodier

Abraham Lincoln once said, "I will prepare, and some day my chance will come." When his chance came, he was ready.

During his seminary years, one priest-in-training owned a favorite T-shirt. Across the front was emblazoned: "Expectant Father." His chance came and he, too, was ready.

When your chance comes, will you be ready?

I know that sports stories don't speak to everyone, but if you'll indulge me, I think Wayne Gretzky has something powerful to teach us about preparation. Former ice hockey superstar Gretzky knew the value of being ready. He broke almost every record imaginable and is generally thought to be the greatest hockey player of all time.

"The Great One," as he is often called, is not particularly big – he stands at 5 feet 11 inches tall and weighed about 170 pounds during his career. He never skated particularly fast, his shot was not high-powered and he often placed dead last on regular strength tests administered to his team. So what made him so great?

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Gretzky attributes his stardom to practice and preparation. He practiced stick handling in the off-season with a tennis ball, as the ball was harder to control than a puck. In practice he innovated. He practiced bouncing the puck off the sideboards to his teammates until that technique became a regular part of his play. Then he worked on bouncing the puck off the net. He became so accomplished at these maneuvers that he sometimes said, "People say there's only six men on the ice, but really, if you use the angle of deflection of the board, there's seven. If you count the net, that's eight. From the opening face-off, I always figure we have 'em eight-on-six."

The Great One was so great because, when his chance came to make an impact, he was ready. And because he was ready, chances came again and again.

I've learned this: it doesn't matter what awaits me just across the sea if I haven't built a boat.

Many years ago a friend and I were talking about a speaking engagement I had accepted in Los Angeles. "I'd love to go places and speak or lead seminars," she said.

I asked her, "What would you speak about? What do you want to teach?"

"I don't know. I've always wanted to write a book and lead seminars," she said, "but I've never gotten around to it."

I've heard her speak – she has a great ability to relate to people. She has a charismatic personality. She is intelligent and articulate. I have no doubt she could excel in such a field.

We talked about her need to develop expertise in an area about which she is passionate. We talked about how she might look for opportunities to lead local seminars and teach courses. And we talked about steps she might take toward writing her book, something she had wanted to do for a long time.

But a number of years after our conversation, she has still done none of those things. If her chance comes, she will not be ready. And more likely, since she is not ready, her chance will probably never come.

I often hear people say, "If only I had a chance." Maybe it's a chance at a new position, a bigger challenge or to do something different. Perhaps they are waiting for a chance to prove themselves or a chance to really make a difference.

But I wonder – if I were offered that new challenge today, would I be ready to meet it? Am I prepared to take full advantage?

It's not enough for me to dream about exotic, new places. I need to build a boat.

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About the author

Steve Goodier holds a B.A. in anthropology and sociology (New Mexico State University) and an M.Div. degree from Emory University. He is an ordained United Methodist minister, district superintendent in the Rocky Mountain Conference UMC, and the author of numerous books about personal development, motivation, inspiration, and making needed life changes.

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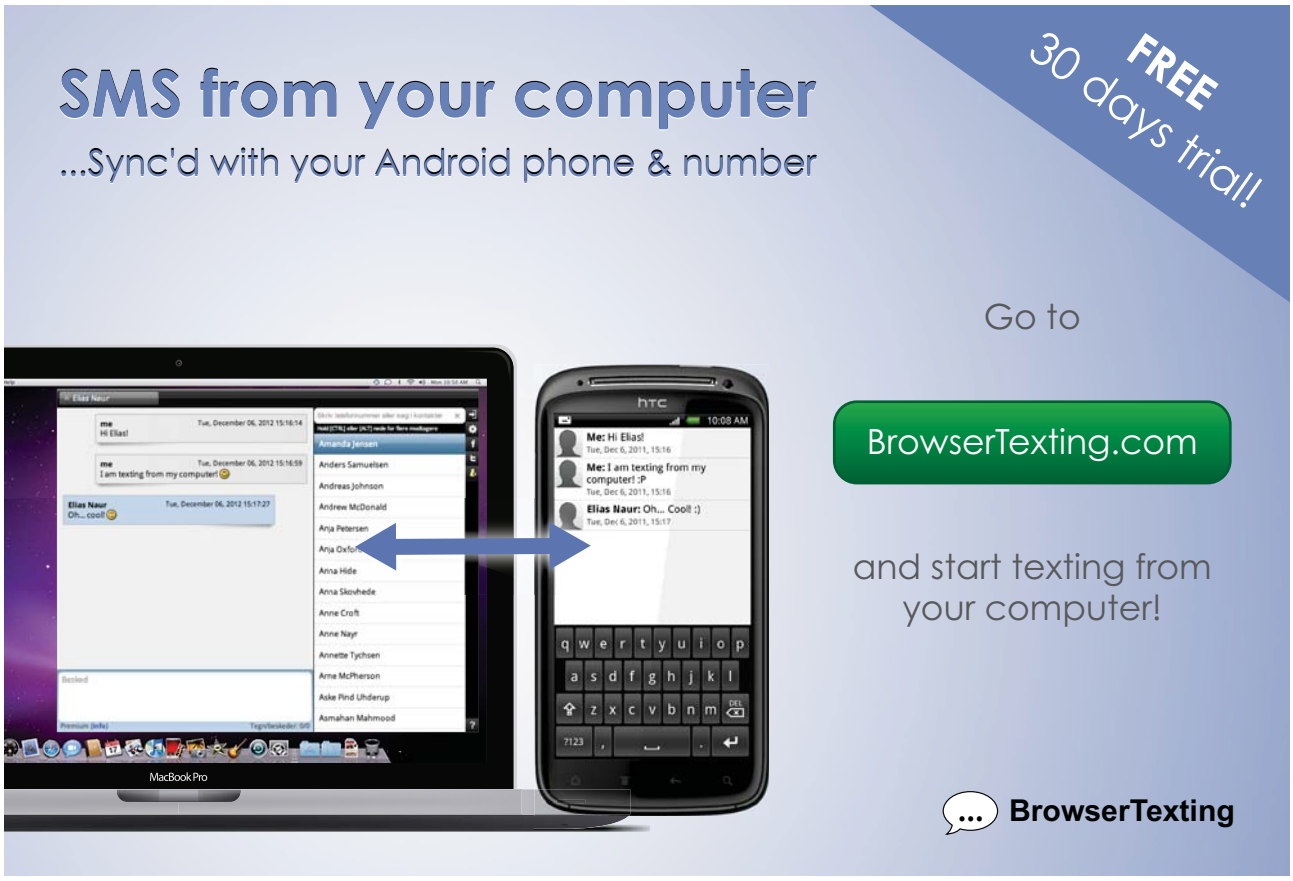

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12 Celebration is the Pause that Refreshes by Jim Clemmer

"Success is every minute you live. It's the process of living. It's stopping for the moments of beauty, of pleasure; the moments of peace. Success is not a destination that you ever reach. Success is the quality of the journey." – Jennifer James, Success is the Quality of Your Journey

After 45 years of hard work, the grizzled old rancher decided it was finally time to sell the ranch, retire, and really enjoy the rewards of his toil and sweat. So he called a real estate agent to list the place for sale. The agent spent most of a day with the rancher, riding the range and getting a feel for the ranch he would be selling.

A few days later, the agent returned to finalize the listing and get approval for an ad he'd prepared. It was written to attract a city dweller from the large metropolitan area less then 100 miles away. The ad described the freedom of the open range. It talked in poetic terms about the river that happily babbled to the lush green hills as it meandered by. The ad described heartbreakingly beautiful sunsets that painted the big open sky with an awesome array of reds, oranges, and crimsons. It spoke of the deep satisfaction and contentment of sitting on the big front porch and watching the young colts play in the corral.

After reading the ad, the seasoned, old rancher walked over to the huge picture window and silently gazed out. A few minutes later, he softly whispered, "This ranch isn't for sale after all." As the rancher turned to face the agent, a tear ran down his wrinkled, leathery cheek. "All my life I've dreamed of a place just like this. Now I finally realize what I've got here."

The relentless drive for ever-higher performance and reaching our next goal often leaves us too numb and exhausted to enjoy what we have achieved. Rather than pausing to appreciate what we have accomplished, we become narrowly focused on what we haven't yet attained. Dale Carnegie once observed that "One of the most tragic things I know about human nature is that all of us tend to put off living. We are all dreaming of some magical rose garden over the horizon – instead of enjoying the roses that bloom outside our windows today."

I've been as guilty of this as anyone. By not slowing down to savor successes along the way, each accomplishment becomes less fulfilling. When I have paused to savor and celebrate, life becomes richer and much more satisfying. I also find that it's a great "battery recharger." Savoring and celebrating is highly energizing. Paradoxically, it's when things are darkest and our goals seem farthest from reach that a focus on what's gone right and what we have to be thankful for can be the most invigorating.

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Radical change and aggressive breakthrough targets are often quite daunting. Continual change and constant improvement can be exhausting. That's why effective leaders break the endless improvement journey into a series of short exciting trips. A key element of that is celebrating and savoring successes. It's how effective improvement leaders reenergize everyone to strive for the next goal.

Energizing leaders employ a multitude of creative ways to foster appreciation and recognition, giving among all team and organization members. They also find numerous ways to hike energy and enjoyment levels by marking and celebrating milestones along the way. Energizing leaders constantly search for ways to make change and improvement fun and rewarding. They know that the Laughter Index is a key indicator of the health and vitality of a team or organization.

Taking on this important leadership role means you'll need to overcome deep conditioning that business is very serious stuff. Tom Peters has speculated on the cause of this energy-sapping view of organizational life. He claims that over the entrance to most business schools there's a giant stone lintel with these words deeply inscribed in it, "All ye who enter here shall never smile again." If suppressed laughter does spread the hips and produce gas, that may explain a few things.

About the author

Jim Clemmer has been writing and speaking about leadership, change, team, and organization effectiveness for over 30 years. His extensive research, broad experience with hundreds of organizations and thousands of people, and deep understanding of these topics makes him an internationally recognized leader in the field. Beyond his seven books, he's written hundreds of columns and articles for newspapers and magazines.

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13 What is Your Destiny? by Michael Beck

The other evening I was out having a cigar and a beverage. While sitting around a fire pit (an outdoor wood fire), I overheard an interesting conversation. [We were all sitting and standing pretty close to one another and this group was talking fairly loudly, so one couldn't help but hear.] This guy was bemoaning how bad his life was. He looked to be in his late twenties. His wife offered a different perspective on their life, but he would have none of that. He went on about the many events in his life that had defeated him (and he obviously felt he was a "victim"). He complained about all the things that had happened to him or had been done to him. He complained that no matter what he did, things kept turning out wrong. He even pointed to where they lived as proof that he was a failure. Then he continued on about how God must have abandoned or punished him. He also decided that surely he must have "bad" genes – that he was simply wired for failure.

Now maybe you don't know anyone like that or maybe all that sounded a bit extreme, but let me draw a parallel to some of the people I've met in business. I've seen lots people who have done "OK". They have a business, a home, and a family. They can pay their bills for the most part – at least the minimum payments. They're liked by others, and view themselves as capable and competent. And yet…something is wrong. In spite of what they've achieved, they know they are destined for more. Inside, in their heart of hearts, they know that where they are in life is not where they could be. Some of these folks secretly feel they're destined for greatness of one kind or another. Some secretly feel they're destined to impact large numbers of people. Some secretly feel they're destined to have great financial success and recognition. But none of these folks have realized their destiny. In fact, they're often nowhere near where they want to be.

No doubt they started their adult life in pursuit of their destiny with big goals, ambition and energy. But time after time their efforts met with mediocre results. They tried one approach to achieve success, but didn't have much success. Then they tried a different approach, but got the same result. And next, a third approach with poor results. And consequently, slowly but surely, they begin to accept mediocrity. They begin to accept the "fact" that they just aren't meant to succeed. That the destiny they once envisioned for themselves was a fantasy and instead, their "fate" or ultimate destiny is to be "average". These people have the very same mentality as our friend at the fire pit. These people end up adopting a defeatist attitude – and you already know how I feel about the importance and impact of attitude on our life. (If not, go to my website and read my recent article on attitude.)

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Maybe you are one of those people I described above. Maybe you (secretly) know what your true destiny is, but have gotten to a point where that spark of a vision has almost been extinguished. Maybe you have tried "everything" and feel that your "destiny" is one of mediocrity – living check to check, not having much of an impact, and/or being completely unenthused.

Anyone can make great strides towards advancing in the direction of their destiny – but it takes a definite shift in attitude, a definite shift in action, and a bit of courage…

About the author
Michael Beck, Executive Strategist, is president of Michael Beck International, Inc. – a firm specializing in executive development, leadership effectiveness, and executive strategy. Connect on LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/mjbeck and visit www.michaeljbeck.com to learn more. Permission to reprint with full attribution. © 2012 Michael Beck International, Inc.

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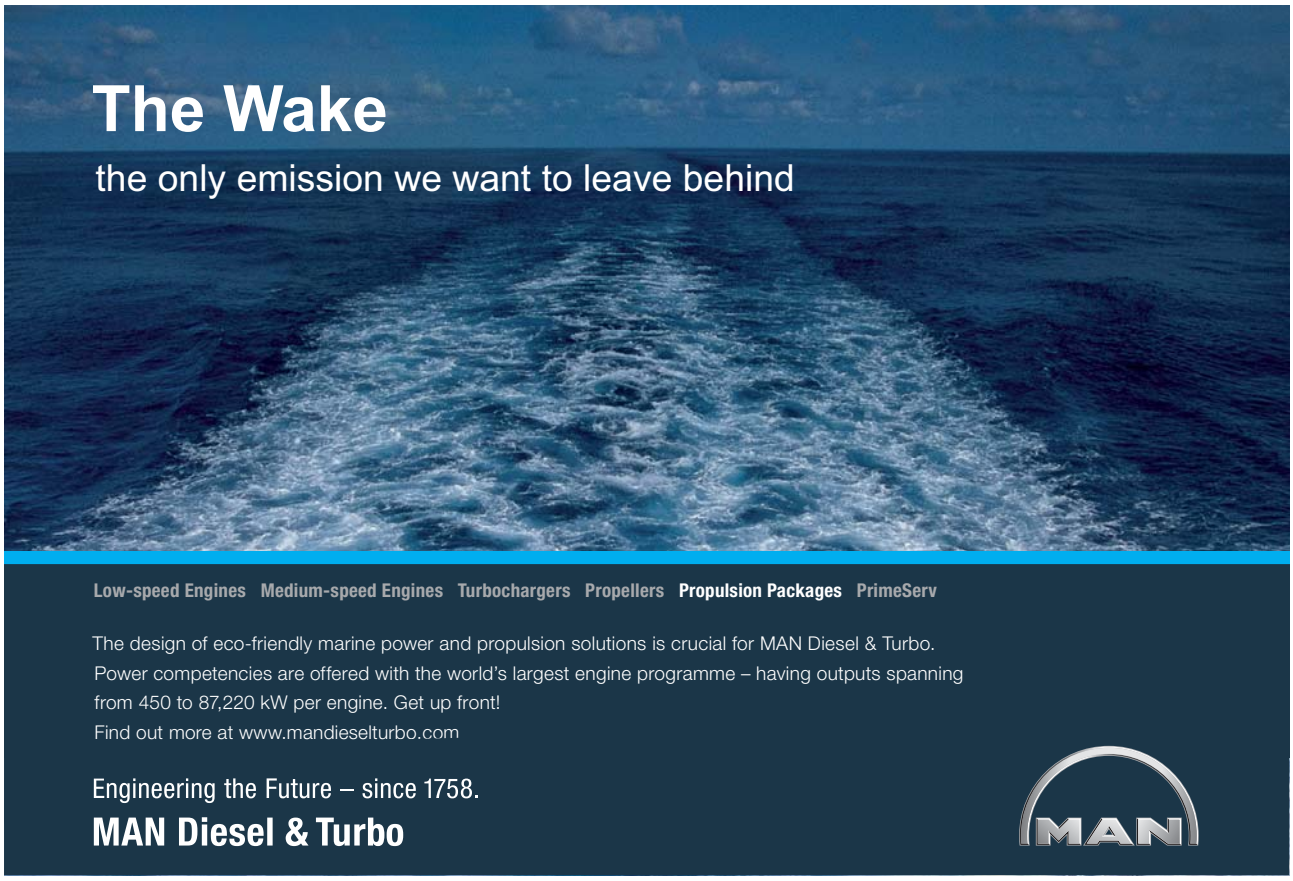

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14 Yield of Dreams by Jim Clemmer

"Take time to dream! In each creative mind a dream takes wings and moves in graceful flow until it permeates the soul in relentless and persistent longing. The dream keeps urging 'It could be.' It won't let go 'til the dreamer heeds and shapes it into reality."

In the early 1950s, Florence Chadwick became the first woman to swim the English Channel in both directions. During her first attempt, she had been swimming for hours and was getting very near to the English coast. That's when the seas turned much colder and heavy swells developed. A dense fog settled in blocking everything from view with a chilly wet blanket. As Florence's pace slowed and energy drained, her mother called through the fog from one of the small boats following behind, "Come on, Florence, you can make it. It's only a little further." But she was exhausted and couldn't go any further. As she slumped in the boat, Florence felt defeated and was heartbroken when she realized how close she'd come. Later she told the media, "I am not offering excuses, but I think I could have made it if I had been able to see my goal." On her next attempt, Florence developed a powerful mental image of the coast of England. She memorized every coastal feature and replayed those images again and again in her mind. This time she encountered the same discouraging conditions as before. But her vision saw her through to success.

Carl Hiebert also used visioning to reach his goal of being the first person to fly an ultralight across Canada during Expo '86 in Vancouver. It took him five years of planning and preparation. The 58-day adventure featured an emergency crash landing, severe weather, and numerous other natural and human-made challenges. Here's how Carl describes the key role vision played in his unprecedented achievement, "As the pavilions of the World's Fair became visible, I was surprised by how familiar they looked… then it struck me. I had seen this view many times through the process of visualization… I had pasted a photograph of my ultralight in the sky just above the cluster of pavilions, and almost every day, for the next 12 months, I had spent a few minutes staring at that picture, imaging myself arriving safely at Expo. Visualizing my victorious arrival had become the proverbial carrot hung just beyond the doubts and difficulties. It had been the incentive I needed to stay with my commitment."

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A big part of Florence and Carl's extraordinary achievements came from their ability to tap into the mighty power of a vision. They aren't alone. Extensive research in the last few decades on peak performance, leadership, personal effectiveness, adaptability to change, world-class athletes, and even the healing process, clearly shows the central role vision plays in success. Most organizations, social movements, world records, new products or services, and remarkable achievements began as a figment of someone's imagination. Somebody had a thought that turned into a dream. That dream grew even as the dreamer was being ridiculed and told to "get real." In 1924, Thomas Watson Sr. was heavily in debt when he came home one evening and proudly announced that his struggling Computing-Tabulating-Recording Company would now be called International Business Machines (IBM). Hearing this, his 10-year-old son, who later became a key figure in IBM's growth, stood in the doorway of the living room thinking, 'That little outfit?' Coupled with disciplined action, dreams become a magnetized vision that attracts the people, events, and circumstances needed to achieve the breakthrough.

The word "vision" comes from the Latin root meaning "to see." What we see depends upon where we look – our focus. A dream or vision is one of the most powerful forces in the universe. Like any mighty energy, our visions can help or hurt us because they are self-fulfilling prophecies. If we see ourselves as helpless victims to changes coming at us, we will be. If our attitude is "same old crap, different day," we'll get what we asked for. If we don't talk to ourselves because we don't like to deal with such a low class of people, our poor self-image won't improve. If we focus on the thieves, liars, and idiots all around us, we'll miss the saints that walk among us (a little girl, riding in the front seat of the car beside her mother, asked, "where are all the stupid jerks today?" Her mother replied, "They only come out when your father's driving"). If we see little but frustration, dead ends, and career or family traps in our future, that's where we're headed. A skeptical "realist" lives by the philosophy "I'll believe it when I see it." A dreamer harnesses the vision force and successfully moves through life knowing "I'll see it when I believe it."

Our vision or imagination is the center point that focuses and guides our choices, authenticity, passion, spirit, growth and development, and energy. The remarkable blind and deaf author, Helen Keller, once said, "nothing is more tragic than someone who has sight, but no vision." We can't leave the incredible magnetic power of vision unharnessed. Left on their own, our thoughts often pull us toward the reasons why we can't succeed rather than the many reasons we can. To increase our effectiveness, we need to actively and consciously attract into our lives what we truly want. We need to ensure the picture of our future is what we prefer, not the dark images of our fears, doubts, and insecurities that will then come true. Organization, team, and personal improvement starts with "imagineering."

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About the author

Jim Clemmer has been writing and speaking about leadership, change, team, and organization effectiveness for over 30 years. His extensive research, broad experience with hundreds of organizations and thousands of people, and deep understanding of these topics makes him an internationally recognized leader in the field. Beyond his seven books, he's written hundreds of columns and articles for newspapers and magazines.

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15 Allowing Yourself to Receive by Steve Pavlina

The vibe of financial abundance is very similar to that of open relationships. It invites and welcomes from a place of flow, and without attachment to outcomes.

We're surrounded by opportunities to invite and receive love, money, and more. But when we're stuck in scarcity thinking, we squeeze this field of possibilities down to a narrow part of the spectrum. And sometimes our intentions are simply too big to be compressed without losing their essence, so we effectively block them.

We intend to increase the flow of love, and then demand that it must come from our primary relationship partner only. We desire more money and require that it must come from our one and only job – or that we must receive a singular job if we don't have one already.

This attachment to such thin bands of reception pollutes our intentions with fear. Yes, we actually fear receiving through other parts of the spectrum, parts that lie outside our comfort zones.

What if getting paid what I'm worth means that I have to quit my current job? What if there are other beautiful relationships to enjoy than just this one?

We resist the consequences of such changes, and so we resist the changes themselves, thereby receiving the perpetuation of stuckness.

The universe cannot deliver the full package of your desires if your mailbox is too small.

When we open up and allow ourselves to receive through all parts of the spectrum (or at least a bit more of it), we reduce the blocks attached to our intentions, and the flow quickly increases.

Is it really so terrible to welcome multiple income streams…or multiple lovers? Can we not simply relax and allow our desires to show up, without presenting a list of fear-based demands that constricts the flow?

Can you allow yourself to receive through all parts of the spectrum of potential, including the bands that expose your limiting beliefs and make you feel vulnerable and afraid? If you can do that, you will soon forget what it's like to experience scarcity.

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About the author

Steve Pavlina (born April 14, 1971) is an American self-help author, motivational speaker and entrepreneur. He is the author of the web site stevepavlina.com and the book Personal Development for Smart People. Pavlina's blog covers topics such as personal development and success; consciousness and courage; productivity, motivation and goal setting; career, wealth and business; and spirituality. (Wikipedia)

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On December 15, 2010, Steve Pavlina released all the content he had created till that date (excluding his book Personal Development For Smart People) and all content he would create in the future (unless explicitly specified) in the public domain.

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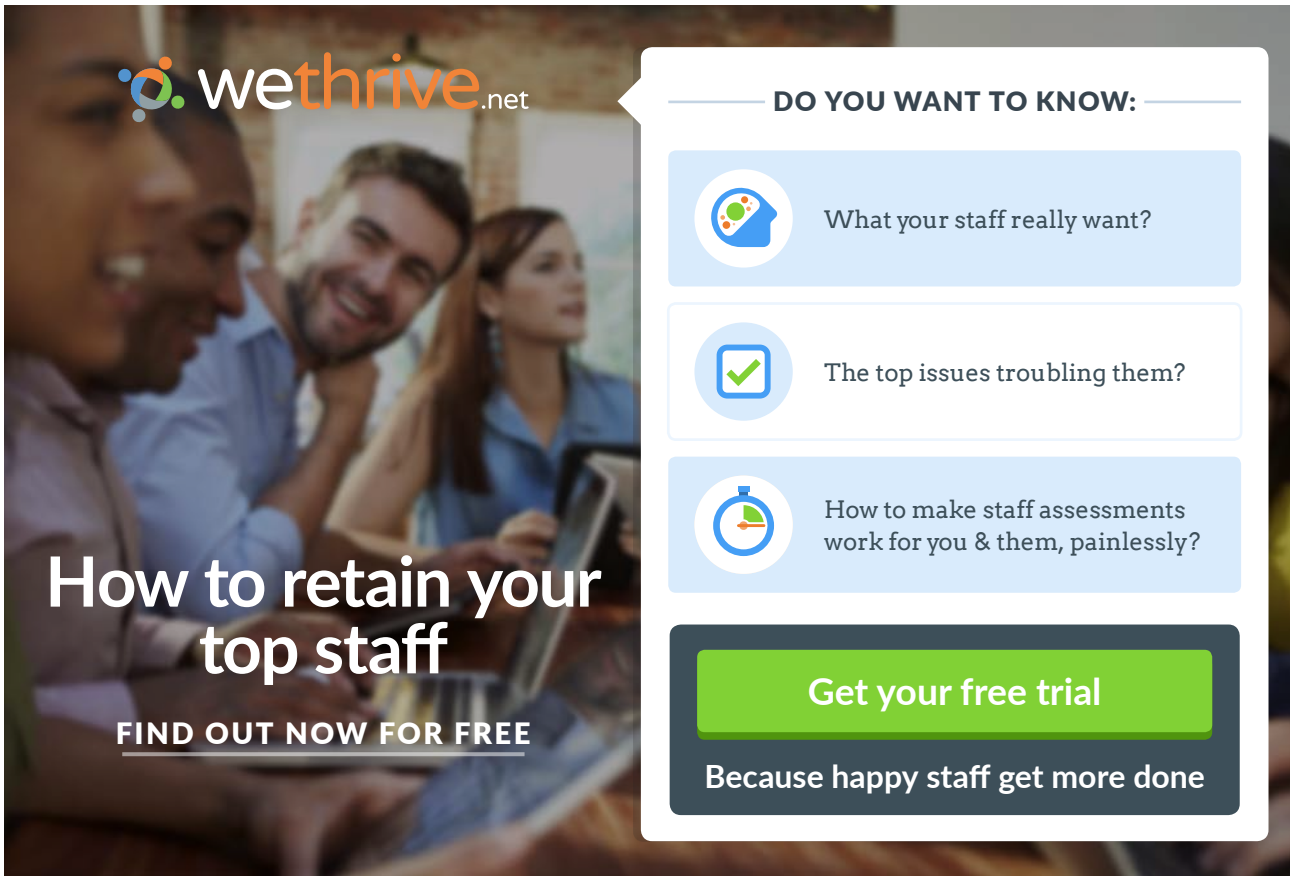

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16 Following the Dream: Christmas Story of Misfits by Victor Antonio G

So I decided to watch Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer with my little girl who had never seen the original claymation movie we all grew up with. Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer premiered on NBC December 6th, 1964, and has become the longest running, highest rated television special in the history of the medium.

I watch it every year, as many of us do, because it has become a tradition. I also think it has an inherent magical power that transports us mentally back to when we were young and life seemed a bit less complex than it is today.

Every time I watch the movie I seem to catch a different view of it; a different take on it if you will. As I watched it this time, the scene that struck a chord with me was the scene in the elves' workshop.

rudolph the red nose reindeer christmas story by business motivational speaker Victor GonzalezIf you recall, "Herbie", one of the elves (standing behind Rudolph in this picture), is distracted while on the toy assembly line. Herbie's job is to paint the wooden trucks coming his way. The supervising elf yells at him and asks him why he's falling behind.

> Herbie confesses to the supervising elf that he doesn't like making toys. In disbelief the head elf yells, "What!? You don't like making toys."
>
> Herbie replies, "I want to be a dentist." (Everyone laughs at Herbie)
>
> The supervisor than shoves a load of wooden trucks in front of Herbie and says, "You're an elf. And elves make toys."

Herbie, unhappy, later on decides to runaway as he realizes he doesn't belong there; he considers himself a 'misfit'. He meets up with Rudolph, who also considers himself a misfit and together they run away. While trekking through the snowstorm and narrowly escaping the Abominable snowman, they discover the Land of Misfit Toys; a place where toys go when no child wants them. Herbie and Ruldoph promise the King of Misfit Land that they'll return with Santa who will find homes for these misfit toys.

But back to Herbie…

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All his life everyone kept reminding him that he's an elf and elves make toys for Santa. Herbie's refuses to accept this fait accompli. By running away he makes a commitment to run towards his dream of becoming a dentist.

Many people in life aren't that brave and live quiet lives of desperation because all their life, someone told them what they should be doing. And in accepting their fate, they now realize how unhappy they are. They don't like what their doing, but yet, every day they go off to their job doing what others want them to do…much like Herbie.

As the movie progresses, Herbie and Rudolph encounter their difficulties after running away. But in the end, they both win…that's the real hidden message. In the end, they FORCED others to accept them for who they are; no more, no less. The elves came to realize that it was a good idea to have a dentist around and the reindeers now let Rudolph play in their 'reindeer games' because they saw the advantage of having a deer friend with a bright red nose.

I'm convinced that one can't be successful pretending to be something they are NOT. If you aren't doing what you love to do, then you're off track, you're lost. I know what you're thinking, "But I don't know how to go about doing what I want to do. Where would I start?"

In the movie, both Herbie and Rudolph set out NOT knowing: who, what, where and when . The only thing they knew was the 'why'. The 'why' was pursuing their dreams. They were unhappy; a big motivator. When they set out, they had no idea how they were going to achieve their goals; they just did it. Along the way they faced major snowstorms and a very hungry abominable snowman (i.e., unforeseen obstacles and dangers).

They also came across a friend, Yukon who helped them. Here's a secret most dreamers accept as true: along the path of success, when you are living on purpose, you will come across people like Yukon who will help you get to where you're going. You'll never meet these helpful people if you never start the journey and take calculated risks. Serendipity favors people of action, not talkers.

Question what you're currently doing. Are you happy? Are you doing it because 'you are suppose to' or because you chose to do it? In my book, The Logic of Success, I state that 78% of the population is either unhappy or would rather be doing something else. Think about that for a second…78%!

When I talk about pursuing your passion, it doesn't necessarily mean, "quit your job". If you're working for a GREAT company, but the "job" you have isn't right for you, work with your managers or supervisors to help you find your fit; where you belong.

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Well, when you're happy, you're more productive. When you're more productive, the company profits from both a revenue and a morale standpoint.

Life plays no favorites, but success does favor those willing to take a risk and make the commitment to pursue their passion. Much like Rudolph's red nose which guided Santa's sleigh through that snowstorm, let the glow of your desire guide your decision and light up your path to success. Corny? Maybe. True? Absolutely! You can bet your unhappy job on it!

p.s., It's OK not to fit in, and be different. It's OK to be a misfit. The objective in life is to find your 'fit'… where you belong. Be proud of being a misfit! And keep in mind that a misfit is only a misfit until he or she finds their fit.

About the author:
Born and raised in Chicago's inner city, Victor Antonio G. has achieved a level of success few would have expected: By the age of 35 he had become Vice President in $3B Fortune 500 company at the time and built-up an international market from $14M to $97M in two and half years, and went on to become President of Global Sales & Marketing to help build a $420M company. He is currently CEO of a privately held multimillion Cable and Satellite Company.
http://www.thelogicofsuccess.com/index.htm

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17 Dream-Busters and Dream-Builders by Steve Goodier

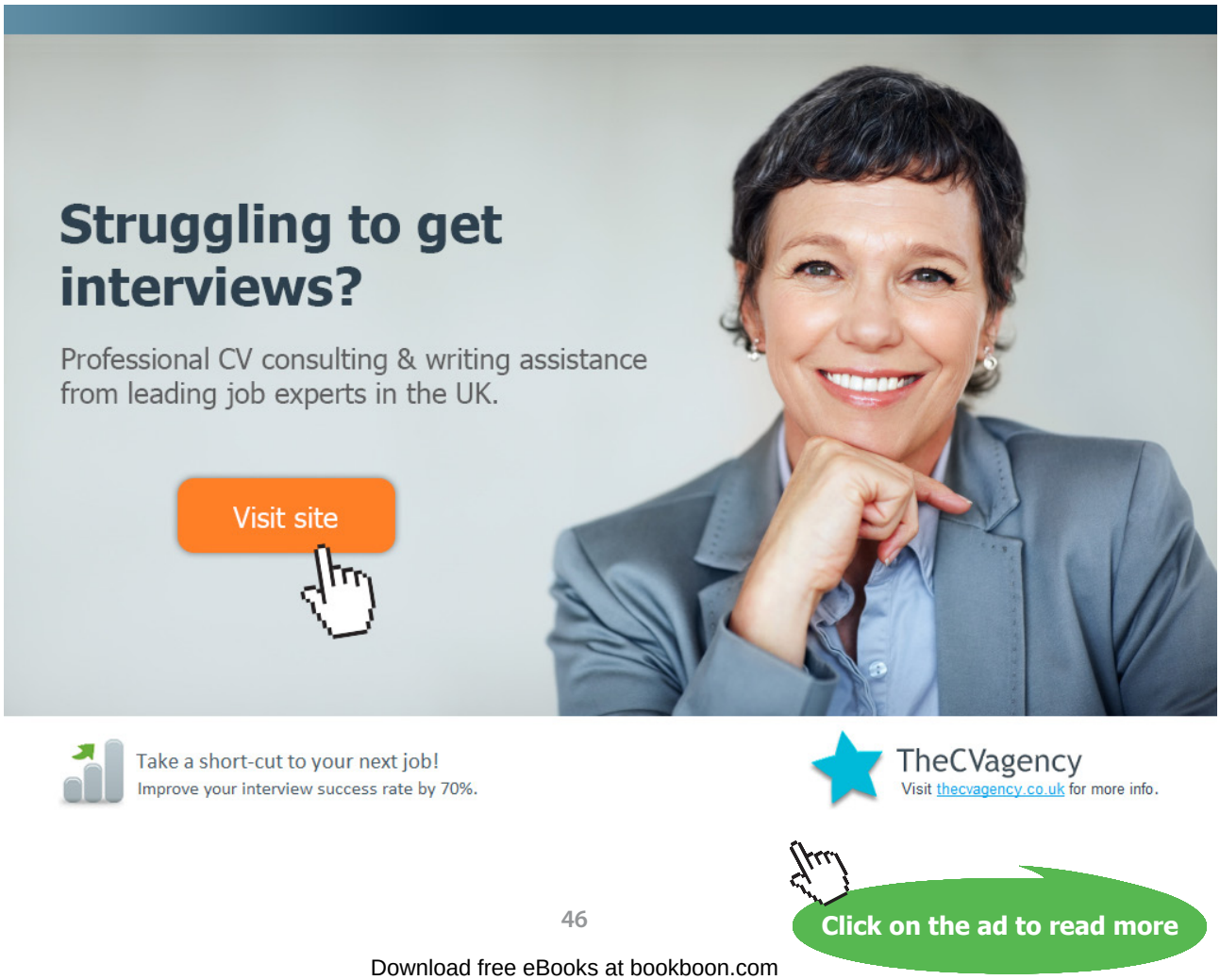
A little girl was asked to bring her birth certificate to school one day. Her mother wisely cautioned her about the important document and told her to be especially careful with it. But in spite of her good intentions, the child lost it. When she became aware of its loss, she began to cry.

"What's the problem, Honey?" her teacher asked sympathetically.

The little girl wailed, "I lost my excuse for being born!"

There are enough reasons to say, "Excuse me." I am not about to apologize for being born.

Some people live, though, as if they are sorry for being different, or for having an opposing opinion than others or for not running with the herd.



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Author Linda Stafford was one of those people. When she was fifteen, Linda announced to her English class that she would someday write and illustrate her own books. She remembers that half of the class sneered and the remainder just laughed at her prophecy. To make matters worse, her English teacher responded that only geniuses become writers and then smugly added that she was on track to receive a D as a grade for the semester. Linda broke into tears.

She went home and wrote a sad, short poem about broken dreams and mailed it to a weekly paper. To her astonishment, the newspaper not only chose to print the poem but they also sent her two dollars for publishing her writing. When she shared the news with her teacher, her only reply was that "everybody experiences some blind luck from time to time."

But as if to defy her teacher's assertion, Linda continued to write. During the next two years, she sold dozens of poems, letters, jokes and recipes. And by the time she graduated from high school, she had a scrapbook filled with her published writing.

Linda never again mentioned a word of it to her teachers or to her fellow students. Why not? Some people are "dream-busters," Linda would later say. And her dream was too important, and, at this time in her life, too fragile to risk being shattered by careless comments from people who didn't believe in her.

Mark Twain said this about dream busters: "Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great."

Linda made no apologies for her ambitions, for her confident belief in herself or for wanting something more out of life. Even at her young age, she somehow knew that nobody on planet earth was more (or less) valuable than she; nobody was more deserving of happiness. She knew that she needed no excuse for wanting to make the most of her brief time in this life and eventually she did become the author she desired to be.

I have found plenty of dream-busters over the years, and I imagine that you have, too. But I have also discovered a few dream-builders along the way – people who encouraged my aspirations and challenged me to take the next step. It was the dream-builders who said yes when others said no. They were the ones who held my vision before me when I wanted to turn away in discouragement. They protected my dreams and reminded me who I really was.

It has always been the dream-builders who made the greatest impact. It is to them I am most grateful.

If some people are dream-busters, others are dream-builders. And I know which ones to listen to. I also know which I want to be.

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About the author

Steve Goodier holds a B.A. in anthropology and sociology (New Mexico State University) and an M.Div. degree from Emory University. He is an ordained United Methodist minister, district superintendent in the Rocky Mountain Conference UMC, and the author of numerous books about personal development, motivation, inspiration, and making needed life changes.

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18 Gifted for Something? by Steve Goodier

I heard of a woman who operated a daycare for children from her home. As she transported children in her car one day, a fire truck zoomed by. The kids were thrilled to see a Dalmatian on the front seat, just like in the old-time stories.

They began a conversation about the duties of a "fire dog." One child suggested that they use the dog to keep the crowds back. Another said the Dalmatian is just for good luck. But young Jamie brought the argument to an end when he said, "They use the dog to find the hydrant!"

He reminds us that we all have useful abilities, if sniffing out fire hydrants is a useful ability. Some of our skills are apparent. Some are hidden. Some probably haven't even been discovered. Some can be improved with work – lots of mine fall into this category.

Madame Marie Curie, the first woman to win a Nobel Prize (she won two), said this about giftedness: "Life is not easy for any of us, but what of that? We must have perseverance and above all confidence in ourselves. We must believe that we are gifted for something and that this thing must be attained."

I like that. "We must believe that we are gifted for something." Do you believe you are gifted for something? Do you know what that "something" is?

American football's William Floyd probably thought his athletic ability was his greatest gift. But then he injured his knee halfway through his 1995 season with the San Francisco Forty-Niners. The talented athlete was out for the rest of the season. It was then that he found a gift he may not have known he possessed.

William Floyd still wanted to contribute and he did NOT want his self pity to spill over to the rest of the team. So he stood on the sidelines at every workout and in every game and encouraged his teammates on. He shouted and cajoled; he motivated and consoled; he became a dominating presence and a source of great inspiration for his team. He had a remarkable ability for bringing out the best in others.

At the end of the year, his teammates voted him the player "who best exemplifies inspirational and courageous play." As much as they needed him on the field, they discovered how much they needed him on the sidelines, urging them to do and to be their best. I wonder if his newly-found life skill, his gift of positive motivation, could prove more useful than even his athletic ability?

What if we believed we were "gifted for something"? What difference would that make?

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And what if we believed we should do something about it? What difference would that make? What difference COULD that make?

I think a lot of life is about finding that out.

About the author
Steve Goodier holds a B.A. in anthropology and sociology (New Mexico State University) and an M.Div. degree from Emory University. He is an ordained United Methodist minister, district superintendent in the Rocky Mountain Conference UMC, and the author of numerous books about personal development, motivation, inspiration, and making needed life changes.

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19 You Can Fly Like Dumbo! by Erica Rowntree

Dumbo and the Power of Self-Belief

The self-image is the key player in our thoughts. To understand its importance we need to turn Descartes' maxim "I think, therefore I am" back-to-front into: I AM WHAT I THINK.

Whatever we think we are, we are. Our self-talk creates our self-image. This is because our thoughts are always directed to proving what we want to believe. So, if we think we are stupid at maths, our thoughts will automatically seek evidence that proves it and ignore evidence to the contrary. Similarly, if we think we are quite clever at maths, we will seek evidence to prove it. So, the key to releasing the potential of our thinking is to build a confident self-image – self-belief – in which our thinking is a partner in describing who we see ourselves to be.

Self-Belief: Dumbo and the Magic Feather

In 1941, Walt Disney taught old and young alike about the magic of self-belief in his adaptation of a Helen Aberson story called, "Dumbo".

If you don't know the story, Dumbo is a young elephant born in a circus with very large ears. Because of his ears, he is taunted by the other animals and ends up an outcast with only a mouse called Timothy as his friend.

Timothy decides to make Dumbo happy again. One night, after drinking too much, the two friends find themselves in a tree and Timothy concludes that Dumbo only got there by using his big ears to fly. Timothy persuades Dumbo to repeat this trick but when Dumbo doesn't think he can, Timothy has to use a "magic feather" to make him believe that he can fly. With feather in place, Dumbo no longer doubts what Timothy tells him and uses his ears to fly in spectacular fashion through the sky.

Back at the circus, Dumbo has to perform a diving stunt from a high pyramid of other elephants into a small pool of water. Timothy tells him he doesn't have to worry because he can fly and puts the magic feather into his trunk. But on the way down, Dumbo loses the feather and panics. Timothy desperately, frantically, tells him: "Dumbo! C'mon, fly! Open them ears! The magic feather was just a gag! You can fly! Honest, you can! Hey, open 'em up! Hurry! Please!"

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Dumbo falls. The crowd gasps. But just as he's about to smash into the shallow water, Timothy's words come back to him: "It's you, Dumbo, not the feather!"

At last he flies! He doesn't need the feather. Finally truly believing in himself, he is able to pull out of the dive and fly around the circus tent. Dumbo becomes the sensation of the circus with a private carriage on the circus train for himself and his mother and with Timothy as his manager.

Do You Believe in Yourself?

We're all a bit like Dumbo. We're all born with our own special gifts but because they are gifts unique to us they make us feel different. In our early years, we may see these traits as curses and others may taunt us for them. But in time and with the help of true friends we can come to realise that these curses are what make us special and the things that we can gift for the joy of others. On the way to learning this, we may need a few confidence-boosting tricks such as daily affirmations, reading self-help books, and employing unlikely friends. But eventually we have to take a leap. And when that moment arrives, and despite an initial panic, we'll discover that we can do it all by ourselves, no doubts, no fears, and no magic feathers.That's when, like Dumbo, you'll have come home. You'll have found yourself. You'll have self-belief.

About the author
Erica Rowntree is an article contributor to ManageTrainLearn, the site with the biggest and most original range of management training materials on the Internet.
http://www.managetrainlearn.com

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20 Goal-Setting: How You Can Join the Top Achievers by Betsy Brown

Why is it that some people set goals and give up on them while others set goals and achieve them with amazing ease? The answer almost certainly lies in applying the following 7 secrets of goal-setting.

1. Start With Your Strengths

   Although you can base your goals on anything you want, your chances of success are greater if, first, you base them on your strengths and second, on the current opportunities in your field. To find out your strengths, do some self-research, such as a personal SWOT: your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

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2. Put Your Goals In Writing

   Written goals have a way of transforming wishes into wants, can'ts into cans, dreams into plans and plans into reality. The act of writing clarifies your goals and provides you with a way to check your progress. You can even add reasons to give you more motivation. So don't just think it – ink it!

3. Dream Big

   One of the factors that restricts the realisation of our full potential is the belief that we shouldn't go for big goals. Yet all the evidence of those who realize big goals is that we can always achieve far more than we think. David Schwartz says in his book "The Magic of Thinking Big": "Big goals attract big resources like a magnet."

4. Pitch Each Goal

   Once you have set your ultimate goal, you then need to set the intermediate goals that will get you where you want. Don't pitch these too easily or too ambitiously or they will drop into the Drop Zone. Aim to make them challenging: out of reach, but not out of sight.

5. Express Them Right

   It's important to express your goals in the right way.

   never express your goal in terms of what you don't want; always in terms of what you do want
   express your goals in performance terms not reward terms
   express your goals in terms of how others benefit
   express your goals according to the principles which matter.

6. Set Goals In Terms of Behaviour

   When we set goals for ourselves, they should be expressed in behavioural terms, rather than in terms of status, rewards or position. That's because behaviour is something within our power, while status, rewards and position are not. Formulating goals in behavioural terms also means we present a strong positive image of ourselves to our brains. The brain, not knowing the difference between a real or imagined experience, then seeks to act in accordance with the presented image.

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7. Pursue Your Goals With Passion

   The driving force behind your goal-achievement is Desire. You must desire your goals constantly, vividly and with a burning passion. If you do, you cannot fail to achieve them. It was said of Michaelangelo that he could blot out every distraction while working on a project such as the statue of David, until it was completed.

When you pursue your goals with these 7 habits, you'll be amazed at how quickly they manifest themselves and how much more enjoyable the process becomes.

About the author
Betsy Brown is an article contributor to ManageTrainLearn, the site with the biggest and most original range of management training materials on the Internet.
http://www.managetrainlearn.com

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21 Enjoying What You Do by Steve Goodier

Plato said that work should be play. Some airline employees are taking him seriously. After landing, one flight attendant announced, "Thank you for flying Delta Business Express. We hope you enjoyed giving us the business as much as we enjoyed taking you for a ride." (I like the honest approach.)

As a plane touched down and was slowing to a stop in Washington, a lone voice came over the loudspeaker: "Whoa, big fella. WHOA!" (Who says you can't have fun with your job?)

One pilot made this weather announcement: "Weather at our destination is 50 degrees with some broken clouds, but they'll try to have them fixed before we arrive."

"As you exit the plane," a flight attendant said, "please make sure to gather all of your belongings. Anything left behind will be distributed evenly among the flight attendants. Please do not leave children or spouses." And passengers reported that they heard this from the crew just as they began to exit: "Last one off the plane must clean it."

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To enjoy your work more, I think it helps to put some play in what you do. And if you don't like your work, can you find something to do you enjoy more?

Authors Doug Hall and David Wecker tell the story of Ken Davis, a man who found a simple way to enjoy his work (Making the Courage Connection; Fireside Books, 1997). Ken just couldn't find his occupational niche. He worked at a variety of jobs and disliked them all. While Ken was working as a door salesman, he noticed that at least half of his customers had malfunctioning doorbells. And suddenly, Ken's life career became clear. He opened his own doorbell repair service.

Ken's wife laughed when she first heard his idea. When she realized he was serious, she cried. Whoever heard of making a living repairing doorbells? But Ken is making a comfortable living at his unique job, and he's happier than he's ever been. Ken didn't enjoy what he was doing, so he is now doing what he enjoys.

"The biggest mistake that you can make is to believe that you are working for somebody else," Earl Nightingale asserts. "Job security is gone. The driving force of a career must come from the individual. Remember, jobs are owned by the company; you own your career!"

It's true that, no matter where you work, you actually work for yourself. After all, it's your life. And with a little creativity and imagination, maybe your work can seem less like drudgery and more like play. Wouldn't you really rather have it that way?

About the author
Steve Goodier holds a B.A. in anthropology and sociology (New Mexico State University) and an M.Div. degree from Emory University. He is an ordained United Methodist minister, district superintendent in the Rocky Mountain Conference UMC, and the author of numerous books about personal development, motivation, inspiration, and making needed life changes.

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22 Small Things with Great Love by Colin Crouch

As luck would have it, this week's newsletter falls on St Valentine's Day, February 14th. So naturally, this week, our thoughts are turning to thoughts of love.

Love doesn't figure too obviously in management training but, in reality, it is there just beneath the surface. On our Maximising Your Potential courses, for example, we suggest that, without love for your work, you cannot possibly reach your full potential or do it with joy.

The Lebanese poet, Kahlil Gibran, even suggested that work was love made visible, adding that if you cannot do your work with love then you shouldn't do it all.

Which is another way of saying: do the work you love and love the work you do.

When you work with love, your whole world changes. You are different and others are different. You become more accepting and understanding. You take off the limitations. And your Emotional Quotient level goes sky-high.

What's more, love is the quality that everyone can bring to their jobs. You don't need qualifications or an entry exam or references. It's there inside everyone of us just waiting for expression.

Nor do you need to be doing work in a loving or caring sector. Or work of great importance. As Mother Teresa said, "We cannot do great things on this earth. We can only do small things with great love."

For Valentine's Day, and the coming year, I'll let you mull over the words of Andre Soltner who runs a New York restaurant called Lutece. His description of his love for his work is a reminder that true love is also uncomplicated and childishly simple.

"I am more than thirty years a chef. I know what I am doing and each day I do my absolute best. I cook from my heart with love. It must be the same with service. The waiter must serve with love. Otherwise, the food is nothing. Many times I will go to the tables to take the orders myself. It starts right then and there. That feeling the customer must have is relaxation. If not, then his evening is ruined. Mine too by the way. How can he love if he's not relaxed? People ask me all the time what secrets I have. I tell them there is nothing mysterious about Lutece. I put love in my cooking and love in the serving. That's all."

Happy Valentine's Day…and year!

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About the author

Colin Crouch is an article contributor to ManageTrainLearn, the site that will change the way you learn forever. Download free samples of the biggest range of management and personal development materials anywhere and experience learning like you always dreamed possible; http://www.managetrainlearn.com

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23 Stop Trying to Be Normal by Michael Beck

Stop trying to be normal. It undermines your success and keeps you in a state of mediocrity. It's an interesting phenomenon. This idea of being "normal" starts to take hold in high school. There begins to form this desire to "fit in" – to be part of a group. Or at least, not be singled out as someone who "doesn't fit in". Along with that comes the desire to be an "insider". This need to belong and to be an insider can be very strong for many people.

Although the challenges and insecurities from our high school days are long gone, that need to belong – to be part of the group – to be accepted – to belong – can still be very strong. There's nothing wrong with wanting to be accepted and/or wanting to fit in, but when this "wanting" turns to "needing", it becomes detrimental to a person's success.

This often occurs when a person has an "external frame of reference" rather than an "internal frame of reference". Having an external frame of reference means looking outside of one's self to determine the truth of things. Things like right vs. wrong, appropriate vs. inappropriate, and successful vs. unsuccessful. When a person has an external frame of reference, they look to others for approval. They base their self-worth and their self-image on what others think and say about them.

Conversely, having an internal frame of reference means looking within one's self to determine the truth of things; to determine right vs. wrong, appropriate vs. inappropriate, and successful vs. unsuccessful. When a person has an internal frame of reference, they don't look to others for approval. I'm not saying recognition and acknowledgment aren't meaningful to someone with an internal frame of reference. I'm simply saying that they aren't the driving forces for their actions. Someone with an internal frame of reference bases their self-worth and their self-confidence on what they know to be true about themselves.

Which brings us back to the idea of being "normal". Most people consider themselves to be "normal" and consequently most groups of people consider themselves to be "normal". Therefore, in order to remain part of the group, one needs to remain "normal".

And being "normal" – by definition – means being "average". Consequently, many people – in an attempt to fit in and belong – spend their lives striving to be average. Sometimes they do it consciously and sometimes they do it unconsciously. Sometimes it's done by intent and sometimes inadvertently. But it happens nonetheless…

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A person is striving to be average (or "normal") when they work hard to meet a quota rather than exceed it. A person is striving to be average when they purposely minimize themselves and their dreams so that their associates, family and/or friends don't belittle them for dreaming big. A person strives to be average by "playing it safe" – not in terms of taking physical or financial risks, but in terms of taking the risks inherent in hoping for, dreaming of, and working towards the things that would set you apart from the others.

It takes courage to break away from "normal"; to separate oneself from the crowd. You risk not fitting in and not being accepted by the group of people you've been a part of. You risk feeling embarrassed if you don't achieve your goals when you said you would. You risk being disappointed and frustrated.

But when you reach your goals – when you realize your dreams – you will know that you are not "normal". You will not be average. And interestingly enough, you will find that you've become part of a new, different group. You will be part of a group that is not "normal". You will be part of a group that knows that each member is not "average".

Mark Twain once said, "Keep away from people who belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great."

The decision to separate yourself from the crowd comes from a within. It arises from a desire to realize one's full potential and a resolve to take responsibility for one's future. It doesn't matter what others say or do or think. None of them pay your bills. None of them have your dreams.

Sometimes it's a lonely path. Sometimes it's hard. Sometimes it's frustrating. But one thing is true for sure. It's always worthwhile.

I know what it's like to try to fit in. I know what it's like to try to be normal. I used to have an external frame of reference.

But I changed. I stopped trying to fit in. I stopped trying to be average and I started striving for excellence. I started setting bigger and bigger dreams and goals. I started associating with other successful people. I don't fit in very well with people who are "normal". I never have. But I've come to realize that I fit in with people who are extraordinary.

So stop trying to be normal. Come and join me instead…

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About the author

Michael Beck, Executive Strategist, is president of Michael Beck International, Inc. – a firm specializing in executive development, leadership effectiveness, and executive strategy. Connect on LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/mjbeck and visit www.michaeljbeck.com to learn more. Permission to reprint with full attribution. © 2012 Michael Beck International, Inc.

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24 True to Our Souls by Jim Clemmer

"Everyone has a special purpose, a special talent or gift to give to others, and it is your duty to discover what it is. Your special talent is God's gift to you. What you do with your talent is your gift to God." – Gautama Chopra, Child of the Dawn: A Magical Journey of Awakening

One of the biggest social movements of our time is society's search for meaning. Books on spirituality, soul, and personal growth are continually popping up on bestseller lists. The Internet is filling with similar sites and discussion groups. Numerous surveys show that the vast majority of people in almost every society in the world believe in some higher power. Conferences on spirituality in the workplace and soulful leadership have become regular events attracting thousands of meaning seekers.

The U.S. philosopher and poet, George Santayana, once said, "There is no cure for birth and death save to enjoy the interval." For many years I helped coach our son Chris' baseball team. One warm June evening we were driving home from a game. We had the windows down and sunroof open as we listened to the world's greatest baseball team – the Toronto Blue Jays – beating up the Yankees again. Chris seemed to be off in another world. Suddenly he turned to me with wonderment in voice and said, "Dad, do you ever have those seconds when it just clicks in your head that everything is perfect?" I thought for a minute and then replied, "Not as often as I used to. I've become too busy reaching for the future to enjoy the moment."

Life is a limited time offer. Too often our "dash" becomes a mad dash. We rush around trying to do and have it all. We become human doings rather than human beings. We provide for our bodily needs while starving our souls. We lose sight of what really matters. We become truer to our ego than our soul. Artists, writers, and performers often talk about finding their voice. Their art becomes an expression of that inner self. The people with the deepest and most meaningful lives are those who have found and use their inner voice. Their life sings from their soul. The ancient Roman poet, Horace, poses a core being question, "Why do you hasten to remove anything which hurts your eye, while if something affects your soul you postpone the cure until next year?"

Our work is a way that we can be true to our souls. Toward the end of his life, impressionistic painter Auguste Renoir had severe arthritis in his hands. But his voice wouldn't be silenced that easily. To continue expressing himself through his painting, he had his brushes strapped to his wrists. A friend asked why he imposed such pain and inconvenience upon himself. Without hesitation, Renoir answered, "The pain is momentary, but the art will last."

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Regardless of how humble or prestigious society may consider what we do, our work should be a key means of finding and expressing our voice. In giving a Labor Day speech just after the turn of the 20th century, the U.S. president, Theodore Roosevelt declared, "Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing."

Our work is part of our dash. If it's just a job that I do half-heartedly and half well, I make myself miserable and starve my soul. My inner voice develops laryngitis if I am in a job I hate (or just tolerate) and don't take pride in the quality of what I do. When our work is part of a deeper life calling we put our heart into it. Our work becomes our contribution to making this team, this organization, and this world just a little better because we passed this way. That's when what we do becomes a meaningful expression of who we are.

About the author

Jim Clemmer has been writing and speaking about leadership, change, team, and organization effectiveness for over 30 years. His extensive research, broad experience with hundreds of organizations and thousands of people, and deep understanding of these topics makes him an internationally recognized leader in the field. Beyond his seven books, he's written hundreds of columns and articles for newspapers and magazines.

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25 Clarity by Steve Pavlina

If a lack of clarity prevents you from taking action, then find or develop a process to gain sufficient clarity to act. Stop acting like this is an unsolvable problem. It isn't.

One basic method begins with writing a mission statement that encapsulates the core purpose of your life.

Mission Statement

Your mission statement is your proposed contract with life. It basically answers two questions:

What do you want to contribute?
What do you want to receive?

I recently updated my company's mission statement. Here's the current version.

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My wife, Pavlina's, mission is:

> to explore, clarify, and elegantly codify conscious growth
> to challenge the status quo, to take intelligent risks, and to experiment
> to strengthen our global society's alignment with truth, love, and power
> to advance conscious growth ambitiously, tenaciously, and sustainably
> to balance inspired innovation, co-creative teamwork, and disciplined execution
> to progressively embrace the highest standards of excellence and mastery
> and to lead and inspire with authority, audacity, playfulness, and love

The giving and receiving aspects of this company mission are tightly woven together. I deeply enjoy the process of working on conscious growth. The people I work with generally feel the same. But that doesn't have to be the case. You could have a mission that sees you contributing and receiving through different channels.

I also have a personal mission statement, which has a lot in common with the company mission but is slightly different.

My personal mission is:

> to explore, understand, and integrate life's intelligent order
> to insightfully clarify, elegantly codify, and ambitiously advance this order
> to lead and inspire with authority, audacity, playfulness, and love
> to progressively embrace the highest standards of excellence and mastery
> to balance inspired innovation, co-creative teamwork, and disciplined execution
> to abundantly enjoy life's finest rewards
> and to prepare myself for other phases of existence

Part of my contract with life is that if I am to pursue a grand purpose, I expect that life will back me up. I don't expect it to make things easy for me, but I expect it to cooperate in helping me learn the important lessons and not waste my time with trivial and unnecessary blocks. Once I learn and integrate a key lesson, I expect to be able to progress and move on.

For instance, after I learned how to contribute value to others in ways I found fulfilling and got past the stupidity of scarcity thinking, I expected life to support me with the proper tools to do the job well. So I shamelessly buy the best tools of the trade that I can, and I appreciate those tools as I use them. I don't skimp.

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I find that when I act in alignment with my mission, life does indeed back me up. I experience the abundance I desire to feel supported.

Of course the entire proposal exists in my own mind, so if I believe that life and I have come to a certain arrangement, then of course we have. Life is just an imaginary concept. What I'm really doing is negotiating a deal within myself, one that gives me enough clarity to act with conviction.

If you develop a mission statement that's overly self-sacrificing and burdensome, you'll procrastinate on implementing it and will often get stuck because you won't feel very supported by life. You may even feel beaten down. On the other hand, if your mission is all about me-me-me, no one is going to care whether you succeed or not, and deep down you're going to know that your mission is irrelevant to everyone else. You'll sabotage yourself from working on it because there's no greater need to fulfill it.

An intelligent mission statement properly balances what you desire to contribute to life and what you desire to receive from life. Nature operates on similar principles. A species that is too giving dies off. A species that is too greedy dies off. A balanced approach is more optimal.

Some other questions you can ask to help clarify your mission include:

What's the most important thing I could do with my life?
What kind of person do I desire to become?
What kind of support would I like to receive from life?
How do I want to live?
What do I care about?
What's the point of my being here?
What would I like to experience before I pass on?
What stimulates me mentally?
What lights me up emotionally?
What calls to my spirit?
What do I want to create?
What do I want to leave behind as my legacy?
What do I believe is the real point of life?
What kinds of people do I want to share my journey with?

Your mission statement should make you smile when you read it. It should stir something powerful within you. You should look at it and be able to say, "Yup, that's me alright!"

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Your mission statement will evolve over time – that's to be expected as you learn and grow. If you take the time to carefully and intelligently write one and do the best job you can, it will pay huge dividends in clarity.

Goals

With a clear mission (statement of purpose), you can derive specific goals. Your mission is your general direction in life. Your goals are the milestones on your path.

Begin by setting some long-term goals (2+ years out) to express and explore your mission. This is where you connect the dots between your purpose and your skills. You may need to develop new skills to fulfill your mission, so include the development of those skills as long-term goals. For instance, I took several years to develop my public speaking skills before I ever did my first paid professional speech.

Put these goals in priority order from most important to least important. Ask, "If I could only accomplish one item on this list, what would it be?" Then ask, "If I could only accomplish one more item on this list, what would that be?" And so on.

Then set 1-year goals based on those long-term goals. Prioritize them.

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Then set goals for this quarter based on your 1-year goals. Prioritize them. Update this list at the beginning of each quarter. I also think it's wise to update your 1-year goals at the beginning of each quarter too, so you can account for any progress or setbacks to refine your targets.

Then set goals for this month based on your quarter's goals. Prioritize them. Update this list at the beginning of each month.

At the start of each week, set this week's goals based on your month's goals. Add your urgent and time-sensitive items to your week as well, the items that aren't necessarily mission-based. Prioritize them with a focus on getting your important items done early in the week and using the rest of the week to handle your urgent but less important items. Learn to procrastinate on the unimportant.

At the start of each day (or preferably at the end of each day), set goals for the upcoming day. Prioritize them.

This takes some effort to create these lists the first time, but it's fairly easy to maintain if you get into the habit of working this way.

Take the time to do this job in excellent fashion. Sit down for a few hours, fire up your brain, and set the most thoughtful goals you can. I like to do this in a fairly dark room, either sitting by the fireplace or by candlelight, with some nature sounds playing (like rain or ocean waves). Creating a relaxing and meditative environment for goal setting really helps me concentrate deeply and do a good job. I know from experience that doing sloppy work here will only make the implementation phase a painful and frustrating mess. Goal setting is very challenging work, and so it deserves a modicum of respect.

After you complete each goal list, read it over and ask yourself, "Are these the very best goals I can set?" If the answer is no, or if you hesitate and aren't sure, take a break, go back to your list when you're fresh, and do another round of revision.

In addition to deriving goals from your mission, you can also add some goals that aren't mission based. That's perfectly fine. But if you find yourself doing this a lot, take a step back to see if you notice any patterns in those other goals. They may hint at new elements you could wrap into your mission statement. For instance, I love doing personal growth experiments, and eventually I realized that this drive to experiment should be a part of my mission – and part of my company's mission as well.

If I were creating all these goal lists from scratch, I'd spend 1–2 hours setting goals for each of the long-term, 1-year, and quarterly time frames. So just doing those would take 3–6 hours. To set goals for the month takes about 15–30 minutes. To set goals for the week takes about 10 minutes. To set goals for the day usually takes about 5 minutes.

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Once these lists are created, the ongoing maintenance of this system is fairly low…usually just 5 minutes a day of selecting and prioritizing the next day's tasks, done at the end of each day. Then progressively deeper planning is done at the end of each week, month, and quarter. But the time investment isn't significant relative to the payoff in clarity.

Action

At the start of each day, review your mission and your goals for each time frame. This only takes 5–10 minutes. As you do this, imagine your goals for each time frame as already accomplished. Notice the causal chain. See how your daily actions ultimately link to your long-term goals and how your goals reflect your mission. Really let it sink in that how you behave today will either be aligned with your path, or it won't.

Commit yourself to making progress today. Determine to move forward today into the expression of your mission. This daily renewal of commitment is very important. It helps prevent you from being blown off track and getting caught up in trivialities and distractions.

Now get to work. Begin with the first task on your daily list. Tune out and ignore everything else. Your greatest challenge will be to develop the habit of working through your daily list in priority order. Don't jump around. Don't distract yourself with trivial items. Learn to become importance-driven and not urgency-driven.

If you need a break, take a break. Then continue with the next task on your list.

The nice thing about this simple system is that you don't need to make decisions about what to do during most days. You can simply relax into action. You've already done the thoughtful decision-making and clarification of what is to be done, and in what order. This is why it's so important to do that goal-setting and planning work in an excellent fashion. If you know you did your best in the planning phase, then you'll be able to relax into action during the execution phase. You'll trust that these are the right actions to move you forward intelligently.

If, however, you do a sloppy planning job, you'll second guess your decisions when you try to execute. You'll blow off your daily lists. You'll tackle items out of priority order. You'll squander your days doing unimportant tasks. Then the urgent items will eventually pile up, and you'll have to put your long-term goals aside to catch up on more trivial ones. After a few days of this, you won't bother planning at all. Then you'll drift for a few months or perhaps even years. And eventually you'll take another stab at this and repeat the process.

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I'd like to save you some hardship by emphasizing as much as possible the importance of setting goals with the utmost care and thought. The same goes for creating a quality mission statement. Don't be surprised if it takes you several days to come up with a mission statement that you really feel is your best work. This is still a relative small investment across your lifetime, but it will save you an extraordinary amount of time in execution.

Creating Flow

What about going with the flow? If you do that on a daily basis without a clear direction, you'll basically end up going with the flow of a random mixture of other people's missions. That may sound okay, but it's overly chaotic and not particularly fulfilling in the long run. Try it for a decade or two if you must, and then notice the sinking sensation that you're falling behind in life and missing the boat. That's because you are missing the boat. You're not leading your life. This version of going with the flow is merely drifting aimlessly. There's no honor in it.

The more intelligent application of going with the flow is to define your desired flow first. Then go with the flow of that purpose. Sometimes you can simply relax into it. Other times it may require paddling. Don't use going with the flow as an excuse for doing nothing worthwhile with your life.

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If you really can't define your own flow yet, then go attach yourself to someone else's flow. Make this a conscious choice as opposed to a haphazard one. Don't just go work for some random company because you think you need a job. Seek out someone you respect or admire, or go to work for a company whose values inspire you. Work for free if you must. The educational value of such an apprenticeship will pay huge dividends down the road, both in the skills you'll gain and the increase in clarity about your own path. If you eventually realize your purpose must flow in a different direction, then you can take the time to articulate that flow and begin pursuing it more consciously.

Remember that the days of your life are going to pass anyway. You can spend those days flowing towards a greater purpose and enjoying the many rewards of clarity and deliberate execution. Or you can keep drifting, occasionally complaining about not knowing what to do as if that's a unique problem (no, it's a solvable one) or as if that somehow gets you off the hook (it doesn't), and then you'll suffer the consequences of lifelong regret (which is preventable).

In the long run, it's easier and more fulfilling to live a thoughtfully considered life in alignment with an inspiring purpose, mainly because you get to experience and enjoy lots of what you desire. After a while the path becomes largely self-sustaining. It's harder to drift aimlessly because then you only get to watch other people enjoying their lives fully, which may induce feelings like resentment, depression, or helplessness. If you're feeling any of that anger, resentment, or regret now, that's good. Go channel it into some fresh decisions. Write a new mission statement, and set some thoughtful goals. It isn't too late to get yourself back on track.

About the author

Steve Pavlina (born April 14, 1971) is an American self-help author, motivational speaker and entrepreneur. He is the author of the web site stevepavlina.com and the book Personal Development for Smart People. Pavlina's blog covers topics such as personal development and success; consciousness and courage; productivity, motivation and goal setting; career, wealth and business; and spirituality. (Wikipedia)

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On December 15, 2010, Steve Pavlina released all the content he had created till that date (excluding his book Personal Development For Smart People) and all content he would create in the future (unless explicitly specified) in the public domain.

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26 On Achieving Goals – Part 1: Defining What You Truly Want by Joshua Uebergang

Alexander Graham Bell said, "What this power is I cannot say; all I know is that it exists and it becomes available only when a man is in that state of mind in which he knows exactly what he wants and is fully determined not to quit until he finds it." Napoleon Hill said, "The starting point of all achievement is desire." Abraham Lincoln said, "You can have anything you want – if you want it badly enough. You can be anything you want to be, do anything you set out to accomplish if you hold to that desire with singleness of purpose."

How to Make Nothing Stop You – Ever

For centuries, mankind has explored this mysterious emotional state that gets him want he wants. This power is not the law of attraction. It is a power within you. The power is your power. It is self-motivation. You control if your self-motivated. Self-motivation gives you anything you damn well want if you want it bad enough.

Think of something you once wanted so badly that nothing stopped you from getting it. This is the passionate desire you need to achieve what you want. Contrast this passion to something you thought "would be nice". Maybe you wanted to learn the guitar because you thought it would be a nice skill. Maybe you wanted to learn a new language to explore cultures. Maybe you wanted to go scuba diving for an adventure. Whatever nice thing you wanted, you did not achieve it because your hunger for it was deficient.

When trying to motivate yourself to learn a new language, perhaps you purchased some books and CDs, but never progressed further because you lacked the emotional desire (it happened to me when I tried to learn Spanish). You can take steps forward to achieve what you want, but you fall short without the self-motivation required to carry you through your full journey.

To achieve your communication and personal development desires, goals, and dreams, I believe two characteristics need emphasis. Both deal with passion and having a fire-in-the-belly attitude. Firstly, you need to define exactly what you want. The second characteristic is revealed in the second part of this article.

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How to Figure Out What You Want

> You will suddenly realize that the reason you never changed before was because you didn't want to. Robert H. Schuller

> When you know what you want, and want it bad enough, you will find a way to get it. Jim Rohn

> Modern man lives under the illusion that he knows what he wants, while he actually wants what he is supposed to want. Erich Fromm

The first step to achieve what you want in your personal development journey is to know exactly what you want. You probably already think you know what you want, but I am pretty confident you do not truthfully know. What you think you want could be someone else's wants; a facade to get another want; a vague desire which creates a slow, unenergized pursuit.

> You can take steps forward to achieve what you want, but you fall short without the self-motivation required to carry you through your full journey.

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When you do not define what you want with pure precision, you wonder through life's jungle waiting for signs that validate your success. You lack proof of forward movement because you don't know what you're moving towards. Eventually, you get devoured by obstacles that demotivate you from trying to reach your mysterious destination.

Let's say you want to be good at making small talk with anyone because you would love to have the skill of being able to approach someone and start a conversation. Wanting to make small talk with anyone, however, is not what you really want. What you really want is a host of outcomes small talk fulfills. What I mean by this is that you don't want the skill of being able to talk to anyone for the sake of being able to talk to anyone – your desire to talk with anyone has hidden motives. Successfully being able to approach someone and start a conversation fulfills that want.

One reason you could want to make small talk with anyone is to control your fears when you meet new people. Another reason is to network more effectively so you can grow your business. Another is to feel secure around people. All these are emotional motives that drive your desire to make small talk. When you define your wants in the correct light, you become self-motivated to pursue that goal because it holds importance to you.

Do you want to raise happy children? Do you want what is best for your family? If you want what is best for your family, you're probably lying to yourself. I'm not saying you don't want what is best for your family; what I'm saying is the underlying motives behind "I want what's best for my family" deals with your desires.

Perhaps seeing your family safe and secure makes you feel happy and comforted. Knowing your children are happy validates your parenting skills. When other parents see your successful children, you feel proud. Maybe you want successful children to make up for the failures in your life or you do not want to be frowned upon and humiliated by other parents. These outcomes are probably what you really want when desiring the best for your family.

Only when you accurately define what you want can you get what you want. You will aim with precision when focusing on a target clear to you.

Exercise to See What You Want

I want you to do an exercise now. This exercise forms the framework for this article so you will greatly benefit from doing it. The exercise is a mental and emotional catapult successful people use to define what they want, become self-motivated, and achieve their goals.

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Get out a paper and pen, and draw two columns. Make the second column twice the size of the first. This exercise is large and will take several hours. You may want to do it in two sittings, but the process should be energizing so you might be able to get it done in a one sitting.

> Success is not what you know or who you know; it is how you think.

In the first column on the left, label it "What I Want". Obviously, under this you will write down what you want. Some people would write down goals as the heading for this column, but I don't like using the word "goals" in combination with words that signify a deep desire because you don't need to set goals when you want something bad enough. Your desires automatically become something you want without you sitting down and writing them as goals.

To help you determine what you want, remove all constraints around your desires. Forget about what you know or have. Stop letting the past limit your future. Remove financial, intellectual, and relationship constraints. Success is not what you know or who you know; it is how you think. You can overcome any constraint if you know how to think in an empowering manner.

It is absolutely necessary you do not reason to yourself what you want. The analytical part of your mind can hurt the emotional part. The most common form of reasoning contains "buts". For example, "I want to work as a public speaker. But I am not good at speaking. But I don't know how to get started. But I won't be able to make money." All these stupid constraints trick you into avoiding your true desires.

> Rather than ask yourself, 'What are my goals?' ask yourself, 'What would excite me and why?'

When we reason with "buts", we rarely have tried to find a solution. I've heard people who want to become public speakers say they are not good at public speaking, yet they have not looked into how they can speak better in public. These people reason they don't know how to get started in public speaking, but they never once looked into how they can get started. We have limiting thoughts from limiting knowledge. It is crazy how we remove ourselves from our desires through this silly (ir)rationalizing process.

Productive Procrastination

Where does your mind drift to during the day? What you think of could be the surfacing of repressed desires you're too afraid to let the world know about.

If you sit in your cubicle thinking about children having fun outdoors, maybe you desire to coach your child's soccer team. Notice where your mind drifts to and think what that says about you. Procrastination can be productive.

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In determining your ultimate career, ask yourself what you would do if money was not a consideration. Ask yourself what you would do if you had the necessary training. Ask yourself what you would do if you knew the right people. Remove all constraints and find what greatly turns you on.

Another thought to help you accurately define what you want is to not fall in the illusion of wanting what other people want. Society has norms and expectations that can mold your desires. I understand that everyone will not want to be married. Think deeply about what your goals really mean to you. Passion is more about caring than finding the right thing. You will be surprised at the many things you can be passionate about once you start caring.

The Secret to Get What You Want

As a verification step to knowing what you want, you can test to see if this is truly what you want by running a mental theater of what it will look, feel, smell, hear, and taste like when you achieve the goal. Rather than ask yourself, "What are my goals?" ask yourself, "What would excite me and why?" See what excites you by running through intense visualizations.

The experiences that excite you (I am talking about a desire of 100 on a scale from 1 to 100 where 100 is the most intense) are what you want. They are your goal. When you want them, you will get them.

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If you still struggle to determine your desires, remember to remove all constraints. You can stop the exercise for a few hours to allow your subconscious to work and define what you want. Additionally, I recommend you get Jack Zufelt's program How To Use The Conquering Force Within You to learn more about defining what you truly want. (I earn nothing from referring you to Jack's program. I have two copies of it and encourage you to get your copy.)

Passion is more about caring than finding the right thing.

Once you define what you want, write these desires down on the piece of paper under the heading "What I Want". In the same column (this is optional), you can go one step further by using the SMART method. Rephrase your want in a specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and tangible form. Write less than five goals for now unless you have the time and desire to do more.

Finished? Well done. You have defined what you want. That completes the first part of the exercise. Few people will ever do what you just did, which sets you apart from the masses.

The next step after defining what you want is to stimulate an intense hunger to get your desire. Why do you need this when you already want your desire? You will have your **** days. You will want to stay in bed. If you did not hunger, you would hardly eat. Consume the advice in part two here and you will devour your passions.

About the author
Joshua Uebergang, known as the "Tower of Power", is a social skills coach, author, and owner of Australian company Tower of Power where shy guys discover how to win friends and influence people. Visit his blog and sign-up free to get conversation techniques, confidence-boosting strategies, and people-magnetic tips by email, along with blog updates, and more! Go now to TowerOfPower.com.au

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27 On Achieving Goals – Part 2: How to Be Self-Motivated by Joshua Uebergang

Sexual arousal has some of the greatest lessons to become self-motivated. Arousal begins by thinking about someone you find attractive. Thoughts create vivid images that lead to a growing intensity of feelings. As your feelings intensify, blood flow increases to certain body parts, breathing heightens, and your skin becomes sensitive. If you continue to immerse yourself in such imagery, eventually you need to act on those feelings.

The enduring desire and process to goal achievement is the same as arousal. Thoughts lead to vivid imagery, which creates intense feelings. Soon enough you must act on those feelings because it becomes too much for you to not chase your goal. You can create an equivalent – if not more intense – desire as physical arousal to achieve what you want by continuing to read below.

All The Keys You Ever Need to Be Self-Motivated

> The starting point of all achievement is desire. Napoleon Hill
>
> You can have anything you want – if you want it badly enough. You can be anything you want to be, do anything you set out to accomplish if you hold to that desire with singleness of purpose. Abraham Lincoln
>
> "Enthusiasm is one of the most powerful engines of success. When you do a thing, do it with all your might. Put your whole soul into it. Stamp it with your own personality. Be active, be energetic and faithful, and you will accomplish your object. Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm." Ralph Waldo Emerson

Emotions play a vital role in goal-attainment. Nelissen, Dijker, and de Vries in their 2007 study titled Emotions and Goals: Assessing Relations Between Values and Emotions emphasize the importance of emotions in achieving goals:

> An emotional state is characterized by a motivational tendency to the attainment or maintenance of a particular, emotion-specific end-state. Some [studies] have further proposed that the goal-directed nature of behavioral consequences of emotions is adaptive, thus portraying emotions as solutions to obstacles and opportunities of physical and social survival.

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As a basic example of the importance of emotions in goal-attainment, let's say you are on holidays visiting beautiful landmarks and you drive up a steep mountain. You get to the top and make your way to an eye-grabbing location that borders the mountain's edge. There is no fences or boundaries placed that control where you can walk. As you approach the mountain's edge, you see the steep fall and quickly take a few steps back to feel safe.

The emotion in this example is fear. It is a fear of danger to ensure you achieve your goal of safety. If you had zero fear of falling off the cliff, the chances of you falling – and failing your goal of safety – increase because you are closer to danger than if you stepped away from the cliff. Your emotions help you obtain goals.

Behind each goal you have, there exists an emotional void you seek to fulfill. Aristotle said the desire for happiness is the void behind all actions. Happiness is the void every human pursues. Nobody can be happy enough. Knowing you desire happiness, however, is not much help when motivating yourself. There is little benefit in knowing you want to make small talk with anyone to be happy. This is where the pain-pleasure theory of motivation comes in.

> Goal achievement is no different to arousal… Soon enough you have to act on those feelings because it becomes too much for you to not chase your goal.

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Anthony Robbins, author of Awaken the Giant Within, made famous the pain-pleasure theory of motivation. The theory states that in anything we do we seek to gain pleasure or avoid pain. Pleasure has you in pursuit of something. Pain has you run away from something. "The secret of success is learning how to use pain and pleasure instead of having pain and pleasure use you," says Robbins. "If you do that, you're in control of your life. If you don't, life controls you."

By understanding how to use pain and pleasure, instead of having pain and pleasure use you, I believe you give yourself unlimited opportunities to be self-motivated. When you learn to build as much pleasure in something as possible, while building pain in something you do not want, you become self-motivated. Manipulate pain and pleasure to build an intense emotional craving to achieve your desires.

We associate so much pleasure with physical arousal that it strongly drives our behavior to fulfill the emotional void whenever possible. Likewise, you can associate extreme amounts of pleasure with your goal, in becoming confident, for example, that you work towards better confidence under any circumstance. In fearful situations you normally avoid, extreme amounts of pleasure can be associated with fighting fear so it becomes exhilarating to be courageous and act in the face of fear. (This is a core secret of how you can become confident in social situations that I reveal in my conversation skills program Big Talk.)

The Four Emotions to Self-Motivation

Well-known motivational speaker Jim Rohn expands on the pain-pleasure theory. Rohn summarizes the primary emotions and desires that bring about change, like the pain-pleasure theory of motivation, into four categories:

1. Disgust – This is the pain component of the pain-pleasure theory. Disgust can occur when you have had enough. You're sick of something from occurring, which motivates you to not let it occur again. Your pain leads to change.
2. Decision – There comes times in our lives that make or break us. These are fork roads where we need to choose the path on which to travel. Fork roads often arise from external circumstances that force us to make a decision, such as a partner questioning whether you want to continue in the relationship. Make a decision and move forward in life. A wrong choice can be corrected at a later time.
3. Desire – We're influenced by outside circumstances, but we must have an internal desire – a purpose that originates from within. You are shown throughout this article how to build a desire and increase pleasure with your desired pursuits.
4. Resolve – This state is defined by the decision to commit to a circumstance no matter what. "When confronted with such iron-will determination," says Rohn, "I can see Time, Fate and Circumstance calling a hasty conference and deciding, 'We might as well let him have his dream. He's said he's going to get there or die trying.'" Nothing can replace commitment. When you know what it is you clearly want, resolve will make it happen.

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Pain, pleasure, disgust, decision, desire, and resolve – these are all powerful states you need to control or they will control you. The question remains: How do you control these mental and emotional states to become self-motivated? How do you build the emotional strength for endurance through the complete journey to attain your goals?

A Simple Exercise to Get You Self-Motivated

I believe an awareness of either pain, pleasure, disgust, decision, desire, and resolve is sometimes enough to create the respective emotion. Knowing about disgust, for example, can help you create disgust to change your behavior and achieve a goal. Even so, there is one technique I am about to share with you that's amazing for building a burning desire to achieve your goals. With this technique you will remove lack luster efforts and reluctance to pursue what you want. It is one of the best goal-setting techniques you will ever use. The technique is simple, but very powerful.

The Science Behind Pain and Pleasure

Recent scientific research of the human body is discovering why pain and pleasure drives self-motivation to create change. Pain and pleasure creates the release of different chemicals in the body that act as biological rewards.

Pain is a sensory experience often created by harm. The body stays away from pain to survive.

Pleasure comes from dopamine, a neurotransmitter released in the nucleus accumbens and prefrontal cortex parts of the brain that makes you feel good. It is associated with the body's pleasure system to reinforce behavior that released the neurotransmitter. Cocaine increases dopamine levels to make the drug addictive.

The principle of pain and pleasure can literally make you addicted to your goals.

On the piece of paper you started the exercise from the first article, you will now fill in the second column. Label the second column as "Why I Want It". In this column, list 20 reasons why you want what you do to trigger, spark, and amplify your emotional desires to hunger for what you want. Come up with 20 or more reasons why you want what you listed in the first column.

Take your time in coming up with the list. 20 reasons or benefits is a lot of work, but the list created from the hours of work in this exercise will be your psychological fuel for achieving your communication and personal development goals in the weeks, months, and years to come. For me, it is my source of inspiration. If there is one method that I frequently depend upon for stimulating a hot passion so that I can pursue my goals with vigor, it is this technique. No other technique injects so much enthusiasm into me.

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If you have troubles coming up with good reasons for your goals, expand on ideas and ask other people for ideas. You can also try to think in themes like: feelings you will experience, how others will see you, physical outcomes, reducing pain, and increasing resolve.

Let's say your goal is to avoid destructively erupting in anger at family members during family conflict. Here are 10 starter points you could use in the "Why I Want It" column:

> I want to be a good role model for my children.
> I want my family to feel safe.
> I want to ensure we have open communication and that no one is scared of talking about certain issues because of my anger. (Prevent other people being demotivated to talk to me because of the pain they will experience.)
> I am sick of fighting with my family.
> I want my family to love me as much as possible.
> I want my family to be relaxed and calm when talking to me; instead of being provoked by my anger.
> I hate feeling the shame when people in public see my anger.
> I want to increase intimacy with my partner.
> I want other parents to look up to me with how I manage my emotions towards my children.
> I want my children to think back 10 years from now and be grateful about my emotional management towards their difficult behaviors.

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The above is a great example of a list of reasons to achieve the goal of anger management. Once you have listed at least 20 reasons, I guarantee you'll be filled with fiery emotions to help you achieve what you want. I encourage you to look at your list on a daily basis because of its emotional power in hooking you to achieve your communication and personal development goals. Look at the list frequently and you'll remain focused and persistent with your goals.

The exercise works because you create a list that summarizes the sale points to make you "buy into" pursuing your goals. It taps into the four emotions of self-motivation. The list builds your pleasure and intensifies pain to make you persist until your goals arrive. The exercise builds the amount of pleasure you get by changing and builds the amount of pain you get by not changing.

I believe this one technique by itself is enough to create a burning desire.

8 Bonus Tips to Be Self-Motivated

I really want you to achieve your goals. I know what it is like to have a down-day where you don't feel motivated. Don't beat yourself up over down-days thinking you will never achieve what you want. Down-days are natural. Here are some quick-fire pieces of advice to help you stimulate an emotional craving for your goals:

> Dress for Success – How often do you see yourself in a mirror or reflection, or look down at what you're wearing that day? Let's say 5 times a day. 5 times a day is 1825 times a year. That's a lot of subtle mental programming. The power of clothing on your mood is amazing. Wear clothing that makes you feel confident and other areas of your life will improve accordingly.
> Be Aggressive – An important goal should stimulate aggression because you badly want it. If you want to be a public speaker, you must be assertive at the time allocated to improve your public speaking. Should something interfere with your practice, you stamped down on what happened to keep on track. Do not create another problem with your aggression. Channel your aggression towards a productive goal – what it is intended for – and watch the steam condense into hard results.
> Relive Past Success – Think to past successes and relive the experiences in your mind. Past successes are not only stored in your mind, but at the cellular level in your body. Linked to the successes are winning feelings you can tap into for success. On the contrary, think of past failures and you stimulate feelings of failure. The technique builds the pleasure of getting what you want. For a more in-depth teaching of this method and other mental reprogramming techniques, I highly recommend Dr. Maxwell Maltz's The New Psycho-cybernetics.
> Here and Now – Focus on what you can do in the present to allow your creative imagination the potential to develop solutions. When you are obsessed with the past and the future, anxiety rids you of your ability to achieve results in the present moment.

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Details – Defining what you want pulls you in the right direction with specific details. Visualize, feel, smell, taste, and hear the intrinsic details of your desired state to put yourself in that winning state. Just as it is with the process of arousal, you can become aroused by experiencing the details of your goals. This technique is similar to reliving your past successes except you are free from the past to create what you want.

Feed Your Mind – You'll be surprised at how uplifted you get by reading about other people's passions and successes. Consume at least 15-minutes a day of motivational material from the likes of Zig Ziglar, Jack Canfield, and Anthony Robbins. "People often say that motivation doesn't last," said Ziglar. "Well, neither does bathing – that's why we recommend it daily."

Create an Ultimatum – Use the desire of resolve that Rohn explains to create change in your life. Make an absolute condition that if something doesn't happen, so-and-so consequences will occur. Tell others about this to hold yourself accountable. Sun Tzu in the Art of War knew soldiers fought their hardest when it was a matter of life or death. Soldiers with an escape route had an option to winning or dying so they did not fight their hardest. Alternatives and exit strategies make it okay to fail. Do everything in your power to create an ultimatum such that you must succeed or suffer severe consequences. This technique increases the pain of not changing.

Teamwork – Team up with someone who wants a similar goal as you. This technique is frequently used in exercising where trainers encourage newcomers to workout with a friend. When you make your goals known to others – and when they have the same goals – the two of you work towards a common cause. You become more accountable for your actions because you don't want to let the other person down. It's vital the person is supportive or they could demotivate you from setting and achieving your goal.

…if you must rely on techniques to provide you with motivation, question whether you want the goal.

A word of warning though, if you must rely on these techniques to provide motivation, question whether you want the goal. You can stimulate passion using the various techniques provided above, but your goal must be what you want (what you defined in the first stage of the article). An intense desire to pursue your goal will come naturally if it is what you truly want.

You pursue goals with a passion by learning how to create a desire for what you clearly define. Once you are passionate and persistent towards a goal, zero events can stop you from achieving it. Outside circumstances may delay achievement, but passion with action guarantees your desires ultimately manifest into the results you want.

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Be careful with what you wish for because you can get it by following the advice shared in this article. Know exactly what you want, why you want it, and how to stimulate a passion to get it. This is the mysterious state of success philosophers have described for centuries. (If you are yet to do the exercise, you are only cheating yourself. Go back to do it now.)

About the author

Joshua Uebergang, known as the "Tower of Power", is a social skills coach, author, and owner of Australian company Tower of Power where shy guys discover how to win friends and influence people. Visit his blog and sign-up free to get conversation techniques, confidence-boosting strategies, and people-magnetic tips by email, along with blog updates, and more! Go now to TowerOfPower.com.au

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