

Personal Excellence

The Magazine of Personal Leadership

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Jason Hewlett
Entertainer

May 2013

Stop
Blaming

Art of
Significance

Signature
Moves

Embrace Your Uniqueness

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The Magazine of Life Leadership

INSPIRATION • AUTHENTICITY

Signature Moves

Embrace your uniqueness.

by Jason Hewlett

WE'RE ALL WEIRD—AND THANK GOODNESS! If everyone sounded the same, talked the same, dressed the same, sang the same, life would be boring. There is power in embracing your uniqueness. You contribute the most when you accept what makes you unique. This is how you can change the world.

All great artists—musicians, painters, poets, sculptors, actors, dancers—have a *Signature Move*, an indelible style. You also have a *Signature Move*, downloaded at or developed since birth. It has won you friends, earned you money, and made a mark. What is that *one thing* that sets you apart? What makes you *stand out* in a *sit down* world?

Embracing Uniqueness

I see five secrets to embracing your uniqueness:

Secret 1: Fail frequently. "I've missed more than 9,000 shots, lost 300 games, and missed the game winning shot 26 times. I've failed over and over in my life. And that is why I succeed," said Michael Jordan.

Failure is a good option, as long as you fail in a positive direction. If you have hit a plateau or forgotten who you are, what you stand for, or lost the light that once made you who you are, try something new, dare to fail again. If you're not pushing yourself to grow, explore, and progress, you'll never achieve any great thing, dream, or state of being. As you *fail forward*, you get closer to success. You're only *dead* when you stop moving. The more tries, steps and risks you take, the closer you become to getting somewhere! If you see something you want to do, DO IT!



Turn off the TV. Get off of Facebook, and go make some friends in person! Luckily, I excelled at failing from an early age. Since I couldn't read well, I started drawing in book margins—and eventually became a decent artist. Since making friends was tough, I began making sounds, noises, imitating voices to make people laugh—and soon I made friends. Since math made no sense, I started memorizing faces, names, and birthdays, until I could rattle off the key facts about those around me; eventually everyone became a friend.

Failure is just another way to discover what you excel at. At some point, you see what you are best at, and then success opens up to you. The great Thomas Edison said: "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work."

Secret 2: Mimic masters.

"Imitation is not just the sincerest form of flattery, it's the sincerest form of learning," said George Bernard Shaw. Mimicry

has served me well: I've made a career of doing impressions. Imitation is a natural form of learning. Look at the people in your life. Listen to them. Monitor their mannerisms. Try to mimic your heroes, masters of the craft you crave. Listen to their voices, see their *Signature Moves* and research their history. You'll find they all did impressions of those who came before them. Yes, at some point these voices became their own, as they create their *Signature Moves*, but they start simply doing an impression of those that they idolize until they discover their voice.

Who are the masters of your craft, the legends that you place on a pedestal and strive to

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be like? Once you can mimic them, seek to become an original, creator, or difference maker with your own *Signature Move*.

Secret 3: Neglect 'normal'. Being *normal* is a waste of your time, talents, gifts, and abilities. What is *Normal*, anyway? What *abnormality* could vault you to top The Greats and enable you to become more amazing?

Once I was walking down the hall of my high school, singing loudly, being obnoxious, when I was stopped by the choir teacher.

"Why aren't you singing in the choir?"

"I'm a basketball player", I stated.

"Come into my classroom," Mrs. Hall demanded. When I showed her what I could do with my voice and mouth, she said, "That's *Not Normal!*" She told me that I was *unique* in a way that pricked my soul. She recognized I could do things that were *not normal*, even *amazing* to her, and she became my tutor, my mentor, and I became her student. She recognized I had a *gift*, and wanted to help me develop it.

What makes you *Not Normal*?

The path to discovering your *unique gift* is self-reflection, and doing what you do best as often as possible, as well as asking those you trust: *What makes you different?*

If you struggle to identify a *Signature Move* that stands out, ponder what you are great at, where you make a difference in the lives of others. It's that *calling* that lives deep in your soul that you feel compelled to express daily. It may be making people laugh, taking action, giving service, or being thoughtful. If you keep your greatness hidden, how can anyone ever know or recognize it? Neglect *normal* and change the world around you!

Secret 4: Decipher the disqualifiers.

Choose to either *digest* what they say (take it in and believe it is for your good), or *discount* what they say and prove them wrong.

For example, as a 15-year old youth I was a decent basketball player. One day I went into the coach's office and asked him why he wouldn't play me more. He looked me in the eye, and said, "Jason, you're not good at basketball, and you never will be good at basketball." At that moment, I had a choice: 1) to *digest* this criticism and give up on basketball, or 2) to *discount* his opinion and prove him wrong. A fire ignited in my soul that moment. So, rather than *digest* his disqualifier, I *discounted* his opinion and dedicated my life to proving him wrong.

In fact, I wrote what he said on paper and taped it to my mirror. I looked at it day and night, and every time I played basketball. The next year I won a starting spot on the Varsity, as a sophomore, and eventually became an All-State basketball player.

When you're *discounted* by someone who doesn't believe in your ability, what will you do? If you choose to *digest* a *disqualifier*,

make sure that it is for your good. Some people are made to *be on stage*, others to shine elsewhere. *What is your stage?* Where do you shine brightest? If the right person (spouse, parent, or friend) tells you that you're on the wrong stage, digest their words, become a better person for it, and embrace who and what you are. If you choose to *discount the disqualifier*, make sure that you are on the right stage and then go for it with gusto.

Recognize that these moments will alter your path. They are not to be taken lightly, so weigh them carefully, cautiously. The catalyst to your ultimate success may just be the difference between whether you digest or discount a disqualifier in your life.

Secret 5: Magnify your mission. What is your life mission? Write a *Mission Statement*, and revise it every year as a way to realign with *your true self*. You need to clearly define your mission in your heart to maintain the vision of a worthy goal and dream long after the honeymoon of thought wears off. Storms

will rage, challenges will come (perhaps to your health, family, finances, or faith) as you progress.

Many people have died as martyrs for their missions: Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Martin Luther, Jesus Christ and his apostles, and soldiers who defend their countries.

Many people say they would *die* for their mission, yet few *live* for it!

Ask yourself, What was I made to do?

What impact can I have? What must I do to fund my mission? Instead of asking, "What will I be remembered for", ask, "What have I offered the world that will live on long after I'm gone, whether I receive credit or not?"

If you can look down the barrel of financial ruin and still have peace of mind; if you can tell your wife that you must pursue a certain career; if you can inspire your children to be their best because you are trying your best; if you can feel that you are called and chosen to do something great, you've found your mission. The only thing worse than not knowing your mission is to discover your mission and not live it faithfully.

What is your mission, passion, reason for being? What good are you supposed to do? The gifts you came to earth to discover, the blessings only you can uncover, are waiting for you. By discovering and performing your *Signature Moves* to serve and bless others, you make the best use of your gifts, talents, and strengths. The effect is exponential. The blessings of *you* are endless. As you forge your mission in your soul, you'll be as *The Greats*, and the cycle begins again as you become a *Master* for others to follow. There is greatness in you—in your *Signature Move*. **PE**



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ACTION: Show the world Your Greatness.

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Art of Significance

Achieve the level beyond success.



by Dan Clark

WE ACHIEVE SUCCESS BY doing what is necessary to get what we want, but often end up in a different physical and emotional place than we thought we would be. It's like the pilot who took off at the equator to circumnavigate the globe. Since his course was off by one degree, by the time he returned to the same longitude, he was lost. An error of only one degree had taken him 500 miles off course, where he ran out of gas and crashed.

No one wants his life to end in a place he didn't intend—a destination of *meaningless selfishness*, or in a crash caused by regrets. But often we don't realize that an error of a few degrees has set us on a course for disaster, and as Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "We die with our music still in us."

The lives of many powerful people are not so wonderful. While giving themselves over to fortune and fame, they surrender their capacity to live as well-adjusted, fulfilled human beings. Yes, I admire the way they excel, but I've also seen the costs of a single-minded focus on success.

I first realized this when a teammate was drafted in the second round into the National Football League. He was a legitimate superstar, but after four years in the league, and at the top of his game, he walked out of practice, and quit, never to play again. Why? He loved being a football player, but he hated playing football. He got what he wanted but didn't want what he got! He loved the money, fame and celebrity perks that afforded him a nice lifestyle, but he hated the brutal practices, nomadic lifestyle, and obligation to play hurt. He was living a successful existence, but since he was misaligned with his inner purpose, not a significant life. *Sadly, too many of us give up what we want most in order to obtain the empty success we think we want at the moment.*

Focus on Why, not How

I played football for 13 years, relentlessly pursuing success, until a paralyzing injury cut short my career. I was paralyzed for 14 months and 16 doctors told me I would not recover. Now that I

have, the question I'm frequently asked is: What took so long? My answer: I was asking the doctors *how* to get better, when I should have been asking myself *why* I should get better.

Focusing on *how* had been setting me up for failure because each doctor had a different theory, and the pain felt so excruciating that quitting before fully recovering seemed easy and reasonable. When I was injured, confused, and feeling alone in the dark, I discovered that it takes courage to leap into an abyss, whether for the thrill of adventure or to dispense with a situation that no longer works. It's easier to hesitate, holding on to the familiar, clinging to people, positions, and possessions that are no longer sustaining, because we fear the unknown. We seek a renaissance of spirit, a return to understanding that being is more important than having, and yet we lose our vitality by resisting the very steps that could help us create a dynamic and fulfilling life.

Are you spending your life wishing for amazing things you'll never get—when you should focus on *doing amazing things with whatever you have?*

I regard my football injury as *one of the best things* that ever happened to me because of what I learned about myself and who I became while working through the setback. My recovery began only when I started focusing on *purposes* instead of shallow goals, and on the reality that there is nothing noble about being superior to some other person. *True nobility only comes in being superior to your former self.* Once I answered *why* I should do what was necessary to recover, figuring out the *how* was simple. To become *significant*, you must do the harder, steady, inner work of learning from the past, letting it go, and becoming everything you were born to be!

Success Verses Significance

Successful people think wealth flows to them. *Significant* people know wealth flows through them (we can

get anything in this life that we want if we are willing to help enough other people get what they want). *Significant* individuals know we become the average of the five people we associate with the most, and willingly pay any price and travel any distance to associate with extraordinary human beings.

Here are the 12 Highest Universal Laws of Life-Changing Leadership:

1. Practice Obedience instead of Free Will Agency;
2. Exercise Perseverance instead of Patience;
3. Proactively Stretch instead of Change;
4. Trust Predictability instead of Hope and Faith;
5. Know the Whole Truth instead of Believing What You Think;
6. Focus on Winning instead of Team;
7. Do Right instead of Seeking to Be Best;
8. Experience Harmony instead of Forcing Balance;
9. Accept Others instead of Judging Them;
10. Love and Be Needed instead of Romanced and Used;
11. Establish Covenants instead of Making Commitments;
12. Forgive instead of Apologize.

The *successful* say, "Patience is a virtue." No it's not! The *significant* realize any virtue taken to the extreme can become a vice.

Perseverance with a purpose is the highest law of endurance. Successful parents, coaches and leaders tell their subordinates, "Be good, win, sell, and do more with less." The *significant* know you can't coach results—you can only coach behavior.

Clearly, many people believe they are thinking and changing, when they're merely rearranging their opinions and prejudices, perpetuating fads of success.

The purpose of a leader is to grow more leaders, which requires *analog action* in a digital world—the continuous development and maintenance of a capable, loyal people, which translates into a positive, energetic culture based on promotion from within. When you, as a leader, enable others to grow and become significant, you build trust; foster mutual respect, support, and unity in team members; and stir pride of ownership that directly translates into unparalleled customer service. Devoting resources to leadership education has a domino effect, as responsible, informed people make proactive decisions that have recurring, positive results. PE

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ACTION: Transcend success for significance.

The Five Whys

Try this method of change.



by Moe Glenner

SUCCESS IN ANY CHANGE largely depends on identifying the real problem or issue. Often, the obvious problem is masking an obscured larger issue.

Tough questions need to be asked and answered honestly. One effective method for digging through the obscurities is the *Five Why Method of Change*. Think of this method as the grown-up version of the over-inquisitive child.

For instance, one of my children was upset that it was raining outside, preventing him from playing in the backyard. When I told him that rain is actually a good thing, he replied, “Why?” That answer got another reply of, “Why?” And so on, until my patience was exhausted and I distracted him with some coloring books.

The *Five Why Method of Change* works in the same fashion. Consider an overweight person. In a moment of clarity, he admits that he is overweight.

Why am I overweight?

Because I consume too many high fat and high caloric foods.

Why do I consume these foods?

Because they provide ready comfort.

Why do I need ready comfort?

Because I’m tired, feel overworked.

Why do I feel that way?

Because I don’t truly feel appreciated.

Why don’t I feel appreciated?

I don’t know.

The *Five Whys* helps you get through the obscurity and shines a light on the real issue (in this case, a lack of self-worth or self-confidence). Further examination may uncover events that evoked the lack of self-worth and confidence and why those feelings are still present and powerful. Once the real issue is addressed, successful change can be realized.

The same process applies at work. For example, a division of a larger company is losing money.

Why are we losing money?

Because we don’t have a cohesive sales and marketing effort.

Why don’t we have this effort?

We lack the manpower and resources.

Why don’t we have the resources?

We are on a tight budget.

Why are we on such a tight budget?

The *Five Why Method of Change* need not stop with just five iterations of why;

it is a suggested minimum. Add iterations as needed to uncover root issues. Keep digging deeper to uncover the real issue, and don’t try to solve the apparent problem with an answer to any one of the *why* questions.

How can you know when you reach the real issue? If there remains an answer to a *why* question, then *keep digging* for the buried treasure. When the only answer to a *why* question is *I don’t know*, the real issue treasure is exposed. At this point, shift the focus from digging to understanding the issue.

For example, if the final *why* is preceded by “Because our CEO told us to do it this way,” the issue is the CEO’s orders, and unless the CEO changes the orders or we better understand the reasoning behind those orders, no change will happen. The CEO won’t likely change

the orders without a compelling argument predicated on an understanding of the orders and their impact. Thus, the focus should be to understand the reasoning behind the CEO’s orders and then continuing on the *Five Why* process with this new information.

Often a *why* answer will tread close to prematurely diving a solution. By avoiding answering a *why* question with a possible implied solution, we’re likely to get to the key factor. Once we detect the real issue, we can repeat the *Five Why* change process as many times as needed to uncover additional contributing factors and influencers. **PE**

Moe Glenner is CEO of PURELogistics, specializing in change management, a speaker and author of *Selfish Altruism*. Visit www.purelogistics.com.

ACTION: Try the *Five Whys* method of change.

PROFESSIONAL • BLAME

Stop Blaming

Start being responsible.



by John R. Stoker

YOUR NEGATIVITY IS AN OUTWARD expression of what is going on inside you. If you are negative at work, you are expressing your wants and desires in terms of violated values or unmet needs or expectations. You *blame others* because you want something that you’re not now getting.

When you express yourself negatively, listen to yourself to learn what’s really being expressed—listen to your *negative* complaining and blaming as an expression of a *positive* value.

For example, if you complain to your boss, “You never listen to me!” ask yourself, “What do I really want?” or “What do I value?” The positive value hidden within your negative statement might be “I have something important to say, and I wish you would listen and understand me.”

Emotion is the mask of *meaning*. So, a hot or negative emotion hides what’s happening in your head. Your emotion says more about *you* than it does about *them*. You create your feelings by the way you perceive and interpret events. Before you can explore the *meaning*, defuse the emotion that masks *what’s really going on*.

Blame as Shame

I once had a manager who always blamed me when things did not turn

out as planned. One day, I told him that I often felt *shamed* when he *blamed* me. He was using *shame* as a means of motivating me, but people are not motivated by abuse or disrespect.

I find that blame—the *violated expectation*—is centered in one of **four areas**:

- **Purpose** focuses on the goal you seek. If you fail to achieve a goal, you might ask questions that would help you to clarify the purpose: *What specifically do you want me to do or to achieve?*

- **Process** deals with *how* you attempted or completed a task. If you hear, *We don’t do it that way here!* ask: *What is the process I need to follow?* or *Are their specific steps you’d like me to follow?* or *What steps did I miss?*

- **Performance** deals with how well you perform or execute a task. Ask questions to clarify the person’s expectations: *What would you like me to do differently?* or *How could I improve?*

- **Person**. If someone is blaming you as a *person*, don’t take it *personally!* People resort to attacking a *person* when their reason has given out. You can infer that they haven’t identified the real issue. Your questions can help explore the reasoning: is the purpose, process, or performance the root of the problem?

Blame is a way of avoiding responsibility. You want to be *accountable* and *take initiative* to identify the specifics behind the blaming statements by asking clarifying questions and then improving the situation. **PE**

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ACTION: Stop blaming, start performing.

Chronic Illness

Be a Wounded Warrior.



by Richard Cheu

THE HISTORY OF AMERICA IS replete with stories of *wounded warriors* whose courageous efforts made a difference in the lives of other combatants or in the course of the nation. The names of some have become legendary. Many stories, however, are unrecorded and the events and warriors are known only to those present as witnesses.

These warriors share five common and riveting characteristics: 1) Courage in the face of opposition; 2) Commitment to a cause; 3) Overriding concern for the safety of others; 4) Determination to forge ahead despite being injured; and 5) Self-sacrifice.

In October 1863, one *wounded warrior* changed the course of the Civil War by rescuing some 50,000 starving Union soldiers trapped in Chattanooga, Tenn. and under siege by a Confederate army for more than six weeks. The only line of supply to the Union forces was a 60-mile wagon trail so difficult to traverse that most of the cattle driven on the trail as food for the soldiers died before reaching Chattanooga.

The situation was so desperate that the Secretary of War commanded Gen. Ulysses S. Grant to leave New Orleans and proceed to Chattanooga despite the fact that Grant was recovering from a severe and painful leg injury sustained when his horse fell on him.

As General Grant later related, "From Bridgeport, we took horses and made our way by Jasper and over Waldron's Ridge to Chattanooga. There had been much rain, and the roads were almost impassable from mud . . . I had been on crutches since my fall in New Orleans and had to be carried over places where it was not safe to cross on horseback. The roads were strewn with the debris of broken wagons and the carcasses of thousands of starving mules and horses."

Within one week of his arrival at Chattanooga, Grant opened a supply line that provided adequate food and ammunition for the soldiers and forage

for the animals. His strategic decisions resulted in the defeat of the Confederate Army. He achieved all this while recovering from his debilitating injury.

He also displayed the same *wounded warrior* characteristics at the end of his life as a *chronically ill patient* dying of cancer. Before his death, he was destitute after being defrauded in an investment scheme. He wrote the memoir to provide his soon-to-be widow with income after his death. He persisted in writing a two-volume memoir which he completed and was delivered to the publisher five days before his death.

Be a Wounded Warrior

In *acute illness* or injury, the course of treatment and healing is usually well-defined. A broken bone can be healed or the infection stopped if the patient will follow the prescribed treatment. Often, the injury does not heal properly or the infection reoccurs because the patient decides he/she knows

better than the doctor and does not implement the doctor's orders. In these cases, the patient is clearly not acting like a *wounded warrior*.

A *chronic illness* or condition will persist during the patient's life. An artificial limb, no matter how good, is not as satisfactory as the original. Cancer, cardiovascular disease,

asthma, diabetes and osteoarthritis are examples of common chronic illnesses.

Incurable and ongoing chronic disease affects 133 million Americans, and the daily activities of about 33 million are limited by their chronic conditions.

A patient who receives a chronic illness diagnosis suffers a shock similar to the shock of being wounded in combat. A flood of negative emotions is released including: fear, despair, anger, anxiety and grief. Any one of them can result in emotional paralysis, looking back on one's life and grieving for what has been lost. This grief can be difficult to overcome. At this time, the patient can follow one of two paths: the way of the *wounded combatant* who looks back and bemoans what has been lost, or the journey of the *wounded warrior* who



looks forward and pursues new opportunities not seen before.

Every chronically ill patient can become a *wounded warrior* by taking *three steps* to counter the shock of diagnosis—*Stop, Look* and *Listen*.

- **Stop:** Stop whatever you are doing. Sit down, close your eyes, and take several deep, really deep, breaths. Concentrate on your breathing and let whatever is in your mind flow out.

- **Look:** Learn about your illness. Discover where you are with respect to your illness or condition. Are you at an early, mid- or late stage? Learn the medical language (jargon) so that you can communicate clearly and understand what the members of your healthcare team are saying to you.

- **Listen:** It takes a virtual army to support one chronically ill person, an army of ever-changing personnel that can include: several doctors, nurses, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, family members, financial advisors, and one or more caregivers. Everyone in your support team is an *advisor*. Decide what kind of health and personal care you want and *tell your advisors what you want*.

By undertaking the *Stop, Look* and *Listen* process and taking responsibility for your healthcare, you can create a life that is meaningful and fulfilling which results from improving your mental, physical and spiritual health.

Getting Rid of Negative Emotions

You need to jettison the *excess baggage* of negative emotions associated with a chronic illness diagnosis. Getting rid of troublesome emotions reduces stress, which benefits the immune system—the body's frontline defense—and increases self-respect that strengthens your will to undertake the next step.

- **Adopting health habits.** Healthy habits include: adequate sleep each night, a balanced diet, moderate exercise, doing something every day that is relaxing, and avoiding excessive alcohol consumption, smoking, and other risky behavior. Choose healthy habits.

- **Increase your spiritual health.** *Spirituality* is a way of thinking and living that opens your eyes to your enormous potential. It focuses your *spirit* (a huge source of available energy) on what really matters to you and sets you on a path to achieve goals. The key thing is to *run the good race. There is life after chronic illness, and it's yours to live.* PE

Richard Cheu is a former neurophysiologist author of *Living Well with Chronic Illness: A Practical and Spiritual Guide*. Visit www.chroniclivingwell.com.

ACTION: *Jettison your negative emotions.*

Love Yourself

and live happily ever after.



by Richard Jaffe

IN MY YEARS AS A SUCCESSFUL entrepreneur, creating and selling corporations, I found a few constants to guide me. *Love myself; live my values, and give back.*

The key to happiness is learning to love yourself. It's a recurring theme in my poetry: loving myself is fundamental to my happiness. The one person I have a relationship with for my entire life is myself, so I make that relationship my priority. When I have the inner peace that comes from loving myself, I don't have to look to others to fill my emotional needs and wants.

You can learn to love yourself and to be happy by living and acting on your values. Values guide your choices, and your choices affect how you feel about yourself and interact with others.

These values and tenets have helped make me an exceedingly happy man.

1. Find your passion and indulge in it. I've been expressing myself through poetry for 30 years. It's one of my passions. Poetry provides balance in life between work, family and other commitments. When I indulge in my passion, I recharge my spirit, my mind, and my body. Poetry is an art form that does as much for the writer as the reader. Poems inspire, educate and cleanse. Writing poetry stirs my soul and fuels my creativity. Exploring my thoughts and feelings and expressing them in symbolic word images exercises my creativity in a fun way. It makes me sharper and, the more I explore the well of my imagination, the faster it fills again. Writing poetry 1) *Improves cognitive function.* 2) *Helps heal emotional pain and grief.* When I experience a profound loss, putting my feelings into words or memorializing those who I lost is cathartic. 3) *Leads to greater self-awareness.* Writing poetry gives me a constructive way to ponder the meaning of my life and what makes me happy. 4) *Provides a gift of inspiration or education to others.* We are not alone! *Universal* questions, fears and emotions are *universal* because everyone experiences them. Once we find our answers, we can help others by sharing them. 5) *Celebrate!* For some things, balloons and cake just don't suffice. Proposing to my wife, the births of my children, their

Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, falling in love—these were among the most emotionally powerful, joyful times of my life. Thanks to my poems written then to capture *my feelings*, I can experience them again.

2. Remember: givers gain. Even when I was a young entrepreneur, my wife Ann and I always donated to the community, to our temple, and to charity. Give even when you have nothing. It always comes back to bless you, though sometimes from a different source.

3. Don't rely on anyone else to make you happy. When your happiness is dependent on your love for someone else, they control your happiness. We have to rely on ourselves.

4. Be the best you can be at whatever you do. Don't compare yourself to your competition, to history, to anyone else. Instead, *raise the bar on yourself.* Even if

I get knocked down at something, I can be happy when I know I gave it my best effort. I don't always succeed, but I can give an even better effort the next time because I'll learn from being knocked down. *Defeat* is being knocked down; *failure* is unwillingness to get back up!

5. Control your thoughts and keep them positive. My kids used to come to me to complain when they were unhappy about something. I would tell them, 'If you do not like the way you feel, just change the way you think!' Eventually they understood that negative thoughts make them feel bad. Beware—thinking positively is habit-forming. PE

Richard Jaffe is co-owner of the NBA Phoenix Suns, a successful business leader and philanthropist, CEO of Safe Life and Safe Skin Corp., and author of *Inner Peace & Happiness*. Visit www.richardjaffe.net.

ACTION: Apply these 5 tips to stay happy.

EMOTIONAL • LOVE

Find Lasting Love

Meeting Mr. or Ms. Right.



by Ernest Quansah

AFTER MUCH RESEARCH and experience with heartache, divorce, and breakups, I've discovered the keys to finding and maintaining meaningful, long-lasting romantic relationships.

Fear, stubbornness, ignorance, resignation—for singles and couples longing for love—are deadly sins in a relationship. Many couples and singles use these psychological traits as excuses. They say they're not rich enough, or need to lose weight, or won't find what they want. But I say, nobody is perfect, and if you think that you'll only be *good enough* when you've lost five pounds, or have a nice car or a bigger house, you'll never be *good enough*.

To find love, answer **six questions**:

- **What is my goal?** Jot down what you are *really* looking for. Are you looking for a lifelong partner, just a date on Valentine's Day, or for your marriage to work? Many *serial daters* and *twice married men and women* claim they want the real thing; however, often their behavior indicates the opposite. You must be honest with what is in your heart.

- **What am I doing to achieve my goal?** Striking a balance is important. Doing too much, like spending a lot of money on a new look or being too negative, can be relationship killers because they are not permanent solutions. If you act

like yourself, you'll be more comfortable and confident—*attractive qualities!* Remember who you are and what you love, but don't be inflexible; love and relationship success are often about compromise. Taking note of what you have and haven't done, and evaluating the effectiveness of those strategies, are the key to relationship success.

- **What might prevent me from achieving my goal?** Fault finding, placing artificial contingencies on your love connection, and making comparisons put too much strain on your marriage. An objective, calm, and rational approach can help you map a course for meeting the person of your dreams and achieving *relationship success*.



- **What methods don't work for me?** Mistakes are to be *expected*, but they should only be *accepted* as long as you learn something from them. If you approach dating or relationships in ways that keep failing, *it's time to change!*

- **What methods work for me?** Focus on your strengths; if certain methods bring you success in dating or marriage, keep using those methods. But also test the waters with new ideas.

- **What will it feel like when I succeed?** If you can't envision *the taste of success*, you'll be less motivated to go the extra mile for true love. Think about how nice it would feel to have meaningful companionship, bring someone home to meet the family, and maybe start a family of your own. PE

Ernest Quansah is president of Relationship Advice for Success, and author of *Do's and Don'ts of Relationships*. Visit www.relationshipadviceforsuccess.com.

ACTION: Answer the six questions.

Signature Voice

The secrets of honing one.



by Amy Su
and Muriel
Wilkins

AS A LEADER BECOMES MORE SENIOR, the need for an effective *leadership presence* becomes increasingly important. The number of stakeholders and constituencies grows, the platforms become bigger, and the impact you make has an increased ripple effect. The question then becomes how to build a leadership presence that is both authentic and scalable to a variety of venues, formats and audiences, with the capacity to expand from office to boardroom? How do you own the room more frequently and consistently?

We coach leaders how to expand their presence by honing a *signature voice* that unlocks more of their authenticity while increasing their flexibility and agility. What's the *winning formula* for success? We find that winning has less to do with *changing how you're perceived*, and more to do with *finding your own signature voice* to sharpen your leadership presence. Influence is driven by the ability to forge a signature voice. We admire and reward people who *communicate* authentically, *connect* with others, and have immediate *impact*.

What we now teach to top executives, we once learned firsthand. Perceived early in her career as too young or passive for leadership, Amy was told to *toughen up*. Yet Muriel was urged to *tone down* her outspoken style and bring it down a notch. Most who receive such feedback revert to a prior comfort zone—instead of *choosing* the style that is most *effective* for each situation. With a *signature voice*, you can be present, inspire intentionally, and avoid less effective modes.

How can you *own the room* with your greatest strengths while being yourself?

1. Increase self and situational awareness. In every situation, there is both your voice in the room and the voice of the audience you are interacting with. The best interactions are fluid, two-way dialogues, where you are offering your thought leadership, judgment, and point of view while connecting, engaging, and responding to others in the room. The most effective leaders

hold their own view while staying present, listening, and being open to what the situation demands. Even in disagreement, respect for self and the other is preserved. The watch-out for leaders is going on auto-pilot—where you inadvertently subvert your own voice or bull-doze your way through—making an impact that doesn't match your intention.

2. Strengthen your mindset and inner confidence. The assumptions and mindset we bring into the room about ourselves, the stakeholders, and the situation can drive a lot of how we ultimately show up. Healthy, supportive assumptions include understanding why you are at the table and being clear on your value proposition. Deep inner *confidence* (not *arrogance*) and being comfortable in one's own skin ultimately comes from an understanding and acceptance of the unique alchemy of your strengths, history, and experiences. It means leading and living in alignment to one's values and



integrity. Leaders who uncover this signature personal brand increase not only their own confidence but their "reach out factor" from others as well.

3. Expand your perspective and put yourself in others' shoes. With true inner confidence and with the integrity to do what's best for the business, leaders with signature voice are also able to hold a larger perspective and put themselves in the shoes of others. In their preparation, they consider who is this? What is the tone of the interaction I want to achieve? What are the potential assumptions at play? They are careful not to let limiting assumptions—such as assuming that the audience is already defensive—get in the way of bringing their best and doing what is right for the situation. This requires leaders to let go of old habits of mind and thought which could lead to negative self-fulfilling prophecies.

4. Expand your communications repertoire. Authenticity deepens from knowing who you are, what you stand for, and why you are at the table. Adaptability comes from having a full

communications repertoire. Think of your repertoire as a set of golf clubs—know which "club" is your strength and bring the others up to threshold to play more courses. Are you able to frame the message in a way that is relevant to the audience? Can you succinctly and clearly articulate your message? Do you listen at all levels—surface listening, issues listening, and emotions based listening—to have a pulse on what is going on? Are you able to use shaping questions, that don't feel like an interrogation, but rather shape, change, or reframe the discussion for all? Leaders with signature voice have this full repertoire, thus making them powerful influencers—whether they have direct authority or not.

5. Know what your body is telling you and others. With mindset and skills up to par, leaders can further hone their signature voice by getting in touch with their physical presence as well. This includes everything from our dress, our non-verbals, and the mood we are in. As leaders, this is especially critical because of the incredible ripple effect we have on others. Do you start to talk faster, louder, feel your heart beat increase as you become increasingly impatient and annoyed during a meeting? Do you start to feel your palms sweat, and speak more softly when you're nervous with those more senior? People tend to react positively or negatively to these non-verbal messages even more than the direct message itself. These physiological cues also allow you to *catch yourself* in the moment and *course correct* before you've lost yourself or others all together. Further, do you know the physical conditions that drive your personal best? We've had clients realize the importance of that morning run, a good night's sleep, or a breathing ritual just before game time.

Ultimately, seeing leaders with a signature voice is like watching star athletes. They look effortless while playing the game—clear, consistent, present to themselves and the other players. Adaptive to whatever ball is thrown their way. They've conditioned their minds, their skill repertoire, and their bodies. Then, they step onto the court or field and just play. Leaders who condition their minds, skill, and bodies are the same. They've walked into the room, owning it, with their signature voice. **PE**

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ACTION: Hone your signature voice.

Be There for Others Via non-verbal communication.



by Darlene Price

WHETHER YOU'RE MAKING a formal presentation, wooing a client, closing a sale, or proposing an idea, persuasive communication can make the difference between success and failure. Learn how to put yourself in your audience's shoes and tailor your message to the needs of decision makers. Here are five tactics to prioritize, organize, and economize your words so that your communications are concise, clear, and convincing.

Learn to use words and phrases that get people to listen; capture and hold attention; gain instant credibility with decision makers; optimize body language; handle Q&A with finesse; and connect with people.

Top leaders and successful managers use specific non-verbal communications skills and tactics to maximize on-the-job performance and professional success!

Nonverbal communication carries between 65 to 93 percent more impact than the actual words spoken, especially when the message involves emotional meaning and attitudes. These nonverbal cues include facial expressions, eye contact, gestures, posture, body movement, tones of voice, dress, grooming, touch, and even your environment—wordless signals that speak volumes. You can train yourself to send the right signals.

Here are my *top five non-verbal communications tactics*:

- **Look 'em dead in the eye.** When speaking to others, ideally look directly into their eyes at least two to three seconds before looking away or moving to the next person. Glancing at someone for one second or less is known as "eyedart" and conveys insecurity, anxiety or evasion. Smile with your eyes.

- **Keep your cool even in the face of heat emotions!** Because your facial expressions are closely tied to emotion, they are often involuntary and unconscious. For example, in a meeting with your boss, he or she may say something to make you angry. However, a pensive scowl, rolling eyes, and pursed lips may not help matters. If instead you want to convey a positive collaborative attitude, choose to hold a slight smile, nod occasionally, raise your eyebrows to show interest, and maintain good eye contact.

- **Pay attention not just to what people**

are saying, but how they are saying it. Separate the *emotion* from the *words* being used. Focus and seek to understand the nonverbal elements of your voice and how others are talking. Include the tone, pacing, pausing, volume, inflection, pitch and articulation. Try recording your side of several conversations and identify what emotions and attitudes your voice tone communicates.

- **Dress appropriately for the occasion!** Make sure your clothing fits the situation. Ensure *business casual* is not *business careless*. Choose quality, well-tailored garments that convey professionalism. Wear a suit or jacket for key meetings and presentations with senior leaders and customers. Avoid showy accessories, busy patterns, and tight or revealing garments. If career advancement is your goal, convey a professional

presence in the workplace. Dress for the job you want, not the job you have.

- **Turn all your electronics off!** Turn your smart phone, notebook, laptop, iPhone, iPad and iPod off! Don't cause a distraction! Don't check email, look at your phone, send a text, check the scores, or disengage in any way. Stay focused and attentive using open body language. Square your shoulders and point your toes directly toward the people you are meeting with. Lean into the conversation, focusing your eyes, ears and all your energy on them.

Send the nonverbal cues that convey *confidence, credibility, professionalism.* **PE**

Darlene Price is President and Founder of Well Said, and author of Well Said! Presentations and Conversations That Get Results (AMACOM). Visit www.wellsaid.com.

ACTION: Send the right signals.

MENTAL • LISTENING

Listen More Swiftly

Understand what others are saying.



by Sara LaForest and Tony Kubica

LIFE RUNS AT A FRENETIC pace. Instead of giving us more time, technology has stolen our time. Like Twitter posts, our world works in 140 character segments. Our attention span shrinks with every new app invented. The average page view on a website is less than 30 seconds!

So, does this mean that we are *listening swiftly*? No. We hardly listen at all. *Listening more swiftly* means that we take the time to not only listen, but also to understand what the speaker is saying. And if we are convinced that there is value, we act on what we heard. And, it is the acting that defines swiftly.

Listening is a powerful tool for *understanding*. Listening takes time to let the speakers develop their thoughts and to absorb and understand their points. It takes patience and courage to listen when what the speaker is saying does not reflect our thinking. But listening opens a world of possibilities. It challenges our assumptions and provides actionable information that can bring a new perspective or seed growth.

In *The Inventors*, Jason Jennings writes how extraordinary companies pursue radical continuous change by

letting go of: ego, same Old, conventional Wisdom, entitlement, greed, short-time mentality, and risk aversion.

The inability to let go is like refusing to listen when the physician says that you have a blocked artery and immediate intervention is required. You reply, "It can't be, I feel just fine," even as you get a little dizzy. The inability to let go is the barrier to listening and understanding. When you hear that you are in danger, and you act swiftly, you know the likely (and desired) outcome.

Growth comes with reflecting on what's working and what's not, with understanding what may be holding you back from growth, and with the courage to *learn more and do something about your current condition*. To paraphrase Einstein, *you cannot solve a problem with the same mindset that created it*. Listen to understand and to decide *the best course of action* based on the *information and input* received.

You don't have the luxury of *having all the answers*.

Many people shut out contrarian advisers. Many frustrated employees say, "If only he or she would listen to us; we know the customers, and we have ideas on how to improve things."

Listening implies *hearing* what the other person is saying, absorbing the ideas, thinking about their merit, and taking what you find valuable and doing something about it. *Swiftly* is applying an innovative idea that can *differentiate* you in a world of *sameness*. **PE**

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ACTION: Listen first to understand.

Spring Awakening

Renew mind, body, and soul.



by Marla Tomazin

SPRING CLEANING SHOULDN'T be limited to your house. You can also refresh your body, style, relationships, and habits. When the bright, warm rays of spring sunlight begin to stream through our windows, most of us feel the urge to make sure everything in our homes is fresh, shiny, and dirt-free. But this year, don't stop with housecleaning—clean out your life, too!

Just as it's easy for dust and clutter to accumulate unnoticed during the short, dark days of winter, it's also easy for bad habits, poor outlooks, and unhealthy relationships to pile up in your life. If you don't make an effort to detox, these things will continue to hold you back and weigh you down.

There's no better time than spring to refresh your mind, body, and soul.

Here are *six ways* to breathe fresh air into your life:

1. Clean your closet. A messy closet is a metaphor for a messy life. Reluctance to change something as simple as the contents of a closet is a symptom of a bigger problem. *Maybe you're afraid of change and what the future holds.* Maybe you just ended a romantic relationship and are clinging to the past. Maybe you're dissatisfied with your life and don't feel ready to take the initiative to change it. It's time to stop procrastinating. De-cluttering the spaces in your home will help de-clutter your life.

There's something refreshing about walking into a clean, organized closet. It will make your mornings less stressful by cutting down on the time it takes to rifle through and find the perfect outfit for the day. And when you look good, you'll *feel* good. First, get rid of any clothes that are old or worn, that don't fit, that you never wear, or that don't honor you and your lifestyle. Then, organize what's left and treat yourself to a few new pieces that embody *the blooming spirit of spring.*

Also evaluate your wardrobe. Your winter coats, wool scarves, and other cold weather items should be packed away until the fall to make room for floral prints and pastels.

2. Get some fresh air. Unless you live in a location where it's balmy all year

round, you've likely been cooped up inside during the cold winter months. Welcome the sunshine and springtime air by taking a walk (or run) outside a few times a week. This will help you clear your mind, make you feel more energized, and aid in shedding some unwanted pounds. As a special bonus, seeing the beautiful colors of blooming flowers and trees will put you in a great mood for the day.

3. Do some weeding. You know how a few weeds can ruin the beauty and health of a flowerbed, and also how fast they can spread. Well, people are the same way. Individuals who are critical, mean-spirited, jealous, or negative can spoil your happiness and infect you with their poor outlooks. Evaluate



the relationships in your life. Think about your friends: Are they supportive or snide? Do you feel energized when you spend time with them, or drained? Are compliments genuine or backhanded? If your friendship with a certain person isn't enriching, back away. Spend time with people whom you genuinely like and who make you feel good. Life is too short to spend time with people you don't enjoy.

4. Set healthy boundaries. Moving away from toxic people is a good start when it comes to filling your life with healthy relationships . . . but don't stop there! With everyone in your life—even with people who make you feel good and who have your best interests at heart—set healthy boundaries. Be clear about what you need and what you expect from others. Let people know what's important to you; for instance, say, "My birthday is something I really look forward to, and it's important to me that we celebrate it as a family." Learn how and when to say *no*. Don't let yourself be bullied or guilted into

over-committing and overextending yourself. Stop making excuses for other people; for instance, *I'll overlook that comment—that's just how she is.* If you don't set clear boundaries, even good relationships can turn sour and become weighed down by resentment. But when you're up-front about what's best for you—in a kind way—you'll enjoy authentic, mutually beneficial relationships.

5. Get rid of bad habits. You can likely name several of your bad habits. Maybe you're always running late, or you've been overspending lately. Perhaps you tend to procrastinate on big projects until the last minute, or you stuff yourself with junk food when you're stressed. We all have bad habits. The good news is: You can change them! You can improve your reactions, change your routines, and become healthier—mentally, emotionally, and physically. For this spring cleaning, pick one bad habit—something that causes you a lot of stress would be a good choice. Then design a game plan that will enable you to kick it once and for all. For instance, if you're always dragging into work late, you might set out your clothes and pack your lunch the night before, wake up 15 minutes earlier, and refrain from turning on the TV until *after* you shower and dress. You'll find that in most instances, bad habits really aren't *that* difficult to scrub out of your life. Summoning the motivation to change and taking that first step are the hardest parts!

6. Plant yourself in something new! If you want a flower to bloom beautifully, you plant in nutrient-rich soil and place in a spot with just the right amount of sunlight, warmth, and water. The same principle holds true for you, too. You'll blossom when you're doing things that make you feel happy and fulfilled. As the days get longer, take this opportunity to finally sign up for that art class you've been dying to try, for example, or attend a hot yoga session with a friend.

As you spring clean your life, be aware of what feels good and what doesn't, of what's healthy and what isn't, of what makes you happy and what makes you sad. Pay attention to areas of your life that you normally take for granted and ask, *Is this working? Does it honor the person I am right here and right now?* You may be surprised by how much dead weight has been holding you back—and by how quickly you bloom when it's gone! **PE**

Marla Tomazin is a Certified Image Consultant, helping clients identify an authentic image and develop its effective expression. Visit www.marlatomazin.com.

ACTION: *Renew your mind, body and soul.*

Move It or Lose It

Put yourself back in the game.



by Karen Peterson

FOR MOST PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY those over 65, falling down can be the worst thing to happen to them. One in three seniors experiences a fall each year; every 18 seconds, a senior is admitted into an emergency room after losing balance and hitting the ground; every 35 minutes, an elderly person dies from a fall—the leading cause of death for seniors

The projected cost in health-care expenses for 2020 due to fall-related injuries in the U.S. is \$55 billion! Keep moving and learning—that improves balance and coordination. I emphasize the cognitive importance of physical movement. But if you're frail, or fearful of falling, you're less likely to get up and move around. So, these activities benefit all seniors. A fun, social program of games and activities that includes exercises designed for seniors helps them address multiple issues that tend to keep seniors sedentary—further decreasing their strength and balance.

Last year, my program was evaluated by Hawaii's Department of Health and found a 38 percent reduction in falls from seniors! Seniors need to continually work on improving their balance, coordination, strength, vision and cognitive skills. When they do, they're less likely to fall—and more able to enjoy life.

I suggest *five moves* that address many different areas of the body:

1. The cross-crawl: After various light warm-ups, begin with the basic *cross-crawl*, which focuses on the fundamentals of balance. March in place, lifting the knees high. At the same time, reach across and touch the lifted knee with the opposite hand or elbow; alternate and keep going. This can be done sitting, standing, or lying down. Once you master these exercises, continue to *challenge yourself* for each exercise.

2. Forward toe-touch dancer: To improve motor skills, physical coordination and cognition, try some dance exercises for seniors. If needed, use a chair. Place your feet shoulder-width apart. Now, extend your left foot and your right arm forward. Keep your left toes pointed down, touching the floor; or maintain the toes a few inches off the floor. Repeat this move with your left arm and right foot. *Hold each pose for several seconds.*

3. Sensory integration—the arrow chart: Look at an arrow chart and call out the direction indicated by each individual symbol. Then, thrust your arms in that direction; in other words, say and do what the arrow indicates. For an additional challenge, do the opposite of what the arrow indicates.

4. Side-step walk: Walk sidestepping—bring your right foot across the left and step down three to five inches away from the left foot, ankles crossed. The closer the feet, the harder it is to balance. Alternate crossing the foot in front and then behind the other foot as you move along; repeat several times, then do the same with opposite feet.

Try a reading exercise from a vision card, designed for stimulating the brain/visual system, while sidestepping.

5. The cat jump: This activity is practice in case of a fall; the muscle memory of the movement will be etched in your body. Bend your knees in a squat. Jump off the ground with both feet, and land softly. Repeat until you are confident in your ability to prevent a spill.

Perform such exercises regularly to achieve safety and revitalize lifestyle. **PE**

Karen Peterson is a therapist, Brain Gym® instructor, director of Giving Back, and author of Move With Balance. Visit www.MoveWithBalance.org.

ACTION: Move more to get back in the game.

PHYSICAL • RENEWAL

Butterfly or Caterpillar?

Go for a grand new beginning.



by Terri Sjodin

COMEDIAN GEORGE CARLIN quipped, "The caterpillar does all of the work, but the butterfly gets all the publicity." And Maya Angelou noted, "We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit *the changes* it has gone through to achieve that beauty."

As a speaker and trainer, I deliver workshops, often for sales professionals, on how to give more effective presentations. People are not always excited to take this class, and I get it. I believe they are very pleased with the result, but it comes with varying degrees of reluctance and resistance.

When you are coaching adults and ask them to go through a transformative drill that will teach them how to build and deliver polished presentations, it comes with some pushback. Sure, we all know that training, practice and developing our skills *help* to make us *better professionals*. However, when we have to engage in the training activities, few of us enjoy doing it.

When I start to hear the normal grumble just before we execute the drill, I share an analogy about *the plight of the caterpillar* with my students.

Imagine for a moment that you're the caterpillar. Everybody is encouraging you to be the butterfly, but maybe you're comfortable, content, and not feeling the need to *do* anything major. (I feel like that sometimes, too.) Why take the risk of throwing yourself off a branch, to hang by a string upside down for four

weeks, then, go through some unknown and probably painful metamorphosis, for what? To potentially emerge as a butterfly? What if you don't want to be a butterfly?

Maybe others have even praised you for being *the best caterpillar* ever. I imagine that at some point, the caterpillar had to seriously think about this, maybe saying, "Nope I'm not doing it! Butterflies aren't that cool. Caterpillars should all be happy being as they are."

Maybe his caterpillar friends agreed. Or maybe he had friends who said, "Come on, let's do it—it will be an adventure."

Somewhere, in all of the thinking, doubt, fear and questions, he realizes he *does* want to be a butterfly, he was just

scared and felt intimidated. In that moment of choice, he takes the leap to *make things happen and go for it*. This is the brave part. The commitment to complete the journey and come out the other side is the story that should be praised publicly. But it's not. All you

ever hear about is "how beautiful the butterfly is," which is true.

Every caterpillar has the *potential* to be a butterfly. Each of us has the *potential* to be or do or have whatever we choose. But like the caterpillar, we must decide what we really want and push past our fears and *go for it, take all the risk, endure the pain, and make it happen*.

If you are about to take a leap and try something new, remember, *change can be difficult, and that's okay*. As Dodinsky wrote, "A great beginning is sometimes at the point of what you thought would be the end of everything." **PE**

Terri Sjodin is CEO of Sjodin Communications and author of Small Message, Big Impact. Visit: www.small-messagebigimpact.com or www.terrisjodin.com.

ACTION: Go for physical renewal.

Cross the River!

This is where it all begins.



by Ricky Cohen

MANY PEOPLE TELL ME THAT the hardest step to taking the *Risk to Succeed* is the first leap. Leaving your comfort zone isn't an easy step to take, but it's the first (and hardest) part. It will get you that much closer to the ultimate goals you have in mind for yourself.

I encourage you to take the first leap, to *cross the river*. Your failure could never be as great as your fear—so cross the river. The depth of the river is determined by your belief—so cross the river. If it seems dark, remember: You're the creator of your darkness—so cross the river. If you say, "maybe tomorrow," remember: Tomorrow belongs to somebody else—so cross the river today.

Every year, I wonder: "Why haven't I yet done certain things that are clearly for my benefit, grown beyond unwanted practices, and stepped away from behaviors that I know are wrong for me? Why haven't I yet become more of the person I know I should be?"

Multitudes have come to the banks of the river—and been unable to cross, or even enter the water.

Each of us has our own story of opportunities lost, challenges ignored, and remaining in the same place year after year—in areas of life where growth and change would bring immediate, tangible benefits. I can list many things that would enhance my life and the lives of those I love—if only I did them.

As a teenager, I used to listen to my favorite disc jockey on the radio on New Year's Eve. Each year, he would request that his listeners call in with their Resolutions. Each year many would call in, committing themselves to be kinder fathers, more patient mothers, go back to school to complete a degree, reconcile with a family member, lose 30 pounds. Each year, the DJ would ask each of his call-in guests: "So how many times have you made this resolution?"

Life's possibilities are never unachievable or beyond our reach. They are not in the heavens . . . Nor are they across the ocean—immense and unmanageable. They

are close to us—in our mouths and our hearts—ready to be acted upon.

Repentance is a suspension of reality in order to reclaim reality. It is the great gift afforded us by the Almighty to sidestep the hard-wired link between action and reaction. It is the facility that enables us to rewrite the scripts of many different situations and circumstances—and turn failures into platforms for unprecedented growth.

Change is all about courage. It takes courage to cross the river—or to even step into the water. It takes courage to remove the shackles of comfort and complacency that limit who you are.

Comfort should be enjoyed physically but never mentally, spiritually, or financially. Complacency is a state of mind unbecoming for anyone with an ounce of life in him. Courage is your strongest advocate, the essential character trait—the force that gives birth to repentance and enables growth.

So begin to cross the river: List three important changes you'd like to make in your life. List the actions you will take each week or month (depending on what you've chosen to do) to ensure that you keep moving forward. Share it with a friend. Someone who might share his with you. Become partners and guarantors of each other's success. Support each



other and demand that the consistent, ongoing steps necessary for real advancement and noteworthy achievement are never abandoned.

Discover your unique talents and takes positive, calculated risks. The unemployment rate continues to hover around 8 percent, and most people are dissatisfied in their current jobs as they struggle to find meaningful employment and job satisfaction and a more fulfilling and satisfying personal life.

You need to develop a realistic plan of action with achievable goals. Aspire to have a career fueled by passion and a sense of fulfillment. Find your passion and take positive risks to accomplish career goals that may seem nearly impossible to achieve. Try using my effective planning system and tools to

pursue and fulfill your dreams, find the courage to take positive risks, and live meaningful and happier lives.

Discover your unique strengths while defining your own version of success. Eliminate self-doubt, fear, and overcome obstacles. Help others, whether through volunteering, mentoring, or community service, to build the self-confidence and independence necessary to succeed. Plan and launch a rewarding and satisfying career or business. If you are fed up with limited options, seek a new vision and direction and inspire those around you. Learn to take the risks and navigate the challenging recession economy to *jump-start your personal recovery*.

Risk is your most valuable asset and most potent tool—the enabler of your will, the facilitator of your courage, and the vehicle for you to imagine and envision. *Risk taking* is the enemy of mediocrity and complacency, and opens the door to career success, heightened love, and life enjoyment. The most successful leaders, lovers, and parents are perpetually taking risks to: unlock opportunity, create a new reality for those around them, move the love shared to a higher and deeper level, and provide children the managed freedom to excel.

Failure is Fabulous. *I wish all of you a giant public failure as soon as possible.* Failure is life's best teacher and it's most enabling experience. With the proper perspectives, failure becomes a liberator and the platform from which previously unimaginable success is generated. Rid yourself of the liabilities and burdens of failure and harvest its unmatched gifts.

Be disruptive! *The drive, creativity and risk taking expressed by entrepreneurs have always been the strongest force for success in the marketplace.* There is a dividing line between *entrepreneurs* and *employees*—a distinction of mindset and execution that precludes the entrepreneurial spirit from being expressed by various stakeholders. **Be disruptive!** Approach your job with drive, creativity, and risk taking. The entrepreneurial spirit resides in you. Give that spirit its voice.

Recession resurgence. *Creativity is in, redundancy is out!* Recessions are the best time to undertake a new business effort. Whether it be the launching of an individual entrepreneurial entity or repositioning an existing division, those who have the tools to navigate a recession's instabilities and understand its unique offerings will lead the next great business cycle. PE

Ricky Cohen is the author Risk to Succeed. Visit www.RisktoSucceed.com.

ACTION: *Cross the river to financial freedom.*

Struggle to Save?

Create your financial future.



by Don Civgin

IF YOU STRUGGLE TO SAVE money, you are not alone. Only half of Americans say they have money left at the end of the month after paying for essentials (Allstate Financial's *Life Tracks* poll).

Our poll reveals a divide in abilities to make ends meet. Four in 10 are living paycheck-to-paycheck while another 8 percent say they don't earn enough each month to pay for essentials. Responses point to an overall lack of financial management skills and resources, but a strong desire to do a better job this year.

Too many Americans face financial challenges that lead to instability.

Here are four top findings on how we are managing our personal finances.

1. Divided we stand. Half feel their personal financial situation is *excellent* or *good*, while half say it is *fair* or *poor*. Men are more *enthusiastic* about their finances than women (53 vs. 47 percent *excellent/good*). Single parents (74 percent *fair/poor*) are the most financially challenged. Only 46 percent of those in households making \$50,000 per year or less have a retirement plan in place (vs. 89 percent of those in \$75,000 or more per year income). Of those making \$50,000 or less annually, only one-fourth say they have money left over at the end of the month. One-third of college graduates (and half of non-graduates) say they live paycheck to paycheck.

2. Positive thinking: 91 percent are confident in their ability to manage their finances. This optimism trickles down to major milestone expenses along with future security perceptions; 42 percent of parents are confident about their ability to pay for educational opportunities for their children; 41 percent say they are confident about their ability to pay for a new car; 47 percent of prospective homebuyers are confident about their ability to buy a new home; 41 percent are confident about affording daily expenses during retirement; and 52 percent say they're doing better than their family was when they grew up.

3. Debt perception. Americans are *treading water* when it comes to debt, savings and investments: 82 percent say they make some debt-related payment each month; 49 percent say they pay credit card debt; 43 percent mortgage

payments; 36 percent car payments; 17 percent student loan payments; and 15 percent medical debts. Among the 51 percent expecting a tax return, 45 percent intend to pay off debt with the money; 65 percent of people with credit card debt say their level of debt has increased or remained the same. Just 15 percent say their emergency savings has increased, and 14 percent say their long-term savings/investments increased.

4. Priorities, priorities. Daily, people place a higher priority on activities other than their finances, yet recognize they need to do more to improve their finances. We spend about three hours per week managing household finances. 47 percent say they're saving less than they should be; and 40 percent admit they are not handling their finances properly or don't know what to do.

Observe Three Basics

Apply three basic principles as you tackle your financial fitness challenges:

1. Do your homework. You can find much *valuable yet free financial information* on personal finance websites, books, newspapers and seminars. Financial professionals and agents can guide you and help you set financial goals.

2. Set goals and a timetable to achieve them. Rather than trying to *make progress* on all your goals at once, prioritize those goals and focus on two or three that are *most important* to you.

3. Get an annual insurance checkup to check that the amount and type of coverage is *right for your current situation*. **PE**

Don Civgin is president and CEO of Allstate Financial. See www.allstate.com/financial.

ACTION: Create your financial future.

FINANCIAL • MARKET

Bull Market!

Grab it by the horns.



by Rick Rodgers

THE STOCK MARKET'S CLIMB and the Dow Jones closing at its first new high since 2008 prompted conflicting predictions from analysts. Some say it marks the end of an impressive bull market, while others say it's the beginning of a larger rally. These predictions may or may not turn out to be correct—and they leave the investor confused.

However, you can make some smart financial moves to potentially take advantage of the new stock market high.

• Rebalance. Rebalancing is correcting an asset allocation that has become imbalanced due to a market fluctuation. It brings your investments back into a pre-defined mix of equities and fixed-income assets. Your portfolio may be *over-weighted in stocks* because of the market high. Rebalancing now forces you to harvest some gains. In a down market, rebalancing forces you to buy at reduced prices. Buying low and selling high is a terrific investment strategy!

• Donate appreciated securities. You can meet donation goals and double your tax savings using *appreciated securities*. If you have owned the security for at least a year, you can donate the asset and use the current market value as a deduction on your taxes. You also avoid paying capital gains tax on the asset if you had sold it. This could be a big tax

savings on stocks purchased years ago.

• Exercise stock options. Stock compensation is a tool for attracting and retaining key employees. For many executives, much of their compensation is paid in stock options. This may be an excellent time to exercise your vested stock options. Both *non-qualified stock options* and *incentive stock options* come with expiration dates and price targets, but differ in their tax treatment. Consult a tax adviser before taking action.

• Net unrealized appreciation strategy. Withdraw company stock from your 401(k) and, instead of rolling it into an IRA, transfer it to a taxable brokerage account. This strategy avoids paying ordinary income taxes (max rate 39.6 percent) on the stock's net unrealized appreciation and turns it into a capital gain (max rate 20 percent). There are strict rules.

• Qualified charitable distribution (QCD). The *American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012* reinstated the ability to make a QCD through Dec. 31, 2013. This allows people over 70 to transfer up to \$100,000 from an IRA account to charities.

• Stop timing the market. You'll never know when the stock market will go up or down, but you don't have to know. Devise a *solid financial plan* using an asset-allocation strategy that divides your money between a *diversified equity portfolio* and *fixed income*. Rebalance your portfolio periodically to take advantage of stock market volatility. **PE**

Rick Rodgers, CFP, is president of Rodgers & Assoc., and author of The New Three-Legged Stool: A Tax-Efficient Approach to Retirement Planning. www.RodgersSpeaks.com.

ACTION: Grab the market by the horns.

Sacrifice for Success

Do you have the grit for it?



by James Mapes

THIS ARTICLE EVOLVED AS I noticed what I was giving up to complete my goals in a timely fashion. But I can attest: It has been well worth the sacrifice.

Do you have the grit to sacrifice for success? Consider this: “Great achievement is usually born of great sacrifice, and is never the result of selfishness,” wrote Napoleon Hill.

One of my favorite words is *creativity* and one of my least favorite is *sacrifice*. I have a visceral reaction to both. Creativity resonates as full of possibility, adventure and limitless imagination. My gut reaction to sacrifice is losing or giving up something I really want. The word instinctively makes me want to run the other way. Yet, it is impossible to achieve a worthwhile goal in the long-term without sacrificing something in the short-term.

Party or Perform?

I began to think about this subject last Sunday when my wife and I were invited to spend the afternoon with a group of friends. I really wanted to join them but I was on a mission to complete the latest revision of my book.

Conflicted and really wanting the food and drink that would accompany this social gathering, I chose to stay home while my wife joined the party.

My resolve took the form of focusing on a larger picture and jumpstarting my decision with will power. The same mental process of *projecting* on a worthwhile future vision also drives me to the gym several times a week and declining the short-term enjoyment of dessert after a meal.

We all must endure a little discomfort and give up something in the short-term to achieve a worthwhile goal in the long-term. Is it ever easy? Absolutely not.

Defining Sacrifice

How would you define sacrifice?

How does the word resonate within you? What images come to mind? Do you think of sacrifice as a completely selfless act in which someone gives up something to benefit another—like a

soldier sacrificing his or her life for fellow comrades or Mother Teresa giving every moment to caring for others?

I choose to view *sacrifice* through the lens of the Oxford Dictionaries definition: “an act of giving up something valued for the sake of something else regarded as more important or worthy.”

Perhaps this definition will help you to understand the mechanics of your thinking and how your actual DNA does not make sacrifice easy.

In fact, the two parts of your mind—the conscious and subconscious—are like a very small rider sitting atop a very large and stubborn Elephant that wants what it wants—now.

The primitive part of your brain—the subconscious—is simply not wired to sacrifice in the short-term in order to achieve something in the long-term.



Along with the programmed need to survive, *we are genetically wired to avoid pain and move towards pleasure*. The reality is that the subconscious part of our brain, which influences 90 percent of our choices, does not like to delay gratification. And, if we gave in to every primitive urge, we would most likely indulge in every short-term pleasure we could think of—even if those choices destroyed the quality of our lives. It doesn't help that the media plays on this vulnerability by prompting us to believe that we can get rich without working hard, lose weight without giving up our favorite foods or have the body of a model without exercising. This is where our conscious mind comes in.

Thankfully, the newest and most advanced part of our brain, the prefrontal cortex, gives us the power to resist these primitive subconscious urges—if we choose to use it. This part

of the brain has the unique capability to project into the future and visualize multiple paths to achieve a goal and then identify the short steps necessary to get there. Only you can choose to make short-term sacrifices to achieve long-term results. It's not easy. Sacrifice takes a willingness to endure momentary discomfort, will power, a powerful vision of the future and the acceptance that in order to move forward, you have to leave some things behind.

Sacrifice only makes good sense when you make friends with reality and accept that you can't have it all, that sometimes you must give up something of lesser value to have something of greater value. The something you give up is unique to your big picture. It might be a material object, a person or the very precious commodity of time. The key is having something of higher value to strive toward—a stretch goal—a larger purpose or meaning to life.

Try Four Strategies

As you read these strategies, keep in mind that sacrifice means choosing what is most important to you in the long-term and letting go of what gets in the way of your larger goal.

- **Let your highest values be your compass for sacrifice.** Know yourself. Look inwards and identify your top values. Make sure what you choose to sacrifice is congruent with your most important values. Different values such as service, money, fun or integrity each have an influence on choice.

- **Make a short list of what is really important to you in life**—both personally and professionally—*mentally, spiritually, physically, emotionally and socially*. This list will be the signpost to keep you on point.

- **Orchestrate your reality.** Minimize both distraction and temptation. I make sure that the possibility for temptation and distraction is minimized when I write by delaying the tempting distraction of checking emails constantly.

- **Keep your focus and recharge by working in focused short intervals.** Using will power is like leaving your car lights on when the engine is off. It drains your brain. In order to stick to your goal, take a minute or two break every 30 minutes of focused work. I stand up, stretch, walk around and have a drink of water.

Have the grit to follow these strategies for sacrifice and *minimize regrets*. PE

James Mapes is the author of Imagine That! A Tool Kit for Your Mind and Quantum Leap Thinking. Email James@jamesmapes.com or visit www.jamesmapes.com.

ACTION: Sacrifice for the success you seek.

Don't Be Afraid

Bring about beautiful things.



by Dan Holden

FEAR CAN ALERT YOU TO REAL danger; other times, fear stems from uncertainty and risk. Frederick Beuchner wrote, "Here is the world. Beautiful and terrible things will happen. Do not be afraid."

I remembered this when a colleague asked me how I made sense of mass shootings. I answered, "This is Earth. Things like that happen here."

The call to *Not Be Afraid* could also awaken you to the fact that you spend more time *reacting in fear* than you realize. Under duress, actions that are *terrible and threatening* look normal and necessary. Behavior that is *foolish and destructive* looks proactive and wise!

If you wonder how you can at times act so foolishly, it may be because conditions have changed without your knowing it. When you are under stress or threatened, your breathing becomes shallow; you take in less oxygen; your brain doesn't work well. You operate from such a stance of fear—but deny it.

Help Restore Life

Do you secretly yearn for something more intrinsically satisfying that would bring more achievement and reward and greater fulfillment and meaning? If so, here are three ways to restore life.

1. Cultivate presence—your original anchor and brand. There is an underlying *spiritual presence* around you. It is the truest part of you—the essential aspect of yourself, the part of you that holds all other aspects. Find and capture how you want most to live it by quieting yourself a little each day, and tracking your heart beat. Essential presence is a *calm interior place* amid an endless storm. You will find it on the other side of your fear.

2. Release the giftedness in others. The *best talent for the future* often comes dressed in hard-to-recognize costumes. They may look different; demonstrate prolonged periods of frustration, agitation, boredom, or restlessness; seldom fit in and see no reason to do so; fail to live up to or pass the standards you set for them; are quietly attracted to personal mastery and to those who are great masters. They show no particular interest in calling attention to themselves—they are caught up in doing

what matters to them. The lenses through which they view their life may strike you as strange—they may appear to waste too much time on things that seem foolish to you. Yet their impact is more positive or pronounced than most others. Something within them guides them somewhere more important. You need to see and call out their latent gifts.

3. Develop three disciplines that require *courage, vulnerability*, and an uncomfortable new relationship with now: 1) *Get clear about purpose and vision*: What outcomes do you want to create and why do these matter to you? Are they clear enough that you use them to make decisions now? How much of what you want serves only you, your ego? How

much serves something greater? Egos get in the line of sight of clear, courageous, purpose-driven action that moves you closer to outcomes that matter. 2) *Get clear about current reality*: Where are you now relative to desired outcomes? What inner fears, doubts and concerns impede your work? What's working well or not so well? 3) *Speak authentically about these issues with others* without lapsing into denial, finger pointing and blaming. Unexamined fear keeps you in a stagnant conversation that goes nowhere. *Real dialogue* requires *vulnerability* and *courage*. **PE**

Dan Holden is an executive coach, consultant, and author of *Lost Between Lives*. www.danielholdenassociates.com.

ACTION: Be the author of beautiful things.

SERVICE • POWER

Authentic Power

It is manifest in acts of service.



by Pope Francis

ASK ALL THOSE WHO HAVE positions of responsibility in economic, political, and social life, and all men and women of goodwill: Let us be *protectors of creation*, protectors of God's plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another and of the environment. *We must not be afraid of goodness* or even *tenderness*. Let us promote friendship and respect between men and women of different religious traditions.

Let us never forget that authentic power is service and that the Pope too, when exercising power, must enter ever more fully into that service. *Only those who serve with love are able to protect*. Protection means respecting each of God's creatures, especially the weak and poor, and respecting the environment. It means protecting people, showing loving concern for every person, especially children, the elderly, and those in need, who are often the last we think about. It means caring for one another in our families: Husbands and wives first protect one another, and then care for their children; and children themselves, in time, protect their parents. It means building sincere friendships in which we protect one another in trust, respect, and goodness.

Let us begin this journey of brotherhood in love and trust. Let us pray for one another, that there might be a great sense of brotherhood. God's face is that of a patient, merciful father. Mercy

makes the world *less cold* and *more just*. Let us not be like children who make sand castles and then see them all fall down. In the end, everything has been entrusted to our protection, and all of us are responsible for it. Each of us can help the less fortunate, those who are weak and suffering, to build peace.

We feel the closeness of those men and women who, while not belonging to any religious tradition, feel the need to search for the truth, the goodness and the beauty of God, and who are our allies in efforts to defend the dignity of man, in the building of a peaceful coexistence, and in the careful protection of creation. We know how much violence is provoked by the attempt to eliminate

God and the divine from the horizon of humanity, and we feel the need to witness in societies the *original openness to transcendence* inherent in the human heart.

We must keep alive the thirst for the absolute, and not reduce the vision of the person to what he produces and consumes. When people fail to care for their brothers and sisters, the way is opened to destruction and hearts are hardened.

I see the church as a body that gives service. It is true that going out in the street implies risk. But if the church becomes withdrawn, all wrapped up in itself, it will age and become sick.

Never give way to discouragement! Ours is not a joy born of having many possessions, but from knowing that with Christ we are never alone, even when we come up against problems and obstacles that seem insurmountable! This is our hope and our joy. **PE**

Pope Francis, formerly Jorge Mario Bergoglio, is the leader of the Catholic Church.

ACTION: Engage in acts of service.





SUPER SOULS



OPRAH'S CONVERSATION continues with The New York Times best-selling author **Brené Brown**, who highlights the insidious power of shame in our lives, offers advice on how to live with a whole heart, and shares her parenting manifesto and why she believes it could transform your life and family.

Clip 1: Cultivating Creativity

OPRAH: In your book, you say "cultivating creativity and letting go of comparison" is one way to conquer shame, guilt, and fear and live a wholehearted life. I never thought that creativity has to be cultivated.

DR. BROWN: Yes, it does. I thought before the break, if you would have called and said, hey, do you want to go to a painting class, I'd say No, you go do your a-r-t because I've got a j-o-b. And, then I realized that one thing all wholehearted men and women have in common is they cultivate creativity. They do something creative—you know, painting, photography, rebuilding engines, cooking. And then it became very clear to me: Unused creativity is not benign. It metastasizes. It's dangerous. It turns into grief, rage, judgment, sorrow, shame. But we are divine beings, and we are by nature creative. And it gets lost along the way—it gets shamed out of us.

Clip 2: Parenting Manifesto

OPRAH: One thing I think is most moving here is your "wholehearted parenting manifesto." How wonderful to raise your kids this way! Every home should have its own manifesto. If you don't, then your home is operating under confusion and chaos and whatever. And maybe you have a manifesto that hasn't been spoken. But I would love for people to adopt this manifesto as their own or adjust it as they will. So can you read the parenting manifesto.

DR. BROWN: I don't know if I can read it without crying because I'm away from my kids. But, okay.

"Above all else I want you to know that you are loved and lovable. You will learn this from my words and my actions, the lessons on love

are in how I treat you and how I treat myself. I want you to engage with the world from a place of worthiness. You will learn that you are worthy of love, belonging, and joy every time you see me practice self-compassion and embrace my own imperfections."

"We will practice courage in our family by showing up, letting ourselves be seen, and honoring vulnerability. We'll share our stories of struggle and strength, there will always be room in our home for both. We will teach you compassion by practicing compassion with ourselves first, then with each other. I want you to know joy so together we'll practice gratitude. I want you to feel joy so together we'll learn how to be vulnerable. Together we'll cry and face fear and grief. I will want to take away your pain, but instead I will sit with you and teach you how to feel it."

"We will laugh and sing and dance and create. We will always have permission to be ourselves with each other, no matter what. You will always belong here." Okay. "As you begin your wholehearted journey, the greatest gift that I can give to you is to live and love with my whole heart and to dare greatly. I will not teach or love or show you anything perfectly, but I will let you see me and I will always hold sacred the gift of seeing you truly deeply seeing you."

OPRAH: Oh, I'm crying now. We all want a mother like that. And a dad. I wish that every parent would go to Oprah.com, get your book, and live by those words. Really. That's how you change the world.

Super Soul Sunday is the multi-award winning daytime series that delivers a timely thought-provoking, eye-opening and inspiring block of programming designed to help viewers awaken to their best selves and discover a deeper connection to the world around them. "Super Soul Sunday" features all-new conversations between Oprah Winfrey and top thinkers, authors, visionaries and spiritual leaders—an array of perspectives on what it means to be alive in today's world. Visit: <http://www.oprah.com/own-super-soul-sunday/super-soul-sunday.html>.

PersonalCOACH



Redefining Success

Come up with your own definition. by Sallie Krawcheck

WHICH OF THESE REPRESENTS SUCCESS? 1) A Fortune 500 CEO, who beat a straight line to the top job in her company. 2) An entrepreneur who has just completed a \$100 million funding round. 3) An individual who moves in and out of the workforce during his career, charging up the ladder, then stepping out for a bit, then coming back part-time for awhile and then completing his career owning a small business and with two kids finishing graduate school.

The first two cases are clear; the last does not fall neatly into our conventional definition of success. But it may well represent a very successful and fulfilling career—and life—and a more modern approach to the rhythms of work and "real life."

This raises the question of how we define success, both for ourselves individually and at a societal level—particularly without any celebrated role models or clear templates for this third way.

Add Some Flexibility

And as the saying goes, *it's hard to be what you can't see*. So this also raises the question of how possible this type of career path is, really. Indeed, while many companies spill a lot of ink talking about their flex programs, the fact that 60 percent of working mothers with minor children report that they wish they had flexibility in their work lives (implying, of course, that they don't) tells us that we have a long way to go. For too many women today, their stark choice is to "gut it out" during their children's younger years to stay on an upward career trajectory, or go home, thereby risking their ability to get back into the traditional workplace (and impairing their earning potential).

Smart companies will recognize the latent talent in this third model of success and move toward allowing "flexibility without shame," thereby accessing and financially rewarding the experience and talent in this group. At the same time, we may be at the dawn of a great age of female entrepreneurialism as technology brings the cost (and effort) of starting a business way down.

But, a lot of this comes down to how each of us defines success for ourselves and our families, and what we as a culture and community celebrate. PE

Sallie Krawcheck is Past President of Merrill Lynch, US Trust, Smith Barney.

ACTION: Redefine what success means to you.

Responsibility

It need not be a burden.



by Deepak Chopra

BEING RESPONSIBLE IS THE mark of a mature, conscious person. But success also requires risk-taking, intuitive leaps, innovation, and thinking outside the box. You will quash those values if you are totally conservative and cautious. You don't have to view *responsible* as synonymous with *caution* and a policy of *no risks*. Being *responsible*, seen in the wider context, means showing initiative, taking mature risks rather than reckless ones, walking the talk, having integrity, and living up to your inner values.

Your greatest responsibility is to lead people along *higher consciousness*, climbing a hierarchy of steps, beginning with a *lack of recklessness* and rising to the top, where you are responsible for imparting the highest values of your vision.

You earn your credentials for *being a responsible leader* through *seven behaviors*, which are imitated by others: 1. You show that actions have consequences. 2. You don't say one thing and do another. 3. You don't shirk the hard choices or delegate them to others so that you are covered no matter what happens. 4. You don't have henchmen who do the dirty work so that your hands look clean. 5. If you back someone up, you establish a bond that they can depend on. 6. You treat people decently, putting everyone on an equal plane. 7. You are cautious with other people's money, taking seriously your fiduciary responsibility.

If you follow these principles, you will engender a culture of trust and loyalty. People will feel secure. *Insecurity creates massive stress* and many problems.

But we have to be realistic, too. Today more than ever, it takes consciousness to keep on the responsible track. For many in business, responsibility has become an old-fashioned value to be shrugged off in favor of profitability. The financial crash of 2008 was engineered through a flagrant lack of responsibility, combined with risk-taking far out of bounds with sensible practice. Yet the lesson that the financial sector took away was the opposite of responsible. With record profits and huge bonuses in the offing, they went back to a slightly modified version of their worst practices.

All of this took place within a larger trend of income inequality, the deteriora-

tion of worker's benefits, lost pensions, and pressure to show a rising profit to shareholders. If you expect to be a leader, *you must decide personally if you are going to follow the trend or hold on to your own values*. The ultimate responsibility is the one you owe to yourself.

Leading from the soul means that you take responsibility for more than the group's needs. You have a concern for everyone's *person growth*. This responsibility begins with your own evolution.

In eight areas of your life you have the power to be guided by your soul: thoughts, emotions, perception, personal relationships, social role, environment, speech, and the body. In all of these areas your behavior affects the people you lead. If you evolve, so will they.

To lead from the soul means that evo-

lution is your top priority. You never act in a way that you lower the self-esteem of others. You examine your underlying beliefs and modify them as new opportunities for growth reveal themselves. Because evolution is an unstoppable force in the universe, you draw upon invisible powers. Thus, being responsible is no longer a burden. It rests lightly on you as long as you continue to grow.

This vision is embraced enthusiastically by top executives. They all know the burden of responsibility and carry it. They are relieved to hear about a path where responsibility isn't a burden. **PE**

Deepak Chopra, MD, founder of Deepak Chopra LLC, is author of 70 books, including The Soul of Leadership, and co-author with Rudolph E. Tanzi of Super Brain (Harmony). Visit www.deepakchopra.com.

ACTION: Be guided by your soul.

INSPIRATION • FAITH

Life Beyond Fear

When fear pushes you, push back!



by Jay Platt

WHAT IF YOU COULD OVERCOME your fears?

What would you do, and

how different would you be?

Most people have no idea of what they're capable of; I think they're almost trained by fear to *not* attempt the amazing things they dream of. But I'm living proof—if you can overcome fear, you can overcome almost anything.

I was living my dream as a U.S. Marine when a cancer syndrome (VHL) exploded like a bomb on my life. It caused tumors in my brain and on my spine, as well as kidney cancer and the loss of my left eye.

After being told that my future would be considerably dimmer than my past, I was mad at the world. Maybe part of me was afraid of the fact that I would be considered a handicapped person.

So, I set out to *rebuild myself* physically, mentally and spiritually, and to set demanding physical goals. I then went on accomplish amazing feats. Along with my record-breaking swim across the Mississippi River while blindfolded, handcuffed and shackled, I swam from Alcatraz Island to San Francisco with my hands and feet tied, and I am one of fewer than 300 people to have hiked the 2,100-mile Appalachian Trail.

Five areas helped me overcome fear to rebuild my body, mind and spirit.



• **Focus on the joys in life:** When you realize it's not all about you, the annoying voice that tells you to be afraid begins to lose its poison. While reeling from my diagnosis and its effects on my life, I heard the carefree laughter of a handicapped girl being pushed in her wheelchair by her mother. That sent me on a positive path. My family, friends and those to whom I donate money through charities give me strength.

• **Spiritual preparation:** Just as I train physically for my feats, I work out spiritually in order to stand up to the fear and anxieties that life's trials bring. To that end, I surround myself with positive messages and positive people.

• **Use setbacks as a motivator:** When something bad happens, you tend to respond with fear that it will happen again or fear that you're less than you used to be. When I was forced to retire early, I had to recalibrate my entire life. One of my favorite questions is, "What are you doing now?" It doesn't matter what you used to be. I am always looking forward to achieving my next goal.

• **Remember a greater good:** When I started experiencing complications from VHL, which first manifested in my left eye, I promised God that I'd *devote my life to others* if I got through the scare. I've kept that promise—my Appalachian Trail hike alone raised \$109,000 for charity. Staying true to a promise might be the most emotionally solid aid to overcoming fear. **PE**

Jay Platt was medically retired from the Marine Corps in 1998. He's subject of the new documentary, Living Unstoppable. Visit www.LivingUnstoppable.com.

ACTION: Use faith/action to overcome fear.

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