

# Personal Excellence

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The Magazine of Personal Leadership

Oprah Winfrey  
Talk Show Host

**Live Life  
on the Whisper**

**Real  
Wealth**

**Happy  
Thoughts**

**The Spirit  
of Service**

**August 2007**

"Personal Excellence is the only reading you'll need to do for continual self-improvement both personally and professionally!"

—Sharlene Hawkes, Former Miss America,  
award-winning ESPN broadcaster



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# Personal Excellence

August 2007

The Magazine of Life Leadership

SERVICE • SPIRIT

## Spirit of Service

*It's the strength of our nation.*

by George W. Bush

ASK EACH OF YOU TO MAKE THE PEOPLE IN YOUR life proud of you by living up to the high ideals of charity and community service. These ideals have a special resonance for Americans. From the beginning, America has offered the world a new model for community life. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, a Frenchman, Alexis de Tocqueville, visited the United States. He was impressed by the way Americans came together in voluntary associations to help a neighbor in need. In *Democracy in America*, he wrote, "When an American asks for the co-operation of his fellow citizens, it is seldom refused. If some great and sudden calamity befalls a family, the purses of a thousand strangers are at once willingly opened."

We continue to see the good heart of America. We see it in citizens who respond to accidents and atrocities with acts of selflessness and compassion. We see it in our commitment to alleviate poverty and suffering. We see it in the volunteers who serve in our faith-based and community organizations—good and decent folks who are living the commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves. Today, more than 61 million Americans volunteer their time to serve others, more than three-quarters of our citizens give to charity. The volunteer spirit of America makes us unique. It represents the true strength of our nation, and it must constantly be reinvigorated and renewed.

That's why it's vital for you to step forward and serve a cause larger than yourself.

When you serve your fellow citizens, you find benefits you never imagined. You discover that one caring person is sometimes all it takes for someone to turn his or her life around. You see that kindness and respect make an enormous difference in a person's life. You learn to take the initiative, instead of waiting for government to step in. You become more aware of others, a better man or woman to your friends and families, a better citizen of your country.

You start to put your own difficulties in perspective. And soon you learn a great truth: that you always get more out of service than you give.

Your willingness to serve will define the character of our nation. I am confident in you, as young people today are more likely to volunteer or become engaged in civic life than previous generations. Service outside the classroom is as important as what you learn inside the classroom. The challenge for you is

to keep this up as you start careers and families. I ask you to make service more than a line on your resume. Find a need that is not being met. Do your part to fill it—make a difference.

You who volunteer to wear our nation's uniform know the risks of serving in a time of war, and yet you voluntarily accept those risks. You choose a noble calling, as you take your place in the finest military the world has ever known. At some point, the lives of other men and women will be in your hands—and they will need leaders of character and selflessness. As your Commander-in-Chief, I salute you for your service, and I ask Almighty God to keep you close as you keep our nation safe.



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There are many other ways to serve our nation. Across this land of opportunity, we have citizens with great needs. And for every need, there is a path to service.

Some of you have chosen the path of teaching. We all know a teacher who has made a difference in our lives. In my case, I married her. The First Lady showed me that teaching is more than a job or profession—it is a vocation. When you decide to become a teacher, you know that your reward will be greater than money. It will happen in moments when you see a student grasp a difficult concept, or come alive during the reading of a poem, or discover how a work of history speaks to our time. To do this for even one child is special. To do this for hundreds of children will bring you a satisfaction that few other professions can match.

The rewards of teaching can be found in any classroom. For example, St. Benedict's all-boys school is located in a poor area of New Jersey. For many of these boys, St. Benedict's is their only safe haven from the crime, drugs, and hopelessness around them. Several St. Vincent students spend time mentoring these young men, helping them achieve their dreams.

To those who have chosen to teach, I thank you and ask you to set high standards in your classroom. Challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations. Teach your students with respect. And always remember the ideals that attracted you to this noble profession.

Some of you may not yet have decided the best way for you to serve. The government can't put love in your heart, but when you find the love and drive, we can help put it in action. That's why I created the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. Through this office, we help ensure that federal funds for social service go to organizations that get results—even if they have a crucifix or a Star of David on the wall.

We also established the USA Freedom Corps to help mobilize volunteers to bring the comfort and kindness of America to people both at home and abroad. Today thousands of volunteers mentor children, assist the elderly, build schools and clinics, and respond to natural disasters. No matter what your interests or skills, there's a place for you to serve in our nation's armies of compassion.

Even if you can't devote yourself to a career of service, you can make a life of service. Mother Teresa's life was dedicated to doing small things with great love. She went to the side of those who were suffering or about to die. She treated them with great gentleness, squeezing their hands, and whispering words of comfort. Their

look of wonder tells you that these are people who may have felt loved for the first time in their lives. Simply holding a dying person's hand with great love can help fill his or her final days with dignity and grace.

I've met thousands of volunteers who serve others in many different ways. They put themselves in some of the harshest places in our country and in the world. Yet instead of telling me how hard they have it, they always tell me how fortunate they are.

You can know this joy in your life. All you need is a warm heart and willing hands. When Mother Teresa accepted her Nobel Prize, she told the story about visiting a nursing home where the residents were always looking at the door. When she asked why everyone seemed so sad, one caretaker said: "They are sad because they're forgotten. They stare at the door, hoping that it will

open and someone who loves them will walk through it."

My challenge to you is this: Be the person who walks through that door. Be the face that brings a smile to the hurt and forgotten. Lead lives of purpose and character—make a difference in someone else's life. When you do, you'll lead a richer life and build a more hopeful nation, and you'll never be dis-

appointed.

So, set worthy goals for yourself—and work to meet those goals with determination and discipline. You live in a world of opportunity, and opportunity changes everything. New possibilities are opening every day. And the key to unlocking those possibilities is a good education and a determination to achieve your dreams. I ask you to dream big, to be confident in your future, and use your capabilities to stake your claim in this land of opportunity, which remains a beacon of hope for people from every corner of the world. In America, your origins matter less than your dreams. If you work hard, and commit to a lifetime of learning, doors will open for you, and you can build a brighter future for yourself and your family.

I ask you to step forward to serve a cause larger than yourself. Volunteer in a local soup kitchen or shelter. Take time to check in on an elderly neighbor. Be a mentor to a child in need. Use your education and skills to help build a better nation. Our armies of compassion need you. How will you answer my call to extend the promise of America, and make our nation a more hopeful place? I ask for the Almighty God's blessings on you and your life. PE



George W. Bush is president of the United States of America. This article is adapted from his speech at St. Vincent College and Miami Dade College.

**ACTION:** Serve your community and country.



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# Be a Light

## Rediscover God.



by Newt Gingrich

**W**E NEED TO REDISCOVER God in America and remember the words of our Lord: “Do not light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, that it may give light to the whole house.”

The *Bible* and the *Declaration of Independence* require Americans to bear witness to certain self-evident truths. Indeed, the *Declaration* assumes many of the central teachings of the *Bible*. When our *Declaration* asserts “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”, it makes some key assumptions. It assumes that God is sovereign over the universe and that God created man. And it assumes that man must obey an order of justice which God Himself has instituted.

That order of justice requires all men to honor each other’s natural rights, because these rights are the unalienable endowment of the Almighty. When someone violates the rights of another, they are not merely breaking the law—they are violating God’s grant of protection. The truths of the *Declaration* reflect the Truth of the *Bible*. They are truths to which we must bear witness. We have relied upon these truths in our times of crisis; they have been the lights that guided us through our darkest hours. As the nation plunged toward civil war, Abraham Lincoln recalled the basic assertion of the *Declaration*: “Nothing stamped with the Divine image and likeness was sent into the world to be trodden on, and degraded, and imbruted by its fellows.”

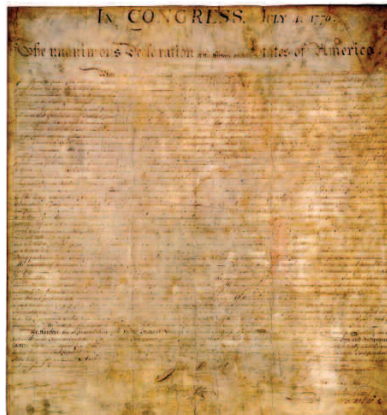
Some 82 years later, President Franklin D. Roosevelt wrote: “Our modern democratic way of life has its deepest roots in our great common religious tradition, which for ages past has taught to civilized mankind the dignity of the human being, his equality before God, and his responsibility in the making of a better and fairer world.”

On D-Day, June 6, 1944, FDR went on national radio to lead the nation in prayer: “Almighty God, help us to prevail over the unholy forces of our

enemy and conquer the apostles of greed and racial arrogance.” We are a nation sustained by our Creator.

Even today, these truths sustain and guide us. We believe that all men and women have equal rights, because that is the will of the Almighty, and it is God that endows them. Yet darkness is again falling across the earth, and it is again the calling of America to light her moral lamps, and place them out.

Today, however, we face another difficulty as those truths are now being challenged from within. A growing culture of radical secularism declares that the nation cannot publicly profess the truths on which it was founded. We are told that our public schools cannot invoke the Creator, nor proclaim the natural law, nor profess the God-given equality of human rights. In hostility to American history, radical



secularists insist that religious belief is inherently divisive and public debate can only proceed on secular terms.

In this contorted logic, the public square strips away and banishes all religious symbols and language. Sadly, these false principles of secular absolutism have deeply penetrated the legal and judicial establishment.

Dr. Jerry Falwell understood that the relentless efforts to drive God from public life would inevitably affect our respect for life itself. It would pressure believers to hide their lamps beneath a bushel. Jerry refused. He would not be passive or ashamed or cowed. He preached: “Feelings of powerlessness can lead to despair. But, an all-powerful God loves you and will never forsake you. Give your problems to Him, and gain His peace over the situations that trouble your soul.” He refused to put his lamp beneath a bushel, and because of that, he was often unfairly caricatured. Though he faced tribulation, he remained of good cheer. His students often heard him say: “You do not determine a man’s greatness by his talent or wealth, as the world does, but

rather by what it takes to discourage him.” And so he would bear witness, and act on his convictions. And he was correct to do so for three reasons:

**First, basic fairness demands that religious believers deserve a chance to be heard.** This is a democracy. We are supposed to invite all persons and all parties to the public debate. It is wrong to single out those who believe in God for discrimination. Yet today we often hear the need to celebrate free secular and artistic expression—but rarely for religious expression. Often, courts have been biased against religious believers.

**Second, the Founding Fathers considered religion a great benefit to society.** They believed that the purpose of government was the protection of liberty, and that the maintenance of liberty required virtue among its citizens. The “pursuit of happiness” was a Scottish enlightenment phrase meaning virtue and wisdom. And if virtue was to survive in the American experiment, it would require “true religion” that cultivates the virtues necessary to the protection of liberty. Any true religion would deserve the respect of the government, which would include the freedom to express in public the moral principles of such a true religion. Constitutional self-government requires personal self-government; the more the government can rely on its citizens, the less it will need to govern them because they will govern themselves.

**Third, we must bear witness to these truths** because we’ve been commanded to do so. We possess a treasure of great worth, one which we’ve been instructed to share with the world. We cannot hide our lamps, because we’ve been instructed by God not to hide our lamps. Let us firmly resolve to put them upon a stand, and let them burn brightly, a gift from God for all the world to see.

Great accomplishments are possible with God’s help. Lead by serving. Be not afraid. Both the life of faith and the life of citizenship require courage, perseverance, and good cheer. But above all, they require action. Resolve to give, and never count the cost; to fight, and never heed the wounds; to labor, and never seek reward. Trust that your strength shall be renewed; that you shall be lifted as with eagles’ wings; that you shall run, and not grow weary. Let us follow the charge of the Gospels to light our lamps, and place them on a stand, that all the world may see. **PE**

*Newt Gingrich is the former speaker of the house. This article is adapted from his Commencement Address at Liberty University. Visit [www.Gingrich.com](http://www.Gingrich.com).*

**ACTION:** Light your moral lamp.

# Life on the Whisper

*Don't wait for the earthquake.*



by Oprah Winfrey

**P**LEASE HONOR YOUR CALLING in life while honoring your creator and serving others. Follow your calling. Find out what gives you juice; nobody can tell you what that is. You may wonder and worry what you'll do next. Relax, you're in good hands: God's got your back. My childhood and early career serve as examples of how God can dream a bigger dream for you than you can dream for yourself. I am a symbol of what is possible, especially when you observe five principles:

- **Be grateful to be on your path.** By being grateful, you allow space for more blessings. I have kept a journal since I was 15 years old, and I invite you to keep a grateful journal. Every night list five things that happened that you are grateful for. This practice will change your perspective and your life. If you can focus on what you have, you'll see that the universe is abundant, and you will have more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you'll never have enough.

- **Be who you are.** Seek to become more fully who you are—come to the fullest possibilities who you really are. Daily experiences teach you, moment by moment, who you really are and to be more fully who you really are. Don't pretend to be something or somebody you're not. For a long time, I wanted to look like Diana Ross. Then I wanted to be Barbara Walters. Through a series of mistakes, I learned I could be a better Oprah than I could be a Barbara. I allowed Barbara to be a mentor for me, and I pursued the idea of being myself. My inner voice told me, "You need to find a way to answer to your own truth."

- **When people show you who they are, believe them, the first time.** That's important when it comes to men because when he doesn't call back the first time, when he mistreats you, when he shows you a lack of integrity or dishonesty or discourtesy the first time, know that that will be followed by many other times. At some point, it will come back to haunt or hurt you.

- **Turn your wounds into wisdom.** You'll be wounded many times in your life. You'll make mistakes. Some people will call them "failures," but failure is

just God's way of saying, "You're moving in the wrong direction." For example, I was taken off the air in Baltimore and told that I was "not fit for television." The truth was that I was could not anchor the news. The first day I was on the air doing my first talk show in 1978, it felt natural, like breathing. That's how your passion should feel.

- **Create the highest, grandest vision possible for your life.** You become what you believe. When I was little girl, growing up with my grandmother on a small farm in Mississippi, I realized in the spirit of myself that my life could be bigger, greater than what I saw. I understand there is a greater power that rules my life. If you can allow the energy of your personality or life force to be connected to the greater force, anything is

CHARACTER • HEALING

# Spiritual Healing

*Renew and heal your soul.*



by Susan Apollon

**D**URING THE SUMMER, MOST of us are in the mood to clean our homes, plant and tend our gardens, connect with friends and family. Summer is a good time to renew your soul by replacing your old spiritual habits with new ones that lead to healing. *So, sweep away old spiritual habits that hold you back and replace them with healthy, joyful new ones.*

Spiritual healing is about bringing into harmony your thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and actions. Healing takes place when you reclaim your power, wisdom, or spirit and reconnect with your soul or Higher Self, and with God.

Don't fret about the future, worry about your kids, or obsess over health issues. Refuse to settle for a job, a relationship, a lifestyle—a life—that doesn't fulfill you. You heal spiritually when you accept and align all parts of yourself in a way that allows you to be true to yourself. You feel more at peace and more confident about who you are, your worth, and your wisdom.

### Law of Attraction

Spiritual healing happens when you work with the *Law of Attraction*: like energy attracts like energy. Since everything is energy and vibrates, you attract experiences of a similar vibration. What you focus on (thoughts, feelings, and

possible for you. My life, what I have done, speaks to the possibility. Not that I am so special. Every life speaks to the power of what can be done. Yet many people have such small dreams for their lives. Dream a bigger dream and hold the grandest vision possible for your life.

When a difficult experience comes into my life, I ask, "What is it you are here to teach me?" I try to get God on the whisper. He always whispers first. Try to get the whisper, because the whisper is followed by a louder voice, then you get a brick—and then sometimes a brick wall or an earthquake. **PE**

*Oprah Winfrey is the celebrated talk show host and CEO of Harpo Entertainment. This article is adapted from her speech at the 2007 Commencement at Howard University and at Wellesley College.*

**ACTION:** Listen to the whispers of the spirit.

images) causes you to vibrate at a particular level. Focusing on thoughts or images that cause you to feel good enables you to be at a higher energy.

When you worry about your job, grades, children, or health—your energy is low, and you experience events and situations of equally low vibrations.

Everything you desire is available to you, if you can just get out of your own way. You put your own stumbling blocks in your path by way of your attachment to negative or low-energy thoughts, images, concerns, unresolved issues; your inability to



forgive and release old feelings of anger, judgment, and pain. Suggestions such as *lighten up, let go and surrender, detach and move on* all represent a shift to a better place.

Becoming aware of how you are feeling enables you to clean up (or out) your spiritual closets and attract what feels better—wonderful things and experiences, your hopes and dreams. Decide what you intend to do or make happen in your life that will make you feel good or better (happy, satisfied, joyful, peaceful). Once you have clear intentions, you can give them power by focusing on them. You might choose to write about your dreams once a day in an intention journal. You might create a vision board on which you place motivational sayings or beautiful images. Imagine living your intention, experiencing your dream, and feeling the joy of this experience. **PE**

*Susan Apollon is the author of Touched by the Extraordinary. Visit [www.touchedbytheextraordinary.com](http://www.touchedbytheextraordinary.com) or [www.extraordinaryhealingonline.com](http://www.extraordinaryhealingonline.com).*

**ACTION:** Observe the law of attraction.

# Compete to Win

*Live and work by three ideas.*



by Jeffrey Immelt

**Y**OU ARE BRIGHT AND TALENTED. Still, life can be a grind. We all struggle at some point. We live in the midst of unprecedented change and volatility. Our national competitiveness is challenged. Our trade deficit is \$1 trillion! This must change—and fast—or we risk losing our position in the world.

We face record high-energy costs and geopolitical uncertainty. We do not have control over our energy future. This must change, fast, or we'll always be dependent on others for our security. Our population is aging quickly. By 2020, nearly 30 percent of our population will be older than 65. This will put a massive burden on our healthcare system. At the same time, we still have 45 million people who lack access to healthcare. This must change, fast, or you will not have a healthcare safety net by the time you retire. In a period of economic prosperity and wealth creation, the bottom 25 percent of this country are losing ground. This must change, fast, or America risks losing its mantle as the land of opportunity.

Solving these problems is your great opportunity. The key is optimism. Yet today, many people are apprehensive. They worry about the war, the environment, or their education. They want to be led by people who have the courage to take on tough problems, the determination to build long-term solutions, and compassion to bring people with them. You must appeal to their optimism, not their fear. To do that, you must be both great and good. We need you to compete to be your best, while maintaining your authenticity and sense of service.

Observe three principles:

**1. Live with passion.** Passion connects the mind with the heart. I had no idea where my journey would lead when I left college. But I did know I would go at full speed. My passion is innovation. I know that technology, creativity, and risk-taking can change the world. For example, innovation will create energy independence and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The challenges of energy availability, global warming, water scarcity, and conservation permeate every part of the world. Technology can preserve the environ-

ment and achieve productivity. I have a passion to make America energy-independent. At GE, we'll invest billions over the next decade to bring new innovation—wind, solar, hybrid, clean coal, new nuclear, water desalination—to the market. We've invested \$15 billion in these technologies, and this could be \$50B in the near future.

Innovation is hard work. Some technologies are risky. People like the status quo. Government policy is uncertain. But the technologies exist to create American energy security and improve the environment. Energy innovation will create a different future for you—one that is cleaner, safer, and more self-reliant. It will make us competitive and create jobs. But you must make it your passion.

**2. Live with purpose.** Purpose turns passion into reality. Today, the source of my greatest determination is in healthcare. I know that, in my lifetime, we can treat major diseases more effectively at lower cost. But problems like this take human intervention to drive change. That's why we must have a purpose to make the system better.

One challenge we're taking on at GE right now is Alzheimer's disease. Today, 5 million Americans suffer from Alzheimer's. By 2030, the total will reach 14 million at a cost to the U.S. healthcare system of \$100 billion. There's no cure, only limited treatments. GE has invested billions of dollars into technology can diagnose Alzheimer's in a living person. This technology will help scientists and researchers track the progress of potential new cures. If we can delay the symptoms by five years, the incidence would be cut in half! Can you imagine how we'll feel when we solve this problem? And there's more to be done beyond that.

Distinguish yourself through your determination. Commit to build competency. Have a purpose to your life. Define your own goals. Work hard and live your dreams.

**3. Bring people with you.** When I graduated from college, I knew that I could compete for myself. What I have learned over the last 25 years is that teaching teams to compete is more fun. My parents were great believers in education. My father used to say that a great education was society's "equalizer;" it could make a poor man rich.

I would add that you can't be rich

unless you give something back. I don't mean charity, although that is important. The best gift you can give is confidence—teaching people to compete on their own. Every day, people try to convince you that Americans can't compete. In fact, some people running for President believe that you need protection to save you from global competition. I believe that embracing globalization is your greatest opportunity.

We have a 100-year-old factory that makes locomotives in Erie, Pennsylvania. We employ 4,500 people, mainly production workers. These are great, high-value jobs. Our wages have paid for thousands to reach their dream of having a house or attaining a college education for themselves or their children. We could make these products anywhere. Instead, we invested in technology, manufacturing practices, and customer service. We have the world's best products that are now exported to Mexico, Brazil, China and India. Winning is a team sport.

Live with passion and purpose. Live for others. People are afraid. They need new leaders. They need the energy and optimism from you to triumph over the cynics. They need you to be a leader.

Many smart people never live their dreams. For last 25 years, I've had a career that's been both fun

and interesting. Today, I am the 9<sup>th</sup> Chairman in the history of GE. I run a \$170 billion company with 300,000 wonderful people. GE is a valuable company and a leader in life-changing technology. I work for investors, and I have a vast responsibility to perform for them.

My life and career haven't been perfect. But I have a passion for what I do; I am committed to drive change; and I put people first. I am an optimist, determined to put it on the line every day. I am trying to give my great GE team one thing: confidence in the future.

A great education is an essential foundation for your future. Don't waste it. Be filled with confidence, compassion, and courage. Believe that you can do anything. You can do anything. If that is how you all feel, then you will do everything! You will be our Greatest Generation. Just remember: passion, purpose, team. You will fix the problems we leave behind. **PE**

*Jeffrey Immelt is the CEO of General Electric. Visit [www.GE.com](http://www.GE.com).*

**ACTION:** Have confidence in your future.

# Summer of Savings

Nine tips for financial sanity.



by Eric Tyson

SUMMER, THE GREEN SEASON, is upon us. And the “green” doesn’t just stand for trees and lawns. It stands for cold hard cash. Kids cost money all year long, but summer brings extra expenses. Overspending sends the wrong message to your kids. You can have more family fun and spend less! Don’t assume that you have to take a fabulous family vacation or send the kids to camp. Overspending on summer activities and “stuff” teaches kids poor money habits. So, rein in your spending and teach your kids how to make smart financial decisions. Here are nine tips:

**1. Think about your value system before you make your plans.** The way you spend your money and your time reveals your values. Actions *do* speak louder than words—and your kids are listening. You’d never say, “You can’t have fun unless you spend a lot of money to have prepackaged experiences.” So think about what’s important to you—and what message it sends.

**2. Don’t charge summer activities.** If a vacation or a summer camp doesn’t fit your budget, it doesn’t fit your budget. Use debt only to make investments in things that gain value, such as real estate, a business, or an education. If you can’t pay cash for summer trips and activities, don’t do it or buy it.

**3. When you’re trying to decide whether you can afford a vacation, factor in all the hidden costs.** Before you reserve your hotel, make a list of all the expenses. The cost of a vacation is not just hotel and airfare. It’s also the new swimsuits, the rental car, the gas, the pet care, and the photography. You can’t make an informed decision until you know the total cost of the vacation.

**4. Vacation close to home.** You don’t need to fly thousands of miles away to have a nice vacation. Airfare is expensive, and so is ground transportation. Look for a worthwhile destination within a few hours’ drive: a beach, mountain range, national park. You still have that getting-away-from-it-all feeling.

**5. Be a smart vacationer.** To cut costs, plan ahead. Research the best, budget-friendly activities and destinations. Don’t fall prey to overpriced tourist traps. Don’t go overboard on the hotel.

Bring your own snacks. Prepare a few meals. Don’t buy T-shirts and trinkets. Spend on photos. If your child brings a friend, make sure he pays his own way.

**6. Dream up creative vacation alternatives.** For instance, you can “vacation at home” by spending a week exploring fun, kid-friendly destinations within easy driving distance. Or spend a few nights camping (assuming you already have the gear). Or visit relatives who have an unfamiliar lifestyle. Find inexpensive educational activities.

**7. Skip the expensive summer camp.** If summer camp is a “must” for your kids, seek the more affordable ones. Don’t assume your kids have to go to camp. This is the time families should be together, doing fun things together.

**8. Consider summer jobs for your**

**kids.** If you’re worried that your kids will spend their summer in front of the TV and computer and playing video games, put them to work. Give them regular chores and summer projects. Pay them a modest allowance.

**9. Encourage your kids to give this summer, not receive.** Spending lots of money on kids in the form of vacations, summer camps, or new bikes and cars can breed materialism and a sense of entitlement. Encourage your children to give to others who are less fortunate.

Toys, classes, sports, and field trips can rack up big bills. Set guidelines and limits for spending on activities. PE

*Eric Tyson is the author of Personal Finance For Dummies (Wiley) and a best-selling personal finance book author. Call 828-325-4966.*

**ACTION:** Spend wisely this summer.

## FINANCIAL • WEALTH

# What Is Real Wealth?

Consider the parable of the pickle jar.



by Abe Walking Bear Sanchez

AS LONG AS I CAN REMEMBER, the pickle jar sat on the floor in my parents’ bedroom. When he got ready for bed, Dad would empty his pockets and toss his coins into the jar.

I used to sit in front of the jar and admire the coins. When the jar was filled, Dad would sit at the kitchen table and roll the coins. Each time, as we drove to the bank, Dad would look at me hopefully. “Those coins will keep you out of the textile mill, son. You’ll do better than me.” And, each time he slid the rolled coins across the counter at the bank, he would say, “These are for my son’s college fund.”

We would celebrate each deposit by stopping for an ice cream cone. When the clerk handed Dad his change, he would show me the coins. “When we get home, we’ll start filling the jar again.” He always let me drop the first coins into the empty jar. As they rattled around with a brief, happy jingle, we grinned at each other. “You’ll get to college on pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters,” he said. “But you’ll get there.”

The years passed, and I finished college and took a job in another town. Once, while visiting my parents, I used the phone in their bedroom, and noticed that the pickle jar was gone.

My dad was a man of few words,

and never lectured me on the values of determination, perseverance, and faith. The pickle jar had taught me these virtues better than words could have done. When I married, I told my wife Susan about the role the pickle jar played in my life as a boy. In my mind, it defined how much my dad loved me.

No matter how rough things got at home, Dad continued to drop his coins into the jar. Even the summer when Dad got laid off from the mill, and Mama served dried beans several times a week, not a dime was taken from the

jar. In fact, Dad became more determined than ever to make a way for me. “When you finish college, Son,” he told me, his eyes wet, “You’ll never have to eat beans again.”

We spent the first Christmas after our daughter Jessica was born with my parents and discovered, to our amazement, the old pickle jar, the bottom already covered with coins. I walked over to the jar and dropped a fistful of coins into the jar. I looked at Dad and our eyes locked. I knew he was feeling the same emotions I felt.

Never underestimate the power of your actions. With one gesture, you can change a person’s life for the better. The Creator puts us in each other’s lives to impact one another. Look for the good in others. When you focus on yourself alone, you build a wall between yourself and all that is good in life. When you do for others, you really do for yourself, since service creates your reality. PE

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**ACTION:** Save with a purpose.



# Now Habits

Enjoy guilt-free play.



by Neil Fiore

HAVE YOU EVER ASKED, “Why am I procrastinating? Why am I surfing the net, answering email, and cleaning the bathroom rather than facing an important task?” Have you then found yourself not enjoying your leisure time because you feel guilty about not following through on your promises?

## Four Strategies

The *Now Habit* reveals four strategies for ridding your life of procrastination:

**1. Notice six warning signs and identify your procrastination patterns.** You’ll then be prepared to replace them with the inner dialogue and effective habits of top producers.

- You have a never-ending source of obligations that you cannot meet.
- You are unrealistic about time. You’re usually late. You have no clear sense of a schedule, deadlines, or an overriding mission for your life.
- If you do set goals and deadlines, they are vague and do not include specific action behaviors and “start-lines.”
- You are unfulfilled, frustrated, or depressed because you have unmet goals and no sense of accomplishment.
- You are indecisive and afraid of making a mistake so you put in twice as much time trying to be perfect so no one can criticize or judge you.
- Your low self-esteem and nonassertiveness hold you back from becoming productive and expressing your full potential. You may believe that there’s something wrong with you and that your worth as a person is determined by your work and accomplishments.

If you struggle daily with most of these issues, you already know that you have real problems with procrastination. If you see only a few of these warning signs in yourself, you may be procrastinating in some areas of your life while maintaining control in other areas. As you become aware of the times you feel most vulnerable to procrastination, you can be ready with your *Now Habit*, Guilt-Free Play program to keep you on the track to quality work and goal achievement.

**2. Learn why you procrastinate.** From *The Now Habit* perspective, you

do *not* procrastinate because you’re lazy or because you lack motivation. You have a natural, innate drive to learn, make a contribution, and to enjoy your accomplishments. When that native motivation is diminished, it’s because your inner dictator or external boss doesn’t know how to guide you. Threats, discipline, and self-criticism don’t work.

While you may procrastinate because of fear of failure, resistance to authority, and feeling overwhelmed, you always procrastinate to avoid something you define as a threat. To stop procrastinating you need to:

- Make your self-worth and esteem *safe* from judgment, and your work space *safe* from self-criticism and self-threats. This will stop your stress response.
- Learn the “Language of Producers” to replace the ineffective inner dialogue of procrastinators. Use *choice* to break through the inner conflict between, *have to* and *don’t want to*. *Choice* directs your energy toward action.
- Shift from feeling overwhelmed to



starting one task now for 20 minutes.

- Think of distractions as habits (or “defaults” and “favorites”) that you’ve taught your brain to bring you when you tell it, “This task is a threat to my self-worth and will make me feel stupid and bad. But I *have to* do this.”
- Use structures and humility rather than will-power and discipline to make changes. For example, disconnect your TV so you have time to think about your goals before you click on a favorite distraction. In humility, see that you need structures to break a habit.

Distractions, such as surfing the Internet and watching TV, are simply your “Favorites” and “Defaults” that your brain offers you. When you communicate a message of danger, fear, and ambivalence, your brain says, “Fine, here are your favorite ways of avoiding that dangerous place that makes you feel bad. Oh, yes, and how about asking yourself, ‘Why am I procrastinating. What’s wrong with me?’

Doesn’t that sound like a legitimate way of avoiding facing your work and fears?”

**3. Learn the language of producers.** Replace the language of Procrastinators and workaholics—I *have to finish* something *big* and important, do it *perfectly*, and *suffer and sacrifice* with no time to play—with the five phrases of producers and peak performers: “I *choose to start* on one *small* step, do it *humanly*, with plenty of time for guilt-free play.”

Shift from the language of procrastinators to the language of producers.

Whenever you say, “I have to finish.” replace it with “I choose to start.”

Telling yourself that you *have to finish* causes resistance, anxiety, stress, and procrastination. If you also communicate to your mind and body a negative image of work—for example, that this task is overwhelming and must be done perfectly with little time for leisure and living—you won’t get started. On the other hand, if you take a mature, leadership perspective and *choose to start* at a specific time, say 9 a.m., your mind and body—the workers—can know when, where, and on what to start. If you add time for guilt-free play after 30 or 60 minutes as a reward, you have an even better chance of being productive.

**4. Scheduling guilt-free play.** The Un-Schedule turns your natural resistance to structure and authority against itself and enlists it in the cause of productivity. For years you’ve been telling yourself to work longer hours and to try harder on difficult projects. The Un-Schedule and the Guilt-Free Play strategies help you to *put more time into your leisure and more quality into your work*. It says, You *must* play to be creative and to avoid burn-out. Live a balanced life. Fill your schedule with guilt-free play time, sleep, sports, friends, dinners, movies, dancing, and music. Focus on getting started earlier in your day for 15 to 30 minutes on your top priority. Reward yourself with a break or change to a more enjoyable task after each period you’ve worked. Keep track of the quality, uninterrupted minutes you work each day and each week. Note that 10 to 15 hours per week is enough to write the first draft of a book in one year.

Keep starting. Finishing is the last time you start on a project. Post on your computer, work station and refrigerator, “When can I start?” These *Now Habits* will help you overcome the causes of procrastination by balancing your life and achieving optimal performance. **PE**

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**ACTION:** Cultivate the *Now Habits*.

# Stress and Burnout

## Equal opportunity destroyers.



by Nancy D. O'Reilly

JANE, AN EXPERIENCED MARKETING executive, travels often and manages multiple projects and deadlines. These challenges often leave her feeling exhausted and overwhelmed. She is calling in sick. She feels tired all the time. She has not found ways to discharge her stress and is now in danger of burning out.

Burnout is a typical stress reaction. Burnout means you have lost motivation, and your job performance has declined. You need to deal with it to avoid being fired or falling sick.

Stress is an equal opportunity destroyer. No one is immune from its effects. You may express your stress openly or suppress and ignore stressor signals until you are ill. Stress can cause physical symptoms such as headache, stomach problems, and ulcers and can leave you vulnerable to disease.

Emotional and behavioral stressors can also impact your productivity. If you do not manage your stress, your job performance declines and sick days increase. Acute stress is painful but brief, and most people readily find ways to discharge it. Chronic stress takes a terrible toll on productivity.

You may become addicted to your own adrenaline. You love the rush you feel when you're stressed at home or work or even during exercise. You may crash and burn before you seek help for your addiction and drive at work.

### Check Your Stress

Monitor your stress and notice if you are in danger of burnout. Is your job satisfaction and job performance declining? Does work seem harder to manage? Use this symptom checklist to learn if you are experiencing burnout or are at risk. If you check four or more symptoms, you need to act fast. You may be burning out if you:

- Often forget appointments.
- Feel unusual fatigue.
- Suffer from insomnia.
- Note changes in appetite or weight.
- Experience behavior or mood changes.
- Often feel grumpy and crabby.
- Get sick a lot.
- Want to withdraw from others.
- Feel anxiety and worry.

If you have four or more of these

symptoms, take three simple steps to recover vibrant energy and zest for life.

**1. Balance your lifestyle!** Don't expect or demand perfection from yourself or from someone else. Draw upon your strengths to cope. Do the things that help you feel calm and centered. Invest more in yourself so you can reconnect with what you know. Don't let one aspect of life dominate the others. Do you have a hobby or activity you enjoy? If not, things are out of balance. Do you constantly feel you are out of time? Then it's time to cross off something you don't enjoy. Let someone else do it!

**2. Create support systems.** Find people you can talk to at work, at home, or in the community. Find a place or activity that's stress-free. Share something with someone. Join a professional organization or socialize with people in

your field. Become a mentor or resource for someone else at work, or at church, or other organization.

**3. Gain control over what you can, and let go of what you can't.** Find a better way to get the job done rather than just doing more of the same. Try to see opportunities instead of problems. Review your career goals if you are working just to earn money. When you do what you love, you tend to love what you do. Schedule your days (weeks, months, years) and work your plan. Seek ways to adjust your schedule with flex-time, job-sharing, or taking a new job.

Take time to manage your stress so you can enjoy life. **PE**

*Nancy D. O'Reilly, PsyD, is founder of WomenSpeak Project, and author of You Can't Scare Me. Visit [www.womenspeak.com](http://www.womenspeak.com) or call 417-860-5834.*

**ACTION: Monitor your stress level.**

# Circle of Life

## Go beyond flexibility.



by Bob Greene

YOU KNOW THE PATTERN: You're angry about something, and the solution is a fistful of chocolate chip cookies. Or you're down in the dumps for no particular reason, and you turn to Ben & Jerry's for a fix.

One great weight loss obstacle is emotional eating—impulsive, unhealthy snacking triggered by stress, boredom, or depression. To halt these cravings that can sabotage your weight loss efforts, you need to determine what triggers those binges. What are you angry or depressed about that makes you turn to food for comfort?

By understanding the *Circle of Life*, you can pinpoint your life's most important areas, determine their current status, and then develop a plan to correct the problem areas. It not only can put an end to your emotional eating, but also address other troubles spots that may interfere with your health and wellness.

Here's how it works. Draw a large circle on a sheet of paper. Divide the circle into six or seven sections, each representing an area you feel is an integral part of a fulfilled life, such as career, family, health, fitness, friendship, romance, finance, and relation-

ships. Next, ask yourself how things are going in that area—and be honest. Going well, write a positive sign; not so well, make a negative sign. Examine the negatives. How could you improve that area? What is something you can do daily to stimulate positive change? Write at least one item in each section that you can do now to improve that category; then commit yourself to it.

For example, if your fitness has stalled, rejuvenate it: begin an exercise journal or buy some new workout clothes. Not eating healthy enough? Clean out the refrigerator and fill up with fruit and vegetables. Relationship woes? Consider joining a social group, or bond with co-workers after hours.

Re-vamp your financial situation by meeting with a financial planner, update your resume, or review your household budget (or draft one).

If you do at least one thing daily to change a negative to a positive, I promise that powerful change will occur in your life after one year. If you can do three things daily, you won't recognize your former life. If you eat healthy and exercise, you don't feel any change daily. Yet, you can look back a year later and see a profound transformation. When you address negative feelings about a relationship or money worries, your emotional eating episodes wane and vanish.

**Act on activity.** Activity has an "after burn" effect—that is, it raises your metabolism for hours after you've stopped exercising. **PE**

*Bob Green is a fitness coach, trainer, and author. Visit [www.thebestlife.com](http://www.thebestlife.com).*

**ACTION: Avoid emotional eating.**



# Work with Passion

*You can make a difference.*



by Rick Wagoner

WHEN I GRADUATED FROM Duke University 32 years ago, I was thinking about my next step, to go to Harvard Business School in the fall. Beyond that, I knew that I wanted to stay close to home. If I worked far away, how would I keep up with my family and friends?

Well, over the years, I've learned six important lessons:

**1. Don't over-plan your life.** While planning for your future is great, the fact is, things change—and opportunities will arise for you that today you can't even imagine. Do your best at whatever you're doing, but be open to opportunities as they come up.

When I finished business school in 1977, I joined General Motors, in our New York office. When I was asked which area I wanted to work in—financial analysis, capital analysis, overseas analysis—I said, "Anything but overseas analysis." So, naturally I got assigned to overseas analysis. And you know what? I actually liked it—a lot.

Four years later, I was asked if I wanted to become Treasurer of GM in Brazil—a great job, but with one obvious catch: I had to move to Brazil. So, I thought for sure we'd pass. My wife had a good job, and we had just bought a house. But that night when I asked my wife if she'd like to move to Brazil, to my surprise, she said "Yes!"

For the next 11 years, Kathy and I lived and worked outside the United States—Brazil, Canada, Europe, Brazil again. And it turned out to be a great chance to grow as a business executive and as a person and as a family. It was the best business and personal "learning experience" that I could have asked for.

The future is global. In my job, I travel to India, China, and Russia. I'm confident that many of the major developments will occur in emerging markets. So, be flexible. Be open to everything the world has to offer. Be global. You'll be amazed at what you can learn, and how you can contribute.

**2. Embrace the opportunities that technology provides you to help solve the challenges.** Think about the huge role that technology plays in our personal lives, in our professional lives,

and in our society. We send messages, sometimes around the world, instantly, with a few keystrokes. Some of you are text messaging even as I speak. The advances in technology in my business life are exciting. For example, now, for the first time in my 30-year automotive career, I can really see a future for automotive transportation that will consume less petroleum and emit less carbon—and yet still allow U.S. and global consumers to buy the cars and trucks they want, at affordable prices.

I'm thinking about the exciting future that we have with bio-fuels, or E-85 ethanol, made from corn and, in a few years, from cellulose—and then electrically driven cars and trucks powered by advanced batteries, or hydro-



gen fuel cells. All this thanks to amazing advances in technology.

**3. Use your great capabilities fully with passion and enthusiasm.** In my experience in dealing with education and working with government leaders, I see a lot of very smart people out there. What distinguishes those who are truly leaders and contribute most is passion and enthusiasm.

Being successful requires that you learn everything you can about your chosen field and apply your knowledge with a passion and enthusiasm that affects others, and engages them.

In today's collaborative workplaces, few great things are achieved by individuals alone. You need great teams, and people who can inspire those teams, and lead them to greater heights. Enthusiasm is contagious. Your goal should be to start the epidemic.

**4. Work with persistence and resilience.** Even with knowledge, passion, and contagious enthusiasm, you'll face some tough challenges and some tough days. A year-and-a-half ago, some of the so-called "experts" were claiming that General Motors was headed for bankruptcy, and I ought to be fired. Those were some tough days for me.

But the real successful people, the real contributors, the great organizations have another important character-

istic—persistence and resilience. No matter how great the challenge, no matter how dark the future seems, simply do not give up.

You will encounter challenging moments because life is not a series of grand slam home runs. So, go at life every day with passion and enthusiasm. And when challenges arrive, simply do not give up. Ultimately, your success will be determined by how you handle the challenges, and what you accomplish despite the hurdles you encounter.

**5. Realize that you can't have it all—at least not all at the same time—so set priorities.** Successful people establish clear priorities in their lives. They understand that they can excel at only a handful of things at any one time... and then go after that chosen handful of priorities with single-minded passion and enthusiasm.

At this point in my life, my priorities are simple—family and friends, General Motors, and several charitable and educational activities. Unfortunately, that's about all I can do, if I want to do things well. Sure, there are other things I'd like to do, but they'll have to wait. I figure I can learn to play the piano and improve my golf game—later on.

**6. Give back.** As you create your own priority lists, I encourage you to make sure that you keep "giving back" to your community high on your list. You see, as tomorrow's leaders, you have a tremendous opportunity to use your intellect, and passion, and creativity not only to build great careers and personal lives for yourselves but also to make a real difference in our society.

Never underestimate the impact that you can have on others by getting involved, taking seemingly small steps, small actions. They all add up. In my experience, being involved in youth math and science education in Detroit schools has been very rewarding, and shows me that we can make a difference.

Keep your family and friends close. They make your life journey rewarding. During the good times, you'll have someone to celebrate with; and during the tough times, you'll have someone to turn to for advice, comfort, and love. Be proud of your accomplishments—not in an arrogant sense, but with the quiet self-confidence that comes from competing successfully with the very best. You have a responsibility to make your families and friends proud and to make the world a better place. PE

*Rick Wagoner is chairman and CEO of General Motors. This article is adapted from his commencement address at Duke University.*

**ACTION:** Work with passion.

# Show Optimism

Be healthier and happier.



by Lise Funderburg

**O**PTIMISM ISN'T THE REFUGE of bubbleheads; it's a scientifically proven way to get happier, healthier, and even catnip-pier to the opposite sex.

An optimistic state comes from a series of active inner processes, psychological somersaults. That's good news because it means that optimism—like other skills such as putting on eyeliner or hitting a tennis ball—is something you can improve with practice.

**1. Play interpersonal Ping-Pong.** If you serve up a smile to people, they usually bounce it back. Hit them with a snarl and watch them scowl instead. Facial expressions and the moods that accompany them are contagious. You can use the infectious effects of a grin to jump-start an optimistic outlook in yourself by sending others what you want them to lob back at you. Saying a kind word to the people you greet can start your day in the right direction.

**2. Short-circuit pessimism.** Putting on a happy face influences your brain in a positive way. For example, in one study, people who were asked to hold a pen in their mouth (causing them to make the facial movements of a smile) rated cartoons to be funnier.

When you feel down, your brain tells your face you're sad and your facial muscles put on a depressed expression—and convey to the brain that, yes, you're feeling blue. Changing the facial muscles so they don't correspond to what you're feeling sends a different message: "It's not so bad." The brain will respond by changing your mood.

**3. Explain success and failure like an optimist.** It's not what happens that determines your mood but how you explain what happens that counts. If an optimist encounters a computer program she can't figure out, she's likely to say, "Either the manual is unclear, or this program is hard, or maybe I'm having an off day." The optimist keeps the failure outside herself ("the manual"), specific ("this program") and temporary ("an off day"), while the pessimist would make it internal, global, and permanent. When success occurs, optimists say, "Of course dinner turned out; I'm a good cook," while

pessimists say, "I was just lucky." If you speak to yourself in a more positive way when you succeed and fail, you'll become more optimistic.

**4. Stack the deck in your favor.** It's easy to be envious: Compare yourself to those with thinner thighs and fatter bank accounts and you'll always come up wanting—and pessimistic. Yet no matter how bad things get, there's always someone who's worse off. Try finishing the sentence "I wish I were a \_\_\_\_." Then complete the sentence "I'm glad I'm not a \_\_\_\_." Your sense of satisfaction with your life will be higher after you complete the "I'm glad I'm not a \_\_\_\_" sentence.

**5. Learn to shift your focus.** You may not stop depressing facts or negative

thoughts from entering into your mind, but you can choose not to dwell on them.

If you look through a camera lens, you'll find that when one part of the picture is in focus, other areas blur a bit. (Sometimes you need to sustain the idea of being in a protective bubble to feel optimistic.) This active self-direction of your own moment-to-moment perspective allows you to create a new life story, one in which you take charge of your emotions and actions. Since people who feel they have a sense of control tend to be the most optimistic, take charge of where your psychological lens is focused. **PE**

*Lise Funderburg is a journalist, essayist, and critic who works as a writer, editor, and writing instructor. Visit [www.lisefunderburg.com](http://www.lisefunderburg.com).*

**ACTION:** Cultivate more optimistic emotions .

## SOCIAL • HELP

# Ask for Help

Doing it all does you in.



by Peggy Collins

**H**AVE YOU EVER FELT YOU were doing something so right, and yet the very thing that you considered a strength became your weakness? For example, if you have attained self-sufficiency, you may decide that if some of it is good then more has to be better. But when you take a good thing too far, you lose your balance and you live in an extreme, self-defeating lifestyle that leads toward burnout. It's The Self-Sufficiency Syndrome!

Can you ask for help? Do you do everything all by yourself because you don't trust someone else will do it as well? Are you feeling stressed most of the time? Do you ever feel you don't belong?

If you answer "yes" on a couple of these questions, you're probably a self-sufficient, out of balance, stressed and don't know how to get "unstuck"

### How do you get back on track?

How do you bring more balance to this severe self-sufficiency?

**1.** If you inherited this from culture or a role model, your new awareness will let you clearly see what you're actually doing to yourself, and you'll be open to learning and changing.

**2.** Perhaps you've made this cultural icon a safe refuge from trust issues you have. If so, figure out what fear keeps

you from reaching out to others and asking for help. Study it and face it.

**3.** Observe others around you. Find someone who asks for help. Is she respected? Is her life fulfilling?

**4.** Are you willing to "act as if" and adopt just one new behavior you see, even if you feel frightened?

**5.** Celebrate every new step and watch your self-esteem flourish!

**6.** This transformation enables you to let go of some control and the behavior that keeps you perpetually "stuck".

**7.** Become well acquainted with "you"—your beliefs, values, and needs. Don't run away from knowing who you are.

**8.** As you know yourself, you create such a strong and safe home base that you can then venture out.

**9.** As you go through this process, you can experiment with trusting others and learning from your mistakes. You learn more from risk that fails than risk that succeeds.

**10.** Relationships become more important as you release your focus on what you can do all by yourself. The achievements for excellence are balanced with settling for something less to strengthen the relationship.

As you create more balance and interdependence, you become a *Sufficient-Self*. At last, you can derive the benefits from collaboration, interaction, feedback, validation, and acceptance for who you really are. At last, you feel that you belong! **PE**

*Peggy Collins is author of Help is Not A Four-Letter Word (McGraw-Hill). She's an expert on networking. Visit [www.thepersonconnector.com](http://www.thepersonconnector.com), [www.helpisnotaletterword.com](http://www.helpisnotaletterword.com) or email [pjcollins@earthlink.net](mailto:pjcollins@earthlink.net).*

**ACTION:** Ask for help when you need it.



# Love Your Work

You have problems to fix.



by Bob Woodward

**Y**OUR LIFE WILL HAVE ITS unexpected turns. You will make your share of errors and mistakes. You will worry about the next steps: why the next step, why graduate school, why a year off, why this job? You'll ask questions: When should I take a chance? Can I pace myself? What really matters? What is true? What is authentic? What can I believe in? What can I truly count on? Who can I count on?

If you're worried about these questions, you should be. You're wrestling with them now in some form, and you'll be wrestling with them for the rest of your life.

## Find Your Own Career Track

Having spent 37 years writing about Washington politics, I divide people into two categories: 1) those who work and live on someone else's track and 2) those who get on their own track.

**Find work you love.** The people who are really blessed and happy are those who find work they love. These people scream, kick, and maneuver—changing jobs, pushing and pushing until they find work they love. Getting up in the morning and having work you love is what makes life worthwhile. If you get into a position where you don't love what you're doing, get off it. It's easy to be on someone else's track or something that sounds like a safety play. Those who get on their own track don't make a safety play.

**Choose who you work with.** Decide carefully who you are going to work with. It makes all the difference, and it's often impossible to make that judgment. I go back 34 years to January 1973, when I was 29 years old, working at *The Washington Post*, to give you an example of who I worked for, and how that made all the difference:

Carl Bernstein and I had written the major Watergate story saying there was a criminal conspiracy in the Nixon White House, that high-level people were involved. *The Washington Post* had backed us, but most people, including many of our colleagues, did not believe what we had written.

Katharine Graham, the owner and publisher of *The Washington Post*, invit-

ed me for lunch in her dining room. So I met with her. As I walked into the room, she had this question on her face: "What have you boys been doing with my newspaper?"

She started asking me about Watergate and Nixon and his people. I was blown away with all she knew. But she had a "mind-on, hands-off" management style. Intellectually, she was totally engaged in what we were doing, but her hands were not on, telling us how to do it, ever. She asked tough questions, and at the end, like the best CEO, she had the killer question: When are we going to find out the whole truth about Watergate? When will the full story come out?

At that moment, we were not believed. *The Washington Post's* stock had gone public, and one of the Nixon administration's tactics was to get people to challenge the valuable FCC television licenses that the *Post* had. So the stock was in the toilet and journalistic credibility was on the rim of the toilet, yet she asked, "When is the whole story going to come out?"

I said that Carl and I felt it was a criminal conspiracy, that people had not told the truth, that they were frightened, and that they compartmentalized information. And so my answer was, "Never. We're never going to learn the full story."

Across the lunch table, she had this pained, stricken look on her face, and she said: "Never? Don't tell me never." This was not a threat. It was a statement of purpose. What she was saying was: "Use your resources, and the resources of this newspaper, and find out. The stakes could not be higher. We have an obligation beyond ourselves to find out what happened here, and what it means." At that moment, I realized that I was working for someone who knew what the job was—to get to the bottom of things.

## The Road Ahead

The task ahead is not simple. All you have to do is figure out how to live and how to work. One big challenge in this era of excess is to grapple to reach a point in your life where you realize that you have enough. It's a different world after 9-11 and the terrorist attacks six years ago. But we have not changed our lives enough to meet the

challenge and the responsibilities of this new era.

The most important thing going on in the world right now is the Iraq war. It may define your future. When the invasion began in March 2003, *The Washington Post* gave me one year to find out why we went to war and to write about what happened. For three and a half hours, I interviewed President Bush to excavate the process he went through over 16 months deciding to go to war. I asked him 500 questions, but the question pulsing through the interview was this: Why? Why did we go to war? What happened? At one point, he just said, "I believe we have a *duty* to liberate people." I said, "Aren't lots of people going to think that's dangerously paternalistic?"

He jumped in his chair when he said, "No, you don't get it. People who are free depreciate it. You are an elitist.



Those of us who led our countries to war have a *zeal* to liberate people." As we go into 2008, if you can get the candidates' definition of what they think *duty* and *zeal* are, you will go far in understanding who they are. At root for Bush is an idealism—the idea of freeing people, and bringing democracy. It accounts for his persistence in this war.

In my book, *State of Denial*, I examine what happened since the invasion and show that the President and the administration for three-and-a-half years did not tell the truth about the war. I show exactly how this war went downhill month after month, year after year. And we were not told the truth. The thing we have to worry about is secret government because that will do us in. Democracies die in darkness.

Don't let the Iraq war teach you that the United States can't engage the world. Don't let it teach you desperation or cause you to retreat into a bubble. Don't let it teach you that our country can't deal with conflict or with evil like Saddam Hussein. Because I think we can and we will. We're at a point of peril, but you'll be fine. There is a determination, resilience, and spirit in this country that will not be snuffed out. So we'll fix it, but there is much for you to fix. PE

*Bob Woodward writes for The Washington Post. This article is adapted from his commencement address given May, 20, 2007, at Bucknell University.*

**ACTION:** Get on the right career track for you.

# Achieving Goals

Learn and apply the secret.



by Linda Nacif

MELISSA WAS A STELLAR agent and top earner in a small real estate agency.

Then she moved to a large real estate firm. She had high expectations to achieve even more in her new job. Unfortunately, her sales were lackluster. Melissa was missing a goal. She was trying to achieve a vague dream, without a map or action plan to reach it.

The way to make your goals a reality is by empowering yourself with intellectual, emotional and practical tools, and converting them into habits. Here are the seven tools you need:

**1. Define your dream.** You may have dreamed about earning more money, getting a promotion, or changing careers—yet once you have more money, new position, or different career, you still aren't happy likely because you haven't defined your dream. It might not be the extra cash but the means to surround your family with comfort; it might not be about getting promoted, but being recognized for a job well-done; you may think that a new career will give you the excitement you have lost. Only when you have a dream will you do the work to achieve it.

**2. Convert your dream into a goal.** By writing a specific goal and a date, you will do things you might never have done. A goal permits you to measure your progress and keeps you focused. Write down your specific dream or goal, along with the date when you'll achieve it. If you don't commit to paper, you won't commit to achieve the task when faced with challenges. Write it down in your calendar so you can track your progress and make the efforts necessary to reach it.

**3. Write your goal on post-it notes and put them everywhere.** Each morning and evening, read your goal and envision yourself as that successful person. Feel the luxury of that new car. Smell the ocean from your dream vacation. See yourself sitting at the desk of your own company. Make sure that the goal is personal, specific, and motivating.

**4. Make a list of your assets and resources.** An asset could be your education, experience, personality, people you know, bank account, appearance, home or car. If you struggle to identify

your assets, ask your friends, colleagues, and family about your good qualities. Your resources—the people you know, your education and experience—can help you achieve your goal.

**5. Write down the obstacles.** When you set a goal, you will encounter many obstacles. Recognize barriers when they occur and don't use them as excuses to desist. For example, your obstacle list might include: "I am afraid of failure." "No one will promote me." "I am too busy with my home life." "I am not experienced enough." You are sabotaging yourself with negative self-talk. Before you begin your action plan, you need to work on your belief system.

**6. Write down why you want this goal.** Do you deserve to be happy and have what you want? What are you

willing to do to achieve it? If your "why" isn't strong enough, you won't achieve your goal and will blame the obstacles.

**7. Write your action plan.** Set your goals from the end and work back. Where do you want to be in three years, one year, one month from now? Don't spend your time dealing with matters that have little to do with your dreams. Everything you do should lead you to achieving your goal. Notice how you spend your time and money and what percent goes toward achieving that goal. Have an action plan and do what you have to do and be who you have to be. It's no secret—you're already that person. It's just a matter of time! **PE**

Linda Nacif is author of *Jump and the Joy Will Follow*. Visit [www.lindanacif.com](http://www.lindanacif.com) or call 619-733-2071.

**ACTION:** Use these tools to achieve goals.

# Working With Difficult People

These tips make it easier.



by Hale Dwoskin

YOU DON'T HAVE THE LUXURY of hand-picking who you work with, and this likely means that there's at least one bad apple in the bunch. You also can't change your work to avoid the bad apple, meaning you need to interact with someone you'd rather not, for much of your life.

While you can't change the difficult person into someone you adore, you can change your reaction to the person and situation—and that makes all the difference.

If you work with someone difficult, it does not mean there is something wrong with you. Also remember that this is just a job. You always have the choice about how you react to your colleagues and whether or not you stay.

Today is the day to address the person who's making your life and work unpleasant. Here are three tips:

**1. Let go of reactions.** Maybe the difficult person at work belittles others' contributions. Perhaps he spreads rumors or doesn't contribute his fair share. The problem doesn't matter. What matters is your reaction to the problem—and your ability to let it go. By letting go, you take charge of how you feel. Three things happen when

you "let go" of difficult people: 1) You feel better and may not even be bothered any longer by the difficult person. 2) The difficult person often changes for the better because they are no longer getting a reaction. 3) The difficult person may get transferred or quit once the reaction is let go completely. So, if you let go, you feel better and make the situation more tolerable.

**2. Focus on the good things.** It's easy to focus on the negative aspects of a job, but how about giving some attention to the good things? When you feel frustrated, make a gratitude list of things to be thankful for about the job (and expand the list to other aspects of life).

**3. Take matters into your own hands.** You might feel trapped into working with this person. Get rid of the feeling of helplessness by taking control of things. For instance, bypass working with the person, if possible, and go directly to the boss with ideas and suggestions. Let the person's annoying behaviors slide off you and engage in happy, productive thoughts.

Tap into your ability to let go of negative emotions. Once you let go of the inner motivators, the actions follow with greater ease—you can let go of negative emotions about a difficult person and have a healthier workday.

You decide whether or not you stay in your current job. There's always the option of finding a new job, if that's what you decide is best for you. **PE**

Hale Dwoskin is CEO and director of training of Sedona Training Associates and founder of The Sedona Method and a featured teacher in "The Secret." Visit [www.Sedona.com](http://www.Sedona.com).

**ACTION:** Let go of negative reactions.



# Don't Fear Failure

*Mistakes teach you valuable lessons.*



by Khoi Vinh

WHEN I LOOK BACK AT MY career, I think I was a good student, but not spectacular. And since graduating in 1993, I've made many mistakes. In fact, I think of this moment as the culmination of 14 years of failure. The most valuable lessons I've learned: Don't be afraid of failure, because every success is just the result of a series of failures.

In my senior year, it dawned on me that I had a lot of planning to do, that suddenly life was getting serious, and that I was the only person responsible for turning all I'd learned into a career.

This notion came into focus in class one day, when one of my wonderful teachers taught us the basics of personal finance. He listed all of the things that we'd each have to pay for as professionals—from photography fees to renting studio space to buying food to having health insurance. He did all the math in front of us and arrived at the total of \$30,000 a year. I was shocked.

It was frightening to realize that I'd have to start bringing in this astronomical amount of money. Moreover, if I wanted to achieve respect and notoriety and do the work that made me happy and that I felt that no one else but me could do, then I'd have to be ready to steer a steady course.

No longer could I remain a dilettante, a dabbler in ideas and entertainments. I needed to make a commitment to getting things done the right way. I reacted by assuming a posture of intense mindfulness, being careful to always make the right decisions, to ruminate over those decisions at length, to strategize my way through life. I tried very hard to always make the right decisions, and to always avoid the wrong decisions. But I naturally kept making mistakes.

For example, right out of school, I got a job doing design work at an advertising agency that focused on marketing ads and brochures for commercial real estate. Now, some people get worked up about commercial real estate, but I'm just not one of those people. I worked hard to make the best of that job. But it was the wrong job for me.

Still, I established a decent life for

myself in Washington, DC. I had a nice apartment and friends living nearby, and I was having a good time. But I stayed there too long—four years—far too long to live in a city that didn't offer what I wanted: close proximity to the most exciting work in my field. I knew that I wasn't meant to be there.

Where I really wanted to live was New York City. So after four years, I moved to New York, and I got a better job doing work that made me happier—designing for the World Wide Web. But I wasted time there too, working long hours, nights and weekends for other people while the Internet boom made people around me rich. If everyone around you is getting rich and you're not, that's a mistake.

I tried to remedy the situation by starting a design studio. I managed to turn the company into something of a success. But after four years, I realized that my business partners didn't have the same vision. I realized that I would have to leave that company if I was ever going to be happy.

When I look back at these failures of judgment, I'm astounded by my naiveté, bullheadedness, cowardice, or inability to see the forest for the trees.

But I also see that the mistakes got me where I am today. Mistakes teach you lessons that you might not learn otherwise. Mistakes lead to opportunities that you might not have encountered, and they give a shape to your life that is richer and more satisfying than any premeditated plan could determine.

My willingness to go out on a limb, to do things that I wasn't sure about, to follow my instincts, to make decisions, right or wrong—and to have those decisions fail—enabled me to reach a point where, now, I feel that I'm doing the work that I was meant to do. I have what I consider to be one of the best design jobs anywhere—I lead the online design team for the *New York Times*, and I work with some of the sharpest minds. I create design solutions for the best journalism in the

world, solutions that deliver meaningful content to millions of people globally and instantly. It's deeply satisfying work. I couldn't ask for a better opportunity, and it never would have come about if I'd only ever just made the right decisions in my past: If I hadn't started my company and established a name and reputation for myself; or if I'd gotten rich during the first Internet boom and went into an early retirement; or if I'd come to New York much earlier, before I was mentally and emotionally prepared. If those things had happened, I might never have done the job that I know that I was born to do.

Every success is the culmination of a series of failures. You can't have success without failing. So fail early and often. Don't waste any time—get out there today and start failing. Start becoming the failures that I know you can be right away. Start doing what you want to do



now, and be willing to lose at it as much as you want it to succeed. Let your dreams get beaten and kicked around a little, let them leave the cozy confines of your imaginations and live in the real world, so that they can realize their full potential. Be willing to have your dreams tested, sooner rather than later, by the forces of nature, by the brutal fist

of the market, by the snarky shortsightedness of critics, by the jealous discouragement of friends and enemies.

And test your own mettle too. As soon as you can, test the persistence and the endurance of your passion. Understand your relationship to your own work, see how time and familiarity change that relationship, see how willing you are to hold onto those dreams through early failures and successes.

Don't waste your time trying to succeed at dreams you don't believe in; fail sooner with those false dreams so that you can start pursuing the real dreams that will satisfy you. Those are dreams that you excel at, that present you the best opportunities to make your mark on the world. And, those are the dreams that reward you most handsomely for the failures that led to your success.

I hope that you experience the tough, unnerving, scary, and valuable failures that bring you the most success. PE

*Khoi Vinh is the Design Director for NYTimes.com. This article was adapted from his speech at the Otis School of Art and Design, May 2007.*

**ACTION:** Fail early and often.

# Happy Thoughts

Hold positives in mind.



by Nathaniel Brandon

**I**N RECENT YEARS, I'VE THOUGHT a lot about making happiness a conscious purpose.

My important teacher in this area has been my wife, Devers, who is the most consistently happy person I've known.

Most people tend to explain feelings of happiness or unhappiness in terms of external events and people. They explain happiness by pointing to the positives; they explain unhappiness by pointing to the negatives. The implication is that events determine whether or not they are happy. I suspect that our own attitudes have far more to do with how happy we are than any external circumstances.

Take a person who is disposed to be happy, meaning that he is happy most of the time, and let some misfortune befall him—the loss of a job, or a marriage, or being hit by some physical disability—and for some time he will suffer. But check with him a few weeks later, and he will be happy again. In contrast, take a person who is disposed to be unhappy, and let something wonderful happen to him—getting a promotion, inheriting a lot of money, falling in love—and for a while he will be happy. But later, he'll likely be unhappy again.

The best predictors of your disposition to be happy are 1) your self-esteem and 2) the belief that you, yourself, not external forces, shape your destiny.

I think of myself as essentially a happy person and have managed to be happy under some difficult circumstances. However, I've known periods of struggle and suffering, and at times felt that not all of the pain was necessary.

I began to think more about Devers' psychology. When I met her, I thought that I had never met anyone for whom joy was a more natural state. Yet her life had not been easy. Widowed at 24, she was left to raise two children with little money and no one to help. When we met, she had been single for 16 years, had achieved success in several jobs, and never spoke of past struggles with any self-pity. I saw her hit by disappointing experiences, saw her sad or muted for a few hours, then saw her bounce back to her natural state of joy without any evidence of denial or repression. Her happiness was larger than any adversity.

When I asked her about her resilience,

she would say, "I'm committed to being happy." And she added, "That takes self-discipline." She rarely ever went to sleep at night without taking time to review everything good in her life; those were typically her last thoughts of the day.

Then I thought that with every decade, my childhood kept getting happier. If you asked me at 30 to describe my early years, the report would not have differed about the key facts, but at 30, the negatives were foreground, the positives background; at 60, the reverse was true. My perspective of what mattered in those years changed.

I realized that happy people process their experiences so that positives are held in the foreground and negatives are consigned to the background.

If something is wrong, the question to ask is: Is there an action I can take to

improve or correct the situation? If there is, I take it. If there isn't, I do my best not to torment myself about what is beyond my control. I find that I deal with problems more quickly and I recover more quickly from disappointments.

Begin each day with two questions: *What's good in my life?* and *What needs to be done?* The first question keeps you focused on the positives. The second reminds you that your life and well-being are your responsibility. When you see someone who, in spite of life's adversities, is happy most of the time, you are looking at a spiritual achievement—and one worth aspiring to. **PE**

*Nathaniel Brandon is the author of Taking Responsibility: Self-Reliance and the Accountable Life. Visit [www.nathanielbrandon.com](http://www.nathanielbrandon.com).*

**ACTION:** Choose to be happy.

MENTAL • AFFIRMATION

## Affirmation and Visualization

*What you see and say is what you get.*



by Lou Tice

**A**FFIRMATIONS AND VISUALIZATIONS are powerful mental tools for achieving goals. An affirmation is saying "yes" to something clearly and with conviction.

To affirm something means to make it firm, solid, real. When you repeat ideas, they become beliefs; beliefs become behaviors; and behaviors create experiences and results. You move toward and become like that which you repeatedly think about.

The formula  $I \times V = R$  (Imagination times Vividness equals Reality) is an easy way to remember this principle. As far as your mind is concerned, a vividly imagined experience really is happening to you—right now.

You can practice affirmations any time, any place, in your mind. You can practice performing perfectly whenever you want to—and such mental rehearsal will improve your performance. Start with the desired result and see the process in reverse motion.

Because of my coaching, I've worked with many top professional sports athletes and teams. These people are not genetically superior to you. But they know how to take charge of their thoughts—and that gives them an edge. They've learned how to build

beliefs that help them grow, how to control their self-talk and mental images to create the best outcomes. What they've done, you can do, too.

The use of affirmations and visualizations gives you a way to take control of your thoughts—to deliberately construct "memories" for your mind that are positive and conducive to peak performance. You can use affirmation and visualization to rehearse a "personal best" future, role-play how you'll deal with difficult people, rebound from rejection, or imagine the results of exciting new ventures.

You repeatedly affirm in language and clearly visualize what you want for yourself in the future, as if it were completely real. Then, you experience new insights and perceptions and an increase in goal-directed energy and drive. And then you take action, doing what it takes to claim your vision as your own.

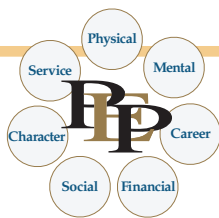
When you look forward to something and create a picture in your mind of how you want it to be, you're using visualization. You develop your vision step by step. First you see it, then you become it, inventing the "how" as you go along.

Affirmations provide a blueprint for growth and change and a consistent frame for visualizations. They are goal statements that help you to move forward with minimal stress and anxiety into the life you most want, the relationships you most desire. They help you improve your internal picture of who you are and what you can do. **PE**

*Lou Tice is CEO of The Pacific Institute and author of Coaching for Results and Smart Talk. Visit [www.tpi.com](http://www.tpi.com).*

**ACTION:** Use visualization and affirmation.





# GOAL GETTERS



**Embrace other points of view.** Everything you know has come from within the limits of your life up to now. You might be wrong about how things work. Explore and experiment with other ways of looking at things. See things from someone else's perspective. Take a different route to your usual places. Read something outside your areas of interest. Listen to a different radio station or type of music. Assume that the other point of view is more enlightened than yours. Try to understand and appreciate others. You grow by understanding different perspectives—understanding why people feel the way they do and are the way they are. Their perspectives come from life experiences that you have not had. That doesn't make them wrong. It just makes them different.  
—Jim Cathcart, author, *The Acorn Principle*



**To manage time and work effectively today,** you must recognize that interruptions take place. The need for instant information makes personal performance more stressful. The expectation of quick decision-making and problem-solving continues to grow. So, minimize negative unexpected work flows in the form of family chitchats, social gossip, and personal healthcare emergencies. Yet encourage affirmative expected interruptions in the form of constant information gathering, frequent listening sessions, and deliberations about pending courses of action. Managing by interruptions can actually make things run more smoothly.  
—Andrew Sikula, Sr., *Marshall GSM*



**Create that winning feeling.** Having a winning feeling is prerequisite to achieving outstanding results. You can't expect to win if you're constantly focusing on failure! Capture that winning feeling of success as often as you can. If you've been a little down in the dumps, feeling insecure or perhaps not feeling as confident in your ability as you'd like, I suggest that you start capitalizing on short-term victories. Focus on tasks you can achieve daily.

Start with an adversity over which you can succeed, and gradually take on more difficult tasks. Think of a time where you were successful at something. It could be a sale, a speech, a school play, or a game. Reflect back on a moment in time to recapture that winning feeling. Write down all of your accomplishments, great and small, in a notebook. Focusing on something positive gives you a boost. What would give you a winning feeling of pride and satisfaction? A winning feeling is a confident feeling, and one that forgets misses and reinforces successful attempts.

—Bob Proctor, author, *Power to Have It All*



## Are micro-inequities hurting your work life balance?

Maybe you want to leave early on Fridays to volunteer at the community center, or adjust your schedule to coach your daughter's basketball team. You broach the subject, but it doesn't go well. Nothing is said outright to discourage you, but there's a subtle negative message. Micro-inequities are micro-actions, or subtle actions people make through body language, tone of voice, and facial expressions that discriminate against certain people. These small actions have a big impact on your productivity and satisfaction. How you say something makes more of an impression than what you say. The expression on your face speaks volumes over your words. A lack of response is a response in itself. The actual words you use only account for 10 percent of communication. Most communication is received through body language and voice tone, pitch, and volume. Micro-inequities are windows into the true feelings and beliefs of an individual. Awareness opens the door to change. You can begin to recognize your hidden prejudices in a safe way that allows for growth and enlightenment. It's empowering to address micro-inequities. Problems are much easier to solve when feelings and needs are acknowledged in a climate of respect. Open the lines of communication. Becoming more actively aware of your attitudes and beliefs will uncover fears and concerns that you can then address and resolve.

—Marilyn Suttle, speaker and author

# Personal COACH



## Coaching Teams

*Know your talent.*

by Mike Krzyzewski

I TRY TO SEE EACH NEW SEASON AS A NEW CHALLENGE because I have a new team to work with, new opponents to encounter, and often new ideas and theories to try. Effective teamwork begins and ends with communication. Communication must be taught and practiced to bring everyone together as one.

A common coaching mistake is spending too much time on "x's and o's" as compared to time spent learning about people.

I define *passion* as extreme emotion. When you are passionate, you always have your destination in sight and you are not distracted by obstacles. Because you love what you are pursuing, things like rejection and setbacks will not hinder you in your pursuit. You believe that nothing can stop you!

I look at myself as a leader who happens to coach basketball. Your heart has to be in whatever you lead. You have to follow your heart and lead with it. I've never made a decision based on what will get me the most money. It was what was going to give me the most happiness. It is always good to renew your vows to the loves of your life.

People have to be given the freedom to show the heart they possess. As a coach, you must provide that freedom through relationships. Because if a team is a real family, its members want to show you their hearts.

During key periods, a coach can't feel sorry for himself, to be down, to be angry, or to be weak. Leaders must beat back these emotions. It takes courage not only to make decisions, but to live with those decisions.

During the season, your team should be led with exuberance and excitement. You should live the journey. You should live it right. You should live it together. You should live it shared. You should try to make one another better. You should get on one another if somebody's not doing their part. You should hug one another when you win. You should be disappointed in a loss and exhilarated in a win. It's all about the journey.

In our program, truth is the basis of all that we do. On our team, we always tell one another the truth. We must be honest with one another. Throughout the season, I look into my players' eyes to gauge feelings, confidence, and to establish trust. People want to be on a team. They want to be part of something bigger than themselves. They want to be in a situation where they feel that they are doing something for the greater good. PE

Mike Krzyzewski is coach of the Duke basketball team.

## Serve with Passion

Combine faith and finance.



by Kirbyjon Caldwell

**G**ROWING UP IN HOUSTON'S Gimpoverished Fifth Ward, I learned all I needed to know about business at my father's clothing store. Earning a Wharton degree years later also shaped my business sense. But shortly after launching my business career, I was "called" to religious leadership. Today I'm the pastor of the 15,000-member Windsor Village United Methodist Church in Houston, Texas, where we're pioneering innovative economic development projects.

I've always had a keen, passionate, interest in transforming the economic infrastructure of communities. I've had entrepreneurial blood running in my veins since birth. When I graduated from high school, I wanted to make a difference, to help people in Houston, to "do good while doing well."

I have a passion for combining faith and finance. When I graduated from Wharton, I went into investment banking, working for First Boston on Wall Street. I then moved to Houston to work for a regional investment bank. I'd been there three months when I was "called" to the ministry. It was a moment when I became eclipsed by God's will. I knew I was supposed to start pastoring a church.

There are two great moments in life—one when you're born, and the second when you discover why you're born. Everyone is called to do something—to leave an indelible imprint in this life on certain people.

I encourage you to ask yourself: "Why am I here?" There's a reason why you were born, and a reason why you're still here. I don't think you should go crazy trying to figure it out, but you should be alert to, alive to, and aligned with that purpose.

After being ordained as a minister, I became the pastor of a United Methodist church with only 25 members, only 12 of whom came to church on Sundays. I believed God wanted me to be there, so I went to work. Now we have over 15,000 members, and we take up more money in one worship service than we did our entire first year—and we have six or seven worship services a week.

How do I explain that success? In spiritual terms, we have five keys: a winsome worship service, multiple

magnetic ministries, a powerful prayer ministry, enthused and involved lay people, and an entrepreneurial methodology. In business terms, we understood our target population, and we delivered our product as excitingly as possible. We did all our work with volunteers and only a small paid staff.

We didn't care what other churches were doing; we just focused on what we were doing. The real competition is not the other church—it's whatever keeps folks from going to church—apathy, arrogance, ignorance, and inertia.

Since early in my life, I've wanted to make a difference in the community. So when I went into the ministry, mak-

ing a difference economically was part of my agenda. We are now developing a 234-acre multi-use community in Houston. It is the largest residential subdivision ever developed by a non-profit entity. There are 464 homes, and 80 percent of them are low-to-moderate-income housing, although they're very nice. We're also developing a 451,000-square-foot community center, which will include spiritual and social services: a charter school, and family life center. We are transforming this community. **PE**

*Kirbyjon Caldwell is the pastor of the Windsor Village United Methodist Church in Houston, Texas. This article was adapted from Wharton Leadership Digest.*

**ACTION:** Serve in your calling with passion.

## SERVICE • DREAM

## Big Dreams?

Just take little steps.



by Joe Farcht

**W**HEN YOU WERE YOUNGER, you dreamed big dreams. All those big dreams seemed possible. As you entered adulthood, bought a car and home, and took on the responsibilities and realities of a member of society, many of those dreams faded away.

What's important today is that you believe that big dreams are still possible and can be realized at any age. All you need to do is brighten up your most important big dream. Take a moment and crystallize in your mind that long-lost goal. Let your mind recreate a bright picture of that enjoyable future achievement.

Big dreams can appear to be unobtainable. Don't let that intimidate you from starting. After brightening your dream, develop a plan for attaining it. Maybe it will take a few years or even a lifetime. Write that plan! What are the steps to be taken in sequence? Now, scrutinize the first major step. What are all the actions that must be completed to accomplish that step? Take the initial action step and break it down into something you can do today. Place this action step in today's schedule and take that action. Repeat this process every day; over a year you will have 365 little steps toward your big dream. You'll be amazed at what progress can be made.

Patience and commitment are required to accomplish big dreams. In today's instant gratification society, patience is

scarce. Commitment is often derailed by competing short-term actions, projects, and activities. Don't let them interfere with your big dream. Embrace patience and know that in time you will succeed in realizing your big dream. Take little daily steps that will advance you toward your goal.

When you face change, you often resist. Think of a change that you are dreading and resisting. Write the reasons why you are hesitant to make that change. After you make that list, categorize each reason as being "emotional" or "rational." You likely hesitate or resist making those changes because of

"emotional" reasons. By thinking about all the reasons why you should make the changes, you build a strong "rational" case for embracing that change. Move beyond the emotional excuses. You can make any change you desire.

The most important competency you can develop is genuinely caring for yourself and the people you work with—loving yourself and others. Only when you nourish and care for your body, mind and spirit can you then nourish and motivate others to produce their best work.

Great leaders passionately care for the people they serve. We follow leaders who we believe care for us. We give loyalty, exceptional service, and high performance to those who take a genuine personal interest in our wellbeing.

How much do you care for and love yourself and the people you serve at work? Cultivate an attitude and expression of caring and love. See and serve everyone through the lens of love. **PE**

*Joe Farcht, former Air Force fighter pilot, is CEO of Leadership Advantage and author of Building Personal Leadership. Visit [www.leadershipadvantageinc.com](http://www.leadershipadvantageinc.com).*

**ACTION:** Care for yourself and serve others.



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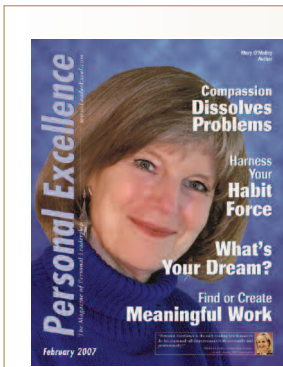
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