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Your Wake-Up Call

When I was quite young, someone told me, “If you want be really successful, find out what God wants to you to do with your life and then dedicate yourself to achieving it”.

At the time, I didn't really like that idea; I did not believe that my life could have any particular purpose; and I did not think that anything God might have in mind would be of any interest to me in any case. Gradually, I have come to believe that what that person said to me, all those years ago, is true.

As human beings, we all share certain basic wants and needs: we have need for food, water, shelter, safety, love, respect and self esteem. We all share an in-built tendency, as Freud stated, to want to move away from pain and toward pleasure. This tendency is part of the human condition for our own good; it keeps us away from harm and generally helps us to make good choices. Most people settle for a pursuing a career that satisfies these basic human wants and needs; and never really think beyond them to what their life could be about.

Somewhere along the line, I came to realise that what God wanted for my life, and what I wanted, were one and the same thing. This understanding came after I had determined to find out what God actually wanted me to do with my life.

It was a profound moment for me. I gradually came to understand my inner hopes, dreams and deepest desires as being implanted by God. So pursuing God's purpose for my life was, in fact, also pursuing my own purpose. When it really came down to it, I finally realised that I needed to look within to discover my own purpose; and once I had found out what it was, it then became possible to dedicate myself to fulfilling it.

So my message to you is simple: it is time for you to wake-up! It is time for you to start thinking of your life in a different way. It is time for you to fulfil your dream - whatever that may be. That is why you are here on the planet right now. By finding and fulfilling your own unique purpose in life you will be living your life to the full.

It is my hope that you will begin to see yourself as a special person, with a truly unique purpose in life - because that is the truth!

Commitment

Committedness: the trait of sincere and steadfast fixity of purpose.

Commitment: the act of binding yourself, intellectually or emotionally, to a definite course of action.

1. Commitment
2. An Open Mind
3. Persistence
4. Flexibility
5. Faith
6. Thankfulness
7. Passion

What are you doing with your Life: would you say you are living your dream; or are you living from hand to mouth, making the best of things, just getting to the next week - what we might call: *existing* rather than *living*?

If you *are* living your dream, then well done: you are truly on the road to success. If you are not living your dream - or even if you have no dream at present - then do not despair because this little book was written for you. We are going to help you to find your dream, develop it and then to actually achieve it!

To live a truly successful life, you do need to first have a dream. As Carl Sandburg, American historian, poet and novelist put it, "nothing happens unless first a dream".

If you think about it, nothing at all that now exists within our experience of physical reality did not first exist in the mind of the person who made it or brought it into being. In all cases, everything is created twice: the physical creation follows the mental creation.

To succeed, you must have a dream, or you may prefer to call it a vision - and you must completely commit yourself to its ultimate fulfilment - that is the essence of the mental creation.

Here is one of the real secrets of success: you should dream big dreams, because you can have anything you want! Read that statement again and let it really sink in because it is true that you can have anything you want;

you can be anything you want to be; and you can do anything you want to do. This may at first seem self-indulgent, but remember, your deepest desires were implanted by God.

What does it mean: to commit yourself to your dream? To illustrate, let me tell you a little about the story of Charles Lindbergh. You know, of course who he was - he was the first person to fly the Atlantic solo - non-stop all the way to Paris. An incredible feat which he eventually accomplished in May 1927.

He used to dream of flying the Atlantic during his long-haul flights delivering mail. Once he had imagined the possibility of being the first person to do this, he completely committed himself to its achievement overcoming all kinds of set-backs. He did not allow the negative opinions of the doubters who surrounded him to influence his resolve.

When he was unable to purchase the single aircraft in existence that he calculated would be capable of making that momentous journey, he had his own airplane designed and built. He didn't have the money, but he got a group of St Louis businessmen to sponsor him - that's why the plane was called *The Spirit of St Louis* - now that's commitment!

Once you have your dream, you too need to demonstrate that kind of resolve - and let me tell you plainly - you *are* capable of it!

It requires you to take actions that are congruent with your wishes in order to translate them into reality, but the first step is to have that dream - your *own* dream, not anyone else's ideas about what is best for you in life - and then absolutely commit yourself to its achievement.

An Open Mind

Openness: characterized by an attitude of ready accessibility about one's actions or purposes

Receptiveness: willingness or readiness to receive - especially impressions or ideas

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Once you have committed yourself to achieving your dream, you should begin to notice something rather odd starting to happen in your life: the universe actually begins to help you to achieve it!

You just need to be Open-Minded - that is, you need to be ready and willing to receive what the universe (you might prefer to say *God*) has in store for you. Some people call this principle the *Law of Attraction*, but whatever you call it, it is quite true that you will absolutely set in motion unseen forces which will definitely assist you with the manifestation of your dream.

People, events and circumstances will be drawn to you that will actually assist you in the achievement of your dream. You can probably only fully accept this truth when you experience it for yourself; and once you have committed to your dream, you will begin to experience it. Things will start to happen: they may seem like co-incidence at first, but you are now living in an altered reality.

As an example of this principle in action, let's take a brief look at the true story of Rudy Ruettiger. You may know that Rudy had a dream. His dream - now the subject of a truly inspiring movie - was to play football for Notre Dame. Everyone told him it couldn't be done. But this is how the universe helped him to achieve his dream.

When he was 22 years old, a friend bought him a Notre Dame jacket, from a surplus store, for his birthday. When he gave it to Rudy, he

commented, 'Rudy, you were born to wear this jacket!'. The words stirred something deep within him; and so he boarded a bus destined for South Bend, Indiana with the goal of meeting Notre Dame Championship football coach, Ara Parseghian.

Rudy had to enrol in Holly Cross Junior College to get his grades up prior to ever being considered for Notre Dame. With nowhere to live, he slept in the maintenance room; and after numerous applications and trials, Rudy was finally accepted to Notre Dame and eventually made the football team as a walk-on.

Rudy was not really considered good enough to make the team, but he never missed a practice match and was there suited-up during the final game of his senior year. Now everyone in the crowd knew of Rudy's goal to play for the team; and in the last play of the last game, the crowd started chanting: Ru-dy! Ru-dy! Ru-dy!

Coach Dan Devine was so moved that he put him into the game in the last 27 seconds when he sacked the quarterback and was carried off the field in triumph on the shoulders of the fighting Irish.

When you carry your own dream within, you too will be able to touch the hearts and minds of the people around you in much the same way; and it is a truly wonderful and uplifting experience when you find out for yourself that the universe does indeed help you to achieve your goal.

Persistence

Persistence: refusing to give up, especially when faced with opposition or difficulty; continuing firmly or steadily

Persistence: the act of continually pursuing something in spite of obstacles

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If having a dream and committing to its ultimate achievement is something like plotting your final destination ahead of an exciting journey, then persistence is rather like the engine you need in order to get there.

Persistence is what drives you on to take the next step in your journey; persistence is what prevents you from getting discouraged by what may have happened in the past; persistence is where the rubber meets the road!

Here is a story, of unknown origin that illustrates what persistence is all about ...

There was a certain man who went to meet a famous guru to ask, "which way is success?"

The be-robed, bearded sage did not speak but pointed to a place far off in the distance. The man, thrilled by the prospect of quick and easy success, rushed off in the appropriate direction. Suddenly, there was a loud "splat!". Eventually, the man limped back, tattered and stunned, assuming he must have misinterpreted the message. He repeated his question to the guru, who again pointed silently in the same direction.

The man obediently walked off once more. This time the splat was deafening, and when the man crawled back, he was bloody, broken, tattered, and irate. "I asked you which way is *success*," he yelled at the guru. "I followed the direction you indicated. And all I got was splatted! No more of this pointing! Talk!"

Only then did the wise old guru speak, and what he said was this:
"Success *IS* that way. Just a little further on than splat!"

Translating your dream into an action plan and then constantly taking actions, each and every day, that will move you in the direction of your goal is what will get you there in the end. No matter how big your goal, you can get there if you will keep your destination in mind and then continually take actions that move you toward the goal.

When you meet an obstacle, as you inevitably will, persistence determines what you will do; whether you will give up or keep going. Persistence is what gets you back on your feet, dusted down and ready to go again.

Persistence is what gets you past SPLAT!

Flexibility

Flexibility: the quality of being adaptable

Flexibility: a measure of the ability to respond to changes in demand

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It is a sound NLP (Neuro-Linguistic Programming) principle that to become successful, we need to notice what is working and what is not; and be prepared to change our approach in order to get what we want - that is the essence of flexibility.

A wise person once said, "If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got". That is a wonderfully true statement - in other words, if you continue doing exactly what you are now doing, then don't be surprised when you don't see any increase or change in your results.

It is the law of cause and effect in operation. The results you are now getting (effects) are the product of the causes (efforts) you have made in the past. To get greater benefits in the future, you need to change what you are doing in the present in order to produce them.

Whilst persistence is an important quality, persistence without flexibility can indeed be futile because, without some flexibility in your approach, you could end up trying to move an immovable object for the rest of your life. The willingness to constantly change what we are now doing and to also demonstrate persistence is what gets us around seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

So notice exactly what is working for you; and notice what is not. Change your approach in some way - you will need to brainstorm various approaches - then continue to observe. By continually changing your

approach and finding what works and what doesn't, you will literally become unstoppable.

As an example, consider the story of Kevin Keegan, famous English footballer (soccer) and eventually manager of England. Kevin was told that he would never become a footballer because he was not talented enough, he was not strong enough and he was too small.

It would have been easy enough for him to just give up; after all these people telling him he would never make it were all professionals - surely they should know what they were talking about! What did Kevin actually do? Well there was nothing he could do about his height, so he worked on what he could do: he worked on his physique until he built a strong, powerful frame; and he worked on his basic ball skills.

After several tryouts, he was eventually signed as an apprentice for Scunthorpe United in 1967. He became a full professional 12 months later; and in 1971 moved to Liverpool where he played on the winning team in the FA Cup 1974, the European Cup 1977, the UEFA Cup 1973 and 1976 and the Football League 1973, 1976-7.

Kevin eventually became the captain of England winning 63 caps between 1972 and 1982; and he became European Footballer of the Year 1978 and 1979. He did it all by being flexible in his approach and persistent in the face of unfavourable odds.

Sometimes, I tell Kevin's story at my Workshop events; and sometimes people will say something like:

'What about all the people who tried and tried but still never made it?'

My answer is that Kevin would also have just been another statistic along with the rest of them if he had not demonstrated these qualities. Kevin was a winner; and you too can become a winner. To become a winner, you simply need to internalise these qualities.

If you really want success, in whatever field of endeavour you are pursuing, you can have it - yes you *can*! But you need to be prepared to work for it - to do whatever it takes. Finding out and then doing *whatever it takes* is the quality of flexibility.

Faith

Faith: acceptance of principles which are not necessarily demonstrable

Faith: strong belief in something without proof or evidence

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There will be many people who will tell you that you will never, or simply cannot, achieve your dream. They are the 80% of people who once had a dream but have now settled for something less. They are the children who once stood in line at school, believing they would one-day become pilots, doctors, actors, singers, ballerinas, missionaries, air-hostesses and so on.

But their experience of life gradually ground them down; and their dreams were reluctantly put away. Those dreams still live somewhere, deep down within their hearts, but they no longer believe that they are achievable.

First, their parents worked on them: questioning their abilities, doubting their chances and telling them that they once had the same dreams. Their parents told them they needed to grow-up, be more responsible and life would work out just great.

Then their teachers worked on them: saying that we all have such ambitions, but in the real-world, you needed a trade, a job, a career - and that life had so very few of these exciting opportunities. They ingrained the attitude of the 'scarcity mentality' into their charges - rather than the 'abundance mentality'. They told these children that there just wasn't enough good stuff to go around.

Finally, their friends worked on them as they also settled for the jobs on offer, they questioned: what was so wrong with being a sales-person, a

plumber, a secretary or a brick-layer? The world needed these trades-people (and so it does) and there was nothing wrong with making an honest living by providing these services. That was how, gradually, their beliefs about the world were changed - they no longer believed that it would be possible to reach the heights they had once dreamed of - and they made the decision to settle for less; much less.

After all this negative conditioning, only a few of those pilots-in-the-making believed they could still learn to fly aircraft; only a few of those singers still believed they were destined to sing for their supper. Many people had their dream literally strangled out of them. And when you are once again ready to pursue what is in your heart, you need to be aware that you are still not immune to this negative conditioning: there will still be very many people ready to tell you why what you are now doing, or about to do, is hopeless!

But, do you know of the work of Masaru Emoto - the scientist who freezes water and takes photographs of its crystal structure? Well, I don't think you could get a more powerful demonstration of the power of faith to impact our physical reality. He has tried a number of experiments which really challenge our conventional ideas about the power of our thoughts. Amongst other things, he found that water which was frozen when offered a prayer, formed better, more perfect crystals than water which was cursed before freezing.

It sounds bizarre doesn't it, but if our thoughts can do that to water, imagine what they can do to us - we *are* after all, 75% water! If your thoughts are positive, affirmative and full of faith, then they are transformational. You become literally changed and therefore better able to achieve your purpose - the goal that other people don't think you can possibly achieve.

That's why you need faith - a deep-down belief that, regardless of the evidence, you are going to make it! You are going to achieve what you have set out to accomplish. You are going to make a difference in this life.

Thankfulness

Thankfulness: a virtue and a dynamic - activates the Law of Attraction

Thankfulness: a positive emotion involving a feeling of indebtedness

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Attitude affects so many things in life. Sales-people are told to maintain a positive mental attitude because it ultimately affects their sales, sports-people are told to cultivate a winner's attitude because it affects their performance. The laws of success tell us to cultivate a grateful attitude but why should *thankfulness* affect our success?

It may be difficult, at first, to see exactly how thankfulness, or gratitude, can be such an important key to your success, but by seeking to maintain an 'attitude of gratitude' you are indeed tapping into the timeless laws of success.

Thankfulness is fundamentally related to positivity and negativity. It is so much easier to be positive about your life and the things that are going on in it right now when you are grateful. As A. W. Tozer once commented, 'a thankful heart cannot be cynical'.

The work-place is full of people who are cynical - ready to run the company down, run the boss down and run the industry down; and do you know something, they can, and do, actually produce the evidence that supports their beliefs. Such people are also employing the laws of success; but by talking about what they do not like, they are using the principles to attract what they don't want. Their reality simply reinforces their views about the company, the boss, the industry and whatever else has been the subject of their negativity.

On the other hand, having an attitude of gratitude impacts your countenance and your general outlook on life; and people generally will

prefer to work with happy, cheerful, grateful people than miserable, down-cast, merchants of doom and gloom. As a consequence truly grateful people, literally attract opportunities that others miss or even possibly repel.

To help acquire this positive attitude, consider the idea of keeping a Gratitude Journal. Would you, every day for a period of one month, be prepared to actually write down all the things for which you are grateful? You know: count your blessings, the way you were taught as a child. What do you think might be the result of engaging in such an exercise? Consider the results of this scientific study into the subject.

Two psychologists, McCollough and Emmons, conducted a study on the subject of gratitude and thanksgiving. In the study, three different groups of people were required to keep daily journals. The first group kept a simple diary of all the events that occurred during the day, the second group kept a record of only their unpleasant daily experiences. The final group made a daily list of everything for which they were grateful i.e. the kept a Gratitude Journal.

The results of this amazing study suggested that the exercise of daily gratitude resulted in higher levels of alertness, enthusiasm, determination, optimism and energy. So let it really sink-in ...

- A Grateful Heart Cannot be Cynical.
- Gratitude is Fundamental to Maintaining an Optimistic Outlook.
- The Exercise of Thankfulness activates the *Law of Attraction*.

Additionally, the gratitude group experienced less depression and stress, was much more likely to get involved in helping others. They also exercised more regularly and made more progress toward their personal goals. Isn't that amazing: just by keeping a Gratitude Journal, the study suggests they were able to positively impact their chances of achieving their goals!

Thankfulness is an attitude and an important key to success. It is an attitude we all need to learn to acquire - particularly when we feel we are in difficult circumstances.

So learn to be grateful.

Passion

Passion: strong, enthusiastic devotion to a cause, ideal, or goal

Passion: your heart's one true desire or the deepest desire of your heart

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It is impossible to think about *passion* without reference to the heart. Deep within your heart, there is a desire, the pursuit of which will bring you all the happiness, success and fulfilment you really want. To find your passion is to identify your own unique purpose in life; to live your passion is to achieve the *Deepest Desire of Your Heart*.

You *can* achieve whatever you want. You *can* be the person you were meant to be; and you *can* really live the life of your dreams. Those are bold statements but they are true; and more and more people are discovering this wonderful truth for themselves. But if this is indeed true, then why is it that so many people - we think the figure is around 80% - are pursuing jobs and careers they don't really care about?

For our parents and grand-parents, growing up in a world with comparatively few opportunities, it is true to say that their lives were consumed with the whole business of 'making a living' - looking after what Abraham Maslow called their physiological and social needs. They worked hard and never really enjoyed the luxury of considering what might be termed the 'higher needs' of the human condition.

Many people in today's workplace are indeed seeking to reach higher and often people think they have reached their peak when they have started to meet their 'esteem' needs, that is, the basic human need for respect, recognition and responsibility. For many people, this means pursuing an interesting career; rather than just getting a job.

However, for very many people, there is still an inner emptiness. Often, this emptiness is experienced more starkly when they have actually

become successful in their chosen careers. They start to wonder exactly what life has been about. The trappings of success: promotion, automobile, house did not bring about the happiness they anticipated. This is a consequence, as Stephen Covey puts it, of climbing the ladder of success only to find when they reach the top that, all along, the ladder has been leaning against the wrong wall.

To really achieve success in life, you must be bold enough to go even higher: to consider what Maslow called. *Self Actualisation*. This means becoming the person you were meant to be; and living the life you were meant to live. Only by doing this, can you possibly hope to find the true success you really desire.

The Rest of Your Life

You are a truly unique person: you can tell this simply by taking a moment or two to look at your thumb print. Do that now – go on, humour me – take a look at your thumb print and know this: you are the only person who has ever lived who has had that thumb print! Isn't that truly amazing? In fact, it is even more amazing than that because, as it turns out, you are the only person who will *ever* have that thumb print.

So you already know, in your heart that you are unique. But also know that this uniqueness extends to your purpose in life: you are called to achieve something significant with your life! Do not make the mistake of believing that life holds no purpose for you. Remember that you are here only once. This is your life - right now! So make sure you live the life you were born to live.

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