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Your Attitude - Your Self-Esteem

“It's all about Self-Improvement”

By Teresa King

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Introduction

Your Attitude is something that is uniquely yours. The dictionary defines mental attitude as:

n 1: a complex mental orientation involving beliefs and feelings and values and dispositions to act in certain ways; "he had the attitude that work was fun."

Your Self-Esteem is something that you have been developing all of your life and it can affect everything you do.

The dictionary defines it as:

n. Pride in oneself; self-respect.

One thing that both attitude and self-esteem have in common is that that they both can be changed. Yes, you can improve your attitude and your self-esteem and that is what this book is going to show you how to do.

Please keep an open mind as you read this book, because before this book can help you, you must focus and apply the tools and ideas that you are about to be given. Many times in your life, you may have heard that "Money is Power." It's true. Money does allow for power. However, real power is knowledge and then applying that very knowledge to improve your quality of life. This quality can go from a relationship with your parents, grandparents, friends, spouse, lover, to the creep that lives next door, even to improving your income.

When your attitude and self-esteem are in a positive frame of mind, you can turn mountains into little bumps. You can make more money, become healthier, have more friends, and even make more time for yourself, and it is all done through knowing and taking simple steps that soon become giant leaps forward.

Chapter 1 Attitude and Conditioning

I would like to simply clarify what attitude really is:

Attitude is:

What you think

What you do

How you feel

All situations require that **you think** about what is happening. You have to decide **what to do**, then work on your emotions on **how you feel** about what you think and do. That is the simplicity of attitude.

You can be struggling with a problem with your teenager. Your teen's new friends are not the kind of friends you want him to have. **You think** the problem is a tough one, you know you **have to do** something about it. You might want to do whatever your decision is in a positive way. However, your emotions on **how you feel** may want to dictate to him and yell and scream to get those low life friends away from the house.

Your attitude will be the essence of how you find the solution to the problem.

A negative attitude will be one of, "Why does that kid always upset me, seems a day can't go by without problems, why did I ever have kids anyway? All I have been doing is trying to do the best I can, feeding, clothing, sheltering and working overtime so he can have his name brand shoes, and now he brings punks home that will influence him and turn him into a druggie and cigarette smoker."

With a positive attitude, your solution will come with positive emotions.

"I love my teenager and find the challenges of raising one quite stimulating. Let's see if I can settle this problem without creating mountains out of molehills."

I have raised my teen with great values, and I know that he has a strong background of knowing the difference between right and wrong so I will trust him to make his own choices. I will sit down tonight and get his viewpoint on his new friends and go from there.

You can almost picture in the above example, which attitude is going to get the best results and come up with the better solution.

Let's Start with Conditioning

As a child, you were raised. Whether you had good parents, horrible parents, indifferent parents, or were raised by someone that was not a relative, you survived. You learned how to eat, talk, walk and read, and all the while you were forming perceptions of what the world was all about. In essence you lived in a box. The only way outside of the box was to learn more, see more, and do more. Each thing you saw, or did, created the "you" that you are now.

If your caregivers:

- were kind, you learned kindness
- gave into your every whim. Then you learned to get your way
- were mean, you learned to be mean, or decided not to be mean
- argued a lot. Your environment was one where arguing was normal.
- were critical, you learned to judge.

If the male figure in your life was dominating and the female caregiver in your life walked on eggshells to not upset the applecart, you learned to be careful and possibly to whisper so as to not make anyone angry.

If you were yelled at as a child, the chances are you use yelling as a tool. This also can backfire on you. Did you know that if you grew up with lots of yelling, that if you find yourself in an environment where there is no yelling, you may very well do things in your new situation to create yelling and all subconsciously?

If your dad gave you the silent treatment, the chances are you use that punishment against those you love, or, you totally flip-flopped and did not do what you thought was wrong and made a vow to yourself - you would not be like that when you grew up.

As a child you learned to be scared of authority, or to defy authority. You learned to respect the law, or hate the law, or just abide by the law. You may have learned to put your seatbelt on at an early age, and it may be a habit. Your parents both may have smoked, so smoking is acceptable to you or every time you smell cigarette smoke it brings back bad memories when you were stuck in an environment that you had little control.

Your parents may have been very religious and you learned to be just like them or won't go into a church, because it was pushed so hard down your throat you can't even look at what it really is. Your parents may have been atheists and would not let you go to church.

You learned fear of water, or respect of water. If your mother screamed every time she saw a spider, you may have ended up with a fear of small harmless creatures, or by watching her, you may have learned how to act hysterical over small things to get attention.

As we grew up, each of us learned what was "normal." What was normal to us was what we were subjected to each day. Our perceptions of what life is and how "adults" behave became part of our center core where we could make decisions with the "facts" that we had on hand.

It's all in perceptions and how you learned through living at home, from your schooling to social events to going to church and television. Children take in the world as a sponge absorbs water - fast. They watch, listen, and try things and then end up doing what they have learned. This is conditioning.

Sometimes, we need to wring out that sponge so we can put fresh water in.

Many parents messed up, after all, they only had skills that they learned as they were growing up. Babies come out naked without any instructions. Some parents managed better than others, and some children never enjoyed decent parenting.

Many children get lots of spontaneous hugs, and others get parents who hardly ever hug. Some children are not allowed to show anger, or some were raised with the myth: Big Boys Don't Cry.

I like to liken children to weeds and flowers. A child that is nurtured such as a precious orchid where its environment was carefully cultivated, may die at the first sign of bad weather, while the scrappy weed defies the wind, rain, snow and flourishes.

We are going to cultivate you as an adult, make you strong like that weed, and unscarred like that orchid, because no matter where you were or how you started, **that was then; this is now!**

Chapter 2 Self-Esteem goes with a Positive Attitude

When Eleanor Roosevelt stated, "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent," she hit the very essence of self-esteem.

Self-Esteem is your image of yourself.

If you let others put you down, or believe others when they say things about you, then let it manifest into a negative feeling about yourself, you are allowing yourself to be governed by other people and what they believe to be true about you, or that you have allowed yourself to prove that you are what they think.

The power within you is astounding. You just need to tap into changing your attitude when you catch yourself being negative.

You can't control the thoughts that pop into your head, but you sure in the heck can control what you do about those thoughts.

"Friends are those rare people who ask how we are and then wait to hear the answer." Ed Cunningham

What kind of friend are you?

A friend is someone with whom you are comfortable, who you enjoy spending time with and who is loyal to you and whom you can be loyal to.

You trust them with your confidences, you can tell them your deepest darkest secrets and share your dreams and goals. You feel safe that your friend will not judge you.

When you choose a friend it is like looking into the mirror. Who you hang out with does reflect on who you are.

Choose some qualities that you would like to see in your best friend.

Loyal
Trust
Comfortable
Sharing
Caring
Similar interests
Encouraging
Good Listener
Supportive
Energetic
Giving
Nurturing
Ambitious
Keeps promises
Remembers your special days
Gives you presents
Compliments you
Tells you the truth when you need to hear it
Accepts you as you are
Does not Judge You
Educated
Fun to be with
Understanding
Compassionate
Smart
Sense of Humor
Steady
On time
Relaxed about Life
Fighting for a Cause
Quick Temper
Slow Temper
Negative

Positive
Lazy
Procrastinator
Thief
Witty
Not so smart
Easy Going
Same Belief System
Same Work Ethics
Morals
Faithful
Angry
Helpful
Tenacious
Dominating
Controlling
Friendly
Industrious

Think of your best friend and list some qualities.

Do you forgive your friend for things on the above list even though you don't like that characteristic in your friend? Do you accept your friend the way he/she is or do you keep trying to mold him/her to what you want in a friend?

Now, choose some qualities that you have as a best friend from the list above.

The art of friendship is a simple thing.

“You do unto your friend as you wish them to do unto you.”

It's the Golden Rule. It is taught in all belief systems one way or another, and it is a good rule.

If you don't want to be judged, you don't judge.

If you don't want anger and upset in your life, you don't allow unhealthy ways of showing anger in your environment.

If you want companionship and to do things that you like to do, you want a friend who respects that as well.

If you break promises to your friend, then your friend won't trust you when you make a promise.

You don't like it when promises are broken to you, do you?

You stay loyal to your friend and best of all you keep that trust and communication open between the two of you.

If your friend is in need of you, your phone lines are open to him/her no matter what time it is. That is what a friend is for. Of course you would expect that your friend would be there for you as well.

If your friend had an annoying habit of a nervous laugh, you would forgive them, wouldn't you? If he/she smoked and you didn't, you would still be a friend.

If your friend did something that you did not feel is right, you would forgive them, would you not? If you cannot forgive them then there is truly no real friendship.

So, why not forgive yourself for your own screw-ups?

Why is it that most people are harder on themselves than anyone else? If my best friend is thirty pounds overweight, the only thing I think about is her health. I do not condemn her for eating that extra cookie, or not walking some of that weight off. My friend is my friend and I love my friends as they are.

When you berate yourself and put yourself down, you are setting yourself up for failure.

Yes, make realistic goals to improve what you want to improve, and give yourself pep talks, but for goodness sakes, don't punish yourself.

Let's think about this next statement:

Before you can be someone else's best friend, you need to make yourself your own best friend.

Let's talk about you and your attitude toward yourself and the things you can do to become a better friend to yourself.

Why is it that you make promises to “you,” then break them?

I am going to go on a diet.

I am going to start an exercise program

I am going to quit smoking, biting my nails.

I am going to quit saying never, and always, and start being nicer.

I am going to lift weights

I am going to spend more quality time with my family

Then a bit down the road, you have broken all the above promises to yourself.

Would you break a promise to your best friend?

Let's think about that one. If you are your own best friend, do you lie to yourself, do you make false promises, do you do things that you know your friend does not like you to do?

Would you lie to your friend and mislead them?

Of course, you wouldn't.

Would you accept some of the things about your friend that you don't like?

Of course you would. So, as your own best friend, you can accept things about yourself, too. One thing we all know is that no one is ever perfect. We were not made to be perfect. We make mistakes, and we learn from them.

A long time ago I heard this one:

"The only mistake I ever made was when I thought I made one."

It's obviously a joke, as everyone makes mistakes.

We can work at self-improvement, and we can change some things, however, it takes time to change everything.

We can take care of 90 percent of what we do, and let the other ten percent take care of itself.

Your best friend is you....

No matter where you go in life, you do have to take your best friend with you. Be good to your best friend!

With small steps you can end up with giant leaps toward becoming a new, happier you.

From Conditioning to Comfort Zones

A comfort zone is the area in your life that you have habitually been doing for so long it is part of your life, like your grandpa's favorite chair. It is in knowing how staying inside your comfort zone can keep you from your dreams, goals, and how it can stop you from doing anything that is not comfortable to you.

Sometimes your comfort zone is not a healthy place to be. When you are constantly in your comfort zone and never step out of it, you don't get much further in life than you already are.

An example: You might not like the thought of dancing, in fact, the very idea of dancing and getting out in front of people wiggling to music might terrorize you. Therefore, why dance?

What could happen if you made a fool of yourself in front of others? Would you be mortified? Would you have an anxiety attack, or, can you shrug it off and go on with your life?

You might envy how some people can get up in front of people and give a wonderful speech, however, the idea of doing it yourself is something you don't want to consider. You might see a fancy car that you would die for, however,

would you die for it, or do you just dream about that fancy car, and deep down know that unless you won a lottery, or some rich person left you money on their death bed, you would never have a car like that?

What if I told you, you could have that dream car? Would you laugh to yourself, and say, "She doesn't know me. She doesn't know what a rut I am in, how many bills I have, what a lousy job I have. She is talking about lucky people, not me!"

Knowing your comfort zone, and why it is your comfort zone is your first step in learning about how to change some of the perceptions that you have about yourself.

Those perceptions begin with the label that was put on you. People get labels put on them. It usually starts when they are small. For a few, the label was a positive one. However, for most, they were negative labels.

Are You Living Up to the Labels that Others Have Put on You?

This may have happened to you. It may have happened to someone you love, or, you may be doing this to your own kids and not even realizing it.

Labels: When you put a label on someone such as you are ugly, stupid, messy, lazy, no good, late, fat, skinny, uncoordinated, clumsy, dumb, irresponsible, under achiever, or things such as procrastinator, and one of the worse ones, "worthless," it will set a person up to become what they are labeled, or resist it so much that they become miserable and end up with low self-esteem.

We tend to accept, or believe what has been said about us, and, by believing what has been said we end up being what we are labeled. It's a vicious cycle.

Maybe as a child you were clumsy, but that does not mean you have to be clumsy.

I remember my middle son when he was tiny. He spilled things more than the average child. He could also find a mud puddle even if it had not rained within three weeks. Instead of calling him "pigpen" or "mud pie" we called him Mr. Clean. We figured if we made a positive label that it would rub off on him in

a "clean" way. It worked. He grew up to be very tidy and organized.

By labeling him something positive, we got positive results.

It is now time to create new improved labels for you.

Get a pen and paper, or get your computer notepad and start writing. First, write all the negative things that have been said about you. Scratch out the ones that are not true.

Don't hesitate. Our minds react quickly to come up with the right answers. It is our own self-doubt that throws that answer aside and starts looking deeper into the question until we come up with the wrong answer. It is not that I am saying that the first answer is always right. Sometimes we do have to look deeper and we will, however, for now, write down the things that you were labeled and immediately scratch out what is not true.

Now write down labels you have put on yourself. Now think about this, who are you? Do you say, "I am a mother?" I am just a housewife. I am a carpenter. I am lazy. I am a working dad. We all tend to label what we are.

Next, write down all the positive labels that you can put on yourself that are true.

I will bet your positive list is way bigger than your negative list!

This brings me to talking about learning what we can accept and what we cannot accept and in knowing the difference. You have probably heard of the Prayer of Serenity. Let's see what it really is:

The Prayer of Serenity

"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference."

Serenity

A simple explanation is this: You could be in a traffic jam. You're stuck. You can't change the traffic jam, however you can be bitter and upset because you are stuck, or you can put in a CD and listen to your favorite comedian and relax and accept what you cannot change.

Life has choices: You can choose to have a realistic expectation or an unrealistic expectation. Unrealistic expectations are when we get upset and gripe over something that we knew would more than likely happen.

If you have taken that traffic route before and have ended up in a traffic jam, you can definitely expect it to happen again - that is a realistic expectation, however, you are late and you must get from point A to point B. You toss it over in your head. It takes ten extra minutes to go the longer route. In your experience there has never been a traffic jam by taking the longer route, however, you really want to get where you are going in record time so you take a chance and take the shorter route.

Then of course you find that you landed in a traffic jam.

Let's think about it: Your expectation was unrealistic, so there is just no sense in griping about or even yelling at yourself for making that unrealistic decision. You took a gamble and lost. Learn from it, and the next time, take the longer route and accept it. You can now put that CD back in, or count all the red cars on the road and all the black trucks on the road, or count the drivers that you see that are not picking their noses. Accept the situation, because you cannot change it.

So you see, you do have choices.

Acceptance has nothing to do with whether or not you like the situation, or how it makes you feel, or if you agree with what is going on. Acceptance is understanding that you cannot change it, therefore, the best thing to do is accept it, so that you can go on with your life or make concessions as in the above example because you have learned from past experiences what the chance of something happening is. That is the reality of the above situation.

Courage

You cannot change how others behave, or your own past experiences that caused pain to either yourself or others. You can atone for things such as a 12-step program in quitting drugs where you hurt someone in the past. However, you cannot change the past. It takes courage to accept what you cannot change.

Courage of another kind:

You may find a law that is just ridiculous, so you research it, after researching, you stand up in the town meeting and voice your opinion. This takes courage, since you are going to attempt to change something, and at the moment you open your mouth, everyone will know that you have a view. Some may agree with you - others may not, however, it takes courage to stand up for what you believe is right, and since you researched it, there is a good chance you can change that law. Laws get changed many times because one person decided to do something about what they did not feel was right.

You can learn from past experiences and you can learn what you can do to stay out of situations that cause you unhappiness. This is the changing of you, not someone else, and you can learn not to be angry about something that you could have avoided because of realistic expectations, and you can learn to not be angry when a situation happens that you have no control over.

Remember: Accept what you cannot change, and change what you can. This is all about attitude!

When your attitude is up tone and you start seeing things positively and working toward seeing things in a different perspective you can improve yourself, your relationships, your job, and anything that you can change in yourself to improve your life and surroundings. That is what this book is all about, your attitude, your self-esteem and changing for the better.

Chapter 3 From Negative to Positive Thinking

“The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees opportunity in every difficulty.” Winston Churchill

From Negative to Positive Thinking

You must turn negative thinking into positive thinking to be happy, to learn how to get what you want out of life, and to grow and to see the world through new eyes.

Negativity begets negativity. Negative forces in your life can only stop you from reaching your dreams.

Negative people can drain you. The more time you spend around negative people the less energy you have to improve your life. It's not easy to improve the quality of your life when you are exhausted.

Are you spending time with creative and positive people or are you sitting in a group of people gossiping about others and seeing the negative side of life?

Let's talk about positive things and how they change your perspective. Learning how to see that the glass is half full rather than half empty is actually quite easy. It is a matter of focusing and catching yourself when you are being negative or those around you are being negative, and putting a stop to negativity and turning it into a positive experience.

Get In The Driver's Seat, by: Bryan Kumar

Being prepared is always better than not being prepared. Pretty simple. Right?

It's easy to be prepared *externally* for events and incidents; you simply gather up the intelligence, the tools, and set up protective systems in place.

But, being prepared internally, i.e. emotionally and mentally is quite another story. Yet, it is just as important, and usually more so, to be emotionally and mentally prepared for what's to come.

So, how do you prepare yourself emotionally and mentally?

You simply practice and rehearse.

Many people go about life "reacting" to situations as they arise. There's no direction there, no control, no target to follow. It's very arbitrary, random, and often times meaningless.

For example, many people get angry, upset or depressed over the littlest things. And the more often they "react" to situations in that manner, the more strongly they condition themselves to react similarly *in the future*, when the next challenge arises.

To create any habit, emotional state, or reaction, you have to rehearse it.

Optimism, self-discipline and believe it or not, even "happiness" or any other mental state, can be attained by the simple process of practice and rehearsal.

The key point to realize here is that every emotion and mental state you go through follows a *recipe* or a *ritual*. When you find out what your internal process (i.e. ritual) is in order to get to a certain mental state, you can create and evoke that state at will.

For example, if you tend to get depressed whenever even the tiniest thing goes wrong, you need to train yourself to react differently to that particular situation.

You can do this by first noticing what your internal process is for feeling depressed. Notice what you do when you're depressed. Find out every detail of your process so that you can explain it to someone else and *teach* them to get just as depressed as you, if they wanted to.

Notice what you're focusing on. What kind of mental pictures are you creating, and what kind of changes occur in your body i.e. posture, facial expression, breathing, etc.

Here's an example of the internal process one would go through in order to get depressed. To get depressed, the person would have to:

- blow the problem out of proportion i.e. create a mountain out of a mole hill, and focus on the *worst-case* scenario
- focus on everything bad and wrong with everything in the world and all around you.
- create vivid and gigantic mental pictures of everything bad and wrong that you're focused on
- change your body to match your focus i.e. slouch over, look down, carry a depressed expression on your face, take small shallow breaths, and so on.

Now that you've found out what the internal process, or *ritual*, is for getting depressed, you know how to **undo** it!

To step out of the state of depression, you just have to:

- change your mental focus from the negative to positive, visualize and magnify the intensity of new, positive, solution-based mental pictures, and rapidly change your body, i.e. posture, breathing, facial expression, etc.

You will realize something very important now...that you can shift from one mental state or emotion to another just by **thinking** it. This is a very powerful piece of information!

You can shift from one mental state or emotion to another just by *thinking* about it!

That means, as soon as you decide on an outcome, you can immediately shift your focus, state and emotion to manifest the desired state or emotion. How useful do you think *that* would be?

You can practice moving from one mental state to another by going from one emotion to another one. This is really a very powerful and useful exercise.

Use the examples above to shift your mental and emotional states from one extreme to the next.

Example: Go from a sad state to a happy one, a frustrated one to an optimistic one, a procrastinating one to a totally motivated one, a nervous one to a confident one, etc.

The more you practice moving from one range to the other, the more prepared you will be, and the easier it will become for you to shift out of a negative state/emotion into a positive one *when it counts*. All it takes is practice and rehearsal so that you are prepared in advance.

Whenever you're caught in a negative state or emotion (anger, frustration, fear, boredom, etc.), just take a moment to step out of yourself and watch yourself from the *outside*. What changes would you immediately want to make to produce better results and outcomes?

It's really as simple as that.

Your focus and your physiology - what you're dwelling on and how you're moving your body - will determine what mental state and emotion you consistently experience in life.

Bryan Kumar – is the author of several books, and writes about visualization in a later chapter in this book.

From reading Bryan's explanation, you can now see that, you can channel yourself from negative thoughts. Remember, if you think a negative thought, it just brings you to thinking to other negative thoughts. You can stop that and make your mind think about positive things. Dwelling on negative things only brings more negativity into your life.

You don't need that. Do you?

You can also learn not to stress out over little things:

How to Handle Stress

No one is totally immune to stress. It is how we recognize the symptoms and what we can do when stress pops up like unexpected visitors when your house is untidy.

The strange thing about stressful situations is that most of us can rise to the occasion when a major disaster strikes. It could be an earthquake, a divorce, an illness, or even death in our families. We meet the major stress issues like champions.

Then come the little things. It's not that they are little, but when you weigh them to what life is truly about, it seems a tad silly to stress over things that annoy us.

When we get annoyed, we stress. If we could just put our annoyances into perspective, we can change and catch the things that cause stress, and learn to recognize how insignificant they truly are.

The pushy lady you meet at the grocery store is one example.

The traffic jam

The barking dog

The person who is flirting outrageously with your spouse

You lose your keys for a while

You worry about the wedding plans

It rains on your picnic day

The gossip

The woman who chatters too much

The waitress taking too long to take your order

Missing the first few minutes of a movie

The flasher in your neighborhood

Bad Hair Day

Don't sweat the small stuff use the negative to positive thinking formula.

You can learn a good habit of catching yourself when you do negative things.

An example, it was a few years back when I learned that the best way to start an argument with someone is to tell him or her that they “always” do something.

“Harry, you always eat crackers in bed.”

It’s a ridiculous statement. Harry (whoever Harry is, and why is he eating crackers in bed anyway?) gets his hackles up. You have just made an untrue statement. He knows he does not “always” eat crackers in bed, *why just last week he ate cheese and apples in bed, and didn’t even have any crackers.*

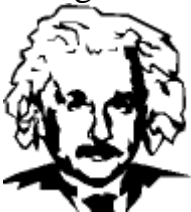
The minute you tell someone that they “never” or they “always” you have opened the doorway to your target to go into a defense stance and finish the war on your false statement.

Here is an exercise for one small change in your life toward the better:

You can catch yourself when you use those two little words, and apologize immediately, and start working on not using them again in a negative mode. I am sure it is perfectly acceptable to tell someone they always look beautiful to you. It is not acceptable to tell them they “never” remember the milk or “never” come home on time, or “always” get to their destination late.

Try that one simple little change, and watch your life improve.

One great thing for a positive attitude is to get active and develop interests.



When Dr. Marian Diamond, a professor of neuro-anatomy from the University of California studied a slice of Einstein's Brain, she stated that Einstein had 73% more glial cells for every neuron than in an average brain.

Glia's are hairy extrusions that surround neurons that nourish them.

In rats that were given more toys and more stimulus, more glia's were found.

This shows that a wide variety of interests play a strong roll in our brain. Einstein was not only a scientist but was a musician, a teacher and a civil servant. He kept his brain very active.

Just because we age does not mean we cannot continue to learn, we can. In fact, the more we keep up both mental and physical activity the better off we are as our age progresses.

Did you know when you furrow your brow when you are concentrating that you are heating up your brain? This increases pressure and makes it easier for you to concentrate on a project. It also can keep people away from you, as you don't look so very friendly with eyebrows squished together.

When you smile, you start to relax, even if you are not in a smiling mood. Go, on sit up smile and see if you start feeling lighter in mood.

What, no smile? Hmmm, okay, I shall tell you a cute joke and see if I can get a smile, or a twinkle, or maybe an out and out loud laugh! You have to open your mind. It is not good to refuse to laugh. We can't stay in apathy. Yes, they have done some tests on 900 people in Australia and discovered that depressed people chose depressing movies over a wide selection of comedies, and that they chose heavy depressing music over lighter happier music to listen to.

So, we can conclude that depressed people are on the scale of apathy, and will choose to stay that way.

I hope you are not that depressed. If you are, keep reading, because you absolutely do have the ability to have a positive attitude, and change the state of your mind.

Did you know that an average child laughs around 400 times per day, while the average adult only laughs 15 times?

What happened, did we get cynical, did we lose our exuberance and exchange it for wisdom?

Did you know that by taking time out each day to read something funny, or watch something funny is actually a healthy thing to do and can greatly increase a positive outlook on life?

“The most wasted of all days is one without laughter.” E. E. Cummings

Relax, and laugh.

Tasteful Joke

Three mice are sitting at a bar in a pretty rough neighborhood late at night trying to impress each other about how tough they are.

The first mouse pounds a shot of scotch, slams the glass onto the bar, turns to the second mouse and says, "When I see a mousetrap, I lie on my back and set it off with my foot. When the bar comes down, I catch it in my teeth, bench press it twenty times to work up an appetite, and then make off with the cheese."

The second mouse orders up two shots of sour mash, pounds them both, slams each glass onto the bar, turns to the first mouse, and replies, "Yeah, well when I see rat poison, I collect as much as I can, take it home, grind it up to a powder, and add it to my coffee each morning so I can get a good buzz going for the rest of the day."

The first mouse and the second mouse then turn to the third mouse.

The third mouse lets out a long sigh and says to the first two, "I don't have time for this. I've got a date with a cat."



Your Brain is Remarkable!

THE FOUR MAIN BRAIN WAVE PATTERNS

BETA - When you are being active, your brain is in what is called Beta.

ALPHA - When we begin to relax and focus our thinking. Alpha contributes to such things as meditation, hypnosis, REM sleep, dreaming, and day dreams.

THETA - This is a deeper level of brain wave. During Theta state, brain cells are able to restore their sodium and potassium levels, which is important for proper brain functioning. The sodium and potassium levels are involved in osmosis, which is the chemical process that transports chemicals into and out of your brain cells. After an extended period in the Beta state the ratio between potassium and sodium goes out of balance. It is how "mental fatigue" happens. A short period in Theta for five to ten minutes can refresh your brain.

DELTA - The deepest of the brain wave frequencies. It is the stage of non-REM sleep. Delta is the deepest, most rejuvenating stage of dreamless sleep. It also produces strong levels of reduced stress.

Chapter 4 The Standard of Excellence

“The meaning of things lies not in the things themselves, but in our attitude towards them.” Antoine de Saint

I have been writing about conditioning and comfort zones, however, I want to really get you to understand how the cause and effect of what has been happening to you and how it really affects your life.

It is called The Standard of Excellence

It's not too often we look at the Standard of Excellence in light of our own way of doing things. It is usually compared to the Standard of Excellence to how a company performs, or a product performs, or an education system working toward a high standard of excellence, or the standard of excellence for sportsmanship.

However, it is perfectly “normal” to use The Standard of Excellence to our perceptions.

During our conditioning we have formed what is right and wrong. Our perceptions of what we have seen so far in our life are based on our experiences. What we have read, what we have seen, and who our mentors have been, are a few places that we have learned our perceptions.

What is The Standard of Excellence for you?

The Standard of Excellence is what you decide is acceptable.

Here is an example:

You might know someone that is an absolute work hound. He/she works to make more money, and when not working at that purpose is working on living on a

clean esthetic environment, which might mean absolute organization, a scrubbed porch to a beautifully landscaped yard.

If that person was put into an environment that was less than his/her Standard of Excellence, then that person will clean up his/her environment to the best of his ability. If he doesn't, he has done a very destructive thing to his mind and he/she has been short-changed.

He has learned to accept a standard of excellence that is not up to his own standard of excellence.

Let's go into a relationship. You have probably seen the show, "The Odd Couple." If not, here is a quick run down of that old sitcom. Two divorced men live together in an apartment. They both have jobs. One is Mr. Very Neat and the other is Mr. Slob. They each drive each other totally nuts.

The slob is happy being a slob and Mr. Neat is not happy living with Mr. Slob. Mr. Neat, cleans, organizes, dumps ashtrays the minute a cigarette is crushed out, and dusts anything that looks like it needs dusting.

Mr. Slob, would rather live in his mess, and not be disturbed by Mr. Neat.

This causes a lot of funny situations as the two try to live together.

Unfortunately, this happens in real life, too, however there really is not much funny about the situation. A man marries a woman. The woman wants everything just so, which means the man needs to comply to make her happy. Maybe he has to pick up his socks, before she turns the negative emotions on.

"Why do you **always** leave your disgusting socks on the floor for me to pick up?" she screams.

This is not aimed at men. There are many men who live with women who are slobes in their eyes, too.

His response will be whatever he is conditioned to respond. "Because I feel like it!" or "I was going to pick them up!" or "Why do you **always** sound just like

my mother, if I wanted to live with my mother, I would **never** have married you!”

Or, maybe he doesn't answer her at all. In fact, next time it is his socks, the towel and his jeans that conspicuously land on the floor.

Whatever the reason for any of the above, is all conditioned responses. The person cleaning up after the other, is in the “I'm being used” mode, and the one who does not have the courtesy to take thirty seconds of his time, stays angry and pushed to do something he doesn't want to do.

The hurt one, feels unloved, for if the untidy one loved her/him, then he would pick up the socks every time, out of courtesy, out of respect or love, or to just plain avoid an argument.

In order for one to live without lowering his/her standard of excellence he/she must pick up those socks, because they refuse to live like that. It's below his/her own standards.

The one who will not pick up the socks has a lower standard of excellence in this particular area of his/her life.

Now, these two are STUCK living together. What a mess.

So, the marriage goes on with ups and downs until both of their standard of excellence has dropped off the scale. She gives up and refuses to pick up the socks. *Now, the house is full of socks, and one day, he goes to his drawer and finds no socks and is late for work. She has received her revenge.*

He is upset and blames her because he has no socks.

Here is a common one:

She might leave the lights on. He might not want to pay the bills for the lights being on. She decides to make more money so they can have the lights on. He decides that money can be used for better purposes, and on goes the problems.

She feels she is working extra time so she can have the lights on and the socks are still landing on the floor. One or both of them start eating more, or one or both of them start drinking to cover their upset, or one or both of them stop coming home because home is not, in this situation, where their heart is, until the relationship is almost beyond repair.

The kids watch and learn while all this is going on, creating their perceptions on life.

Then the big D (divorce) happens, as neither can take it anymore.

Oh my - what has happened here?

Do you think I am getting carried away with this marital problem?

Well, okay, maybe a little, however, this is how it can escalate from a BUMP of a problem to a mountain.

Is there a positive answer to any of the above?

YES.

The socks are the problem that one sees.
The lights being on, is yet another problem.

It's not the lights; it's not the socks. Truly, it is not the SOCKS; it is not the LIGHTS.

Think about it.

It is how the little things in life can grow huge over time because the real problem was never addressed. **It is the way we communicate with one another.**

Harry, I would really appreciate you picking up your socks. You've done it before for me. When you leave your socks on the floor, it makes me feel like you don't care about me.

Estelle, I'm sorry, I will try harder to remember.

Estelle, I was raised where every dollar counts, leaving the electricity on makes me feel like we are wasting money that can be put to a better purpose.

Harry, I get so tired when I don't get enough light. My eyes are just not as good as yours are and many times, I get awful headaches. I will save in other areas, to make up for the lights being on.

Let's make a deal, you pick up your socks, and I will use only the lights on in the room I am in, and I will try to do the best that I can do, to remember how it concerns you that the house is lit up like a forest fire.

Compromise, without using words such as ALWAYS and NEVER.

Always, and never are words that cause more battles than religions have caused wars.

Now back to Standard of Excellence. Each of us has a perception of what is important and what causes us to lower our standard of excellence.

Harry in the above example does not like wasted money. His standard is not to waste money.

She wants the home to be clean, but does not feel loved enough because he does not seem to care about how she feels about having to be stuck cleaning up after another adult.

Can this marriage work? Of course it can. It can work as long as the lines of communication stay open, and each is willing to make a few compromises to keep that relationship working. Marriage is not something that is all a bed of roses, it takes work to keep it working, and it takes understanding how the other feels, and the only way that one can know how the other feels is by having decent communication, without accusations and raised voices.

Of course, it also takes accepting responsibility for your own actions, which means maturing into a responsible person.

Now, suppose you are not living with someone with all the above chaos?

How does your own personal Standard of Excellence reflect on your life?

Oh, this is a good one:

I wish I knew exactly what part of your life you would like to improve, however, I need a general idea so I shall pull one out of mid air.

Is it okay to lower your Standard of Excellence?

Let's say you are single, and you are renting a house. Your dream is to purchase your own house one day, however, you are saving for your dreams. Your standard of excellence is to have a lovely yard. You work, you plan your weekends so that you can keep up the lawn, your rose garden, and maybe even have a workshop that you are keeping organized.

Your boss offers you some overtime. You want to purchase your own house, so you start working overtime. Then you come home and park in front of the television set, letting your mind say it is okay, because you have worked overtime. One day, you take a look at your yard. You quickly get up, mow the lawn, take out a few weeds, but not all. A few things at your shop don't get put back where they are belong because time is now less than what it was before.

Eventually, you have allowed your yard to not look so good, your workshop a bit messy, but your bank account is growing. However, to have that money, you have compromised your own standards of what you feel is important.

Now, you have choices here. Get up away from the television, do your yard, and get that shop picked up, then vow to yourself that you won't let it grow to weeds and that every time you use something it will be put back into place.

Alternatively, you can lower your standard of excellence and decide that is okay, for now, for things to be a bit messy and learn to relax with your new game plan, or, you can hire someone to do your yard for you, and take a little longer to get your dream house.

You need to take responsibility for your own actions. It certainly is okay to not have the most beautiful yard in the world. It certainly is okay to lower your standard of excellence, as long as you don't do it more and more, until you look around and you wonder where that "real you" went.

Here is another example. You have just lost weight. You worked hard at it, you watched what you ate, you started an exercise program, and things are going great. You are proud of yourself to take control of that area of your life. You meet someone, fall in love, and nine out of ten times, you will lose a little more weight because you are in the euphoria of "being in love."

Time wears on, your new partner takes up more of your time, you start dropping 20 minutes of your exercise plan, soon, you drop it completely out of your life, and before you know it that darn weight is back on you again, only this time, it's worse than it was before.

What happened? Did you lower your standard of excellence? Did you learn to accept that the extra weight was okay, or did you lose your focus or change your priorities?

Can you lose it again? If so, can you keep it off? There is now a niggling doubt, and of course, self disgust, because you allowed yourself to gain it all back again. Then you start looking at yourself, and think, "Hey, this extra twenty pounds is not so bad, look at that fat neighbor down the street" ... and soon you are allowing yourself to accept something that used to be very important to you.

Do you see how lowering your standard of excellence can affect how you feel about yourself, how you make excuses, how you allow little things to continue on until they become so overwhelming that they hard to face?

WHAT if you never did have a great standard of excellence in the first place, because the perceptions that you grew up with did not teach you what is accepted as "normal" in the society that you live in?

This can be from chewing with your mouth open to passing gas in public, to it is okay to have urine on the toilet rim, and not making the bed is no big deal. Your dishes are piled up and so you use a paper plate. Your yard has two junk cars in it, so why not a rusty old mower?

If you lived with slobs all your life, two things would happen - you would be a slob, or you would decide that it was unacceptable to live like a slob.

Now, if you are a slob, and your mate is a slob and your close friends are slobs, and this just does not bother you and your self-esteem is high and you are getting what you want out of life, you are making the money you want to make, you are happy at your job, and you are living in complete harmony in your environment, then that is your Standard of Excellence, but I am glad you are reading a self-help book 😊

I remember as a child, coming from a very poor background, thinking that if I saw a house that was clean and had some furniture, and had a television that those people were rich indeed. If they had a real dining room table with matching dishes, and food in their refrigerator, in my young mind they were as rich as rich can be. It was my perception.

When I went to live with my grandmother and I got mud on a doll and I put in the toy box, grandma came in and said. “What are you thinking? How can you put that doll back in that toy box with mud on it?”

“But, grandma,” I answered, bewildered. “I am going to take it out later to the fort I built.”

Grandma then said, “if you put it in with the other toys, then you are getting other toys dirty causing more work for yourself.”

“Oh, I didn’t think about that.”

Then she added, kindly, “Teresa, I know you are not used to having things in their place and everything in its place, and I know you don’t come from a home where everything is kept clean and tidy as this house is. In this world, there is no excuse for not keeping things clean. No matter how poor you are, soap is cheap and elbow grease takes your own desire and determination to improve your own living conditions. You can then have pride in all that you do, whether you have money or don’t have money, because you have given it your very best. There is no shame in being poor; there is shame when you allow poverty to keep you

from being able to hold your head just high enough to keep your nose out of the air.”



I sure miss my grandmother.

Take pride in what you do, and do the best that you can. Do not fear failure, we all fail, then we get up and brush ourselves off, and try again. Each time we fail, we learn yet another way to not do something. It is all in learning.

Each time we learn something new we take the risk of failing and stepping out of our comfort zone. Imagine, not learning how to walk for fear of looking silly when we repeatedly fall down, or not learning how to talk because we were afraid we could not say the words properly. Keep learning something new in perspective, and failure should not scare you at all.

Did you fear failure when you got on your first bicycle, or were you so excited about getting your bicycle that you took your falls until you mastered the bike?

Here is yet, another example:

You have set your Standard of Excellence very high for your grades in school. In fact, you strive to get all A's. You graduate, start college, and then decide to have a baby. Now, you have another responsibility, a baby, and you still want those A's. Do you drop courses because you only got a "B" or do you accept a lower standard because now you have a baby to tend to?

These questions I ask you really don't have answers. What they are doing is getting it so that you can set your own Standard of Excellence. If you see someone that is exceptional in your mind, you can learn by watching them and getting an idea of what you can do to improve the quality of your life. You can

add little decisions into your life. They can be as simple as deciding you will not leave the house unless your bed is made, all the way to having an organized drawer, to planning the time to do your laundry and shopping and organizing your time, to deciding that wearing curlers to the grocery store may not be acceptable to you.

Speaking of curlers in a grocery store, it reminded me of the time my sister told me she wanted some milk. She had her hair in curlers. She lived in a small town. She snagged her three-year old daughter and snuck to the store, ever alert that no one knew her. Her daughter started pulling toys from the lower shelf in the store. So my sister said, "Put those back!" Her daughter didn't comply so she stepped closer to her daughter saying, "I told you to put them back.!" Her daughter then sat on the floor and started dragging her rear end across the floor screaming, "Please don't beat me, mommy, don't beat me mommy."

Of course, by this time the whole store was staring and my sister, in her lovely curlers, mortified, paid for the milk, and rushed out of the store, blushing.

In case you are wondering, no, my sister did not beat her children. She never wore curlers to a store again. She did take her daughter to the store again, and that was very brave, indeed.

By watching successful people and acquiring some of their qualities, and not overwhelming yourself with trying to do too much at one time, you can improve your own self-esteem. Your self-esteem comes from inside. The more you do to improve how you feel about yourself by setting your own acceptable Standard of Excellence, the more you can achieve, and the better you can feel about yourself.



You are not the label on the clothes you wear. How many times have you purchased a pair of \$60.00 Levis because they are a status symbol, rather than getting three pairs of quality jeans for the same price, or having the one pair and using the other \$40.00 to build your future?

Your perceptions cause your Standard of Excellence.

There is only one person who can raise your standard of excellence, and that is YOU. No one can do it for you.

The question is what is acceptable and what is not acceptable?

Can a person have low self-esteem and move mountains to always look perfect, always do everything right, because they feel if they don't, no one will accept and love them? Or worse their own fear of failure makes them totally unable to relax about "normal" things in life.

Yes. A person can have all the outer things, cleanliness, name brand clothes, a nice car, a beautiful face and body and still have low self-esteem.

Brian Mesinger, PhD, a pediatric psychologist, states: "Self-esteem is the collection of beliefs or feelings that we have about ourselves. How we define ourselves hugely influences our motivations, attitudes, and behaviors."

Self-esteem comes from the inside, not from the outside. Yes, we can put up values to how we will appear to others. We can put on our outer facade and still have low self-esteem. It's an inner feeling of unworthiness.

However, if you put up such a high standard of excellence that you find fault in everything from: OH MY GOD... I have a pimple, and you don't go anywhere in the big bad world because you have a flaw that others can see. You may not know it, but you have a problem with self-esteem.

It is normal to not like having a pimple. It is not normal to let that pimple ruin your whole day.

Poor self-esteem comes from the environment that you were raised in, and it takes some help to first recognize that you do live in, or have lived in a dysfunctional environment. You then have to acknowledge and meet it straight on so that you can enrich your life in a way that you may never have believed possible!

Poor self-esteem can show in all different ways.

The class clown... - generally of low self-esteem - Acting up and disrupting others

The mama's little helper - generally needs to help to feel needed and valuable

The enabler - the one always helping others out of their own follies instead of putting the responsibility back on the person they are enabling. It is called "Tough Love" when you decide to quit enabling someone.

Strong signs of low self-esteem can manifest in the following behavior patterns:

"Persons with low self-esteem:

Consider themselves lost, unworthy of being cared for.

Are poor risk takers.

Operate out of a fear of rejection.

Are typically unassertive in their behavior with others.

Are fearful of conflict with others.

Are hungry for the approval of others.

Are poor problem solvers.

Are fraught with irrational beliefs and have a tendency to think irrationally.

Are susceptible to all kinds of fears.

Have a tendency to become emotionally stuck and immobilized.

Have a poor "track record" in school or on the job; conversely, they sometimes over compensate and become over-achievers.

Are unable to affirm or to reinforce themselves positively.

Are unable to make an honest assessment of their strengths, qualities, and good points; they find it difficult to accept compliments or recognition from others.

Have poorly defined self-identities with a tendency to be chameleons in order to fit in with others.

Are insecure, anxious, and nervous when they are with others.

Often become overcome with anger about their status in life and are likely to have chronic hostility or chronic depression.

Are easily overcome with despair and depression when they experience a setback or loss in their lives.

Have a tendency to overreact and become de-energized by resentment, anger, and the desire for revenge against those whom they believe have not fully accepted them.

Fulfill roles in their families of origin that are counter-productive and maladaptive. These roles carry over into their adult lives.

Are vulnerable to mental health problems and have a propensity to use addictive behavior to medicate their hurt and pain. Such addictive behavior can include alcohol, drugs, food, gambling, sex, shopping, smoking, workaholism, or the search for excitement, truth, wisdom, and a guru with an easy guide to the achievement of happiness.

Signs of Healthy Adult Self-Esteem:

Adults with healthy self-esteem hold themselves as:

worthy to be loved and to love others; worthy to be cared for and to care for others; worthy to be nurtured and to nurture others; worthy to be touched and supported and to touch and support others; worthy to be listened to and to listen to others; worthy to be recognized and to recognize others; worthy to be encouraged and to encourage others; worthy to be reinforced as "good" people and to recognize others as "good" people.

People with a healthy self-esteem have a productive personality; they have achieved success to the best of their ability in school, work, and society. They are capable of being creative, imaginative problem solvers and risk takers. They are optimistic in their approach to life and the attainment of their personal goals. People with healthy self-esteem are leaders and skillful in dealing with people. They are neither too independent nor too dependent on others. They have the ability to size up a relationship and adjust to the demands of the interaction. Adults with high self-esteem have healthy self-concepts and self-image. Their perception of themselves is in synchrony with the picture they project to others. They are able to state clearly who they are, what their future potential is, and to what they are committed in life. They are able to declare what they deserve to receive in their lifetime. They have a sense of deservedness, which allows them to reap good things in life.

People with high self-esteem are able to accept the responsibility for and consequences of their actions. They do not resort to shifting the blame or using

others as scapegoats for actions that have resulted in a negative outcome. They are altruistic. They have a legitimate concern for the welfare of others. They are not self-centered or egotistical in their outlook on life. They do not take on the responsibility for others in an over-responsible way. They help others accept the responsibility for their own actions. They are, however, always ready to help anyone who legitimately needs assistance or guidance.

Adults with high self-esteem have healthy coping skills. They are able to handle the stresses in their lives in a productive way. They are able to put the problems, concerns, issues, and conflicts that come their way into perspective. They are able to keep their lives in perspective without becoming too idealistic or too morose. They have a good sense of humor and are able to keep a balance of work and fun in their lives.

Adults with healthy self-esteem look to the future with excitement, a sense of adventure and optimism. They recognize their potential for success and visualize their success in the future. They have dreams, aspirations, and hopes for the future. They are goal-oriented with a sense of balance in working toward their goals. They know from where they have come, where they are now, and where they are going.

Healthy adult self-esteem is supported in the family, peer group, workplace, and community. To sustain healthy self-esteem adults need to receive nurturing from the people in their environment, including:

Unconditional warmth, love, and caring: to realize that other people recognize them as deserving to be nurtured, reinforced, rewarded, and bonded to. The environment transmits messages of warmth, loving, and caring by physical touch, meeting the survival needs of food, clothing and shelter, and providing a sense of stability and order in life.

Acceptance for who they are: to recognize that other people see them as worthy individuals who have a unique set of personality characteristics, skills, abilities, and competencies making them special. Acceptance helps individuals recognize that differences among and between people are okay. This encourages the development of a sense of personal mastery and autonomy. Acceptance enables people to develop relationships with others, yet maintain healthy boundaries of individuality within themselves.

Good communication: being listened to and responded to in a healthy way so that healthy problem solving is possible. Appropriate giving and receiving of feedback is encouraged and rewarded. Communicating at a "feelings" level is a mode of operation for these people, allowing them to be in touch with their emotions in a productive manner.

For any environment to support the development of healthy adult self-esteem, it must contain:

Recognition and acceptance of people for who they are. To base such recognition and acceptance on the condition that they must first conform to a prescribed standard of behavior or conduct, is unhealthy. Unconditional recognition and acceptance given in the form of support allows individuals to reach their ultimate potential.

Clearly defined and enforced limits known to individuals with no hidden tricks or manipulation. Limits set the structure for the lives of individuals, allowing clear benchmarks of appropriate and inappropriate behavior. Limits enable individuals to recognize their responsibilities and to chart their course of behavior in a rational way.

Respect and latitude for individual action within the defined limits of the environment. This encourages individuals to use their creativity, ingenuity, and imagination to be productive within the established structure. Restrictions that suppress individuality can lead to a narrow focus, with people becoming stunted and handicapped in the use of their personal skills, abilities, and resources.

Established freedom within the structure. This enables individuals to develop a sense of personal autonomy. If they are too tied down and inhibited, they could become resentful and eventually rebellious against the prescribed structures in their environment. Being given the freedom of self-expression within the established rules and norms allows individuals to explore their potential to its fullest; thus there is a greater possibility of becoming successful, healthy achievers. “

The above in italics was taken from an exceptional website and I am giving them full recognition for such a wonderful site on learning about self-esteem and what you can do about low self-esteem and how you can nurture your children to

make sure they don't have low self-esteem. It was added to this book with permission from James J. Messina, Ph.D. and Constance M. Messina, Ph.D. I could see no reason to tell about the low and high self-esteem in my own words, when it was written so beautifully already.

This remarkable website can be found at: <http://www.coping.org>
It has a lot of information on all kinds of self-esteem issues.

Then we come to this one:

Impossible High Standards of Excellence.

Maybe your standard of excellence was put way up on the scale, and no one can live up to what you expect of yourself - not even you. This also can make a person miserable. Are you one with such a high standard of excellence that you are unhappy because you can't find anyone who has your standards, or that you are so exhausted trying to keep your standard up, that you can't relax at all?

Relax, you are not alone, there are many people who have very High Standards of Excellence, and even accept that others are not up to their standards, yet still push themselves beyond what is "normal."

My mother-in-law, years ago came over from England. I knew she was coming, so I made sure the house was ready and that spare room had clean sheets and fresh smelling towels, and that she had everything that she would need to be comfortable.

I woke up at 6 o'clock in the morning and found her vacuuming under my couch cushions.

This surprised me, but did not upset me. I figured she had time on her hands and did not like to sit still, or she was being helpful. Personally, if someone wants to come to my house and clean under things and behind things, it is fine with me.

But, truthfully, I think she had a higher standard of excellence on house cleaning than I did, and therefore, she was bringing my house up to her standards.



Let's talk some more on Standard of Excellence just to give you some ideas of how vast of a subject this is:

- Do you belch at the table? How are your table manners?
- Is it acceptable to pass gas in front of your spouse or your children?
- Do you put your feet on the furniture?
- What do your shoes look like?
- Would you lie for your friend, when you did not approve of what your friend did.
- If you saw a watch at a restaurant, would you take it or turn it in?
- Would you cheat on your spouse, and if you did, would you confess?
- Would you have sex with a stranger?
- Do you try to be places on time, or let it slide?
- Are you a good host/hostess?
- Are you warm and friendly to your company?
- If you are male, do you open the door for women or stand up when they walk into the room. Do you take your hat off when inside a building?
- Are you a snob, and too good to be with the lower class in your eyes?
- Do you choose friends that have the same or close to the same values?
- Do you smoke? If you do, do you throw your butts on the ground?
- Do you litter?
- Do you pick things up when you see them on the ground?
- Do you pay back money that you borrow in a timely manner?
- Were you raised to be prejudice and have you changed?
- Do you make snap judgments and then seldom change them?
- Are you loyal to your friends?
- Do you hang out with people who cannot help you financially?
- If you are female, do you wait until the door is opened for you?
- Do you work at your relationships or just give up easily?
- Are you worth what you are being paid at your job?
- Are you worth more, but don't ask for a raise?

Do you visit people and lift up their couch cushions? ☺

Would you hire you?

Do you plop when you sit?

If you want to be successful, are you dressing as a successful person dresses?

As you can see, I could fill up a whole book with questions. You need to create your own Standard of Excellence then evaluate what you can accept and what you no longer will accept. Go ahead, write that list, then prioritize what is the most important and **make those changes**.

Have we talked about what “normal” really is?

It’s the value that is put on because of common usage of something. If you live in a society where you are not allowed to vote, then voting is not normal. If you live in a society where you have been raised that you can vote, then voting is normal.

If you live in a society where cannibals reside, guess what? That’s right, cannibalism is normal.

The society that we grow up in becomes what we perceive to be “normal.”

If you live in the South in the United States it is normal to have a southern accent. Most of the children have a southern accent, and the teachers and the colleges all have their “normal” way of speaking for the area in which they were raised.

If you live in England it is “normal” to have a society with an English accent.

As children, our perception can only take in our immediate surroundings, as we grow we learn more, and we absorb more, however, when we are small, normal is what we can perceive. If people eat worms, fried worms, worms sautéed to a delicate texture, or eat grasshoppers, it could be considered a delicacy, while another society may get their tummy to turn over at that thought of eating snakes, ants, and cockroaches. It’s all in how we are raised and what we were taught and have accepted as normal.

Children learn what to eat from their parents. I remember a girlfriend of mine.

She was feeding her baby daughter canned baby style green peas.
While she fed the baby, she grimaced and tried to get the baby to eat the peas.

It was very funny to see. This baby would not eat those peas, and I thought if someone tried to put food in my mouth and was making *gagging* faces, I don't think I would want to eat it either. *Have you had your fried worms today?*

Again, it is all in how we perceive things as we grow.

Now take a few moments and write down some qualities and things that you would like to change that will improve the quality of your life and the way that you feel about yourself?

This will now bring us to Ethics and Your Road to Happiness.

Chapter 5 What is Happiness?

“People are just about as happy as they make up their minds to be.” Abraham Lincoln



What is happiness?

Happiness is setting a goal and working toward that goal and reaching that goal. Once the goal is reached, you have a momentary win, and that is huge happiness, however, if you don't set another goal, then you have nothing to keep you in that state of happiness for very long.

Your goals can be many small ones, or one large one, but once reached, then your happy state will not continue. Mankind does not live on only one accomplishment in life. Set goals; work toward goals; reach goals. Life is good!

Another part of being truly happy is Ethics.

Are Your Ethics In?

When you live by rules that can influence others, and those rules are of high quality, then that is the first step toward your own happiness.

One main and universal rule is "Do unto others, as you would like them to do unto you." It was mentioned earlier in this book, on the subject of friendship.

Now it is back again. Only, this time it is being used for the values of life.

It's a great guideline for what you would want toward your own happiness. If you don't want to be stolen from, you don't steal. If you don't want to be lied to, then don't lie.

It's a simple system, really.

Take for example, a parent who tells their 12-year-old child, "Now, remember to tell them that you are 11, so we don't have to pay full price for you to".....go to the movies, have dinner priced by age, or get on a bus.

What does this teach the child? Does it teach him/her honesty?

It is little things like that where we step outside our own values, without really realizing what kind of damage it can be doing, and worse, what kind of message we are telling our children.

It's okay to lie when it saves us money? It's okay to lie to get us out of trouble?

So, we have to watch what we do and say to put a great example to others. In this way, your own happiness can be fulfilled, while you are in essence teaching by the way you live, how others can be happy, too.

It is well known that the happiest people are those that have:

- A belief system
- A family
- Are married
- Have a fulfilling job
- Sleep at night and get up with enough sleep
- Have a routine
- Get exercise and eat healthy.

You may not have all of the above, and it does not mean you can't have happiness, just because you don't. Those are standard "norms."

There are all kinds of ways to have happiness:

Helping people brings happiness, - for those you help and for yourself. How do you feel after helping someone?

Take for example, when someone stops and asks you for directions and you tell them how to get there. Don't you feel good after that exchange?

When you live up to your own ethics, values, Standard of Excellence, and do the best you can, and you show by example who and what you stand for, your road to happiness will not depend on what fork in the road to choose in life, for you have taken the fork that will work for anyone who cares to set their own standards, then proceeds to live by them.

Gratitude

One thing many people forget is to be grateful for what they have.

No matter what mental state you are on, you have things to be grateful for. I already know one thing that you can be grateful for.

You can read. Be grateful that you can read and have the right to read. If someone is reading this book for you, then be grateful that you have someone who will read for you.

Sometimes, we keep pushing and wishing for things and we totally forget to be grateful for what we have.

Start a list of what you are grateful for, and add to it, whenever you get a chance, when you find yourself falling toward depression or any kind of negativity, read your list, and see if you can add more to it.

Put that list on your refrigerator, or bedroom mirror, so that you can constantly be reminded of the things in your life that you are grateful for.

When you are grateful for things, it keeps your mind on having a positive attitude about life.

Chapter 6 Your Mood and Colors

Did you know that the colors that surround you can influence your mood?

Did you know that a orange or a red room can stimulate your appetite and that a blue plate will make you eat less? Many restaurants use reds and orange in their interior.

Orange can also create laughter. It is a good color for a room where you would entertain your guests.

Did you know that yellow is bright and cheerful, but if you have a whole room painted bright yellow, you can start feeling angry?

Red can stimulate. It is also a color of power. A woman giving a speech wearing red, demands respect. It is also the color associated with lust.

Greens and Blues are soothing colors. If you have a board meeting and you want more creativity, you might consider painting the room with invigorating colors. Blues and greens make for soothing quiet times.

Pink can soothe, however, pink can inhibit aggressiveness. If you are planning on your daughter becoming a lawyer, maybe you might want to give her a different color. Maybe light lavender would be a refreshing change.

Black, which is not a color, shows authority and independence.

White, which is also not a color, reminds people of innocence and can be refreshing.

Purple is the color of mystery and intrigue and is comforting.

Look around your house and see what colors your rooms are. Do you think you need to paint a hall? Or how about the kitchen?

Years ago, when I was in the Real Estate business I was told if you want to sell a house, paint the kitchen orange. The mindset on that philosophy was, if the woman liked the house, and then walked into the kitchen to see an orange kitchen that she would immediately think, "*If this house was mine, I would paint that kitchen.*" Which would start the process of making the house hers, just so she could change the color of the kitchen.

That goes back to just how our minds can work. A thought placed into our heads, and the reaction to that thought.

Try a dash of color and see how it can change your mood.

Chapter 7 Your Health and Exercise

One of the best things you can do for yourself is take care of your health. In order to use the wonderful mind you were given, you need to make sure it gets oxygen. You need to make sure that you get enough sleep, and that your body gets fed properly with the proper nutrients.

You need plenty of water, and you need to move that body.

It is very difficult to get all of your nutrition from the food you get in the store nowadays. Much of the fresh produce has been stored for days before you get to purchase it. Supplement a healthy diet with vitamins.

When you are not eating properly and when you are not getting enough fresh air and getting some exercise for your body, you are not being the best that you can be. It's hard not to get snappish at others when you are tired. It's harder to control your temper when you are starving yourself.

When your brain is not getting fresh air, it is hard to stay focused on your goals and the changes, that by now, I am sure you are thinking a lot about.

Your brain needs omega3. Fish is brain food. If you are a vegetarian, then you probably know that you can get omega3 by eating walnuts.

If you don't exercise, start doing some. I don't care if you walk 5 feet more past your mailbox every day, or decide that you will walk four aisles extra in the grocery store. Do something and do more each day, until you are bursting with energy.

Stretch first thing in the morning. Get those kinks out and limber up. Step outside and inhale and exhale. Fill those lungs then let the air out.

Get a glass of water and drink it. Get some protein in the morning. It will help you from having low blood sugar toward lunch.

Do it for you!

Park your car further from the store.

Take the stairs instead of the elevator. If you have 15 flights, don't let that stop you. Take the elevator to the 10th floor then walk up those stairs.

If you can't do that many, don't worry about it; do what you can. And, do it every chance you can.

If you are handicapped, you can still do something extra. Bend a little further, stretch a little higher.

Take up a sport that you might be able to do. If you can't do things like bowling, or tennis - then swim. If you can't swim, then wade. Take up weight lifting, your instructor will show you what you need to know about lifting weights, and you may just start out without any weights at all as you use your own weight on your body, until you can add weights. You can do something extra each day and build yourself up for more.

Join a health club if you can. If you don't like to be alone, find a walking partner. Change your house around a little, so that maybe if you have goodies that they are on a very high shelf so that you have to reach a little higher to get to them.

Cut down on hydrogenated fats. Cut down on red meats and add more fish to your diet instead. When you get fresh air, plenty of water, good nutrition, enough sleep and exercise you will be able to focus longer for learning and concentrating on your goals. It is amazing what small changes can do for you. So start right now.

Stand up, or reach up or twist in your chair. Each day do a little more. You can do it - you just have to know how important it is.

You don't need to spend money either on exercise. You can use pop bottles with water in them to use for weights. You can find an old rope. You can draw

hopscotch on your sidewalk and use an old bobby pin for a marker, and, if you can walk, then all you need is to dress properly for the weather and walk.

If you watch television, do some twists and bends during the commercial breaks. Every little bit helps. Tests have shown that 30 minutes per day of exercise is very beneficial, and more tests have proven that three, ten minute spurts of exercise are very close to the same benefit.

The object to any aerobic program is to get into “air.” Getting into air is simply walking long enough, or fast enough to get to the point where talking is a little harder to do. That’s in “air.” For a healthy person getting in air, could take 30 minutes of fast walking, for an unhealthy person, it could be a few minutes. Keep it up.

Rejuvenate yourself. Get old tapes that you listened to when you were a teenager and start dancing. I expect to see some “Twist and Shout” and “Do the Monster Mash.” All the way, to Lawrence Welk and a good old fashioned waltz. If you are too young to remember that stuff, then how about getting busy with “The Hustle.” If you are too young to remember that one, then you are on your own, as I have not kept up with what the really young dance to, but you get the idea. Put some music on and move that body.

Grab your partner and take a dance class. Take up karate. Start right now and do something to improve your health.

Don’t think you have time to add exercise to your life? I bet if you really wanted to improve your health badly enough, you will make time. Do something and start right now. Stretch!

WATER

FUELING UP ON WATER

It's our body's vital fuel, a health drink from nature. It's calorie-free, inexpensive and easily obtained. Yet few people follow the old fashioned advice to drink eight glasses of water a day. You also need an extra glass of water for every ten pounds you are overweight.

Most people drink when they are thirsty, but the beverage of choice tends to be some other drink besides water. Americans drink two or three glasses of plain water a day, according to a U.S. Department of Agriculture survey conducted in the late 1970s. Based on an analysis of all fluid in take by adults, it is said to total about two quarts of water a day, and this includes water from foods and from other beverages. It's not usually necessary to actually swallow two quarts of plain water every day. However, people with special problems such as kidney conditions might be exceptions.

Americans drink eight gallons of bottled water a year, roughly two ounces or a quarter-cup a day, according to the International Bottled Water Association. Californians drink three times the national average of bottled water, downing 24 gallons a year, or nearly a cup a day. Climate and seasons of the year play a role in one's thirst also, and just as we tend to perspire more in the summer months, we also tend to drink more water.

Boosting intake of plain water makes good sense, many experts concur, because water eases digestion and regulates body temperature. Water also bathes the cells and accounts for about 60 percent of body weight. And it can help us exercise longer and more efficiently. Drinking water can ward off constipation and maybe even crankiness. And since it's a natural appetite suppressant, water can help us lose weight and keep it off. It can help keep skin healthy, although it won't necessarily banish acne.

Who should drink water? We all should, but pregnant women, nursing mothers and athletes should be especially careful to drink a sufficient amount. When it is hot or humid, upping water intake is also wise. There are certain workers who seem to have a more difficult time developing the water-drinking habit. Among those who don't normally drink enough water are teachers, airline attendants and nurses.

Drinking fluids, particularly, water, during exercise reduces cardiovascular stress and improves performance. After a strenuous workout, you have to replace the fluids you have lost. Otherwise, you will suffer chronic dehydration. Drink water before, during and after exercising, and remember that water reduces body temperature thus making the whole exercise process safer.

Water can be especially helpful for people with a history of kidney stones because it dissolves calcium in the urine, reducing the risk of stone formation. Among physicians, urologists are probably most likely to extol the virtues of water. And it has been documented that drinking water mostly before 6 P.M. can reduce the likelihood of nocturnal bathroom visits.

It is interesting to note also that water helps prevent urinary tract infections, both for men and for women. Too busy to count how many glasses a day you drink? There are other ways to calculate if your intake is sufficient. Dark-colored urine often suggests you aren't drinking enough water. Get into the habit by starting with a glass of water with every meal, then work in a cup between meals.

Chapter 8 Learn how to Give and Receive

“If you were going to die soon and had only one phone call you could make, who would you call and what would you say? And why are you waiting?” Stephen Levine

Accepting and Giving Compliments

Do you love compliments, or do you get uncomfortable when you get them? Do you immediately deny the compliment?

“Gee, that dress looks good on you.”

“Oh, this old rag.”

“I really like that poem you wrote.”

“ Really, do you think I should change any of it?”

When a person gives you a compliment. A simple thank you is in order.

“You look great in blue, it really brings out your eyes.”

“Thank you.”

“I love that dressing you put on the salad.”

“Thank you. My grandmother taught me how to make that.”

See, how truly easy that is. It's simple.

Do you take time to give compliments?

The next time you see something you like, *don't just think it. Say it!*

Think about the people in your life that readily give compliments. Think about deep down how it makes you feel good (when you are not in denial toward the compliment). Think about how when someone notices and remarks on how well you are doing at your job, how well you did on a test, or how great you made a dinner.

Don't withhold compliments. When you think them, tell the person. If it is not normal for you to think good things about others do stop and look. Is there something that you can honestly say that is positive to another person? Say it. It doesn't bite back. It might feel unnatural at first, but after a few trials, you will see that sparkle in someone's eyes. You will see your friends, and your children strive to do better for you. All because of a simple few words that you took the time to say something complimentary.

How about giving and receiving? Is it hard for you to accept a gift?

Do you say, "Oh, you shouldn't have?"

How about, "Thank you. This is perfect, how very thoughtful of you to think of me."

Most people love to give. It makes them feel good to give. To chastise them for giving, even when you are doing it out of habit is like throwing cold water into someone's face.

Be gracious, enjoy being cared about, and accept the gift. Life is good!

How about the "buts" in life? You did a good job, but.....

Your hair looks nice, but.....

I like that color, but.....

"Buts," can make people cringe at what is coming next and totally wipe out the compliment that you just gave.

You can use “but” when the criticism is constructive. How can you tell if your criticism is constructive or destructive? It’s easy. If you cannot help or are not willing to help with the solution, then it is not constructive criticism.

“Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticize them, you're a mile away and you have their shoes.”

Chapter 9 Work Shop

“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.” Ralph Waldo Emerson

Finding what caused your negative Attitudes- Work Shop

Attitude: Manner, disposition, feeling, position toward a person or thing.

Ruin: the downfall, decay or destruction of something.

Negative attitudes can ruin you. It isn't enough to say, "think positive". Sometimes one has to trace back to where it all started to go wrong.

The point where your attitude changed for the worse we will call a "ruin", because to some degree it was brought about by downfall, decay or destruction of yourself.

Let's assume that the natural healthy state of mind is positive, cheerful and effective. Many of us feel that way most of the time. Some don't. All of us have times when we feel less than up to par.

So let us think of "ruin" as an inability, rather than something that was done to you. We don't have to buy into the victim mentality that is so often foisted upon us. Let us look at this from an attitude of taking charge of yourself; that is, taking charge of your own life. It isn't, "I'm the way I am because my father and mother both died when I was young."

It is more that when you found that both father and mother were gone, you felt inadequate in some way. Maybe you felt helpless, or lost. Or maybe you were

inconsolable.

You were unable to do anything about it. So when you look at that moment in time you are looking for two things, the inability you felt you had at that time, and an attitude you developed to compensate for it.

Not everyone has such a disastrous beginning in life, but most of us have had upsets here and there. Picking up the last time you were badly upset can be painful to remember, but if instead of feeling victimized, you look for an inability, an inadequacy that you had at the time, and put that into words it can be a good place to start. There are probably far more ruins, or inabilities, than there are people.

So you find that last upset and look for what inability of yours was present then. Put it into words. If it is your "ruin" you will find it present in similar situations throughout your life. You will find that you feel the effect of this. You may even realize that if you don't do something about it that you may get worse. You may feel a need to change this condition.

At that moment of ruin, you still wanted to survive. There was something that you did to compensate for your inability, perhaps to cover up the fact of that weakness, or to deny it.

You came up with an Attitude. Attitude now with a capital "A" to distinguish it from the many different attitudes you have about different things on a daily basis.

The inability you had then is the key to viewing the Attitude, because you may not even know you have an Attitude that is affecting your self-esteem or relationships badly. You do know it because other people keep pointing out that you are "so sad" "so angry" or "so reserved," but you have no idea how it came about or how to change it. It becomes the "it's just the way I am" attitude about Attitude." No matter what inability you had then, (and perhaps still have now) it is the defense mechanism you created afterwards that everyone else reads as "Attitude" that is ruining you now. *By the way, Attitude with a capital "A" is always negative in this workshop.*

Here is an example. Little Johnny goes to school every day and has to pass

the house of Brutus, who is a bully. Johnny gets pushed around frequently, not really physically hurt, but generally mistreated and downgraded. "You stupid little runt, you couldn't hold your own with a girl."

Johnny feels the effect of all of this, and he also feels that he is unable in some way to cope in this situation. Perhaps he feels an inability to stand up for himself. It is hard enough facing the bully, but to have to face himself and his inability to stand up for himself really begins to ruin him. He goes home and complains to Dad, who tells him to fight it out next time the bully comes by.

Well, Johnny knows he can't do that so he develops an Attitude. He solves this problem by walking three extra blocks to school to avoid the bully. He develops an Attitude of avoidance.

You see Johnny years later. He has a little trouble looking you in the eye. If you try to give him a job to do that you know he isn't going to enjoy, somehow it gets set aside until last, or, he passes it on to another to do. You use your own words to describe Johnny to your friends. "He has a sort of creepy attitude" you say, "not really someone to help you out in a pinch." You instinctively distrust him.

Johnny's boss comes around and points out that he is being slack in getting his work done. Does Johnny straighten up and fly right? No, not if he has a core "Attitude". He may do the work sooner or later, but mostly later because he is trying to avoid it. Consciously Johnny may say to himself, "I better get my act together and get this work done", but he will start it, and then start to avoid it. The Attitude has become ingrained. That is why I spell it with a capital "A".

The Attitude tends to stick to one. A person wears it on his shirt sleeve, so to speak, like a man in love. You see Attitude in the way people walk, and talk, look at you, or move their hands. It isn't hard to see the other guy's Attitude. What is hard is to spot your own.

You say, "Someone says something to me, and I'm always on the defensive. I know it is a bad attitude, but I just keep on doing it." The Attitude can't release until one has at least spotted what was going on in life before the

Attitude started. That is why you look for the ruin. The ruin was the inability one felt one had during a time of upset or loss. The Attitude was how he resolved the problem.

"Get over it" may be good advice, but it is also an attitude. It just barely makes the grade of a positive attitude. It is the pushy sort of attitude one does to ward off the whining and complaining of others. An attitude is always an attempt to survive. Problem is, Attitude with a capital A is always a wrong answer, a bad habit pattern.

Okay, so this is a self-help book, so you need to look, if you can, at your own "ruin." Find a recent upset. Find out what inability you had, then put it into your own words. Look back across your life at similar type of upsets, and find out if that same inability was present in all the situations. If not, look for another upset and find an inability you had at that time, put it into words and see if that inability traces back to earlier incidents in your lifetime.

Finding the inability that is "ruining" you, putting it into words so you can clearly define it, can help put you back in control. This same type of situation is probably still affecting you. It becomes a downward spiral and it will get worse unless you take steps to change it.

Finding your "ruin", that is, the inability you have/had rather than blaming others is a first step in recovery. The next step is to spot the Attitude you developed to compensate for that inability.

People do overcome these disabilities. Sometimes they just grow out of them. There was this lady who told me about a reunion years after she graduated High School. This one male classmate came forward, shook her hand and was genuinely glad to see her. "Things have sure changed," she mentioned. "When you were in school I thought you didn't like me. You always seemed to have a chip on your shoulder." The classmate moved closer to her, partly covered his mouth with his hand and said quietly, "I was shy."

Maybe if it had been put in terms of an inability he might have said, "I had an inability to talk to girls" or some such thing. The Attitude used to handle that inability, a chip on the shoulder, a macho man. Not him at all. At least not the man he grew to be, a positive, effective man who could

admit his weaknesses and get on with life.

Not everyone is so lucky to outgrow his Attitudes. Some people spend years trying to whittle away at them. Spotting the ruin that preceded the Attitude may not be the entire solution, but it is a step in the right direction. It always helps to know "why the Attitude". Just remember to look at it from the view of inability, rather than blaming the other person. That alone is progress.

Once you recognize a pattern, and you will, your cognition will have no boundaries once you recognize and realize that all you need to do is turn that negative inability into a positive ability. You can turn around what has been going wrong. You can find that pattern and change it!

Chapter 10 The Stairs to Recovery

Did you know that changing your thinking and believing that you will be successful is the root of all successful change?

“As long as you’re going to be thinking anyway, THINK BIG.”

Donald Trump

Get a Support System

There are a lot of online support groups for recovering from a problem. The first thing that you need to realize, no matter how strong you think you are, if you have a severe problem, you need to allow others to help you.

Yes, you may have been hurt. Yes, your experiences may cause you to distrust. However, whatever problem you have, the chances are you were feeling helpless or alone in the first place. Now, you don’t have to be alone, and you can learn and grow so much with a support group.

“Remember, we all stumble, every one of us. That’s why it’s a comfort to go hand in hand.” Emily Kimbrough

If a support group does not fit in with what you feel you need, then consider choosing one person that you do know and trust.

Make a list of all the people you know. People you work with, family, friends, teachers, an online friend. Now, cross out the people who will not be helpful. These would be people who are not too concerned with the problems you face. Next cross out those you know you can’t trust.

Now, start putting check marks on your list of those you trust.

If you don't trust anyone, then put a check mark next to people you think you might be able to trust.

Build your own support group, even if you have to do it one person at a time, until you have what you need. You don't have to be alone. You don't have to be brave, tough and super strong. There is no shame in asking for help. People love to help; give them a chance to help you.

Chapter 11 Against the Odds - Harness Those Darn Urges

When you are trying to improve your mind that you are going to stop a you, whether, it is drinking, sex, food bingeing, food purging, are going to get urges!



yourself, and you make up your behavior that just is not good for drugging, smoking, promiscuous gambling or anything else. You

Accept that you are going to get urges. Urges can come on strong or light. It all depends on what is triggering the urge. **KNOW** that the more urges you resist that eventually, they will not be as strong, until one day, you will say to yourself, “Hey, I did not have an urge.” Then it might come again six days, later, but notice that each time the urge is easier and easier to conquer.

“Discipline is just choosing between what you want now and what you want most.” Anonymous

We can take smoking as an example.

You decide not to smoke, for four hours you have not smoked, you have done wonderfully then that horrid craving comes on. Your urge to smoke is what you think is unbearable.

The urge is not unbearable. It is manifested in your mind that it is a **MOUNTAIN** to climb rather than a bump. Treat each urge as a bump, and not a mountain. Positive control and thinking can get you over the bump, for “this too shall pass.”

Whatever you are going to decide to change, such as quitting drinking, you are going to have a struggle. The first few weeks that you make up your mind that you are not going to fall down on your resolve, you need to do things to help you get over the big BUMP.

These things can be avoidance. Avoid people who drink, avoid people who smoke, avoid actions that cause you to want to drink or smoke.

For me, on smoking, I absolutely had to stay away from the phone. A cigarette urge in the beginning was too strong for me to cope with a phone call.

So, I would tell the caller, sorry, no phone calls for a couple of weeks, until I get a grip on this area in my life that I want to improve.

Coffee and beer were other triggers. I drank tea, and water. I stayed away from all alcohol and any social gathering where there would be smoking, until my battle with urges was under better control. If you can be around those that are doing the habit you are trying to break, then more power to you. I could not.

Stress and getting angry were more triggers. I stayed away from people who tend to get my dander up. Eventually, with a strong desire and a strong resolve, I became smoke free.

To change a bad habit takes determination, and yes, I failed and went out one day and smoked a whole pack of cigarettes. My urge ran up or my stress was so high that I slid back. The next morning, I began with more resolve than before.

I thought of what I would buy with the money I saved on cigarettes. I visualized being a non-smoker, and the first thing I did was tell myself, I am not a smoker. From this minute forward I don't smoke. I am not a smoker. I kept at that, and yes, the first few weeks were hard. I am not perfect. I balled up paper and threw it against the wall. I kept telling myself, "This too shall pass."

I raged at the television, as I sat to watch as some actor lit a cigarette. ARRGH, and I'd turn off the television, and I would go for a walk, if it was dark at night, I would drive to a store, and browse and walk to get away from seeing cigarette smokers.

If I can do it, I know you can change any bad habit that you want to change, and that is the absolute key to changing any habit. You must really, really want to quit that bad habit, with your whole heart and soul. And, you need support to help you get through those bad days.

I changed a bad smoking habit into a good walking habit. How about that?

Support for me, was my family and friends not insisting I talk to them on the phone, and my smoking friends to not smoke around me and cut their visits short. My friends would go on walks with me. People who accept that you are determined to meet your goal, and will respect your decision and have faith that you will reach your goal are good support friends to have in life.

I don't care if you want to change a bingeing habit for eating, or if you want to not use drugs or you want to quit caffeine, some habits are harder to give up than others, some will be a life time determination. It doesn't matter what the bad habit is, you can take control of your own life. When you decide that you have had enough of the bad habit, you can meet with success.

So, when you want to change, write down the triggers that cause you to do the habit you want to stop or change. **Don't place the blame on others.** Take control of that change. Do stay away from "the others" that trigger your emotions that help cause the defeat, and keep a journal. Your journal will be able to help you discover the very triggers that I am talking about.

It is not someone else's fault that you smoke, or you drink/drug, gamble, have eating binges, starve yourself, or are heavy. It is not someone else's fault that you procrastinate, or stay up late all the time, or bite your nails. No one else can change you, and you cannot change others. Accept that, and reaching your goals will be way easier. If using drugs/drinking is your problem and you find that you make excuses, such as 'Oh, that, I'm sorry, I was drinking.'

Remember, there is no excuse for what you did when you were not sober. You were sober when you decided to take a drink, and you were sober when you knew that when you drink you would probably do something unacceptable. The responsibility starts before you take that first drink. It is a good reason to not drink.

When you need to soothe yourself, and decide to go on a shopping spree, when your credit cards are pushed to the hilt, and you know it is hurting your credit ratings and upsetting a spouse, you know you need to change that behavior and change a bad habit for a good habit.

Yes, you will run into those that will try to sabotage your efforts.

There are those that sabotage. They may not even realize what they are doing, or maybe they do. The spouse that brings you candies to eat, when you are on a diet and the friend who brings the “bottle.”

“Oh, come on, so you are a little fat, you are under stress, a little candy is not going to hurt. I love you just the way you are. “ OR “Oh, come on you’ve had a bad hair day, let’s have a few drinks and relax.”

They are well meaning friends that you don’t need when you are fighting urges and setting goals to remove bad habits out of your life.

Don’t blame them if you fall back on your resolve. Just accept that you cannot change their behavior. So either stay away from them or expect the bumps and be firm and learn to say NO. Better yet, have supportive friends around you for as much as you need them, especially when the one who is trying to pull you down is around.

Remember, the one who is offering you the no, no’s in your life, is very afraid of change, too. If you get to your desired weight, how will it affect the other person?

If you quit drinking, your drinking buddy has lost a drinking buddy.

Okay, so you have tried to quit your bad habit, maybe once, maybe a hundred times and each time you failed. ***That was then; this is now.*** If your habit is a very addictive one like cocaine, or drinking and you are sure you will end up physically sick in your recovery, then you need to get serious about getting professional help to get you off those drugs.

If you just drink too much and can go several days before you get drunk and let the drink control your life, then you can quit without physical sickness.

When a habit threatens your health, such as cigarettes, or being obese, or you are anorexic, or purging your food or when a bad habit such as drinking is out of control, then you need to face reality, and get out of denial and take control of your life. You can do it.

If you have several bad habits I would really suggest that you choose the most dangerous one such as: Alcohol vs. smoking. Alcohol would be your immediate choice. When that is under control and you feel ready to face another one, then go ahead.

Trying to do too much at one time can set you up for failure. Be kind to yourself and try not to bite off more than you can chew at one time, but do bite off something!

“The only people that fail in their endeavors are those who quit prematurely or simply never try at all.” Anonymous

Remember, changing your thinking and believing that you will be successful, is the root of all successful change. Take control of your life.

Chapter 12 The fun Game to Play

This is a fun thing to do to find out a little about you. You will use your imagination and pretend.

Here we go. Remember this is not real. I am not going to give you a house. 😊
Get out paper and write down your answers.

Okay...

I have decided to give you a house. Don't ask me why, I just feel like it.
You get three choices of a house.

A small house, a large house or a medium sized house.
Which will you choose?

This house will be on an ocean, a lake or a stream.

Choose one.

You are happy you have your house, but I ask that you put a vase in the entry to your house. Will it be a big vase, small vase or medium vase? Choose one

Okay, now you are in your house and you are looking out at the landscape, and you decide to go for a walk. You walk and walk and see a lovely field of flowers and sit down to admire them. As you sit you find a key.

Do you keep the key, or leave the key?

Next, you go off in another direction and WOW you find a dark mansion... it is kind of scary looking, there is an locked gate and lots of over grown weeds, do you go in?

Oh, well, its time to go home now, so you walk back to the house, and go in then remember you did not inspect your new back yard. You go out the back door, and just as you go out, you see a bear. He doesn't look very friendly.

You may try to feed him, and you may try to get back in your house, but the door has slammed shut and now you are there with the bear.

What do you do?

So you are thinking and while you are thinking, the bear comes toward you. He is a BIG BEAR and he looks really mean, so you decide to move away from him. He begins to follow you. You begin to run. You see a fence.

What do you do?

Now that you have all the answers ready: Here is your fun evaluation:

If you chose a large house you don't know where you are going.

If you chose a medium house you are basically a content person

If you chose a small house, you know exactly where you are going

If you chose an Ocean, you don't know where you are going, but you are going.

If you chose a Stream -You are going with the flow - easy going

If you chose the Lake - You are content in life

If you chose a large vase you like to get attention

If you chose a medium vase you are of normal ego

If you chose a small vase, you are of little ego, and probably insecure

If you picked up the key, you will notice when opportunity is knocking

If you went back for the key to get into the house, you are practical

If you went into the house, you are adventuress and daring, and fun loving

If you stayed out of the house, you are cautious and/or have a regard for other people's property.

With the bear, if you climbed the fence you believe in afterlife.

If you did not climb the fence, you do not believe in afterlife.

I will volunteer my answers.

I chose a large house, ocean, large vase, I took the key, I explored that scary old house, I tried talking to the bear and feeding him. The bear did not listen and I could not get back into the door to find him any food, so I jumped that fence.

In case you are one who jumped the fence and can't imagine just standing there. I did have one fellow years ago with whom I played this game. He did not jump the fence. I was surprised. So, I asked are you sure? He said, "I am definitely not going to climb that fence." When it came down to what it meant to not go over that fence, that he did not believe in an afterlife, he said, "Wow, that test is cool. I don't believe in an afterlife."

When my kids were small, they got to play this game and they picked various things. My oldest one had the same answers as mine. My middle son picked a medium house and a lake.

Chapter 13 Your Attitude - Your Job

A positive attitude at your work place can bring you respect, admiration and promotions. Do you work at a job where you have people who are negative? Are you negative in your work place?

Keeping positive about your job and doing the best that you can is the best way to getting recognition. By refusing to listen to negative talk and or joining in, you will surprise yourself how much better you feel about yourself.

Gossiping about co-workers, or the boss is all negativity that you do not need in your life or on the job. Keep positive. If you don't like to be gossiped about, then it is best not to join in gossip about someone else.

When your attitude is positive and you decide to do the best you can at the job you are doing, you will be amazed at how much more you can produce. Just stay away from people who interrupt you, talk badly about others and in many ways are not going anywhere. You are going somewhere, and that is what is important.

Your Attitude - Your Family

A positive attitude with your family can bring healthier relationships and a happier home life. Your family is probably the most important thing in your life. Learning about parenting, and how to improve your marriage is a great step toward a happier healthier home life. Get those communications open and learn all that you can about how to improve your marriage.

Get negative people out of your life. Yes, it will take some doing. Almost every family has a negative person, and it is very hard to get away from family, however, you can keep watch that you don't let a negative person drain you, and you can plan your visits around people you do want to be around.

Cut out the Clutter and Clear Your Stress

When you are not in the habit of putting things in their proper place you end up with trying to remember where things are.

You get clutter in every single day. Junk mail, newspapers, grocery receipts and junk mail in your bills. You have coupons that you are saving, pictures, extra batteries, tools, and in it all comes.

If you don't have a place where you keep each thing, you are adding stress to your life.

Take this scenario, you are running around in the morning, you know you set your keys somewhere. You can't find your purse, your wallet, the sweater that you were sure was hanging in your closet.

You pull open a drawer and start hunting frantically, then you try to shove it shut, but it is stuffed full and won't shut.

MORE STRESS

One of your kids, says, "Dad, I can't find my other shoe!"

More Stress

You are shaving, and you can't find where you put that new package of razors, so you nick yourself with the old, dull one.

More Stress

You are trying to stir the oatmeal, but can't find the serving spoon; you know it was washed.

More Stress

Little Johnny can't find his coat. Little Sally can't find the spare toothpaste.

How did you end up out of toilet paper!?

This is truly not a very healthy way to start your day. It begins with a lot of little stressful situations that you can avoid in your life by simply organizing and creating a habit so that you have only one junk drawer, and you have a place for everything and everything is in its place.

Imagine...

Kids school work in a special place, a bulletin board, a large calendar, an in, out, and pending box.

A file for bills to be paid

A file for bills already paid

A file for pending projects

A great big trash can for junk

Imagine

A place just for serving spoons

A place for batteries

A place for spare light bulbs

A place for spare flash lights.

Imagine...

Having your clothes ready for the next day, and a spare set in case of being burped up on.

THERE is nothing wrong with wearing an apron. Call it old-fashioned if you will; however, aprons save you stress.

MEN can wear aprons, too. Maybe not the flowery ones, however there are nice butcher type aprons that are quite masculine. It is a new day and age where men do help with the kids far more than their forefathers did. Kids get sticky fingers, and when you cook, grease splatters. Get covered up and save yourself the stress of having to change clothes at the last minute.

How about those clothes in your closet? Are you waiting to get back into them? Box them up, or give them to charity.

How about clothes you have not worn in over 18 months?

Give them to charity.

How about suits you have not put on in 5 years. What are they waiting for? Moths?

That old broken toy you were going to fix 4 years ago and it is still sitting there. DUMP it!

Do you have unused exercise equipment? Have a yard sale, and when it is done, give the rest to charity.

Have your kids outgrown clothes? If you are saving for another child, great, box them up, until it is time. If you are not going to have another child... have a yard sale, give them to someone who needs them, or again, fill up a charity box.

If you are really in a disaster, don't get over whelmed, take a corner at a time until everything in your house is organized. Teach your kids to put things back where they belong.

When new things come in, get rid of the old. Keep the house, your shop, your garage nice and neat.

Yes, it is not always convenient to put something back, but it does not take any more time than the ten minutes here and the ten minutes there, trying to find what you are looking for.

If you work at home, SEPARATE your work from the rest of the family. If you work at home and you have kids answering your business phone then you either have to teach the little ones not to answer the phone and the older ones to be professional, or spend the extra \$20.00 per month and get a phone that only you will answer.

Speaking of answering phones. When you are overly busy and harried, you can let the answering machine pick up the phone for you. You never want a customer to think you are too busy to help them.

Your Attitude - Your Goals

A positive attitude toward becoming successful toward your goals will bring you your goal. It's true, when you make a goal, and you think, "I can't." It can hurt the final result. Sometimes, when trying to reach a goal, you can get interrupted or go off to do something else. However, you must stay focused to reach the goal you want and to know that you CAN get there.

If you want to create an extra income, you can manage your time better:

How to Reorganize Your Time

Almost everyone needs or wants more money coming in, and with this desire most would like to start some sort of extra income-producing project. The trouble is, not many of these people seem able to fit "a second job" into their time schedules.

It's true that most people are busy, but extra time for some sort of home-based extra income-producing project can almost always be found. It may mean giving up or changing a few of your favorite pastimes - such as having a couple of beers with the guys or watching TV - but if you score big with your extra income project, you will have all the time you want for doing whatever you want to do.

The first thing to do is to sit down with pencil and paper and list your daily schedule. What time do you wake up? Then step-by-step, list everything you do each day. Most people will find that they have about three hours each day that can be utilized in a more constructive or efficient manner. As we've noted above, you may have to give up the time you waste in your local pub or a few television programs you watch, but it will be worth it in the long run.

Efficient time management boils down to planning what you're going to do, and then doing it without backtracking. Start by making a list of the things you want to do tomorrow, each evening before you go to bed. Schedule your trips to the store or where ever to coincide with the other things you have to do, and with

your trips to or from work. Organize your trips to take care of as many things as possible while you're out of the house. Take stock of the time you spend standing around shooting the breeze - especially the time you spend on the telephone - and eliminate all that isn't necessary.

Whatever chores you have to do at home, set aside a specific time to do them, and a specific amount of time to devote to them. For instance, just one hour a day devoted to yard work would probably make your property the envy of all your neighbors. Don't try to do a week's work in one big flurry. Whether it's painting your house, fixing leaky faucets, or mowing your lawn and trimming your shrubs, do a part of it, or one particular job each day - you'll be amazed at your progress.

Take care of all your mail the day you receive it. Don't let those bills and letters pile up on you. If you're unable to pay a bill immediately, file it in a special place that's visible, and note on the envelope the date you intend to pay it. Answer your letters the same day you get them.

The important thing is to think of time as your most valuable asset, because it is. So organize! Decide what you have to do, and what you want to do. From there, it's just a matter of arranging priorities.

Once you start listing and planning what you want to do, and then carry out your plans, you'll find plenty of "extra time" for handling virtually any kind of home-based income-producing project. People in general may not like routines or schedules, but without some sort of plan as to what is supposed to be done, the world would be mired in mass confusion.

Laws, ordinances and regulations are for the purpose of guiding people. We live according to an accepted plan or way of life, and the better we can organize our life, the more productive and happy we become.

The secret of all financially successful people is simply that they are organized and do not waste time. Think about it. Review your own activities, and then see if you can't find a couple of extra hours in each day for more constructive accomplishments.

When you begin planning, and then when you really become involved in an extra income-producing endeavor, you should work it exactly as you have organized your regular day-to-day activities - on a time-efficient basis. Do what has to be done immediately. Don't try to get done in an hour something that's realistically going to take a week. Plan out on paper what you have to do - what you want to do - and when you are going to do it. Then get right on each project without procrastination.

Finally, and above all else, when you're organizing your time and your business, be sure to set aside some time for relaxation. Be sure to schedule time when you and your spouse can be together. You must not involve yourself in anything to an extent that you exclude other people - particularly your loved ones - from your life.

Taking stock of the time you waste each day, and from there, reorganizing your activities is what it's all about. It's a matter of becoming more efficient in the use of your time. It's really easy to do, and you will not only accomplish a lot more, you will also find greater fulfillment in your life.

Chapter 14 Visualization Meditation

"Obstacles don't have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don't turn around and give up. Figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around it."

Michael Jordan

Do you know that you can tap into the power of your mind through simple techniques using meditation?

I'm not talking about someone sitting yoga style with a long white beard and a turban on his head. I am not talking about something that is easy to learn, and can change your life in fantastic ways.

Here is a special report from Bryan Kumar on "Visualization" which is added to this book with his permission.

Visualization

Visualization has been given a bad name by many who tried it and didn't get the results they wanted.

The problem is not with visualization; it's the lack of understanding of the term, and the process, that is the problem.

Visualization works amazingly well when you do it right, and it can be used to create just about anything that you want in your life.

After researching, studying and experimenting with visualization for many years, I have found the following process to produce the best results:

1. Find a quiet place where you won't be disturbed for at least 5 to 15 minutes. Your bedroom would be ideal. You may want to unplug the phone and lock the door so there are absolutely no interruptions. Pull the curtains to keep direct sunlight out and dim the lights if possible.
2. Lie down on your back and get comfortable. (Have loose, comfortable clothing on - nothing restrictive.)
3. Close your eyes. While keeping them closed, roll your eyes upward as if you're focusing on your forehead. Don't strain your eyes. Just roll them up as far as they can comfortably go.
4. Inhale deeply and slowly through your nose and then exhale slowly through your mouth. With your eyes still rolled up, begin to focus on your breathing.
5. Continue to take deep breaths in and out for up to a minute (or more if needed) until you notice your body becoming very relaxed and settled.

(Breathing in this way, with your eyes rolled up, will quickly put you into the "alpha state" of consciousness - a state that is ideal for creative visualization.)

6. Next, think of a time/incident from your past where you were extremely happy. It could be a time when your peers praised you, when you received an award of some sort, or even a time when you fell in love. Next, relive this memory as vividly as you can, using all your senses. Try to get in touch with that feeling again. Hear what you heard. See what you saw. FEEL what you felt. Remember the voices that were around you and what they were saying. Recall anything else that your senses were taking in - the smell, touch, etc. Make your vision as clear, vivid, crisp as possible. (If you're not able to do it very clearly at first, it's all right. Each time you relive that memory it will become easier, and clearer and more alive.)

NOTE: It is extremely important that you DO NOT pull out a memory that will trigger a negative emotion. If you can't think of a happy memory, you may want to skip this step. Although I strongly recommend that you try really hard to find a happy memory to recall. Here's why...

The point of Step 6 is to get your mind and your body into a 'happy' state. Because, once you're in a truly happy place in your mind, we are going to "link" your visualization to that emotion. This will energize your visualization beyond belief and cause it to manifest more powerfully and quickly. The more strongly you can relive your past happy memory, the more energized your vision will become.

7. Once you're in touch with that happy experience from the past and are able to strongly feel joy and happiness, now is the time to start creating the vision of what you want to happen in the future. Something you would like to have, do, or be in the future.

This is where most people lose it because they have not been taught how to visualize correctly. Please pay attention to the following...

When you're visualizing your future, you have to see it as being real "right now" - in the "present," as if you already have it right now. Imagine that your vision is real and that it has already happened. See yourself enjoying whatever it is that you want created.

The next important aspect of visualization that most people do incorrectly is...they don't put themselves "in the picture." Instead, they see themselves doing/enjoying the vision as if they're watching a movie of themselves. This is not the best way to visualize. Instead of watching a 'movie' of yourself enjoying what you want, put yourself **in** the picture. You're not an outsider or an observer anymore. Instead, you're experiencing the vision with your whole body and your senses.

For example, if you want a new car, don't visualize a movie of yourself in the new car. Instead, put yourself "inside" the car so that you can see the steering wheel in front of you and feel the seat on your back. Be **in** the picture! Breathe in the "new car smell." Feel the grip of the steering wheel in your hands.

If it's a new house that you want, imagine that you're inside that new house right now. See yourself lying in the new bed of your new house instead of where you're laying right now. Really get in touch with the feeling and imagine what it would be like to actually have it "right now." Be in the moment. Live it right now, as if it has already happened.

If it's money that you want, imagine piles and piles of currency all over the bed, all over your body, maybe even falling to the ground from the edges of the bed. Imagine the weight of the money on top of your body. Remember to get all of your senses involved. Imagine yourself touching the money with your hands and feeling how it feels against your fingers. Smell what that newly printed money smells like.

And, remember to feel really happy and grateful - just as you would feel if you really had this money in your hands right now.

That's the key to effective visualization. See it in the present, as if it has already happened. And be **in** the picture - involve all your senses as vividly as you can.

8. This next step may seem a little weird to some people, especially if they haven't studied success and mind power before. But, do it anyway since it is a very important step and should not be missed.

After you have enjoyed being in the vision that you want to create, open your eyes and say the following words...

"I now allow myself to have (fill in what you want here)! It is done! And so it is."

This may seem silly at first but is VERY important, because it allows you to "release" your vision out to the universe to get created.

If you don't release your vision as outlined above, you'll be attached to it and that will interfere with the creative process. As you say those words, let go of all worry, fear, doubt, disbelief, and concern. Don't worry about when or how it will get created. Just trust in the creative force of the universe and release your vision to it. And then, go on about your daily activities and don't think about your vision much.

Be sure to end your visualization each time with this step.

This step is similar to planting a seed in the ground and then walking away. If you keep digging up the seed to see if it germinated yet, you'll kill it. Which is why you have to release it and allow the soil to do its job.

If you continue to wonder or worry or doubt the visualization as you go about your day, you will send the wrong message to your subconscious mind...that you don't really believe that it is possible. This will negate the creative process, and you don't want that.

That's it!

Do your visualization as described in the above steps at least once a day. Twice would be ideal. First thing in the morning, as soon as you get up, and last thing at night right before you go to bed are the best times to do this since your mind is already in a very receptive state.

Doing it before you go to bed will ensure that your subconscious continues to work on it all throughout the night. If you wake up in the middle of the night, you can always try to get in touch with that same feeling again if you want. It's not necessary but it won't hurt.

One last thing...

The key to creative visualization is **consistency**. Do this process daily, if at all possible.

People often ask me how long they should continue to do this process. My answer? Until you get the result!

Some people get results in as little as a few weeks. For others, it takes longer. The more consistent you are and the more emotionally charged you can make the visualization (with positive feelings,) the better it will work.

And, please, don't give up after a week or two, or even a month or two, ok? It only requires a few minutes of your time and the results can be life changing. So, do use this power that you have inside of you to change your life for the better.

Very few people are happy with their lives, very few people have all the things that they'd like to have. And it's no coincidence that very few people use this power that they have at their disposal; fewer even know that it exists.

You have this creative power at your fingertips now. Take full advantage of it.

May all your great visions turn into your daily living, breathing reality!

Sincerely,

Bryan Kumar

Bryan is the author of several books. His latest, at this writing, is called:

[“Money and Power an Interview with Allen Says”](#)

It is an absolutely awesome interview with Allen Says, the man who created the Internet Warriors and has made millions from believing that he can.

Remember, earlier what I said about having your dream car?

You have the power. Visualize it, smell it, feel the upholstery, picture getting into it. See the admiration in the eyes of someone watching you park the car. Put the key in the lock. Imagine the color, and how you feel when you know it is yours.

Chapter 15 Inspirational Quotes

"People are like stained-glass windows.
They sparkle and shine when the sun is out.
But, when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed
only if there is a light from within."
Elizabeth Kübler-Ross

"I keep my ideals, because in spite of everything, I still believe that people are
really good at heart. "
Anne Frank

"There are two lasting bequests we can give our children:
One is roots. The other is wings.
Hodding Carter, Jr."

"The important thing is not to stop questioning."
Albert Einstein

"Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference."
Author Unknown

"We do not stop playing because we grow old. We grow old because we stop
playing!"
Benjamin Franklin

"Nothing is particularly hard if you divide it into small jobs."
Henry Ford

"Whenever you are asked if you can do a job, tell 'em, "Certainly I can!" and get
busy and find out how to do it."
Theodore Roosevelt



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

"If you keep doing what you've always done, you'll keep getting what you've always gotten."
Jim Rohn

"If you really want to do something, you'll find a way; if you don't, you'll find an excuse."
Author Unknown

"I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everybody." Bill Cosby

"The past does not equal the future." Anthony Robbins



"Be not afraid of greatness; some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them."

William Shakespeare

"Show me a person who has never made a mistake and I'll show you somebody who has never achieved much."

Joan Collins

"If you really want something, you can figure out how to make it happen."

Cher

"There is no sense in being pessimistic. It would not work anyway."

Anonymous

There are no such things as limits to growth, because there are no limits on the human capacity for intelligence, imagination and wonder."

Ronald Reagan

"Let no one come to you without leaving better and happier."

Mother Teresa

"Examine what you believe to be impossible, then change your belief."

Dr. Wayne Dyer

"Sometimes when I get up in the morning, I feel very peculiar. I feel like I've just got to bite a cat! I feel like if I don't bite a cat before sundown, I'll go crazy! But then I just take a deep breath and forget about it. That's what is known as real maturity." Snoopy

You can use inspirational quotes and put them on your wall, bulletin board, or your refrigerator to keep your mind with positive thoughts.

Chapter 16 How to Get What You Want out of Life

This is simply a lot that I have gathered into this book and now you can see how it all can unfold for you.

HOW TO ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING YOU WANT IN LIFE

Take a look at yourself - inside and out. Where do you live, what job do you have, how do you relate to your friends and family? What interests do you pursue, what adventures do you have?

What do you truly want from life? Do you want wealth and success, happiness and peace of mind? Do you want a family and a yard, a yacht or a sports car? Where are you going? Do you have a particular goal or are you just wandering through life?

You can accomplish anything you want in life - that's true. Once you have a particular goal, you can fulfill that desire by straightforward commitment and total conviction.

But what if you don't know what you want? Maybe your goals are small ones - like losing some weight, or buying a new car. Maybe it is getting a promotion or finding a mate. Whether you want a bigger apartment or want to be a corporation president, any avenue of prosperity and achievement is open to you if it is truly what you want.

No goal is too small; no dream is too big. Even if you aren't clear on your desires, you can tap into your subconscious mind to get the answers and to find the paths to success.

Can you change your life - do you want to? Can you picture yourself as your most perfect image of accomplishment? How does it feel? If you have the desire to attain goals, the commitment to follow through and the ability to creatively imagine yourself in the position you dream of, you are more than halfway there.

The most successful leaders and artists throughout history have followed specific paths and attained their hearts' desires. Keep an open mind and a hopeful outlook - then change your thinking. Put on the clothes of success. Act as though you already have accomplished your desires - then let the reality catch up.

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

Take a choice: money, health, physical energy, beauty, creativity, recognition, power, adventure, contentment, achievement, self-expression, authority, love, peace of mind, or enlightenment. Would you like any of these? If you are like most people today, you probably want ALL of these.

But if you search your true desires, you might find that there are a few things you want more than others, and, if you keep going in your search, you'll find one desire that has been with you your whole lifetime and is the one path you need to follow.

Although money is the obvious desire, it is usually not the final goal. Indeed, money can, and does buy happiness - up to a point. Once you have enough money to be financially secure or to purchase the material objects you want, the true desire might be something else.

Love is the goal of every person's heart. Whether it is love of a mate, or a family, or respect and recognition from peers and fellow workers, love is the ageless pursuit. The mystics say that love is the sole purpose of life- to give love and to find it.

But love comes in many forms. Not only is there the overt display of affection or true inner feelings, there is the self-respect and inner contentment that goes with accomplishment. For some people, true peace of mind will never be

attained until they complete some creative tasks or achieve certain heights in business.

Many people seek the authority that comes with a good position in a job. Along with that can come recognition and fame. Although you may want the money that is associated with high management levels, many people simply seek that satisfaction of working from the inner circles.

The goal of every person regardless of background and material desires is health. A sound body is the gift that will get you to the other goals. Even a new diet and exercise plan can give you more energy - the energy you'll need to accomplish success.

Adventure and travel is a driving force for many people. They may seek jobs that involve travel, or they may be looking forward to taking time off to visit the exotic ports and see the other side of the world. If you don't want a long journey, perhaps you'd just like a few weeks in a sunny resort or the luxury of a summer and winter vacation each year.

Then there is creativity and self-expression. What about the book you're going to write or the watercolor class you'd like to take? Creative expression is a wonderful inner release that boosts confidence and gives you something to accomplish. Finally, regardless of wealth and health, expression and love, everyone is looking for peace of mind. That's not to say emptiness of mind, but to be rid of petty worries and confusion, to be finished with fears and live in total awareness. It surely is the ultimate lifetime goal.

CATCH UP WITH YOURSELF

Now is the time to evaluate your life and your desires. Go ahead and test yourself - nobody's looking. Try to find out what your inner desires really are. Once you know, you can formulate a plan of action, and then achieve your goals.

Right now, write down three things you want. Don't spend time thinking about them - just write them down. You may be surprised at what you want. Can you see any relation to the types of desires most sought for?

What accomplishment are you most proud of? What makes you happy - happy enough to be content, to feel totally relaxed, and to slide back with a smile on your face?

Without dwelling on failures, mistakes, or past ill feelings, quickly list the important accomplishments of your life. Think about the places you went to, the relationships you encountered, and the education you received. Consider your job changes and positions, and the achievements related to work.

Put a star next to the most important accomplishments of your life. Is there any correlation with the list of the three things you want most?

MAKE PLANS

Before you go any further with your life, make a list for your future. Write it down - don't just think it. What would you like to accomplish in the next ten years? Would it be a new house, a high-paying position, a home in a new city, or a trip around the world?

Break your list down into those things you'd like to accomplish in the next five years. Then make one further division into the next six months. What can you do in the next few months to further you towards your long-term goals?

GOAL SHEET

My most important desires are:

In my lifetime, the most important things I've accomplished:

If I looked back on my lifetime in 20 years, I'd like to have accomplished:

Within 10 years, I'd like to achieve:

Within 5 years, I'd like to achieve:

In the next six months to a year, these are the things I'm going to do to work towards by goals:

Regardless of your family commitments or your personal relationships and regardless of your business enterprises or any false sense of achievement, what do you really want?

Give yourself credit for past accomplishments, and give yourself credit for your future achievements. You can and will attain all your goals, both long-term and short-term if you approach them in a step-by-step fashion and if you believe that they are worthwhile for you.

YOU ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON IN YOUR LIFE.

Although you can be considerate of your environment and all the people in it, first consider yourself. You must consider your well-being, your happiness, your success. Make a pact with yourself right now that you will achieve your goals, and make them realistic to reach. Then, one by one, make your own life the success it deserves.

BEFORE THE RACE - RELAX

An important step in achieving goals is to be able to relax. You'll get nowhere if your body and mind are nervous and jittery and jumping from one place or idea to another. In order to focus on your goal, you must center your being.

Relaxation is the balance of the mental, spiritual and physical aspects of yourself. Set aside time each day for deep relaxation - not sleep, but relaxation. The state of deep relaxation is a state of meditation. There are no thoughts in your mind. There are no physical ills or discomforts. You breathe in deeply, allowing the lungs to fill with fresh air, and you exhale all the used and stale air. The blood

circulates amply throughout every part of your body. You drift through space, ever towards your true destiny.

Exercise or sports is a good way to get into relaxation. The body needs physical stimulation to pump blood into all its extremities, and to give the heart a good workout. Exercise is a wonderful way to let the mind relax, as you place your thoughts on the way your body moves. For many people, sports and exercise are enjoyable ways to feel alive, youthful, and fulfilled.

Then take time to relax. Lie down on your back with your arms out, palms up. Your feet should be about two feet apart. You might clench your muscles first. Then relax them. Allow your thoughts to drift, but don't get caught in them. Watch them go by, as if they belong to somebody else.

If you have a special problem, tuck that in the back of your mind - don't dwell on it up front. Let yourself and your emotions go. Breathe out the negative feelings and emotions; breathe in positive, life-giving air. Float freely. Relax. ASSUME THE BEST. Expect to achieve; expect to accomplish your desires; expect to win. Accept less, but push on to attain more. The higher your goals, the further you'll go. Don't go for less than your full potential. Shoot for the universe. You owe yourself nothing less.

You have a right to be happy. You have the means to be successful. You can succeed in what you desire.

Always keep in mind the fact that you are in transit, attaining your goals, moving through life as though you are an actor and the setting is a stage.

Keep your thoughts firmly planted on prosperity, good fortune and lucky breaks. Assume that you will, in fact, nearly have accomplished your goals. It is with that attitude that successful people achieve.

DO YOU HAVE THE POTENTIAL?

The power to accomplish anything you want is within you, but it will not happen if you are not tuned into your true desires. Don't fool yourself into compromising for less than a complete goal. If you want to be an artist, you may not be the world's most famous artist, but if you have that inclination, you will be

an artist. If you want to succeed in business, you may not be another financier/mega-millionaire, but you will succeed in your endeavors.

Most people need accomplishment feed back, after all, what's so great about achieving something if nobody cares? It's also important to receive that recognition and feel that love.

Set goals that you can achieve. Divide them into little tidbits that you can accomplish every day, every month, every year. Set your goals for success.

Reap the rewards constantly - each step of the way. Pat yourself on the back for a job well done then move on. Start immediately to accomplish the goals you have set. In fact, give yourself a task that you can finish by tomorrow. Think of yourself as a success in your endeavors. Dwell on the idea that you are compelled to accomplish your goals, and live and breathe them until you have them.

Can you see yourself a year from now, having achieved a few goals? Can you make the decision and commitment to become successful in your desires? Then you have the potential to accomplish anything you want.

THE POWER OF SELF-IMAGE

Visualize being as a success in your field of endeavor is the inside-tip in accomplishing anything you want. If you can specifically imagine being the person you want to become, you will attain that reality.

Forgive yourself. Just as you would another person, tell yourself that it's okay for all those mistakes, or the should-haves that keep popping up in your mind. Don't dwell on the past and get blocked by events from long ago.

Let go of fears and anxieties. Although it certainly is easier said than done, learn to change negative thoughts into a positive action. Are you afraid of poverty - that you'll never make ends meet, or never buy that house, or be destitute once you stop working? Then turn that into the positive goal of financial security.

Do people make you anxious? Maybe you feel inferior, not as good as others. Everybody has feelings of inadequacy. Just turn them around into positive goals.

You may be paralyzed by the thoughts that you are unattractive. It is your thoughts that make it a reality. Change your modes of behavior and you will make friends. In most cases, it is your own negative thoughts that cause you to stay stuck in the place you're currently in. Keep moving. Take the risks. You may need to change your job, or move to another city. You might take up a sport or hobby. Become active in your life - participate, and you will grow into the image you see for yourself.

SUCCESS IN BUSINESS

Perhaps the most sought-after goal in our present society is success in business. Whether you want to be promoted into high paying management positions, or wish to start your own independent enterprise - knowledge of the business world is important.

As you plan a course of action towards accomplishing your goal, keep in mind the small goals that put you closer to the end, and be prepared to change often. You may need to change companies, or take the opportunities in other departments as those positions open.

Create an aura of success around you. People who are successful dress that way. Even if you're not in a high-income bracket, act as though you have already achieved - without being egotistical or overspending.

Develop an expertise in an area. Don't keep special information to yourself, but be quick to learn all there is about your position and the tasks surrounding getting that job done. Capitalize on your strengths, and let others help you develop your weaknesses into assets.

Get to know the people in the company and the people in the industry. Read all the trade journals and magazines relating to your company. Make appointments with people who are successful in your field and learn from them.

You need to have a total commitment to succeed in business. Most people who make it to the executive boardroom put in long hours, often at the sacrifice of everything else. Regardless of the physical effort involved, you must mentally be engrossed in your business and the company enterprises.

In order to help yourself develop fully, you might seek a mentor, someone who will offer you time and teach you the ropes. This person usually is someone who believes in your ability, someone who you can develop a mutually beneficial business relationship with.

Some people become friendly with all their co-workers and find that is a way to advance. But don't try to be extroverted if it's not real to you. Most people who successfully run their own businesses are individuals who like to work alone.

As you increase your activities and accomplishments, you increase your potential to reach higher. The more you achieve, the more confidence you develop to achieve more. You don't have to be the same as everyone else and fit like a vegetable in a patch. Be unique, different. Capitalize on your own self-image. Don't fall victim to self-consciousness. Trust your intuition. Hunches and inner feelings usually are the best route to travel, regardless of what seems to be the logical choice. Make decisions quickly and with firmness. A true leader will handle these responsibilities efficiently - that's what makes you different and why you'll rise to the top.

Be persistent in attaining your goals, but be open and sincere.

If you are having personal difficulties with any co-workers, try to know more about these people from a personal angle. Be interested in them and their accomplishments and goals. You might be able to turn opposition into friendship.

Above all, use your integrity. If the goal is not worthy of your inner desires, it will be hard to attain. If your methods are not sincere, you will receive opposition. If your actions are not honest, you will suffer the consequences. Turn all negative qualities into positive aspects - then watch yourself achieve.

TIPS ON ATTAINING WEALTH

Many people want money as a primary goal. There certainly is nothing wrong with your desire for money. But first, be sure that your true goal is money. Can you live, breathe, eat, and sleep money? Do you dream about money, and want it more than anything?

For true money-seekers, you must be your own boss. The great money makers all started and ran their own businesses. And, even though it seems as though all the good ideas have already been taken, there are plenty out there.

The secret of the wealthiest people is to find a special need and fill it. Like quick-food chains; like supermarkets; like electronic games. Whether you invent a new toy or gadget, or see a spot to market special items in a new way, the world is open to true entrepreneurs, and they do make it.

LEARN YOUR TRADE

Almost any goal you choose - whether riches and material abundance or spiritual attainment - requires learning. How much education do you have? Do you want more? Perhaps your goal is to get another degree or to secure a special license.

There are countless opportunities to learn more about your own industry or to learn about a new skill. Not only do you have the colleges and universities, but there are many trade schools, correspondence schools, and special groups that teach skills - at very reasonable prices.

KEEP THE END IN MIND

What do you need to know to get to where you want to be? You may not need a degree, but the actual experience. So you'd need to change jobs or accept a part-time job at night to develop your skills.

More than ever, people are leaving their present occupations to learn a new trade and then starting at the bottom again to be happy in their work. Maybe you'll need to put in extra hours at work now so that you can save money to take the time off next year.

Even though most entry-level positions are offered to the younger people, you can find many companies willing to give you a chance to change your occupation. Many times you might find an older master willing to apprentice you to learn the skill or trade.

Once you're enrolled to learn new skills, put everything towards learning. Apply yourself one hundred percent. Take advantage of asking questions and getting

criticism from teachers and fellow students. Read everything you can study well. It is your developing expertise that will get you ahead and closer to your goal.

It's always a good time to learn more. Even if you are happy in your job, expanding yourself through education is a very rewarding activity. Take some dancing or tennis, gourmet cooking or sculpture lessons. Any activity that is taught and shared by many enthusiasts will do just fine, provided you are interested in that activity.

STOP WASTING TIME

Consider the most important things you need to accomplish. These are high priorities. Then think about those things that seem to take up a lot of time and get you nowhere. Those are the low priorities.

Understand what's important to achieve and do those things first. It's better for you to stack those low priorities somewhere else and finish the important material than to spend time clearing your desk to get down to the essential things.

You'll be noticed more quickly for the big things you achieve than for keeping paper flowing. Don't let co-workers waste your time with chitchat if you've got things to accomplish. After work or during your hour for lunch, is the time for chitchat.

Handle paper once; decide the action and finish with it. Keep interruptions to a minimum and delegate responsibilities. Although you'd like to believe you're indispensable to the job and you are the only one to take care of many things, you can teach someone else and move on to your own goal achievements.

DON'T PROCRASTINATE.

What are you waiting for? Few opportunities are thrown at you; you have to create the right positions and situations to move up. Make lists of things you want to accomplish and do them.

If you're busy in an office situation, make daily lists and reward yourself with praise upon completion. Catch yourself achieving.

Concentrate on what you're doing and do one thing at a time, but do it quickly and handle the next thing. Be efficient with telephone calls, maybe taking them at appointed times or calling back at your convenience.

Don't try to look busy. Be busy. Your superiors will know what you accomplish. Be busy doing important things rather than writing about what you've done.

Take the time for physical exercise. It will energize you - not take away from your effectiveness. It relaxes your mind and stimulates your capacity to achieve.

LOOK WITHIN

An inner core of all accomplishment is the positive energy from the subconscious. If your subconscious mind has tapped into your goal and believes it is good for you, your energies will direct you towards that goal.

You can consciously create circumstances and conditions of environment and physical presence, but it is that level behind the outwardly physical that directs your true being. When the subconscious mind accepts an idea, the inner power will complete it.

That's why you can accomplish anything you want - by creating all outward manifestations to trigger your subconscious into action. As you decide on your goals and write them down, repeat them twice a day out loud. This in essence brings it to the inner level.

When you think about your goals and desires, the subconscious hears it. So direct your energies - both outer and inner - to your goal with one-pointed devotion. In that way, you can control your destiny.

In order to connect to your inner self, relax - let your thoughts go. Feel that part within you that actually makes the decisions - the reflexes, the instincts, the intuition and hunches. Let your mind be quiet from its usual chatter.

Some people present problems to their inner consciousness by asking themselves a question before they fall asleep. Often the answer is in their minds when they wake up.

Clarity rids confusion. If you find you're filled with worries and anxieties, spend the time to think them through. Approach them logically, considering the consequences of all possible actions. When you've made a decision, follow through and don't agonize over what-ifs.

Everybody has creative potential - you don't have to be an artist to be creative. Each moment of the day is creating your own self, becoming your true inner person.

Let yourself look within. Release the handicaps of fear and anxiety - even for a moment. You'll be relaxed and refreshed.

USE AFFIRMATIONS

It is constant repetition of the goal and the belief that you can attain it. It's those techniques above, which have been used by great inventors, financiers, business people, political figures and enlightened beings.

Never dwell on self-criticism or what you think are your inadequacies. Instead, repeat your goals and the qualities that will make you successful.

Write out your outstanding goal. In a few words, describe what you want to attain. Then write what you will do to achieve that. What energies and efforts will you trade for that success?

Give yourself a specific date to accomplish this goal, and specific times to carry out the interim steps. Put this paper or note card in a visible place - such as taped to the mirrors - so you can review it and repeat it at least twice a day.

It is those people who convince themselves that they are failures, and successful people believe that they will rise to the top and will achieve their goals. Believe in yourself. You are everything worth believing in.

CREATIVE VISUALIZATION

Form the habit of accomplishment. With every step you take and every decision you make, bring yourself closer to your goals. Walk through your life with this sense of direction and they will come to you.

Develop self-confidence and esteem. Assert yourself and acquire all the excellent qualities and traits you admire most. What is your ultimate goal? How do you see yourself? Be specific. Visualize the place you live in - the rooms, the paintings on the walls, the furniture and the swimming pool. Consider the family situation and financial stability. Think about the place you'll be living in.

Then look at yourself. What clothes are you wearing and what do you look like? Consider your physique, your hair, and the condition of your body.

Then think about the things you do. What sports do you play, what groups do you belong to?

As if you've already accomplished your desires, look back and see what you did to get to where you are. Think about the classes you took, the jobs you worked at, and the places you moved to. Think about the places you've traveled to and the friends you've made.

Be comfortable with your new self-image. Put it on for size and change your fantasy to adjust perfectly to you. Why don't you live as though you're already there? What's stopping you from becoming the person you are totally capable of becoming?

BECOME YOUR FULL POTENTIAL

Keep your goals and ambitions to yourself - don't share them with anyone, not yet. Write them down and refer to them. Look back at what you wrote in a month, then in a few months. Work on them constantly, and don't be afraid to revise and rewrite. Goals are always changing.

Think in possibilities. What is possible for you to achieve in the next six months? Go for it. Don't play it safe with what you'll probably achieve anyway. Push yourself to go further. The rewards are greater.

Feel the winning feeling. Feel successful already. Try on the clothes of total accomplishment and peace of mind. Live each day as though you have already reached your goals. There are always new ones for you to continue your growth.

Don't announce your goals. This will set you up for failure. Even if you make a pact with yourself to attain a specific goal, don't chastise yourself if you don't make it. It may have been unrealistic or you may not have tried hard enough.

Do it yourself. There is nobody better to help you achieve your desires than you. Tap into the power of the subconscious and practice being your own fantasy.

Then go ahead. Act on your convictions. Follow them through with devotions and then reap the rewards. You CAN accomplish anything you want in life.

Wrapping it up

"A man may fail many times, but he isn't a failure until he begins to blame someone else." Knox Manning

You will notice that throughout this book I have mentioned, "don't blame others."

It's true, when you decide that you want a better attitude and that you want to improve your self-esteem and have a better, more rewarding life, you have to quit blaming others.

Taking responsibility for your own actions is a strong step. Accepting what you cannot change and change what you can is another great step toward achieving what you desire.

Yes, you will have stops along the way. It is up to you to see those obstacles in a positive light and find positive ways to solve the problems that come up.

Whining, crying, complaining and blaming, do not solve problems. Taking positive action solves problems.



We all have days where we wonder, "What's the use?" It is seeing it for what it is and realizing that you do have choices, and you can learn to make better choices, you can set goals and reach them. You can change your attitude when it is hurting you in your career, your home life and everywhere you turn. Recognize what it is. Do not dwell on the past, but rather, use your experiences both good and bad, to reach out and become a better you.

You learn from failure; do not fear failure. Don't be afraid to adopt new ideas, and to try new things. No one looks all that great when they first try something.

You probably learned how to swim, roller skate, ride a bicycle, wrote your first essay, or even put your foot in your mouth. I have done them all and have made a fool of myself in public, too. It takes practice to make perfect and it takes a wise person to realize that perfection is not as important as doing the best that you can do. If you don't try new things, then you stop the growth of learning. Without continuing to grow, we die a little inside. The mind must stay active.

You can make a pact with yourself that you will think more positively and that you will not let yourself dwell on negative things.

Did you know that it takes more muscles to frown than to smile?

Start a SMILE ATTITUDE.

CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY ARE TAUGHT

Written By Dorothy Law Nolte

"If a child lives with criticism, they learn to condemn ...
If a child lives with hostility, they learn to fight ...
If a child lives with pity, they learn how to feel sorry for themselves ...
If a child lives with ridicule, they learn to be shy ...
If a child lives with jealousy, they learn what envy is ...
If a child lives with shame, they learn to feel guilty ...
If a child lives with encouragement, they learn to be confident...
If a child lives with tolerance, they learn to be patient ...
If a child lives with praise, they learn to be appreciative ...
If a child lives with acceptance, they learn to love ...
If a child lives with approval, they learn to like themselves ...
If a child lives with recognition, they learn it is good to have goals ...
If a child lives with sharing, they learn about generosity ...
If a child lives with honesty and fairness, they learn what truth and justice are ...
If a child lives with security, they learn to have faith in themselves and in those

about them ...

If a child lives with friendliness, they learn that the world is a nice place to live ...

If you live with serenity, your child will live with peace of mind ... “

Today is the beginning of the rest of your life. Make it a rewarding life.

Teresa King

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About the Author

Teresa King is the mother of three grown sons, and at the writing of this book has two grandchildren, one girl, one boy, three months apart in age and both just over two years old.

She is the author of several books, from marketing to historical romances and enjoys teaching and helping people to keep their minds alert and to inspire them to do the best they can in life.

She plays online bridge in her spare time and enjoys walks, nature, crossword puzzles, reading, and conversing with friends and her family and loves her computer.

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Another eBookWholesaler Publication