

Live A New Life Story[®]

The Owner's Guide – *Revised Edition*



The Art and Science of Change, Reinvention, and Success

by David Krueger, M.D.



MENTORPATH
MIND OVER MATTERS

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OWNERS GUIDE

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My favorite athletic coach, James Pennington, mentored me daily for four years. His two repeated phrases served as inspiration and template for success to win games and championships in three sports, and as a guide for later professional choices:

- *“Your mind is the most powerful thing in the world.”*
- *“Keep your eye on the ball and your head in the game.”*

These two statements summarize the importance of mind over matters in life and in business, certainly as the preface for these next pages.

My admiration and gratitude deepens for my best friend and brilliant collaborator, Carly Jennings. She influenced so much of what follows.

Since *LIVE A NEW LIFE STORY® THE OWNER'S GUIDE* is a synthesis of my previous work and writing as a Psychiatrist and Psychoanalyst, combined with my current work as Executive Mentor Coach, my deep gratitude is for those who taught me: my former patients, current clients and trainees.

About the Author

David Krueger, M.D. works with practicing and performing professionals to create and sustain success strategies. As Founder of the New Life Story® Wellness Training, New Money Story® Mentor Training, and the NeuroMentor® Institute of Peak Performance, he applies earlier experiences of teaching and practicing psychotherapy and psychoanalysis for 25 years as Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, Baylor College of Medicine, and more recent work in the last 18 years as Mentor Coach working with individual clients and organizations to enhance their performance.

He is author of 24 trade and professional books on success, wellness, self-development, and performance, and 75 scientific papers. His books include a Business Bestseller, *The Secret Language of Money* (McGraw-Hill), a book named to the Master Work Series (Northvale, NJ) of the 100 Most Influential Professional Books of the 20th Century: *Success and the Fear of Success* (The Free Press).

Dr. Krueger was named the 2021 Top Executive Mentor Coach of the Year by the International Association of Top Professionals (IAOTP). He is Dean of Curriculum and Mentor/Trainer Coach at Coach Training Alliance (CTA), a Partner at CEO Advisory & Mentoring Pte. Ltd. (Singapore/London/Australia) as a Mentor in Confidence and Subject Matter Expert, and is on the Advisory Board and Contributing Faculty, Bauer College of Business, University of Houston. Dave was awarded the International Association of Top Professionals Lifetime Achievement Award for 2022.

He has trained 2,250 professional coaches at CTA and 425 Specialty Certified Mentor Coaches who are licensed to use his trademarked material, who span six continents. These coaches are actively involved with individual clients, corporate training, teaching, as well as university and business school graduate education. He offers continuing education seminars to these and other Professional Coaches and executives.

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Introduction



We learn through stories. Stories are how we understand and how we remember. A story is a system for holding together facts—a way things make sense. Defense lawyers know this. Little kids standing next to broken vases know this.

Behavioral patterns and belief systems downloaded especially from parents in the first years of life become automatic, to operate without observation or awareness. Neuroscientists estimate that about 95% of our behaviors and core beliefs are pre-programmed in the unconscious mind, operating on autopilot. We rarely ever observe these behavior patterns and beliefs because they're unconscious.

Then, we create two stories simultaneously:

- The surface story: that we run our lives with conscious intentions and aspirations. This dialogue includes “This is what I want from life.” “These are my positive aspirations.” Yet the conscious mind is a tiny processor that controls the mind and brain systems less than 5% of the time.
- An unconscious story: that ghostwrites behaviors—at times in a different direction than conscious intention. When your life and actions don't meet your positive aspirations, the dialogue can include, “I can't get what I want.” “The system keeps me from doing what I need.” “I don't have what it takes.”

Then we unconsciously fortify what “happens” in those first two decades of life, etching stronger pathways of emotion, assumption, and belief. We each develop a personal story with a plot and storylines. Our beliefs and assumptions ghostwrite that story. From an infinite sea of possibilities, our software determines what we perceive and process.

We don't see things as they are—we see things as we are. We see what we believe. And we're always right.

We tell our story. Then our story tells us.

Listen for the power of story:

Because most of the initial story is “set in” or ghostwritten before we are capable of being aware, it runs subconsciously, framing both our experiences and our reactions. We are not, however, hard-wired for life. We can discover this underlying story and rewrite it to reflect who we are now. This process of mind change alters our brains as well. With new experiences, new neuronal pathways and new neural networks are formed. New highways to new communities in your brain. And, some remarkable new research shows, consistent repetition of new experience

even alters gene expression.

When we write a new story—and change our minds—we change our brains.

When people construct their personal narrative, what they leave out, as well as the beliefs that ghostwrite behaviors, are often invisible. A personal narrative, unlike other narratives, is not announced directly. The narrator may not realize the story he is living, and can even believe he is writing a different story than people perceive.

Now, we have a specific method for identifying personal stories and systematically changing their narratives.

What follows is a specific method to identify a personal life story and rewrite it: a system to recognize and eliminate the outdated aspects and add what is fresh and authentic. In this way you create a new story to flow into, leaving the old behind. By actively editing past storylines as well as creating new potentials, you author successful personal, relationship, money, career, and wellness stories.

We will employ the seven step ROADMAP® program to effectively facilitate significant change:

- R**ecognize the authorship of your life story
- O**wn your present story
- A**ssess the storylines and plot
- D**ecide what to keep, enhance, let go, and avoid.
- M**ap changes.
- A**uthor new experiences.
- P**rogram new identity to incorporate and sustain the changes.

Live a New Life Story® The Owner's Guide and *Workbook* are a culmination of a professional lifetime of helping people change. As a Psychiatrist, Psychoanalyst for over two decades, and now as Executive Mentor Coach for the last decade, I have been privileged to co-author new stories with many ordinary and extraordinary individuals. Insights, understanding, even coming to the end of the past and ending an old story are not enough to create a new story. The process of change itself must be addressed in an informed and systematic way. This unique and effective system will help you create strategies for success. This approach integrates the dynamic insights of psychology, neuroscience, and quantum physics with the principles of strategic coaching. The new story involves generating new experiences coupled with awakening hope, envisioning the future, and mobilizing talents and strengths to attain specific goals of personal growth.

Live a New Life Story® The Owner's Guide and *The Workbook* systematically informs active listening to recognize and assess a life story, inform choices, map new possibilities, and mentor a journey of transformation. Quizzes, exercises, and work pages in each Module provide the structure and strategies to evolve the participant's unique voice in writing and revising a new



story. Each of the Modules guides the anatomy of change with principles, tools, exercises, and examples.

Many prescriptions for change ignite discomfort with the old story, even resolve an old story, yet fail to offer ways to develop a successful new story. This series offers a new delivery system for informed mentorship of life story transformation.

Beliefs drive behavior. Behavior drives performance. Changing your mind changes your brain and your life.

NOTES TO THE MENTOR ON HOW TO USE THE OWNER'S GUIDE AND WORKBOOK

Live a New Life Story® The Owner's Guide is a master plan with concrete assessment and action steps for mentoring the next chapter of a life story. The Owner's Guide comprehensively explains the principles and applications of change. It is written as a companion guide to a mentoring program, as well as for qualified professionals who plan to become certified as *New Life Story® Coaches*.

The companion *Live a New Life Story® The Workbook* is a separate client workbook; it is incorporated into the Manual with placement corresponding to suggested use. The Workbook is available for purchase by clients to enhance their experience of direct mentoring with you.

Live a New Life Story® Glossary is available as support material, and is included in both the Manual and the Workbook.

Live a New Life Story® The Owner's Guide consists of ten modules in three sections.

- **Section I, The Art and Science of Change**, addresses the concepts of story, change, and change implementation. This section contains the seven steps to write a new life story to effectively facilitate significant life change for clients: recognize authorship, own story creation, assess the storylines and plot, decide what to change, know how to change, create new experiences, and evolve new identity to incorporate and sustain the changes.
- **Section II, Transformation**, guides further mastery of the new story creation integrating psychology, neuroscience, and professional coaching methods. An entire module is dedicated to what I believe to be the most important variable to determine success: understanding and regulating of states of mind.
- **Section III, Successful Application**, mentors the extension of *Live a New Life Story®* to money, relationships, career, personal success stories, and wellness.

The Owner's Guide will consistently address "you" as the professional to initially work on your life story and as model for language to use with clients.

Each Module is a complete unit, as well as being a component of a ten part series. Each of the Modules in Section III can be used as a template for mentoring, seminars, workshops, supervision, or coaching packages. The theory, principles, and work pages inform a philosophy and methodology of change. The case illustrations and tools provide a working laboratory for masterful application.

My Mission:

My purpose is for you to complete this series and to gain a deeper understanding and greater confidence in order to help people enhance their personal, career, relationship, money, and wellness stories.

My Expectation:

As professionals, some of you will incorporate these principles and methods of transforming a life story into an existing practice. Some of you may use the entire module tract as a series. Some of you may choose only one or a few of the topics to build applications and niches for your professional work.



Section 1

The Art and Science of Change

And telling her to ... never change, as though it were a choice, as though one of our greatest lessons isn't that change is the only constant. The seasons tell us, everything in organic life tells us, that there's no holiday. Still, we try to do just that. Sometimes, though, we learn the kind of wisdom that celebrates the open hand. Then we know that letting go of everything is the only way to keep the things that matter most.

Elizabeth Berg, Never Change

It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent, but rather the one most responsive to change.

Charles Darwin





Module 1

Story and Story Assessment

It has been asserted that we are destined to
know the dark beyond
the stars before we comprehend the
nature of our own journey.

Loren Eiseley

It is a theory which decides what can be observed.

Albert Einstein

We will employ seven steps of the Live a New Life Story® ROADMAP program to effectively facilitate significant life change:

Recognize the authorship of your life story

Own your present story

Assess the storylines and plot

Decide what to keep, enhance, let go, and avoid.

Map changes.

Author new experiences.

Program new identity to incorporate and sustain the changes.

[In Workbook]

STORY AND STORY ASSESSMENT

Module 1 begins the process to recognize and accept authorship of your story. This ownership of a life story involves a review and assessment of plot and storylines, including understanding hidden emotional themes. For example: Why do people repeat behavior that doesn't work? Why do they persist with internal scripts that lead to stifling debt, disappointing careers, or stuck relationships? Then do it harder, yet expect a different result?

Story ownership makes possible a review and assessment of plot and storylines.

This Module provides a systematic method for identifying specific personal narratives, and understanding the assumptions that create them. Informed listening focuses on fundamentals such as repeated behaviors, passive vs. active voice, internal vs. external point of reference, and listening to the body as well as the mind.

The first three steps of the **ROADMAP**® program will be addressed in this Module:

1. **Recognize** authorship of your story
2. **Own** your present story
3. **Assess** the storylines and plot



Step One. Recognize Authorship of Your Story

A. *The Power of Story*

1. *Our experiences are always consistent with our assumptions.*

Each of us writes our own personal story, and makes sense of things by fitting incidents and events into our unique plot. This story fills in the blanks and connects the dots to complete the picture of who and what we are. Events, images, and experiences form the patterns and storylines of that plot. We construct meanings to make sense of our life, and determine what is remembered as narrative in a coherent story of our identity. Reality validates and affirms those assumptions, as we live out our expectations.

A farmer and an anthropologist pass through the same terrain of undeveloped land. The farmer sees the soil and envisions growing crops. The anthropologist sees signs of an ancient civilization and reconstructs its history. Both are right. The data viewed validates each individual's story.

Using our beliefs and assumptions, we create our own personal story and the themes of that story. The plot defines and orients us in the present and guides us toward the future. The stories we tell about our life become our life. The stories we tell about our past become our past.

That we are always right about our assumptions never comes into question, only further etches those beliefs as reality. And we are always creating our own story, so reality self-validates.

We perceive and remember what fits into our plot, which is our internal model of the world and ourselves. The plot—the core beliefs and assumptions of life stories—informs what people look for and how they attribute meaning to what they find. People then create narratives of self-statement according to that plot, as brain and emotions are both programmed to ignore facts that contradict assumptions. We ignore, mistrust, disbelieve, or more likely don't notice, anything that doesn't fit into our pattern. These notions, prejudices, and fears, plus expectations from others, construct a self-concept. Some are conscious and some are not. Without knowing how to examine and change them, it is difficult even to challenge these assumptions. In fact, any departure or change from a well-traveled plot line, even a positive one, may initially create anxiety and uncertainty.

Beliefs must be in conscious focus before we can revise the ones that don't work and create new ones for personal and career growth.

We begin the guided journey to recognize the plot of your life story, to understand the hidden assumptions and emotional agendas that ghostwrite your storylines. You can then revise your story to live it fully and successfully.

When you stop telling yourself all the things you should say and cease listening for what you ought to hear, you can begin to recognize your own story more fully. Half of the struggle happens when you become tired of your old story: the story in which you work too many hours, feel under pressure at work, and perpetually feel short on time. Or the story in which you are the caretaker of others. Or the scapegoat. Or continue to fall in love with an ideal you hope someone will become, rather than who that person is. Perhaps you don't fully know your own story; you just realize there are aspects you don't much like. This is a beginning. And you don't need to know the story you should have written five years ago.

Growth and change begins with personal story ownership: the recognition that we are the authors of our own stories.

Taking ownership of a life story begins the process of inquiry. Only by accepting ownership can you proceed to assess the storylines and decide what to change.

2. We become what we think and feel. Our beliefs become our reality.

The beliefs *within* us determine our perception of what surrounds us, including what and how we select, register and process.

A story can create its own reality.

A placebo generates the effect of the accompanying story. A patient is prescribed an inert pill + some expectations. In the majority of cases, those expectations become manifest. By anticipating an experience, one can create it.

The story generates a truth so powerful that it can even reverse the pharmacological effect of a real medicine. The placebo is a white lie, a fiction that becomes a truth.

To a large extent we view our beliefs and assumptions as the truth, as reality of the way things are. We validate our beliefs by experiences that affirm them, and surround ourselves with individuals who share our values and hold similar points of view. And we live those assumptions by communicating to others how to respond to us. If you firmly believe you will be rejected or abandoned, you will either choose someone who will enact it, or you will act in a way to generate that response. Because your belief system contains what you see as inevitable, without insight, the only degree of mastery you can exert is by trying to regulate how and when the inevitable happens.



Our assumptions are often in evidence but not always in our awareness, because they are so basic to who we are. If you want to find out what you believe about yourself and the world, look around at your life. Your life is the self-statement, the mirror, of what exists inside you. When you feel chaotic or disorganized internally, you likely will notice that your house or office reflects that experience. You have created, promoted, and allowed everything in your present experience. All that you say, in the syntax of thought, feeling, and behavior, is about yourself.

You may regard your past as a series of episodes at times seeming to lack a theme or continuity. What you remember and how you remember it, however, fits into the plot you earlier incorporated and now accept in yourself and others. Your unconscious filter omits from perception or forgets any incident that doesn't fit comfortably into your plot. Like the words of an unknown foreign language, they are not recorded for later retrieval or reference. Because of that filter, the episodes you recall of your past are not at all random. In fact, the incidents of your past are variations of a recurring plot, consistent with one another. Without insight and change, new editions of the same story place a thousand different faces on the same central characters to repeat the same themes.

3. A new story can only occur by living in the present moment.

It has been said that there is nothing but the present: the past is a present memory and the future is a present anticipation.

Observing and owning repetitions of themes and storylines initiates understanding the core assumptions that generate these repetitions. Moment by moment and frame-by-frame, we actively construct the present scenarios and our experiences of them. Some of the storylines are visible, such as ways of relating to family, or responding to stress. Other aspects may be invisible on one's own radar, such as an assumption of ability to only make a limited amount of money.

Acknowledging yourself as the author rather than the subject of your story recognizes the active construction of experience. By analyzing the story, you can discern underlying assumptions.

4. Our minds seek closure and infer causality, accurate or not.

A series of studies reported by Dr. Daniel Gilbert of Harvard showed volunteers words appearing on a computer screen for a few milliseconds. This was such a short time that they were unaware that the words were shown, and could not even pick them out or guess from a multiple choice. Yet they were influenced by them. For example, when the word hostile was flashed, volunteers judged others negatively. When the word elderly was flashed, volunteers walked more slowly. When the word *stupid* was flashed, volunteers would perform less well on tests.

When these volunteers were later asked why they judged, walked, or scored the way they did, their response was striking.

They did not know, yet none of them said, “I don’t know.” Instead, they quickly considered the facts that they were aware of and came up with some reason. For example, the volunteers who walked more slowly would state, “I was a little tired when I did the test.” Or, “I have been traveling for the last few days, and haven’t slept well.”

Each was unaware of the fact that they were falsely attributing cause and effect.

These findings demonstrate the desire we have to bring closure in two ways:

- For our brains to end any dissonance by imposing certainty.
- For our minds to create a complete story by a causal explanation that infers both closure and a sense of effectiveness. Complete trumps accurate.

[In Workbook]

CALIBRATING INTUITION

As preparation for writing your new story, one of the tools you’ll use is intuition. Intuition is a “knowing” not formulated from data or intellectual processes. Intuition lets the unconscious do its job without the logical brain’s getting in the way.

Intuition can flow when you don’t make assumptions, when you are very present and centered. It’s related to flow—like the athlete totally immersed in a procedural body memory of performance. If athletes have to think about how to perform, even for a nanosecond, it takes them to a different part of their brains and out of flow; it interferes with performance. Intuition is an energy field of flow to be attuned to internally—which can then be applied to empathically resonate with others.

This exercise that will illustrate one way to program and calibrate intuition.

First:

1. Get in a comfortable position on your chair.
2. Take some deep breaths.
3. Say “Yes” to yourself many times.
4. Think “Yes” to yourself many times.
5. Feel “Yes” to yourself many times.
6. Think about something that is a “Yes.”
7. Be aware of what your body feels like when you experience “Yes.”



Then:

1. Think “No” to yourself.
2. Feel “No” to yourself.
3. Think about things that you associate with “No.”
4. Experience what it’s like in your body with “No.”
5. “Yes” is usually associated with openness and receptiveness in your body.
6. “No” is usually associated with emptiness, contraction, nothing.

This exercise to focus on body experience aligned with a Yes or a No also applies to reading someone else. A Yes results in a certain kind of body signal. A No results in a different kind of body signal.

In his book *Social Intelligence*, Dr. Daniel Goleman reviews the neuroscience of intuition and social connection. Our ability to empathically resonate with the emotion and experience of others is based in both mind and brain.

This exercise is only one example of our catalogue of intuitive perceptions. You can develop many more. Most are already there—just listen to them. Trust them. You can discern the people who withdraw from or deposit to your emotional bank account.

Just listen to your intuition.

B. The Story Takes Over the Author

- “*My anxiety took over.*”
- “*My doubt stopped me.*”
- “*My bulimia got out of control.*”

It is *as if* the story has overtaken the author, holds the author hostage, and writes itself. Like the placebo: a white lie, a fiction that becomes a truth. Or an addiction that trumps the mind and brain of its creator/victim.

Why do we repeat behavior that doesn’t work? Especially those actions that lead to stifling debt, disappointing careers, stuck relationships? Then, if something doesn’t work, do it harder, yet expect a different result? Why is it not obvious that trying to exit an old story by simply writing a “better ending” only recreates the same story, and ensures that someone remains in it? That a thousand better endings to an old story don’t create a new story? That too often, we see ourselves as the victims of the stories that we author and the feelings we create? Why is the compulsion to repeat so compelling to intelligent people, yet so illogical?

There is something secure and familiar about repetition. The same reason a child reads a book, gets it the first time or two, then reads it ninety-eight more times. Or sees the same movie until being able to say the lines.

Predictability masquerades as effectiveness, and we repeat the same story because we know what the outcome will be.

The invisible decisions that we make daily become camouflaged as habits, our collection of repetitions. We are always loyal to the central theme, the plot, of our lives, always returning to it. Any departure, even temporary, causes uncertainty and trepidation. Being in new territory—developing a new story—creates anxiety.

The easiest and fastest way to end this anxiety is to go back to the familiar: the old story.

Why can't someone just simply break out of a cycle—such as underachievement—and make a better life? Or launch a new business that they've dreamed often and planned well? A simple question. But not a simple answer, as it is not a matter of intellect, willpower, or just moving to a better zip code. The question assumes that there is an intact alternative, a substitute story waiting to be chosen, or a different frame of mind to switch into from the one that has so permeated every cell of brain and mind. It would be like saying, "I know a better way to lead your life—just trust and go along with me to get there." No one would or could do that. A new story has to be gradually constructed while, in the process, giving up what is known, secure, and predictable.

C. The Story Ghostwritten by the Brain

In the fall of 2004, some voters voted twice in the presidential election. Their first time was a stopover at the laboratory of neuroscientist Dr. Drew Westen to be hooked up to functional MRI brain scans. He presented them with a variety of new material. He found that people emotionally committed to particular ideas manage to ignore factual material that contradicts their own preconceptions. The participants simply did not register data opposing a belief system. He also found that three separate areas in the brain acted in concert to ignore everything except what fit a preconceived idea. His research reminds us that there are truths we refuse to see, and that incorrect assumptions will be validated.

We see what we believe.

The same thing happens in the brain in another circumstance: the arrival of an old friend re-lights the brain cells' configuration of that relationship, however many years have intervened since the last encounter.



Here's what both have in common:

Familiar experiences travel along well-established neuronal connections with their predictable neural networks. A neural network contains the information of a particular way of relating, a habitual pattern of response based on past experience.

Reactions become automatic so we don't have to make a new decision in each situation. This default mode of operating can mistakenly be read as "fate" when it is simply a kind of learning neuroscientists call long-term potentiation. We call them habits. In coaching, we sometimes highlight a habit to illuminate that it is a choice—a decision. Or can be.

Here's what makes change so difficult:

Old habits and accustomed behaviors are like being on a daily commute. Though repetitive, it is familiar. To change is like coming to the end of that usual path to suddenly enter uncharted territory with no assuring landmarks. This is what is literally happens in the brain as a grooved neuronal pathway and network—the default mode—is changed to generate new experience. The result is feeling lost, tempted to end the discomfort of uncertainty by returning to the familiar—the old story. In the beginning, no one is comfortable proceeding in new territory.

[In Workbook]

Step One. Recognize Authorship of Your Story

Plot—the core unfolding of the themes and storylines of life stories—informs what you look for and how you attribute meaning to what you find. You then create narratives of self-statement according to those assumptions, since brain and emotions are both programmed to ignore facts that contradict beliefs.

The first step toward enhancing a life story is to recognize story ownership. Then, assessing the storylines becomes possible in order to decide what to change. This ownership of a life story involves a review and assessment of plot and storylines, including understanding hidden emotional themes and recurring patterns.

The following questions will begin to help you understand assumptions that create them.

Focus on your basic life-story plot themes to first recognize the following aspects of your life story. Writing down the answers may be useful now, and to show progress later.

Needs

- Do your basic needs and ideals align with your goals?
- Are you subjugating any needs to wants? Why?
- Do you need to become more of who you really are?
- Do you deny your wants or needs to avoid conflict, to please others, or to take care of others?

Ideals

- Do you have clear internal ideals about who and what you want to be?
- Are you living up to your own ideals?
- Have you realized your potential?

Relationship

- Who are you (or whom do you become) in an important relationship, such as with a spouse?
- In a relationship, is your personal growth facilitated, stymied, or ignored?
- Do you lose your individuality by taking on your partner or spouse's identity? Do you feel "less than" rather than "equal to"?

- 
- What goals have you realized in your life?
 - What goals have yet to be achieved?

Career

- Who are you in your career?
- Do you define yourself by your job description?
- Are you reaching your full potential at work?
- Do you create a self-definition that facilitates growth, with definite goals, a specific and evolving life and career plan, and measurable success?

Identity

- Reflect on the roles by which you define yourself—or allow yourself to be defined (such as spouse, parent, boss).
- Do you define yourself by your work, such as “realtor” or “nurse”? How important is that to you?
- Do you define yourself by a relationship, such as “wife” or “son”?
- What is your core identity that transcends all roles and relationships?
- Does your sense of self feel internally consistent despite varying external contexts?
- Who do you say that you are?

[In Workbook]

THE 4 R's: REPEAT AND RATIONALIZE vs. RECOGNIZE AND REORGANIZE

Repeat: Are you repeating an old story hoping for a better outcome?

The brain operates efficiently, to expend the least amount of energy to do a task. This efficiency means that the brain takes shortcuts based on what it already knows—the tracks already laid down and neurons tailored to certain tasks. The shortcuts save energy. The shortcuts also mean that past experience necessarily shapes current perception and processing. Psychoanalysts call this transference. Neuroscientists call it the efficiency principle. Behavioral economists call it diagnosis bias (physicians should as well, but often do not). For all of us, the brain perceives things in ways it has been trained to do. How we categorize something determines *what* we see.

This works great for many things. But the challenge is that imagination, which comes from perception, can be limited to what we already know. We can only imagine from our current experience and our known paradigms. Neuroscientist Gregory Berns examines the science of thinking differently—*iconoclasts* in particular—to emphasize how we need to put ourselves in new situations to see things differently and boost creativity.

Rationalize: Do you dismiss or compromise any aspect of your money story?

A repeating storyline may be as bold as always looking for the next big deal, or as quiet as habitually comparing yourself and your money to others. Or as pernicious as not being able to convert your talent into corresponding income.

If you feel trapped in your own recurring money story, such as chronic debt, consider your basic assumptions that ghostwrite the storylines. Better strategy won't either get you to a vague goal, or solve emotional conflict. Recognizing the internal origin of a process is difficult because an external drama always accompanies it. Some warning signs of this struggle include personal compromise, conflict with other people, limited success, unhappiness, or not living up to a full potential.

Recognize: Are your needs, ideals, passion, and talents all going in the same direction?

Listen to your language in regard to your goals. If you say you will *try* to reach a goal, you may be protecting yourself from anticipated failure. *Trying* speaks of less than a full commitment, a potential diversion to other alternatives against failure. The words of someone not committed: "I'll try," "I should," "I ought to," "I know I need to." These build in an "out." When someone says, "I'm going to try to quit drinking," you know that he or she will continue to drink.

If your money story is not satisfying, or if you haven't attained your objectives, look more closely: *You are always reaching your goals*, whether they are conscious or unconscious. It is helpful to know consciously and specifically what those goals are. You might be undermining your success by being imprecise in your objectives. Do you fear specifically yet dream vaguely?

Reorganize: Do all the storylines fit and advance the plot of your money story?

Once becoming aware of actively making choices, you can decide what's in your best interest, what furthers your story. And what doesn't.

Your money story is the manifestation of your beliefs. You are always free to change your mind, always free to change your beliefs, including core assumptions about who you are. But first, you have to be aware. Then, assess what works and what doesn't. Then strategize about how to change, and craft a plan to guide and map the progress for external and internal change.



When the brain encounters the unaccustomed or unexpected, perturbation occurs. The brain has to reorganize perception, which influences how we see things. We are pushed to see things in a different way—to be creative. Prompts include a novel stimulus, new information, or an unaccustomed context.

Here are some suggestions for creative stimulation.

- Be aware of the categories that you use for a person or idea—in order to go beyond or outside them.
- Seek out environments in which you have no experience.
- Bring together ideas from different disciplines and different perspectives to the same subject.
- Engage a Mentor or Coach to challenge new ways of looking at things.
- Follow intuition and gut feelings: write them down.
- Brainstorm and free associate: allow a stream of consciousness not bound by usual categories.

Step Two. Own Your Story

A. Storylines That Define

Because most of the initial story is “set in” or ghost written before we are capable of being aware – it runs subconsciously, framing both how and what we experience, and our subsequent reactions and responses. Once thoughts and beliefs are established, our minds select only what input supports them so seamlessly we don’t notice other possibilities. This automatic process assures that we will only experience what we deeply expect, insuring that we will be right about the truth of our assumptions, our internal story.

Consequently, we are neither aware that we have been the author, nor that what we experience externally directly reflects our internal thoughts and beliefs. Instead, we feel at mercy of both what is occurring on the outside and the feelings we have.

Whatever remains unconscious will be attributed to fate.

We think that life is something that happens to us, not the other way around. Until we become aware of this relationship—that our thoughts and feelings, our story, indeed create what we experience—we only see outward, to events that seem unrelated and random. We can feel fearful and anxious and perhaps disconnected.

We begin the transition from powerlessness when we become aware that we are the authors of our stories. By breaking down the storylines, into the beliefs, assumptions, and emotions that compose them, we have the freedom to examine them, to understand them, and to decide if they remain valid. We are finally looking inward; we are connecting and recognizing the link between the interior and exterior. Then we become free to make different, effective choices.

An example of this transition is a feeling of anxiety about entering a new venture. Unexamined, one might medicate, manage, avoid, or eliminate the symptom. (Drinking, overeating, or gambling would be more extreme forms of state-changing actions). Once we take responsibility for our experiences and feelings, we can track inward to discover the core assumptions behind them. We may find this anxiety stems from the fear of failure. This knowledge allows us to find a solution that will resolve the emotion, an action/intention that allows us to move through the obstruction. We plan to do research, become more knowledgeable, and generate a more precise game plan. In the process of working with this challenge we are also rewiring or teaching the brain to be more dynamic and flexible.

Whatever you experience you either accept or create.

This principle requires that you take ownership of your story, and accept that you are agent rather than recipient/victim; it acknowledges that you construct your experience.



Because of the tendency of the mind/brain to follow the existing neural pathways, making changes can be a gradual process, one in which fluctuations will occur, sometimes with two steps forward and one step back. As you become more conscious and responsible for the story, you realize the pervasive quality of your programming, that it affects all areas of your life.

Once you own your storylines, you can then scrutinize them to determine the underlying assumptions in the construction of their narrative. Each storyline reflects the self-concept and assumptions of its author. The quest then becomes, rather than adapting to an emotion, to understand the assumptions in its creation. If you feel anxious, the first step is to take ownership of that feeling as an active creation. A feeling is an actively constructed verb, not an existing noun. If you repeatedly feel anxious in a certain situation, consider the following statement and question. Anxiety is the reaction to danger. What is the danger to which you're responding? An unspoken assumption here needs highlighting so it can be examined. If there is no obvious danger, then examine the assumption to which you are responding anxiously. Assumptions ghostwrite behaviors, feelings, and thoughts.

Once you own the feeling, such as anxiety, you can convert it to an intention. A fear of not being successful in a new venture can be converted to the intention to do research, become knowledgeable, and generate a game plan to proceed.

Ownership of a story is a gradual process, sometimes undertaken grudgingly and painstakingly, with few “aha” moments. Invisible assumptions and emotional agendas ghostwrite your life story, and often manifest interpersonally.

Every day of your life is a blank page for a portion of the next chapter of your life story.

Some disclaimed action, attributed to insignificance or “just happening,” makes the author seem like the passive recipient. “The thought came to my mind.” “My mind refused to think about it.” “My mind played tricks on me.” “I couldn’t help being late.” These locutions disclaim one’s self as agent, as creator of thoughts, feelings, and experiences.

Ninety percent of our lives will be characterized by how we handle the 10% of what happens to us, yet most people look at that 10% and think of it as the 90% that characterizes their lives.

Experience is not just encountered, observed or predetermined, but created moment by moment. You are the author of your story, its agent and creator. Whether you remain unconscious and powerless or become aware and proactive, you consistently manifest what you think and feel.

When you acknowledge yourself as author of your story rather than passive participant, you recognize the active construction of experience. Experience is not encountered, observed, or predetermined—it is created moment by moment. The narratives and each of the storylines reflect the manifestation of basic assumptions and self-concept of the author.

B. Storyline Motivations and Assumptions

We believe our assumptions are the truth. Our assumptions include who we are, what we believe, and what we perceive. And because we live them out, we are always right. We select, filter, register, and process in our unique way that makes our beliefs exert powerful influence to become our truth. Although not conscious or logical, we must recognize those beliefs and assumptions.

You can exchange information with another person, including the information of your experience of that person. Although you can empathically resonate with another, you cannot assign or know a feeling, a thought, or a motivation. The corollary is that you are responsible for your life. Whatever you think, feel, and experience is what you create each moment. Thoughts and feelings do not “occur” to you, nor are you the victim of thoughts or feelings that you create.

[In Workbook]

Step Two. Own Your Storey

ASSUMPTIONS AND MOTIVATIONS THAT CONSTRUCT STORYLINES

Beliefs and assumptions generate the possibilities that you see. They then govern how you process what you perceive. Thus your perceived possibilities influence how you perform and whether you achieve your goals. Beliefs, created by you, become self-fulfilling prophecies, because they are lived out.

Empowering beliefs include:

- I will make a plan and follow it.
- I believe I will do what is necessary to make good decisions.
- I am competent to achieve my goals.
- I can make the money I need.
- I can find a way to love my work.

Limiting beliefs also influence reality and behavior. Limiting beliefs have an effect emotionally and physically.

Limiting beliefs include:

- What I do won't be seen as important.
- My opinion doesn't matter.
- I will never make all the money I need.
- No matter how hard I try, it will fall short.
- I feel stuck in repeating negative things.

As you transform beliefs, you write a new life story. Fundamental to any belief system is its point of reference. To initiate change, move your point of reference from external to internal, beginning with the following basic questions. Filling the space of the present moment with current feeling and experience leaves no space for old beliefs. Your old assumptions will not disappear, but you make them a memory rather than a lived experience. You can change your mind and it will change your life.

- Is any pattern evident from your plot assessment?
- Do any themes stand out to you as you reflect on your responses?

- What do these patterns and themes articulate about how you think about yourself and others?
- How do they affect your behavior?
- Do you see the patterns repeating in other areas of your life?

Identify basic aspects of your true self

- What are you uniquely good at—better than almost anyone else?
- What are you most passionate about?
- What do you have special experience doing?
- What is your greatest personal ambition?

Create your own experiences and your own reality.

- What is the biggest obstacle that you currently face?
- What is the biggest challenge you face now?
- What is the one thing you most want to change about your life now?
- What is the one thing you most want to change about your work life now?

Review your belief systems

To challenge a belief, consider:

- Does this belief still work? Help me function?
- What could I do if this assumption were not in place?
- What new acknowledgement would serve me better?
- Have I outgrown this belief?
- Have I discovered that this belief is no longer true?
- What is a more current adaptive belief?

Become your own authority

- Have you taken enough ownership as author of your own story enough to examine the basic assumptions and motivations constructing your storylines?
- Are you doing what you want, or are you doing what you believe feel you are supposed to do in each of the areas of your life?

- Are you engaging in impulse actions?
- Avoiding decisions?
- Making bad decisions?
- Responding to others' wants that eclipse your own needs?
- What are you saying "yes" to in your life that you need to say "no" to?

Impulse actions? Bad decisions?

- What are you saying "no" to in your life that you need to say "yes" to? Change? Commitment? Avoided decisions? A challenge? Forgiveness?
- Do you hope or pray for magic, or the ability to understand and master?

Each of the storylines you create has its own history, its own consistency over time. The drama of everyday life does not just affect you, it is created by you.

Illuminating the story of your life, the plot and subplots, involves the same questions as understanding any other story.

- Identify and learn about the protagonist (you), your motives and conflicts, wishes and fears, the manifestations of your wishes and fears in your life drama, your entire internal experience, and how each scene ends—whether resolved or not, happy or not, complete or not.
- Identify the antagonist (you, also).
- And how the outside, identified antagonist (your proxy) was carefully selected and identified as an external representation of some part of you. What part of you does the identified antagonist represent? (It is not an accident that the external antagonist was chosen out of millions of possibilities to be a specific representation of some part of you that is unrealized, deleted, or repudiated).
- Is this antagonist like others in the past, with each relationship being the same process, only with different faces? For example, are you engaged in struggles and difficulty with authority involving your current boss similar to struggles and difficulty you had with other bosses in the past?
- How similar is this struggle to an original one with a parent?
- Is there a consistent theme or pattern of the important others, the social context, the storyline and its outcome?

These questions assess whether the past lives on in the present, and in fact ghostwrites some of the present. Observing and owning repetitions of themes and storylines allows you to

understand your core assumptions that generate these repetitions. You see what you believe, and become it.

Listen for the assumptions and motivations constructing your storylines

Core assumptions form the basic beliefs about yourself. Organizing, powerful, and influential, they fashion the storylines of your life. The harder you try to disregard, disavow, or counter them, the more intense their influence becomes. The more intently you run from something, the more you engage it: you keep coming back to what you attempt to flee. What behaviors have you tried in vain to change? Those instances point the way toward a core belief. Someone who is constantly trying to please, even to the point of subjugating personal needs and wants, may assume that love only comes from continually pleasing someone else. The best indicator of your beliefs and values is your behavior.

- What patterns can you find?
- Do any themes stand out to you as you reflect on your responses?
- What do you care passionately care about?
- What is your greatest personal ambition?
- What do these patterns and themes articulate about how you think about yourself and others?
- How do they affect your behavior?
- Do you see the patterns repeating in various areas of your life?



Step Three. Assess the Storylines and Plot

A. Ideals Assessment

[In Workbook]

DISTINGUISH AND ADDRESS IDEALS

Needs and ideals form core themes of personal story plot. Awareness of your unique blend of these elements will inform assessment of your present story, and guide you in its revision.

The following exercises will help identify your personal set of needs and ideals.

A personal journey of integrity in aligning decisions with ideals includes:

- Clarify your core ideals.
- Develop awareness of how each ideal applies to important areas of your life.
- Recognize and honor the hierarchy of ideals when making decisions (such as an immediate need of your child eclipsing your desire to learn and be creative).
- Attach a significance to each ideal and recognize the expense in commitment (such as knowing the sleepless nights and boring moments in having a child).
- Align beliefs and assumptions with ideals.
- Live your ideals. Protect them. If you have not been true to them with integrity for yourself, reclaim them. If you are unclear about each of them, focus sharply, and perhaps reconstruct fundamental values.

[In Workbook]

IDEALS CLARIFICATION EXERCISE

Ideals are internal standards of excellence. Ideals serve as a personal model of value—an internal guide to purpose. Living up to a personal, attainable ideal generates a sense of worth and esteem. Failure to live up to an internal ideal leads to feelings of shame.

From this list of ideals, choose the three that are most important to you. You may want to add others.

ACHIEVEMENT

ADVENTURE

BEAUTY

CATALYZE

CHARITY

CONNECTEDNESS

CONTRIBUTE

CREATIVITY

DIGNITY

DISCOVERY

FAMILY

FEEL

FREEDOM

GENEROSITY

GROWTH

HAPPINESS

HEALTH

HONESTY

INDEPENDENCE

INDIVIDUALITY

INFLUENCE

INTIMACY

JUSTICE

KINDNESS

KNOWLEDGE

LEADERSHIP

LEARNING

MASTERY

PEACE

PLEASURE

POWER

SELF-ESTEEM

SENSITIVITY

SPIRITUALITY

SUCCESS

TEACHING

TRUTH

WINNING

OTHER: _____

My top three ideals, in order of most to least important, are:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



[In Workbook]

Four Guidelines for Living Your Ideals

Once you've clarified your ideals, consider ways you might begin to incorporate them into your life. For example:

1. See how they apply.

Consider the different areas of your life, one by one—your career, life as a spouse, as a parent, a sibling, a friend, and any other areas—and explore how each of the top three ideals you've identified here applies to or reveals itself in each of these areas.

2. Honor your order of priorities.

Recognize and honor the hierarchy of ideals when making decisions. For example, the immediate needs of your child might supersede a desire to learn and be creative.

3. Appreciate the price.

Each ideal carries with it a price tag, so to speak; that is, there is a personal cost involved in being committed to upholding and honoring that ideal. For example, there will inevitably be sleepless nights and boring moments involved in raising a child.

4. Live your ideals.

Think of yourself as a tigress and your ideals as your cubs: they are your life, and you will do anything and everything to protect them. If you feel you have not been entirely true to your ideals or protected them with that kind of fierce integrity, then choose this moment as your time to reclaim them.

If you are unclear about any one of the ideals you've identified, spend additional time focusing on it, and if you feel it's necessary, rewrite that list until it rings unquestionably true for you.

B. Needs Assessment

[In Workbook]

DISTINGUISH AND ADDRESS NEEDS

Unlike our ideals, which are standards of value to which we aspire, a need is an essential requirement that we must actually have present in our lives, a necessity for mind, body or spirit. Early in life, our needs consist of physical nurturance, empathic attunement, attachment,

effectiveness, exploration, assertion, feeling and tension regulation, and sensory needs. In adulthood, our needs become adult versions of these same basic needs, all providing for physical requirements, comfort, identity, affirmation, love, communication, safety, and sexual/sensual needs.

Consistently meeting your own needs results in a sense of effectiveness and optimum functioning, like the satisfaction of having completed a task or project, knowing you have given it your best effort. Frustrated or unmet needs create the opposite feeling, of discomfort and ineffectiveness. For example, when the basic need for connection is derailed or nonexistent, we feel an emotional disharmony.

A need may be most obvious when it is not met.

As with ideals, each of us is unique and has a particular set of needs that we value more highly than the others. From the following list of needs, choose the three that are most important to you. This list isn't exhaustive; feel free to add others.

- | | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| ACCEPTANCE | EMPATHY | TIME ALONE |
| ACCOMPLISHMENT | HARMONY | REGULATION |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT | NURTURANCE | FOCUS ATTENTION |
| ACTUALIZATION | ORDER | RELAXATION |
| CARE | PHYSICAL ACTIVITY | SELF CONTROL |
| CERTAINTY | RECOGNITION | INTIMACY |
| COMFORT | SAFETY | PASSION AT WORK |
| COMMUNICATION | FINANCIAL SECURITY | PASSION AT PLAY |
| CONTROL | EMOTIONAL SECURITY | OTHER: _____ |
| DUTY | SIMPLICITY | |
| EFFECTIVENESS | STRENGTH | |

My top three needs, in order of most to least important, are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



When your needs and ideals are in synchrony with each other and are combined with a clear vision and defined goals, all of your efforts go in the same direction. It will feel right and result in mastery.

A discrepancy can exist for organizational systems as well as for individuals. For example, corporate *ideals* might include teamwork, leadership, caring for and promoting the creativity of employees, innovation, and realizing human potential. Corporate *needs* include productivity and the bottom line of profit and loss. When the core ideals of a corporation parallel its core values of an individual within that corporation, both grow.

[In Workbook]

DISTINGUISH WANTS FROM NEEDS

Wants or desires are not fundamental constructs like needs or values. A want can be replaced with another want, and fantasies are readily interchangeable—but one need cannot substitute for another need.

While ideals and needs both spring from the very essence of who we are, wants are far more circumstantial. A particular want, for example, may arise as the temporary manifestation of an unmet need from the past, such as the unmet need for affirmation as a child resulting in adulthood in the relentless pursuit of validation, accolades and accomplishments. While needs are universal, wants are tied to experiences uniquely personal and with their own particular histories.

Unsatisfied wants may result from not having a defined goal (not having a definition of *enough*), or from trying to satisfy a past want in present time. While you can get sick if you don't get enough of a need, you can also get sick if you get *too much* of a want. You can never get enough of what you don't need.

If the desires you have don't serve you, *you can choose new ones*. Like your money story, your wants are not carved in stone or cast in your DNA. And choosing desires for yourself that are in alignment with your needs—and even with your ideals as well—is a recipe for satisfaction.

An application: Spend based on who you are, not who you want to be.

People may buy something to pursue a hope or dream, expecting it will change who they are. Disappointment sets in when the books on cameras don't make someone a photographer, or tapes on learning a foreign language do not result in proficiency.

Consider purchasing as a reward, or when you need something, rather than with the expectation that it will change who you are.

[In Workbook]

IDEALS AND NEEDS DECISION TREE

Ideal + Need → Goal → Commitment → Fulfillment → Self-validation

Ideals and needs can be used to inform decisions and evaluate goals. This decision tree is one way to systematically assess and plan.

Conflicting needs, wants and values hinder our performance and drive us to invest time, money and energy in things that don't fulfill us. Accordingly, it makes sense to weigh every significant decision you make against the considerations of your ideals, needs and wants, *before* you make the decision.

- If the decision meets all three, it is a “Yes.”
- If the decision is in alignment with your ideals and needs, but seems to be in conflict with a particular want, it is a “Maybe.” Examine this particular want to see if it is significant enough to nix the decision. Since wants are more transitory than ideals and needs, a sound decision may overrule a want.
- If the decision opposes or does not meet one of your needs or ideals, then the decision can be “No” or “On hold.”

This alignment of ideals, needs and wants can be applied to establishing direction and goals in all significant areas of life: home, career, relationships, way of being, business, personal success, financial plan, and spiritual development.

We live in a culture that is often very goal-oriented. There is nothing wrong with being focused on a goal—as long as the goal aligns well with your ideals and needs. If it does not, then you are working at cross-purposes and cannot possibly win, because if you win, you lose.

Before adopting a goal as your own, examine it closely to see whether or not it is in synch with your top ideals and needs. If it does align well with your ideals and needs, then move to *commitment*.

Once you have committed to the goal, then be loyal to yourself by *fulfilling* that commitment, not simply because you said you would, but because that goal is an integral expression of your ideals and needs, and thus its full-out pursuit—not only its final accomplishment, but the journey along the way as well—also serves as an essential *validation* of your genuine worth.

Because the goal is aligned with your ideals and needs, it is a consonant expression of who you are.



Case Illustration

Robert consulted me because he wanted to expand his business, but felt stuck. He was an acknowledged expert in a niche area, and supervised the work of some consultants who worked for him. Although he worked successfully on behalf of clients, his income didn't match his recognized expertise. And his own needs were not satisfied by his work.

We focused initially on what he did uniquely well, and on his primary passion.

I sent him the *Distinguish and Address Ideals* and the *Distinguish and Address Needs* exercises, and asked him to select from the prepared list the three ideals and three needs that best represented his core self.

Robert knew that money resonated with emotional issues throughout his life. Money had been the language of care and love in his family, seemingly the tangible evidence that his parents loved him, confirmed by a will that promised significant inheritance. He recognized that he had continued a storyline: to make substantial money meant he would give up his wish of being taken care of by someone else. Now, success and money accumulation meant taking care of himself. The impossible had become accessible, though now by his own efforts.

We recognized a disparity between his wish to be taken care of, his needs for autonomy and self-enhancement, and his ideals of mastery, creativity, and teaching others. His wants, needs and ideals were not in synchrony, nor were they aligned toward his goals.

He could now use this awareness as information to construct a new story rather than have it ghostwrite a new edition of the old story.

Robert recognized conflicting wants and needs as he progressed successfully toward goals in his business. He began taking care of himself in a much better way.

The result of our work was that Robert worked happily at doing what he did uniquely well. He leveraged his time and income by training and licensing people in his method, and franchised a component of his firm to a national group for significant residual income.

C. Understand Conflicted and Contradictory Storylines

Invisible storylines and emotional agendas can make intelligent, sophisticated, reasonable, talented, dependable, ethical people act goofy about certain things.

Intelligent people spend money they don't have. Sophisticated people get scammed, sometimes repeatedly. Reasonable people forego pleasure to pursue money in order to purchase back a portion of what they forfeited. Gifted people can't convert their talent into sufficient income. Otherwise balanced individuals spend extravagantly or hoard compulsively. Dependable people ignore financial matters until they become serious. Highly principled individuals step over boundaries and write their own rules about money. The messages will keep repeating themselves—people will keep writing the same money stories that imprison them—until they are listened to.

A question to consider: As you look at your life and money stories, your thoughts and beliefs; do you perceive a flow, or does there appear to be some pattern of disharmony?

As you begin to discover them, you will likely find a collection of ideas that are in conflict with each other. The conflicts are a direct result of how you accumulate beliefs as you grow and mature. Much of the programming is wired in the first years of life. Additions from relationships, school, community, and jobs further establish the programming. It is a mixture of unexamined material, the remnants and scraps of the stories of others, patched together by emotion and judgment. It becomes an inner voice as well as the blueprint from which the outer experience is built. It also explains why we may experience an internal tug-of-war, wanting something and not wanting it. Conflicting thoughts and feelings are like having feet on the gas and the break pedals simultaneously, the reason why we may strive to achieve in some area only to have it all fall apart repeatedly.

To have success in any area, you must be in a state of coherence. Resolving the cross-currents of conflict and gaining clarity about what you do want maximizes the likelihood of creating the outer experiences to match the internal.

Ultimately, however, you must determine which obstacles are generated from within and which are external.

In your life story, is all of yourself going in the same direction, or do you seem to undermine yourself in certain areas of your life?

In your money story, do all the storylines fit and advance the plot?



D. Recognize Active versus Passive Positions

Sometimes the story seems to write itself, to just happen to you.

- “My thoughts ran away from me.”
- “It just seems to keep happening.”
- “I wasn’t myself.”
- “Uncertainty crept in.”

Statements like these illustrate that a passive mindset predominates, one that denies or doesn’t recognize responsibility for thoughts, feelings, or actions. When this mindset exists, you then seem the unwitting recipient of the experience, with little hope that something can be learned, or different choices made.

Rather than managing, overcoming, countering, or medicating a feeling such as anxiety, the first step is to acknowledge that even though it seemed to “just happen,” you generated the experience.

When you take responsibility, you activate your capacity for change. Once you understand the major internal themes, you can begin to resolve the conflicts. That may include releasing long held anger or resentments. When you have completed some of this “house cleaning”, you can then focus on creating new and different feelings, responses, and behaviors. The clearer you become about your old stories, the more freedom you have to reframe your life and reinterpret the events in ways that empower instead of cripple you.

E. Listen to Your Self-Statements

You can only perceive from within the borders of your own mind and body; therefore, everything you think you understand always comes from within you. In effort to make the world meaningful we project our own meaning upon it. Thus, whatever you attribute to others, a group, or culture you interpret by comparison with your internal landscape. All you ever make are self-generated statements.

The value of knowing this lies particularly in being able to discover unconscious themes as they are played out in front of you.

We always perceive and create outside to match inside, so pay attention to what you consistently like and dislike in another. Everything you say and do is a self-statement.

Acknowledge and own everything about yourself. Take yourself very personally. Listen carefully and explicitly to all the messages from your interior, to your whole truth. Feelings never lie; the body cannot deceive.

Everyone else also makes self-statements. What someone says about you has everything to do with him or her, even though focused on you. Listen, but don't take it personally (only a theory is ever this simple and clear). All others can do is share their experience of you; it is their experience and perception, their own point of view. You can share your own experience of someone else, but be aware that your perceptions are also filtered through your own lens.

For example, if someone is being critical and judgmental of you, it is your decision whether to believe and accept that point of view. Consider whether you may be assigning an aspect of yourself, such as competitiveness, to someone else. If you believe you lack a certain quality, you may pursue someone who exhibits it. This reliance on another's functioning for you and on an external point of reference for validation can be limiting. In order to grow, you must move your point of reference to an internal one, and own responsibility for your life and its expression.

Sometimes you can recognize something the first time only by denying it.

The old story may have included displacing aspects of you onto others, or trying to change another person. This essence of co-dependency is seeing either a desired or a disavowed part of yourself in another. You can even fall in love with who you hope someone will become, rather than who he or she is. Or fall in love with your own ideal projected onto someone else. This hope may be for your own unmet needs, or for a piece of your life not yet lived. In this way, however, hope is maintained in an old context, and past needs cannot be met in the present. Past needs become present wants.

Other disclaimed action has to do with one's mind, as if thoughts and feelings existed apart from one's mind, and passively insert themselves. "The thought came to my mind." "My mind refused to think about it." "My mind played tricks on me." These locutions disclaim one's self as agent, as author of thoughts, feelings and experiences, as if your mind were the subject rather than the creator of your thoughts and feelings. Other disclaimers include a slip of the tongue (sometimes attributed to Freud), being late, or various accidents not viewed as motivated, meaningful, and / or intended.

Internal dramas convert into interpersonal ones, assigning roles to others, roles that originate from an aspect of self, externalized and ghostwritten for another to enact. The most dramatic roles are those disavowed, such as in blaming someone else so that you yourself become the victim. The idealized version of oneself, never quite attained, may be assigned to a caretaker hero. The shining armor of this hero inevitably becomes rusty over time with disappointment and disillusionment. In order to grow, you must assume responsibility for your own life, to become your own hero.



F. Listen for Repetitions of the Old Story

Each of us generates a life story with a recurring plot. We repeat its continuing formula over time, even when it is not a winning one. Each repetition may more deeply reinforce basic assumptions and the (false) belief that you are a victim of fate. Reentering an old story in an attempt to write a better ending creates a variation of the scenario, a new edition of the same process.

The more intently you run away from something, the more you engage it, so the more apparent it becomes.

At times we repeat just to see, in relation to a fixed point of reference, how much we've changed. Each time we return to the chorus of a song, those same words are different, for more of the lyrical story has unfolded, and we see more of the unfolding journey at each juncture of repetition.

You are always reaching your goals, whether they are conscious or unconscious.

If your personal or professional life is not as gratifying as you would like, if you believe you have not attained your objectives, look more closely. It is helpful to know consciously and specifically what those goals are. You might be undermining your success by being too vague in your objectives. Do you fear specifically yet dream vaguely?

Listen to your language in regard to your goals. If you say you will “try” to reach a goal, you may be protecting yourself from anticipated failure. “Trying” immediately says that there is not a full commitment, a potential diversion to other alternatives against failure. The words of someone not committed fully include, “I’ll try,” “I should,” “I ought to,” “I know I need to.” These build in a “take-away” by not being totally committed, by creating an “out.” When someone says, “I’m going to try to quit drinking”, you know that he or she will continue drinking.

G. Listen to Your Body

Your body always speaks to you. Wordless validations of feeling good result from eating healthily, working out, and resting well. Listen also to the message in each pain, discomfort, dis-ease, change of function, exhilaration, sensation, and energy spurt. There are no accidents within the system—the story—of your body. As with any complex system, a change of one component affects every aspect of that system. Of your body’s eleven systems, only two—the nervous and the immune—have memory. Living a new story with your body inscribes a new text for these two systems and reciprocally benefits your whole body.

Warren Buffet used the analogy of buying a car. If you knew you were going to get a new car every few years, the approach would be different than if you knew you were going to choose

one car and have it for the rest of your life. You would do research to know the best care for that car, probably change the oil more frequently, and do everything possible for maintenance. Knowing that it would be the only car for the rest of your life, you would take meticulous care of it.

Your body is the only one you will have for the rest of your life.

Knowing that it is irreplaceable, everything about the care and maintenance of your body matters. It reflects the cumulative care you take of it.

Listen to your body; acknowledge and accept its somatic language. Acknowledge what works. And what doesn't. Hear your body speak when you eat too much, eat foods that are unhealthy, or drink too much. Pay attention to the message when you work out, when you feel refreshed by taking care of yourself. Your body's language communicates the accountability of stress and tension, as well as of relaxation and contentment. If you are creating hypertension (emotional tension's physical expression as high blood pressure), understand and change the process. Acknowledge and accept what your body speaks in pain, headache, chest tightness, churning gut, being easily winded.

A physical symptom contains the message, yet importantly, it is the message.

What does a symptom ask of its creator? To listen, to hear the message spoken in physical or symbolic language, to learn from it in order to address the change needed.

Do you have a symptom speaking a disavowed message to you?

[In Workbook]

A 5-PHASE PLOT OUTLINE

Phase 1. Assess your present situation

- Where are you now?
- What accomplishments that are consistent with your beliefs and ideals are you willing to commit to?
- What has worked? And what has not?
- What has been missing that if you added now would enhance your life?

Phase 2. Visualize and generate possibilities.

- Where are you going?
- What defines success? How will it look and feel?

Phase 3. Design a specific plan.

- Create a mission that is stronger than your fear.
- Design a plan that honors your uniqueness, needs, and values.
- Establish a strategy and a series of specific, compelling, and short-term goals to arrive at a big-picture goal.

Phase 4. Work through each initiative and next best action for each goal.

Phase 5. Consider the impact of change on your identity. Your vision may involve changes in such fundamental notions as how and who you see yourself to be.

LIFE'S GROUND RULES:

PARADOXES & ANTIPODES IN STORY CONSTRUCTION

Paradoxes

1. You most engage what you run away from; running away is a very specific, focused, motivated action.
2. Acceptance is not acquiescence.
3. Passivity is a very determined activity. Forgetting is as active a process as remembering. Doing nothing is a specific decision, process, and work product.

4. If you don't change your direction, you are likely to end up where you are headed (ancient Chinese proverb).
5. Not requiring that others respond to you exactly as you want means that no one has control over you.
6. If you influence others to respond in the specific way that you want, and they do so, you have rendered them inauthentic in your mind.
7. Activity is not necessarily the same as productivity; doing does not equate with being.
8. Assumptions and beliefs, like traumas, are ways of stopping time.
9. "More" is not a goal, but because it is elusive, it has appeal as a container of hope and happiness.
10. Suffering and desire are the two secrets we cannot keep.
11. See it big. Keep it simple.
12. Be aware of definitive statements that foreclose exploration. One man's statement by one man was sufficient to explain all the unexplainable to him: "All women are females."
13. You can be strong if you allow yourself to be weak.
14. The only thing constant is change. Often the hardest work is accepting the changes.
15. The loss of the illusion is more difficult than the loss of the real thing.
16. The more you run away from something, the more apparent it becomes.
17. We criticize, perhaps to prove that we do not possess the fault.
18. By the time you finally don't have to make sense out of everything, it does.
19. Only when you feel fully secure can you be aware of how afraid you were before.
20. Fighting something engages it; accepting it lets it go.
21. Only the impossible is addictive—a fantasy that has been lost but given temporary hope by proxy.
22. The answer always gives birth to and shapes the question. Only by knowing the answers can you finally give voice to the questions.
23. Adolescents can teach us the depth of superficial things.
24. It is rare to see fully all that there is, yet nothing else.
25. Action is not the same as emotion. Judgment resides in the potential space between the two.
26. It is a moment of liberation to know that no one is binding you.
27. The most common thing that gets in the way of seeing something as it truly is, is our preconception of it. The most common thing that gets in the way of listening and understanding something, is trying to fix it.
28. Fear, change, and adventure are synonyms
29. Mistakes and successes are teachers.
30. The past is a lesson. Letting go while learning from it is a process.



31. “Finding” yourself is creating yourself. Everything fitting into and enhancing the plot makes for a good read. And a good life.
32. All you have to do is the next right thing. Sometimes it isn’t clear what the next right thing is, but you can almost always be clear what it isn’t.

Antipodes

The opposite of:

- Perfect is real.
- Fear is freedom.
- Control is mastery.
- Doing is being.
- Repetition is creativity.
- Working harder is working smarter.



Module 2

Change & Change Evaluation

Everything you say reveals you.
What you are speaks so loudly,
I can't hear what you say.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Claim the events of your life
to make yourself yours.

Anne-Wilson Schaefer



[In Workbook]

CHANGE AND CHANGE EVALUATION

When people change their minds and create new experiences, new neural networks and brain connections occur. Success involves creating a new story inside and outside: an evolving internal model combined with new experiences.

The module examines the basic life narratives and the plot of your story to evaluate which ones work and which do not. You are guided to enhance, expand, and develop the storylines that work, and transform those that don't into intentions and achievement. This module includes strategies to systematically understand, edit, and revise your life story.

Steps four and five of the ROADMAP™ program will be addressed in this Module:

Step Four. Decide what to change

Step Five. Map changes

Step Four. Decide What to Change

A. 4 Basic Inquiries for Storyline Evaluation

[In Workbook]

A. 4 Basic Inquiries for Storyline Evaluation

1. What do you want to *change*?

Anything you consider a problem, barrier, or obstacle, is created by you and cannot continue to exist without you. It is not a simple matter of getting over it, countering, or adapting to it: it will remain until you create something else through thought, feeling, and action. Consider creating something else instead.

An example is fear of public speaking. One approach: to convert the fear into an action plan that includes joining Toastmasters, to practice in a safe environment. By confronting the fear and setting goals that will resolve it, you overwrite the old story of ineffectiveness, and convert the worry or fear into an intention.

What are three behaviors or beliefs that you could change, reverse or leverage to help you toward financial success?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

2. What do you want to *let go of*?

In order to change, you also have to know what you want to let go. The bottom line, no matter how entrenched the process or how strong the hope, is “Does it work?”

As you evaluate, you may find things that you wished and hoped were different, but remain unsatisfied. This is the time to decide whether changing your strategy would make a difference or if it’s best to let go and free your attention for creating other things. Emotionally, this may be difficult, but determine to learn what you can from it, so that it becomes an opportunity for self-awareness and correction that will enhance your future stories. In this way you are learning to convert what could have been perceived as failure into growth.



Review your money beliefs and behaviors. If you could eliminate three of them from your life, which ones would have the most impact?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3. What do you want to *avoid*?

There is always the pull of the old and the fear of the new. Yet there is no future in repetition. For example, avoiding engagement with someone who is draining protects your energy for a more productive choice.

What three things can you avoid that will positively rewrite your money story?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. What do you want to keep and *enhance*?

Your money story, like your life story, is the manifestation of your beliefs. Changing your mind changes your brain and your life: beliefs, goals, and visions drive action. Choose carefully what you engage.

Choose three areas of your existing money story that you'd like to keep or enhance:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

B. The Psychology of Change

A child reads *Goodnight Moon*, gets it the first time or two, then reads it ninety-eight more times. Or sees the same movie until being able to say the lines.

An adult will repeat behavior that doesn't work, often doing it harder, and expect a different result. Why is repetition so compelling to intelligent people even though it is so illogical? Why is it not obvious that trying to exit an old story by simply writing a "better ending" only recreates the same story, and ensures that someone remains in it? Why don't we see that a thousand better endings to an old story don't create a new story? That too often, we see ourselves as the victims of the stories that we author and the feelings we create?

As described earlier, part of the answer to these questions lies in the way our minds work: to seek familiarity and security through repetition, to stick to old storylines and habits. Predictability masquerades as effectiveness, and we repeat the same story because we know what the outcome will be. The invisible decisions that we make daily become camouflaged as habits, our collection of repetitions. We are always loyal to the central theme, the plot, of our lives, always returning to it. Any departure, even temporary, causes uncertainty and trepidation. Being in new territory—developing a new story—creates anxiety. The easiest and fastest way to end this anxiety is to go back to the familiar: the old story.

Coming to the end of an old story—or interrupting it—does not in itself generate a new story. You must concurrently create a new story.

Yet a new story doesn't come fully furnished and decorated. It is difficult to write a new story when you don't know how the new story will feel, and you can't know how it feels until you create it. Even when true mastery or growth is elusive, the pull of the old and the fear of the new continue to influence.

Why can't someone just simply break out of a scarcity cycle—or chronic underachievement—and make a better life? Or launch a new business that they've dreamed often and planned well? A simple question. But without a simple answer, as it is not a matter of intellect, willpower, or just moving into a better zip code. The question assumes that there is an intact alternative, a substitute story waiting to be chosen, or another frame of mind to switch into from the one that has so permeated every cell of brain and mind. It would be like saying, "I know a better way to lead your life—just trust and go along with me to get there." No one would or could do that. That assumes that a new story awaits discovery and claim.

Of course, this is not the case, as a new story is gradually and sometimes painfully constructed by a person who must, in the process, give up what is known, secure, and predictable

You are always loyal to the internal model that you create-- not as a model, but as the way things are. Repetition and resistance to change are not initially viewed as such, but as reality.

- 
- What are the repetitions in your life that are dead-end and dissatisfying?
 - What are the things you'd like to change in your life in the next 90 days?
 - If you could add three things of vital importance to your life beginning this month, what would these be?

C. The Neuroscience of Change

And part of the answer to why change is difficult lies in the brain's preference and capacity for creating habits.

Experience converts to neuronal energy in the brain, which runs along pathways that collectively form networks. These networks are templates representing particular ways of relating, or habitual responses to certain stimuli in the environment. Consistent repetition of experience grooves these networks, strengthening them, until the brain rewires and they convert to automatic responses. The comfort or familiarity we feel from habitual behavior partly comes from the fact that habits require so little mental “processing” energy, compared with that of fresh stimuli. The brain always strives for energetic economy, choosing first to transform experience as quickly as possible to habit by building new neurons and networks as the default mode.

An example of this would be learning a new dance step. Going through new physical motions might be experienced as awkward and uncomfortable while triggering feelings of doubt and anxiety. These are predictable reactions in the mind/brain to new stimuli, requiring a shift from the automatic mode into an active level of processing. Change creates discontinuity and disrupts the “normal” state of cohesion. Enough practice, however, firmly establishes new neural pathways and networks and results ultimately in the dance pattern done without much thought or physical effort. This is called “long term potentiation.”

Behavioral patterns as well as belief systems downloaded especially from parents in the first years of life become automatic, to operate without observation or awareness. This learning mechanism that we regard as identity and character traits works consistently from earliest years. Because it runs seamlessly and automatically, we can remain indefinitely unaware of how much we are a collection of habits. With our preference for security and comfort we are not necessarily motivated to discover, question, or challenge it. Instead we may define it as fate or “just who we are.”

But we are not hard-wired for life.

Your brain and its unconscious programs are not fixed or unchangeable. You can rewrite mind software and rewire brain hardware to create a new life story. With new experiences, new neuronal pathways are created. This reprogramming can shift to more adaptive and successful modes. New research shows that we can rearrange and repurpose brain cell connections

(neuroplasticity) as well as produce new brain cells (neurogenesis) throughout our lives. Neurons are both flexible and regenerative.

We are addressing the mind matters and brain business of change. We now have the methods and tools to effectively catalyze and accelerate the process of change.

There is an infinite sea of new patterns and possibilities to be relearned or created to further new goals. The caveat: You have to take action to diminish preprogrammed responses and to write new script for new experiences—a new story has to replace the old one.

And there are no shortcuts, because long-term change requires consistent practice to groove new neural pathways and establish new neuronal networks.

In the beginning, change is not only a disruption in the usual order of things; it is also an uncertain and precarious venture into new territory of mind and brain, not yet etched like the old story. While you develop familiarity with the new story, there is the likelihood, especially at times of stress or stimulation, whether good or bad, that you may move back to an old neural network. (Someone trips unexpectedly, and you immediately know his native language.) In extreme stress, the present context disappears: past, present, and future collapse into a repetition of the familiar. With a crisis, slippage to old neuronal pathways with accustomed storylines occurs; the repetition may not even be obvious until its pattern becomes complete. This stress activation of old and well-established networks and state of mind temporarily eclipses new growth and recent change, even making it seem to disappear.

Departure from the path of the familiar in behavior and brain involves the unknown, a sense of risk. Tolerance of the unknown, the new, requires holding a belief of successfully filling that space. At times, change is something someone can get ready for only after it occurs. (And if you want to make an enemy, try to change someone.)

Change involves creating new experiences as well as evolving the context to process and understand them. For example: The anxiety resulting from making changes can be re-interpreted as a positive form of excitement—a signpost of moving ahead without familiar landmarks—instead of a warning message to run for cover.

D. Principles of Change

Some change occurs from the inside out, from examining and altering thoughts and feelings, with the resultant change in behavior. Some change occurs from the outside in, from creating new experiences and transcribing different thoughts and feelings.

Each individual usually has a favorite mode of how he or she works best, from the inside out, or the outside in. And at times a situation mandates change. A change in behavior, feelings, or thinking can lead the way to affect the other two.



In my work as a professional coach, there are some things I have come to appreciate about change that differ from my former work as a psychoanalyst:

- The prerequisite to change is not necessarily insight and understanding. You have to be in a new story before you can give up an old story. Significant life change occurs not by interpretation of the unconscious, but by doing and experiencing things differently in the present moment.
- Someone does not have to be motivated to begin doing something. An action can generate its own motivation. The professional athlete who gets up in the morning and goes to the gym may not be motivated to do so. He just does it. Sometime during the course of the workout, perhaps late into it, he becomes motivated. Or he may just do the workout because he knows that it is the thing to do in order to do what's next.
- Change requires ownership of a person's story—that authorship is an active, self-determined process, not ghostwritten by past experiences or overridden by the unconscious.

Four principles of change have powerful application in initial revision of a life story

1. Change begins with the recognition that you are the author of your own life story.

The dramas of your everyday life do not just affect you, they are created by you. Whatever you think, feel, and experience is what you create each minute. Your experiences are always consistent with your theories.

As improbable as it may seem at times, you internally author your life drama. Even your most painful current scenarios originate within yourself. In order to create freedom, you first have to be aware that you are not free. Awareness begins the process, but awareness alone does not create change.

People may hear what you say, but they sense what you feel, believe, and doubt. What you believe will show, affecting how others will respond to you. You are always teaching others how to respond to you.

By opting for repetition, individuals sabotage invention and imprison creativity. The same behavior repeated long enough begins to seem like fate. That outlook can lead to despair. However pristine the theory or esteemed the therapist, mentor, or coach, the ultimate question is: Does it work? New theories alone will not drive old lived experiences into extinction. Insight, understanding, and theory do not create change. Change requires a new lived experience to replace old lived experiences, coupled with evolving your internal model to incorporate that change, including how you regard yourself.

These two following vignettes illustrate subtle repetitions cloaked in the disguise of learning. Even though there may be no overt resistance to change, one may be burdened by knowing rather than energized by wanting to learn.

Brian, a Professional Coach colleague, in working with a client, noted with exasperation, “There’s no place to put new learning in your head.” He confronted his client with linking new information to a related experience, and focusing on that experience without learning from the new information and experience. His client had to move to the position of “beginner’s mind” to embrace curiosity and openness to stay in touch with new experiences and information to learn from it.

Many years ago a colleague who sat next to me at a professional meeting commented about his motivation to attend the meeting: “I come here to have what I do every day validated.” His search for validation obfuscated some possibilities of finding new and different information or perspectives to consider.

In order to change, you first have to know what you want to change—that is, know what you do not want in your life and what you want to create instead. Without this awareness, meaningful and systematic change cannot occur.

Doing something differently, being a contrarian, is not change, because it uses another person or idea as a point of reference and simply opposes it.

Reinvention begins with taking ownership of what you do, rather than living out what just seems to happen or feeling victimized by forces beyond your control. You have written the script of your life and remained loyal to it, even those parts that may not work for your best and highest good. Your life is the manifestation of your beliefs. The world occurs to you in the way you believe it to be.

2. If you want to change your life, first change your mind.

How do you take an inventory of beliefs that are self-limiting, conflictual, and compromising if they are experienced as reality? Analogous to Impressionist painting, each of your experiences is a dab of paint on a pointillist canvas. Only when you step back and view the entire picture do you recognize that the points form a pattern of a particular segment of life, and that the segments have their own unity. You create each experience, the patterns, and the composite image—and each are at a different level of awareness.

Beliefs may be conflicting, such as in the woman who indicated that she wanted to lose weight, yet wanted to enjoy life, food, and her summer free of dieting.

Letting go of a belief is a change. Outdated convictions inhabit a museum of beliefs, on the



shelf near Santa Claus, neighbor to the inadequacy fear, set on the floor above that crack you cannot step on to protect your mother's back.

Informed change requires you to determine where you are now, to decide where you want to go, and to figure out how to get there. With a goal and plan, you can stay on track, recognize and avoid detours and tangents, and move more effectively toward your goals.

Without a plan you can't know where you are and cannot strategize how to get to where you want to go. If you don't know where you want to go, you can't figure out how to get there. And once you create a plan, you have to remain loyal to it.

If you encounter a barrier or obstacle to your success, the solution is not getting over it, countering it, solving it, or getting around it: it is not there until you create it. Consider the possibility of not creating the obstacle—creating something else instead.

A component of every internal obstacle is the associated desire. Regard the obstacle not as the problem, but as guide to the hidden desire. For example, someone fears initiating a job interview. Rather than maintaining the obstacle by dwelling on previous unsatisfactory encounters, the fear can be converted to an intention with a preparation plan and commitment for the interview; a new experience replaces the old story of fear.

A century ago, philosopher and psychologist William James wrote that the greatest discovery of his generation was that human beings could alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind. Billions of words and millions of therapy sessions later, the idea often still eludes us.

In our quest to understand, we believe that merely giving something a name accurately explains. The unknown in medicine can be ascribed to “a virus”. Mathematics constructs “chaos theory” to explain what defies logic and cannot be understood. The “random walk theory” of Wall Street officially postulates that the market cannot be predicted. We create the illusion of understanding and even of mastery by assigning a diagnosis.

The brain operates efficiently, to expend the least amount of energy to do a task. This efficiency means that the brain takes shortcuts based on what it already knows—the tracks already laid down and neurons tailored to certain tasks. The shortcuts save energy. The shortcuts also mean that past experience necessarily shapes current perception and processing. The brain perceives things in ways it has been trained to do. How we categorize something determines what we see.

When the brain encounters the unaccustomed or unexpected, perturbation occurs. The brain has to reorganize perception, which influences how we see things. We are pushed to see things in a different way—to be creative. Prompts include a novel stimulus, new information, or an unaccustomed context.

3. You are always free to change your mind, always free to change your beliefs and core assumptions about who and what you are.

Changing your mind not only alters your brain but also transforms your life. But first you have to become aware. Prediction and expectation based on the past create repetition, but based on the present and future create possibilities. A belief system constructs an obstacle or an opportunity. Any effort to change your past is futile, as your past is over and gone.

For example, to succeed at a goal of being a giving person, subjugating your needs to those of someone else, may lead to a failure of your own growth and self-actualization. What you believe will come true. What you say to yourself, *all of it*, will make a difference. Know what you do not want to create, and what you want to create instead.

No one can believe in you more than you can believe in yourself. You live the vision of yourself and actualize your goals: be absolutely certain that you clearly and consciously know your goals.

4. You have to have a new story to be in before you can give up an old story.

To change, you have to develop a life story that contains the storylines you want. To stop doing something is not complete change—a new story incorporates new behavior and beliefs. You have to embody—actually live—this story you want. Good theory is not enough. Abstaining from an old story—such as excessive spending—is a beginning.

1. What is the biggest obstacle that you face currently?
2. What is the biggest challenge you face now?
3. What is the one thing you most want to change about your life now?
4. What is the one thing you most want to change about your finances now?

E. Assessment for Change

1. Personal Feedback Questionnaire



[In Workbook]

PERSONAL FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

First determine who knows you best and who will give straightforward feedback (family, colleagues, boss, minister, etc). Ask each one to jot down their impressions, opinions, and suggestions about you.

Ask these people what each of them sees as your:

- Strengths
- Potential
- Special skills
- Personal and career possibilities
- Blind spots
- Unrealized potential
- Winning strategy (personality style that you most rely on, even when it doesn't work)
- Next step to take
- Distractions/derailers
- Work environment in which you would work best?
- Work environment you should avoid?

What did you learn from the feedback you received? How will you use their feedback to create a strategy for proceeding in each area of your life?

Knowing what you want to achieve is crucial, with a game plan, specific steps, and measurable results.

Review your responses in these four areas.

1. What do you want to achieve?
2. What do you want to maintain without change?
3. What do you want to change?
4. What do you want to eliminate or avoid

Prioritizing Goals

1. Which of the issues will resolve itself without your doing anything?
2. What is the one thing that bothers you the most?
3. Choose the issue to resolve that would make the biggest difference in reducing your stress level.
4. Is there anything blocking your ability to get this done?
5. What have you learned that would be useful to you in this focus?
6. Imagine what would happen if you viewed a fear of making a mistake as an indication that a problem needs to be solved rather than as a sign of danger?

2. Compromise Inventory and Resolution Schedule

[In Workbook]

COMPROMISES INVENTORY

Compromise: Something you tolerate that takes time, energy, peacefulness, or money from you in a recurring, unsatisfying way. Compromises seemingly avoid conflict and strive to create a certain appearance.

Compromises at home include such things as household repair needs, cleaning needs, messiness, or noise boundary violations. Compromises in work life can be inadequate space, wrong field of work, poor communication, lack of mission, improper technology, or dysfunctional hierarchies. Compromises regarding family, friends, and colleagues include imbalance of support or friendship, blurred boundaries, misunderstandings, and the need to change fundamental agreements.

Compromises can be systematically approached in these four major arenas:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Relationship
- Financial

Compromises usually result from disregarding a personal need or being disloyal to a personal ideal. Toleration of the compromise seemingly avoids conflict and strives to create a certain appearance.

After each of the four compromises write the need or value you will honor as you resolve the compromises.



In the exercise that follows, list a significant current compromise in each of the four major areas.

- Design a time goal by which you will resolve, reframe, or accept each compromise to reclaim the engagement and energy given to it.
- Choose to resolve it by a certain date, for example, to cleaning up a messy office within seven days.
- Reframe the toleration by moving resolution to a certain future date to avoid its being a daily energy drain.
- Distinguish reframing from procrastination; an example may be to revise a home office system during a part of summer vacation.
- Or accept a concession that you have no control over and cannot determine, such as a spouse's driving habits; move it to the acceptance list to disengage from it.

COMPROMISES RESOLUTION SCHEDULE

Physical Compromise: _____

I choose to: ___ Eliminate by (give date):

 ___ Move to: Year 20___ list___

 ___ Accept and assign it to my:

 ___ Gratitude List

 ___ Worry List

 ___ Forever List

Strategy: _____

The need or value I will honor to resolve the compromise:

Emotional Compromise: _____

I choose to: ___ Eliminate by (give date):

 ___ Move to: Year 20___ list___

 ___ Accept and assign it to my:

 ___ Gratitude List

 ___ Worry List

 ___ Forever List

Strategy: _____

The need or value I will honor to resolve the compromise:



Relationship Compromise: _____

I choose to: Eliminate by (give date):

Move to: Year 20__ list__

Accept and assign it to my:

Gratitude List

Worry List

Forever List

Strategy: _____

The need or value I will honor to resolve the compromise:

Financial Compromise: _____

I choose to: Eliminate by (give date):

Move to: Year 20__ list__

Accept and assign it to my:

Gratitude List

Worry List

Forever List

Strategy: _____

The need or value I will honor to resolve the compromise:

F. Establish a Context for Change

Certain human needs are universal and remain present throughout adulthood: attachment, effectiveness, validation, support, and intellectual stimulation. These needs have even more valence with increased demands, and at a time of change.

Many prescriptions for change ignite discomfort with the old story or even resolve an old story, yet fail to offer ways to develop a successful new story. Professional coaching meets needs that people have always had, while offering a new delivery system for mentorship, accountability, partnership, co-creative work, and a sense of possibility.

A professional coach helps people write the next chapters in their lives or business stories: what's next, how to get there, and how to succeed at what happens after what happens next. The ticket to entry in coaching is desire, not trauma or failure. The Professional Coach is confidential collaborator for aligning vision with needs and values, for a strategic pursuit of goals.

1. Neutrality

In psychoanalysis, neutrality means staying equidistant from either side of the patient's conflict. By gaining understanding of both sides, the patient can own the generation of each side, and the possibility of choosing not to create conflict, or of finding some resolution at another level. The anorexic, for example, offers a model to instruct us on neutrality. Any hint or inkling that the therapist wants her to gain weight and get out of danger results in opposition—an absolute refusal to eat—rendering the therapist as ineffective as all other previous family and caregivers combined. The conflict becomes externalized: she hands over to the therapist the desire to get better, and she takes the other side, the familiar “no.” By remaining neutral, the therapist helps her feel her own push and pull, the wish and the fear of her own autonomy, and understand how food enters into this expression. She can then own both sides and fashion self-growth.

Professional coaches practice neutrality by asking powerful questions without taking the position of trying to fix, give answers, or become the expert in their clients' lives. If the coach tries to fix or solve a problem, or offer a better way of doing things, the coach has hijacked the client's agenda. The fastest way to foreclose understanding is premature action. If either coach or client picks a side of a conflict or a dilemma to act on it, the illusion of resolution is created. But it only forestalls both understanding and a true resolution.

Yet the coach is not neutral in a particular way. In an alliance to co-create effectiveness and success, the coach holds the vision of what the client can do and be. The coach may be the first person in the client's life who is totally dedicated to the client's success.



2. The Use of Empathy

All signifiers of personal meaning and construction (reality, relationship, experience, perception) carry the unspoken foundation question: From whose point of view? This is what empathy is primarily about, to resonate with another's experience and reflect that understanding out loud, establishing a common ground.

Empathy is placing ourselves in the inner world of another person without getting lost there. Empathy describes a listening perspective positioned inside the experience and point of view of another, to resonate with and understand that person's subjective reality, his or her entire mental state. Empathy neither infers nor exudes kindness, sympathy, consolation, gratification, or commiseration. Empathy describes a point of reference, a particular attunement to another's internal and external systems and that person's model to perceive and process. Losing oneself in another is the antithesis of empathy. Likewise, codependency obfuscates empathy, as it requires not seeing all of someone—such as being in love with who someone could be rather than with who the person really is.

Accurate empathy, being attuned to the entire subjective reality of another individual, even requires attunement to what that person is omitting, sticking up for an aspect of someone not being given sufficient oxygen for awareness or activation, seeing beyond the problem, focusing on what to look for—and toward. In coaching, the task is often believing in the client's capacity to generate solutions and strategies.

Empathy strives to be equidistant between components of a conflict or dilemma, not knowing what the answer will be, not having a need for it to go one way or another, and knowing that there are many truths to tell without being invested in whichever is most salient at this moment.

Remarkable similarities of background, style, or mental model between two people may appear as attunement, yet an overlap of parallel experience may masquerade as empathy, while actually precluding it. Likewise, significant differences of background, culture, or psychic models of assimilating and registering experiences may require focused attention to construct an empathic bridge. In either case of exceptional similarity or disparity, unspoken assumptions may create an impasse. Any categorical assignment reduces the other real person to a projection of one's own assumption.

3. Insight and Understanding

Insight and understanding alone do not replace old lived experiences. A new lived experience is required, one that repeats until it etches new neuronal pathways and new neural networks. When new brain circuits are etched with the impressions of new experiences, some gene expression is altered in the neural network by producing different cellular protein, as was found in remarkable research by Eric Kandel. The continuity and repetition of new experiences

form different synapses in a new circuit. With charged emotional cues or specific stress, the newer experience may be disrupted by a return to the default route, the old story. Some present experience can seem so magnified because it has a resonance with the past. The new choreography in the ballet at the synaptic cleft alters brain structure along with function: When we change our minds, we change our brains.

Martin Seligman asked, “What really makes people happy?” Seligman’s research on positive psychology and authentic happiness indicates that positivity can be taught; it is strengthening, but must be actively practiced. The focus on positive growth and mutual enhancement, rather than on analysis of problems, self-reinforces.

Seligman sees the difference between optimists and pessimists as a fundamentally different explanatory style.

The pessimist attributes negative events to stable and global factors. Bad events are pervasive, uncontrollable, and permanent.

The optimist scans for possibility for self or business enhancement. Bad events are local, temporary, and changeable.

The basic interactions of early development, including mutual affirmation, recognition, responsiveness, empathy, and positive support are the same fundamental aspects of the coaching relationship. But this process itself is not the subject of focus in coaching as it is in psychotherapy. Psychotherapy fosters understanding and emotional growth. Coaching facilitates effectiveness and mastery from the application of these principles.

Perhaps some of the popularity of professional coaching is the readily understandable language of a coach, speaking of goals, achievement, and attainable possibilities. Psychoanalysis, the study of the ways we deceive ourselves, uses interpretation to advance insight and to construct new meaning. Professional coaching uses strategies and models of change to look ahead and generate change.

Underlying causes are always present for any problem—often complex, multi-determined causes. But a coaching approach uses underlying causes only as information, since the causes themselves do not prevent effective behavior. When someone moves toward a goal, problems seem to dissolve. When someone fills the space with present experience, there is no room for past experience. With full engagement in moving ahead, there is no energy left over to create internal obstacles or to collude with external ones.



G. Reflections to Understand & Revise Your Storylines

[In Workbook]

15 REFLECTIONS TO UNDERSTAND YOUR STORYLINES

1. What are the recurring storylines in your life that work?
2. What are the recurring themes in your life that do not work?
3. Is there a piece of your life that is un-lived?
4. What goals have you realized in your life?
5. What goals have you not realized in your life?
6. Do you have a clear internal ideal of who and what you want to be?
7. What percent of your full capacity are you putting to use in your work?
8. What percent of your capacity are you living in your personal life?
9. Who are you (or who have you become) in your most intimate relationship?
10. What are your conflicted storylines where it is obvious not all of you is going comfortably and effectively in the same direction?
11. Do all the storylines fit and further the plot you want to advance?
12. What do you continue to engage by disclaiming and denying?
13. Do you have an awareness of your different states of mind?
14. Do you have basic mastery of how to enter and exit various states of mind?
15. What do you hear in listening to your body's somatic language?

H. Before, During, and After Story Components

In coaching, we listen for any one of these three story components that a client leaves out: before, during, or after. And then, together, we get curious about each one.

Before

A story without all three components is incomplete. If we write an incomplete story, we give up power. The incompleteness can begin with, "I'll try..." "I should..." "I want to..." Users of these stories believe their stories, but they're deceiving themselves. When you hear someone say, "I'll try..." or "I ought to..." you know they're not committed. These stories are begging to be busted. Yoda said it best: *Try not. Do. Or do not. There is no try.* A commitment begins with "I will..." A commitment is a decision you only have to make once. The incomplete story takes over the author (analogous to excessive drinking), such as procrastination or relentless working. This seditious story eclipses its author's true self to take on a life of its own. Recognizing constraint and limitation, coupled with the desire to change, may give rise to the

question, “How do I get out of the box?” The question assumes the box is there, a given in the universe. The box (the structure of the familiar and accepted) becomes the obstacle, yet it is not there until you create it. To recognize yourself as the author, the creator of the box must challenge an internal (and often an external) model. The question may then become “How do I create something else instead?”

Listening to and understanding your basic story precedes change. First, determine which storylines work and which ones do not. The ones that do not work need to be honestly assessed, illuminated, and understood, including the assumptions underlying these repeated storylines. The world occurs to you in the way you believe it to be, and your experiences are always consistent with your theories. The dramas of everyday life do not just affect you; they are created by you. Illuminating the basic narratives and the story of your life involves the same questions as understanding any other story. Identify the wishes, the fears, the goals, the plot, and adherence to the storylines.

Plot includes a fundamental orientation:

1. Figure out where you are.
2. Figure out where you want to go.
3. Figure out how to get there.

Without knowing where you are, you cannot plan how to get to where you want to go. Not knowing where you want to go will automatically result in bewilderment as to how to get there. Yogi Berra’s version is, “If you don’t know where you’re going, when you get there you’ll be lost.”

The primary problem with a failed plan and those who do not succeed is one or more of the following: They do not know where they are, do not know where they are going, do not have a plan to get there, or get distracted in their plan to get there. Distraction can be a crucial obstacle. Having a master plot allows one to filter out noise, to discern the route that gets where you want to go, and along that route to determine what is tangential and what is a detour in getting there. Being loyal to a plan is essential; the most common reason for failure is not having a plan. The next most common reason for failure or compromise with a well-informed and well-conceived plan is not sticking to the plan.

Your life is the manifestation of your beliefs. You are always free to change your mind, always free to change your beliefs, including your core assumptions about who and what you are. But first, you have to be aware. Then, you can begin the process of change and generate a game plan to map the progress. In order to change, you have to know what you do not want to change, what you want to change, and what you want to create in order to do it in meaningful and systematic way.

Your experiences are significantly determined by your assumptions and theories. You have to



believe in order to see. Expectations shape what you see, how you see, and the meanings you attach. These beliefs and expectations author the themes of your lived experiences, which in turn further validate and etch the beliefs, and invalidate (or not even log in that which invalidates). What you expect is what you perceive, what you give meaning to, and how you extrapolate that meaning. You omit, disregard, or exclude the intolerable, the dangers, and the unacceptable.

During

Certain states of mind—fear, rage, anxiety, overwhelm—only engage the moment, the *during*, as a partial story. A hot stock tip, a business deal suddenly sour, a family tragedy—all trigger a similar alarm of mind. The impulse resides in the present moment. The client's anxiety speaks the urge, "What will make me feel better in the next instant?" The coach asks, "What is in your best interest?"

The client says, "I'm really set and comfortable doing what I'm doing. But I wonder what it would be like to let go and try something really different." The coach nudges, "What do you imagine?" Or, "Good. You're aware of the comfortable familiar, and yearn for change." The coach may later add, "What could you do to become more comfortable with your passion?"

The stuck client says, "I feel so stretched at my work that I feel overwhelmed." The coach empathically resonates, "I understand how overwhelmed you feel. Let's look at one specific accomplishment that, if done in the next day or two, would leave you feeling effective and moving ahead." In collaborating to co-create a new story the coach says, "Are you willing to do it?" And perhaps to bust the old story, "Are you also willing to identify—and to let go—what you can't determine?" Story-busting means dead hope gets buried. Story-making creates a new current mission and appropriate hope that is based on potential.

We often attribute a storyline to inanimate objects, as if the objects themselves have the capacity to generate a story. Listen to the unspoken, pernicious story attributed in each of these three quotes:

"This stock has always treated me and my family very well." (As if the stock has any mind of its own, or even knows who own it).

"The most powerful force in finance is reversion to the mean." (As if someone arbitrarily averaging numbers creates a story or a force, yet we imbue it with the power of independent initiative).

"The odds strongly suggest the Red Sox won't repeat." (As if the odds have a storyline and speak it).

After

Change is not really change, because what you want to change is not there until you create it. So rather than “change” a piece of behavior or life, an alternate view is to first acknowledge and take responsibility for its ongoing present creation, in order to then create something different. Change is then simply generating the new. To continue doing the same thing and hope for different results binds you to an old story. Yet old habits linger, like the reluctance in parting with an old friend, and new experiences mutter warnings of resistance. You generate fantasies and vision from a current model, so in order to create something different, you have to see new possibilities and envision what is unknown.

Old habits and accustomed behaviors are like being on a well-marked superhighway. Though circular and repetitive, it is familiar. Any change is like coming to the end of that superhighway to suddenly enter uncharted territory with no assuring landmarks. You may feel lost, tempted to end the discomfort of uncertainty by returning to the familiar default mode. You have to make it up as you proceed in new territory.

Change involves creating new experiences as well as revising or creating a new model for understanding and processing the new experience; otherwise, it is like putting new wine into old bottles. For example, present anxiety must be read in a current context, as a signpost of moving ahead without familiar landmarks, in order not to immediately equate anxiety with danger as in the old model, when you would stop and head for cover. Change involves reading experiences in a current way, revising the automatically coupled meanings, and constructing a new model of processing and understanding experiences. These changes may revise such fundamental beliefs as a sense of self and identity.

Change is a process, not an event. Creating and maintaining a plan evolves from principles, values, and needs. Particularly at times of stress and stimulation, whether good or bad, principles are necessary. For example, having an investment plan and overall strategy requires maintaining that choice despite emotions, events, circumstances, and situations. Particular emotions in the money arena include fear and greed.

Predetermined and continuously informed goals, a structured map, and plans may be more necessary for some individuals than others and can be especially useful at times of stress, as when things are going very well or very badly. Attunement and response to emotions are not always desirable or adaptive. Taking the emotion out of investing allows business decisions. For example, for someone making his own investment decisions, which can tend to be emotional decisions, stop losses may be an insurance against loss and a planned exit strategy to take the emotion out of money. Extreme emotion such as fear or greed may derail one from a usual state of mind and game plan.



After recognition, ownership, assessment, and deciding what to change in your story, you are ready to learn how to change.

[In Workbook]

DECONSTRUCT A CONCERN **(To see what it teaches you)**

An example: an active internal critic. Let's consider how to transform your inner critic into an inner coach by listening to the rest of the story.

Write down the biggest health concern your inner critic says:

- *"I don't exercise enough."*
- *"I need to lose weight."*
- *"I drink too much."*

Hear four storylines in each statement: anger, fear, request, and love. That is, listen for the anger, fear, request, and love in the concern.

This is how each of the four storylines can sound:

Anger: "I'm mad at you for not taking care of yourself and eating right."

Fear: "I'm afraid for your health."

Request: "I want you to eat at least four servings of vegetables a day, cut out desserts, and work out four times a week."

Love: "I want you to be around a long time and feel alive and energetic."

You don't confront your dragons to defeat them; you confront them to get to know them. To learn what they've done for you so they can get the respect they deserve. Then, with the pride of a mission accomplished, those dragons can rest peacefully and let you proceed, knowing they're safe—and appreciated.

Be careful lest in casting out your devil, you cast out the best thing in you. ~ Nietzsche

Step Five. Map Changes

A. Steps to Edit Your Life Story

[In Workbook]

Step Five. Map Changes

14 STEPS TO EDIT YOUR LIFE STORY

Five frogs were sitting on a log. Four decided to jump off. How many were left?

The answer: 5, because the 4 only decided and planned—they didn't **do** it.

This exercise addresses invisible—and not so invisible—decisions camouflaged as beliefs and assumptions. The active editing of your story begins here. You can track the moment in time when you made your original decision that led to a view or belief that is limiting. Most often the original decision arises from disappointment, or negative past experiences.

An example is a decision to be overly cautious about investments, to protect yourself in case of loss or misrepresentation. If this belief stems from earlier negative experiences, it may dictate rather than inform subsequent decisions. To move ahead, first convert a fear to an intention: such as outlining a course of study, and consult with a financial planner. Then move the intention to a commitment.

Editing Steps

1. Get to the fundamental beliefs you hold in your life. For example, you may believe that being born without money means you'll never amass wealth; or not being a good public speaker means you must avoid the limelight.
2. Realize that you decide what to perceive. You also decide what meaning to attach to your perceptions. And you decide the behavior associated
3. Each day is a new and blank page. You will write whatever you choose this day. It is not there unless you choose it and create it.
4. Clarify what you want to create, and what action would be paired with it. You are always free to change your mind.
5. Try new perspectives and possibilities to get informed data. For example, a fear of public speaking can be converted into an intention to improve, and a commitment to join Toastmasters.
6. Honor your uniqueness. Combine what you do uniquely well with your passion.

- 
7. Embrace that which you can determine and which benefits you, consistent with your needs and values. Let go of all that you can't determine, and which doesn't serve you
 8. The bottom line of any theory or belief system is this: Does it work now?
 9. Make yourself a promise about how you use, invest, and refurbish your life energy based on your life plan.
 10. Design short-term, step-wise measurable goals to validate your progress. Hold yourself accountable to the timetable of your goals. Change is a process.
 11. Create a mission that is stronger than your fear.
 12. Focus your energy on where you are—the present—and on where you are headed—the future.
 13. Keep your eye on the ball and your head in the game
 14. Know what enough is.

B. Steps to Revise a Storyline

[In Workbook]

5 STEPS TO REVISE A STORYLINE

1. Align needs and ideals with your goals.

- In the story of your life, is all of yourself going in the same direction, or do you seem to undermine yourself in certain areas of your life?
- Do all the storylines fit and advance the plot?

2. Address resistance to change and repetition of the old story.

- What are the repetitions in your life that are dead-end and dissatisfying?
- What are the things you'd like to change in your life in the next 90 days?
- Are you willing to do it?

3. Create your own experiences and your own reality.

- If you could add three things of vital importance to your life beginning this month, what would these be?
- Develop an internal point of reference; change occurs from the inside out.

4. Change only what doesn't work.

- What in yourself would you like to enhance?

- What do you do uniquely well, better than almost anyone in the world?
- Are you devoting enough time and energy to developing your unique and undeniable talents and interests that distinguish you?

5. Decide what you want to change.

- What is the one thing you most want to change about your life now?
- What is the one thing you most want to change about your work life now?

C. Change Only What Doesn't Work

A simple question in examining your story is, “What works?” And its corollary, “What does not work?” A simple plan is to keep doing the things that work and change the things that do not work.

While your behavior may not be intended as self-sabotage, that may be the end result. The cause of your behavior is not in your childhood, past victimhood, bad mother, cold father, or conflictual adolescence. The cause is what you generate at this moment. You create the present cause, which means you can also not create it. And create something quite different instead. Blame, fault, victimhood, and passivity all ensure continuation of the present story.

If you don't change, the future will continue to be played out as in the past and the present. Is this your preference?

We assume that change is necessary and beneficial, with its absence inferring resistance or stuckness. However, not changing at times of pressure, impulse, or various seductions may be a valid, informed decision. C.S. Lewis addressed another aspect of this issue. “We all want progress. But progress means getting nearer to the place where you want to be. And if you have taken a wrong turn, then to go forward does not get you any nearer. If you are on the wrong road, progress means doing an about turn and walking back to the right road; and in that case the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive man.”



D. Resistance to Story Ownership

[In Workbook]

18 CAVEATS ON HOW TO AVOID STORY OWNERSHIP AND CHANGE

1. Focus on the system. Devote special attention to the things that seem frustrating, out of your control, and impossible to address: politics, corporations, and economics. Systems must remain in focus as broad categories for you to feel distanced and disaffected.
2. Maintain a focus on theory. Avoid detail, singular aspects, and application. Remain theoretical about how to transform various systems, about what needs to be done, maintaining the frustration of what seems to continue out of your control.
3. Believe that the answer will appear when you step out of the box, or when you simply oppose the system.
4. Keep the point of reference external; keep believing that the antithesis of conformity is opposition; know that one or the other of these external points of reference of conformity or opposition holds the real truth.
5. Do not decide. Allow the urgency of a situation to decide for you. The gravity of a last-minute emergency forces action and avoids planning. Waiting for the deadline excuses responsibility for thoroughness and excellence.
6. Believe that the answer is more rules and further structure.
7. Debate the obvious; give energy to the controversial.
8. Believe in experts unequivocally, and that expertise is authoritative. Dismiss any notion that expertise is perceived, processed, and filtered through assumptions, belief systems, and prejudices of experts.
9. Do not seek your own information or develop your own solutions when you have experts to listen to. Rather, find someone to provide a map for you and avoid anyone who wants to help you develop your own navigation system.
10. Always find some cause-and-effect relationship to explain things otherwise not understandable. Maintain a consistent external focus to blame someone, or find some tangible explanation that offers a specific, concrete focus on what is wrong. Warning: Much work is required to maintain this caveat, as you must be certain that the obstacle can never be totally removed, or its causal effect would have to be confronted as inaccurate. The perceived cause must always be just beyond reach and remedy in order to remain as blame.
11. Keep doing the same thing and expect a different outcome. If the outcome doesn't change for the better, do the same thing harder.
12. Be suspicious of new ideas.
13. New ideas, being perturbations of the existing system, must be curbed or even silenced
14. Meticulously guard against mistakes; the best way to be sure to avoid mistakes is to keep doing the same thing again and again with perfection as the goal.

15. Maintain a focus on failure, giving it the proper respect of fear so that it remains ever in focus with its guiding principle of avoidance.
16. Be extremely wary of new strategies and solutions, and invest instead in enforcement of the existing approach.
17. When you make mistakes, focus on the mistakes and attempt to get them right.
18. Continue to hold prejudices because they are markers of emotional landmines.



Module 3

Guide to Lasting Change

Caminante no hay camino.

Se hace camino al andar.

(Wanderer, there is no path.

You create it as you walk)

Antonio Machado

People cannot discover new lands until they have
courage to lose sight of the shore.

Andre Gide

[In Workbook]

GUIDE TO LASTING CHANGE

This module presents the process of creating a new story as well as evoking a new identity to incorporate and sustain the changes. How to set goals and insure their success, steps to ignite change, and guidelines for life story change are all elaborated in this module. An exercise to create a vision presents the principles of design and fulfillment of this success tool.

Steps six and seven of the ROADMAP® program will be addressed in this Module:

Step Six. Author new experiences

Step Seven. Program new identity to incorporate and sustain the new story.



Step Six. Author New Experiences

Ben Fletcher at the University of Hertfordshire in the United Kingdom devised a study to get people to break their usual habits. Each day the subjects picked a different option from poles of contrasting behaviors—lively/quiet, introvert/extrovert, reactive/proactive—and behaved according to this assignment. So an introverted person, for example, would act as an extrovert for an entire day. Additionally, twice weekly, they had to stretch to behave in a way outside their usual life pattern—eating or reading something they would never have done.

The remarkable finding was that after four months, the subjects had lost an average of 11 pounds. Six months later, almost all had kept the weight off. The weight-loss impact of a nondiet was the result of this study focusing on change and its impact.

The rationale: Requiring people to change routine behavior makes them actually think about decisions rather than habitually choosing a default mode without consideration. This is *story-busting* in an indirect way. In having to process decisions actively, they exercised their choice- and decision-making abilities, extending to other choices such as what and what not to eat. Once you become aware you are actively making choices, you can decide what's in your best interest, what furthers your story, and what doesn't.

One version of brief coaching (ten- to fifteen-minute focused encounters) was developed by a group from the Mental Research Institute of Palo Alto on Cybernetics and Communications. They developed a model to focus on obstacles that interfered with people's forward movement in life, rather than on the origins or dynamics of those obstacles. The particular interest was on ways that people found solutions. They found that study participants derived significant benefit from directly focusing on solutions rather than on problems; by doing so, the participants' problems dissolved as they moved ahead in their lives.

A. Live A New Life Story Coaching®

How We Facilitate Change: 12 Principles

The following principles focus on facilitating change in the coaching relationship. Note that only the summary version (in italics) is in the *Workbook*.

[In Workbook]

1. **Each person's life story is created.** You create whatever you think, feel, and experience at each moment. Every day is a blank page until you begin writing on it—even though it seems to “just be the way things are.” The first step is taking ownership of your story, including the assumptions that generate default behavior.
2. **Understanding begins with examination of which storylines work and which do not.** The next step is changing the ones that do not work, while keeping or even enhancing those that do work.
3. **Knowing what not to do is at least as important as knowing what to do.** You may not always know what the next right thing is, but you can almost always know what it isn't.
4. **Questions are more powerful than advice.** Questions can direct, clarify, illuminate, and even story-bust. Advice invites acquiescence or resistance; questions move the process from compliance to collaboration.
5. **When people create their own answers, they have signed on to invest in the outcome.** This investment elicits a sense of effectiveness and mastery.
6. **Identify four things: What to change, accept, let go, and enhance.** Doing this allows you to put your energy into what works, and allows you to accept and let go of what you can't change. Making this simple distinction both liberates and enhances effectiveness.
7. **We don't see things as they are; we see things as we are.** Learn to recognize your own assumptions and beliefs, and how they color what you perceive. Assumptions manifest as feelings and behaviors. By making assumptions explicit, you become able to perceive those that facilitate and those that interfere.
8. **Change is constant and inevitable; resistance to change is what generates most problems.** We are most successful when we learn from yesterday, anticipate tomorrow, and integrate the impact of new experience.
9. **Small changes lead to big changes.** Issues that seem overwhelmingly large and insurmountable can be approached by looking at the simplicity of the issue, specifying a small step to take for progress. For example, someone who feels overwhelmed at work by the number of tasks expected of him can identify one issue to deal with effectively within the next day. This focus on a specific action exercises effectiveness and initiates a model of mastery.



10. **Solutions, causes, and problems are not always related or even inter-connected.** Resolving a problem, even emotionally coming to the end of the past, does not create a blueprint for success. Strategic planning for specific goals is necessary. For the person with an eating disorder, there are no prepackaged answers awaiting discovery. She is moving into new developmental territory without a map
11. **A collaboration keeps both individuals on the same side, looking at the same scene together.** Empathic listening keeps the professional aligned with the client's point of view and builds common ground for work.
12. **The benefit of doing more of what is working and less of what isn't working will become evident and self-perpetuating.**

We can foster change by conscious practices and effective tools. An infinite sea of new patterns and possibilities can be created to further new goals. The caveat: You have to take action to diminish preprogrammed responses and to write new script for new experiences; a new story has to replace the old one. There are no short cuts, since long-term change requires consistent practice—repetition—to groove new neural pathways and establish new neuronal networks. But there are effective and efficient methods to accelerate optimum change and ensure transformation.

Psychotherapy addresses change to reflect, understand, and resolve an old story. The therapist attunes to problems, conflict, and development. The Professional Coach, as an accountability partner, becomes a catalyst for the client's success and growth. The Professional Coach listens to join talents and strengths with possibilities and vision. Coaching focuses on creating a new story—to align the client's needs and values and strategize toward a goal.

After a psychotherapist hears someone speak his fear of initiating a job interview, exploration of assumptions based on past experiences and the carryover from prior negative encounters follows.

A Professional Coach bears the same concern and focuses on converting the fear to an intention, co-creating a plan and vision for the interview; a new experience replaces the old story of fear.

Any new venture or stretch of current capacity naturally generates uncertainty and anxiety. Any really significant accomplishment, for anyone, always begins with unfamiliarity and risk. "Comfortable" is not where you begin, but where you arrive with mastery of new experiences. Even a good and planned change is at first a discontinuity, like a gap in the experience of self. And although the change may be anticipated, it still requires adjustment.

You can't learn to swim on paper, so you have to jump in the pool for the first time as part of the process of mastery. The only way to learn to swim is to proceed despite anxiety: to let go and jump in the pool the first time. In order to ride a bicycle, the only way to *learn* balance is to *lose* it. If tasks such as these are perceived as terrifying, they will be avoided. If the perception

of danger and the feeling of fear predominate, stopping will seem logical.

If you change your perception to *possibility* and *benefit*, you shift your perspective. Then you have to *experience* something new in order to make your commitment come true and change your reality. Choice becomes a conscious selection rather than a default behavior.

B. Getting out of the Box

The question may arise, “How do I get out of the story?”

But the question assumes that the story is there, a given in the universe. The story—the proverbial “box” of the familiar and accepted, as in “think outside the box”—becomes the obstacle. Yet the truth is, *the story is not there until you create it*. And people are always free to change their minds, beliefs, and core assumptions.

Recognizing oneself as the author, the creator, of the story challenges an assumed model and leads to deeper questions: “How do I create something else instead?” And “What will the ‘something else’ be?”

To simply stop doing something is not complete change; a new story means incorporating new behavior and beliefs. A person has to embody—actually live—this new story. Abstaining from an old story—stuckness or compromising repetitions, such as abstaining from excessive drinking or eating—is a beginning. But someone has to engage a new story before an old story can be given up.

C. The Basic Coaching Model

The coaching framework creates the space and the working crucible for breakthrough change. The process of accountability supports change until new knowledge transforms into new behavior.

A five-step basic coaching model provides the structure for each individual coaching session. It may also be useful to consider this model in other interactions and venues, including a self-guided journey.

1. Specify the client’s agenda

What would you like us to focus on this session? Or, What would you like us to accomplish in our time today?

The client determines the agenda for each session:

- 
1. Listen deeply and consistently to the client.
 2. Respond appropriately to what the client says and to his or her energy.
 3. Serve the client's agenda through each question and statement.

The coach listens closely to the client's exact words, the feel of the words in voice and energy, what the client wants from the session, and potential underlying agendas. The verbal exchange is only a part of the interaction. Knowingly or unknowingly, the client always communicates emotional experience. The emotional message may or may not be the same as the verbal message.

This key element of coaching places responsibility for determining the agenda of each session squarely on the client. The coach will persist until a focus is achieved, even if a client is resistant. Clients are responsible for their own feelings, decisions, and actions. And their success is theirs.

Contrast this method with dynamic psychotherapy and psychoanalysis, in which the patient is encouraged to "Say anything and everything that comes to mind." In this stream-of-consciousness mode, focusing and preplanning represents resistance.

2. Determine useful intervention moments.

The intervention moment is the point of shift, insight, or awareness by the client.

1. Use intuition about what the client has conveyed to discern the most useful intervention moment.
2. Facilitate the client's shift by asking open-ended direct questions. Let's look at how you see this as a problem. Help me understand how you're thinking about that to come to that conclusion?
3. Thoroughly explore the most useful timing for a powerful shift for the client.
4. Listen for the impact of your questions and statements land and make adjustments as needed.

Coaching interventions are the essence of the session. Several potential approaches can be taken with a client to discover how the client may shift in order to take action. Indications for these interventions may come in subtle clues such as the following:

- Obvious stuckness
- Missing pieces in the story
- Inconsistent statements
- Strong or weak energy
- Nervous laughter

- Sudden, strong, or contradictory emotions
- Assumptions or limited perspectives
- Throw away comments

The old story intersects with the new story at the moment when the client recognizes a need to change and is ready to take that step.

3. Shift the perspective

“How can we look at this in another way? Have you seen this before? How did you handle it before that worked the best?”

Coaching works so well as a process for achieving goals because it catalyzes change. Once an agenda is clear and one or more coaching interventions have been explored, the coach invites the client to shift or move beyond the stuck place and towards possibility thinking. The shift must occur in the client, not dictated by the coach. It is counterproductive to lock onto a solution and push for it before the client is ready. Hijacking the client’s agenda will usually fail, because there is no impetus from the client. Clients need to see and experience from their own perspective before they can proceed on their own path.

The coach invites the client to shift beyond a stuck place, look at a problem in a new way, or encourage possibility thinking. The shift invitation may come in the form of a challenge, a nudge, a suggestion, a new perspective, or simply questioning how the client’s thinking led to his or her conclusion.

4. Frame the session

After the client’s shift is acknowledged, the coach may explore commitment, or encourage the client to put new awareness into action that would further the goal

1. Acknowledge the shift the client has just made.
2. Check the client’s commitment to moving forward.
3. Request action from the client. “What actions are you taking away from the session? What accomplishment if done this week would result in significant improvement? Are you willing to do it?”
4. Have the client specify a time frame for the intention.

5. Follow up

A key role for a Professional Coach is that of accountability partner. A follow up for each session’s goals builds in accountability and continuity with the overall mission. This is typically done within a specific time frame, e.g., at the beginning of the next coaching session.



D. A Dozen Basic Tenets of Coaching

1. The client is adaptive and creative.
2. The focus of coaching is on possibilities rather than problems.
3. The results of coaching center on the presence of solutions rather than the absence of problems.
4. The agenda comes from the client, not the coach.
5. The map of the coaching journey is co-designed by questions: “Where are you now? Where do you want to get to? How do we measure progress along the way?”
6. The client has—or creates—the answers.
7. The coach asks powerful questions that assume nothing other than a belief in the client.
8. The coach is an accountability partner, keeping the client focused on an agenda with the mission of furthering the client’s goals.
9. The coach does many things: Questions, clarifies, encourages, mentors, teaches, inspires, brainstorms, and challenges.
10. The emphasis on coaching is on now and next: The present and the future.
11. The coach collaborates in writing the next chapter of the client’s life or business story.
12. The client is oriented to mastery and wants to succeed.

E. Coaching Interactions

The experience of effectiveness generates mastery, a model that is at the core of both coaching and human motivation. To live a new life story is to construct exactly what one wants: It is not there until it is created. A life is a story written daily.

Interventions

Professional Coaches typically rely on incisive questions to guide clients to their own insights and decisions—to help clients experience mastery without superimposing the coach’s own agenda or solutions. While a basic technique of coaching is asking powerful questions and listening deeply together for the answers, coaches apply different interventions. But a technique shouldn’t become a rule. The *principle* is: What is needed to further the client’s objective and enable forward movement? Another principle in coaching: Listen to your gut and pay attention to your hunches about your client. Common sense will inform the application of your intuition. Clients need more than just questions, especially when they’re in new territory, without a map. In addition to powerful questions, coaches engage clients in the following ways:

Brainstorm

You have a wealth of experience and ideas that can further discussions of everything from business and marketing to people skills and human dynamics.

Offer ideas and insights.

For example, the client is afraid of not making enough money.

Since fear is guide to desire, the challenge is offered, “How can you convert that fear into an intention?”

Strategize to achieve goals.

Strategies include SMART (Simple, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound), and understanding human dynamics and behavior.

Explain.

Client: “The universe is conspiring against me to present obstacles as I get more successful.”

Coach: “When you move ahead, you are aware of bumps in the road—if you weren’t proceeding, you wouldn’t encounter those bumps.”

Advise.

Some forward movement can be a simple suggestion based on the coach’s experience, or the client’s blind spot.

Story-bust.

Question or challenge automatic, habitual behavior, or limiting assumptions that persists even when they don’t work. Often these limiting beliefs are outside conscious awareness.

Give information.

The client may need guidance toward resources and information.

Train and redirect.

For example, give a model of how to handle conflict, including communication skills.



Regulate states of mind

The client learns about states of mind, and how to access which state works best for a particular task. For example, the client may need to become calm and grounded/centered in the present moment in order to have access to both right- and left- brain synthesis in focusing on an issue. Or in order to strategize about how to build in a contemplative space before taking action.

F. Strategic Goal Pursuit

[In Workbook]

Step Six. Author New Experiences

STRATEGIC GOAL PURSUIT

SMART Goals

Goals are exciting and energizing. They make it easier to focus, and make it clearer when distractions occur. SMART goals co-create moving ahead and specifically hone strategies. SMART goals include these components:

- **Specific.** Be very specific about a goal—e.g., “getting fit” is not a goal but an outcome.
- **Measurable.** A way to track efforts and sustain energy and motivation.
- **Achievable.** The goal must be attainable.
- **Realistic.** Make sure you are willing to pay the price of your goal.
- **Time-bound.** There needs to be a beginning and an end—time-framed.

Initiatives

For each goal, establish three key initiatives move toward that goal.

Next Best Action

For each initiative, decide on the next best action.

Application

People with addictive behavior have often spent much time understanding an old story, or focused on old behaviors and patterns. But understanding and further analysis aren't enough to

bring about abstinence. These individuals need a new story to be in before they can give up an old one.

Often for each session, they have no goal. They do not think a goal can be achieved in a session. They become challenged either because they believe nothing will help, or they want action—results right now.

If they have right now goals, they are driven to participate.

So, beginning a session with questions like, “What are your goals for this session?” Or, “What would you like for us to get done today?” focuses on the immediate.

This is also a model for the outside world: Setting a next-step goal, and having a strategy to reach it. Abstract goals are anathema to someone tangibly focused on what will happen in the next moment. If the next thing can be a specific, finite goal, and can be achieved in a brief period of time, such a goal serves as a model for effectiveness in the beginning of a new story. I have done Mentor Coaching with addiction counselors who, by incorporating coaching principles, halved their relapse rates in three months.

With medical patients, this “laser coaching” for 10- to 15-minute segments has been applied as a means to focus specifically on one goal: e.g., taking ownership of their own healthcare, or simply making a commitment to take their medication. The provider is not trying to sell, influence or fix, but rather intent on listening for the client’s own goal.

G. Success Insurances for Completing Goals

[In Workbook]

SUCCESS INSURANCE FOR COMPLETING GOALS

Goal-setting, especially the proper tools to strategically structure progress, is crucial for long-term achievement. The usual problem, however, is not setting goals but completing them.

Goals and strategy require management and dedication.

The section entitled “A review of research on goal setting” (Goldsmith, M., and Lyons, L., eds. *Coaching for Leadership*, Volume II, Wiley, 2005) helps us understand two essential components: Why people give up on goals, and how effective goal-setting can help ensure long-term achievement. Six of the most important reasons people give up on goals follow:

- **Ownership.** People must “buy in” to their goals and take ownership. This shifts the ownership and initiative to an internal point of reference. Then, effectiveness and mastery can come about.

- 
- **Time.** Goal-setters tend to underestimate the time it will take to complete the task (an “optimism bias”), a habit that leads to giving up.
 - **Difficulty.** Along with the factor of time, the optimism bias applies equally to difficulty.
 - **Distractions.** People tend to underestimate potential distractions and competing goals.
 - **Rewards.** Disappointment sets in when achievement of a goal doesn’t translate into other goals or to the desired happiness.
 - **Maintenance.** Maintaining changed behavior is difficult, and there is always the pull of the old and the fear of the new.

H. 11 Steps to Ignite Change

[In Workbook]

11 STEPS TO IGNITE CHANGE

1. Have needs and values in sharp focus.
2. Know what you do uniquely well.
3. Assess specific strengths, passions, and weaknesses.
4. Establish SMART goals: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound (timetable: 30-90 days).
5. Determine 3 Key Initiatives to take for each goal (timetable: 1-2 weeks).
6. Decide on the Next Best Action for each initiative (timetable: 2-3 days).
7. Structure a strategy to reach and stretch each goal.
8. Increase tolerance of planned risk with associated fear.
9. Focus on specific results, action, and momentum regarding goals.
10. Continue assessment of disciplined activity with refinement of goals.
11. Endorse your progress.

[In Workbook]

WHY ARE BAD CHOICES SO EASY AND GOOD ONES SO HARD?

This was the first question I was asked by one of the participants in a recent seminar series.

She elaborated, “Everything you discussed about our resistance to change resonated with me. I’m wondering about something I’ve witnessed in others and myself: Why is it relatively easy to make changes that undermine our best interests? Is the ease of making the ‘bad change’ the

path of least resistance, and of our hedonistic tendencies?”

- We naturally resist moving away from our comfort zone of familiarity, not only because we know the outcome, but also because it’s the default mode grooved in both the mind and the brain.
- “Bad” choices usually involve immediate reward (cheesecake, drugs, risk). Dopamine mediates the excitement of even anticipating a pleasure.
- “Good” choices involve later payoff (broccoli, exercise, saving money). The good news is that with repeated new experiences we can rewire our brains and revise mind software—new pathways to new communities in the brain.
- The key success strategy to write the next chapter of a life, wellness, or money story is a structured plan, and to stick to it.
- An aspect of that plan is to learn specifically from the past what you don’t want to include.
- Commitment devices can make good choices consistent. Prioritize “shoulds” and then reward with “wants” to reframe the “wants” as part of a performance ethic. This contingency removes guilt from what you know you’re going to do anyhow.
- A continuity program makes a good decision automatic. An example is automatic withdrawals to fund a retirement account.



Step Seven. Program New Identity to Incorporate and Sustain the Changes

A. 12 Basic Principles for Change and Transformation

[In Workbook]

Step Seven. Program New Identity to Incorporate and Sustain the Change

12 BASIC PRINCIPLES OF CHANGE AND TRANSFORMATION

1. Awareness of your plot and storylines.

The beginning of change is recognition that you are the author of your story. In the face of a personally created problem, barrier, or obstacle, the task is not getting over it, pushing through it, or adapting to it: It is recognizing that the obstacle is not there until you create it. Consider the possibility of not creating it and creating something else instead.

2. Assess the storylines that work and those that do not work.

In order to change, you first need to know what you want to change, and what you want to create instead in each aspect of your life: Career, ideals, personal life, functioning at full capacity, happiness, relationships, financial. The bottom line, no matter how entrenched the process or strong the hope, is “Does it work?”

3. Recognize passive vs. active positions.

Active: You are the author, the casting agent, and the director of your story.

Passive: Fate; luck; destiny; assuming that you are the victim of the feeling you create, as in “I got butterflies in my stomach,” or “My fear took over.”

4. Listen to your language—it speaks your assumptions.

Words reveal an internal model.

Pressure words reveal an external point of reference and authority rather than an internal one: Should; have to; ought to; need to. Passive language indicates perceiving yourself as the subject rather than the initiator of action: “The thought occurred to me; my anger got the best of me; it just happened.”

Limitation words reveal the assumption of constraint and limitation: Impossible; can't; shouldn't.

5. Address resistance to change and repetition of the old story.

Repetition ensures predictability. We repeat behavior that doesn't work because it offers familiarity. Doing the same thing leads to a known outcome. We sometimes mistake predictability for effectiveness.

There is no future in repetition. Any departure from the familiar, even a positive one, creates anxiety and uncertainty. You need a new story to be in before you can give up the old story.

6. Take ownership of your story to become your own authority.

Reinvention begins with taking ownership of what you do, and what you do about what happens next—rather than living out what just seems to happen, or feeling victimized by forces beyond your control.

7. Decide what you want to change.

Your life is the manifestation of your beliefs. Old beliefs do not generate new ideas. Changing your mind changes your life, as beliefs, goals, and visions drive action. Choose carefully what you engage.

8. Excitement and fear are the same feeling just viewed and experienced differently.

Excitement counters anxiety when your mission is stronger than your fear.

9. Construct a map to determine where you are.

Without a map to determine where you are, proceeding with an organized and successful story (life, career, relationship, investment, etc.) will be difficult or impossible. With a map, you can see where you are, how far you've come, and how far you have to go to reach your goals.

10. Decide where you want to go.

Having a map allows you to filter distractions, to determine the route, and to discern what is tangential or a detour. Distinguishing what you want to achieve, preserve, and avoid is an ongoing processes.



11. Figure out how to get there.

Create a game plan of realistic, attainable goals with measurable results.

12. Stick to the plan.

It is never too late to become what you might have been. Or too soon to become who you want to be.

B. 32 Guidelines to Further Life Story Change

[In Workbook]

32 GUIDELINES TO FURTHER LIFE STORY CHANGE

1. Distinguish need from want.

You can get sick if you don't have enough of what you need, and you can get sick if you have too much of what you want.

2. You always have the right to say no or yes.

Don't hesitate to say no or yes when you are clear about what you want and need. Also, as a wise mentor once told me, never speak more clearly than you think. The other person also has a right to say no or yes. So don't hesitate to ask.

3. You have to be free to say no before you can be free to say yes.

Unless you are free to say no, yes has no meaning.

4. Coming to the end of your past, especially resolving emotional issues, isn't enough: you have to have a purpose, a dream, in order to give hope a blueprint.

5. Have a "big picture" and bring it into focus whenever necessary.

The big picture consists in your own ideals and principles, and objective organization of your life and decisions according to what you believe to be in your best interest.

6. Establish priorities.

Every day you will redefine and refine priorities, and make decisions about what is really important in each area of your life: Family, work, health, friendships, leisure, self care, and finances, to name a few. A neglect in one area creates imbalance.

7. Have specific, attainable goals on a short-term, daily basis as well as in the big picture.

Setting specific goals allows self-affirmation once you attain them.

8. Disengage from "what might have been."

You may lose today and tomorrow looking back for yesterday. "If only" fantasies idealize the past and erode today.



9. Engage what you can be effective in doing and disengage what you have no determination over.

Adhering to these two tenets and distinguishing the difference between the two can create a powerful impact on your life.

10. Seek out suggestions, critiques, and advice.

Consult with people knowledgeable in specific areas. At times this may be difficult emotionally, when it would seem easier to consult (collude) with someone who would mirror and agree with your own opinions rather than listening objectively to critical or contradictory information. Don't limit yourself with your imagination, because your imagination has to evolve from your present model. Other points of view may be a catalyst.

11. Sleep on it. Recognize that there are few true emergencies in life.

Weighing different factors, gathering data, and perhaps consulting experts work best to make most decisions. Rarely does any legitimate crisis demand that these steps be skipped. A classic example is the promoter who tries to push you into an overnight decision, to make money decisions in a fraction of the time it took to earn the money. Decisions based on impulse, frustration, or anger may need to be postponed until objectivity is regained. Calling a time out is a useful maneuver for emotionally charged matters. "Let me think about that and I'll get back to you" is a decision.

12. Select goals consistent with your self-image.

This is necessary to have all of you going in the same direction. We live our lives based on our beliefs and assumptions; to change your life you must first change your belief.

13. What you decide to accept undergoes a change.

To forgive someone is to free yourself.

14. To get what you always wanted in the past may not feel as good as you expected, because it is no longer the past.

Just having a choice can make choosing the same thing feel very different.

15. For an end point, ask yourself, "What is good enough?"

Driven pursuit of perfection arises from not having a standard of good enough—of not having established an end point.

16. The question “What is in my best interest?” should always be in the background and, at times, the foreground as well.

Asking this question is just another way to assess the big picture, at a time when you may be focusing on details, or in the grips of excess emotion.

17. The past may not be the best or the most relevant context in which to understand the present.

The model of understanding must fit the situation, your style, and your personality; it should be consistent.

18. Create a contemplation space to ponder decisions, especially emotionally freighted ones. Between an urge and an action lies a potential space in which judgment resides.

19. Growth involves enduring uncertainty.

20. Not only can we change, we can also choose how we will change.

21. Insight and understanding may initiate internal change, but both internal and external change needs to be addressed.

The more you think about how much you missed out on, the more you miss now. When you stand up, your lap is a memory—it can be recreated, and if you continually have to return to it, it interferes with proceeding.

A client commented, “I wish there were some magical words you could fill me with so I didn’t feel bad.”

My gentle but firm response was, “There are. Stop searching for magic.”

22. Growth and change involve their own mourning.

You have to relinquish a past position in order to move ahead.

23. The only familiar territory is behind you.

Danish philosopher Soren Kierkegaard said, “Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards.”

24. Growth and change are hard. The only thing harder is not growing or changing.

25. Our experiences are always consistent with our theories.

Most often we attempt change by changing our experiences, which often only produce new editions of the old experience.



26. Clarify your external goals.

Be certain there is a fit between your internal and external goals, that what you want to accomplish is consistent with your ideals. This consistency can provide an organizing structure and direction to your ambition.

27. Anything important requires a commitment to go forward despite discomfort.

A commitment is a decision you only have to make once—then you can direct your energy to fulfilling the commitment.

28. Know what reaching a goal will do.

Then you can distinguish clearly what it will not do. For example, reaching a goal will not undo the past, or make other troubles go away. Monetary wealth may bring many things, but it may not make your marriage better.

29. You'll never do anything important that will feel comfortable in the beginning.

Anxiety about the new and unfamiliar do not equate to the old anxiety coupled with danger, warning about the need to head to safety. This new anxiety can be a signal, an affirmation, that you are moving ahead to do things new and unknown.

30. Trying to change your past is not change; it will always be the way it was.

31. Decisions always limit choices while activating others.

32. We suffer most from our anticipations and limit ourselves most by our assumptions.

C. Creating a Vision

[In Workbook]

CREATING A VISION: See It To Believe It

The Art of a Vision

A vision crystallizes possibility into a fundamental, articulated idea. A vision gives hope possibility—a shape and form—to program your future while at the same time rehearsing it. You program a message for success in your mind by creating the experience of having achieved it.

Proven guidelines include the following elements:

1. You must construct your own vision.
2. The criteria to measure success need to be clearly defined.
3. Wanting to change, to be wealthy, or to be happy are all imprecise and abstract goals.
4. Be specific, simple, concrete.
5. Create positive terms for success.
6. Make your criteria in positive terms of what you want, what you will do.

Picture yourself as you have just succeeded at your goal at a specific time in the future, such as one year from now. Create this success experience specific to time, place, how you would experience yourself, and your body through all five senses. Hold the energy of the precise outcome you've just achieved, the goals met, and the feelings it brings. Imagine the details of the scene of your success inside and outside, engaging all senses, thoughts, feelings, and bodily experience along with details of the scene. For example, for a successful transaction, include the values and needs fulfilled, the money you have made from it, the details of what you are doing, such as shaking hands and ushering someone out of your office.

Carve out a few moments at the beginning and the end of each day to replay your vision. This vision *begins the experience and outline of a goal that you can strategically realize.*

The Science of a Vision

Recent positron-emission tomography (PET) scans of the brain have confirmed several things about visualization:

- Visualization brings about actual physical changes in the brain.
- The brain assimilates a mental picture whether the stimulus is actual from the optic nerve, or imagined; the brain cannot distinguish between a mental image and an actual image.
- When you repeat a vision of successfully attaining a goal, the act programs neural networks and neuronal pathways to etch the experience more strongly.
- Mental visualization of a complex movement can actually improve performance.
- PET scans have established the fact that thoughts cause physical changes in your brain.
- The key elements: to hard-wire a vision as you write new code.
- Repetition. The neural networks dedicated to your vision must be renewed and repeated regularly, or they will be eliminated.
- Conscious incorporation of this new vision into an ongoing story to be ultimately metabolized as part of the self. Otherwise, you will “lose” this vision.
- Specificity. The more detailed your visual image, the more specifically etched your brain will be about achieving the goal.

- 
- Write it down. Research on memory tells us that a new idea or fact lasts an average of 40 seconds in short-term memory before it's gone, unless you write it down to review. Read each one at the beginning and the end of each day.

Visualization *crystallizes possibility* into an *articulated idea*—the experience changes the brain. A vision serves as guide and inspiration to design ways to realize it—to live into it.

When you program your system with a visualized goal, you create structural tension in your brain—cognitive dissonance—the difference between where you are and where you visualize and affirm. Your brain then strives to end this tension by actualizing the goal. Structural tension (dissonance) in your brain will do the following things:

1. Give you creative ideas
2. Help you see things in your environment not seen before—a perceptual shift
3. Provide motivation to take action

Affirmations to Support Visualizations

Affirmations make visualization a complete story. To achieve a goal, reprogram your automatic pilot by affirmations. Affirmations are positive statements that state the goal as if it has already been achieved. For affirmations to be optimally effective, the following characteristics need to be incorporated.

Present tense

Begin with, “I am ...” State the goal as if you have already achieved it.

Positive

Your brain will strive to achieve the image you focus on. A positive image is more powerful than ideas.

Personal

Make your affirmations about your experience and accomplishment, not to change other people's behavior.

Visual

Use all five senses, different lenses: include wide-angle and close-up; make a complete picture of experiencing the success of your goal.

Emotional

Include a feeling word (happily interacting, peacefully experiencing). A primary reason we do things is how we imagine we'll feel when we do it.

Brief

Brevity is the soul of wit—and affirmations.

Specific

Clearly focused, specific detail makes it real. No abstractions.

Action words

“I am driving ... acting ... living ...”

If you say, “I am going to ...” you will always be on the way.

Consistent

As soon as you let up on the disciplined, focused pursuit of a goal, your automatic pilot will revert back to the familiar.

How long do you do this? Until you reach the goal.

How many goals should you generate affirmation for? A reasonable number—at least three—that you're working on daily.

In this way, you etch the vision and specifics of success in your brain. Then, you strategically inhabit the experience.



Section 2

Transformation

Until you are willing to be confused about what you already know, what you know will never grow bigger or more useful.

Milton Erickson

We cannot solve the problems we have created with the same thinking that created them.

Albert Einstein

The way I see it, you can either run from it, or learn from it.

*Rafiki to Simba
The Lion King*





Module 4

Master States of Mind

The present is not just something that comes
after the past ...
it is what life is in leaving the past behind.

John Dewey

I don't want to get to the end of my life and realize
that I just lived the length of it. I want to live the
width of it as well.

Diane Ackerman

[In Workbook]

MASTER STATES OF MIND

A state of mind is a psychophysiological state, an organized software program of feelings, expectations, and attitudes. Each software package determines access and expression of memory, emotion, thinking and behavior. Mastering state changes and regulating emotions—such as remaining calm in the face of danger—determines effectiveness. The chapter illustrates common difficulties that arise from mind states, and presents tools for their management; examples include writer's block, sports slump, hot stock tips, and public speaking anxiety

You will learn how to exit one mindset and enter another. The module describes how to determine what state works best for specific endeavors, and how to access particular states of mind. Exercises facilitate getting centered in body experience and regulating states of mind.



I. Understanding States of Mind

A. Access to Mind States

[In Workbook]

REGULATING STATES OF MIND

We enter into and exit from states of mind fluidly and invisibly, like the precision passage of the baton between relay team members. Our familiar repertoire can range from creative energization and quiet happiness through anxiety or boredom to relaxation. More extreme, reluctantly inhabited states exist for some: Depression, nothingness, deadness, emptiness, and confusion. Feelings, the subjective experience of distinct emotions, are a component of each state of mind.

Within a particular state of mind we perceive, remember, feel, think, behave, and respond in a consistent mode

The regulation of feelings and states of mind involves the understanding and mastery of access to a particular state of mind without altering consciousness to do so (i.e., while “staying present”).

Each of us has a continuum of states, with some awareness of what state works best for what endeavor, even of how to enter into and exit from different states. We become more or less cognizant of which state to enter for a creative endeavor, which state to enter for conceptual planning, and what state of attention and concentration works best for each task from the alertness of business endeavors to relaxation for sleep.

What does it mean to get centered in your body and experience? With specific focus on attunement to present experience and state of mind, connection of mind and body results. If you feel detached or not grounded in your body or experience, focus awareness on very specific details of your physical body, including breathing and relaxation.

Grounding yourself in your body allows you to center inside your experience and attain a fully “present” state of mind. This grounding and centering creates a sense of being relaxed yet alert, focused but not tense. The “present” state of mind allows full access to all aspects of experience, especially self-awareness and attunement.

B. Continuity of Self

Our overall sense of self and organization depends on the continuity of a fundamental core state of mind. The mastery and regulation of state changes often determine effectiveness in the repertoire of human skills and tasks. A state of mind may be determined actively, or a state change can be introduced inadvertently by an emotional trip-wire, such as for the Vietnam veteran who was shelled in a bunker and is startled when a car backfires.

Feelings always come first and trigger state change. A new experience may feel different, a state of mind that has no history and, as yet, no associations. In other words, a changed landscape. Relaxation and contentment, because they may not have been states previously inhabited by someone, lack continuity with the past, the known. All the usual states with their familiar content at times may not be accessible.

C. Establish Self-Empathy

Empathy describes a listening perspective positioned inside the experience and subjective reality of another. This attunement and resonance with another individual's internal experience permits appreciation of that person's own framework of thinking, feeling, and meaning. Empathy positions one foot in the shoe of another's experience without losing any of yourself. Accurate empathy, being attuned to the entire subjective reality of another individual, even requires attunement to what that person may be omitting—sticking up for an aspect of that person not being given sufficient oxygen for awareness of activation. Empathy calls for seeing beyond the problem to focus on what to look for and toward. Empathy registers perception and informs intuition.

The foundation of empathy and growth is empathy for one's self, an internal attunement that may at times seem elusive and ethereal. This intimacy with one's self precedes and makes possible true intimacy with another. The greatest thing in the world, Michael Day Montaigne has said, is to know how to belong to yourself.

“Listening from the inside” is the essential nutrient that we give to our children and to each other. This very process takes care of yourself.

Self-empathy makes yourself the focus of your attunement and resonance. Self-empathy is more difficult than focusing on another person, especially if you are unaccustomed to taking yourself as a point of reference, and been a caretaker of others to the partial exclusion of yourself.

Being empathic with yourself is the same process as being attuned to others, only with your self as the focus. Your feelings have to have a receiver (you), have an impact and become known (by you), and be metabolized (by you). This process is the essence of effectiveness and



mastery. Perhaps only by its presence now can you understand its absence earlier. Likewise, a new experience of continuity allows an awareness of previous and present discontinuity.

D. Self-Reflection

Self-reflection is a biased process. Everything about people except their own minds can be objectified and viewed from another's vantage point. The mind is known only to itself, with each individual's unique brand of subjective reality.

Any new venture or stretch of current capacity naturally generates uncertainty and anxiety. Anything really significant that anyone ever does begins with unfamiliarity and risk.

“Comfortable” is not where you begin, but where you arrive with mastery of new experiences.

Even a good and planned change is at first a discontinuity, like a gap in the experience of self. And although anticipated, it still requires adjustment.

You can't learn to swim on paper, so you have to jump in the pool for the first time as part of the process of mastery. The only way to learn to swim is to proceed despite anxiety: To let go and jump in the pool the first time. To ride a bicycle, the only way to learn balance is to lose it. If tasks such as these are perceived as terrifying, they will be avoided. If the perception of danger and feeling of fear predominate, stopping will seem like the logical thing to do.

A psychotherapist hears someone speak of a fear about public speaking; at that point exploration of assumptions based on past experiences and the carryover from prior negative encounters begins. A Professional Coach hears the same concern and focuses on converting the fear to an intention, to possibility and benefit, and co-creates a plan and vision to initiate small practice steps; a new experience replaces the old story of fear.

What you believe will come true, because you will live it. People may hear what you are saying but, more importantly, they also sense how you feel and believe. Others will register and remember how you made them feel even when they forget what you said. What you believe will be apparent by how you behave with someone else, and by how it affects others responding to you.

How you see things will show up in your choices, behaviors, and results.

1. What do you want to see or do differently from what you see or do now?
2. What are you going to do to take you from where you are now to where you want to go?

The way you see things is not the way things are, but simply how they appear from your point of view.

What you feel and do are based on your point of view. How you see things based on your beliefs and assumptions determines your behaviors, choices, and results. Your choices and behaviors arise from the way you see things. If you regard a particular stock highly, you will buy it. The stock doesn't know that you own it; it doesn't even care. If you see the stock as a bad investment, you won't buy. The stock is the same whether you buy or not. The choice and behavior are not the variables—your point of view is what makes the difference.

You always create outside to match inside.

Choices, behaviors, and results may change temporarily but will revert back to the way you see things. To obtain different results, rather than working on choices and behaviors, address your point of view. A new or different point of view creates a different behavior or choice. And there is no right or wrong point of view—some simply work better than others.

For a common example, often someone loses weight only to gain it back again. The diet/program is adhered to, the weight is lost, but why is it almost always regained? Because the body image—the internal body blueprint—doesn't change. Your body is a manifestation of your body image, and the two will always revert to a match. For even this kind of change, inside and outside have to match.

E. Let Go of the Past

You have to let go of the past in order to live in a present-moment state of mind. When you let go of the past, you reclaim your power, your aliveness in the present. If you live in a past hope or dream, in the “if only” nostalgic creation of an idealized past, or in an idealized “someday” future, you miss being in the present moment. The most difficult farewell is saying goodbye to what might have been. If an unfulfilled hope remains as a “someday” fantasy, the present is eroded while one continues looking to an idealized future. Waiting for “someday” can be very self-deceptive. Keeping a goal just out of reach maintains the hopeful fantasy associated with it. “I'll lose the last ten pounds and then I'll be happy” must remain elusive and unfulfilled, because if the weight-loss goal were reached, the tangible hope of happiness contained in the loss of those last ten pounds would be exposed as false. Only the impossible becomes addictive.

When what-might-have-been remains as an “if only” regret, then the present is lost in idealizing the past.

For the same reason, it is difficult to sell a stock that has declined significantly in value, because the sale causes a real money loss to replace a paper theory of loss.

Once you accept people as they are in the present, your parents, for example, and let go of trying to change them (to right past wrongs), they cannot exert control over you in your life,



before or after their death. To forgive does not mean forgetting; it means remembering and letting go. We use memories in order to forget; to make something a memory relegates it to the past rather than continuously engaging it to create an active, intrusive presence.

You pay and suffer for a mistake each time you relive it. You pay again if you judge, punish, or recreate the pain of guilt. Evoking the mistake may seem automatically coupled with the event or circumstance and continue to be perceived as a deserved pain. Similarly, holding onto anger also keeps injury and hurt alive. Hell, it is noted regularly, is a state of mind.

An alternative to the continued self-punishment of memory of a mistake involves acknowledging responsibility, accountability, and payment for the mistake in order to let go of it. Accountability and acceptance can modify the old story of keeping the pain and suffering alive with each recreation of memory, so that you can reside fully in the present moment of your new story.

You are always free to change your mind.

You can always change. If you have wanted to change and haven't done so, perhaps it's because you are ambivalent about change and continue to engage an old storyline coupled with a rationalized engagement of it. Reentering the old story in order to create a better ending interferes with the present: Even a thousand better endings later, you are still in the process of recreating the old story.

Recreating the old story ensures security and predictability. With repetition, however, there is no future. The past is projected simultaneously onto the present and future, as if it were still the past. Just writing a better ending does not allow you to exit from the past. There is not yet a new story to inhabit, like a fully furnished and decorated house. You don't know how the new story is going to feel, and you cannot know until you create it.

It is difficult to give up whatever you believe will fulfill old hopes and needs. The old story keeps the illusion intact. The excitement and hope may have been in always having that promise for the future. Chasing the illusion is based on its perpetual elusiveness, at the same time that you can see no alternative.

The coupling of an obstacle and a desire had been a lifelong companion for Ron. He began to be aware that his belief system was limiting. "The things I didn't think I could change, that did not seem possible, all seemed fate. Just like with an inoperable cancer, there is no cure. I didn't realize change was possible. I absorbed so much of the thinking in my family, in my culture, without even knowing it. You just did things you were supposed to do. These are the cards you've been dealt. You live with it. There is not supposed to be any fulfillment, it's the way life is."

Ron had not known another model until he was directly exposed to it during our

work. He gradually saw that his beliefs had been viewed not as a particular point of view or model, but as the way things were, with no alternatives. For him, letting go of certain expectations and creating new ones that kept him in the present context without recreating the past allowed him to reinvent his life story.

As Ron put it, “Eating is retreating to something familiar. I’ve filled a lot of mental space with worry, anxiety, and symptomatic eating. The fear is that if I don’t have anything to worry about, I won’t know what to do.” His lack of familiarity with feeling good made it difficult to sustain this novel state and experience. Accompanying thoughts jostled his concept of self: “Do I deserve this?” “What is going to happen to end it?” “This can’t last very long.” “I have so identified myself as a worrier, if I don’t worry, who will I be?”

These subtle “take aways” from his good feeling were automatic, validating his assumption that if he felt good, that good feeling certainly would end. He became aware of the limitations of his old story as he created a new story to juxtapose as an alternate possibility.

Every experience has its own life cycle. Some patterns, such as feelings in response to everyday situations, cycle rapidly and offer a greater possibility of understanding by the cumulative mass and visibility of the data. Other patterns, such as relationship patterns that take years to complete, are more difficult to recognize and objectify because of the amount of time elapsed during repetition. By the time we recognize the lifecycle of some major scenarios of our life, a significant portion of our life cycle has elapsed.

Some patterns and storylines are, as Richard Russo describes the life-cycle change of a town, “... almost imperceptible without the benefit of time-lapse photography.”

One of the purposes of this book is to shorten that recognition time by highlighting those assumptions and beliefs driving behaviors, feelings, and storylines that are compromised or don’t work, and to catalyze change enabling you to write exactly the story you want and need.

F. Construct a Present Context

The plot is the arc drawn across the themes and storylines of an entire life narrative. Basic beliefs and core assumptions generate experiences, behaviors, and meanings. All components of a life, business, or career story can evolve into a cohesive narrative and an organized coherent plot of action goals, strategic development, and results. Strength can be maximized



and obstacles overcome in this process.

A good attorney knows that each person on the jury hears and registers information and testimony into a story that makes sense to him or her. The best and most believable story wins. Each individual perceives, processes, and remembers what fits into the plot. Plot is each person's individual transformation into a story that makes sense. The plot generates and shapes the storylines and narrative. All subsequent information is absorbed through that narrative plot.

Story purpose, called premise, keeps the reader from straying from the storyline while fully and richly developing the plot.

Your own philosophy of life forms the premise for individual plot; your unique internal ideal shapes values and beliefs. A philosophy of life includes the principles of why, how, and what you want to live. Meaning and purpose inform the assumptions you create to generate the plot. According to Barna Research, only one of four Americans has a life philosophy. Often someone without a life philosophy has difficulty constructing a career philosophy.

Novels are often constructed around a character who is just about to experience change; they begin in the middle, reconstruct or retrieve the past, and continue to the end. In the climactic scene, a character makes a final choice. When a character is about to undergo a change, he or she is at the culmination of all that has gone on before, emotions are heightened and in evidence to everyone, and the character is revealed more quickly and memorably. At this time of transition or transcendence, the character is driven to overcome an obstacle. An adversarial situation or person tests commitment and conflict, moving the protagonist to grow through wisdom and understanding to resolution and mastery.

Coming to the end of the past is not enough: You have to have a purpose, a dream, an internal ideal in order to give hope both a direction and a map. You have to have a new story to be in before you can give up an old one.

II. How to Regulate States of Mind

A. How Do You Feel?

[In Workbook]

A Structured Inquiry to Recognize Feelings

When someone asks, “How do you feel?” or when you ask yourself, “What am I feeling?” the answer may not always be obvious. Because a feeling usually cues a state of mind, is it crucial to first identify feelings—not always an obvious task.

We have to name our world in order to live in it, to identify experience and name our feelings in order to reside inside them.

In order to be aware of a feeling, the following steps are necessary.

1. First take an internal point of reference—to perceive from inside your own experience. This centering may not be easy if you are accustomed to focusing on others and being attuned to their feelings.
2. Register emotion from an internal perspective, a mind-body awareness.
3. Recognize and distinguish specific feeling (the subjective awareness of emotion).
4. Accurately label the feeling.
5. Once experienced, distinguished, and labeled, a feeling can be mastered and communicated.

This stepwise process of registering, distinguishing, and communicating feelings may be more difficult if you are accustomed to discharging emotion by action rather than understanding by reflection. Action sequences may be useful to regulate tension (such as exercise) or may mask feelings (such as excessive drinking or eating, or compulsive activity).

B. Regulation of Feelings and States

The regulation of feelings and states of mind involves the understanding and mastery of access to a particular state of mind without altering consciousness to do so (i.e., while “staying present”). Perhaps nowhere is this more poignant than the regulation of mind state artists and writers foster to enter a creative state. For example, Dame Edith Sitwell would lie in the stale solitude of an open coffin as a prelude to entering the mind state she needed to write her macabre literature. Other writers create states of mind to fit their intended work: Dr. Samuel Johnson and the poet W.H. Auden stayed in a stimulated state with continuous consumption of tea when they wrote; Willa Cather read the Bible to set the right tone prior to her writing;



George Sand went immediately from lovemaking to writing; Voltaire used his lover's back for a writing desk; Benjamin Franklin wrote while soaking in a bathtub to focus his thought process; Coleridge used opium before each stint of writing. The painter J.M.W. Turner liked to be lashed to the mast of a ship and taken for sail during an incredible storm, so he could later recreate this experience on canvas. Some authors play a piece of music repetitively during the course of writing to create an emotional framework to house their evolving story.

The corresponding state of mind in the reader often matches that of the author as the author's creation guides the reader to a particular state through the senses: the music and voice of the words, the texture of imagery, the rhythm of feelings.

Each of us has a continuum of states, with some awareness of what state works best for what endeavor, even of how to enter into and exit from different states. We become more or less cognizant of which state to enter for a creative endeavor, which state to enter for conceptual planning, and what state of attention and concentration works best for each task, from the alertness of a business presentation to relaxation for sleep.

Perhaps the most natural method of regulating state change is distraction, such as jangling car keys to shift the crying infant to a calmer state. One may learn an internal distraction so fluidly that it may appear as an attention-deficit problem. Likewise, an individual discovers various ways to reconnect the mind and body, such as by distraction into physical activity, or building a somatic bridge to engage the senses, such as exercise, a warm bath, or breathing exercises.

Action symptoms of stimulation, such as alcohol and drug use or self-mutilation, attempt to engage the body as a foundation for emotional experience and organization. Physical reconnection by these action symptoms establishes only a temporary balance..

C. How to Get Centered in Your Body And Experience

Specific focus on attunement to present experience and state of mind fosters connection of mind and body. If you feel detached or not grounded in your body or experience, you may focus awareness on very specific details of your physical body in your immediate environment.

Grounding yourself in your body allows you to center inside your experience and attain a fully present state of mind. This grounding and centering creates a sense of being relaxed yet alert, focused but not tense. The "present" state of mind allows full access to all aspects of experience, especially self-awareness and attunement.

[In Workbook]

GROUNDING AND CENTERING EXERCISE

1. Ask yourself: “How present am I?”
2. Go through a systematic review of your body and perceptions from it: Feeling, perceiving, and moving each aspect of your body from toes to head
3. Make a systematic inventory each of your senses:
 - Seeing
 - Hearing
 - Touching
 - Tasting
 - Smelling
4. Attune specifically to aspects of body function that may be calming: Focus on and control of breathing, tensing and relaxing various muscle groups, alignment of body posture.
5. Progressive Relaxation:
6. Sit in a comfortable chair and close your eyes. Clear your mind. Focus only on your immediate bodily experience. Begin feeling the sensation of relaxation.
7. Take a deep breath.
8. Breathe in relaxation. Breathe out tension.
9. Focus entirely on your feet and toes; relax them completely.
10. Let the relaxation move into your calves. Then to your thighs. Notice the warm, heavy, comfortable sensation.
11. Let the relaxation move into your hips. Then to your abdomen. Then to your chest. Notice the relaxed, soft feeling of your muscles, and the deeper breathing.
12. Let the relaxation travel up your neck into your face. Then to your scalp. Then to your brain.
13. Be aware of even deeper breathing. Continue to breathe in relaxation, and breathe out tension until your entire body is in a relaxed state.
14. Decide when to stop the exercise. Allow a moment of transition to a fully alert state.
15. You will remember this experience in your body and mind and will be able to access it more quickly each time.

A BRIEF, ON-YOUR-FEET GROUNDING EXERCISE

1. Focus attention on your body
2. Evenly balance your weight and posture

- 
3. Relax arms, legs, shoulders
 4. Breathe evenly and deeply
 5. Relax jaw, tongue, face
 6. Eyes look forward, aware of all fields of vision, including periphery.
 7. Rub your feet on the carpet.
 8. If possible, jump up and down in place a few times.

D. Management of State-Specific Issues: Blocks, Chokes, and Slumps

Centering brings mind and body together and in full focus. The principles borrow from my work with athletes and artistic performers whose physical performance must be aligned with a present concentrated state of mind. Even a slight interruption of concentrated focus can disrupt a performance. Jumping up and down borrows from an actress who learned focus and getting into character in this way.

A gymnast had to deal with her instantaneous loss of focus in thinking about an opponent before she would successfully move into the Olympics. A tennis star, under certain kinds of pressure, would have a picture of her coach flash instantaneously in her mind as she tossed her ball in the air to serve. Grounding and centering for each athlete relaxed her state of mind and focused attention for an uninterrupted mind-body flow of energy.

Illustration of a Block

Nathan felt increasingly excited about his developing talent as a writer. But he noted that he was experiencing a writer's block—he had not produced anything for a month.

I asked him to explain in detail his writing process, and his experience of each step.

He observed that, as he sat down to write, “I got nervous and began doing a lot of different things other than writing.”

After exploring the details of this process, I could observe, “It’s possible that your nervousness was largely excitement about immersing yourself in the passion you’ve always wanted to experience, and you read it as anxiety, as if there were danger.”

He recognized his current anxiety as feeling different—an excitement—while also an uncertainty about letting go of the familiar home base of restraint. Drawing on his earlier emotional coupling of anxiety with danger, his default assumption now remained the same, so that he would immediately and automatically distract himself to avert anxiety. This perception,

coupling of meaning, and coping mechanism were part of his old story, now juxtaposed with a newly evolving story. Additionally, he learned the grounding exercise to create calmness.

We reframed his excitement as a validation of being in a new experience. As a signpost of progress, it signaled him to continue to proceed with his writing.

Explicit and Implicit Learning in Performance

Explicit learning focuses on data and factual information. Implicit learning takes place outside awareness. Implicit learning includes body knowledge, such as riding a bicycle, or a procedural memory, such as complex behavioral patterns. For example, a parent may repeat with children the same behavior or attachment pattern the parent experienced as a child. Implicit learning and memory operate in the flow of a process, so you don't have to think about it each time.

Thinking Too Much

A switch to explicit memory—consciously thinking about how you do something—disrupts the flow and can cause a “choke.” Thinking about it moves away from the automatic (implicit) to the intellectual (explicit). This slight internal shift from implicit to explicit disrupts the flow of the automatic, procedural response. The deliberate focus of the explicit mode—reverting to when one was first taught how to hit a ball or do a routine—interferes with performance. Continuing in this explicit mode can create a “slump.”

More obvious shifts can occur through a change of state of mind, such as anxiety, panic, crowd distraction, pressure, stress, or emotional charge.

I consulted with a professional athlete who was in a significant slump that had worsened with the increasing publicity about it. We explored the detailed account of her experience—what she was thinking, feeling, and doing in her performances.

As we examined this process, the specific difficulty centered on her serves in tennis tournaments. When she tossed the ball in the air, she instantaneously flashed an image of her coach in her mind. She moved from implicit memory to explicit memory in a nanosecond. This perceived critical judgment deflected her from the flow of total immersion in the procedural memory of serving. The slight shift had occurred because of a derailment in the otherwise powerful and positive bond with her coach. The coach, in her mind, had become like a critical father. Any focus on her internal dynamics and relationship to her own father put her more “into her head.” Attempts to substitute a positive noncritical image as well as emphasis on performance enhancement resulted in reversion to an explicit mode. These attempts failed to help her return to her own experience of her implicit mode.

I scheduled two sessions to coach their relationship, to focus on understanding



and righting the derailment for a return to the harmonious and powerful process between the two of them that had produced an internationally known performer.

Thinking Too Little

Panic or anxiety narrows perception to a single immediate focus: *thinking too little*. I have worked with a number of solo performance athletes, such as golfers, gymnasts, and tennis players, whose performance relies on intense concentration and focus to remain in the flow of their performance. If the athlete lapses even for a second—such as wondering about being viewed by a coach, the audience, or another competitor—shifts from centeredness in the implicit process, and can significantly impact performance.

E. Listen to Body Stories

Every psychological symptom both reveals and conceals, making very obvious to others what you are hiding from yourself, continually engaging what you attempt to flee. Symptoms give disguised voice to what you avoid knowing, a secret hiding in the open. A symptom is a sentinel of a process that needs, indeed begs, to be understood, listened to rather than silenced, respected rather than disregarded. As its own story, a symptom will be repeated until translated. It speaks literally: A pain in the neck, purging something, weeping skin, hypertension. A psychological symptom answers a question not asked consciously, and proffers a story with its own history, dynamics, and meanings. The writer Milorad Pavic wrote, “It is easier to fall ill than learn the truth ...so take care of your maladies ... they always have something to tell you.”

You are the author, not the victim of your symptom.

A symptom carries various enigmas: That every fear harbors a wish; that we construct defenses so that we unconsciously sustain contact with what we fear; that we make the object of desire and fear the same so that we can run away from it and engage it at the same time; that fear guides toward, yet masks, desire. For example, a phobic assignment of danger provides the illusion of safety in its avoidance. The fascination and compelling engagement with the phobic object is coupled with an equally passionate aversion, like the fear and pull of looking over the edge from a great height. A phobia, then, is a defense against anxiety made by creating a specific designer anxiety.

Symptoms sometimes have early beginnings. Every child attempts relentlessly to make his or her parents “normal “ and becomes symptomatic to the extent that they are unsuccessful. If a parent is unattuned empathically with little register of the child’s emotional world, the child then provides the parent with something more tangible and specific, such as bad behavior, a physical complaint, or accident.

A psychological symptom is a statement that no matter who you are or how old you are, the

child inside you will come back and demand fulfillment of any unrequited need when awakened by a present want.

A symptom asks its creator to listen, to hear the message spoken in somatic form, action, or symbolic language, to learn from it. The invitation is to understand and appreciate its power to reduce tension, to recognize the addictive investment in its effectiveness, and perhaps also to acknowledge its organizing function to identify and label (“I’m an alcoholic / bulimic / procrastinator. . .”).

The symptom contains the message, yet, most importantly, it is the message. The anorexic, by not eating, defiantly asserts autonomy from parents and their control, yet ensures attachment because she is dangerously ill. Her painful dependency is in heavy disguise and enigmatic code (“I don’t need you, or anyone; I’m not even dependent on food.”). The visible secret is her emaciated, frail body that simultaneously screams the need for and aversion to help. Control, the antithesis of mastery, hypertrophies as she becomes worse. The process that she once felt in control of is now controlling her.

Someone who has experienced anxious worry and suffering for a lifetime becomes accustomed to feeling bad. Staying with feeling good is the ultimate challenge. Anxiety has been coupled with danger and trauma. Fear has predicted the future, and the only certainty has been repetition of the past. The pull of the old and the fear of the new inform invisible decisions that become camouflaged in habits, our collection of repetitions. When one has grown accustomed to feeling bad, for example, being depressed, feeling good is an unusual emotion and state of being. Because any new experience is subject to disruption, feeling good may, paradoxically, be stopped to return the depressive to the accustomed home base of feeling bad.

In the instant that a current experience is stopped, the now-vacated space the feeling would have continued to occupy fills immediately with old content and meaning, a state change to boot up an old software package. This activation of procedural memory (such as perceiving another as judgmental and critical, as an old attachment figure would have been) is viewed as the cause of stopping the feeling rather than the result. “Why do I stop myself from feeling good?” one may ultimately recognize and ask. The concurrent anxiety and uncertainty of being in an unfamiliar place, even that of feeling good, is a discontinuity, even a temporary lack of self-cohesiveness with departure from the habitual. By moving back to the usual discomfort, the separation anxiety from that familiar experience/identity is quelled.

Almost two centuries ago, Kierkegaard said, “The very possibility of being able creates dizziness.” Or, as a man told me more explicitly, “Dave, wouldn’t it be a drag if I found out what I’ve been running from all this time was good rather than bad?”

You are never more aware of creating a symptom and its meaning than when recognizing that you determine both its presence and its absence. It is enigmatic that you may recognize you



feel most like a child at the very moment you realize you are no longer one.

Ending the relationship with a symptom often feels like an amputation, removing a section of identity, parting with a long-standing loved/hated companion. You can't just abstain from a symptom. To give up a symptom or a problem, especially those that have been lifetime companions and even woven into your identity, is no small matter, no "ah-ha" recognition for a simple reversal. There must be a new story to be inside before the old story can be relinquished.

Rather than attempting to remove a symptom that may be its creator's loved and hated best friend as predictable comfort, relief, and loyalty (such as food, smoking, or the idea of death), the need is to understand the relationship with the symptom. Empathic listening and collaboration may reveal the use and motivation of the symptom as it undergoes developmental change. (You don't have to search for a magic bullet once you recognize you've created an illusory enemy.)

Anatole Broyard spoke to this view in *Sorrow's Company*. "The patient has to start by treating his illness not as a disaster, an occasion for depression or panic, but as a narrative, a story. Stories are antibodies against illness and pain."

Anticipating an experience can create it.

We see what we believe, and we judge before it happens. To someone consumed by an addictive process, the idea of the food, drink, or drug changes the state of mind before the substance is actually ingested. Between an urge and an action lies a potential space in which judgment resides.

A final farewell to a symptom may be to try on its clothes one more time to be sure they no longer fit, to learn that the old fears and negative thoughts no longer feel the same, that the once-familiar symptom doesn't work any more. How better to know how far you've traveled than to have a fixed point of reference, to engage the symptom one more time just to be sure, like viewing the real body at a funeral. One is never more aware of what was missed in the past than when creating it in the present. It is most difficult to give up what has already been taken away, to let go of what is already gone.

Often loss of the illusion is more difficult than the loss of the real thing.

And we can never forget that sometimes the most paralyzing experience is to fully recognize freedom.

[In Workbook]

CHOICE ENHANCEMENT

The following considerations apply to emotions and choices:

- **Increased tension produces emotional regression.** With increased tension and advanced conflict, the stress response reaction can move someone into a more emotional pattern characteristic of a much earlier age. (“I must be doing something wrong. All the things I know to do aren’t working.”)
- **Increased emotion narrows perspective.** (“I’m so preoccupied with my portfolio losing value, it’s hard to focus on my work.”) When emotion prevails, focus becomes narrower and more restricted to the most recent event. Paradoxically, attempting to use reason and logic with an escalated individual—someone in a highly emotional state—deepens the automatic alarm pattern. The escalated individual will further escalate, dig in his toes, and spiral into more extreme responses, hurling himself away from logic.

Remember: When you’re in a state of upset, the first order of business is to regulate feelings. Get centered and grounded.

Anxiety is an energy experience. The most effective antidote to anxiety is grounding yourself—transforming the energy by becoming present.

Being grounded and centered allows a state of mind for optimum synthesis of thinking with access to existing knowledge. Stress interferes by catapulting someone into a state of mind that narrows concentration and limits the scope and range of thinking. The stress hormones of epinephrine and cortisol block information processing.

When you’re relaxed and centered, you have the greatest access to all of your states of mind—all the information you possess. The antidote of purposeful relaxation extends energy reserves. After a period of relaxation, attention and concentration improve.

Managing energy is a key to success. This begins with knowing your strengths and limitations, your biological cycles, when you perform best.

- Know how to enter and exit various states of mind—and which works best for a particular task. For instance, writing and editing are two different states of mind—to be done at two different times.
- Cluster activities that require the same state of mind.
- Identify what enhances your energy: anticipation, creativity, pleasure, meditation, prayer.
- Identify what depletes your energy: toxic people or situations; negative mindset; lack of focus.



Sleep On It: The Neuroeconomics of Striking When The Iron Is Cold

There are few true emergencies in life. Investing in a stock, deciding on a summer vacation special good until 5:00 P.M., or purchasing mulch from the guy who's only going to be in the neighborhood selling it until noon—are not some of them. (My 11:15 A.M. decision resulted in a front yard mushroom farm within two weeks.)

In an excited state of mind, the compelling stories of a hot deal will look different in a cool state of mind the next day. A hot stock tip, a business deal gone sour, a family tragedy, all may create an alarm response and an emotional state of mind geared for survival rather than logic. Or, a compelling social interaction may engage a powerful brain circuit that makes us give money to strangers.

Each thought and feeling has a chemical consequence. The chemicals of emotion alter mind and body. Personal experience determines what software program (state of mind) to process the data, and how to proceed.

The following considerations apply to decision-making regarding emotions and choices, catalogued by the chemical mediator.

1. Adrenalin/Cortisol: The Emergency System

When incoming data resembles threat or danger, it triggers an emotional and biochemical response within a fraction of a second. While necessary for survival, adrenalin and cortisol hijack the logical, rational brain. Emotion-based judgments where rational ones should prevail may misjudge information. This automatic alarm system may cause mistaken perception, and reaction.

Additionally, increased tension produces emotional regression. With increased tension and advanced conflict, the stress response reaction can move someone into a more emotional pattern characteristic of an earlier age. Increased emotion also narrows perspective; focus becomes more restricted to the more recent event when emotion prevails.

2. Dopamine: The Pleasure System

Dopamine mediates the excitement of anticipating a reward or pleasure. Someone can create a cult-like following by the promise of great possibility coupled with the vagueness of hazy dreams. The result: People are stimulated to see what they want to see. Like money, people project their own desires onto the story and see their wishes crystallized into an illusion of reality. The essentials here: Dopamine plus a projection screen (a good story).

3. Norepinephrine: The Maintenance System

We believe that certain accomplishments and acquisitions will give us lasting satisfaction. However, a new possession, such as a car, will quickly be assimilated into our bank of possessions and no longer be the subject of intense focus and desire. Receiving a reward shuts down the anticipatory release of dopamine, diminishing the energy and pleasure. The central nervous system shifts to the maintenance mode (necessary from an economic and evolutionary perspective), primarily mediated by norepinephrine.

The fastest way to relinquish a desire, or to stop noticing something, may be to buy it.

4. Oxytocin: The Social Connection System

Social interactions stimulate the release of the neurochemical oxytocin, especially when we are trusted; this induces a desire to reciprocate that trust we have been shown, even with strangers.

People engaged in cons know how to stimulate oxytocin. In David Mamet's film, "House of Games," the confidence man played by Joe Mantegna explained to a previous mark, "It's called a confidence game. Why? Because you give me your confidence? No. Because I give you mine."

Think about the trust that large numbers of people were given by bankers in the form of credit and mortgages. That trust was reciprocated; both sides suffered, as well as some innocent bystanders.

A Remedy?

- "I'll think about it," is a decision.
- "I'll get back to you," is an option.
- "I'll sleep on it," is a choice.

These decisions allow you to pause between the pick and the purchase. "Sleeping on it" allows movement through different states of mind to fresh perspectives the next day. Most importantly, it allows moving these neurochemically-mediated responses from the foreground to the background for a balanced decision



Module 5

Advancing the Plot

It is okay to think about what you want to do. Until it is time to start doing what you were meant to do.

The Rookie

If I were to wish for anything, I should not wish for wealth and power, but for the passionate sense of what can be, for the I, which, ever young and ardent, to seize the possible. Pleasure disappoints, possibility never. And what wine is so sparkling, what so fragrant, what so intoxicating as possibility?

Soren Kierkegaard, Either/Or

And one ought to consider that there is nothing more difficult to pull off, more chancy to succeed in, or more dangerous to manage, than the introduction of a new order of things.

Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince

[In Workbook]

ADVANCING YOUR NEW PLOT

A self-statement is a unique, personal communication of experience and point of view. What people say and do are inevitable, unavoidable self-statements of their beliefs and personal reality. Individuals actively construct their experiences. Narrative and plot reflects individual assumptions and self-concept.

The module illuminates how to listen for, own, and learn from one's self-statements, including an exercise to edit and enhance choices.

Adopting an internal point of reference--being one's own authority—involves developing principles (the adult version of rules) and living up to one's own ideals (the way to generate authentic self esteem).

Individuals take ownership of their own authority by claiming action. To move from a passive role to an active one anchors personal authority. Examples include when people regard themselves as the victims rather than creators of their narrative (“My anger got the best of me.” “My thoughts ran wild.”)—as if the story has taken over the author.

This module guides you to create a new story with a cohesive plot so powerful it can craft a new identity.



I. Self Statements

A. Listen; Learn; Own

Self-statement: A unique, personal communication of experience and point of view. What people say and do are inevitable, unavoidable self-statements of their beliefs and personal realities. Individuals actively construct their experiences. Narrative and plot reflects individual assumptions and self-concept. A life story manifests through self-statements, from broad themes such as success, to simple statements such as someone melancholy who sees and forecasts unhappiness. People believe according to their self-images; views are self-statements of our perception. All that you say is about yourself.

An example of an application of this concept of self-statement is this quote from Eric Hoffer, who was much attuned to smart little brothers who have bigger brothers. “You can discover what your enemy fears most by observing the means he uses to frighten you.”

Everything you say and do is a self-statement. Even when it is about someone else. Experience is not encountered, observed, or predetermined, but actively constructed. Your narrative reflects the assumptions and self-concepts you have about yourself. You are the author of your entire experience. You choose what you engage, what you create, and what you do not create. You actively choose your emotions as well as the assumptions generating those emotions.

The reciprocal to acknowledging that everything you say is a self-statement is recognizing that *everyone else only makes self-statements*. All you can ever do is share your own experience of someone else; you can never tell them what they think, how they feel, or what they should do. If you do not take personally what someone says about you, and recognize it simply as their own self-statement, you will not be hurt by what they say. It is a particular freedom you grant yourself to refuse to take personally what others say. (Of course, it is almost impossible not to take certain things personally.)

Basic assumptions fashion the storylines of your life. Your actions are a direct result of your mindset. Your mindset—how you believe and think about things—must be constantly challenged. The difficulty in trying to examine a mindset is that it is part of your identity—who and what you are. If you are to be successful, you must examine your beliefs flexibly and be willing to give up ones that don’t work. A mindset achieves more power the more you attempt to disregard, disavow, or counter these assumptions. Some of the most limiting core beliefs include viewing oneself as inadequate, or with limited self-worth. A sense of inadequacy may be engaged continuously by blaming and criticizing oneself, finding others to blame, or performing for acclaim to try to counter a supposed inadequacy. The affirmation for each performance will be temporary, or even disavowed as though the other person doesn’t really

know your true self. The process then continues. Perceiving others as critical and judgmental (an aspect of self assigned to others) and performing to demonstrate goodness may work briefly, but your belief about yourself is unassailable by anyone other than yourself.

This reliance on affirmation can become addictive. An identity can center around what feels missing, such as someone to love you.

Internal dramas convert into interpersonal ones by assigning roles to others that originate from an aspect of self, externalized and ghostwritten for another to enact. Handing over one side of the conflict to someone else can never resolve an internal conflict. Both sides are internal, dual and conflicting storylines, and only the author can change the story.

The most dramatic roles are those we disavow, such as in blaming someone else in order that we become the victim. The idealized version of oneself, never quite attained, may be assigned to a caretaker hero. The shining armor of this hero becomes inevitably rusty over time with disappointment and disillusionment. In order to grow, you must assume responsibility for your own life, become your own hero.

B. Your Story Becomes Your Life.

Difficult times, mistakes, and significant stressors can foster personal development. Nodal events and defining moments can become their own storyline. It is not a mistake that determines who you are, it is how you handle the mistake. It is not a trauma or crisis that determines who you are, it is how you manage it. If you subsequently define yourself by that mistake, trauma, or event, you are creating a story that becomes self-perpetuating. It is your story to write. How you deal with certain events, periods, and issues then becomes the storyline around which a narrative is built.

Identify a habit, a part of your daily routine that you don't think about. Think about it as part of a whole, as a strength that it represents or a principle it involves. To revise a habit that doesn't work, apply the strength or principle to choose a different application. For example, if a habit is procrastination, rather than critically judging and trying to push through it, focus on postponing an action. If completing a task is coupled with a fear or danger, then it makes sense to delay in that context, such as assuming that success will be met with jealousy and abandonment by others. The motivation to succeed needs to be placed in a current context, as do the assumptions surrounding it. Are the expectations of jealousy and abandonment past or current realities?

Or if the delay is because a skill necessary for progress is not yet in place, the motivation to procrastinate is useful and adaptive, and may inform the motivation to acquire the necessary skill or know-how to proceed. If you are in the planning and development phase of a new business, procrastinating on putting up a website may be a wise decision until you are sure of the niche market and of your specific message. But if the habit of procrastination is not



adaptive, then it's up to you to create progress in its place.

The single most important thing that you can do for yourself is to show up.

That is, to be yourself and let unfold what you know from both your head and your gut, trusting your experience in doing and being. The answers are not all there in prepackaged form, because the most important ones have to be lived.

Your primary work is to always remember who you are, and to bring that forward to reconnect when you forget—not to lose your plot. We all forget at times: With excess stimulation, the really good and really bad times, when under the gun, in the trench, in stress. At these times we may forget the highest aspirations for ourselves.

The key in this process is to hold that essential space for yourself to return to and claim, a homecoming especially at times of abandonment, or most simply, when you forget to remember. It feels very much like a homecoming when you recognize the abandonment of yourself and then step back into your own space, your internal point of reference, to own it again as yours.

A common way of abandoning yourself is to get tangled up in the importance of being accepted and looking good, such as what questions to ask, what to say, what to do. Those things are important, but more important are your natural responses when you simply remain available to yourself and accessible to whatever person or endeavor you engage. Everyone loses track of this for a short while at times, sometimes for longer whiles.

When you enter a bank to buy money (commonly known as applying for a loan), your concern focuses on being good enough, about how you will be viewed, if you are adequate. When an acceptance does come, and relief with it, the exact terms, condition, and cost of your purchase of money may be relatively unquestioned. This temporary abandonment couples with role confusion. In contrast, consider an unemotional purchase: When you go to a hardware store to buy a garden hose, it is simply a transaction. No questions of acceptance, validation, adequacy, or worth. In any other transaction, you pay careful attention to the cost of what you purchase and the conditions and terms of the agreement. The emotional transaction, especially about money, may actually overshadow the business transaction.

Patience is the key, the art and science of celebration of the process as you go along. Remember to access joy on a regular basis. This always requires entry through the heart, the window opening you to joy. The measurement in your self-reflection is like a special breed of electrocardiogram:

1. What is it that makes your heart happy?
2. What is it that makes you most comfortable with simply being?
3. When are you most fully yourself?

4. Are you meeting your basic needs?

These are all correlates of baseline measures that need to be taken as a point of reference, a home base to return to periodically and systematically. These key elements form your foundation, personally or professionally.

C. Become Your Own Authority

*To punish me for my contempt of authority, fate has made me an authority myself.
~ Albert Einstein*

[In Workbook]

15 CAVEATS ON BEING YOUR OWN AUTHORITY

1. Each day is a new and blank page. You create whatever you choose this day.
2. You choose what you perceive.
3. You choose how you process what you perceive, the meaning that you attach.
4. You choose the behavior from the belief that you have created.
5. Focusing on the present moment, with specific, tangible, current goals synthesizes past, present, and future into this moment.
6. You create what you expect. If you focus each night on three positive things you did during the day, and then on how you can improve and expand those three things, you will be right. If you focus on three negative things, even implicitly by default assumptions that seem automatic and continuous, you will also be right.
7. A mistake or bad experience is a failure only if you do not learn from it. Whatever happened or did not happen during the day, however bad or overwhelming, will end in a positive way when you focus on your specific achievements at the end of the day and how you may further them.
8. After you choose a vision and goals, intentional choice begins. There is more than one path to your goals; the paths are as variable as your creativity.
9. Goals and agreements are complementary. A goal is what you shoot for, a target. Agreement is a promise you make to yourself or another. Know your agreements consciously and be loyal to them; a deal is a deal, especially with yourself.
10. Changing a habit that doesn't work allows you to apply the energy to a conscious goal.
11. It is the process of looking to someone or something else to fill what is missing that creates something missing.
12. If someone else chooses your boundaries, they become restrictions; if you choose them yourself, they become principles.



13. Both conformity and opposition occupy the same prison.
14. A true freedom is not requiring someone else to respond in a particular way in order for you to proceed, or to be happy.
15. That which you can imagine and believe can be achieved. You become what you believe yourself to be.

To the extent that you focus on the responses of others, and leave out your own subjective experience, you abandon yourself. If you rely on others for your needs you may create a dependency that deprives you of the pleasure of effectiveness and mastery. And compliments never help if you don't believe them. To become the hero of your own story requires establishing an internal ideal and living up to it—being your own authority.

Taking care of yourself is a confrontation and acknowledgement that no one is taking care of you. One way to resist actively taking care of yourself is by maintaining an addiction—the illusion that some substance, thing, or person will be an answer and provide what is missing.

- Do you hope or pray for magic, or the ability to master?
- Do you hope or pray for being guided, for understanding the walk you're on and your own determination of the steps and the destination?
- Do you hope or pray to have the symptom taken away or to discern your body's message?

[In Workbook]

AN EXERCISE IN AUTHORIZING YOUR OWN REALITY

What would it be like:

- If you registered judgment or criticism from others as their self-statement?
- If you were free to be who you really are?
- If no one has any control over you?
- If you do not try to control anyone else?
- If you put all of your energy into doing only what you can determine?
- If you weren't afraid of expressing your dreams?
- If you weren't afraid of saying what you really want to say?
- To do what you really want to do?
- To do what you most enjoy doing?

- To know exactly what you want and what you don't want?
- To get rid of the things you don't want in your life?
- To ask exactly for what you need?
- To not worry what anyone else thinks about you?
- To not attempt to determine anyone's opinion about you?
- To live your life without judging others?
- To let go of judgments and criticisms that you have of yourself?
- To let go of judgments and criticisms you have about others?
- To not paint someone else as wrong or at fault
- To not have to be right or win?
- To not have to work at acceptance?
- To not be afraid of rejection or abandonment?

The self is the set of personal stories developed in the mind. The mind, invisibly formed by the brain, is inherently subjective and private. The self composes a plot of interwoven themes and storylines, more or less cohesive, as a consistent identity. The self, our greatest necessary creation, exists as a composite illusion, an idea but not a fiction.

We create a composite sense of self from a system of selves along complex neuronal networks, those designer assemblies of brain cells for experiences and interactions. This self—and all the unique qualities that self prefixes—esteem, confidence, initiative, identity—is personally authored. Being written daily, this, too, can undergo transformation.

Awareness of being the author of your own actions with an accompanying sense of effectiveness and mastery is only one component of creating your own story. Thoughts, feelings, sensations, and entire affect states may seem much more elusive to own.

Goals and ideals require a formulation of a concept of future time. When you fully establish and positively validate your self, esteem and confidence allow continuity planning a positive and expansive future landscape.

The particular moments that collectively comprise our lives, seeming unsummoned and individually indistinct, nonetheless compose the story of our lives. We may not fully comprehend these incidents at the time, and only later gain more understanding. These building blocks of moments of meaning are about being real and human, bounded and grounded, but not limited.



A new story recasts the past and the present as it layers new experiences internally and relationally alongside the old experiences to create a new meaning. Past, present, and future are current constructions. A new narrative can make sense of both the past and the present in a coherent way, allowing full potential and capacity to come to life. Reflection on the plot of your life and the assumptions underlying various motivations allows scrutiny as to which storylines work and which ones do not. The ones that work don't need fixing; the ones that don't work can be fully focused to see their adaptiveness in a prior context, then brought to the present and revised.

D. Review and Revise Belief Systems

[In Workbook]

Review and Revise Belief Systems

Passive Position to Active Intention

We author the stories that then seem to shape our lives. Like so many other processes in our lives, we inadvertently reverse cause and effect. The feeling we originate may then seem to target its creator: “My anger made me respond in a foolish way.” In dreams, as with symptoms, cause and effect interchange: The author of the dream and the creator of the symptom behave as if what they made is instead happening to them. It is as if the story takes over its writer

Until beliefs are addressed, internal change and behavioral change will not occur. Beliefs can either limit or facilitate change. We have an attachment to hang onto things the way they are, meaning to continue without change the way we are.

Various language content and patterns reveal underlying assumptions about the map, the plot of your story. These assumptions may facilitate or impede progress. Language reveals internal versus external point of reference, internal versus external authority, active versus passive position.

External Authority Phrases

Pressure words reveal an external point of reference, assuming an external authority.

- Should
- Have to
- Need to
- Must

Limitation Words

- Cannot
- Impossible
- Should not
- Something stopped me

Passive Positions

- The feeling took over
- Anger seized me
- Doubt crept into my mind
- The impulse seized me
- A part of me resisted working
- I came to an impasse
- Suicide entered my mind
- My mind played tricks on me
- I found myself doing that

Creating and writing your own story involve recognizing that the story has not been ghost-written from the past, as if someone or something (parents, critical others, fate) were handing you the lines in a script.

We structure our language around belief systems. For example, a cause-effect belief is that if something causes this, then the result will be this. For example, “I have to do all of these things before I can actually begin.” Or, “If I do this for him, then surely he will want to do this for me.” The most extreme cause-effect dilemma was from a mother of a boyhood friend, who told him, “You can’t go into the water before you know how to swim.”

An example of the coupling of two unrelated things can become, “I won’t do this because I don’t have the experience,” or “I will do this after I lose twenty pounds,” or “I’ll enjoy myself when I retire/get my life in order/do these tasks.” These language patterns are evidence of putting one’s life on hold and creating a belief that limits.

When a belief is in place, to its creator it seems logical. The belief, “If I go forward, then something bad will happen,” would make continuing appear foolish. Money and weight are two areas to specifically challenge belief patterns. Beliefs that may have served us well at a different



time, such as earlier in life, in adolescence or childhood, may simply no longer work or may be outdated, tailor-made for an earlier context but no longer a good fit.

To challenge a belief, consider the following:

- What could I do if this assumption were not in place?
- What belief would serve me better?
- What can I shift that belief to?
- Am I too capable of having this limiting belief hold me back?
- Have I outgrown this belief?
- Have I discovered this belief is not true?

We create a belief system of assumptions that we see as reality. When others do not live up to our assumptions, we are disappointed. The assumptions, however, are usually unstated, and part of the assumption is that the other person will just know what we expect without our having to say. When a significant and important person does not live up to our expectation, the result may be hurt, with the hurt quickly countered by anger. We often assume that we share the same beliefs, plans, and assumptions with a significant other—that our partner sees things as we do. Our assumption may be that if someone loves us or respects us, they will do what we want. We may assume that others think and feel, perceive and attribute significance just as we do.

A pattern can be a smokescreen for yearning for fulfillment of needs you are not meeting for yourself. Yet the other person also wants something. Then we are disappointed and disillusioned when someone else does not exactly meet our expectations.

Codependency stems from the assumption that if you love someone enough, and work hard enough to get him or her to change, he or she will in fact change. Codependency, like an addiction, is a promise never kept. The basis of a codependent and frustrating relationship is trying to get someone to change. It is not being in love with the person, but being in love with who the person might become when he or she changes. The relationship, then, is with the assumption and not the person. A woman once remarked about her husband, “I always thought how wonderful he would be if he were different.”

Living a new experience and creating a new story begin with recognizing that you are the author of your story. The old story may have included displacing aspects of yourself onto others, avoiding or trying to change another as an attempt to change yourself. This essence of codependency is seeing a part of oneself in another and trying to change that person as a way to change or disavow that aspect internally. Just as you can fall in love with who you hope

someone will become (rather than who he or she is), you can also fall in love with your own ideal projected onto someone else. This hope is for your own unmet needs, for a piece of your life not yet lived. In this way, however, hope is maintained in an old context, and past needs cannot be met in the present. Unrequited past *needs* become present *wants*. You can never get enough of what you don't need.

Other disclaimed action has to do with one's mind, as if thoughts and feelings existed apart from one's mind, and passively insert themselves: "The thought came to me." "My mind refused to think about it." "My mind played tricks on me." These locutions disclaim being the agent and author of thoughts, feelings, and experiences, as if your mind were the subject rather than the creator of your thoughts and feelings. Other disclaimers include a slip of the tongue (sometimes attributed to Freud, as if it were he who had the slip), being late, and various accidents not viewed as motivated, meaningful, or intended.

The remedy: Acknowledge and own everything about yourself personally, listen carefully and explicitly to yourself, to all the messages from your interior, to your whole truth. Feelings never lie. The body never lies, though it may speak in enigmatic code.

Internal positions often polarize around active or passive. Indications of the passive position reveal themselves in language of being the subject of one's decision or feelings: "This happens to me," or "My anger got the best of me," or "My anxiety stopped me." This language indicates the belief that you're the victim of the feelings that you generate. Anger is not there until it is created. A feeling is a verb. The anxiety that stops you is the feeling that you create in stopping yourself. The horse needs to go before the cart.

There is an internal sense of difference, depending on the active or passive position taken. In another example, someone says of a dream, "I don't know why he would do that to me." Yet both the character in the dream and the dream itself are both created by the dreamer. We are the author of our dreams, the author of each of the components of our dream, as well as of its the story. So also with life.

In numerous ways, you can perceive yourself as the subject rather than the agent of thought, feeling, and behavior. Passivity is a very determined activity. Forgetting is as active a process as remembering. Doing nothing is a specific work product. Disclaimed action (a slip of the tongue, being late, various accidents) is meaningful intended action; its importance is validated by the double engagement of creating it and refuting it.



II. Further the Plot

A. Choice Architecture

A good friend of mine illustrates the need to pick your spots with this anecdote. When you're draining the swamp, and alligators surround you, it's hard to remember that your original intention was not to kill the alligators, but to drain the swamp. So just kill the ones between you and the drain.

Self-awareness includes your external world, your internal world of mind/emotion/spirit and how you connect to others and allow them to connect to you.

1. Develop awareness of what you engage and create.
2. Observe the patterns of where and how you spend your energy.
3. Assess what does and doesn't enhance you in the transactions of paying your time and energy.
4. Recognize what is within your power, and what is not. When your head and your gut both agree, you'll never go wrong.
5. Is all of you going in the same direction?

Your effectiveness encompasses everything that you think, feel, experience, and do. You will be ineffective and helpless in controlling other people and their actions. You have no determination over what someone says, thinks, or attempts in regard to yourself. You have total determination over whether you buy into and accept another's assumption and assignment, or whether you hear it simply as a self-statement of the speaker. If you're invited to an argument, you can decide whether to accept the invitation.

Choosing what you engage includes meeting your needs of love and connection, letting go of the past, determining what desires are in the present, and installing possibilities rather than obstacles as you proceed. Options that you create include being present, centering in the current moment.

You elect how to spend your emotional currency, including whether you spend it on worry, regret, remorse, or suffering. With awareness and the recognition of choice, you own all of your self-statements. Another person can only make self-statements, no matter how focused or directed at you, so it is important not to take their comments personally. This is a choice as well. Choosing not to become the container or target of someone else's self-statement is important in a relationship, especially an intimate relationship, and in regulating your own feelings. All you can ever do is share your experience of someone else. The fastest way to make someone angry is to try to change him or her.

When hope is still in an old context, attempts to change become frustrating and impossible. Hope in the old context does not know the present or future. You have to have a new story to be in before hope can reside in the new container and context. Hope in a past context, such as why your parents didn't love you in the way you needed and wanted, will remain fruitless, because you can no longer reenter that past. Repetition of this old storyline by attempting to write a better ending locks hope in the past.

To address conscious choices, four areas need to be in sharp focus:

- Ideals
- Needs
- Prioritized goals
- Clarity of tangible and specific results

Your readiness and willingness to specify these four issues mark a significant beginning. Examination and mobilization of these basic areas create new ways of thinking, doing, being, and growing. Insight, understanding, and analysis of the old story produce only a well-analyzed old story. Insight and understanding are important, but change has to be addressed as well. Change includes creating both a new experience and a new model in which to understand that experience.

Change can mean giving up the familiar, embracing risk/anxiety/perception of danger, and exposing that which you believe is dangerous or would result in danger. Trying to change your past is not change, as your past will always be the way it was

Success also involves significant change. Greater success introduces greater adjustment. The greater the movement from the pre-success position and the shorter the time frame, the greater will be on the need for change. The professional athletes I have worked with offer a good example of a dramatic shift to sudden wealth, with new levels of challenge, demand, and stimulation all at a very young age.

Written and reviewed, your daily validation and progress notes become rewarding and nurturing. Doing this in your time, just for you, is a means to affirming and recognizing positive achievement. Mastery (the process and journey, and the metric of achievement—the goal and destination), when attained, enhances self-esteem

This process can directly affect your sense of self and all the qualities that self prefixes: esteem, confidence, validation, initiative, regulation of feelings and tension.

One of the most essential aspects of actualizing full intelligence and creativity is establishing a structure for it to manifest. Unique intelligence can emerge from this structure, from a disciplined, strategic schedule.



Two simple examples demonstrate how a framework can influence thinking.

I took my daughter at the beginning of her teenage years on a Hollywood trip. She wanted to see movie stars in restaurants and take tours to see their homes. We spotted four “stars” just in the baggage-claim area at the airport, but when we looked more closely, they bore little resemblance to our first identification. Our inclusion criteria, based on our enthusiasm, were far too high.

While we were watching episodes of “Wheel of Fortune” being filmed, the two hosts chatted with the audience between segments. Some spectators wondered how they kept thinking of new mystery words or phrases. They said that once they and the production crew got in the mode of thinking of the puzzle words and phrases, new ones would occur to each of them even as they were driving home or to the studio.

Similarly, once you become immersed in a process, it becomes self-perpetuating. Creativity begets creativity. It just needs a framework and a structure within which to take shape and form. Definition and discipline allow it to blossom. Change of behavior and habits operates in the same way, providing a structure within which it takes on a life of its own.

This process becomes automatic, a framework in which creativity can occur. It also becomes a gyroscope of establishing a groundedness and an internal point of reference for self-correction and self-righting. It is a step in developing your own system of learning, validating, measuring, and structuring progress with attainable goals. This learning creates a confident state of mind. Confidence as a state of mind transcends usual ways of thinking and pitfalls to create its own process and answers. Confidence begets confidence.

B. Editing and Enhancing Your Choices

[In Workbook]

MAKING CHOICES: INQUIRIES FOR BEGINNING A NEW STORY

The following queries focus awareness on how you choose.

- Reflect on what changes in your life that you can make independently.
- Consider which changes you need to make collaboratively (such as with a spouse, a business partner, boss, executive team).
- Recognize when you should let someone else make the final decision (such as a spouse or a boss).

- Identify what you can and what you can't determine. Put all of your energy in what you can determine. Accept what you can't determine.
- Get rid of the things that you don't want. Let past mistakes teach you, then let go of them.
- Every increment of behavior, such as each bite of food you take, is a separate choice. Do you like your choices? Every choice you make affects now and tomorrow in some way.
- What accomplishment, if completed within a week, would produce significant movement or impact? Are you willing to do it?
- What accomplishment, if completed within a month, would produce significant movement or impact? Are you willing to do it?
- What accomplishment, if completed within a year, would produce significant movement or impact? Are you willing to do it?

C. An Exercise to Structure Positive Focus

[In Workbook]

AN EXERCISE TO STRUCTURE POSITIVE FOCUS

The following is an exercise to bring positive focus as well as structure to your life, one day at a time. This exercise transforms each 24-hour segment of your life into a unit of positive learning experience.

- Schedule a time just for yourself, such as a brief time-out at the end of the day, to reflect on three achievements for that day. These achievements may be about business or personal life.
- Write down the three achievements. Examine them to determine why they were important, why and how each of the three was significant to you for that day.
- Explore how you could make more progress in each of the three areas.
- Then for each of the three achievements write down ways that you could make more progress.
- Write down the specific actions or behaviors you would take in each of the three areas to further progress.
- Review the three areas and actions taken the next day at the designated time.

One of the original architects of the coaching process, Dan Sullivan, constructs a 21-day program of doing a version of these essential exercises each day for twenty-one days, believing that it takes that long for a habit to form. This process also integrates the immediate past (24 hours), the present moment of what you feel is important, and sets up the next day in a positive



and framed way to create a structure and an immediate game plan. Each day clarifies and self-reinforces confidence of achievement. Whatever the motivation, understanding, insight, or plan, success depends on actual behaviors, on actions that in the short and long term lead to success. In his research, Dan Sullivan found that successful people are successful because of their habits—the default mode of behaviors that become automatic. A habit is simply a behavior repeated automatically, a procedural memory of incorporated routine. Twenty-one days is the period of time required for a habit to get established and become the default mode.

Develop clarity about exactly what you want, the reality you want to materialize. Write it down to place it where you will see it each day. In doing this, you orient your mind and focus your energy in the direction you want to go.

Bad habits and nonbeneficial behaviors operate on the same principle: A behavior becomes automatic by repeating it daily in as little as three weeks. This exercise of focus on specific, positive, habitual behavior replaces maladaptive patterns with adaptive ones to make them automatic.

- Identify bad habits and nonbeneficial behavior.
- Reframe the behavior to positive, beneficial results.
- Examine specific progress in each of the areas of behavior that can be affected presently.
- Consistently repeat the behavior daily for three weeks.
- Carve out a daily period of time specifically and consistently set aside just for you to review the most salient aspects of your day.
- Be loyal to yourself by honoring this time.
- Write down the achievements and the action for proceeding in future.

This process brings into focus automatic behaviors, and the assumptions and motivations that bring about behavior. For example, by sharply focusing on procrastination, you can discern avoidance (reframe into a specific time goal), inadequate preparation to begin (prepare and initiate), and decision to not do something (disengage altogether and engage what you do want). Plans, structure, behavior, and actions should all further your goals.

D. Authoring the Set of Stories Called Self

The self is the set of personal stories developed in the mind. The mind, invisibly formed by the brain, is inherently subjective and private. The self composes a plot of interwoven themes and storylines, more or less cohesive, as a consistent identity. The self, our greatest necessary creation, exists as a composite illusion, an idea but not a fiction.

We create a composite sense of self from a system of selves along complex neuronal networks, those designer assemblies of brain cells for experiences and interactions. This self—and all the unique qualities that self prefixes—esteem, confidence, initiative, identity—is personally authored. Being written daily, this, too, can undergo transformation.

Awareness of being the author of your own actions with an accompanying sense of effectiveness and mastery is only one component of creating your own story. Thoughts, feelings, sensations, and entire affect states may seem much more elusive to own.

Goals and ideals require a formulation of a concept of future time. When you fully establish and positively validate your self, esteem and confidence allow continuity planning a positive and expansive future landscape.

The particular moments that collectively comprise our lives, seeming unsummoned and individually indistinct, nonetheless compose the story of our lives. We may not fully comprehend these incidents at the time, and only later gain more understanding. These building blocks of moments of meaning are about being real and human, bounded and grounded, but not limited.

A new story recasts the past and the present as it layers new experiences internally and relationally alongside the old experiences to create a new meaning. Past, present, and future are current constructions. A new narrative can make sense of both the past and the present in a coherent way, allowing full potential and capacity to come to life. Reflection on the plot of your life and the assumptions underlying various motivations allows scrutiny as to which storylines work and which ones do not. The ones that work don't need fixing; the ones that don't work can be fully focused to see their adaptiveness in a prior context, then brought to the present and revised.

E. Creating Time and Keeping Power

“How do you find time to write with everything else you do?”

My answer, “I don't find the time. I create it.”

What do you need to do each day to take care of yourself? To strengthen yourself and enhance your growth? Do you create that time and honor it consistently? Do you do what enhances you? Creating and scheduling this time is at least as important as any other scheduled appointment or activity. It doesn't just happen, you have to create it. You will never *find* the time to do what you want to do; you have to *create* the time. The schedule and structure are not there until you create that as well. The structure provides the framework within which you can work, establish goals, and have that day as an increment in the big picture of your life.



This special time, cordoned off just for yourself, is the most important thing you can do each day to take care of yourself. Make an appointment with yourself, for yourself. During this time, you reestablish and reaffirm your groundedness, centeredness, and alignment with your true self, goals, and purpose. This alliance and collaboration with your self will also be the most important thing that you can do for those you love, especially your children and spouse.

You are providing the model of how and who someone can be to your children each day, each moment. What you do and who you are provide the model of the possibility of who your children can become. Children cannot surpass their parents in developmental growth during their childhood and adolescence. You have to lead the way in this manner as in every other aspect of parenting. They are always taking mental notes, logging in possibilities for themselves by what they see actualized in you, as well as what you facilitate in them. If you do not have and practice self-love, your love to them may seem contextual—caretaking in the role of a parent to do the things that a parent “should” do.

Power is an energy created from centering internally to synthesize motivation, spirituality, and emotion. Losing, abandoning, or relinquishing this groundedness gives away power. This emotional and spiritual energy is the antithesis of control and the use of power to dominate others. Power internally is the result of the alignment of all the above components, with all of you going the same direction from deeply within. A compromise to give away, minimize, hide, or subjugate your power signals itself in some way in your head and your gut. When what you think, what you feel, and what you do harmonize, you will know.

Knowing and feeling the full extent of this power may be compromised if you are not fully your own authority, or if you suppress the full experience of expression, mastery, or success, or fail to acknowledge success.

A popular ad includes statements such as these: *“The world takes little pieces of you, an indignity here, a compromise there ... forgets your name ... loses you in a sea of inhumanity ...”* Rather than assuming that the world is doing this to you, consider that what you do to yourself creates your reality. Personal power is yours to keep or give away, piece by piece, identity and dignity yours to create. Your decisions determine your reality and are your self-statement.

Speaking your mind becomes your mind.

- Reality is negotiable.
- Every choice has an end result.
- You can make radical changes in small steps.
- You never accidentally do something.
- Hope, a confident expectation of an aspect of the future, adds to the present.
- When specific, attainable hope is born, action can follow.

Develop clarity about exactly what you want, the reality you want to materialize, and write it down to place it where you will see it each day. In doing this, you orient your mind and focus your energy in the direction you want to go. Awareness is a powerful force to initiate understanding and change.

Your beliefs drive your thoughts, emotion, and energy. Selective focus on what you want to bring about will direct your energy in this regard. Repetition and consistency of the tangible goal will draw possibilities toward you. Emily Dickinson said, “I dwell in possibilities,” which is an entirely different residence and orientation from dwelling in doubt, disbelief, or assumptions that something will interfere with your desires.

Negative thinking not only drains energy but also directs it toward the negative path, and draws negative things toward you both in perception and actuality.

New behavior and new experiences create new pathways in the brain. With each repetition, those pathways become more deeply etched. When well grooved, such a pathway becomes a habit, an automatic behavior, the default mode. Your future self lives in your present mind. If you can visualize it clearly, then actualizing that vision can follow.



Section 3

Success Application

Once you know exactly what you want, the entire world conspires to give it to you.

Madonna

Trust your heart, especially when it is a strong one. Never contradict it, for usually it can predict the things that matter most: it is a homegrown oracle.

Baltasar Gracian
The Art of Worldly Wisdom



Module 6

Your New Money Story®

You will never let yourself have more money
than you think you are worth.

Zig Ziglar

If you put a small value on yourself, rest assured that
the world will not raise your price.

Anonymous



[In Workbook]

A. *Your New Money Story*®

What money means to people, what it says to them, and what they say with it constitute their money stories. A money story is a large part of a life story. Each person's unique relationship with money is complicated, because some of the most important aspects of it are emotional, even unspoken and unconscious. Some money issues are really about money, while many are about other matters, private or even secret, made palpable by money. For example, intelligent people spend money they don't have. Sophisticated people scheme and get scammed. Reasonable people forego leisure time to purchase money with their time and energy in order to buy back some of what they forfeited. Gifted people can't exchange their talent for proportionate income. Otherwise balanced individuals spend extravagantly or hoard compulsively. Reliable people ignore financial matters until they snowball. People with integrity write their own exceptions to rules about money. How can money make intelligent, sophisticated, reasonable, talented, dependable, ethical people act so goofy at times? And how can they keep on writing the same money stories that imprison them?

Money's language speaks self-statements. A self-statement is a unique, personal communication of your experience and point of view. What you do and say are ubiquitous, unavoidable self-statements of your beliefs and personal reality. Three people stand shoulder to shoulder and observe the same event, yet each of their stories of the event will be different. The three stories comprise self-statements of each individual's perspective from unique life experiences.

Money can make any statement, carry any message, and represent any notion. Money language conveys messages that sometimes are invisible to the speaker yet quite decipherable to observers.

This module helps you understand the emotional elements encrypted in money language and communicated in money behavior. You will learn how to understand and revise your own money story as a strategic, informed component of a life story.



I. Assess and Understand Your Money Story

1. A Money Quiz

[In Workbook]

A MONEY QUIZ

At several business seminars and presentations I passed out an index card and asked each person in the audience to write, anonymously, a single answer to each of three questions.

Here are the three questions:

1. To me money means _____ .
2. My current annual income is _____ .
3. In order to ensure happiness and contentment financially, with no more money problems and worries, my annual income would need to be _____ .

I suggest that you pause here before continuing in order to reflect on your own answers to these three questions. The subsequent elaboration may have considerably more meaning if it begins with your own experience of your three answers.

2. Money Quiz Discussion

[In Workbook]

MONEY QUIZ DISCUSSION

Statement 1. The range of answers suggests how much individuals attribute to money. Money provides a window of opportunity through which one may see hope, happiness, freedom, or security. Yet as any of us get closer to the “glass,” money becomes a mirror reflecting a desired or disavowed self. Self-statements made with money glare back at us to regulate mood, prove worth, keep score, affirm accomplishment, channel aggression, form attachments, or foster alliances.

Money enters into every aspect of life, a force and energy to be reckoned with daily. Money, as an emblem of feelings and significance, is one of the most emotionally charged objects in contemporary life. Always designed to be a symbol, money stands for what you idealize or want, fear or lack, feel you don’t deserve or can’t have.

Statements 2 and 3. More than 90% of the many hundreds of people I polled thought their annual income would need to be about twice its current level for them to feel happy and free from money worries. Someone who makes \$50,000 a year believes it would take roughly \$100,000 a year in order to be financially content. Someone who makes \$500,000 believes that the figure would be about \$1 million a year. And, in discussions after this poll, individuals whose income had actually doubled at some time also doubled their “happy and content” amount. When those who made \$50,000 achieved their \$100,000 goal, they then thought it would take about \$200,000 to be content and worry-free about money.

The answers to these three simple questions suggest how much more we attribute to money than its value as simply a medium of exchange. We project a range of emotional meanings onto money: Love, security, control, power, worth, freedom, success, and status.

Each of us has a money story, but we may not know how to tell it to ourselves to fully grasp it. The story seems to write itself, even to just happen. How do you “get” the money story you are creating each day? How do you understand the storylines of internal conversations about money, your personal history about money, hidden assumptions and emotional meanings, projections, money as mirror of self, how money is clothed in secrecy and taboo? Someone’s external goal may be financial freedom, yet an internal voice says, “I will never get out of credit-card debt.” Thoughts, actions, and words all have to go the same direction to produce success.

We interpret money. It has no meaning until we give it one, no power until we bestow it.

We interact with money, have a relationship with it, speak with it, and have it speak for us.

You can listen to your conversations, even talk to yourself. Every statement you make about money has its own voice and is part of your personal money story. You make several statements about money, some of which may be opposing and contradictory. By listening to your language you can discover your money story. By uncovering the assumptions and conflicts surrounding it, you can consciously write and live the story you want.

Every person has a money story. No one can fully see it because of being in it. The story seems to write itself, to “just happen” or be “just the way it is.” Common storylines in each money story include internal conversations about money, hidden assumptions, emotional meanings, money as both mirror and projection screen, with some secrecy and taboo.

Our money stories are a large part of our life stories. Some of the money issues are really about money, but many are about other matters, private or even secret, hitchhiking on money. Money is simple, yet complicated because some important issues associated with it are emotional, unspoken, and unconscious. We take money, the tool, far too seriously. We don’t take our money stories seriously enough—to recognize that we write them, live them, and can revise them. It’s hard to get money just right. It may occupy too much of our lives, or too little. Its importance may inhabit too large a space, or too small.



Professional Coaches and healthcare professionals often have difficulty with the business side of their practice, particularly charging and collecting a reasonable fee. Their difficulty can stem from the core value of compassion and helping others (seemingly while antithetically charging money for it). Often a simple reframing is useful; for example, one may see the fee for service as structure and boundary within which more meaningful work can be done. When this structure is in place, neither provider nor recipient is preoccupied with it. The valuation of the service and of the provider by setting and collecting a reasonable fee serves as a model for the client or patient.

3. Beliefs Ghostwriting Your Money Story

[In Workbook]

BELIEFS GHOSTWRITING YOUR MONEY STORY

We earlier looked at the question, “How much money do I need to be happy and content?” Now let’s look at a related question: What is the greatest annual income you can reasonably *expect to earn*?

This isn’t meant to be theoretical, as in, what *anyone* can expect to earn. The question is about *you*, personally and individually. And not if you suddenly won the lottery, or quit your job and in a fit of inspiration created the next Google, but what you can *reasonably* expect.

To get the most out of this exercise, answer the question with a specific dollar amount *before* you continue.

What is the greatest annual income I can reasonably expect to earn?

\$ _____

Now, let’s take a close look at that answer. Why is that the number you chose?

Do you know of anyone who earns more than that? There are people who earn many times the number you wrote? But there are hundreds of thousands of people in the world who are who are no more intelligent, gifted or born to advantage than you are, who have created large fortunes.

The question, then, is this: where did that “reasonable expectation” come from? From your story. In fact, this might be a more accurate way to ask that question:

What is the greatest annual income my money story will allow me to have?

\$ _____

You will be right about your assumption, whatever it is, because you live your life according to the script. You will let yourself make and keep only the money you think you're worth. Your belief system contains what is inevitable. Without awareness and ownership of your money story, the only way to exert any mastery over a limiting assumption is to determine how and when the inevitable will happen, and then bring it about by your own hand.

4. The Anatomy of a Money Story

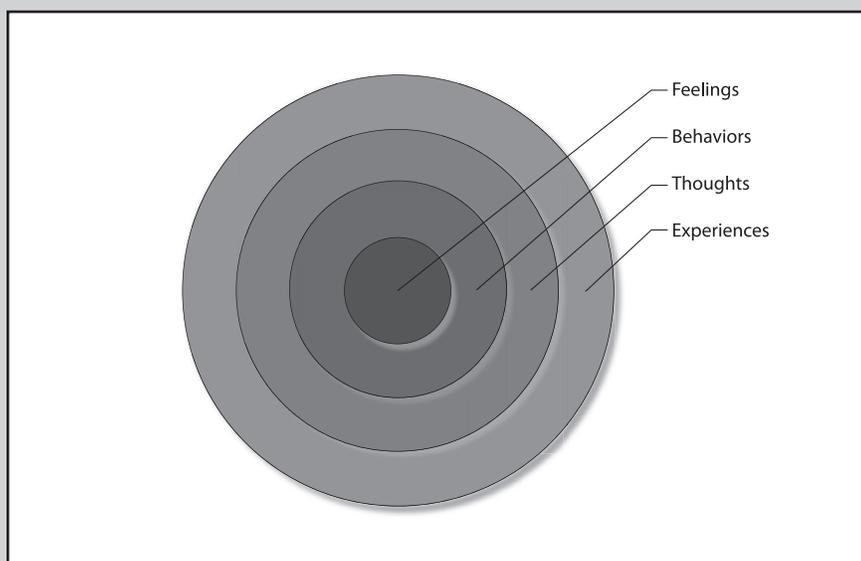
[In Workbook]

THE ANATOMY OF A MONEY STORY

To understand why we typically don't know our money stories, it's helpful to understand how we put them together in the first place. There are four distinct layers to a money story, each quite different from the others.

1. **Feelings:** our gut reactions connected with the strivings, emotional attributions, beliefs about, and representations of money in our lives and the world around us;
2. **Behaviors:** the things we do for and with money;
3. **Thoughts:** how and what we think about money and its symbolism;
4. **Experiences:** our overall reactions and responses to money, its significance and meanings in our lives.

CHART: Anatomy of a Money Story



Draw three concentric circles, with FEELINGS in the center like a bulls-eye, followed by BEHAVIORS, then THOUGHTS, and finally EXPERIENCES as the outermost region lying



outside the circles.

Fill them in with your own meanings for each—the first three words or phrases that come to mind in each of the four areas.

Feelings

We make money decisions based on underlying feelings, which give money its emotional meaning to us; over time those money meanings crystallize into our beliefs about money.

Money can stir deep feelings of anger, resentment, admiration, compassion, lust, hostility—the entire spectrum of human emotion is a magnet for the symbolic potency of money. Of the four layers of story, feelings are the deepest; they form the core of our money story.

Behaviors

Our behaviors are the clearest windows to our true beliefs about money. Unlike the hidden, internal world of our feelings, our actions are clearly visible. Our behaviors represent the secret language of money at its most readable and *least* secretive. What we *say* we believe is one thing; what we *think* we believe may be yet another. What we *actually* do is the clearest expression of what we really do believe.

Thoughts

We don't often think logically or even consciously about our true money beliefs, but we do think about our money behaviors—at least, sometimes. However, our thoughts are not usually central to the process (even when we believe otherwise). We tend to buy emotionally and *then* justify rationally, not the other way around. In other words, thoughts follow after the fact.

Thoughts are what we tell ourselves the story means, not necessarily what it really means. Like any “official” history of events made up after the fact, the story we tell ourselves is often a whitewashed version of what really happened. And this logical explanation often drives the real story underground.

Experiences

The various elements of our encounters with money all combine together to create an overall experience, which becomes what, to us, money *means*.

The experience surrounding money in its entire dimension, including our money behaviors, the feelings and beliefs that drive them and the thoughts, opinions and rationalizations that we have about them, all comprise what in time becomes the substance of our money story.

5. Can You Make and Enjoy Money?

[In Workbook]

CAN YOU MAKE AND ENJOY MONEY?

Mark the following items true or false.

- Talking about money, even with my family, feels embarrassing and seems taboo.
- I go on spending sprees I can't afford.
- I seem to consistently lose money on investments.
- I feel afraid and paralyzed about investing my money.
- I don't seem to be taking the initiative to learn more about managing money or investing, and I still rely on other people to make decisions for me, even though they're not experts.
- You've got to step on other people to really make money.
- I need to have money in the bank to feel "real."
- No matter how much money I have, I always want more.
- I use money to gain love and admiration, to compete with others, to show off my prosperity, or to gain revenge.
- I grew up poor, and although I'm doing all right now, I still feel poor and insecure.
- I have difficulty admitting my mistakes and cutting my losses.
- I'm pretending to be content with my financial status only because I'm afraid to make any changes.

If you answered true to any of these questions, you're probably having some difficulty gaining, managing, or enjoying money. No matter what you earn, old perceptions may persist because the questions are about your feelings and assumptions. Feelings are at least as real as dollars. Rich and poor are both states of mind.



6. *An Exercise for Awareness of Your Money Story.*

[In Workbook]

EXERCISES FOR AWARENESS OF YOUR MONEY STORY

The assumptions and beliefs that determine your money story deserve full attention. These exercises will illuminate invisible decisions camouflaged as beliefs and assumptions.

MONEY MEMORIES

Spend a few minutes writing anything and everything that comes to mind about your childhood experiences, fantasies, attitudes, and ideas regarding money.

As you were growing up, what notions were presented to you regarding money, its use, and its importance? _____

Were the principles presented to you consistent with what you saw your parents doing?

How did your parents behave with money? _____

How did they regard those who had less money than they did? _____

How did they regard those who had more money than they did? _____

MONEY MEANINGS

Spend a few minutes writing every word, phrase, image, feeling, and experience that the word “money” brings to mind.

Write about what you use money to express or do:

For yourself _____

For (or to) others _____

As reward for obedience or performance _____

To enhance growth _____

To create opportunity _____

For control (such as buying for others what you really want yourself)

For punishment by withholding _____

To manipulate behaviors or attachments? _____



What are your current beliefs about money and your attachment to it?

Some examples of beliefs:

- People who have considerable money are lucky
- People get money when and if they deserve it
- Wealth and spirituality are mutually exclusive
- People of wealth are different
- It's difficult to make a living in this economy

MONEY MATURITY

Be empathic with yourself rather than judgmental or critical. The observations can become reference points for what to keep, enhance, avoid, or let go.

How open are you about money details with your children? _____

How fully and honestly do you speak with your spouse or partner about money, finances, spending, goals, savings, and debt? _____

Step outside yourself and become your own mentor. Write the most important things you currently observe about money and your money story. _____

Does your current financial picture allow you to use your ability to achieve your personal mission? Professional mission? _____

Do you have a money mission statement? _____

7. A Debt Quiz

[In Workbook]

A DEBT QUIZ

Answer each of the following questions with a Yes or No, circling the scoring number in the corresponding column. For the first ten questions, each “No” scores 5 points, and each “Yes” scores *minus* 5. The next two questions are each worth 10 points, and the last is worth 20. When you’ve answered all the questions and circled all your points, add up your total score.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
1. Do you routinely make minimum payments on credit card balances?	-5	5
2. Are the balances on your credit card statements gradually increasing every month?	-5	5
3. Do you have a balance on one or more cards of more than 50 percent of the credit limit for that card?	-5	5
4. Do you often use cash advances on your credit cards to pay other bills?	-5	5
5. Do you routinely “play the float” on cards (juggle payments between cards) in order to pay bills?	-5	5
6. Do you regularly have past due bills, rent or mortgage payments?	-5	5
7. Do you have little or no savings?	-5	5
8. Have you been denied credit or had a credit card purchase declined during the last quarter?	-5	5
9. Have you had one or more checks bounce during the last quarter?	-5	5
10. Have you had one or more notices or phone calls from a collection agency in last quarter?	-5	5
11. Do you ever hide, misrepresent or neglect to mention a debt to your spouse or other family member?	-10	10
12. Do you ever hide a bill or credit card statement from your spouse or other family member?	-10	10
13. Are you unable to state, offhand and without sitting down to go through your records, the exact total amount of money you presently owe?	-20	20
TOTAL SCORE	—	—



Possible scores range from 90, a perfect score, suggesting you have no significant problem with debt, to *minus* 90. Obviously, the lower your score, the more likely you are to some extent caught in the debt cycle. Truthfully, though, if you answer *any* of these questions with an immediate “yes,” then there is probably at least some material in this chapter that has special meaning for you.

What is the solution? How does one escape from this vicious cycle? Because the entire sequence depends on playing “let’s play pretend,” relief starts by saying “no more games” and coming clean with the truth.

B. Symbolic & Emotional Meanings of Money

Money is a Rorschach onto which we project various self-statements of personal meanings. The hope that more money will bring happiness has to do with what “enough” is for you. Only with an endpoint of “good enough” can you know when you reach a goal. This presupposes having a goal, and a game plan about how to reach that goal.

Money is an idea as well as a fact. Money is a medium of exchange for goods and services, and its value can theoretically be distinguished from emotional and symbolic assignments. Money is also one of the most emotionally charged objects in contemporary life as an emblem of feelings, significance, and striving. Perhaps the other two vehicles on which so much hitchhikes emotionally are food and sex. The symbolic and realistic meanings of money are both important, probably inseparable for each of us, but particularly fused in emotionally charged situations such as money in a marriage, or in certain professional or personal arenas.

Money was always intended to be a symbol, so it is a ready stand-in for personal meanings of what we idealize, want, fear we don't have enough of, or feel we don't deserve or can never have.

Particular emotions, such as fear and greed, predominate in the money arena. Strategies and game plans may be abandoned at times of excess stimulation—when things are going particularly badly or especially well—so that bad investment decisions prevail. Money carries unique personal meanings for each of us from past experiences, social ideas, and our own unique emotional development. Even in coming to know our personal myths and ourselves quite well, we may have omitted consideration of the personally complex meanings of money: How it affects our beliefs, behaviors, feelings, and relationships.

C. The Psychology of Money

From a position of simplicity viewing money as money, we may see how much emotional complexity we attach to money. Money is endowed by each of us with conscious and

unconscious significance, to represent power, security, self-worth, love, happiness, control, dirtiness, freedom, status, sexiness, worldliness, acceptance, or a host of other personal meanings. It may be used as an icon of achievement, immortality concretized and passed to succeeding generations. The symbolic representations and perception of money are influenced by our cultural background, family values, developmental experiences, and emotional needs.

Although society adds some metaphors of its own, money symbolism is uniquely subjective. Money and meanings are woven into our personality from our life history, sensitivities, experiences, internal conflicts, emotional needs, and basic sense of self. And some of these symbolic meanings lie outside the realm of intellect, reason, and logic.

The symbolism of money may reside entirely in our right forebrain—the emotional part—at times disconnected from the left forebrain—home of reason and logic.

The issue of money may quickly spark ambition, insecurity, envy, fear, jealousy, competition, guilt, or any number of other emotional reactions. If someone is competitive, insecure, or prone to fantasize and worry, money is always a reliable and tangible focus, a yardstick of many measures.

Many emotional and relationship issues manifest vividly in the financial arena, with money seen as the answer, the problem, the cause, or the result. Money may be the common language of success phobia, impulsivity, and even fear of autonomy, exemplified by someone's creating financial crises from which to be rescued. Money symptoms include compulsions of gambling, shopping, hoarding. Money may become the currency of addictions in work, financial risk-taking, wealth acquisition, or impulsive spending.

While we often make decisions on an emotional basis, the particular meanings and significance of money present a built-in readiness to be an emotional tripwire for repetitive and limiting meanings and decisions.

The more money represents unfulfilled needs or wants, the more promise it holds of happiness. The perpetual hope that more money will provide happiness sharply focuses on what is "enough." Someone who assumes that more money will bring more security or freedom may find that, in fact, more money paradoxically brings a lessened sense of security and freedom. Or one may believe that if he only had just the right amount of money, then he could do exactly what he really wanted to do and have everything he wanted. The "right amount" may be a specific figure, but if it is a floating figure defined by "more," then it will be perpetually elusive. This illusion may not have to be confronted, however, as long as the amount extends beyond the realized. For most people, usually about double what one has is the typical illusionary figure.

Hope can be rolled into a "someday" fantasy, sometimes given a numeric value. The person who believes that he or she will finally be happy when "that final ten pounds is lost" may never



lose it, for then the illusion would have to be confronted that happiness is not specifically ten pounds away. For someone who is only one promotion away from happiness, how many promotions will it take to prompt self-reflection?

A person may recognize that what he or she thought would bring happiness does not. In the end, a symbol is only a symbol. Confronting the illusion of the symbol can precipitate a serious, often disappointing review of what money is and is not.

Pursuit of “more” may not clarify what constitutes “enough.”

Ron consulted me for Executive Coaching with an unusual presentation: He had run out of wall space. He had just received a coveted national award as one of the outstanding individuals in the country in architectural design. He placed this award on the only remaining space on his wall. The walls of his office, as well as his trophy case, were now completely filled with awards and medals. He had already met his goal of yearly earnings of \$500,000. With each accomplishment, he bargained with himself that the next success would make him feel complete and happy. His pursuit of happiness seemed elusive, though attainable; each higher monetary goal offered the hope of contentment.

Years before, he had believed he would feel comfortable when he had the security of fully funding his retirement plan. After that, he upped the ante to pay off his house mortgage, then his vacation property, then to achieve a net worth of \$5 million.

He recognized that he was trying to make money speak the language of fulfillment; yet it was not saying back to him what he wanted. There were no admired colleagues more senior than he to applaud him. There were no higher awards to achieve. He did not need more money. He was not happy, and now his hope of contentment seemed illusory.

Money only kept score, but score of what? He recognized his orientation to money, and how he used it to garner the responses and admiration of others. Each round of applause had worked for a little while, but never well enough or for long enough. He felt a relentless desire for more, yet more never made him happy. He was finally forced to confront his illusion that more would be enough when he had no remaining wall space for more awards. He felt lost, crystallizing a baffled review of what was missing.

Ron admonished me, however, not to take his earlier symbolism too lightly. He commented, “I’ve never seen a problem that money made worse. I know that

money can't buy happiness. Then again, happiness can't buy government- insured bonds.”

We examined his ideals—his internal values that serve as guiding principles (Module 1). His ideals centered on achievement and mastery, yet his goals of further awards and more money by definition could not be met—there is no end point to “more.”

Ron quickly recognized that his fundamental needs to be acknowledged and to be cared for were only partially met by his goals. His ideals were not in alignment with his goals—or his passion. After some reflection, he decided to devote his professional time to architectural projects that he selected for reasons different from the influences on his previous ones. He chose projects that he could do uniquely well (rather than taking on all available business), and those that he felt passionate about. He also shifted from his work ethic of putting in 12- to 14-hour days to a productivity ethic, allowing himself satisfaction with each day's accomplishments.

This transition led Ron to work more happily, make even more money, and have more discretionary time. He devoted some of that extra time to funding and organizing Big Brother events.

D. The Neuroscience of Money

Money mastery requires an understanding of how the mind works. A state of mind is a psychophysiological state, an internally organized software program of expectations, attitudes, meanings, feelings, and decision-making (See Module 4).

We all have different states of mind. Within a particular state of mind, we perceive, remember, feel, think, behave, and respond in a consistent mode. A normal range of states of mind include calm relaxation, reflective thinking, focused alertness, worried anticipation, and emotional stimulation. “Zoned out,” “in a fog,” and “on tilt” all refer to states of mind. The mastery and regulation of state changes often determine effectiveness in the repertoire of human skills and tasks.

We enter and exit states of mind fluidly and invisibly, like the precision baton passage between relay team members. Each of us has a continuum of states of mind, usually with some awareness of what state works best, from the alertness of business endeavors to relaxation for sleep. We intuitively learn how to enter and exit different states. More sharply focused pinpoint attention is useful when giving a speech, while relaxation moving into somnolence works best for bed time.



Feelings always come first and trigger state change. Feelings, which are the subjective experience of distinct emotions, are one component of each state of mind. Additionally, each specific software program of mind state determines what you notice, the meaning you attach, access to memory, emotional regulation, and behavior patterns. If you are in a gloomy mood, worrisome possibilities and pessimistic scenarios abound. In a ruminative state, you may have difficulty thinking of anything other than insufficient finances. In a happy, optimistic state of mind, the focus shifts—perception changes the same facts. Each state of mind has its own developmental history, its own set of expectations to filter and organize perception.

One's mastery and regulation of state changes can determine effectiveness at any task. The simple version is this: To change your mood, you have to recognize that you are in one. Each "mood" or state of mind has its own characteristic software of thinking and feeling. Many of the difficulties of performance in various arenas are about mood regulation more than about competency. A state of mind may be determined actively, or a state change can be introduced inadvertently by an emotional tripwire, such as in the Vietnam veteran startled when a car backfires.

The Brain in Good and Bad Times

It's no wonder, then, that we can get caught up in a prevailing market mood of exuberance or depression. Dramatic events such as the 1987 and 2008 stock-market crashes provoked anxiety; the surging tech stocks of the late 1990s induced greed. An extreme emotion, such as fear or greed, may derail one from his or her usual brain tracks and shift state of mind. Decisions made in a fearful state of mind follow the survival mode, which are quite different principles from those of long-term investing. Present fear renders the past and the future as inaccessible as logic and reason.

Mastery with money and investing requires having principles, consistency, and a game plan including understanding how your mind works. Money loss in investing is generally the result of emotional decisions that trump otherwise good information, advice, and strategy. At times of stress, the emotional stamina to resist reacting impulsively is as difficult to achieve as it is important.

Rational thinking and intuitive knowledge come together in a calm, focused state of mind to allow one to access and synthesize different realms of knowledge. This reflective thinking mode contrasts with working hard at performing a task.

Most bad money decisions are the result of emotional decisions rather than information, advice, or other strategic aspects of investment philosophy and practice. Mastery with money requires having principles, consistency, and a game plan including understanding how your mind works.

Emotions can override logic and game plan in money management and investing. Certain

situations and characteristics of the emotional components of investing and managing money have the potential to derail reason and logic, with the emotional brain dominating decision-making. Insight and understanding offer a beginning move toward the remedy.

The fear of losing money is a predominant motivation for some investors who are more influenced by past loss than by the prospect of future gain. Presetting emotional stop-losses to set a comfort zone may be as necessary as financial stop-losses on the equity.

Abandoning a game plan at a time of excess emotional stimulation (fear, greed, and euphoria) may transcend an objective view and knowledgeable input, such as an investment plan. When emotion predominates, vision contracts (the fixed focal length of an emotionally altered state of mind), so that past lessons and future plans blur. In a radical market, emotion prevails. One solution is to focus on what you can determine (loyalty to your game plan) and accept what you can't control (the market), so that you stay grounded rather than get swept into emotionally reactive decisions and changes. A regular finding through many types of studies is that investment losses based on emotion and attitudes far surpass those based on fact, stock selection, or system.

The relationship to risk is a highly subjective and emotional matter. Risk here refers to the subjective emotional perception rather than to various business models, investing measures, and techniques for lowering the likelihood of loss (such as asset allocation, diversification, buy-and-sell disciplines).

The perception of risk is a highly subjective experience. Past experiences of loss in any emotional arena and even of trauma can color the perception of risk, as risk is often associated with loss. If loss is highly charged emotionally, even acceptable risk may feel exaggerated, so that one avoids or reacts to situations based on feeling rather than on fact.



II. Revising the Text of a Money Story

A. Your Money Mission Statement

[In Workbook]

YOUR MONEY MISSION STATEMENT

Analogous to a business mission statement, a money mission statement proclaims the meaning, use, value, and purpose of money to you, including short- and long-term plans.

Here are some questions to ask as you fashion your money mission statement:

- What are the central themes of your current money story?
- What do you want the central themes of your new money story to be?
- What matters most?
- Are your needs and values in harmony with your goals and strategy regarding money?
- What do you want money to mean to you?
- How will you use money?
- How will you not use money?
- What relative value will money have in your life?
- What purposes will money have on your life story?
- What is your plan for acquiring the money you need now
- What is your plan for acquiring the money you need for your children's education?
- What is your plan for acquiring the money you need for retirement

B. Plot a New Money Story®

[In Workbook]

7 TECHNIQUES TO PLOT A NEW MONEY STORY®

1. Focus on the plot of your money story and the basic assumptions creating the storylines.

Assessment begins with recognizing that you are the author of your money story, just as you are the author of your life story. Take ownership of your experience. It does not just happen, even though it may seem that way.

Your experiences become consistent with your theories. You loyally align with the central theme, the plot, of your life. You perceive and process according to that plot, and any departure, even temporary, creates uncertainty. Developing a new story generates anxiety of the unfamiliar. The easiest and fastest way to end this uncertainty is to go back to the comfortable, but limiting, old story.

Examine your beliefs and assumptions creating the storylines for each recurring money problem, as well as for each financial success. Problems and successes both exist when you create them. And both are lessons.

For each obstacle, look for its core assumption. For example, if you feel you have been treated unfairly in a business deal, did you silently hope that someone in authority would take care of you? Use the situation as a lesson to take better care of yourself. Recognize that there is no ultimate arbiter of fairness.

Are you susceptible to a good investment story? Do you want to buy a promise of fulfilling your hope, rather than assessing the purchase with the same research you would in purchasing a computer or refrigerator?

2. Assess the money storylines that work and those that do not.

Regardless of intent or motivation, promise or possibility, the bottom line is always, “Does it work now?”

Do your recurring obstacles share a common theme, such as goals not aligned with needs and values? Or do you hear the story you want to believe?

Core assumptions form the basic beliefs about yourself. Organizing, powerful, and influential, they fashion the storylines of your life. The more you try to disregard, disavow, or counter them, the more intense their influence becomes. These beliefs are not “just there.” You create them. Our behavior best indicates your beliefs and values.

What patterns do you see in your handling of finances?

3. Recognize passive versus active positions regarding money.

Words reveal an internal model. Listen for explicit language reflecting a passive or active position, and for an internal or external point of reference.

Active language reflects an active position and ownership of initiative. Rather than “I’ll try,” active language says “I will.”

Passive language arises from beliefs about fate, luck, destiny, victimhood, entitlement, or



hope. The language of this position makes the creator both subject and victim: “My fear took over.” “The market beat me up this week.”

Pressure words indicate an external point of reference rather than internal authority: should, have to, ought to, need to, or must.

Limitation words reveal the assumption of constraint: impossible, can't, shouldn't.

Nonspecific actions and nouns generalize and universalize experiences rather than create a specific focus and action potential. “I came to an impasse.” “My mind played tricks on me.”

Abstract goals impede precise strategy. Attitudes of wanting to be happy, to change, or to be comfortable with money defy goal planning and strategy.

Your language will both reflect and facilitate ownership of your story to become your own authority.

4. Assess what you want to change.

Change begins when you recognize that you author your own story. If a problem recurs, rather than simply getting over it, countering it, or adapting to it: It is not there until you create it.

5. Determine what you want to let go.

In order to change, you first have to know what you want to let go. The bottom line, no matter how entrenched the process or strong the hope, is “Does it work?” Unfulfilled hope—what might have been—becomes the most difficult goodbye. You are never more aware of what you've missed in the past than when you give it to yourself now.

6. Know what you want to avoid.

The pull of the old and the fear of the new exist side by side. Yet there is no future in repetition.

Recognize what you can and can't determine. Disengage the impossible, especially trying to change another person. Avoid involvement in nonproductive, energy-draining struggles, such as arguments: What is the sound of one hand clapping?

7. Clarify what you want to enhance.

Your money story, like your life, manifests your beliefs.

Changing your mind changes your life, as beliefs, goals, and visions drive action. Choose carefully what you engage. Your money story and your life story should be mutually enhancing. Both share the same text: What is really important?

C.7 Guidelines for Establishing a Healthy Money Story

[In Workbook]

7 GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING A HEALTHY MONEY STORY

1. Remember that money is money.

Owing money does not “mean” anything about you or your value as a person, just as having a lot of money does not mean anything about who you are as a person. It’s only money. Let go of whatever complexity and emotional drama you have attached to your money, your spending, your debts, your possessions, your net worth, and all the rest. As crucial as it is that you deal with it responsibly and consciously, remember that it is only money.

A firm grasp of this fundamental principle—“Money is simply money”—is the foundation of all sound financial decisions and behaviors.

2. Understand that internal satisfaction can transcend money.

Money means less when true inner peace exists; it becomes a simple medium of exchange, free from complex meanings or hopes of enhanced self-worth.

We live in a society that tends to equate “success” with financial prowess. But many forms of success have no relationship at all to financial success. The most genuinely successful people typically find work in an area they enjoy and that is intrinsically motivating, and their financial success is in essence a by product of that larger *life* success.

The German poet and philosopher Johann Goethe, when asked for the secret of life, replied, “The secret of life is living.”

3. Know that there’s also nothing wrong with money.

Be careful not to idealize poverty and rationalize the lack of success as somehow nobler than wealth. Money bestows on the possessor many choices not otherwise available. As Albert Camus put it, “It is a kind of spiritual snobbery that makes people think they can be happy without money.”

4. Learn how to balance money for today with money for tomorrow.

Money can be used constructively to enhance enjoyment and satisfaction in life. These joys should be balanced with the accumulation of money for future security.

5. Create a financial plan that reflects your values and priorities.

If you don’t know where you’re going, any map will do. Money problems arise from falling



prey to easy credit availability, but we only fall prey to easy credit when we lack a clear larger plan.

A financial plan doesn't have to be complicated; in fact it's better if it's not. Identify your priorities in life, create the financial goals that support those priorities, and chart a path to get there.

6. Seek out suggestions and advice from an expert.

The decision to seek consultation from people knowledgeable in specific areas is logically sound but emotionally difficult. Consulting someone who will mirror and agree with your own opinions is far easier than listening objectively to critical or contradictory information without responding defensively or remaining stubbornly attached to your original position.

The point of consulting an expert is not to follow their advice and wholly abandon your own perspective, but to maintain your own viewpoint while staying open to what you can learn from the expert, and then using this new information to form a flexible and better-informed position.

7. Go on a media diet.

The media is remarkably effective at fanning the flames of compulsive spending. The message the media gives you generally goes something like this: *You are overweight, unfit, unattractive, your life is boring, you're in incredible danger, you may even smell bad—and the solutions to all these problems are just a purchase away.*

Start noticing the choices you make, including what you buy and consume, based on what television, magazines and other media tell you. Seek out one specific media source each week that you disagree with or dislike. Experience the difference from your previous perception.

Start making your media choices conscious; exercise your prerogative to watch, read and listen to only those specific media resources that you choose, and savor them well.

Fasting is good for the soul: consider giving yourself one fully media-free day per week.



Module 7

Your New Career Story

You need people who can tell you what you don't want to hear.

Robert De Niro

The two things that people want more than sex or money are recognition and praise.

Mary Kay Ash

We will either find a way, or make one.

Hannibal 47-183 B.C.

[In Workbook]

YOUR NEW CAREER STORY

The module deals with various steps of achievement, including how to: understand how and why someone fails and succeeds, examine implicit and explicit learning and performance, and create a mindset of success.

Individual needs and ideals must align with career and goals for synchrony of purpose and for core value investing in one's career. Exercises synthesize purpose with ideal, and goals with strategy. Career enhancing caveats precede an exercise on integrating core ideals with goals, navigating changes and overcoming obstacles.

Optional tracks include work addiction identification and remedy, why managers succeed or fail, strategies for common managerial challenges, and the recovery from job loss.



I. Core Value Investing in Your Career

A. Meanings and Values of Work

A wealthy individual once told me that although he didn't need to work for financial reasons, he still needed to work. "Working fulfills me, fulfills my desire to achieve. I say who I am through the work I do. When I'm not working, I feel like an artist without a palette." He described his ideal to produce, to contribute, and to achieve. Work was not a compulsion or addiction, but a form of self-expression of his core values. Most of the serial entrepreneurs I've worked with have these values.

Others rely on work to provide continuity and stability, for self-validation, as a central organizer, or to maintain an internal order. Work is an expression of each person's entire human being. While it is only one expression, it often means more to us than the money or the other rewards it brings.

Individuals who find no pleasure or fulfillment in their work or career—who only "do their job"—remind us how vitally important work is to our emotional life. Those feeling depressed or lost after a long-awaited retirement capture our attention as well. Work is the stage on which we enact a large portion of the drama of life. However complete our sense of self and how autonomous our self-esteem, work still colors our perception of ourselves.

Work is often idealized as an identity. To some extent, we define ourselves by the work we do.

If self-esteem and self-respect sag, external markers such as work, prestige, and income level become even more meaningful. Our reasons to work (besides money) hold different meanings for each person: Self-esteem, gratification, personal ambition, creative expression, ethical values and beliefs, and internal needs. Work can also serve as a defense against unwelcome emotions and activities, offer relief from guilt, or offer escape from other life stresses. Work effectiveness may silence internal voices whispering "inferiority." Work and career are the domains of mastery of one's life and fate.

Those who are successful in their career almost always find it enjoyable and meaningful. William Osler, a 19th-century physician and teacher, stated,

"The very first step towards success in any occupation is to become interested in it. Experience and observation also help us see that success or failure in any endeavor is caused more by mental attitude than by mental capacities for almost all of us."

Value-based goal-setting highlights the distinction between satisfaction and mastery and the intrinsic rewards of work such as pay and prestige. Healing professionals, including

professional coaches, often have difficulty with the business of their practice, particularly charging a reasonable fee. Their difficulty stems from the core value of compassion and helping others, while charging money for it. Often a simple reframing is useful; for example, to properly value the work by charging appropriately, and to see the fee as structure and boundary within which meaningful work can be done. When this structure is in place, neither provider nor client is preoccupied with it. The comfort of the professional in setting and maintaining a fee serves as model for the client.

A type of externally oriented work ethic is exemplified by someone who always does what he or she *should* do and is *supposed* to do, constantly focusing on others' evaluation rather than on internal initiative and values.

Comparing yourself to someone else in any respect is to compare your inside to the other's outside. This is not an apples-to-apples comparison. When you look at someone else, you see only what you can generalize, or even idealize—while experiencing directly your own doubt, uncertainty, or discomfort. The analogy would be the beginning writer who picks up a piece of classic literature and concludes that he or she could never write as well as its author.

A common assumption is that those who succeed remarkably are the most driven, work the most relentlessly, and give up the most of their personal life. George Valliant, a Harvard psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, studied a group of subjects over several decades to discover that, contrary to popular mythology, those who enjoy the best marriages and the most intimate friendships are also most likely to become extremely successful in their professions and corporate world. Many of the successful people in his study were so certain of themselves and their goals that they actually preferred to preside over their own smaller businesses than to grow wealthy as executives in someone else's larger company.

B. Value-Based Goal Setting

Many people walk through their lives never being better than anyone else at whatever it is that they do.

1. What is it that you know or do better than almost anyone else in the world?
2. What is it that you do uniquely well?
3. Do your core values fit with:
 - What you are doing?
 - Where you are putting your energy?
 - What you are developing?
4. Are you passionate about where you are immersing yourself?
5. What do you want to know or do better?



While one man spoke of the many real-estate deals had done, along with the investments and developments that were a particular interest challenge, and profit for him, he also noted that he never forgot his home base, his commercial real-estate leasing business.

Don't ever forget where home base is. Never forget what you know best. Home base in business is to know and focus on the fundamental purpose of business. While you may have other interests, and take interesting tangents, home is the core business, the main and vital tap root, though there may be many other roots in a system.

In your career, as well as in your life, in order to achieve both happiness and financial satisfaction, all of you must be going in the same direction. In order for your career and personal success to achieve fullest potential, the inside and the outside must match: Strength, motivation, passion, strategies, and goals must be consistent with who you are and an extension of who you are—not to define yourself, but to be defined by you. The application of focus and direction on your potential and goals with all of you going in the same direction allows expansion of strength and measurable results toward achieving your vision.

Knowing what you want to achieve is crucial, with a game plan, specific steps, and measurable results. Review these four questions focusing specifically on your career:

1. What do you want to **achieve**?
2. What do you want to **maintain** without change?
3. What do you want to **change**?
4. What do you want to **delete or avoid**?

When you invest your time, passion, energy, and money in your core values, the result is success. As you constantly study, understand, and immerse yourself in what reflects your core values, a gain in personal power will be the result. Take care to avoid anything that weakens you or does not support your core values.

Success is a mindset.

A mindset is both internal and external and includes a game plan along with a vision. Success has less to do with skills or intelligence than with a mindset. Success is not necessarily about hard work, a product, or a service, though these may be necessary components. Thinking and acting like the owner of a business creates a sense of ownership of results. Results and activity are not synonymous. Attached to your ownership and commitment is the question, Does it work? The answer is less about what you do and more about how you do it, particularly in terms of enthusiasm and passion, and how aligned your approach is with your core values. Success involves constantly understanding, studying, and immersing yourself in your unique strength, to reinforce and support that uniqueness in every way, and to avoid that which distracts and weakens.

Value-based goal setting in your career builds and reinforces a unique identity. This identity consistently applies and reflects your core values. Success actualizes your full potential as a human being.

II. Career Enhancement

A. 18 Career Enhancement Caveats

[In Workbook]

18 CAREER ENHANCEMENT CAVEATS

- 1. When your head and your gut (what you think and feel) both agree, and you act accordingly, you won't go wrong.**

It is when we disregard, delete, or cover over one or the other that we fall into compromise. Emotional goals and internal values must be consistent with external plan and vision.

- 2. Having a definition of success and an internal ideal of "good enough" are essential for satisfaction.**

Epicurus had it right, "Nothing is enough for the man for whom enough is too little."

A passage in one of Robert Schumann's piano sonatas marked, "As fast as possible" is followed a few bars later with the admonition, "Faster."

The most outstanding characteristics of the superachievers I have known is that all of them love their work and their play.

- 3. Rich is knowing you have enough.**

An internal definition of success is essential. It may be defined differently by men, by women, and even individual by individual. The familiar model of male competition makes measurement of external success clearer. But internal success is measured by ideals, quality of relations with important others, and comfort with one's self. Self-esteem comes of having internal ideals as guides.

- 4. Long-term goals are necessary to keep perspective, while short-term goals are necessary to sustain enthusiasm and tolerate frustration.**

Short-term setbacks are essential to achieving success within the orientation and



organization long-term goals provide. In learning to walk, the toddler's fall is not a failure but part of the process of learning to walk. When you have the endpoint of your purpose clearly in mind, you can more easily keep setbacks in perspective.

5. Respect the boundaries between work and private life.

In order to be fully immersed in your work at your office, and likewise in your private life when you are home, a clear boundary between the two must exist for each day, each weekend, and for designated vacation periods. In order to be maximally effective when you are at work, making time for a private life and for play is crucial. Creativity, which can be nurturing in itself, needs time to ferment, develop, and expand. Even though you may enjoy and feel rewarded by your work, play is equally important.

6. Develop your emotional and interpersonal expertise as well as your technical expertise.

All three can be finely tuned and mutually enhancing. Consider also when different listening positions may be more effective. At times a colleague or employee may need your empathic ear; at other times, an objective, even confrontational position may be needed. Part of establishing a goal is identifying whom you need to work with. Then identify the skills, knowledge, and abilities you need to develop in order to reach the goal.

7. Thinking, feeling, and imagining are all active forms of doing something.

Yet thinking, feeling, and imagining are different from action. Physical action is not the only form of doing something. You can't simply apply willpower to become happy or undepressed; the emotional issues that interfere and facilitate have to be addressed.

8. A potential space between urge and action is where judgment resides.

"What is in my best interest?" is a question that can always be in the background, and at times the foreground. Thinking about something and considering it is a response, one that may be necessary at times when you feel the urge to act, or may be feeling the pressure from others to act. There are few true emergencies in life.

9. You'll never do anything important that will feel comfortable in the beginning.

Mastery requires you to proceed despite your anxiety. You can't learn to swim by figuring it out on paper or in your head. Mastery and effectiveness convert anxiety and uncertainty to comfort. Anxiety is often assumed to be bad, as a signal of danger as it may have been in an earlier context. Consider anxiety as a signal that you are proceeding in new territory, beyond where you've been before. Anything really important requires a commitment to going forward despite discomfort.

10. Assess what reaching a goal will do.

It is important to know what achieving a goal will do in order to distinguish clearly what it will not do. For example, reaching a career goal will not undo the past, or make other troubles go away. Having more money won't make a marriage relationship better.

11. Just having a choice can make choosing the same thing feel very different.

Not only can you change, you can choose how you change. A gain in insight and understanding constitutes internal change; external change is another step in and of itself. Every step of growth and change involves its own mourning; you have to relinquish a past position in order to move ahead.

12. Growth and change are hard. The only thing harder is not growing or changing.

What you decide to accept undergoes a change. The only familiar territory is behind you. Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard said, "Life can only be understood backwards, but it must be lived forwards."

13. Recognize your own limits in order to achieve success.

It may be difficult to recognize those limits and to seek the advice of others. It may seem a weakness or an acknowledgement of limitation to consult with an expert. Failing to recognize the limits of your knowledge in any area, or being unable to admit mistakes, can profoundly hamper your judgment.

14. Admit mistakes in order to cut losses.

For instance, the prospect of selling a plunging stock at a loss may make the loss so concrete and real that you will have difficulty selling. As long as the stock isn't sold, you can retain the hope of reversing the "paper loss." Be able to recognize that success and sound decisions in one arena, such as being an accomplished physician, does not guarantee success in others.

15. Be willing to seek suggestions, critiques, and advice without taking it personally.

Consulting only with those who mirror and agree with your opinion is far easier than listening objectively to critical or contradictory information. The decision to seek consultation from individuals knowledgeable in specific areas may be as logically sound as it is emotionally difficult.

16. Distinguish lack of information and organization from unconscious conflict.

Further information, strategy, and redoubled efforts will continue to fail if emotional conflict creates a barrier. Determine whether your plan is faulty and needs to be changed,



or whether poor performance prevents realization of the plan.

17. Planning and strategy are essential components of a plan.

A plan, an agenda for what you want to happen, must combine with strategy, a view, and structure of how you will proceed. Strategy includes flexibility, because you can't always predict exactly what will happen or how you will need to respond. The most common reason for failing at a plan is not having one. The second most common reason is having a plan but not sticking to it.

18. Examine the process that gets you to a good result. Examine the process that gets you to a bad result.

You can learn immensely from both. Any plan for success must incorporate the understandable fear of taking risks and making mistakes as a necessary stepping-stone to goals.

B. Systems and Leadership

The simple version of systems theory follows:

There is something indispensable to be learned in playing sports. It is the first experience of team outside a family. Winning is a metaphor that everyone believes in together, a common shared goal. An example is basketball, in which all players must know what everyone else is doing on the court and orchestrate their moves accordingly toward an immediate goal (the basket), an intermediate goal (the game), and a longer-term goal (a winning season). The few players with the most baskets will make the papers the next day, so that is their reward. They, as well as the coach, must congratulate everyone for the team's victory—especially the reserves who never got to play, because it is up to them to provide the day-by-day work of training for the entire team. On a basketball team, even though only five players are on the court, the twelve people of the team, plus the coaches, make each shot.

Here's the complex version of systems theory:

General systems philosophy holds that any system (biological, family, organization) contains elements and subsystems that constitute the whole. A system is dynamic, nonlinear, and either self-organizing or chaotic. Developmental change in a system evolves from the interaction and coordination of many individual parts. Perturbation, or change of any nature or element of the system, produces a response and change in the entire system.

A common example is when someone in a family introduces change, such as personal growth, or when a company initiates a new procedure. The entire system responds by first opposing the change. This attempt to return to the accustomed equilibrium (even if it isn't working)

is a natural initial reaction. This resistance to change can be viewed as an opportunity to demonstrate belief in the new position in order to loyally stick with it. Then the next phase of systemic response, acceptance and integration, can occur.

Leadership inspires other people to perform beyond the ordinary, to unleash the human spirit through relationships.

Leadership is not a position, or what you say or do, but responding with extraordinary action. Leadership is neither a position nor authority, but effectiveness enacted. Real leadership begins with how we listen, whether in an organization or in a family.

C. Creative Criticism and Problem Solving

[See Personal Feedback Questionnaire in Module 2 in Client Workbook]

If you want to know how you're doing, you might ask subordinates to evaluate your performance in an anonymous questionnaire. You may be uncomfortable with such direct and explicit feedback, but it can be immensely useful. Subordinates are uniquely situated to experience, observe, and evaluate their bosses.

The areas of evaluation can include leadership, organization, crisis management, facilitation of cohesiveness, and even inspiration. Since the evaluations are confidential and anonymous, and since no pay raise or promotion depends on them, you might not wish to share them with anyone else.

Co-workers feel effective to be able to give such feedback. Knowing that a superior is interested in their comments leads to greater involvement in their company.

[In Workbook]

A SYSTEMATIC METHOD FOR REVIEWING AND SOLVING PROBLEMS

A systematic method for reviewing and solving problems can be remembered by the acronym SOLVE:

- S** – State the area of the problem as specifically as possible.
- O** – Outline the problem in as much detail as possible: where, when, how, who.
- L** – List alternatives. Write down the first ten solutions that come to mind without analyzing them. Then select the three best solutions, which are the ones that recognize your unique abilities, do not create limitations, and that organize a focus.
- V** – Visualize the consequences. This visualization should incorporate a good bit of your



interests, abilities, personality style, and values with your problem-solving approach. The alternative that feels best—the most comfortable—may be the best. Plan a strategy to achieve the specific goal. Gather information from experts if necessary, but develop your own plan.

E – Evaluate the results after a full effort at problem solving. If there has been a failure, evaluate the most common causes of failure: A wrong fit between work and abilities, interests, and personality style; too scattered a focus; an absence of commitment; discomfort about being in unfamiliar territory; hidden barriers, such as conscious goal in that opposes a need or ideal.

D. Career Assessment: Core Values, Goals, Changes, & Obstacles

I once heard a successful business leader mentoring young adults who were deciding on a career path. After significant focus on following their passion, unique talents, and core values, he added another dimension. If things get really tough, and the boat appears to be in danger of sinking, which people will be at the front of the line at the lifeboats? Closer toward the front are people who have fundamental skills to offer having to do with health, food, shelter, transportation, communication, money, and organization. Definitely at the back part of the line are the dinosaur bone diggers, historians, and those who predict some aspect of the future.

In achieving career goals and choices in the path of success, commitment and resolution move directly to decisions. External obstacles must be overcome, and internal ones not created.

Part of the additional information required to accomplish your goals comes from acknowledgement of and collaboration with the other people, groups, or organizations you need to work with in order to reach your objectives. Specific measurable results and a time frame to reach goals constitute necessary components of your life plan.

[In Workbook]

CAREER ASSESSMENT

Core Values

1. In looking at my internal model of myself, am I clear about my ideals? Am I clear about my internal standards of “good enough”?
2. As I look at the big picture, do I have a clear overview of the past, present, and the future, in terms of my goals and values?
3. How well does my sense of self, values, and ideals, fit with what I am doing in my career?
4. If I would exposed my real self to a greater extent, what would be the result?

5. What labels do I attach to myself?
6. Do these self-imposed labels limit me or serve as an explanation for my behavior (for example, shy, follower, or procrastinator)?
7. What do I know or do better and with more passion than almost anyone else? Is it synonymous with my values and ideals?
8. What is the one thing that I do uniquely well? What are the things, after what I do uniquely well, that I do exceptionally well? Good enough? Not good at? If at all possible, am I delegating everything that I am not uniquely good at?
9. Am I living my life fully for me, or for how I want to be viewed or think I should be doing?

Goals

1. Have I developed my own personal and internally derived definition of success, and formulated my own goals?
2. In goal setting, is my motivation primarily internal or external?
3. Is the reward or esteem derived from one area, such as career, absorbing more of my energy and time so that I create pressure and vulnerability in other areas that are also vitally important?
4. Have I determined what I can and what I can't effectively address and create? Am I putting all of my energy into what I can effectively create? Am I letting go or avoiding those areas where I have no power or ability?
5. What is my vision for my career in the next 12 months?
6. What are my top three goals?
7. What is my biggest challenge?
8. Do I have a specific strategy and plan to achieve my goals?
9. Do I have a map of how I want to reach my goal?
10. Do I have specific and tangible ways of measuring progress, goal attainment, and time frame?
11. After reaching a particular goal, do I wonder, "Is that all there is?" Or do I find that I am no longer sufficiently interested to sustain the passion and engagement?
12. Am I able to relax completely?
13. Am I holding back from making important commitments because they seem to close off other alternatives?
14. Does it seem selfish to act on my own needs?
15. Am I advancing in my career in line with my true potential?
16. Do I find it difficult to finish things without a deadline?
17. How much do I rely on others for direction, affirmation, and self-esteem?

Changes and Obstacles



1. Do I have a clear perspective of where I am now, in terms of where I've been and where I want to go?
2. Do I have a clear and precise game plan with realistic attainable goals and measurable results, with a specific time frame?
3. Are my decisions and progress and my career path consistent with my overall game plan?
4. Am I ready to make changes and to try new things, including calculated risks required to move ahead?
5. What is the most frightening thing about realizing the goals and results I have set out?
6. Am I willing to tolerate the anxiety and uncertainty of change and newness in order to sustain my effort and reach my goals?
7. Where do I create obstacles, or stop myself short of my full potential and goals?
8. What are the ways I distract myself and waste time?
9. Is there any internal influence keeping me from proceeding with my plan for success?
10. Do I feel that I have to be a driven, type A personality to really succeed?
11. Am I so concerned with making a mistake that I inhibit my efforts or hold back from trying something I really want to do?
12. Do I often base my decisions on how other people will perceive me?
13. Do I feel equally successful with family and spirituality as with career?
14. What opportunities exist in my career that I have not yet taken advantage of?
15. Am I at a place in my career where I am essentially running my work/businesses? Are there times when it is running me?
16. Do I make use of others - experts, consultant, advisors, and mentors - to provide input and objectivity?

III. Optional Career Tracks

A. Identify and Remedy Work Addiction

Work addiction is an unrestrained, unfulfillable internal demand for constant engagement in work and a corresponding inability to relax. A person with work addiction, a “workaholic,” is incessantly driven, relentlessly active. Work is the one organizing and effective activity. For some people, inactivity or activity other than work gives rise to guilt, anxiety, or emptiness. Some individuals view work as the only area in which they can establish and maintain their identities, feel effective, and enjoy feelings of importance, validation, and affirmation. Others may use work to counteract underlying feelings of inadequacy and ineffectiveness. In either case, the workaholic cannot rest.

Working long, hard, and passionately and deriving satisfaction from it does not make someone a work addict. An addiction is something you can’t do without. Those addicted to alcohol or drugs feel as if they cannot do without them. The person who cannot maintain comfort or a sense of worth without working is similarly addicted. People with work addiction feel they must work constantly, even on weekends, and during whatever vacations they permit themselves.

For these individuals, however, the relentless pursuit of work and the attainment of material gain do not bring pleasure.

Work addiction, like other addictions, affects the workaholic’s social life and restricts his or her personal freedom and happiness. In fact, excessive work can be a means of withdrawing from relationships, manipulating relationships by limiting one’s availability, or regulating relationships so that not too much is expected.

Individuals who are truly addicted to work do not find great pleasure in the work itself. Work addiction, like other compulsions, is an attempt to regulate one’s feelings and self-esteem.

[In Workbook]

WORK ADDICTION: SELF-EVALUATION QUESTIONS

Change begins by looking at things in a different way. Consider the following questions in relation to your work and your feelings about your work identity.

- Do you have a specific time when your work life stops and your private life begins each day? Each weekend? For vacations?

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- When you leave work in the evening, do problems, projects, calls, appointments, and meetings follow you home and erode your private time?
 - Do you have withdrawal symptoms when not working, such as restlessness, anxiety, depression, or psychosomatic symptoms?
 - Has anyone close to you ever accused you of being a workaholic?
 - Have you become creative in rationalizing your excesses, perhaps by convincing yourself that success demands a dedication bordering on obsession? Do you fear failure if you do anything less?
 - Can you not seem to stop replaying conversations at work, reassessing decisions, and reexamining work details?
 - Is what you do who you are? Is your identity as a person so closely linked to your work identity that it is difficult to enjoy an activity not connected with work?
 - Do you take setbacks, feedback, or criticism of work projects personally?
 - Are you still trying to prove your worth to yourself, or someone else, by what you do? Do you believe that only unending effort will demonstrate your true value?
 - Are you doing what you do for someone else's response, or for your own benefit and satisfaction of your own ideals?
 - Is work an escape? Does it allow you to fill a void or get out of doing something you regard as unpleasant, such as meeting family obligations or facing family conflicts?
 - Do you have medical problems as a result of overwork, or a physical deterioration from alcohol, cigarettes, skimping on sleep, or overeating?
 - Has your social or family function deteriorated as a result of excessive work, including neglect of children or spouse?

Some Remedies for Work Addiction

- Establish a clear boundary between your work life and your private life: each day, each weekend, and for designated vacation periods. If you feel guilty or vaguely uncomfortable with taking time off or relaxing, consider reframing the time, even the play, as a necessary component of your work. In order to be maximally effective when you are at work, making time for a private life and for play is crucial.
- Even though you may enjoy and feel rewarded by your work, play is equally important. Creativity, nurturing in itself, needs time to ferment, develop, and expand. You may even find it useful to set aside a brief time at the end of each day to allow closure of work activity, to have an official transition time that puts a period at the end of the sentence of each day so that time off is really time off.
- Establish your own life plan on a daily basis, as well as the big picture on a yearly and

career-long basis. Keeping a journal may be useful. Writing down your thoughts, feelings, plans, and timetables regarding work can clarify things and may provide a basis for reflection and comparison from year to year.

- Distinguish the feedback, criticism, and setbacks on work project in relation to the work itself, the task you've performed. Try not to hear them as a personal affront or invalidation.
- Develop your emotional, interpersonal expertise as well as your technical expertise. Both can be finely tuned. Consider, for example, when different listening positions may be most effective. At times a colleague or employer may need your empathic ear; at other times an objective, even confrontational position may be needed.
- Know the difference between thinking, feeling, and imagining, as opposed to acting. Physical action is not the only form of doing something; thinking and contemplating are active forms of doing something. This distinction may seem obvious, but it is not clear in the minds of many people. For example, a patient may come into the psychiatrist's office wanting to know what to "do" about her depression. There is no immediate thing to do; we must begin by understanding and resolving the physical or emotional issues that underlie the symptom. The patient's own failed attempts to approach the problem actively, to apply willpower and distracting activity, provide ample evidence that another approach is required.
- Reassess the amount of time you spend talking about your work with family and friends, and the amount of time you spend associating only with friends from work or people in the same line of work. Obviously people who care about each other are interested in all the things that are important to the other, including work. But being caught up in "war stories" may represent an inability to establish boundaries for work or an over inclusive identity with one's work.

B. Why Managers Succeed or Fail

The effectiveness of any business is determined by the leader's personality, the extent of the leader's expertise, the adequacy of the business plan, and the human and material resources needed to carry it out. Of equal importance is the suitability of the administrative structure to the requirements of the task.

Personality styles of leaders can either facilitate or derail success.

The leader's lack of technical knowledge, conceptual limitations, incapacity for administration, or an improper fit between personality and administrative style may all create problems for an organization. However, an extreme personality style forces the organization to adapt in ways that may limit its success. The three most common extreme personality styles that can create problems in an organization are the narcissistic leader, the authoritarian leader, and the emotionally isolated leader.



Narcissistic Leaders

Narcissism refers to one's sense of self and ability to regulate esteem and confidence. Unhealthy narcissists often compensate for a difficulty in self-esteem regulation by demanding affirmation and applause from others.

Extremely narcissistic individuals may be excessively self-centered. Their over-valuation of themselves may manifest itself in grandiosity, which serves to cover their feelings of inferiority, and their over-dependence on external admiration. They may be emotionally shallow, intensely envious, and deprecatory and exploitative in their relationships with others.

Leaders with unhealthy narcissism are often driven by an intense desire for power and prestige. They often assume positions of leadership and authority, and are hardworking, intelligent, and talented. However, individuals with pronounced narcissistic needs may dramatically compromise their own creative potential and, with it, that of their organization.

One of the most professionally devastating features of narcissistic individuals is their inability to evaluate themselves and others in depth, partly through a lack of capacity for empathy and a difficulty in connecting emotionally with other people. Their need for affirmation and feedback demands that they surround themselves with individuals who will confirm their view, praise, and idealize them.

Mason founded a company based on direct sales of personal products. Over only two years, he signed up 18,000 direct-sale members. His company became the fastest growing direct sales company in the nation. The rapid growth was due primarily to Mason's own charismatic appeal and to his ability to instill grandiose fantasies of unlimited wealth in his sales force.

In order to study such an individual and the phenomenon of his success, I attended the company's national meeting during the year of its most startling growth. It was an inspiring and emotional event for all those who attended. Their sense of unity centered on the expectation of unlimited financial opportunity.

The plans for expansion seemed to me particularly grandiose at the time, even considering Mason's rapidly rising fortunes. He spoke of building an entire town, a college, and a medical center—a small universe with his name stamped on all of it.

Equally remarkable, he would not allow in the corporate structure the formation of a functioning board of directors. He made all decisions and selected subordinates who "shared the vision," who literally idolized him. This extremely narcissistic leader created a system with no checks and balances and had no way to receive any input or opinion from anyone other than those who agreed with him.

Some ten months after this national meeting, the organization was bankrupt.

Mason's reach had far exceeded his grasp. Tens of thousands of direct marketers across the country simply could not understand how or why the bankruptcy had occurred so quickly. The main reason was that Mason had surrounded himself with "yes-people" who played to his narcissistic needs in order to participate in his power. More honest and critical members of his staff were either driven out as dissatisfied opposition or left the organization on their own accord.

Mason's ability to judge people in depth and to appreciate true human values was a critical (and massive) blind spot; his view of others was based on their ability to reflect his own opinions and views. He surrounded himself only with people similar to himself, as if he were standing in a hall of mirrors.

In the short run, Mason's grandiosity and expansiveness could be transmitted throughout the organization as a charismatic excitement, bringing an initial spurt of productivity. In the long run, however, his unhealthy narcissism brought about the organization's downfall. Mason's personality and style illustrate dramatically the kind of fatal weaknesses that, in other organizations and with other leaders, may take much longer to do their damage.

Narcissistic leaders require both submission and idealization from their staffs. They crave unconditional, repetitive expressions of admiration, which may become a requirement for communication with them. Their tolerance for unavoidable everyday frustration is low. Meanwhile, their wish to be admired for personal attractiveness, brilliance, and charm exists alongside intolerance for the success of others, if it overshadows or threatens the narcissist's own attributes. Such leaders may become resentful of the most creative or productive members of their staff. When a younger colleague develops professional autonomy, a previously supportive narcissistic leader may begin to devalue or undermine the colleague's work.

The Authoritarian Leader

Some leaders have an obsessive-compulsive personality that translates into an excessive need for order. They must always be right and always in control.

These traits make for efficient organizational functioning. No one ever doubts that there is a leader who is in control, which can be very reassuring. But if these traits are extreme, the inordinate need for orderliness and control may reinforce the bureaucratic components of organization and encourage decision-making on the basis of regulations and mechanized practices. An overly rigid bureaucracy may interfere with the creativity, expansiveness, and



autonomy of decision-making, which is especially likely to cause problems at times of rapid change or crises.

After graduating with honors from an Ivy League college, Mara was hired as associate editor of a national magazine. The salary was modest, but the job seemed to offer tremendous opportunities. On Mara's first day, the editor who hired her introduced her to Mr. B, the owner of the company. His name was listed as publisher on the mastheads of the four monthly magazines.

Mr. B remained seated at his giant, polished desk as Mara was introduced, and he then asked the editor to leave. Alone with the young woman, Mr. B looked over her resume and transcript with a sneer, then stood up to speak. "I see you're an educated woman," he said. "Well, to me, you're just a paper tiger to be tamed. You've got your fancy degree and I've got a seventh grade education, but I'm forty-seven years old and I've already got more money than you'll make in your whole life."

A few months later, Mara was performing her job competently enough that the editor arranged for her to receive a raise. At this point, Mr. B swooped into the editorial offices during the frenzied final afternoon of editing, just before the corrected galleys were due at the typesetter, to demand that Mara drop her work and run his personal errands for several hours. This apparently was a long-standing pattern, by which Mr. B's style caused his staff to miss their deadlines. They would then have to put in unpaid overtime to catch up, or he could unleash a barrage of criticism on them the next day for failure to meet the deadline. The editor, accustomed to this behavior, was silent. When Mara protested, Mr. B only laughed at her and repeated his "paper tiger" epithet.

After the third deadline day interruption in as many months, Mara spoke to the head of the secretarial pool, a formidable woman who was greatly feared by her subordinates. Her perfectionist criticism of their work was constant, and she had a caustic response to even a minute's tardiness. When Mara asked if the pool could spare the most junior typist to run Mr. B's errands on deadline day, the head secretary responded, "This office worked perfectly well before you came, young lady, and it'll work perfectly well after you leave. Any changes made here will have to be made over my dead body."

Both Mr. B and his head secretary operated with similar authoritarian personalities within an authoritarian organizational structure. Although Mr. B had won great financial success, he was so envious of those who had obtained the education he lacked that he felt compelled to attempt to humiliate them. The head secretary resisted any changes in her normal routine and guarded jealously the modest power

of her position. The self-esteem of both Mr. B and the head secretary rested on the fear and submission they evoked from others and the control they were able to exact. Paradoxically, they had come to love being hated, as if being hated were an emblem of their power.

The Emotionally Isolated Leader

These leaders isolate themselves from other executives in the company, frustrating the appropriate dependency needs of those executives and workers. One result is various pairings, or the formation of small groups for mutual support and understanding. Each of these subgroups may have its own agenda and ideas, creating particular difficulties for each corporation.

An adaptive evolution in this situation is when a particular manager or executive acts as a warm and compassionate buffer between the cold CEO and the rest of the company. This more open and responsive person functions in a nurturing capacity, so workers and managers feel listened to. Sometimes the buffer actually supports the organizational structure rather than splitting or undermining it.

Subordinates' predictable response to an aloof, isolated CEO is the development of fantasies about him or her. The distance between the CEO and the employees is filled with all sorts of notions about the CEO, simultaneously idealized and denigrated.

An Arabian proverb says that every man in his life should be able to plant a tree, write a book, and have a child. Translated in terms of an executive's functions, the planting of a tree might represent productivity and building new things; the writing of a book, the creation of new ideas and knowledge; having a child, the development of an organization's human resources through the encouragement of individual growth and the development of gratifying relationships in the process of productive work.

C. Common Managerial Problems and Strategies

[In Workbook]

COMMON MANAGERIAL PROBLEMS AND STRATEGIES

Although there are real, external reasons for managerial difficulty—including massive reorganization after takeovers and the realities of discrimination due to age, sex, and race—managers most often fail for reasons they themselves create.



Problem: Excessive Narcissism and Self-Interest

Individuals with an excessive need for positive feedback and a preoccupation with themselves quickly alienate colleagues, supervisors, and subordinates. Others with strong narcissistic needs may require the enthusiasm and idealization of others. If you fall into this category, you may try the following:

Solution:

- Reframe statements about personal glory and accomplishment as if they are organizational accomplishments.
- Use the words “we” and “us” instead of “I” and “me.” Caution: For this to work, the change in terminology has to reflect a change in attitude. You have to become an authentic team player.
- Instead of demanding recognition and affirmation from colleagues and subordinates, find other ways to address these needs. Other groups and endeavors outside your professional arena, as well as your family, may better meet these needs. If expanding your scope isn't enough, seek an Executive Coach.
- You must be able to be wrong all alone and be successful as part of a team.
- There is a thin line between self-absorbed narcissism and charismatic leadership, often bridged by thinking systemically of the group or organization rather than “I”, and supplying to others the very feedback most wanted by yourself: Affirmation, recognition, praise.

Problem: Inability to Get Along with Subordinates

Authoritarian leaders may have an especially difficult time inspiring others, creating a sense of loyalty, and establishing cohesive teamwork. Many experts in the field view poor interpersonal skills as the single most frequent factor in the failure of managers, especially early in their career. This is a crucial area.

Solution:

- Develop the ability to listen well. Invite feedback and criticism, then listen carefully, attentively, without interruption, and without the need to feel defensive.
- Remain empathically attuned to subordinates. Listen to them, to their experiences, and realize how they may hear what you have to say. Anything you say is already in the context of a superior-subordinate relationship; thus, they may be inclined to hear it more critically or harshly than you intend.
- View conflict and differences of opinion as something welcome and inevitable rather than as something bad that must be quashed.

- Involve subordinates in decisions to develop a we-and-us feeling. For group cohesiveness, all need to consider themselves part of the group effort. Elicit new ideas and cooperation.
- Give them credit for their work, and subordinate your own credit to the credit of the group.

Problem: Fear of Action and Fear of Failure

An emotionally isolated leader may retreat just when he or she most needs to engage. Fearing failure or significant criticism, such a leader may retreat, giving the appearance of lack of commitment. An underlying assumption is that inaction prevents mistakes in management. In actuality, this practice may hasten the leader's downfall.

Solution:

- Accumulate as much data as possible, but plan a time when data-collection will stop and action will begin. Some individuals will study something so exhaustively that they bypass deadlines needed for action.
- Separate, as much as possible, personal assumptions and fears of failure from the organizational task at hand. Recognize that inaction is a form of failure; know when action is required. A ship is safe in a harbor, but ships aren't made to sit in a harbor.
- At times, it may be useful to consult with someone outside the system who can be objective and observant.

Problem: Failure to Adapt to Change and Rebound from Setbacks

Life is a developmental process; so is the life of an organization. A once-successful management style or strategy needs to evolve as an organization grows. Flexibility of thought and action is especially important for managers in restructured or acquired companies. In a rapidly changing environment it is essential to relinquish old management styles.

Solution:

- Be sure your management style and approach fit with the organizational task and your level of responsibility. For example, the individual who moves from a creative or entrepreneurial task to the management of people doing similar tasks needs to adopt a different approach to work.
- Acknowledge failure, and request understanding and help in rebounding from it.
- Do not become defensive at criticism or feedback, but welcome it; cooperative input is vital in a rapidly changing environment or company. Don't try to conceal failure or blame it on others. The way one handles failure is an issue that may make or break an advancing career.



D. The Recovery from Job Loss

Dr. Lawrence Stybel found that terminated executives have stages of emotional de-commitment similar to Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross's stages of loss, including shock/denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.

Shock and denial manifest by initial refusal to accept or blocking out news and awareness of the job termination, more dramatically if it is sudden and unexpected. Typical responses of "It's not happening to me," and "I can't believe it," are necessary steps to accept help, engage full endeavors in closure, and search for a new position. Dr. Stybel points out that the expression of supreme confidence in ability and likelihood of locating an immediate new position are in part a denial protecting a narcissistic injury.

Anger forms the question, "Why did this happen to me?" Looking to blame others, to scapegoat a system, or to feel betrayed by both colleagues and superiors is a common reaction of disappointment and hurt, often converted into anger. Anger is basically the active reaction to counter hurt or helplessness, rather than a passive acceptance.

Revenge and bargaining follow, in which there may be a desire to seek revenge on the person or system. This may be accomplished by succeeding with a competitor or a business remarkably similar to and mirroring the lost one.

Depression manifests as diminished concentration, decreased attention span and short-term memory, tiredness, lack of energy, diminished appetite, difficulty sleeping, and decreased motivation. Feelings range from dullness to overt depression. This phase indicates a recognition and gut response to the loss. Positive endeavors to resolve the depression include increased exercise, diminished drinking, active pursuit of all job possibilities, and even thinking about different possibilities to apply knowledge and expertise in different ways.

Acceptance evolves this process into a more comfortable position of resolution.

With increasing acceptance, greater energy and effort can be directed to new pursuits. Learning about what has led to successes and what has led to failures is important at this time if one is to maximize and expand successes and minimize failures. Transition moments, those times when an individual experiences significant change, whether good or bad, is an ideal time to open to new ideas and to consider new experiences.



Module 8

Your New Relationship Story

They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel.

Carl Buehner

Love is the selfless promotion of the growth of another.

Milton Meyerhoff

[In Workbook]

YOUR NEW RELATIONSHIP STORY

Every relationship is co-authored, combining two individual stories and one co-created story. Each party in a relationship brings unspoken assumptions and implicit contracts that can derail the relationship. Exercises include power and gender issues, communication facilitation, and relationship enhancement.

The module details an approach of mutual commitment to respect needs and wants of the other without neglecting your own, ways of facilitating communication, and tips on negotiating on different points of view.

Coauthoring a mutually satisfying relationship built on common ground can replace storylines of unmet needs and wants. Some core relationship principles are presented to establish a foundation for the relationship exercise tools.



I. Communication 101

A. Communication and Connection

[In Workbook]

COMMUNICATION AND CONNECTION: MAXIMS + STEPS

4 Maxims of Communication

- 1. The person who makes a difference in your life is the one who listens as if he or she always knew who you are, and gives it all back to you.**

Each relationship combines two individual stories to coauthor a new relationship story. The implicit contracts authored by each party in a relationship become unspoken assumptions that can facilitate or derail the relationship. Making explicit the hidden assumptions and implicit expectations becomes a crucial part of communication. To see the point of view of the other and to communicate that understanding, each must respect the other's point of view. Understanding and respect are not synonymous with agreement.

- 2. Ultimate freedom is not to relying on someone else's response to determine how you feel about yourself.**

Ineffectiveness of communication, simply feeling that what you said was not heard or registered by the other, may produce irritation or anger. Then the content of the discussion becomes more intense. The process that initiated the derailment - feeling invalidated - gets lost.

The simple step of repeating to the other what you heard him or her say prior to making your own point validates listening. You are then in a position to be heard more successfully. Your individual responsibility to co-author a mutually satisfying relationship includes the following:

- Mutual commitment to respect for the other's needs and wants without neglecting your own.
- Facilitation of communication.
- Mutual negotiation on different points of view.
- Explicit awareness of implicit assumptions.
- Acknowledgement and understanding of needs and wants made obvious by relationship symptoms.

3. **The greatest vulnerability is daring to risk your best feelings.**

4. **The greatest satisfaction** is risking your best feelings.

4 Steps of Communication

Much of the difficulty in relationships comes from one of two areas: assuming you can change someone else's behavior or attitude, and faulty communication.

A basic human desire is to connect with another. The power within a relationship is not a decision, but a commitment at a heart level. Communication is a significant basic component in any business or personal relationship.

1. Reflect back to the speaker what you heard him or her say.

This simple step assures the speaker of effectiveness—of being heard. If you're poised with a response rather than listening and reflecting, the first speaker may feel a need to repeat; both speakers are then vulnerable to escalation of emotional tone.

In any relationship each person's perspective is different. It is important that each sees the other's point of view and avoids hijacking the other's agenda. The unspoken resolution may be some variation of, "I see your point of view, and I have mine, and yours does not take over mine, though perhaps you would wish it would, just as I would wish that my point of view would take over yours." Knowing and respecting each other's point of view is the initial phase of a satisfying mutual, equal collaboration.

2. Clarify by asking the next question.

Socrates taught us that really smart people ask questions rather than give answers. The detail may contain the feeling and the important aspects that otherwise would have to be assumed.

A large corporation's executive team huddled around a tape recorder listening to the last presentation by the CEO of that company. They were playing it, rewinding it, playing it again. Each looked puzzled. The consultant asked them what they were trying to do. In his speech, the CEO had indicated that the organization should embrace more color. They each had a different idea about what color meant: Dress, race, decoration, language, stationery. No one had considered simply picking up the phone and asking the next question, "What do you mean by color?"

3. Provide a context.

The context of any statement or meaning includes time, location, and system.

4. Listen between the lines.



For someone who listens for facts, that filter will mean that the person stops listening when the speaker stops giving facts. When a very intelligent person listens for information, the communicator, in order to hold the listener's attention, must interweave information with the newness of what is being said. The speaker's empathic attunement to the listener includes creating a listening environment while providing information without losing the listener's attention.

Listen literally and closely to what someone says, and you will pick up constant clues about what is wanted and needed. Truth as well as reality is perception.

B. Information Processing and Communication Facilitation

Developing empathy and establishing rapport with another can be facilitated by awareness of the other's primary representational system.

A wife who is more kinesthetic asks her visually inclined husband how he feels. His response, "I can see what you're saying," seems elusive. She presses him to convert his model into hers, continuing to ask how he feels, what he senses. He repeats. They escalate. Rapport derails. She accuses him of being stubborn. Baffled, he retreats.

You can communicate better by appreciating the predominant mode of your partner or colleague. If you use primarily an auditory model and your partner uses a predominantly visual mode of organizing, communication may suffer unless each of you appreciates the other's filter for perceiving and processing information and experiences.

At the beginning of a relationship, all three channels—kinesthetic, visual, and auditory—are active, both parties taking in a great deal of information, just as when traveling to a new country one is intensely taking in everything possible through all five senses. As a relationship progresses to developing and sustaining the connection, the intensity gives way to a default mode—the primary operating mode of auditory, kinesthetic, or visual. At this stage, communication issues become exaggerated.

The same models apply to executives and business owners who must be able to clearly lead and effectively communicate. Recognition of these distinct ways of processing information may be useful to consider in establishing and developing rapport and in fostering communication toward a common objective.

[In Workbook]

INFORMATION PROCESSING EXERCISE

How information is perceived and channeled is one element of a life story.

Three fundamental representational systems elaborated in Neuro-Linguistic Programming based on the predominant representation channel include visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. How each person perceives, records, and recalls events depends on the predominant representational system used.

Auditory

Though not exclusive, an individual uses predominantly one representational mode. Those who take in information best through auditory presentation perceive experiences more in terms of sound and spoken word. They use phrases such as:

- I hear what you are saying.
- I really want you to listen.
- It sounds good.
- Tuned in.
- Within hearing.
- Loud and clear.

Visual

Those who primarily process in a visual way record and construct pictures or internal images of their experiences; they recall by snapping a picture into focus. Visual individuals will be inclined to say:

- Can you picture it?
- I can see what you're saying.
- Bring this into focus.
- It appears to me. . .
- Mental image.
- It seems fuzzy to me.
- I'd like to look at it.
- Short-sided.



Kinesthetic

Kinesthetic individuals experience in a bodily way, and index information by sensation and feeling. Those more kinesthetic use sensory and bodily terms, such as:

- I need to grasp that.
- Hold that thought.
- To be more in touch with. . .
- Able to get a handle on it.
- Come to grips with.
- Start from scratch.
- Hand in hand.
- I'll walk you through this.
- Hold on.
- It slipped through my hands.

Developing empathy and establishing rapport with another can be facilitated by awareness of the other's primary representational system.

Neuro-linguistic program researchers and practitioners have distilled some basic principles of recognizing the particular model and using it to facilitate communication.

- Recognize the predominant channel of processing information for yourself and your partner: auditory, visual, or kinesthetic.
- Respect the other person's model of the world, of perceiving and processing information along one of the three representational systems. One is not better than the other, just different.
- The observational skills of the type and meaning of communication is a necessary component of emotional intelligence.
- The meaning of the communication may be best indicated by the response that you get.
- The representational system, as well as the words, is only a symbol of the event, not the event itself. A map is not the territory. The model of your mind is not your mind.
- At times, the most important information about an individual is behavior.
- An individual's behavior at any moment is not who he or she is. (Yet when a particular behavior persists, remember Maya Angelou's advice, "When people show you who they are, believe them.")

- If what you are doing is not working, rather than doing it harder, think about doing it differently.
- Understanding this method of coding and understanding successful behavior and communication along one of the three models replicates and builds further success and intimacy.

C. Illuminate Hidden Assumptions

We believe our assumptions are the truth. Our assumptions are about who we are, and we see what we believe. Whether we are right about our assumptions never comes into question, because we live them to make them reality. It's just the way things are. And, of course, no one can question reality. We perceive things the way we are, hear what we want to hear, and see what our own system allows us to see, select, register, and process.

Although confronted daily with proof to the contrary, we still assume that significant others think like we do, and believe essentially as we do. At times we wish that the other person could just know what we want and think without ever having to say.

A fundamental assumption may be, “My love will change this person.” Trying to change someone is often a basic quest in a relationship. While this may stem from earliest childhood as attempts to change parents to get them to be empathic, responsive, and loving, this same attachment pattern continuing into the present will be as frustrating as it was originally. To want and expect someone to respond as an extension of your interest or your desire in order for you to be happy guarantees ineffectiveness. If the other person does not respond according to your intended script, you may immediately feel ineffective, frustrated, and angry. Anger is an instinctive response to counter helplessness, as well as to protect against bruised esteem and worth. An important relationship decision, such as basing your marriage on the assumption that you can change the other, should be seriously questioned. Assume that what you see—all of it—is what you get.

While these issues are often approached by attempts at communication, their origin is internal and has to be addressed. The underlying assumptions may manifest in a relationship, but are not caused by the relationship.

A common unspoken assumption that can get in the way is displacing some unwanted or disavowed part of yourself onto your spouse. One will assume the role of desire, and the other become the obstacle. One wants to buy a new car, the other opposes the purchase for rational reasons. One wants to have sex, the other is not ready. The desire and obstacle are both inside each person, but neither has to recognize it as long as one of the two sides of the dicotomy is given or attributed to the partner.

These roles of “no” and “yes” may shift, such as when the spendthrift (desire) suddenly is not



opposed by the tightwad (obstacle), who says, “Oh, let’s go ahead and buy it.” The spendthrift must then either own that avoided aspect of himself (unlikely) or shift in unison to say, “Well, let’s consider other alternatives and whether it’s time or not.” If the contract is broken by not staying in the accustomed role, they simply switch roles for a time.

The implicit contract has each one taking a role to embody the disavowed half of the ambivalence of the other. One embodies the desire, the other the obstacle; if one changes, the other changes to restore equilibrium in the system. For example, both the hoarder and the spender present justifiable points of view: The security of saving versus enjoyment of present living. When one in the partnership inhibits, the other manifests the opposite, so balance can be maintained.

Partners are selected, consciously or unconsciously, for many purposes. It is part of the “fit,” though it may seem like a “fate.”

Remember the maxim: The greatest vulnerability is daring to risk your best feelings.

Intimacy and trust have to occur internally first before being co-created with someone else. To present an image other than your true self will attract those who want someone other than who you truly are - a pretend relationship.

In an ideal and creative pairing, one chooses a partner who has some of what the other needs to grow more of, and vice versa. Serving as a catalyst for the other’s growth, rather than continuing to function for the other person (as in codependency that stymies growth), allows both to grow, mutually and reciprocally.

When you get upset, you may assume that something that just happened caused the upset. This reversal of cause and effect will keep you stuck. What has just happened is often the result - the focus and attempted remedy of the cause. When what has happened is external, the upset is the result of resisting or fighting what happened, rather than accepting it. An example is road rage, such as anger at someone who cuts in front of you on the freeway. If you accept this event and your inability to undo what has already happened, there will be no anger. Anger is the active attempt to counter the passive experience of helplessness. Fighting the event, substituting anger for a sense of helplessness, it is what causes the upset. The vulnerability to this upset gives energy to a situation over which you have no control.

Codependency includes being in love with who you hope someone will be.

Iris was continually traumatized by her husband’s affairs, yet she could not leave him despite his shabby treatment of her. She continually searched for definitive evidence of Fred’s philandering; believing that once she had specific proof, she

would leave him. Even though she had “caught” him repeatedly, she continued her search for “one more, final proof, and that would be the final straw.” She had perpetuated an endless series of occasions for hope of changing her husband.

Iris finally said, “I could love him if he were who I wanted him to be.” She paid a tremendous price to maintain her illusion that she would finally be happy when he changed. That price included her happiness, peace of mind, and even her health. She kept hope alive, always seemingly just within grasp, by continuously attempting to write a better ending to her repeated storyline.

Iris came to see that she could not leave Fred because he expressed a part of her that she had not dared own. He expressed *her desire* for freedom and sexual expression, and the “other woman” became her proxy, the part of herself *as yet un-lived*. Iris gave voice to Fred’s conscience, scolding and criticizing him for what he knew to be unacceptable, the part of him *not yet owned*. Their attachment pattern of perpetual adolescent and critical parent maintained a powerful bond, unchangeable until they recognized that each functioned for the other. When each of them owned his or her individual story, they could then have equal responsibility for the co-created relationship story.

Each of us is both our own protagonist and antagonist, though we inevitably perceive another, usually some specific person, as the antagonist. It is easier to externalize an unwanted aspect of ourselves and embody it in an antagonist than to accept it as a part of oneself. Emerson said it best: “The truth takes flesh in the forms that can express it.”

Changing a lifelong story, even to a small degree, is no small matter, because it creates discontinuity by disrupting all the default settings, including implicit assumptions in a relationship.

It also involves changing an identity, an entire paradigm that has been woven into the fabric of being.

D. Articulate Implicit Contracts

When you engage in a relationship, you instantly draw up an explicit as well as an implicit contract about the nature of the relationship and each respective role. Conflicts inevitably arise because segments of the implicit contract are an unconscious treaty, signed in secret by only one side.

Implicit contracts are ubiquitous. Every personal and business relationship has one. A common implicit theme reads like this: *If I do everything exactly as you want, and take good care of you, then*



you will do exactly what I want you to do. When an assumed signatory breaks this contract, hurt or helplessness results, often quickly countered by anger. This unspoken contract ensures perpetual disappointment.

If you want to make an enemy, try to change someone. Or, as Melville stated, “Nothing so aggravates an earnest person as a passive resistance.” And, of course, each of us is earnest in our own way. When you release certain expectations for another, such as attaining perfection and ghostwriting someone else’s story, this necessary loss becomes an essential freedom.

Doing what will please someone else is a particular type of internal ideal with an external point of reference. For example, a girl grows up in a family that valued (and shaped her to be) loving, giving, and caretaking of others; thus for her to have—and act on—her own needs would be seen as selfish. For her to succeed at this ideal of being pleasing and caretaking to others, she may have to neglect her own growth. Becoming more aware of her own needs and values may initially feel like an alternate universe where the basic rules have changed. Blame, the flip side of pleasing others, also focuses on someone else.

Recognizing constraint and limitation may give rise to the relationship’s version of the question considered in Chapter 3, “How can we get out of the box?” The question assumes that the box is a given in the universe, rather than being created at each moment. The box is the model, the way of viewing and creating reality, including the patterns and obstacles mutually created in the relationship.

You create a burden for another and an inevitable frustration for yourself when you require and insist on a specific reaction. No one will ever respond exactly as you want. You give the other person freedom when you do not require a specific response.

E. Respect and Communicate Different Points of View

Each person’s perspective is different in any relationship. It is important for each person to see the other’s point of view and avoid hijacking the other’s agenda. Knowing and respecting each other’s point of view is the initial phase of a satisfying mutual, equal collaboration.

An intense discussion unfolded at a board meeting I attended. A senior member, known for his sometimes extreme positions and impassioned stands, had vigorously urged the board toward specific and swift action on the matter being discussed. At one point he rose from his seat and began to walk around the entire board table as he talked more loudly, punctuating his points by waving and thrusting his arms. After he had circled the room and was back at his chair he concluded, almost shouting as he slammed both palms on the table, “This is what

we *have* to do!”

Breaking the stunned silence, the chairman of the board said in his wise and quiet manner, “That is a point of view.”

Discussion then ensued with room for other points of view.

In an ideal situation, if you never take anything others say to you personally and recognize it as simply their own self-statement, you will not be hurt by what they say about you. In so doing, you grant yourself a particular freedom. The corollary is to take everything about yourself personally: Listen carefully and explicitly to yourself, register all the mind, body, and spirit messages from your interior. Feelings never lie, though they may speak in enigmatic code.

All you can determine in a relationship is your 50%. What you determine of your own experience is 100%. Yet nothing seems to need reforming, Mark Twain noted, as much as other people’s habits.

F. Transference in Relationships

If you feel you know someone instantly, you are likely replaying your old software program, assuming it is taking in and processing new information. That is, the person you’ve just met immediately cues your associations and familiarity to a preprogrammed set of information and characteristics. Immediate impressions often fit familiar patterns of aversion or attraction. Negative experiences or disliked aspects of yourself projected onto another introduce aversion. Reminders of positive experiences as well as the promise of fulfillment of a desire inform attraction.

So many celebrities see marriages as disposable and are unable to maintain lasting relationships. Nicolas Cage and Lisa Marie Presley divorced after 109 days; Drew Barrymore and Tom Green after five months; Julia Roberts and Lyle Lovett after 21 months of marriage. When columnist Walter Scott was asked to explain, he responded, “Because the very qualities that make performances great—the childlike ability to live in the moment under imaginary circumstances—is the same characteristic that makes many of them unstable marriage partners.”

Hollywood romances with hasty weddings may attempt a quick hermetical seal of the romantic storybook beginning, so as not to lose the idealized image to the pores and blemishes beneath reality’s makeup. Relationships need to go through several seasons before making permanent decisions, such as marriage. For the person you have known a short time, if marriage is a good idea now, it will still be a good idea next spring.



Pay attention to your continued information, to your second and third impressions, and keep one ear open for more of the story, perhaps the other side of it. Recognize what exists currently, such as how someone behaves, rather than maintaining the hope of what someone can become.

In *The Bridges of Madison County*, the relationship between Robert Kincaid and Francesca ended in a way that preserved the idealized love. The time capsule of four days held the romantic euphoria and insulated the pair from reality's disillusionments. Their story, like that of John Kennedy and Marilyn Monroe, would remain young and unchanged. Each expressed an un-lived part of the other: Francesca was Robert's elusive grounding of place and family; he was her free, passionate, nomadic spirit.

II. Relationship Facilitation 201

A. 12 Relationship Principles

[In Workbook]

12 RELATIONSHIP PRINCIPLES

1. Each person has a point of view.
2. Communication establishes a common ground for understanding different points of view and creating a mutual, collaborative agreement or plan.
3. Developing empathy with another is predicated on doing it with yourself first. Empathy is a way of listening to yourself as well as to another person's entire experience of feeling, thinking, perceiving, and behaving. Rapport is from the French word "rapporter" which means to be in touch or contact with a person, and it can apply to yourself as well as to others.
4. What someone believes is more important than what they know.
5. To require that someone else responds to you in a particular way renders inauthentic both the person and their response.
6. What you don't do is as important as what you do.
7. Strike while the iron is cold. Known when to be reflective and invoke principles. When the house is burning is no time to teach fire safety principles.
8. There are few true emergencies in life. "I'd like to think about that and get back to you" is a response.
9. How empathic ruptures are learned from, understood, and repaired becomes a core maintenance aspect of every relationship. Everyone fails empathically with another at times. The most important thing may not be what you have done, but what you do after what you have done.

10. To forgive someone is to free yourself; if you hold on to anger and hurt, you continue to hold the injury.
11. You cannot change yourself by first trying to change someone else. The only person you can change is you. Attempting to change someone else's mode of processing or personality style won't work — and will create derailments. Quicken software cannot be changed or rehabilitated to WordPerfect.
12. To have someone live an unexpressed part of yourself can be both unsatisfying and addictive.

B. Master Storylines of Money, Power, and Gender

Money is one of the most common vehicles on which emotional issues hitchhike. (Two other top contenders are sex and food). In any relationship, money is a likely tangible focus and manifest issue for expression of feelings, power, control, love, status, security, self-worth, freedom, or a host of other meanings. In every relationship, it is a reality to navigate. Some of the money issues in a marriage are about money; many are about other things.

The unspoken assumptions about money, power, and gender often remain silent until crystallized by a specific situation. At times of excess or scarcity, reversal of greater income to the other spouse, inheritance, or divorce, money matters take center stage. An imbalance for any reason could be attributed to money, a tangible container for a number of issues. For some marriages, even economic viability does not equalize the power of the partners in the marriage, because we are deeply influenced by values we absorb from society about acceptable and appropriate roles for both men and women.

The antipode of domination is empowerment; the antipode of control is mastery.

Rosalyn, age thirty-two and married for ten years, had become increasingly unhappy and depressed. In her initial consultation, she focused on what she could do to help her husband, Bradley, with his stress. He had, in the last seven years, formed his own company and had accumulated significant financial worth. Bradley, who experienced extreme pressure in his business, had been diagnosed with hypertension and a duodenal ulcer. Rosalyn's complaint was that he interacted with her in the same way he ran the business—strongly dictatorial with no questions allowed. She felt confined, constrained, as if needing to adhere to his desires and wishes to maintain the marriage.

Bradley refused to have a joint consultation with his wife, just as he had earlier refused her entreaties to seek help.

As Rosalyn began psychotherapy, she was able to unveil rather quickly many aspects of herself that had gone unexpressed in her marriage. She had been blinded to



other points of view, as her original family had functioned in a manner similar to the roles currently assumed by herself and her husband.

Within a few weeks of beginning treatment, however, she said she was stopping. Her beginning awareness of feelings, creativity, and independent thought and action were threatening to Bradley. He indicated that Rosalyn's continuing in therapy would lead to divorce. As Rosalyn contemplated the things she would lose, including the security of her marriage, her lavish, exciting, jet-set lifestyle, she chose to give up therapy. Her decision was so precipitous that she even denied herself time to discuss it in therapy. Her focus remained on the external reality of an "either-or" choice. For her, the external issues were also metaphors for needs, fears, and choices that came too dangerously close to the surface.

C. Reminders in Your Relationship

[In Workbook]

Recognize the Place of Assumptions about Money, Power, and Gender

- Acknowledge the differences in income, work, and potential between you and your spouse, and the implications these differences have for the balance of power in your relationship.
- Be aware of the rules, stated or unstated, by which male and female roles are chosen and rewarded in the family, and on such matters as who makes decisions, who handles financial matters, and who handles the daily responsibilities of family life, such as household, children, and chores.
- Develop a clear understanding of the attitudes of male and female roles in the family and in the broader political, social, and economic issues that have an impact on child-rearing, divorce, and aging.
- How is each of you validated or invalidated, empowered or eroded, in areas of work and money?

D. The Us Story

Each important relationship becomes its own story, an *Us*. This story distinguishes the uniqueness of this relationship. Marriage illustrates the *Us* story.

The *Us* is a collaboratively constructed story, ideally a mutual and reciprocal one, respecting the contributions of each partner. The co-authored new story evolves as an entity with its own uniqueness. *Us* develops its own storylines of communication, behavior, metaphors, patterns,

choices, ways of interacting, goals, and even visions. The mission of *Us* is to develop and evolve internally and in the relationship, as well as in individual and joint efforts with external focus.

The *Us* evolves to a higher plane, a level of trust. The *Us* becomes its own story, an entity that can be appealed to at times of dissension, question, or doubt. The appeal to the supraordinate *Us* may be called into counsel when various questions arise.

Wayne and May were married and in business together. They presented for coaching for their business venture. They seemed remarkable in their respect and admiration for each other, as well as for the depth of the bond that they had fashioned. It had not been an easy adjustment for either of them, as each had a unique history of painful intimacy. Additionally, Wayne had become a stepfather for her two children, both still at home.

While successful, their business suffered from periodic derailments as a result of strategic disagreements.

When we looked closely, many of the setbacks arose from empathic derailments. At times one or the other partner would not communicate feelings or needs, ensuring that the other could not possibly become attuned to them. The emotional rupture would send both into a hurtful retreat, sometimes punctuated by anger. It was difficult for either partner to emerge from the retreat to discuss business.

I requested that they tell me their story, and to tell it in whatever collaborative fashion that felt natural for them. Each of them elaborated, from their own perspectives, the construction of the themes and storylines of their relationship. They had established a common ground from which to address the issues, expected and unexpected, that arose. They told me their heartwarming story of finally finding each other after unhappy prior relationships. Each of them had taken away what worked and were informed by what had not worked.

From their old stories of compromised intimacy—including experiences of rejection or abandonment—each wanted to be important to the other. When one did not feel most important to the other, a familiar pain was the result.

Each of them knew the importance of developing a new story to be in, as each of their prior relationships had been unsatisfying. They impressed me with their exquisite attunement and readiness to make full commitment and channel full passion into their collective new story. They knew that together they had a mutual, shared responsibility to create a common ground, framed by communication to deal with joint matters and decisions. They also knew that either one alone could temporarily abort that process.

I asked them to describe the entity of their *Us*, the uniqueness and capacities of this entity they had co-created. As they spoke, a story with a distinct plot, themes, and purpose emerged.



I pointed out their trust and belief in their *Us*, how it was the relationship's alchemy that had evolved to another level of over-arching vision and purpose. I indicated that at their moments of difficulty, they could trust their *Us* and its wisdom, even though they temporarily lost sight of it at those emotionally charged moments. They could individually or together rise above the matter and emotion at hand to move into the transcendent *Us* to view, consult, or collaborate.

They both recognized how much trust they had in their *Us*, even when momentarily confused or emotionally overwhelmed. Their transcendent *Us* had objectivity as well as subjectivity and became the mentor and guardian of the relationship with its own story. *Us* could be consulted to address decisions about their best interest, and to counsel in times of trouble or confusion.

The *Us* that they coauthored became a vital part of their evolving relationship story with its own voice, plot, and vision.

E. A Relationship Story Exercise

[In Workbook]

A RELATIONSHIP STORY EXERCISE

Reflect on what you have learned from previous contacts:

- How did I do in my last conversation? How do I feel about that?
- What patterns in my relationship and conversations do I want to change? To outgrow?
- What patterns in my relationship and conversations do I want to expand? To initiate?
- What judgments do I make of myself around this person? What judgments do I make of him/her?
- What judgments or criticism do I assume and expect?

Prepare for co-creating a new relationship story:

- Outline the basic aspects of the story you want to create.
- Consider your frame of mind prior to your communication. Get centered in your body and relaxed.

Further the agenda:

- What does each of us want from the other?
- What does each of us need from the other

- Am I relying on this person to provide some need or want that I could provide for myself?
- What could I communicate to convey precisely what I want and need?
- Do I know precisely how my collaboration partner sees the issues?

Foster the process of communication:

- With emotionally charged topics, reflect back to your partner what you hear him or her saying before offering your point. This reflection assures the other's sense of effectiveness—to know that you register what was said. The other person is then in a better position to listen to you.
- Am I being all of myself in the relationship?
- Am I being aware of not taking things personally?
- How could I better support my collaboration partner?

F. Leadership Based on Relationship

Every business and corporation develops an Us of the system with its own unique story. The vision and leadership of the executive in charge can facilitate converting “I” and “you” to “us” and “we”, and can make the business story a coherent and progressive one.

Leadership, like so many other aspects of life, occurs within a relationship.

The relationship group may vary in size from one to many. The Center for Creative Leadership found that the primary success factor of leadership within organizations is the *relationships with others*. Some of their other studies show that the most significant derailment in a career pathway is insensitivity to others and non-attunement to others' points of view.

Empathy plays a vital role in leadership, of being interested and able to see and understand another's point of view. Various studies have shown that social skills far surpass technical skills in leadership abilities.

Trust and respect form the foundation of any important relationship, including leadership.

Leadership is not a position you take, but a process that is formed by believing in someone so that person can teach you why to believe in him or her. By your expecting the best, the other can live into your expectations. We are always teaching others how to respond to us. A leader catalyzes others to commit, resolve, and actualize fullest capacities, encourages them to transcend doubt and uncertainty, and facilitates focus on a mission that is stronger than fear



and doubt. Leadership is not a role, but a process of being a model. Clarence Buddington Keeland said, “My father didn’t tell me how to live. He lived and let me watch him do it.”

As a leader, you must not only believe in someone, but you must care about them as well. Leadership applies to many relationship aspects of life including parenting and business. Leadership is empowering another to collaborate in a mutual, equal, creative way. A true leader makes the leadership role invisible while providing a vision.



Module 9

Live Your New Success Story

You can't build a reputation
on what you're going to do.

Henry Ford

Try not to become a man of success,
but rather try to become a man of value.

Albert Einstein

The greater danger for most of us is not that our aim
is too high and we miss it, but that it is too low and
that we reach it.

Michaelangelo



[In Workbook]

LIVE YOUR NEW SUCCESS STORY

A success story necessarily involves assessing and resolving resistance to change.

Separate sections for men and woman identify and formulate strategies for the unique success issues of each gender. Self-inquiry quizzes for men and women illustrate invisible patterns and hidden beliefs that impact success.

Teaching tools illuminate such polarities as *“Addiction to extreme success”* and *“Essential caveats of successful being,”* The module guides readers to attain an internal sense of what is “good enough” with a personal definition of fulfillment and accompanying self-validation.

The module reviews the system of action plans for growth and possibility thinking.



I. Success: Desire and Obstacle

A. Patterns of New Learning: Four Phases

Often people who are engaged in a new endeavor that requires change and growth hit a plateau several weeks after beginning. Their initial excitement, spawned from the exciting new and hopeful expectations, cools off. The leveling off registers as a lessening of the ever-increasing acquisition of mastery, pleasure, and rewards. Someone may experience disillusionment, and even question why there is not more satisfaction. It is important not to read this phase as an indication of a bad choice, or as validation that the choice is not a fit.

1. Initial confusion often launches change and new learning. Awareness of the unfamiliar and uncertain registers as curiosity, or even anxiety.
2. Increasing confidence both with the experience of effectiveness and with positive feedback constitutes the next phase.
3. Mastery is the consistent experience of effectiveness and movement to a new level of excitement and validation, into its own self-sustaining “flow.”
4. Entropy occurs when the excitement and invigoration of the learning curve’s newness and mastery level off or decline.

You perceive what you recognize. You recognize what you have a map to know. Yet you invent your perceptions and experiences, just as the map created is not the territory itself. And you sort information into patterns and categories in order to perceive it. Einstein said, “It is the theory that decides what we observe.”

Fear, adventure, and change are all synonyms in new learning. Change may occur from the inside out, or change may be initiated on the outside, requiring adaptation to it. Change may simply be a different way of looking at something, a new way of thinking, or openness to feeling and reflection on what was previously unknown or closed off. Each of us must see and experience for ourselves the advantages of change. And we have to judge what needs to remain the same, as we may find it difficult to resist some changes, for example, an impulsive decision.

Attitudes that promote curiosity and openness introduce new learning. Learning is always a choice, a potential creation. There are many different levels of learning both internally and externally. Learning does not always have to be converted into action or into a specific metric of success.

B. Evaluate and Address Five Types of Resistance to Change

The avoidance of change, despite a seeming need to change, could arise in any of the following ways. Each route is its own decision, and each deserves specific consideration to evaluate stuckness in a client.

1. Motivated avoidance is the active opposition to or refutation of change.

This resistance to change was described by Freud in speaking in the psychoanalysis of patients this way: "... The resistance with which the patient clings to his disease and thus even fights against his own recovery ...” I'll mention in a moment some specific techniques on dealing with this fear of change.

2. Consistency of default mode is the persistence of a basic and habitual way of responding.

The positive aspects of this sameness include the strength and ease of habit. This persistence of the usual when it doesn't work constitutes resistance to change. Alternatively, positive behavior might be converted into a habitual response, an automatic and invisible decision.

3. Passive-aggressive behavior involves passive acceptance—seeming compliance with another or authority—but concealing implicit refusal to do what is expected or needed.

The aggression is expressed indirectly to the person or system trying to induce the change; because it is expressed passively, it induces anger in the latter. The passivity is the refusal to change. For example, a spouse promises to do an important favor, and then conveniently forgets. The transfer of anger of the passive-aggressive person into the container of the one who expects collaboration and partnership can be quite defeating for a relationship.

4. Voluntary behaviors that are difficult to change persist despite a conscious desire to change, because of both ambivalence and uncertainty as to what it would be like to leave the familiar behind. Another person or the system can add to the resistance.

5. Brain resistance.

When someone's brain is habituated, such as in smoking or drinking, the resistance has an additional physiological basis.



Here are some strategies of dealing with change in challenging clients:

1. Remember that you cannot determine what anyone else does. You can only question, suggest, challenge, brainstorm, advise—those interventions made from a collaborative position are most likely to have impact.
2. The relationship is the change agent.
3. Remember that the client is expert of his or her life.
4. You are most likely to create action in the client if you do not attempt to do so.
5. State your understanding of the client's experience as best you can. Listen for responses.
6. State your understanding of the client's intention as best you can. Listen for responses.
7. Find out from your challenging client what he or she has managed to do in a small way that he or she would want to do more of.
8. Find out what the client has not done yet that he or she would like to do in a future similar situation.
9. Highlight solutions that do not work, along with an empathic resonance of how frustrating that must be.
10. Find out whether the client is willing to try something different.
11. Ask how the client may want to redirect efforts toward the goal.
12. Find out whether the client is willing to redirect efforts and pursue a particular goal.
13. Invite the client to try something different, something simple and specific in the beginning, that would actually be the easiest thing to do.
14. Clarify SMART goals. Co-create a specific strategy or system to address the task.
15. Pattern interruption. Any time you change one element of a system, you change the entire system, at least for a little while, until the forces of the system exert themselves to return to the previous state. Any pattern can be changed with a different interaction. Someone can change a pattern by changing the what, where, when, who, or how of the pattern
16. Visualization. Ask the client what he or she imagines it would be like to arrive at the stated goal. This visualization begins with the destination, so you can work backward to see the steps necessary to arrive there.

The first step for the client who has a fixed finger pointed at others is acknowledging the impossibility of changing someone else. The assumption that someone or something else must change in order to make the client happy ensures ineffectiveness and frustration. Refocus on one thing that the client could do himself or herself in the next day or two that would create a change. The shift of focus from outside to inside, from others to oneself, parallels the Serenity Prayer familiar to many Twelve-Step groups: “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.” In other words, focus your energy on what you can determine, and let go of what you can’t.

You are always free to change your mind. Changing your mind changes your life. To become your authentic self involves taking risks to make change, experiencing but not giving in to fear, releasing judgment and criticism, letting go of assumptions forged at an earlier time, and embracing dreams that bring mastery and accomplishment.

II. Success Phobias

A. Forms of Success Phobia

Success phobia is the disturbance of a person’s ability to comfortably handle achievement. Those who have the opportunity, intelligence, and imagination to succeed, but do not live up to their potential, or suffer when they do, reveal an internal rather than external impediment to success. Fear of success seems contradictory. Why would a person recoil from something that is consciously desired and highly valued?

Success can be a struggle in any area of life—academic, vocational, marital, sexual, and parental, to name a few. Surprisingly, fear of success isn’t always obvious. It manifests so many ways that it often goes unrecognized. Individuals suffer success phobia for different reasons and reveal it in different ways. There is no simple, single connection between any set of symptoms and any particular set of causes.

The key to assessing self-defeating behavior is to look for patterns throughout a lifetime. Each instance of botched success may look reasonable enough in itself, but a pattern of self-defeating behavior in work, love, or other areas of life is a very effective way to disallow one’s full potential.

An important first step in overcoming a fear of success is to recognize its indicators. Three basic areas of phobic avoidance include avoidance of the final step to success, erosion of successful accomplishment, and ambition without goal setting.

Some of the common forms of success phobia include:

1. Avoiding the final step (“I always stop just short of my goals.”)

At significant points, such as being hired for an important job, winning a promotion,



graduating, or even getting married, some individuals may sabotage their own plans at the final step. Such people seem to be acting illogically, often because the underlying issues are both emotional and unconscious in origin. But usually these emotions hitchhike on some aspect of reality to help rationalize sudden abandonment of goals.

A graduate student had completed all but the last paragraph of his doctoral dissertation but could not finish it. At that point he decided to switch subjects, and abandoned his initial goal of getting his degree, became a professional student, and postponed success.

Another graduate student feared she'd be found a phony when she took her final doctoral examinations.

2. Choking (When I get ahead, I choke.)

The fear of success is whispered in the everyday words, choke and clutch, describing the sensation of being paralyzed with fear at a time of needing to act.

3. Subjugating ability and accomplishment (“That’s not really me.” or “That was luck... a fluke.”)

Jane’s stress reached unbearable levels when a professor announced that her thesis was the best in the class. She was convinced that she’d lose all her friends as soon as her competence was recognized and acknowledged.

4. Erosion of successful accomplishment (“No matter how well I do, it always turns sour.”)

Literature describes several famous characters who, surprisingly, fall ill precisely because their most deeply rooted wishes come to fulfillment, as though they cannot stand their own success. Instead of enjoying their victories, Shakespeare’s Lady Macbeth and Ibsen’s Rebecca West suffered grave illnesses almost as soon as they knew a major wish was about to be fulfilled. In *The Horse’s Mouth*, Joyce Cary’s irascible painter, Gulley Jimson, found a different route out of success: He painted his most elaborate mural on a wall scheduled for demolition and personally bulldozed the wall as soon as the mural was completed.

Someone can work diligently toward a goal as long as it remains a safe distance away. But once it is within reach, anxiety mounts. One way of ending the anxiety is to adopt some form of self-defeating behavior. A person could sabotage a performance, fall ill, or otherwise destroy the product of success immediately after realizing success. Or he or she may consistently make errors, have accidents, be tardy, procrastinate, refuse money or squander it, or deprecate the associated prestige and recognition.

5. Eclipsing success (“Whenever something good happens, I’ll do a take-away.”)

Consciously striving for success while actively fending it off creates considerable conflict for some individuals, exemplified by this statement: “Whenever I do something really well and someone compliments me for it, I have to point out something that’s not good, some criticism or flaw. My response has the effect of undoing whatever I do.”

6. Reframing success (“It was just luck”)

Some individuals openly disavow their achievements and the work that went into them, attributing their success to luck, circumstances, accident, or just having been born to do it. Others disavow success internally, by feeling like an imposter, by feeling that they’ve fooled anyone who thinks they’re really intelligent.

One woman was convinced that her acceptance into medical school was a mistake. A professional man who was given a prestigious award thought the awards committee had mixed up his name with someone else’s.

Another way to define success negatively is to declare an accomplishment a failure, camouflaging it so it can go virtually unnoticed. One who expects to be zapped at the finish line (abandoned, criticized, forced to make it alone) had better not cross the line, at least not while anyone is watching.

7. Fearing failure (“I’m afraid I’ll do all that work and then fail”)

A fear of failure is the opposite side of the coin of fear of success. It is a fear of success rationalized to seem logical and consciously understandable. The consequences are the same: Avoiding completion of a project, retreating from competition, disowning success, or depreciating the accomplishment.

8. Ambition without goal-setting (“I just can’t seem to set a goal”)

Failure to set specific goals may ensure that no goal will ever be reached; the feared perils of success can thus be avoided completely. People may set vague and undefined goals or avoid setting goals entirely as a defense against feeling too ambitious. Contradictory feelings arise from an internal impediment to success.

9. Excess goals (“I have so many goals...”)

An alternative is to set more goals than one can possibly reach, ensuring that none will be completed successfully. Failure to reach the goals may look like laziness, especially to the person who engages in this pattern. From this perspective, one succeeds in achieving failure, but by his or her own hand.



10. Passive approaches to active goals (“The perfect job will come along.” Or, “If it’s meant to be...”)

Very intense ambition may be coupled with a passive approach to achieving goals. After obtaining a specialized science degree, one young woman maintained the belief that potential employers would learn of her skills and create a job just for her. Yet she took no realistic steps toward acquainting potential employers with her expertise. She was disappointed when nothing happened.

11. Fear of success vs. burnout

“Burnout” is a state of exhaustion caused by consistent emotional stress. Burnout causes physical and emotional depletion, a sense of futility and general malaise. Hope and enthusiasm about work erode.

People suffering from burnout may conclude that they have chosen the wrong profession and withdraw from it. Changing their work will reveal whether it was in fact burnout or whether the real anxieties cluster around achievement and success.

People quit their jobs for a variety of reasons. Boring work is neither challenging nor pleasurable and significantly depletes motivation. And the vicissitudes of the job market may force highly accomplished, successful individuals out of chosen careers.

B. Are You Afraid of Success?

[In Workbook]

ARE YOU AFRAID OF SUCCESS?

Answer the following questions “true” or “false.”

- Do I usually stop short of finishing things?
- Am I more concerned about how others see me than about what’s best for my work and myself?
- Do I feel like a fraud whenever I succeed at something?
- Do I start too many projects at once and end up not finishing any of them?
- Do I want to do more than what I’m doing, but I can’t choose a direction and stick to it?
- When I get what I really want, does something bad usually happen?
- If I can’t do something perfectly from the beginning, do I not want to try it at all?
- Do I feel like my husband’s/wife’s/parent’s shadow?
- When I start to do something, do I remember the voices of my parents criticizing me?
- I’ve got talent, but am I still waiting to be discovered?
- Do I believe that people shouldn’t try to rise above their station in life?
- Have I always been an underachiever?
- In a crisis, do I choke or clutch?
- Are title and position are more important than how I feel?
- Whatever I do and however much I get, do I want more?
- Do I feel that I’d be nothing without my job?
- Do I believe that successful women scare men away?
- Do I feel so let down when I succeed at something that I don’t even want to try anymore?



___ Do I hate the person I have become at work?

___ Do I feel that I'd be exposed as inadequate if I finally get to the top?

III. Special Issues of Success

A. Success and Women

Women now participate in many activities once reserved for men; sex-role stereotypes are gradually fading. But their residue remains. For many generations, the traditional woman had to restrict her ambitions and interests to the accepted feminine role, which entailed marriage, children, and domestic activities. Only after the children had left home (if then) could she expand her interests and work outside of the home.

Through the centuries, only especially clever women or those in unusual circumstances have been able to circumvent the presumed order of male dominance and female domesticity. The family system traditionally focused on containing, rather than expanding, expectations for females.

Early Models of Success

A group of extremely successful female executives was asked in a pivotal study about their family histories. Of all the possible variables, the most consistent finding was that these very successful women had a father who recognized his daughter's ability and value with no stereotypical limitations. Consistently, these fathers supported the girl's freedom of exploration and expression. They regularly participated in their daughter's activities, extolled their daughter's ability to choose her own activities regardless of sex-role designation, and engaged in aggressive, competitive activities with her. In a successful woman's family, both parents encouraged their daughter to establish her own standards for measuring herself and her achievements, rather than letting her boundaries be set by gender stereotypes.

Any child will attempt to conform to the image that achieves love and respect.

A girl's mother is her most important model of how she can hope to be as an adult woman. If a girl sees her mother as passive, deferential, helpless and vulnerable, she is likely to believe that behaving assertively will contradict her mother's worth and risk the loss of maternal support. The mother may not feel comfortable enough about her daughter's assertive needs and independent thought to support them. The girl may then mistake the desire for mastery and independence as an aggressive, competitive urge to restrain rather than feeling guilty and anxious.

Her father must be comfortable with both her femininity and her potential to become a powerful person. The father is the first man a girl loves (just as the mother is the first woman a boy loves). Furthermore, her parents' relationship becomes a girl's prototype for the way relationships are negotiated between two people and within a group, in this case the family.

Career Choices

Corporate culture may clash with polarization into "masculine" and "feminine" behaviors.

One national company was taken over by a corporation known for its traditional orientation. Headquartered in the Sun Belt, the new management promptly issued dress regulations requiring all female employees to wear skirts, hose, and heels, whether or not their jobs required public contact. The mandate seemed reasonable enough to the male chief executive officer basking in the southern sun, but to the lower-level women executives in the company's northeastern offices, it seemed out of touch and unreasonable, considering frigid northern winters.

Career choices can be very difficult for the woman whose family has been inflexibly traditional. In choosing a career, you must deal with your past identifications, expectations, and conflicting feelings about sex roles. You may want full autonomy and competence and yet feel that you don't deserve them. An emerging young woman may also receive conflicting messages from those who want her to do well, but not too well. Family and society may present contradictory values and expectations.

Money and Gender

Men and women regard money differently. Men tend to view it as representing power and identity; women more frequently view money as security and autonomy.

A study by *Money* magazine elaborated these differences. Men generally viewed effective money management in terms of long-range strategies, such as planning for taxes, retirement, and choosing investments. Women, in contrast, viewed good money management in terms of short-range goals, such as finding bargains, balancing the checkbook, and eliminating debts.

Today women of all economic classes seem to be more aware of money management as an important component of their work, whatever its nature. But adopting an active role in money management takes time and effort. Small steps may include reading the business section of the paper and watching the financial segment on the television news.



Mid-Life Issues

Many women invest themselves in mothering, believing that the career of motherhood is the noblest of all endeavors, and that the value of producing healthy children far surpasses value from producing income. Other women, who may feel guilty about the conflict between motherhood and some other career, will only permit themselves to direct their attention outside the home after the children have grown up.

Sometimes, in mid-life, a woman will finally allow herself to consider her own development and fulfillment. It's as though she feels she has paid her dues, has put in the requisite amount of time fulfilling her first career, and can now blow the dust off her shelved ambitions and desires.

The more grounded a woman's sense of herself has been in her identity as a wife and mother, the more difficult her readjustment will be when she enters the work world. She may feel that being female, attractive, and lovable is incompatible with being assertive and successful, and she may also feel more dependent and less competent than men.

Women looking for outside work in mid-life also face the hard fact of devaluation in the occupational marketplace, stemming from years of "not working."

Women between the ages of thirty and fifty have a multiplicity of choices for their domestic, personal, and career roles. They may find it difficult to work out a stable lifestyle that allows the growth of personal interests while satisfying desires to be good mothers and loving wives. With no universal or traditional precedent, they need more than average self-esteem and strength to settle on a manageable pattern; it may be difficult to find validation and approval for any particular choice. Young children are bound to want their mother around as much as possible, and children and husband are both likely to blame the working mother when things go wrong. Other women may envy her or disapprove of her arrangements, so she often faces her dilemma alone.

Women who put all their energies into being dedicated mothers and derive pride from managing households often find that this career is a transient one, lasting only until the last child is grown. The career mother is without a job at mid-life.

Self-inquiry for Women

[In Workbook]

Success Self-Inquiry for Women

Make an appointment with yourself to reflect on and write your answers to the following questions

1. What is your own personal definition of success?

“The tragedy of life doesn’t lie in not reaching your goal. The tragedy lies in having no goal to reach.” - Benjamin F. Mays.

2. What does money represent to you? What does money management entail for you?

Have you been regarding money and money management as autonomy and security, in addition to focusing on short-term money management such as finding bargains and balancing the checkbook?

3. How much do you rely on others for direction, affirmation, and self-esteem?

It is the process of looking to someone or something else for what is missing that creates something missing.

4. Do you read the business section of the newspaper and watch or listen to the financial portion of the broadcast news to balance your awareness of events?

These small behavioral changes can expand awareness and promote different ways of thinking.

5. Do you believe that if you’re competent and work hard, your boss will offer you a promotion or raise without your having to ask for it or promote yourself?

Some people have been conditioned to wait for “gifts”; they believe that doing all the right things, performing well, and waiting to be recognized will bring the appropriate reward. A more useful technique, particularly in larger companies, is to find an intelligent, sensitive way to make your work visible. You may have to take the initiative in listing your accomplishments and requesting your own raises. If at all possible, find a female mentor.

6. Do you believe that asserting yourself is being too pushy?



Here is the delicate balance, as well as a double standard: Behavior considered assertive for a man has traditionally been seen as aggressive in a woman. Generally, however, the better you are at your work, the more room you can carve out for being yourself.

7. Do you have specific long-term goals and a step-by-step process for reaching them?

“It is much more difficult to measure non-performance than performance.” ~ Harold S. Geneen.

8. Once you have a game plan for success, are you afraid to take risks and make mistakes?

*“Some people try to softly tiptoe through life so that they can arrive at death safely.”
~ Robert Anthony*

9. Do you believe that to make it in the business world you have to behave like a man?

Your womanly side may be your best asset. Delores Danska, an award-winning television program manager, stated, “In my job, I need to bring out the best in my producers, which means being supporting, encouraging, and caring.”

10. Do you feel you have to be driven, a type-A personality, to be a real success?

Achievers achieve because they combine ambition and ideals. They have a commitment and work to achieve it. None of these represents a personality profile or character type; there are many personality styles and types among achievers. Rather than trying to be more like someone who is an achiever, be more like yourself. Listen for how and what you want to do.

B. Success and Men

Competition Model

Boys and girls are raised differently. Many studies of normal families have revealed gender-related tendencies. Both mothers and fathers emphasize achievement and competitiveness more for sons than for daughters. Both parents encourage their sons more than their daughters to control the expression of feelings, to be independent, and to assume increasing amounts of personal responsibility. Sons are punished more often and more severely than daughters. With their sons, fathers tend to be more strict, firm, and authoritarian. They use more physical punishment with boys, and are intolerant of behaviors violating the traditional masculine stereotype.

With their daughters, fathers show greater warmth and physical closeness; they expect gentle, ladylike behavior and hesitate to use physical punishment. Mothers tend to restrict and supervise their daughters more closely than they do their sons. Girls are pressured to be obedient, responsible, and nurturing, whereas boys are urged toward achievement, self-reliance, and exploratory behavior.

Men suffer as much as women from gender-bound personality traits. If women have been limited in expressing their ambitions, men have been equally limited in expressing their sensitivity and emotions. But in the same families where females are encouraged to pursue their ambitions, males can express warmth, tenderness, and emotion and suffer no loss of masculinity.

Some men face another sort of role stereotype. Social obstacles often prevent them from seeking goals other than those expected of them, either personally or professionally. For instance, the man who chooses to become a nurse or a secretary can have his masculinity questioned. Or the man who chooses work or friendships below his class may face disapproval from his family.



Self-Inquiry for Men

[In Workbook]

Success Self-Inquiry for Men

Make an appointment with yourself to reflect on and write your answers to the following questions

1. What is success for you?

“Nothing is enough to the man for whom enough is too little.” ~ Epicurus

2. Do you have a clear definition of external success?

This level of success is the easier one to define. The metrics of this success include money, material acquisitions, work accomplishments, titles, regard by associates and friends.

3. Do you have a clear definition of internal success?

This type of success isn't easily mapped. And it may be defined differently by men, by women, and even by each individual. The familiar model of male competition makes measurement of external success clearer. But internal success is measured against ideals, relatedness with important others, and contentment with oneself. This type of success involves connecting ambition with ideals and living up to your own standards.

4. Do you have specific long-term goals and a step-by-step process for reaching them?

Having long-term goals can keep you oriented and organized; having step-by-step, short-term goals can help you sustain enthusiasm and tolerate frustration. Short-term setbacks are an essential part of achieving success. For a toddler learning to walk, falling is not a failure, but part of the process of learning to walk. If you have an end point, your purpose, clearly in mind, you can more easily keep setbacks in perspective.

5. Once you have a plan for success, are you afraid to take risks and make mistakes?

“To him, being human was only an excuse for not being perfect.” ~ Katherine Anne Porter

6. Is anything internal keeping you from proceeding with your plan for success?

*“Nothing prevents our being natural so much as the desire to appear so.”
~ Francois La Rochefoucauld*

C. Success Intoxication: Recognition and Prevention

[In Workbook]

SUCCESS INTOXICATION: RECOGNITION AND PREVENTION

Success can be intoxicating and gradual. If a frog were placed in hot water, it would immediately jump out and survive. If the frog were put in cold water and the temperature raised one degree at a time over an extended time, the frog would ultimately die because it would not perceive the water as hot.

This process is analogous to someone moving from one drink each evening gradually to two on the weekends, and a pattern begins that, because of its incremental nature, the change goes unnoticed until some profound event brings it into focus. The process may occur over a long period of time, making it even more imperceptible.

With extremes of success, such as accomplishment in business, the enhanced stimulation and self-reinforcing aspects of success can make it harder to regulate emotions and stay grounded in values and identity. For example, the stimulation of success can be so intoxicating that executives believe they can write their own rules, as recent corporate scandals have revealed.

With increasing demand, including excessive stimulation of success, the amount of time at work may expand; someone may never feel quite satisfied with accomplishments, always creating more. It may be harder to relax, because the stimulation of excess is invigorating. Boundaries between work and personal life may become blurred or eroded, as one is in demand a great deal. Self-esteem becomes exaggerated by constant affirmation. The metrics of success expand in terms of money, accolades, and accomplishments. Natural supplements, such as caffeine, alcohol, or sugar, sustain the adrenaline extremes.

This cycle may be interrupted by a crisis, such as a divorce, success, death, children's leaving home, or some catalyst to snap a bigger picture into focus. At times someone might deliberately create a crisis in order to step off the treadmill that he or she otherwise feels powerless to stop.

The trappings of success may become so much a part of one's identity that it would feel shattering to change, feel like an amputation to give up any component of it.

- Are there any personal values that you compromise for success?
- Do you subjugate any of your basic needs to the pursuit of success?
- Do you have any current regrets about the process or content of your success?
- A decade or two from now, when you look back on the present time, will you have any



regrets?

- Have you wondered if this is all there is?

Your own queries have to begin internally, by asking yourself several questions:

- What is the finish line?
- Whom do you want to be when you cross it?
- Whom do you want to be there when you cross it?
- What is enough?
- How will you know when you get to enough?
- What are your specific metrics for success?
- How much of your identity is determined by these external benchmarks of success?

IV. Evolving a Success Story

A. Life's Ground Rules, Part II: 30 Essential Caveats of Successful Being

[In Workbook]

LIFE'S GROUND RULES, PART II: 30 Essential Caveats of Successful Being

1. Our experiences are always consistent with our theories, so it is helpful to know our theories quite well.
2. We are always teaching people how to respond to us.
3. The only people who seem perfect are the ones we really don't know.
4. Remember that we are always and inevitably comparing our inside with everyone else's outside.
5. Lessons are repeated, though perhaps in different forms, until they are learned. The relationship is always the greatest teacher.
6. The things we learn we knew all along, though perhaps in a different form.
7. We are always a novice at each new step and stage of life. (By the time we've got certain

- things down, like parenting, we aren't doing it any more).
8. Each person will always give you the answers; sometimes, you have to listen very carefully to learn the questions.
 9. Remember what's really important.
 10. We learn to love by loving.
 11. The more love you give away, the more you have left.
 12. Being effective and experiencing mastery is the most fundamental of all human needs.
 13. A good teacher shows you step-by-step that what you're looking for is what you already have.
 14. Keep your eye on the ball and your head in the game. This adage from my favorite coach spoke of life as well: One focused step at a time, yet with a direction and destination.
 15. You don't have to know all the answers, just get inside your experience and you will be informed. When your head and your gut both agree, you'll never go wrong.
 16. Not everything we learn is necessarily something we want to learn.
 17. For each new stage of life, we are so young at being older.
 18. Flowers blossom toward the sunshine, not away from the dark.
 19. Every lived experience is important and is stored in some way, though not all of it is retrievable by words and conscious memory.
 20. Just as a child gives birth to parents, two people give birth to a relationship. Both are more work than you ever imagined, and both are more rewarding than you ever could have imagined.
 21. We need not be filled with knowing, but with caring to learn. Preserve the curiosity and openness of a beginner's mind.
 22. It may not be necessary to understand everything, just as there are some things which can be understood only after they happen. Sometimes you can only get ready for something after it has already occurred.
 23. The most fundamental need children have is to look into the mirror of their parents' belief in them. It's the same with adults. Our belief in our children is internalized to become their belief in themselves, so that they do not dream too little, imagine too low, or play too small. It's the same with adults.
 24. Nothing in the world is more important than the bond that the child develops in its relationship with each parent. Later, the same can be said for adults in significant relationships.
 25. Bertrand Russell said, "The fundamental defect of fathers is that they want their children to be a credit to them." It's the same with mothers, the same with spouses, the same with CEOs.
 26. Everything we do matters. The corollary is that what we do always comes back, though sometimes in altered forms.
 27. Focus. Don't water last year's crops. Don't go to the hardware store for milk. Wishes don't



wash dishes. (My grandmother).

28. What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us. (Ralph Waldo Emerson).
29. True freedom is not needing someone else to respond in a particular way in order to proceed or to be happy.
30. We define ourselves by the choices we make, choose what information we receive, and decide whom we follow to influence us. Destiny is a step-by-step choice

You are always free to change your mind. Changing your mind changes your life. Becoming your authentic self involves taking risks to make change, experiencing but not giving in to fear, releasing judgment and criticism, letting go of assumptions forged at an earlier time, and embracing dreams that bring mastery and accomplishment.

B. Your Life Story: Good News/Bad News

[In Workbook]

Your Life Story: Good News/Bad News

Good News: You are in control of your life

Bad News: You are in control of your life

Good News: Your choices in life define you

Bad News: Your choices in life define you

Good News: You can exert power and do with your life what you want

Bad News: That power is not inert, but always responding, moving

Good News: You can harness that power and direct it

Bad News: You have a default mode that could be worse than doing nothing

Good News: It is a moving energy.

Bad News: That energy can be used against you.

Good News: Everything has a choice embedded in it

Bad News: Even those who do not think they are choosing, are choosing

Good News: There is no such thing as doing nothing

Bad News: Minding your own business is an illusion of neutrality and inertness; doing nothing and minding your own business are the same thing.

[In Workbook]

A SELF-COACHING SUMMARY

1. Get all of yourself going in the same direction. You will know intrinsically when you are doing this, by the way it feels, and by your sense of yourself. Don't confuse newness and trepidation of being in new territory with a signal of it not being right, or of not being unified in progress.
2. If you want to change your life, change your mind. Beliefs drive behaviors; behaviors drive performance.
3. You are always free to change your mind. When you change your mind, you change your life, as well as your vision of possibilities.
4. Have inside and outside match to move your self, life, career to new realms of capacity and function.
5. Don't compare your inside to someone else's outside.
6. Believe in yourself. This will determine how much others believe in you.
7. Stick with yourself, no matter what. The "no matter what" may be ups and downs, things that you may never be able in this moment to predict. All you can know is that you will stick with yourself, no matter what, not losing sight of goals and ideals despite noise and stimulation. What you believe will be lived, and thus come true.
8. If you find yourself denying change, it has already occurred.
9. To exit an old story, you have to have a new story to be in. Focus on developing that new story and collaborating on concretizing, co-creating, and living a game plan for career and life. When you engage the present and the future, you can expand vision and develop future potential. Employ a motivational, constructive, and effective collaboration with yourself and others to develop and realize a vision, goals, and results.
10. The only thing harder than the work of growth is not doing it.
11. People may hear what you are saying, but more importantly, they also sense how you feel and believe. People will register and remember how you made them feel even when they forget what you said.
12. What you believe will show. How you are, and how you behave with someone else, shows most in how it affects others responding to you.
13. As with any new venture, or stretch of current capacity, some fear and uncertainty are naturally there in the beginning. Nothing you have ever done of significance does not begin with uncertainty and anxiety. Comfortable is a place you get to with repetition and mastery of new experiences. You can't learn to swim on paper, you just have to overcome anxiety to jump in the pool for the first time as part of the process of learning.
14. What you believe will become true, because you will live it. You are always creating outside to match inside. Your experiences are always consistent with your assumptions. It is vitally important to know your assumptions and theories quite well since you are always living them out. Once aware, you can change the ones that don't work, stick with and enhance



the ones that do, and generate new beliefs designed for growth.

15. A vision leads you to it. You choose what you believe, though it may not seem an active choice.

[In Workbook]

Paradoxes Inherent in the Process of Growth.

1. Leaning on someone else temporarily helps one to stand alone.
2. Standing alone is the only way to get really close.
3. Knowing the answers precedes, and often makes possible the questions.
4. No one wants a guide who has never been lost.
5. A fantasy can be more real than the rest of one's life. Fantasies and reality can change when beliefs are changed.
6. You are always free to change your mind.
7. The only thing harder than the work of growth is not doing it.
8. Speaking and looking are forms of touch.
9. A person can be more delicious than food.
10. Everything you do is important.
11. If you find yourself denying change, it has already occurred.
12. A vision leads you to it. We choose what we believe, though it may not seem an active choice.

[In Workbook]

6 STEP ACTION PLAN FOR ACHIEVING GOALS

1. Move resolution to decision (a commitment).
2. Identify benefits (happier, more prosperous, and more secure).
3. Outline obstacles that must be recognized in order to not create them. If there were nothing preventing you from reaching your objectives, you would have already done so. Until you identify the obstacles that stand between you and reaching your objectives, you are in denial.
4. Determine who are the other people, groups, and organizations you need to work with to reach your objectives.
5. Compile additional information to accomplish this objective.
6. Set the date to reach the goal as part of your game plan.

[In Workbook]

Possibility Thinking

What you believe is what you'll see. This means that you are not just data-determined, but also hypothesis-determined. The brain as computer and as biological evolutionary system determines a story constructed to be called reality.

What is the practical value in this? About decision making? About how to change some mental models?

1. For any situation, look at the data, but also at the hypothesis—the default assumption that appears as “given.”
2. Since we shape and filter the world by our hypotheses, they need to be continuously tested.
3. Examine the hypotheses that work and the ones that don't work.
4. Challenge your thinking and assumptions. Interact with diverse people and keep an open “beginner's mind” rather than a quick foreclosure to a new idea. Life as a series of experiments keeps a system open to the new. Premature closure occurs by too-rapid judgment, as well as moving a new idea into an already existing model to lose the context of a new model. This style of dismissal occurs frequently among very bright people with significant life experiences who immediately relate something new to something that they already know, absorbing it into an old context or meaning without sufficient examination.
5. We become comfortable and dependent on our old habits; uncertainty and discomfort result when moving away from existing internal models.
6. Use data to test a hypothesis rather than to automatically confirm it.
7. Distinguish between transforming your thinking and being caught up in a new fad. Focus on the foreground without losing sight of the background's big picture. Repeat zooming in and out to keep perspective. Both microscopic and macroscopic views offer benefits.
8. The best way to excise something from your life is not to ignore it. The best way to avoid something is to be informed by it. By avoiding something, you engage it, and keep it central in your life. To ignore takes energy, and moves you from a centered, healthy place. Decide what you want to keep, what you want to avoid, and what you want to let go.
9. You are always free to change your mind.



[In Workbook]

18-STEP NEW LIFE STORY GROWTH PLAN

Clarify and envision the following:

1. Where you want to be, a vision coupled with purpose and objective.
2. How you see yourself and your functioning: strengths, weaknesses.
3. What you do uniquely well.
4. What you do exceptionally well.
5. What facilitates your change, progress, success.
6. What obstacles to your progress exist.
7. How you determine success with a specific set of goals.
8. Reassessment and revision of operating plan for change and growth based on experiences.
9. Short-term and long-term goals given your unique abilities.
10. Your best opportunity now.
11. Action steps for each week.
12. What the next level will be.
13. A strategy to achieve the next level.
14. Distractions, obstacles, energy drains, and time wasters.
15. After defining and specifying what is holding you back, the action you will take to not recreate that obstacle.
16. The challenges inherent in each goal.
17. Creative avoidance is still avoidance.
18. Don't compare your inside to someone else's outside.



Module 10

Your New Wellness Story[®]

People don't grow old. When they stop growing,
they become old.

Anonymous

When you were born, you cried and the world
rejoiced. Live your life so that when you die, the
world cries and you rejoice.

Cherokee saying

I. The Wellness Revolution

Just after graduation ceremonies at Harvard Medical School, the number one graduate, Michael, was walking along the Charles River with his favorite professor. A drowning man crying for help floated down the Charles. Michael jumped into the water and pulled the man to shore just after he had gone down for the third time. He applied cardiac massage and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation until the victim regained consciousness. Michael was proud to have the opportunity for his professor to witness his rescue, and he was congratulated on a job well done.

Although wet and exhausted, Michael continued to walk with his teacher. Then a second victim crying for help came floating down the river. Michael again jumped in to rescue this person and repeated the process. It happened a third, and then a fourth time, until finally Michael was so exhausted he could barely move. He turned to his professor and said, “I know I’m a doctor dedicated to helping people, but I just can’t keep this up any more.”

His professor replied, “Then why don’t you run ahead upstream and stop whoever is pushing these unfortunate people off the bridge?”

This story, told by Dr. Frank Yanowitz to his fourth-year medical students, contrasts two paradigms of healthcare.



A. Wellness Defined

[In Workbook]

Wellness Defined

Wellness integrates mind, body, and spirit with a balanced flow of energy. It is an ongoing process of choices that become the stories of our lives.

Wellness is never static--we never stay at the same place. So it must consistently be assessed. The core assessment involves an evaluation of what is working and not working in your life right now.

Wellness requires:

- Self-awareness
- Informed physical care
- Meaningful connection with important others
- Balancing mind, body, and spiritual needs

The pursuit of wellness has immediate rewards. You can:

- Feel better
- Become stronger
- Look younger
- Become healthier
- Increase energy
- Enhance physical and emotional well-being

B. Wellness as Choice

We are just beginning to recognize how simple choices profoundly affect our wellness. Sickness is reactive: People react to address a specific condition or ailment. Products and services treat the symptoms of a disease or attempt to eliminate the disease. People respond when they succumb to a specific condition or ailment. They do not want to be customers of the healthcare industry.

Wellness is proactive: People seek activity, products, and services to feel healthier, reduce

the effects of aging, look better, and prevent illness. Wellness is characterized by problem avoidance and prevention.

One reason that wellness has been elusive as a concept is that most of what we know today about biochemical functions of proteins, minerals, vitamins, and nutritional substances occurs on a molecular level rather than a cellular level.

Why do sophisticated, intelligent people spend money to improve their lives and their surroundings in every way *except* their physical and emotional well-being? For example, The National Institute of Health found 61% of the U.S. population to be overweight (an excessive of total body weight) and 27% of the U.S. population to be obese (an excess of body fat) defined as having a BMI of 30 or greater.

This figure has *doubled* since the 1980s.

When someone is clinically obese it increases the difficulty of maintaining energy and affects job performance. The obese have a significantly higher incidence of body pain, fatigue, stomach distress, arthritis, headaches, and other common ailments usually associated with aging. Most of the 59,000,000 Americans who have diabetes or pre-diabetes are overweight.

“Thousands of studies have shown direct relationships between lack of physical activity and coronary heart disease, hypertension, cancer, diabetes, anxiety and depression.”

~ Paul Zane Pilzer

Over half the cases of personal bankruptcy in the United States are due to medical bills (Harvard University study). Of these individuals who are driven to bankruptcy by medical bills not covered by health insurance, some surprising findings occurred:

- 75% of the medically bankrupt had health insurance when their illness began.
- The majority owned their own homes and had attended college.
- Most of the medically bankrupt who had health insurance simply were unable to continue paying the expenses not covered by health insurance.

Today about 95% of all prescription drugs in the United States are maintenance drugs—ones that treat the symptoms of a disease. Maintenance drugs are designed to be taken in many cases for the rest of your life.

A change of lifestyle, especially diet and exercise, can dramatically cut lifetime healthcare expenses.



C. The Wellness System of Energy

[In Workbook]

The Wellness System of Energy

Each person is an open system: We take in energy from sources around us, transform and organize it, and return it to the environment.

Ilya Prigogine won a Nobel Prize for his theory of dissipative structures. A dissipative structure is an open system in which energy is taken in, modified, and then returned (dissipated) to the environment.

Wellness requires an efficient flow of energy. Disease is when that flow of energy is disrupted, blocked, or derailed in some manner.

Consider these examples of disrupted energy flow:

- Taking in more energy in the form of food than is required, resulting in obesity.
- Blockage of energy, such as suppressed communication or repressed feelings.
- An insufficient intake of energy, such as vitamins and nutrients, or denying compliments from others.
- Crossover or inappropriate substitution of one form of energy for another such as using sex to satisfy a spiritual need, or money to satisfy an emotional need.
- Rechannel energy in an indirect way, such as passive-aggressive behavior or psychosomatic symptoms.
- Weak interface or unfocused assertiveness with others, producing diminished emotional impact.
- Excessive withdrawals from your emotional or physical bank account without replenishing.
- Poor interface with the environment such as impulsive, explosive, or addictive behavior.

Wellness of the senses also deserves consideration, as sensory information is a form of energy input into the wellness system. Our senses channel significant information on an ongoing basis to inform and protect our system.

An example of excessive energy input to the sensory system is noise. I grew up on a farm and noticed that my dad's hearing by age 40 was compromised. He worked around heavy

machinery all his life and did not know to use ear protection. I knew from the time I started to drive a tractor at age 10 that I wanted to be a doctor. I knew from Drs. Kildare and Ben Casey that I had to hear a set of heart sounds through a stethoscope, and if my hearing were compromised like my dad's, I would be in trouble. So I fashioned earplugs from moistened tissue (don't ask) and cotton to plug my ears around farm machinery. It worked. Only much later did I see ear plugs at the drugstore made for use in environments ranging from loud machinery to snoring spouses.

What we eat is another form of energy intake and utilization. When Yankee Stadium was built during the 1920s it had 82,000 seats. After remodeling during the 1970s the seating was only 59,000. During that 50-year period, the average American "bottom" had widened from 14 to 19 inches. (Perhaps Miss Piggy has too many followers of her dictum, "Never eat more than you can lift.").



II. Authoring Your New Wellness Story

A. *The Mindset of Wellness*

[In Workbook]

The Mindset of Wellness

Wellness is a mindset. This mindset gives ownership of a life story of wellness to the individual. With this ownership comes the responsibility—and privilege—that each thought, feeling, experience, and behavior is created each moment.

Recognition of the authorship of your wellness story includes awareness of the processes and behaviors of mind, body, and soul. This authorship includes the physical, emotional, and spiritual patterns that you engage on a daily basis. It means recognizing true needs and distinguishing them from wants.

- Mind includes constructive and creative use of your mind; knowing and living up to your ideals; maintaining a loyalty to your ideals; nurturing close relationships.
- Body includes making the choices that are in your best interest; informed, consistent pursuit of nutrition, exercise, and safety.
- Spiritual includes self-awareness and nurturance; meaningful endeavors; expression of feelings to others; asking and getting what you need.

Identify Body Language

Wellness is a quality of health and well-being that is essential. When this process is not practiced, the awareness of its omission may be crystallized in illness. Sometimes we only appreciate water when the well is dry.

This exercise will help you track bodily symptoms to a deeper meaning. The example of gastrointestinal upset will walk you through the steps.

1. Experience: Churning gut
2. When it occurs: After an upsetting event
3. It prevents: Outright expression of anger
4. Its reward: A refocusing to something I can end by a medication
5. The deeper need: Focus on the initial derailment of relationship and its subsequent breakdown product or upset

6. More effective approach: From a cool state of calmness, understand and express a point of view and illuminate hidden or implicit assumptions
7. The remedy: Reframe or negotiate to a mutual agreement

Wellness Initiatives

1. List three things that you know you can do to increase your wellness.
2. What is one initiative you can take this week for each of the three wellness steps?
3. Specifically plan the next best action for each initiative—one thing that you can begin today that will give you a start in the process of change.
4. Will you commit to this next best action today?

Disease is body talk, feedback for gathering information. Disease—the symptoms that we are familiar with—is not the problem but the attempted remedy. A symptom is the body’s attempt to solve a problem, somatic language that something needs attention. And when you listen to whispers, no one needs to shout.

“The next major advances in health of the American people will come from the assumption of individual responsibility for one’s own health and a necessary change in lifestyle for the majority of Americans.” ~ John Knowles, M.D., former President, Rockefeller Foundation

Your body is the projection of your mind’s software. To change your body, you have to revise the software.

“Every psychological symptom both reveals and conceals, making very obvious to others what we hide from ourselves, continually engaging what we attempt to flee. Symptoms give disguised voice to what we avoid knowing. As sentinel of a process that needs, begs, to be understood, a symptom should be listened to rather than silenced, respected rather than disregarded. A story needing to be heard, it repeats until translated or listened to literally: A pain in the neck, purging something, weeping skin, hypertension. People become patients because they can no longer keep their secrets, yet cannot tell their stories to themselves. A symptom is an answer to a question its creator has not dared ask consciously, a story with its own history, dynamics, and motivation.” ~ Krueger, D. Integrating Body Self and Psychological Self. New York: Brunner/Routledge, 2002.

How you think about something can change your body. The placebo effect reminds us how powerful an expectation can be.

During the Korean War a young soldier sustained a bad wound to his leg. Although his leg was lacerated, his vital signs were excellent as his fellow soldiers supported him. When a doctor arrived, he took one look at the soldier’s leg and exclaimed, “Oh my God, this is bad.” The young man immediately died.



A hypnotic suggestion that someone is badly burned can immediately cause skin blisters.

Psychoneuroimmunology verifies what folk medicine has known for centuries: That thoughts and emotions directly affect the body's chance of healing. The immune system, the body's first line of defense against disease, has substantially strengthened by thought, feeling, and overall health.

[In Workbook]

Wellness Mind Mapping

1. What do you do to actively work at health and wellness?
2. Do you have any health challenges or illnesses?
3. Are you on any maintenance medications?
4. Have you educated yourself about the benefits of vitamins, minerals, and supplements?
5. What do you do to nurture yourself, and to reduce stress?
6. Do you make an appointment with yourself to relax/meditate?
7. Describe a typical day. Describe a typical week.
8. Describe your usual diet for a week. For one day, write down everything you eat and drink.
9. Describe your usual exercise for a week.
10. Describe what you do for fun and pleasure during a week. How often do you do it?
11. What barriers do you experience to wellness?

B. Why Is Change So Difficult?

[In Workbook]

Why Is Change So Difficult?

In studies of coronary bypass patients, when their lives are at risk unless they adopt healthier lifestyles, how many do you think change their habits? Only one in nine.

Changing behavior is difficult. What keeps people from doing what they need to do for themselves? What makes it so difficult for people to change, even when their lives depend on it?

Here is a sampling of preventable situations:

- 70% of healthcare costs stem from preventable diseases. (Center for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Stress contributes to 85% of all medical problems. (Cooper Wellness Program)

- 70-80% of primary-care physician visits are for stress-related complaints or disorders. (U.S. Public Health Survey; U.N. International Labor Organization study)
- Stress is the number-one reason behind sickness from work. (Gee Publishing Survey)
- Stress undermines work productivity in 9 of 10 companies. (Industrial Society survey)
- 71% of workers are not emotionally engaged in their work. (Gallup)
- Obesity, diabetes, and heart disease have reached epidemic proportions—and almost all are preventable. (American Medical Association)

Some of this resistance is based in staying in a comfort zone of the predictable and familiar. Another component of resistance is that our brains are programmed to operate on the default mode of repetition.

One answer is to have a clear, specific, stepwise program for change.

C. An Application of Change

At each moment we actively construct what we think, feel, and experience. Every day begins a fresh page. The dramas of everyday life do not simply affect us, they are created by us. Yet so often the story closest to us, our own, is the most difficult to know.

How can we tell our wellness stories to ourselves in order to know which aspects of the narrative work and which need to change? How can we identify what is missing, change an attitude, or generate happiness?

Insights, understanding, even coming to the end of the past and ending an old story are not enough to create a new story.

Once you become aware of actively making choices, you can decide what's in your best interest, what furthers your story, and what doesn't.

If you want to understand something, try to change it.

Here's an example from Executive Mentor Coaching:

Bryan was working successfully at a new CEO position. Three months earlier he advanced from COO at another corporation. He was doing a great job in his first 100 days.



In one session he departed from our discussion of success strategies to say he had a vague concern that he would somehow sabotage his new achievements. Then he said he regularly stopped at a convenience store to eat candy before he got home so that his wife wouldn't see him.

I asked how he decided to stop each time. He responded by calling it sneak eating, and said he hadn't told his wife.

I asked, "What do you say to yourself the instant you decide to sneak eat?"

He wasn't sure. I wanted to know specifically what was going on in his head that led to the conclusion to do what he did.

I prompted, "In other words, do you bargain with yourself to say 'I'll do better later?' Do you oppose your own authority to say, 'I'll do whatever I want?' Or feel some overwhelming urge that hijacks your best judgment?"

Bryan's conversation with himself was, "To hell with it, I'll eat whatever I want—no one's around to stop me." He recognized that the result was abandonment of his principles.

I noted that in the story he was writing, he farmed out his authority to his wife—as if she were the obstacle. He kept the other half, the desire, as if he were getting away with something. He created the illusion that he triumphed because she didn't see him. He acknowledged his reactive choice to not be his own authority.

His question was, "How do I get it back?"

I said, "The question is not how do you get it back, but how do you not give it away? It is yours; you're the author of your story. It seems you're not being loyal to yourself."

He recognized that he was writing the storyline he detested.

I asked how he could convert his fear into an intention that was in his best interest. He quickly admitted he needed to take care of himself better, that he wasn't living up to his own ideals. He could then collaborate with me to make a specific plan with effective strategies for eating and exercise. We could then apply this process to sustaining and expanding his success in his company as well as his life.

D. Brain Programming for Wellness

[In Workbook]

Brain Programming for Wellness

Neuroscience now teaches us that we can either program wellness or program illness by our focus. We bring about not what we want but what we focus on. Focusing on illness and worry not only drains energy but adumbrates illness.

A negative thought loop is mentally replaying the same thoughts and reviewing the same scenarios again and again. You can't find an exit—you can't think or use logic to get out of it. While it looks like focusing, it's really obsessing. Thought loops are being marooned in your left brain.

Negative thought loops of worry will drain emotional and physical energy as well as create negative mental pictures that program your mind to their fulfillment. Since mind and body are connected, depletion of energy wears down the body's defenses.

To program wellness and deprogram illness:

- Recognize negative thought loops such as worry.
- Write down the list of negative thoughts so that you can cue your radar for awareness.
- Write a list of positive, proactive thoughts/plans/affirmations.
- As soon as you recognize you're entering a negative thought loop, immediately move to a positive thought and action.
- For intrusive negative thoughts, schedule a time to engage them.
- Respect the boundary of engaging the negative concern only during the time that you have scheduled (e.g., 20 minutes each week at 3:30 PM Tuesdays).
- Mourn what cannot be changed. Place energy on what you can determine.
- Focus on and express gratitude for wellness.

Wellness Focus and Visualization

- Focus on the weight that feels good to you.
- Picture what you'll look like at your ideal weight. Look at the pictures daily.
- Write out your ideal body weight range.
- Focus on the body you want – your ideal weight range– your ideal body.



(Remember, it has to be your body at ideal weight. You can't lose weight and have a supermodel's body.)

- Don't focus on losing weight
- Don't focus on "fat thoughts" such as the following:
 - Slow metabolism
 - Hereditary body size
 - Slow thyroid
 - The spirit of your Great-Aunt Sally that channeled the curse of large thighs
- Look at and admire your body; be grateful; keep in mind the pictures you have.
- When you eat, be entirely present to the act of eating and to your body.
- Visualize the thoroughly chewed food assimilated throughout your body.
- Think and feel as though your desire is manifest.
- Create your body, as your life, intentionally

Remember the ABCs: Ask. Believe. Create.

*I hope I have helped you to
understand and transform your life story,
articulate a powerful personal vision that will inspire you and others,
establish strategies to reach your goals.
And create a flexible template to help many others.*

[In Workbook]

What if right now is a turning point for you?
The time your grandchildren will tell stories about years from now?

The time you awakened your deep passion and acted on it.
The time you did what you were always meant to do.

Or, this moment of truth may be a brief awakening,
silenced by the sensible obstacles you're familiar with constructing.

In that case, your grandchildren will have to be content
telling stories about your favorite sports team,
or what great cookies you used to bake.

It will all depend on how brave you'll be.

Addendum



CLIENT INFORMATION PACKET

Information Sheet

Professional Coaching includes an initial extended evaluation, weekly telephone sessions, and perhaps e-mail, telephone, and fax communication. In-person meetings are also available. Arrangements may be made to focus Coaching on your writing, speaking, or other direct working observation venues.

Date: _____ Referred by: _____

Name: _____ DOB: _____ Age: _____

Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Preferred Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Occupation: _____

Business Name: _____

Business Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home phone: _____ Business Phone: _____

Fax line: _____ E-Mail Address: _____

Preference for leaving messages: _____

Names of important people in your life (spouse, partner, children, friends, etc.):

Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: _____

Other information you want me to know: _____

Client Intake Form

A list of priorities and information about me:

1. I want to improve or expand/extend use of the following skills or develop and create the following components to my professional/personal life:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. I want to resolve the following challenges or problems:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

3. I want to eliminate the following tolerations (what I'm putting up with in my life/business now):

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

4. I want to accomplish the following measurable or observable results:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____



5. At this point, I think that I'd like to make these fundamental changes or shifts:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

6. What I want and need most from you, as my coach, includes:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

7. Also, I want you to know that:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

Professional Coaching Agreement

I understand that I am working with _____ for Professional Coaching at the agreed fee. I am paying this monthly retainer by check or Pay Pal prior to the beginning of the month. We will have standing scheduled times each week by telephone or meeting in person, as deemed most useful. Additionally, we may have other interim though limited exchanges by telephone, voicemail, email, or for review of faxed material without additional charge. If there are special circumstances or events that require significant time or an additional session, we can renegotiate rates.

All information will be held as confidential unless the client requests otherwise in writing.

Professional Coaching is distinctly different from counseling, psychotherapy, and psychoanalysis, and does not deal with the diagnosis or treatment of emotional problems. I am not under the medical care of _____ and he is not acting as a therapist or counselor in this collaboration. Since Professional Coaching does not constitute medical consultation or treatment, any healthcare insurance does not apply.

These fees may potentially be considered deductible business expenses.

Signature: _____ Date: _____



Professional Coaching Preparation Form

Date: _____

Your weekly update is a way to prepare yourself to get the most out of our time together. These documents are a way to regularly monitor yourself, for us to track progress collaboratively over time, and for me to review before our sessions.

Please e-mail or fax this form by the evening prior to the day of our session. Periodically, it may not be convenient if you are traveling or have other disruptions, so we will also create a process to set the agenda verbally for each session at the top of the time together that appointment.

1. What I have accomplished since our last session:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

2. What I didn't get done, but intended to do:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

3. Challenges and problems I am facing now:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

4. My best personal/professional opportunities now:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____



5. I want to discuss during our session:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

6. What action steps I commit to doing before the next session one week away:

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____



Case Study: An Application of Live a New Life Story in an Unlikely Setting

When Trevor began work with me in coaching, he spoke of life being like gambling, that it is primarily luck and fate. He had just experienced some setbacks in business that reinforced an old belief that there are some things over which you are entirely helpless. Although he recognized this assumption as a replay of his parents' attitudes, it didn't feel to Trevor that he was authoring his present stuckness. He likened it to gambling, due to luck and fate.

Rational minds advise against something as risky and intimidating as gambling. But I decided to explore his gambling metaphor to illustrate another possibility—that most components are not due to luck, just as in life. Gambling can be seen as a series of choices, as a metaphor to life choices. So I decided to invite myself into Trevor's metaphor. I spoke of my experiences playing blackjack.

I first shared an experience I had on a family vacation many years ago. We were on a cruise ship for part of our vacation and it was the first time my fourteen-year-old son had seen casino gambling. It intrigued both of us, and we decided to form a partnership for gambling. He couldn't participate actively, being underage, but he sat behind me as my "consultant," where he could directly view the action of the blackjack table and whisper strategy and directions in my ear.

This was a wonderful opportunity, I thought, for him to learn some principles of business. We decided to capitalize our venture at \$50, \$25 each. We knew we might have losses that could disillusion or stop us. We set aside some "bounce-back money," aware that the most common reason for the failure of small businesses is inadequate capitalization. We also decided that, no matter what our winnings were, we would never risk more than \$25 per night, half our initial investment.

We gambled for approximately an hour and a half each of six nights on the cruise. We agreed on when we would hold, when we would ask for another card, and when we would place more than our minimum bet. The value of having already established these principles became abundantly clear once we were at the table and emotion threatened to hijack our principles. On the two or three occasions when we abandoned our principles, we learned important lessons that served to firmly reestablish loyalty to our rules.

At the end of six evenings, we had seen about thirty people at our table come and go. Amazingly, only two or three of them actually came out ahead. We were, happily, ahead about 300 percent. We made the following observations about those who did not win and especially those who lost spectacularly:

1. They had no consistent principles or standards;
2. Those who appeared to have some standards abandoned them with sufficient emotional stimuli, such as a big win, a big loss, or a sustained streak of wins or losses;
3. Emotionally motivated behaviors always lost, including anger at losing, overstimulation from winning big, and afraid; and
4. They had no established end point for loss or gain.

I later learned that there was a statistically significant next best action, just as in business, for each of the card combinations of the dealer and player.

Every transaction from gambling to business is based on a relationship. So selecting a time, location, and dealer were important. With a positive relationship with a dealer, the player's success is perceived as the dealer's success as well. Conversation forms the foundation of that relationship. Tips when winning shares the profit, with larger tips when winning larger amounts. The dealer becomes invested in the player's success.

If a mindset, dealer, or table position is not working, you are free to cut losses, choose another, or stop playing. When you adhere to a "business plan" of when to bet, when to ante, and when to fold, reason rather than emotion of greed or fear do not prevail.

Trevor constructed the following from our work.

Tips for Gambling (a.k.a., You Too Can Be Effective at Life)

- Don't let the game scare you.
- Everything you do is important
- If you play, there is a chance of success, and vice versa. Nothing ventured, nothing gained.
- You can shift the odds in your favor, e.g., by being at the right place at the right time.
- Think like whoever is in charge of the right place and time.
- Risk is necessary in order to succeed. You may have to risk more to succeed more.
- There is more than one dealer - choose wisely.
- You are free to walk away from a bad dealer.
- A good relationship with a good dealer enhances your chance of success.
- Share your winnings, as it encourages others to risk more.
- Disclose your success in order to generate hope in those who need it.
- Risk succeeding big.
- Speaking your mind becomes your mind.



- When you know something, you can never not know it again.
- Old assumptions cannot generate new ideas.
- Creativity is nurturing in itself, validating in its own right.

He contrasted these with the premise of his old story, in the metaphor of gambling:

- Don't gamble.
- Nothing ventured, nothing lost.
- If you must play, do it secretly to avoid giving the impression that you are in the game.
- Losing is safer and more predictable than winning; if you win, there is something to lose.
- Hide your winnings, as it makes people feel bad.
- The dealer is the dealer.
- The cards are the cards.
- Risk is risk.
- Who knows who runs the place?

From these two contrasting lists, he ventured a third list.

My Formerly Forbidden, Secret, Unspeakable Manifesto of What I Want.

- I want to use everything that I have.
- I want to like the surface as well as the depth.
- I want the surface to be continuous with the depth, and both are who I am.
- I want to be free to play at the surface.
- Therefore, I commit to:
 - Be in the best shape I can be
 - Become as healthy and attractive as I can be
 - Look in the mirror and admire who I see, surface and depth.

LITTLE THINGS COUNT (Or: How Two French Fries Weigh 40 Pounds)

Putting on 40 pounds over 10 years means gaining an average of four pounds per year.

- 40 pounds divided by 10 years equals 4 pounds per year. Four pounds divided by 12 months equals .33 (1/3) of a pound per month.
- This is approximately 1/100th of a pound per day (1/3 pound divided by 30 days).
- One pound of stored fat represents 3500 calories.
- 3500 times 1/100 equals 35.
- To achieve the feat of gaining 40 pounds in 10 years, all you have to do is consume an extra 35 calories every day.
- 35 calories = two regular French fries

Little things count.

People generally diet backwards. They regularly eat and exercise poorly, then do a binge diet. If you have good habits on a regular basis, you can cheat (binge) at times such as holidays. It's what you do day in and day out that makes or breaks wellness.

Develop the habits that move you toward your goal. You have to have a system. Repetition is the mother of learning.

Life Story Glossary



Change. To modify or convert from past to present. Or back again—such as the “system restore” of a midlife crisis when someone who has previously altered a value system in order to succeed in a competitive corporate environment shifts back to what is more authentic. Change uses the past as a point of reference to alter recognizable patterns; reinvention focuses on now and the future, to create a new story. A new story can move problem to possibility, obstacle to desire. The key element in writing a new story is to design the story from what is possible rather than what has existed in the past.

No human quality is beyond change. ~ Daniel Goleman

Choice Architecture. The determination of informed choice, and the recognition that each moment’s choice is actively determined. Choice Architecture involves the recognition that you write your own story, own it, can assess it, and decide the choice generated each moment. Mentor Coaching collaborates with clients to help them make the most informed choice possible moment by moment. Choice Architecture helps someone understand how the mind and brain work in order to create optimum maps and paradigms in order to make informed, strategic choices.

*It's taken me most of my life to know which notes not to play.
~ Dizzy Gillespie, the great jazz trumpeter*

Concessions. Something an individual puts up with that takes time, energy, peacefulness, or money in a recurring, unsatisfying way. Concessions are in four major arenas: physical, emotional, relationship, and financial. Concessions at home include such things as physical repair needs, cleaning needs, messiness, or noise boundary violations. Concessions in work life can be inadequate space, wrong field of work, poor communication, lack of mission, improper technology, or dysfunctional hierarchies. Concessions regarding family, friends and colleagues include imbalance of support or friendship, blurred boundaries, misunderstandings, or the need to change fundamental agreements. Concessions usually result from procrastination, conflict avoidance, or creating a certain appearance.

*Nothing prevents our being natural so much as the desire to appear so.
~ Francois La Rochefoucauld*

Emotional Economics® The study of the interactions of mind and brain impacting money behavior and financial decisions. Emotional Economics® integrates and applies developmental psychology, neuroscience, and quantum physics with strategic coaching principles to understand and remedy money mistakes and financial fallacies. The study of Emotional Economics® incorporates the principles of understanding how the mind and brain work in order to revise mind software and rewire brain hardware regarding money behavior and financial decisions.

Our core beliefs and emotions require a portal of expression, a path to the tangible.

Empathy. A listening perspective positioned inside the experience and subjective reality of another. This attunement with another's internal experience permits appreciation of that person's own framework of thinking, feeling, and meaning. Empathy is resonance, not sympathy, commiseration, or condolence. Empathy positions one foot in the shoe of another's experience without losing any of oneself. Empathy is neutral—equidistant between two sides of a conflict—not knowing what that person's answer will be, and not needing for it to go one way or another. An empathic failure results in another's hurt (often quickly repaired by anger—a reaction to the helplessness of not being understood).

*Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other's eyes for an instant?
~ Henry David Thoreau*

Explicit and implicit learning. Acquiring conscious, specific, and focused content is referred to as explicit learning. Explicit learning focuses on data and factual information. Implicit learning takes place outside awareness. Implicit learning includes a body memory such as riding a bicycle, or a procedural memory such as complex behavioral patterns; for example, a parent who repeats with children the same behavior or attachment pattern experienced as a child. Implicit learning and memory operate in the flow of a process, so you ultimately don't have to think about it each time. A "choke" or "slump" can be associated with a switch from implicit to explicit processes.

What is remembered is what becomes reality. ~ Patricia Hampl

Ideal. An internal standard of excellence. Ideals serve as a personal model of value—an internal guide of purpose and principles. Examples of ideals include to relate, to create, to teach, or to contribute. Living up to a personal, attainable ideal generates self-esteem. Integrity results when ideals are respected and protected. Shame results when ideals are not being attained—or when there is no tangible evidence of what "good enough" is:

Ken Townsend's mother, after reading that Townsend won an English prize said, "There must be some mistake." Townsend ". . . took her remark as proof that whatever I did, it would not be good enough." ~ Raritan magazine

Internal point of reference. Ownership of one's life story: the self as the source of initiative, esteem, and regulation. Autonomy to become one's own authority allows someone to fully realize passion and potential. Examples of an external point of reference—of not being one's own authority—include passive language: "Anger seized me;" or "I came to an impasse," or "My mind played tricks on me."). Other examples are external pressure words: "Have to. . ." "Ought to. . ." "Should. . ." Or the direct abdication of one's own initiative: "You made me feel that way." Dependence on others as well as perpetual defiance of authority, indicates ongoing struggles with autonomy.

Both conformity and opposition occupy the same prison. ~ David Krueger, Destiny



Intuition. A nonrational way of knowing, related to body-based wisdom. An impression, gut feeling, hunch, flashing image, or fantasy may occur before someone knows what to think. Intuition is imaginative, sometimes surprising.

Intuition is the source of all scientific knowledge. ~ Aristotle

But what would happen if we took our instincts seriously? . . . We would end up with a different and better world. ~ Malcolm Gladwell

Mental Models. A representation of external reality inside your head. A Mental Model attempts to understand knowledge and principles about the world. We each have several Mental Models—or mindsets—inside our heads. A Mental Model is a way to identify core principles and organizing concepts to make a story from isolated facts. A Mental Model needs to come from multiple disciplines, as one discipline cannot encompass all the necessary wisdom. If physicians or philosophers stick to their own model, their understanding of the real world would be limited. Mental Models are simply stories—stories composed of metaphors that explain both tangible and intangible. If we don't have enough Mental Models we tend to overuse the ones we have. To a man with a hammer, every problem looks like a nail. Mental Models are stored in the hippocampus, the brain's memory focal point.

Alice came to a fork in the road. "Which road do I take?" she asked.

"Where do you want to go?" responded the Cheshire cat.

"I don't know," Alice answered. "Then," said the cat, "it doesn't matter." ~ Lewis Carroll

Mirror Neurons. Mirror Neurons are a function of actual networks in different parts of the brain that reflect the behavior or feelings of others. We unconsciously imitate what we witness, ranging from movement, to behavior patterns, to yawning. Mirror Neurons help us directly and indirectly imitate actions and create experiences. Stick out your tongue at a newborn baby, and the baby will immediately return the gesture. A baby smiles and her mother smiles back. Mirror Neurons are instrumental in acquiring empathy, language, and social behavior. This mirroring activity explains how children download beliefs and behaviors beginning in the first years of life. We experience and take in how our parents handled money—the behaviors, messages, attitudes, biases, meanings, and regard of money. Mirror Neurons help us understand emotional and social contagion.

A loving person lives in a loving world. A hostile person lives in a hostile world. Everyone you meet is your mirror. ~ Ken Keyes, Jr.

Tell me what you pay attention to and I will tell you who you are. ~ Jose Ortega y Gasset

Money Story. People breathe life into money and give it personal meaning to make it a story. Otherwise, money is only a fact—a piece of paper or set of digits. People create internal and external conversations about money. Some of the money issues are really about money, but many are about other matters, private or even secret, hitchhiking on money. Money is simple,

yet so complicated because some important aspects are emotional, unspoken, and unconscious. For example, self-statements equate money with worth, esteem, opportunity, obstacle, desire, or competition. Money is used to regulate feelings, affirm accomplishment, assuage guilt, or create attachments. Every important relationship, including money, has its own history, develops its own story, and evolves its own language.

I don't know how to tell my money story to myself in order to see what elements need to be changed. ~ Jeremy Tarcher, Publisher, Personal Communication

Narrative. The basic components—the running commentary—of a life story that comes alive in various ways. Narratives include not only the themes of verbal expression, but also body language that expresses feelings in psychosomatic lexicon, and recurring behavior patterns. A life story unfolds through its narration. Personal narratives, unlike other narration, may not be announced directly. Some of the narrative may be left out, invisible to the speaker; the narrator may not be fully aware of the story he's telling.

*Myths are the stories we tell ourselves to explain the world around us and within us.
~ Pamela Jaye Smith*

Needs. An essential requirement for mind, body, or spirit. Earlier in life, needs include physical nurturance, empathic attunement, attachment, effectiveness, exploration, assertion, feeling and tension regulation, and sensory requirements. An adult version of those same basic needs exists, such as providing for physical requirements, comfort, identity, affirmation, love, communication, safety, mastery, freedom, and sexual/sensual needs. When a need is met, a sense of effectiveness and optimum functioning results.

Needs and values form core themes of personal story plot. An unmet need results in someone getting sick. ~ Henry Miller

Neurogenesis. The creation of new brain cells. With new experiences, new neuronal cells as well as pathways are generated throughout our lives. Neurons are both flexible and regenerative. The new brain cells connect with existing circuitry and developing networks to enhance function, such as memory. Two things above all other create neurogenesis: an enriched environment (intellectual and emotional stimulation) and exercise. Another finding: chronic stress impairs neurogenesis.

Life isn't about finding yourself. It's about creating yourself. ~ George Bernard Shaw

Neuroplasticity. The capacity of the brain for creating new neural connections and pathways in response to experience. Neuroplasticity can occur throughout the life span. Neuroscience has demonstrated that the emotional and mental changes we craft by the process of “mind sight” transform the physical brain. By focusing on our experience we can sculpt neural pathways, and stimulate the growth of aspects of the brain crucial to well-being. Neuroscience shows us that we can grow these new connections throughout our lives. One of the most



exciting and revolutionary discoveries in the last few decades is this: how we specifically focus attention shapes the actual structure of the brain. The brain never stops growing in response to new experiences.

You become what you give your attention to. ~ Epictetus 55-135 A.D.

Perception. The process of how we select, register, and attach meaning to experiences. Someone registers information and experience that fits an existing belief pattern, and ignores or disbelieves what doesn't fit that pattern. Two people with different cognitive styles can stand shoulder to shoulder viewing the same scene, then later describe it in ways that sound like two different events. Our inner beliefs determine our experience of what surrounds us; our interpretation becomes our story, which becomes our reality.

*The percentage of Americans who believe they are in the richest 1% of the population: 19%.
~ Peter Strupp*

One day our descendents will think it incredible that we paid so much attention to things like the amount of melanin in our skin or the shape of our eyes or our gender instead of the unique identities of each of us as complex human beings. ~ Franklin Thomas

Plot. The skeleton of a life story that gives it structure, purpose, and pattern. A unique set of individual beliefs, consequences, and relationships that determines how one creates experiences. The plot is the arc drawn across the themes and storylines of an entire life narrative. Plot dictates what one looks for, how one perceives, and how one assigns meaning to an experience. All subsequent information is absorbed through that narrative plot. Basic beliefs and core assumptions generate experiences, behaviors, and meanings. All components of a life, business, or career story can evolve to a cohesive narrative and an organized coherent plot of action goals, strategic development, and results. Often an individual plot goes unquestioned because someone takes it for granted and remains unaware of its existence as an organizing model.

Those who do not have power over the story that dominates their lives, the power to retell it, rethink it, deconstruct it. . .and change it as times change, truly are powerless because they cannot think new thoughts. ~ Salman Rushdie

Premise. An organizing proposition upon which a story is based. The preliminary statement of story purpose keeps the reader from straying from the storyline while fully and richly developing the plot. Certain fundamental propositions upon which life stories are based include parentage, social class, looks, and race. America lets one work out of some premises, such as social class. For example, the greatest reason people don't earn and keep a lot of money is the premise that they don't see themselves capable of it. Still other premises, such as one based on early childhood abandonment, powerfully affect subsequent relationship expectations.

The universe is made of stories, not atoms. ~ Muriel Rukeyser

Psychological symptom. A somatic story authored by emotions. A symptom both reveals and conceals, making obvious to others what one hides from oneself, simultaneously attempting to engage and to flee. Symptoms give disguised voice to what their creator avoids knowing, a secret hiding in the open. A symptom is a component of a story that needs, indeed begs, to be told in its entirety, listened to rather than silenced artificially, respected rather than disregarded. It speaks literally: a pain in the neck, purging something, weeping skin, hypertension. As a story with its own history, dynamics, and meanings, a symptom answers a question not asked consciously; it will be repeated until translated.

It is easier to fall ill than learn the truth... so take care of your maladies ... they always have something to tell you. ~ M. Pavic

Reinvention. To create or compose different life story experiences. A process that begins with taking ownership of a life story, rather than living out what just seems to happen, or feeling victimized by forces beyond our control. The key element in writing a new story is to design the story from what is possible, rather than from what has existed in the past.

I am astonished I could let go of the drama of being a suffering artist. Nothing dies harder than a bad idea. ~ Julia Cameron

Resistance to change. Both mind and brain become conditioned to respond in recurring patterns. There are always the pull of the old and the fear of the new. Yet there is only a redundant future in repetition. Any departure from the familiar, even a positive one, creates anxiety and uncertainty. We repeat behavior that doesn't work because it offers security and familiarity. Doing the same thing results in a known outcome, and we can mistake predictability for effectiveness, trade freedom for safety, or forego aliveness for certainty. Overcoming resistance to change by creating new experiences literally changes the neuronal networks and neural nets within the brain.

History doesn't repeat itself, but it does rhyme. ~ Mark Twain

Secrets. To hold onto something, to continuously engage by sequestering, reserving its place frozen in time. The possibility of telling beckons relinquishment of what the secret holds, threatens to unleash the feelings packaging it, and adumbrates dissolution of the illusion that is part of the secret. The threat of exposure risks stripping away everything pertaining to the secret, especially its companion hope. Someone can engage something the first time by denying it. People can tell themselves secrets out loud by symptoms. Speaking secrets out loud in words distinguishes the present from the past (a secret is always about the past, because it exists in a time capsule).

The only secrets are the secrets that keep themselves. ~ Emerson

Self-empathy. Self-empathy makes your self the focus of your attunement and resonance. Self-empathy is more difficult than focusing on another person, especially if you are unaccustomed to



taking yourself as a point of reference and have been a caretaker of others to the partial exclusion of yourself. Being empathic with yourself is the same process as being attuned to others, only with yourself as the focus. Your feelings need to have a receiver (you), have an impact and become known (by you), and be metabolized (by you).

If you look deep enough inside yourself, you'll see everyone else. ~ Kinky Friedman

Self-statement. A unique, personal communication of experience and point of view. What people say and do are inevitable, unavoidable self-statements of their beliefs and personal realities. Individuals actively construct their experiences. Narrative and plot reflect individual assumptions and self-concept. A life story manifests through self-statements, from broad themes such as success, to simple statements such as melancholy that sees and forecasts unhappiness. People believe according to their self-images; views are self-statements of our perception. All that you say is about yourself.

Every man's work, whether it be literature or music or pictures or architecture or anything else, is always a portrait of himself. ~ Samuel Butler (1835-1902) English Writer

State of mind. A psychophysiological (mind-body) state, with an internally organized software program of expectations, attitudes, meanings, and emotions. Each state of mind has its own developmental history, its own expectations to filter and organize perception and attribute meaning. Each person has different states of mind, with more awareness of some than others. A normal range of mind states includes calm relaxation, focused alertness, or worried anticipation; some states have a predominant feeling such as excitement, fear, anxiety, or euphoria. Each state of mind, like a software program, determines access and expression of memory, emotion, thinking, and behavior. Within a particular state of mind people perceive, remember, feel, think, behave, and respond in a consistent mode.

The mind seems to embrace a confederation of psychic entities. ~ William James

Storybusting. Although people are neurologically and psychologically conditioned to relate to the world in a preprogrammed repetitive way, change can occur. An internal working model can be transcended. This is storybusting. The usual solutions may no longer work.

*And what happens when the stories we have relied on our whole lives stop making sense?
~ What The Bleep Do We Know!?*

New information may not fit into the existing framework, and ultimately can't be ignored.

For centuries, no one believed a human being could run the mile in less than four minutes. In 1954, when one man busted that story, the perception of reality and possibility changed. Within months of Roger Bannister's breaking the four-minute mile, several others did so as well, and today it is commonplace. The obstacle of the impossible could no longer be constructed.

Storyline. The basic themes, or subplots, of a life story plot. Each storyline has its own history, its own consistency over time, its own assumptions and motivations. The perceptions and suppositions within a storyline become evident in behaviors. A storyline is the manifestation of beliefs, since one always finds or creates that which validates basic theories. Some of the major storylines of literature and life include entitlement and privilege, redemption through caring for others, hard work brings prosperity and dignity, and penance absolves earlier mistakes. The victim always finds ways to suffer; someone who is hopeful will always create possibility and live into it.

The unconscious speaks more than one dialect. ~ S. Freud

Story Metaphor. The metaphor constructing a life or money story is based on the premise that whatever you think, feel, and experience is what you create each moment. You construct your entire story; every element of experience is created. Consider the different perspective in saying “I am sad” versus “I feel sad.” “I am sad” is a self-definition that both defines and limits. “I feel sad” is the recognition of the act of creating a feeling, and the inherent recognition of being able to create other feelings as well. The choice architecture of each moment actively constructs story narrative. To focus on and see story construction accepts not only creation but also establishes transformation possibilities.

*Money is the one true metaphor, the one commodity that can be translated into all else.
~ Dana Gioia*

Success intoxication. To become enmeshed in the escalating pursuit of success and become lost in its stimulation and affirmation. Indications of success intoxication: a reliance on the extremes of accomplishment; accelerating success with heightened metrics; an evolving erosion of other important matters to the process leading to success; blurred boundaries between work and personal life. The stimulation of extreme success, such as in business or athletic endeavors, can make it harder to regulate emotions and stay grounded in values and identity.

Success has made failures of many men. ~ Cindy Adams

Success phobia. A disturbance of a person’s ability to comfortably handle achievement. Those who have the opportunity, intelligence, and imagination to succeed but do not live up to their potential, or suffer when they do, reveal an internal rather than external impediment to success. Success can be avoided in any areas of life—academic, vocational, marital, sexual, and parental, to name a few. Fear of success manifests in so many ways that it often goes unrecognized. Three basic areas of phobic avoidance are avoidance of the final step to success (“I always stop just short of my goals,” known as choking), erosion of successful accomplishment (a take-away after success to spoil its enjoyment), and ambition without goal setting (“I can’t set a specific goal”).

We have met the enemy—and he is us. ~ Walt Kelly

Transference. The active organizing process of the mind to understand a present experience, but necessarily relying on existing software. What we expect in the present tells us instantly what



has happened in the past. Relationships with original caretakers establish a story premise of expectations and patterns. When neuronal networks and neural pathways activate, the basic storylines unfold. Transference is most obvious with a stereotypic or irrational response, such as currently reacting to a spouse in the same way as toward a parent in childhood. Unless shaped and changed by revision, repetition ensures a replay of the old story.

You tricked me out of feeling solitary by being others for me. ~ Clive Wilbur

Visualization. A scenario of the experience of arrival at a destination, such as the successful actualization of a goal. An author visualizes a scene and conveys it to the readers in such a way that they live into the process of being there. Constructing a vision gives hope possibility—a shape and form. Vision crystallizes an achievement into a full sensory experience and context in mind and brain. An individual inhabits the experience of a vision as guide to creating it. A vision serves as inspiration to design ways of realizing it. The most successful businesses have a vision that is also ubiquitous for each person in the organization.

A vision leads you to it.

Wants. Wishes and desires. Wants are replaceable with other wishes, and fantasies are interchangeable, but one need cannot substitute for another need. Old unmet needs manifest as present wants, such as a childhood need for affirmation leading to relentless adult pursuit of validation trophies and driven accomplishments. A need cannot be suppressed or segmented from awareness for very long. The frustration of a wish, such as the expectation of a gift, can lead to disappointment. While needs are universal, wants are tied to uniquely personal experiences and have their own particular history.

I know what I am fleeing from, but not what I am in search of. ~ Michel de Montaigne

Work addiction. An unrestrained, unfulfillable internal demand for constant engagement in work, and a corresponding inability to relax. A “workaholic” is incessantly driven, relentlessly active. Work is the one organizing and effective activity. Inactivity or activity other than work may give rise to guilt, anxiety, or emptiness. Some individuals view work as the only area in which they can establish and maintain their identities, feel effective, and enjoy feelings of importance, validation, and affirmation. Others may use work to counteract underlying feelings of inadequacy and ineffectiveness. Working passionately, long and hard, and deriving satisfaction, does not make someone a work addict.

An addiction is something you can't do without, yet it is a promise never kept.

dkrueger@mentorpath.com to contact David Krueger MD
for Executive Mentor Coaching, corporate seminars, or facilitation

MentorPath.com for articles by David Krueger MD

MentorPath.com/Library for other books by David Krueger MD

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NewMoneyStory.com for *Your New Money Story®: ROADMAP for Money Mastery*. Seminar Series on 5 CDs + Workbook or available digitally

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TheSecretLanguageofMoney.com for book information, interview and video

NewLifeStoryCoaching.com for licensed, specialty-certification training
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NewMoneyStoryMentor.com for licensed, specialty-certification training
for New Money Story® Mentor Training

MentorPath.com/Corporate for corporate offerings

NeuroMentorInstitute.com/MentorCoach for application of the mind, brain, and
performance sciences to strategic coaching

Live A New Life Story[®]

The Owner's Guide – *Revised Edition*

Integrating insights from psychoanalysis and neuroscience with strategic coaching, *Live a New Life Story[®] The Owner's Guide* mentors life story transformation.

Live a New Life Story[®] shows how to assess a life story plot, master the inevitable changes, and craft a new story. Each of the nine modules of this unique system illuminates the path for systematic change, reinvention, and success. Whether it is a life, money, relationship, career, or business story that you want to transform, the structured programs in this manual will guide the process.

- Learn the master plan for writing the next chapter of your story.
- Apply a comprehensive philosophy to transform your mind and brain.
- Implement the latest psychology and neuroscience research to change belief, behavior, and performance.
- Maximize new coaching techniques for powerful results.
- Harness the power of regulating states of mind, and how to access them for optimum success.
- Demystify and defuse obstacles to achieving and sustaining success.
- Includes: *Live a New Life Story Workbook[®]* with tools, exercises, and quizzes to guide your steps toward meaningful change; *New Life Story Glossary[®]* to illuminate core concepts.
- Develop the art and science of success strategies: mind over matters.

The Art and Science of Change, Reinvention, and Success

David Krueger, M.D. is an Executive Mentor Coach, and CEO of MentorPath[®], an Executive, Coaching, Training, Publishing, and Wellness Firm. He is also Dean of Curriculum and Mentor Coach for Coach Training Alliance.

Author of 16 trade and professional books on success, wellness, money, and self development, and 75 scientific papers and book chapters, his coaching and writing focus on the art and science of success strategies: mind over matters. Dr. Krueger founded and served as CEO for two healthcare corporations, and founded a third start-up that went from venture capital to merger/acquisition. He formerly practiced and taught Psychiatry and Psychoanalysis, and was Clinical Professor of Psychiatry.

His most recent book, *The Secret Language of Money* (McGraw-Hill), is a Business Bestseller, and has been translated into 10 languages.



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