

Jack Canfield

cocreator of
Chicken Soup for the Soul[®]

with Janet Switzer

A photograph of Jack Canfield, a man with short grey hair, smiling. He is wearing a dark blue suit jacket over a light blue button-down shirt and grey trousers. He is standing with his hands clasped in front of him, leaning slightly to his left.

The Success Principles[™]

How to Get from
Where You Are to
Where You Want to Be

Praise for *The Success Principles*™

Canfield's principles are simple, but the results you'll achieve will be extraordinary!
—Anthony Robbins, author of *Awaken the Giant Within* and *Unlimited Power*

If you could only read one book this year, you have it in your hands.
—Harvey Mackay, author of the *New York Times* number one best seller
Swim with the Sharks without Being Eaten Alive

When Jack Canfield writes, I listen. This is Jack's finest piece of writing and will impact your life forever.
—Pat Williams, senior vice president of the NBA's Orlando Magic

Jack Canfield is a Master of his medium, giving people who are hungry for more life the wisdom, insights, understanding, and inspiration they need to achieve it. Great book, great read, great gift for anyone committed to becoming a Master of Life!
—Michael E. Gerber, author of *The E-Myth* books

In one book, *The Success Principles* gives you the basic strategies for success plus the advanced strategies that will help you become a success master. I have personally learned a lot from Jack Canfield and I trust you will too.
—John Gray, Ph.D., author of *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus*

Before you can change your life, you must first change your thinking. Jack and Janet have created an inspirational and motivational road map for your personal success! My real estate home study course has helped thousands become confident, successful real estate investors. I am convinced *The Success Principles* will change the way you think, the way you act, and help you change your life in ways you never dreamed possible! I would not only recommend this book to my students, but also to anyone committed to being successful—beyond their wildest dreams! I urge you to read this wonderful book. It will absolutely help you to change your life for the better!
—Carleton Sheets, creator of the “No Down Payment Real Estate” home study course

Canfield and Switzer have put their methods to success in an illuminating and easy-to-read book. Jack's teaching is highly effective and this new book will be the gift to give this year.
—Ken Blanchard, coauthor of *The One Minute Manager*® and *Customer Mania!*®

In *The Success Principles*, Jack Canfield reveals the specific methodology and results-oriented principles required for success and ultimate achievement. Whether you need to boost sales at the office, expand creativity, or create more balance in your life, this book will pave the way to achieving your highest success!
—Peter Vidmar, two-time Olympic gold medalist in gymnastics and member of the U.S. Olympic Hall of Fame

The Success Principles will inspire and empower you to lead a more fulfilling life. Get ready for some changes with this book!
—Kathy Smith, a leading force in American fitness and wellness

[Click Here to Order Your Copy of *The Success Principles*](#)

Jack's message is simple, powerful, and practical. If you work the principles, the principles work. A must-read for those who want to create the successful life about which they dream. —Andrew Puzder, president and CEO of CKE Restaurants, Inc., Carl's Jr., Hardee's, and La Salsa

What a great book! Jack Canfield's *The Success Principles* is a reference book for everyone who is interested in actually having the life they have dreamed about. Keep this book with you, use it as a guide and inspiration to help you achieve your highest potential and the inner peace that you desire. You need this book. —Marilyn Tam, former president of Reebok Apparel Products Group and author of *How to Use What You've Got to Get What You Want*

If you thought you knew everything about how to be successful in business, wait until you read what's inside *The Success Principles*. From start-up entrepreneurs to the world's most powerful CEOs, this book can and will teach anyone how to be more successful and much happier doing what they love to do. —John Assaraf, RE/MAX Indiana, *New York Times*, and *Wall Street Journal* best-selling author of *The Street Kid's Guide to Having It All*

Page for page the best system for achieving anything you want. Get ready for the ride of your life. I couldn't put it down! —Marcia Martin, former vice president of est and transformational coach

Jack Canfield's amazing ability to be extremely articulate, understandable, and approachable makes *The Success Principles* not only an amazing blueprint for success, but also a pure joy to read. —Jim Tunney, Ed.D., former NFL referee, educator, and author of *It's the Will, Not the Skill*

I have witnessed firsthand Jack Canfield's tenacity in using the principles within this book. It is because of this determination and his beliefs in these principles that the *Chicken Soup for the Soul*® book series was born. *The Success Principles* is not only an amazing book that will give you the guide to outstanding achievement, but it in itself is proof that the principles work. —Peter Vegso, president of Health Communications, Inc., and publisher of *Chicken Soup for the Soul*®

Most of us know what we want out of life, but only a handful of us have learned how to get it. Now *The Success Principles* not only gives you the road map, it hands you the keys to the ignition and puts gas in your tank! Get yourself some cookies and don't put this book down till you've mastered its message. —Wally Amos, author of *The Cookie Never Crumbles*

My good friend Jack Canfield is one of the most insightful speakers and teachers in the world today. After you have spent time with him, internalizing his ideas and insights, you will be changed in a positive way for the rest of your life. —Brian Tracy, one of America's leading authorities on the development of human potential and personal effectiveness and author of *Success Is a Journey*, *Million Dollar Habits*, and *The Traits of Champions*

[Click Here to Order Your Copy of The Success Principles](#)

By bringing your actions in line with Jack's core principles and values you can achieve any success you seek, including inner peace. Jack has written the road map to that end in *The Success Principles*. All you have to do is follow it.

—Hyrum W. Smith, vice chairman and founder of FranklinCovey

In today's super-competitive marketplace, high achievers are those people who follow a systematic approach to their success. Now in the best success classic to come along in decades, *The Success Principles* catalogs and explains these systems in simple language with step-by-step instructions, and features inspiring stories of others who have traveled the path before you. If your goal is greater accomplishment, more money, more free time, and less stress, read and apply the proven principles in this book.

—Les Brown, author of *Live Your Dreams* and *Conversations on Success*

What a great collection of "successful" thoughts and ideas . . . some simple, some profound, and all "essential" in today's complex world . . . a must-read!

—Steven Stralser, Ph.D., managing director of and clinical professor at the Global Entrepreneurship Center, Thunderbird: The Garvin School of International Management, and author of *MBA in a Day: What You Would Learn in Top-Tier Schools of Business—If You Only Had the Time*

After you read *The Success Principles*, you will approach your short- and long-term goals in a completely new and exciting fashion. This book outlines the tools you need to get everything you want out of life and more! Canfield and Switzer's own success is evidence that these principles work and can be easily applied to any goal.

—Rita Davenport, president of Arbonne International

Success is something almost everyone wants, and many spend a lifetime hoping for. Some never find it while others realize it early in life. No matter where you are in your life, stop and read this magnificent book by Jack Canfield and Janet Switzer. Maybe you're already there, or are trying to get there, or are lost somewhere between the desire for and the realization of personal success. When you've finished *The Success Principles: How to Get from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be*, you'll immediately know where you are, where you want to be, and how to get there. This is a work that should become a textbook and required reading before earning "adulthood."

—Dave Liniger, chairman of the board of RE/MAX International

Jack Canfield has done it again! In *The Success Principles*, he explains with great ease and compassion the time-tested techniques employed by high achievers from every walk of life—techniques that can take you as far as you dare to dream. No matter what your definition of "success" is, this book is going to get you there!

—Jeff Liesener, president of High Achievers Network

If you've ever wanted Jack Canfield to personally mentor you in achieving your highest vision, this book is the next best thing to having him as your personal guide. It's packed with information, inspiration, and—most importantly—understanding. Along with his proven strategies, Jack's support, compassion, and integrity shine through.

—Marshall Thurber, cofounder of the Accelerated Business School and *Money and You*

[Click Here to Order Your Copy of The Success Principles](#)

The success principles in this book are so simple to follow but at the same time so powerful. They are essential to achieving your goals. Jack has a way of making learning entertaining and fun. This book is a true winner!

—Kathy Coover, cofounder and senior VP of sales and marketing of Isagenix International

In a world filled with dubious paths to success, *The Success Principles* identifies the proven steps today's biggest names and brightest stars use to achieve their ideal future. I can't think of a better way to get from where you are to where you want to be.

—Bill Harris, director, Centerpointe Research

If you have a big vision and big plans, read *The Success Principles* and take action on what you learn. After all, you deserve to have more of what you want out of life.

—H. Ronald Hulnick, Ph.D., president of the University of Santa Monica

A unique blend of lessons and techniques with true-life anecdotes and humor make *The Success Principles* a great read. Educational, humorous, and very down-to-earth, this book uses Jack Canfield's ability to motivate and inspire without an overly "hyped" attitude. These success principles offer great value to any reader.

—Christen Brown, president of On Camera Entertainment and author of *Star Quality*

No matter what your idea of success is, Jack Canfield can help you get there. *The Success Principles* is life's reference book for the young and old alike. Transform your dreams of success into reality. Buy this book today.

—Gary T. Van Brunt, CEO of Discount Tire Co.

The Success Principles proves once and for all that personal achievement is not an accident of birth or privilege. Rather, it's the result of thinking, and of doing—of planning, and of follow-through. But most importantly, the power to achieve is a *skill* that can be *taught*—and no one teaches it more superbly than Jack Canfield.

—Catherine B. Reynolds, chairman of the board of the Catherine B. Reynolds Foundation

This book is a must-read! Canfield and Switzer explain the specific, step-by-step formulas all of us can use to achieve more success in our careers and personal lives. If making more money, playing a bigger game, and achieving your dream lifestyle are what you want, *The Success Principles* delivers it masterfully.

—Gay Hendricks, Ph.D., author of *Conscious Living* and coauthor (with Dr. Kathlyn Hendricks) of *Conscious Loving*

No matter where you are with your life, *The Success Principles* gives you proven strategies and time-tested systems to create a brighter future. Join the ranks of today's highest achievers in reading and applying what this impressive new success classic tells you. Then plan to get a copy for a friend.

—Paul R. Scheele, author of *Natural Brilliance*, *Genius Code*, *Abundance for Life*, and *The PhotoReading Whole Mind System*

This book is a brilliantly written, masterful distillation of the leading principles and processes available today for creating real success in your life.

—Hale Dwoskin, author of the *New York Times* best seller *The Sedona Method: Your Key to Lasting Happiness, Success, Peace, and Emotional Well-being*

[Click Here to Order Your Copy of The Success Principles](#)

Success in all areas of your life can be yours! Follow Jack Canfield's principles and strategies to achieve any goal! *The Success Principles* offers a detailed yet understandable guide to achieving more of what YOU want. It's enjoyable and effective. Read it today!
—Erin Saxton, The Idea Network

I have made the studies of success a lifetime pursuit. Thank you so much, Jack, for putting together an easy-to-understand book on success that readers of all ages and backgrounds will understand and benefit from. The powerful lessons and stories within *The Success Principles* are truly life-changing!
—James Arthur Ray, author of *The Science of Success* and *Stop the World: 29 Principles to Realize Your Infinite Self*

Reading *The Success Principles* is as close as possible to having Jack Canfield as your personal coach. Jack has the ability to blend intelligence and compassion, making the book very approachable. The book's principles and stories of others who have used these principles is effective and inspiring. This dynamic book will be spoken of for years to come!
—George R. Walther, author of *Heat Up Your Cold Calls*

If you are looking for a magic bullet to improve your life, your career, and your relationships, *The Success Principles* delivers it in spades. But don't just buy this impressive new classic and put it on a shelf. Read its proven strategies, apply its time-tested systems, then get ready to join the ranks of the world's highest achievers!
—Raymond Aaron, Canada's number one business and investment coach

What a great collection of "successful" thoughts and ideas . . . some simple, some profound, and all "essential" in today's complex world. A must-read! I used the principles in this book to propel my Web site from 100 visitors a month to over 5,000 visitors a month.
—Zev Saftlas, author of *Motivation That Works* and founder of empoweringmessages.com

Jack Canfield's *The Success Principles* intertwines strategies for success with proven examples and stories. The book should be a must-read for everyone who is looking to attain new heights in his or her life. Is there a way to make this required reading for future generations? I wish I had this information twenty years ago!
—Arielle Ford, author of *Hot Chocolate for the Mystical Soul*

Canfield and Switzer have created a book that is alive with intellect, compassion, and humor. This is one of the best books on success I have ever read! If you have a dream that you have not yet attained, let Jack Canfield lead the way. You will be happy you did.
—Bill Cirone, superintendent of Santa Barbara County Office of Education

If expanding your opportunities, creating new alliances, helping more people, and getting more out of every minute of your life are your goals, *The Success Principles* can bring you these results. I loved it!
—John Demartini, CEO of Demartini Seminars and founder of the Concourse of Wisdom

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Successful people know the most significant investment you can make is in yourself. *The Success Principles* helps you master the skill sets that will attract great people, great opportunities, and great fortune into your life. Let this investment pay off for you.

—Cynthia Kersey, author of *Unstoppable* and *Unstoppable Women*

If ever there was a book that uncovered the secret strategies of today's highest achievers, *The Success Principles* is it. Easy, understandable, applicable. It's the best success tool to come along in years.

—Bill Bauman, Ph.D., Bill Bauman Seminars and Mentoring

Finally, a book that lives up to what it claims. *The Success Principles* really does take your life to the next level and helps you achieve anything you've ever dreamed of. Using the principles that have made Jack Canfield and the many other successful men and women within this book, you too can attain amazing achievement. Read this book today!

—Tom Hill, founder of the Eagle Institute and author of *Living at the Summit: A Life Plan*

If you're looking for a winning plan for success, look no further than Jack Canfield's *Success Principles*.

—Suzanne de Passe, television producer

Jack Canfield is a true master. He understands what it takes to lead a successful life, and in *The Success Principles* he puts all the key elements together in one place for the rest of the world to see.

—T. Harv Eker, author of *Secrets of the Millionaire Mind*

I have been a student of Jack Canfield for over a decade and have used the principles he teaches in this book to accelerate my own success and the success of the people I train and manage at the Henry Ford Museum. This book has my highest recommendation. It will change your life.

—Jim Van Bochove, director of workforce development at The Henry Ford: America's Greatest History Attraction

Jack Canfield's *Success Principles* brilliantly and succinctly imparts the tried and true formula for living a successful, fulfilled life. You will find inspiration and motivation on every page.

—Debbie Ford, number one *New York Times* best-selling author of *The Dark Side of the Light Chasers* and *The Best Year of Your Life*

Jack Canfield has, with diamond-like clarity, crafted the ultimate success manual. It's the manual I wish I'd had when I began my quest for the best.

—Master Mary Louise Zeller, "Ninja Grandma," twelve-time national and five-time international gold medalist in Olympic-style tae kwon do

Whether you are a budding entrepreneur, have been in business for decades, or have just graduated high school, Jack Canfield's *The Success Principles* is a must-read. The book takes you step-by-step through the stages of success and achievement and will propel you to your next level (and most likely far beyond that too)! Jack's down-to-earth style and straightforward language allow the everyday person to enjoy this incredibly thorough, comprehensive, and intelligent book.

—Linda Distenfield, president, and Ira Distenfield, CEO of We The People

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THE
Success
Principles™

HOW TO GET FROM WHERE YOU ARE TO WHERE YOU WANT TO BE

Jack Canfield

Cocreator of the
Chicken Soup for the Soul® Series

WITH
Janet Switzer



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INTRODUCTION

If a man for whatever reason has the opportunity to lead an extraordinary life, he has no right to keep it to himself.

JACQUES-YVES COUSTEAU
Legendary underwater explorer and filmmaker

*If a man writes a book, let him set down only what he knows.
I have guesses enough of my own.*

JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE
German poet, novelist, playwright, and philosopher

This is not a book of good ideas. This is a book of timeless principles used by successful men and women throughout history. I have studied these success principles for over 30 years and have applied them to my own life. The phenomenal level of success that I now enjoy is the result of applying these principles day in and day out since I began to learn them in 1968.

My success includes being the author and editor of over 60 best-selling books with over 80 million copies in print in 39 languages around the world, holding a *Guinness Book* world record for having seven books on the May 24, 1998, *New York Times* bestseller list, earning a multimillion-dollar net income every year for over the past 10 years, living in a beautiful California estate, appearing on every major talk show in America (from *Oprah* to *Good Morning America*), having a weekly newspaper column read by millions every week, commanding speaking fees of \$25,000 a talk, speaking to Fortune 500 companies all over the world, being the recipient of numerous professional and civic awards, having an outrageous relationship with my amazing wife and won-

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derful children, and having achieved a steady state of wellness, balance, happiness, and inner peace.

I get to socialize with CEOs of Fortune 500 companies; movie, television, and recording stars; celebrated authors; and the world's finest spiritual teachers and leaders. I have spoken to the members of Congress, professional athletes, corporate managers, and sales superstars in all of the best resorts and retreat centers of the world—from the Four Seasons Resort in Nevis in the British West Indies to the finest hotels in Acapulco and Cancun. I get to ski in Idaho, California, and Utah, go rafting in Colorado, and hike in the mountains of California and Washington. And I get to vacation in the world's best resorts in Hawaii, Australia, Thailand, Morocco, France, and Italy. All in all, life is a real kick!

And like most of you reading this book, my life started out in a very average way. I grew up in Wheeling, West Virginia, where my dad worked in a florist's shop, where he made \$8,000 a year. My mother was an alcoholic and my father was a workaholic. I worked during the summers to make ends meet (as a lifeguard at a pool and at the same florist's shop as my father). I went to college on a scholarship and held a job serving breakfast in one of the dorms to pay for books, clothes, and dates. Nobody handed me anything on a silver platter. During my last year of graduate school, I had a part-time teaching job that paid me \$120 every 2 weeks. My rent was \$79 a month, so that left \$161 to cover all my other expenses. Toward the end of the month, I ate what became known as my 21-cent dinners—a 10-cent can of tomato paste, garlic salt, and water over an 11-cent bag of spaghetti noodles. I know what it is like to be scraping by on the bottom rungs of the economic ladder.

After graduate school, I started my career as a high school history teacher in an all-black school on the south side of Chicago. And then I met my mentor, W. Clement Stone. Stone was a self-made multimillionaire who hired me to work in his foundation, where he trained me in the fundamental success principles that I still operate from today. My job was to teach these same principles to others. Over the years, I have gone on from my time with Stone to interview hundreds of successful people—Olympic and professional athletes, celebrated entertainers, best-selling authors, business leaders, political leaders, successful entrepreneurs, and top salespeople. I have read literally thousands of books (I average one every 2 days), attended hundreds of seminars, and listened to thousands of hours of audio programs to uncover the universal principles for creating success and happiness. I then applied those principles to my own life. The ones that worked I have taught in my speeches, seminars, and workshops to well over 1 million people in all 50 U.S. states . . . and in 20 countries around the world.

These principles and techniques have not only worked for me but they have also helped hundreds of thousands of my students achieve breakthrough

success in their careers, greater wealth in their finances, greater aliveness and joy in their relationships, and greater happiness and fulfillment in their lives. My students have started successful businesses, become self-made millionaires, achieved athletic stardom, received lucrative recording contracts, starred in movie and television roles, won political offices, had huge impact in their communities, written best-selling books, been named teacher of the year in their school districts, broken all the sales records in their companies, written award-winning screenplays, become presidents of their corporations, been recognized for their outstanding philanthropic contributions, created highly successful relationships, and raised unusually happy and successful children.

THE PRINCIPLES ALWAYS WORK IF YOU WORK THE PRINCIPLES

All of these same results are also possible for you. I know for a fact that you, too, can attain unimagined levels of success. Why? Because the principles and techniques always work—all you have to do is put them to work for you.

A few years ago, I was on a television show in Dallas, Texas. I had made the claim that if people would use the principles I was teaching, they could double their income and double their time off in less than 2 years. The woman interviewing me was highly skeptical. I told her that if she used the principles and techniques for 2 years and she didn't double her income and double her time off, I would come back on her show and write her a check for \$1,000. If they did work, she had to ask me back and tell her viewers the principles had worked. A short 9 months later, I ran into her at the National Speakers Association convention in Orlando, Florida. She told me that not only had she *already* doubled her income but she had also moved to a bigger station with a substantial pay increase, had started a public speaking career, and had already finished and sold a book—all in just 9 months!

The fact is that anyone can consistently produce these kinds of results on a regular basis. All you have to do is decide what it is you want, believe you deserve it, and practice the success principles in this book.

The fundamentals are the same for all people and all professions—even if you're currently unemployed. It doesn't matter if your goals are to be the top salesperson in your company, become a leading architect, get all A's in school, lose weight, buy your dream home, or become a world-class professional athlete, a rock star, an award-winning journalist, a multimillionaire, or a successful entrepreneur—the principles and strategies are the same. And if you learn them, assimilate them, and apply them with discipline every day, they will transform your life beyond your wildest dreams.

“YOU CAN’T HIRE SOMEONE ELSE TO DO YOUR PUSH-UPS FOR YOU”

As motivational philosopher Jim Rohn has so aptly put it, “You can’t hire someone else to do your push-ups for you.” You must do them yourself if you are to get any value out of them. Whether it is exercising, stretching, meditating, reading, studying, learning a new language, creating a mastermind group, setting measurable goals, visualizing success, repeating affirmations, or practicing a new skill, *you* are going to have to do it. No one else can do these things for you. I will give you the road map, but you will have to drive the car. I will teach you the principles, but you will have to apply them. If you choose to put in the effort, I promise you the rewards will be well worth it.

HOW THIS BOOK IS STRUCTURED

To help you quickly learn these powerful principles, I have organized this book into six sections. Section I, “The Fundamentals of Success,” contains 25 chapters that are the absolute basics you must do to get from where you are to where you want to be. You’ll start by exploring the absolute necessity of taking 100% responsibility for your life and your results. From there, you’ll learn how to clarify your life purpose, your vision, and what you truly want. Next we’ll look at how to create an unshakable belief in yourself and your dreams. Then I’ll help you turn your vision into a set of concrete goals and an action plan for achieving them. I’ll even teach you how to harness the incredible power of affirmations and visualization—one of the success secrets of all Olympic athletes, top entrepreneurs, world leaders, and others.

The next few chapters have to do with taking those necessary but sometimes scary action steps that are required to make your dreams come true. You’ll learn to ask for what you want, reject rejection, solicit and respond to feedback, and persevere in the face of what can sometimes seem like insurmountable obstacles.

Section II, “Transform Yourself for Success,” addresses the important inner work you’ll need to do—work that will help you remove any mental and emotional blocks you may have to success. It’s not enough to *know* what to do. There are many books that will tell you that. You also need to understand the importance of and the methodology for removing self-defeating beliefs, fears, and habits that are holding you back. Like driving your car with the emergency brake on, these blocks can significantly slow your progress. You must learn how to release the brakes, or you will always experience life as a

struggle and fall short of your intended goals. What will you learn in Section II? You'll learn how to surround yourself with successful people and how to acknowledge the positive past and release the negative past, face what isn't working in your life, embrace change, and make a commitment to lifelong learning. We'll look at how to clean up any physical and emotional messes you have created and complete all the "incompletes" in your life robbing you of valuable energy that could be better used in the achievement of your goals. I'll also teach you how to transform your inner critic into an inner coach and develop valuable success habits that will change your life forever.

Section III, "Build Your Success Team," reveals how and why to build different kinds of support teams so you can spend your time focusing exclusively on your core genius. You'll also learn how to redefine time, find a personal coach, and access your own inner wisdom—an untapped but ultrarich resource for most people.

In Section IV, "Create Successful Relationships," I'll teach you a number of principles, as well as some very practical techniques, for building and maintaining successful relationships. In this day of strategic alliances and power networks, it's literally impossible to build large-scale, long-lasting success without world-class relationship skills.

Finally, because so many people equate success with money, and because money is vital to our survival and the quality of our life, Section V is entitled "Success and Money." I'll teach you how to develop a more positive money consciousness, how to ensure that you have plenty of money to live the lifestyle you want, both now and after you retire, and the importance of tithing and service in guaranteeing your financial success.

Section VI, "Success Starts Now," consists of two short chapters on the importance of getting started now and empowering others in the process. Reading these chapters will jump-start you in creating the life you've always dreamed of but up until now may not have fully known how to create.

HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

Believe nothing. No matter where you read it, or who said it, even if I have said it, unless it agrees with your own reason and your own common sense.

BUDDHA

Everyone learns differently, and you probably know how you learn best. And though there are many ways that you can read this book, I'd like to make a few suggestions that may be helpful.

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You may want to read this book through once just to get a feel for the total process before you start the work of creating the life you truly want. The principles are presented in an order that builds one upon the other. They are like the numbers in a combination lock—you need all the numbers, and you need them in the right order. It doesn't matter what color, race, gender, or age you are. If you know the combination, the lock has to open for you.

As you are reading, I strongly encourage you to underline and highlight everything that feels important to you. Make notes in the margin about the things you'll put into action. Then review those notes and highlighted sections again and again. Repetition is the key to real learning. Every time you reread portions of this book, you'll literally "re-mind" yourself of what you need to do to get from where you are to where you want to be. As you'll discover, it takes repetitive exposure to a new idea before it becomes a natural part of your way of thinking and being.

You may also discover that you're already familiar with some of the principles here. That's great! But ask yourself, *Am I currently practicing them?* If not, make a commitment to put them into action—now!

Remember, the principles only work if you work the principles.

The second time you read through this book, you'll want to read one chapter at a time, then take whatever time necessary to put it into practice. If you're already doing some of these things, keep doing them. If not, start now.

Like many of my past students and clients, you, too, may find yourself resisting taking some of the suggested action steps. But my experience has shown that the ones you most resist are the ones you need to most embrace. Remember, reading this book is not the same as doing the work, any more than reading a book on weight loss is the same as actually eating fewer calories and exercising more.

You might find it useful to connect with one or two other people who would like to join you as accountability partners and ensure that each of you actually implements what you learn. True learning only occurs when you assimilate and apply the new information—when there is a *change in your behavior*.

A WARNING

Of course, any change requires sustained effort to overcome years' worth of internal and external resistance. Initially you may find yourself getting very excited about all this new information. You may feel a newfound sense of hope and enthusiasm for the new vision of your life as it can be. This is good. But be forewarned that you may also begin to experience other feelings as well. You may feel frustration at not knowing about all of this earlier, anger at

your parents and teachers for not teaching you these important concepts at home and at school, or anger at yourself for having already learned many of these things and not having acted on them.

Just take a deep breath and realize that this is all part of the process of your journey. Everything in the past has actually been perfect. Everything in your past has led you to this transformative moment in time. Everyone—including you—has always done the best they could with what they knew at the time. Now you are about to know more. Celebrate your new awareness! It is about to set you free.

You may also find that there will be times when you wonder, *Why isn't all of this working faster? Why haven't I already achieved my goal? Why aren't I rich already? Why don't I have the man or woman of my dreams by now? When am I going to achieve my ideal weight?* Success takes time, effort, perseverance, and patience. If you apply all of the principles and techniques covered in this book you *will* achieve your goals. You will realize your dreams. But it won't happen overnight.

It's natural in the achievement of any goal to come upon obstacles, to feel temporarily stuck on a plateau. This is normal. Anyone who has ever played a musical instrument, participated in a sport, or practiced a martial art knows that you hit plateaus where it seems as if you are making no progress whatsoever. That's when the uninitiated often quit, give up, drop out, or take up another instrument or sport. But the wise have discovered if they just keep practicing their instrument, sport, or martial art (or, in your case, the success principles in this book), eventually they make what feels like a sudden leap to a higher level of proficiency. Be patient. Hang in there. Don't give up. You *will* break through. The principles *always* work.

Okay, let's get started.

It's time to start living the life you've imagined.

HENRY JAMES

American-born author of 20 novels, 112 stories, and 12 plays

TAKE 100% RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR LIFE

You must take personal responsibility. You cannot change the circumstances, the seasons, or the wind, but you can change yourself.

JIM ROHN

America's foremost business philosopher

One of the most pervasive myths in the American culture today is that we are *entitled* to a great life—that somehow, somewhere, someone (certainly not us) is responsible for filling our lives with continual happiness, exciting career options, nurturing family time, and blissful personal relationships simply because we exist.

But the real truth—and the one lesson this whole book is based on—is that there is only one person responsible for the quality of the life you live.

That person is *you*.

If you want to be successful, you have to take 100% responsibility for everything that you experience in your life. This includes the level of your achievements, the results you produce, the quality of your relationships, the state of your health and physical fitness, your income, your debts, your feelings—everything!

This is not easy.

In fact, most of us have been conditioned to blame something outside of ourselves for the parts of our life we don't like. We blame our parents, our bosses, our friends, the media, our coworkers, our clients, our spouse, the weather, the economy, our astrological chart, our lack of money—anyone or anything we can pin the blame on. We never want to look at where the real problem is—ourselves.

There is a wonderful story told about a man who is out walking one night

and comes upon another man down on his knees looking for something under a streetlamp. The passerby inquires as to what the other man is looking for. He answers that he is looking for his lost key. The passerby offers to help and gets down on his knees and helps him search for the key. After an hour of fruitless searching, he says, "We've looked everywhere for it and we haven't found it. Are you sure that you lost it here?"

The other man replies, "No, I lost it in my house, but there is more light out here under the streetlamp."

It is time to stop looking outside yourself for the answers to why you haven't created the life and results you want, for it is you who creates the quality of the life you lead and the results you produce.

You—no one else!

To achieve major success in life—to achieve those things that are most important to you—you must assume 100% responsibility for your life. Nothing less will do.

ONE HUNDRED PERCENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR EVERYTHING

As I mentioned in the introduction, back in 1969—only 1 year out of graduate school—I had the good fortune to work for W. Clement Stone. He was a self-made multimillionaire worth \$600 million at the time—and that was long before all the dot-com millionaires came along in the '90s. Stone was also America's premier success guru. He was the publisher of *Success Magazine*, author of *The Success System That Never Fails*, and coauthor with Napoleon Hill of *Success Through a Positive Mental Attitude*.

When I was completing my first week's orientation, Mr. Stone asked me if I took 100% responsibility for my life.

"I think so," I responded.

"This is a yes or no question, young man. You either do or you don't."

"Well, I guess I'm not sure."

"Have you ever blamed anyone for any circumstance in your life? Have you ever complained about anything?"

"Uh . . . yeah . . . I guess I have."

"Don't guess. Think."

"Yes, I have."

"Okay, then. That means you don't take one hundred percent responsibility for your life. Taking one hundred percent responsibility means you acknowledge that you create everything that happens to you. It means you understand that *you* are the cause of all of your experience. If you want to be really success-

ful, and I know you do, then you will have to give up blaming and complaining and take total responsibility for your life—that means all your results, both your successes *and* your failures. That is the prerequisite for creating a life of success. It is only by acknowledging that you have created everything up until now that you can take charge of creating the future you want.

“You see, Jack, if you realize that you have created your current conditions, then you can uncreate them and re-create them at will. Do you understand that?”

“Yes, sir, I do.”

“Are you willing to take one hundred percent responsibility for your life?”

“Yes, sir, I am!”

And I did.

YOU HAVE TO GIVE UP ALL YOUR EXCUSES

Ninety-nine percent of all failures come from people who have a habit of making excuses.

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER
Chemist who discovered over 325 uses for the peanut

If *you* want to create the life of your dreams, then *you* are going to have to take 100% responsibility for your life as well. That means giving up all your excuses, all your victim stories, all the reasons why you can't and why you haven't up until now, and all your blaming of outside circumstances. You have to give them all up forever.

You have to take the position that you have always had the power to make it different, to get it right, to produce the desired result. For whatever reason—ignorance, lack of awareness, fear, needing to be right, the need to feel safe—you chose not to exercise that power. Who knows why? It doesn't matter. The past is the past. All that matters now is that from this point forward you choose—that's right, it's a choice—you choose to act as if (that's all that's required—to act as if) you are 100% responsible for everything that does or doesn't happen to you.

If something doesn't turn out as planned, you will ask yourself, “How did I create that? What was I thinking? What were my beliefs? What did I say or not say? What did I do or not do to create that result? How did I get the other person to act that way? What do I need to do differently next time to get the result I want?”

A few years after I met Mr. Stone, Dr. Robert Resnick, a psychotherapist in Los Angeles, taught me a very simple but very important formula that made this idea of 100% responsibility even clearer to me. The formula is:

$$\mathbf{E + R = O}$$

(Event + Response = Outcome)

The basic idea is that every outcome you experience in life (whether it is success or failure, wealth or poverty, health or illness, intimacy or estrangement, joy or frustration) is the result of how you have responded to an earlier event or events in your life.

If you don't like the outcomes you are currently getting, there are two basic choices you can make.

- 1. You can blame the event (E) for your lack of results (O).** In other words, you can blame the economy, the weather, the lack of money, your lack of education, racism, gender bias, the current administration in Washington, your wife or husband, your boss's attitude, the lack of support, the political climate, the system or lack of systems, and so on. If you're a golfer, you've probably even blamed your clubs and the course you played on. No doubt all these factors do exist, but if they were *the* deciding factor, nobody would ever succeed.

Jackie Robinson would never have played major league baseball, Sidney Poitier and Denzel Washington would have never become movie stars, Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer would never have become U.S. senators, Erin Brockovich would never have uncovered PG&E's contamination of the water in Hinkley, California, Bill Gates would never have founded Microsoft, and Steve Jobs would never have started Apple Computers. For every reason why it's not possible, there are hundreds of people who have faced the same circumstances and succeeded.

Lots of people overcome these so-called limiting factors, so it can't be the limiting factors that limit you. It is not the external conditions and circumstances that stop you—it is you! We stop ourselves! We think limiting thoughts and engage in self-defeating behaviors. We defend our self-destructive habits (such as drinking and smoking) with indefensible logic. We ignore useful feedback, fail to continuously educate ourselves and learn new skills, waste time on the trivial aspects of our lives, engage in idle gossip, eat unhealthy food, fail to exercise, spend more money than we make, fail

to invest in our future, avoid necessary conflict, fail to tell the truth, don't ask for what we want—and then wonder why our lives don't work. But this, by the way, is what most people do. They place the blame for everything that isn't the way they want it on outside events and circumstances. They have an excuse for everything.

- 2. You can instead simply change your responses (R) to the events (E)—the way things are—until you get the outcomes (O) you want.** You can change your thinking, change your communication, change the pictures you hold in your head (your images of yourself and the world)—and you can change your behavior—the things you do. That is all you really have any control over anyway. Unfortunately, most of us are so run by our habits that we never change our behavior. We get stuck in our conditioned responses—to our spouses and our children, to our colleagues at work, to our customers and our clients, to our students, and to the world at large. We are a bundle of conditioned reflexes that operate outside of our control. You have to regain control of your thoughts, your images, your dreams and daydreams, and your behavior. Everything you think, say, and do needs to become intentional and aligned with your purpose, your values, and your goals.

IF YOU DON'T LIKE YOUR OUTCOMES, CHANGE YOUR RESPONSES

Let's look at some examples of how this works.

Do you remember the Northridge earthquake in 1994? Well, I do! I lived through it in Los Angeles. Two days later, I watched as CNN interviewed people commuting to work. The earthquake had damaged one of the main freeways leading into the city. Traffic was at a standstill, and what was normally a 1-hour drive had become a 2- or 3-hour drive.

The CNN reporter knocked on the window of one of the cars stuck in traffic and asked the driver how he was doing.

He responded angrily, "I hate California. First there were fires, then floods, and now an earthquake! No matter what time I leave in the morning, I'm going to be late for work. I can't believe it!"

Then the reporter knocked on the window of the car behind him and asked the second driver the same question. This driver was all smiles. He replied, "It's no problem. I left my house at five AM. I don't think under the circumstances my boss can ask for more than that. I have lots of music cassettes



and my Spanish-language tapes with me. I’ve got my cell phone. I have coffee in a thermos, my lunch—I even brought a book to read. So I’m fine.”

Now, if the earthquake or the traffic were really the deciding variables, then everyone should have been angry. But everyone wasn’t. It was their individual *response* to the traffic that gave them their particular *outcome*. It was thinking negative thoughts or thinking positive thoughts, leaving the house prepared or leaving the house unprepared that made the difference. It was all a matter of attitude and behavior that created their completely different experiences.

I’VE HEARD THERE’S GOING TO BE A RECESSION;
I’VE DECIDED NOT TO PARTICIPATE

A friend of mine owns a Lexus dealership in Southern California. When the Gulf War broke out, people stopped coming in to buy Lexuses (or Lexi, for any fellow Harvard graduates and Latin students out there). They knew that if they didn’t change their response (R) to the event (E) of nobody coming into the showroom, they were going to slowly go out of business. Their normal response (R) would have been to continue placing ads in the newspaper

and on the radio, then wait for people to come into the dealership. But that wasn't working. The outcome (O) they were getting was a steady decrease in sales. So they tried a number of new things. The one that worked was driving a fleet of new cars out to where the rich people were—the country clubs, marinas, polo grounds, parties in Beverly Hills and Westlake Village—and then inviting them to take a spin in a new Lexus.

Now think about this . . . have you ever test-driven a new car and then got back into your old car? Remember that feeling of dissatisfaction you felt as you compared your old car to the new car you had just driven? Your old car was fine up until then. But suddenly you knew there was something better—and you wanted it. The same thing happened with these folks. After test-driving the new car, a high percentage of the people bought or leased a new Lexus.

The dealership had changed their response (R) to an unexpected event (E)—the war—until they got the outcome (O) they wanted . . . increased sales. They actually ended up selling more cars per week than before the war broke out.

EVERYTHING YOU EXPERIENCE TODAY IS THE RESULT OF CHOICES YOU HAVE MADE IN THE PAST

Everything you experience in life—both internally and externally—is the result of how you have responded to a previous event.

Event: You are given a \$400 bonus.

Response: You spend it on a night on the town.

Outcome: You are broke.

Event: You are given a \$400 bonus.

Response: You invest it in your mutual fund.

Outcome: You have an increased net worth.

You only have control over three things in your life—the thoughts you think, the images you visualize, and the actions you take (your behavior). How you use these three things determines everything you experience. If you don't like what you are producing and experiencing, you have to change your responses. Change your negative thoughts to positive ones. Change what you daydream about. Change your habits. Change what you read. Change your friends. Change how you talk.

IF YOU KEEP ON DOING WHAT YOU'VE ALWAYS DONE, YOU'LL KEEP ON GETTING WHAT YOU'VE ALWAYS GOT

Twelve-step programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous define *insanity* as “continuing the same behavior and expecting a different result.” It ain’t gonna happen! If you are an alcoholic and you keep on drinking, your life is not going to get any better. Likewise, if you continue your current behaviors, your life is not going to get any better either.

The day you change your responses is the day your life will begin to get better! If what you are currently doing would produce the “more” and “better” that you are seeking in life, the more and better would have already shown up! If you want something different, you are going to have to *do* something different!

YOU HAVE TO GIVE UP BLAMING

All blame is a waste of time. No matter how much fault you find with another, and regardless of how much you blame him, it will not change you.

WAYNE DYER

Coauthor of *How to Get What You Really, Really, Really, Really Want*

You will never become successful as long as you continue to blame someone or something else for your lack of success. If you are going to be a winner, you have to acknowledge the truth—it is *you* who took the actions, thought the thoughts, created the feelings, and made the choices that got you to where you now are. It was you!

You are the one who ate the junk food.
You are the one who didn't say no!
You are the one who took the job.
You are the one who stayed in the job.
You are the one who chose to believe them.
You are the one who ignored your intuition.
You are the one who abandoned your dream.
You are the one who bought it.
You are the one who didn't take care of it.
You are the one who decided you had to do it alone.

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You are the one who trusted him.
You are the one who said yes to the dogs.

In short, you thought the thoughts, you created the feelings, you made the choice, you said the words, and that's why you are where you are now.

YOU HAVE TO GIVE UP COMPLAINING

*The man who complains about the way the ball bounces
is likely the one who dropped it.*

LOU HOLTZ

The only coach in NCAA history to lead six different college teams to postseason bowl games, and winner of a national championship and "coach of the year" honors

Let's take a moment to really look at complaining. In order to complain about something or someone, you have to believe that something better exists. You

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have to have a reference point of something you prefer that you are not willing to take responsibility for creating. Let's look at that more closely.

If you didn't believe there was something better possible—more money, a bigger house, a more fulfilling job, more fun, a more loving spouse—you couldn't complain. So you have this image of something better and you know you would prefer it, but you are unwilling to take the risks that would be required to create it.

Think about this . . . people only complain about things they can do something about. We don't complain about the things we have no power over. Have you ever heard anyone complain about gravity? No, never. Have you ever seen an elderly person all bent over with age walking down the street complaining about gravity? Of course not.

But why not? If it weren't for gravity, people wouldn't fall down the stairs, planes wouldn't fall out of the sky, and we wouldn't break any dishes. But nobody complains about it. And the reason is because gravity just exists. There is nothing anyone can do about gravity, so we just accept it. We know that complaining will not change it, so we don't complain about it. In fact, because it just is, we use gravity to our advantage. We build aqueducts down mountainsides to carry water to us, and we use drains to take away our waste.

Even more interesting is that we choose to play with gravity, to have fun with it. Almost every sport we play uses gravity. We ski, sky-dive, high-jump, throw the discus and the javelin, and play basketball, baseball, and golf—all of which require gravity.

The circumstances you complain about are, by their very nature, situations you can change—but you have chosen not to. You can get a better job, find a more loving partner, make more money, live in a nicer house, live in a better neighborhood, and eat healthier food. But all of these things would require you to change.

If you refer to the list found earlier in this chapter, you could

- Learn to cook healthier food.
- Say no in the face of peer pressure.
- Quit and find a better job.
- Take the time to conduct due diligence.
- Trust your own gut feelings.
- Go back to school to pursue your dream.
- Take better care of your possessions.
- Reach out for help.
- Ask others to assist you.
- Take a self-development class.
- Sell or give away the dogs.

But why don't you simply do those things? It's because they involve risks. You run the risk of being unemployed, left alone, or ridiculed and judged by others. You run the risk of failure, confrontation, or being wrong. You run the risk of your mother, your neighbors, or your spouse disapproving of you. Making a change might take effort, money, and time. It might be uncomfortable, difficult, or confusing. And so, to avoid risking any of those uncomfortable feelings and experiences, you stay put and complain about it.

As I stated before, complaining means you have a reference point for something better that you would prefer but that you are unwilling to take the risk of creating. Either accept that you are making the choice to stay where you are, take responsibility for your choice, and stop complaining . . . or . . . take the risk of creating your life exactly the way you want it.

If you want to get from where you are to where you want to be, of course you're going to have to take that risk.

So make the decision to stop complaining, to stop spending time with complainers, and get on with creating the life of your dreams.

YOU'RE COMPLAINING TO THE WRONG PERSON

Have you ever noticed that people almost always complain to the wrong people—to people who can't do anything about their complaint? They go to work and complain about their spouse; then they come home and complain to their spouse about the people at work. Why? Because it's easier; it's less risky. It takes courage to tell your spouse that you are not happy with the way things are at home. It takes courage to ask for a behavioral change. It also takes courage to ask your boss to plan better so that you don't end up working every weekend. But only your boss can do anything about that. Your spouse can't.

Learn to replace complaining with making requests and taking action that will achieve your desired outcomes. That is what successful people do. That is what works. If you find yourself in a situation you don't like, either work to make it better or leave. Do something to change it or get the heck out. Agree to work on the relationship or get a divorce. Work to improve working conditions or find a new job. Either way, you will get a change. As the old adage says, "Don't just sit there (and complain), do something." And remember, it's up to you to make the change, to do something different. The world doesn't owe you anything. You have to create it.

YOU EITHER CREATE OR ALLOW EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS TO YOU

To be powerful, you need to take the position that you create or allow everything that happens to you. By *create*, I mean that you directly cause something to happen by your actions or inactions. If you walk up to a man in a bar who is bigger than you, has obviously been drinking for a long time, and say to him, “You are really ugly and stupid,” and he jumps off the bar stool, hits you in the jaw, and you end up in the hospital—you created that. That’s an easy-to-understand example.

Here’s one that may be harder to swallow: You work late every night. You come home tired and burned out. You eat dinner in a coma and then sit down in front of the television to watch a basketball game. You’re too tired and stressed out to do anything else—like go for a walk or play with the kids. This goes on for years. Your wife asks you to talk to her. You say, “Later!” Three years later, you come home to an empty house and a note that she has left you and taken the kids. You created that one, too!

Other times, we simply allow things to happen to us by our inaction and our unwillingness to do what is necessary to create or maintain what we want:

- You didn’t follow through on your threat to take away privileges if the kids didn’t clean up after themselves, and now the house looks like a war zone.
- You didn’t demand he join you in counseling or leave the first time he hit you, so now you’re still getting hit.
- You didn’t attend any sales and motivational seminars because you were too busy, and now the new kid just won the top sales award.
- You didn’t take the time to take the dogs to obedience training, and now they’re out of control.
- You didn’t take time to maintain your car, and now you’re sitting by the side of the road with your car broken down.
- You didn’t go back to school, and now you are being passed over for a promotion.

Realize that you are not the victim here. You stood passively by and let it happen. You didn’t say anything, make a demand, make a request, say no, try something new, or leave.

YELLOW ALERTS

Be aware that nothing ever just “happens” to you. Just like the “yellow alerts” in the old *Star Trek* television series, you almost always receive advance warnings—in the form of telltale signs, comments from others, gut instinct, or intuition—that alert you to the impending danger and give you time to prevent the unwanted outcome.

You are getting yellow alerts all the time. There are *external* yellow alerts:

He keeps coming home later and later with alcohol on his breath.
 The client’s first check bounced.
 He screamed at his secretary.
 His mother warned you.
 Your friends told you.

And there are *internal* yellow alerts:

That feeling in your stomach
 That inkling you had
 That fleeting thought that just maybe . . .
 That intuition
 That fear that emerged
 That dream that woke you up in the middle of the night

We have a whole language that informs us:

Clues, inklings, suspicions
 The handwriting on the wall
 I had a feeling that . . .
 I could see it coming for a mile.
 My gut feeling told me.

These alerts give you time to change your response (R) in the $E + R = O$ equation. However, too many people ignore the yellow alerts because paying attention to them would require them to do something that is uncomfortable. It is uncomfortable to confront your spouse about the cigarettes in the ashtray that have lipstick on them. It is uncomfortable to speak up in a staff meeting when you are the only one who feels that the proposed plan won’t work. It is uncomfortable to tell someone you don’t trust them.

So you pretend not to see and not to know because it is easier, more con-

venient and less uncomfortable, avoids confrontation, keeps the peace, and protects you from having to take risks.

LIFE BECOMES MUCH EASIER

Successful people, on the other hand, face facts squarely. They do the uncomfortable and take steps to create their desired outcomes. Successful people don't wait for disasters to occur and then blame something or someone else for their problems.

Once you begin to respond quickly and decisively to signals and events as they occur, life becomes much easier. You start seeing improved outcomes both internally and externally. Old internal self-talk such as "I feel like a victim; I feel used; nothing ever seems to work out for me" is replaced with "I feel great; I am in control; I can make things happen."

External outcomes such as "Nobody ever comes to our store; we missed our quarterly goals; people are complaining that our new product doesn't work" are transformed into "We have more money in the bank; I lead the division in sales; our product is flying off the shelves."

IT'S SIMPLE

The bottom line is that you are the one who is creating your life the way it is. The life you currently live is the result of all of your past thoughts and actions. You are in charge of your current thoughts and your present feelings. You are in charge of what you say and what you do. You are also in charge of what goes into your mind—the books and magazines you read, the movies and television shows you watch, and the people you hang out with. Every action is under your control. To be more successful, all you have to do is act in ways that produce more of what you want.

That's it. It's that simple!

SIMPLE ISN'T NECESSARILY EASY

Though this principle is simple, it is not necessarily easy to implement. It requires concentrated awareness, dedicated discipline, and a willingness to experiment and take risks. You have to be willing to pay attention to what you are doing and to the results you are producing. You have to ask yourself, your family, your friends, your colleagues, your managers, your teachers, your coaches, and your clients for feedback. "Is what I'm doing working? Could I

be doing it better? Is there something more I should be doing that I am not? Is there something I am doing that I should stop doing? How do you see me limiting myself?"

Don't be afraid to ask. Most people are afraid to ask for feedback about how they are doing because they are afraid of what they are going to hear. There is nothing to be afraid of. The truth is the truth. You are better off knowing the truth than not knowing it. And once you know, you can do something about it. You cannot improve your life, your relationships, your game, or your performance without feedback.

Slow down and pay attention. Life will always give you feedback about the effects of your behavior if you will just pay attention. If your golf ball is always slicing to the right, if you're not making sales, if you're getting C's in all your college courses, if your children are mad at you, if your body is tired and weak, if your house is a mess, or if you're not happy—this is all feedback. It is telling you that something is wrong. This is the time to start paying attention to what is happening.

Ask yourself: *How am I creating or allowing this to happen? What am I doing that's working that I need to be doing more of? (Should I do more practicing, meditating, delegating, trusting, listening, asking questions, keeping my eye on the ball, advertising, saying "I love you," controlling my carbohydrate intake?)*

What am I doing that's not working? What do I need to be doing less of? (Am I talking too much, watching too much television, spending too much money, eating too much sugar, drinking too much, being late too often, gossiping, putting other people down?)

What am I not doing that I need to try on to see if it works? (Do I need to listen more, exercise, get more sleep, drink more water, ask for help, do more marketing, read, plan, communicate, delegate, follow through, hire a coach, volunteer, or be more appreciative?)

This book is full of proven success principles and techniques you can immediately put into practice in your life. You will have to suspend judgment, take a leap of faith, act as if they are true, and try them out. Only then will you have firsthand experience about their effectiveness for your life. You won't know if they work unless you give them a try. And here's the rub—no one else can do this for you. Only you can do it.

But the formula is simple—do more of what is working, do less of what isn't, and try on new behaviors to see if they produce better results.

PAY ATTENTION . . . YOUR RESULTS DON'T LIE

The easiest, fastest, and best way to find out what is or isn't working is to pay attention to the results you are currently producing. You are either rich or you are not. You either command respect or you don't. You are either golfing

par or you are not. You are either maintaining your ideal body weight or you are not. You are either happy or you are not. You either have what you want or you don't. It's that simple. Results don't lie!

You have to give up the excuses and justifications and come to terms with the results you are producing. If you are under quota or overweight, all the great reasons in the world won't change that. The only thing that will change your results is to change your behavior. Prospect more, get some sales training, change your sales presentation, change your diet, consume fewer calories, and exercise more frequently—these are things that will make a difference. But you have to first be willing to look at the results you are producing. The only starting point that works is reality.

So start paying attention to what is so. Look around at your life and the people in it. Are you and they happy? Is there balance, beauty, comfort, and ease? Do your systems work? Are you getting what you want? Is your net worth increasing? Are your grades satisfactory? Are you healthy, fit, and pain free? Are you getting better in all areas of your life? If not, then something needs to happen, and only you can make it happen.

Don't kid yourself. Be ruthlessly honest with yourself. Take your own inventory.

BE CLEAR WHY YOU'RE HERE

*Learn to get in touch with the silence within yourself and
know that everything in life has a purpose.*

ELISABETH KUBLER-ROSS, M.D.
Psychiatrist and author of the classic *On Death and Dying*

I believe each of us is born with a life purpose. Identifying, acknowledging, and honoring this purpose is perhaps the most important action successful people take. They take the time to understand what they're here to do—and then they pursue that with passion and enthusiasm.

WHAT WERE YOU PUT ON THIS EARTH TO DO?

I discovered long ago what I was put on this earth to do. I determined my true purpose in life, my “right livelihood.” I discovered how to inject passion and determination into every activity I undertake. And I learned how purpose can bring an aspect of fun and fulfillment to virtually everything I do.

Now I'd like to help uncover the same secret for you.

You see, without a purpose in life, it's easy to get sidetracked on your life's journey. It's easy to wander and drift, accomplishing little.

But with a purpose, everything in life seems to fall into place. To be “on purpose” means you're doing what you love to do, doing what you're good at and accomplishing what's important to you. When you truly are on purpose, the people, resources, and opportunities you need naturally gravitate toward you. The world benefits, too, because when you act in alignment with your true life purpose, all of your actions automatically serve others.

SOME PERSONAL LIFE PURPOSE STATEMENTS

My life purpose is *to inspire and empower people to live their highest vision in a context of love and joy*. I inspire people to live their highest vision (see Principle 3, “Decide What You Want”) by collecting and disseminating inspiring stories through the *Chicken Soup for the Soul*® series and in my inspirational keynote speeches. I empower people to live their dreams by writing practical self-help books like this one, *The Power of Focus*, and *The Aladdin Factor*; designing courses for high school students; and conducting seminars and workshops for adults that teach powerful tools for creating one’s ideal life.

Here are the life purpose statements of some of my friends. It is important to note that they have all become self-made millionaires through the fulfillment of their life purpose.

- To inspire and empower people to achieve their destiny¹
- To uplift humanity’s consciousness through business²
- To humbly serve the Lord by being a loving, playful, powerful, and passionate example of the absolute joy that is available to us the moment we rejoice in God’s gifts and sincerely love and serve all of his creations³
- To leave the world a better place than I found it, for horses and for people, too⁴
- To create and inspire one million millionaires who each give \$1 million to their church or charity⁵
- To educate and inspire people to live their highest self based in courage, purpose, and joy, versus fear, need, and obligation⁶

Decide upon your major definite purpose in life and then organize all your activities around it.

BRIAN TRACY

One of America’s leading authorities on the development of human potential and personal effectiveness

1. Robert Allen, coauthor of *The One Minute Millionaire*.
 2. D.C. Cordova, cofounder of the Excelerated Business School.
 3. Anthony Robbins, author of *Personal Power* and *Get the Edge*, entrepreneur, and philanthropist.
 4. Monty Roberts, author of *The Man Who Listens to Horses*.
 5. Mark Victor Hansen, coauthor of the *Chicken Soup for the Soul*® series.
 6. T. Harv Eker, CEO of Peak Potentials and creator of the “Millionaire Mind” seminar.

Once you know what your life purpose is, you can organize all of your activities around it. Everything you do should be an expression of your purpose. If an activity doesn't fit that formula, you wouldn't work on it. Period.

WHAT'S THE "WHY" BEHIND EVERYTHING YOU DO?

Without purpose as the compass to guide you, your goals and action plans may not ultimately fulfill you. You don't want to get to the top of the ladder only to find out you had it leaning up against the wrong wall.

When Julie Laipply was a child, she was a very big fan of animals. As a result, all she ever heard growing up was "Julie, you should be a vet. You're going to be a great vet. That's what you should do." So when she got to Ohio State University, she took biology, anatomy, and chemistry, and started studying to be a vet. A Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship allowed her to spend her senior year studying abroad in Manchester, England. Away from the family and faculty pressures back home, she found herself one dreary day sitting at her desk, surrounded by biology books and staring out the window, when it suddenly hit her: *You know what? I'm totally miserable. Why am I so miserable? What am I doing? I don't want to be a vet!*

Julie then asked herself, *What is a job I would love so much that I'd do it for free but that I could actually get paid for? It's not being a vet. That's not the right job.* Then she thought back over all the things she'd done in her life and what had made her the most happy. And then it hit her—it was all of the youth leadership conferences that she had volunteered at, and the communications and leadership courses she had taken as elective courses back at Ohio State. *How could I have been so ignorant? Here I am at my fourth year at school and just finally realizing I'm on the wrong path and not doing the right thing. But it's been here in front of me the whole time. I just never took the time to acknowledge it until now.*

Buoyed by her new insight, Julie spent the rest of her year in England taking courses in communications and media performance. When she returned to Ohio State, she was eventually able to convince the administration to let her create her own program in "leadership studies," and while it took her 2 years longer to finally graduate, she went on to become a senior management consultant in leadership training and development for the Pentagon. She also won the Miss Virginia USA contest, which allowed her to spend much of 2002 speaking to kids all across Virginia, and more recently she has created the Role Models and Mentors for Youth Foundation, which teaches kids how to be better role models for one another. By the way, Julie is only 26 years old—a testament to the power that clarity of purpose can create in your life.

The good news is that you don't have to go all the way to England for a year

abroad to get away from the daily pressures of your life long enough to create the space to discover what you are really here to do. You can simply take the time to complete two simple exercises that will help you clarify your purpose.

YOUR INNER GUIDANCE SYSTEM IS YOUR JOY

It is the soul's duty to be loyal to its own desires. It must abandon itself to its master passion.

DAME REBECCA WEST

Best-selling author

You were born with an inner guidance system that tells you when you are on or off purpose by the amount of joy you are experiencing. The things that bring you the greatest joy are in alignment with your purpose. To begin to home in on your purpose, make a list of the times you have felt most joyful and alive. What are the common elements of these experiences? Can you figure out a way to make a living doing these things?

Pat Williams is the senior vice-president of the Orlando Magic basketball team. He has also written 36 books and is a professional speaker. When I asked him what he felt the greatest secret to success was, he replied, "Figure out what you love to do as young as you can, and then organize your life around figuring out how to make a living at it." For young Pat, it was sports—more specifically, baseball. When his father took him to his first baseball game in Philadelphia, he fell in love with the game. He learned to read by reading the sports section of the *New York Times*. He knew he wanted to grow up and have a career in sports. He devoted almost every waking moment to it. He collected baseball cards, played sports, and wrote a sports column for the school newspaper.

Pat went on to have a career in the front office of the Philadelphia Phillies baseball team, then with the Philadelphia 76ers basketball team. When the NBA considered granting an expansion team franchise to Orlando, Pat was there to lead the fight. Now in his sixties, Pat has enjoyed 40-plus years doing what he loves, and he has enjoyed every minute of it. Once you are clear about what brings you the greatest joy, you will have a major insight into your purpose.

This second exercise is a simple but powerful way to create a compelling statement of your life purpose to guide and direct your behavior. Take time now to complete the following exercise.

THE LIFE PURPOSE EXERCISE⁷

1. List two of your unique personal qualities, such as *enthusiasm* and *creativity*.

2. List one or two ways you enjoy expressing those qualities when interacting with others, such as *to support* and *to inspire*.

3. Assume the world is perfect right now. What does this world look like? How is everyone interacting with everyone else? What does it feel like? Write your answer as a statement, in the present tense, describing the ultimate condition, the perfect world as you see it and feel it. Remember, a perfect world is a fun place to be.

EXAMPLE: *Everyone is freely expressing
their own unique talents. Everyone is working in harmony.
Everyone is expressing love.*

4. Combine the three prior subdivisions of this paragraph into a single statement.

EXAMPLE: *My purpose is to use my creativity and enthusiasm to
support and inspire others to freely express their talents in
a harmonious and loving way.*

7. There are many ways to approach defining your purpose. I learned this version of the life purpose exercise from Arnold M. Patent, spiritual coach and author of *You Can Have It All*. His most recent book is *The Journey*. You can visit his Web site at www.arnoldpatent.com.

STAYING ON PURPOSE

Once you have determined and written down your life purpose, read it every day, preferably in the morning. If you are artistic or strongly visual by nature, you may want to draw or paint a symbol or picture that represents your life purpose and then hang it somewhere (on the refrigerator, opposite your desk, near your bed) where you will see it every day. This will keep you focused on your purpose.

As you move forward in the next few chapters to define your vision and your goals, make sure they are aligned with and serve to fulfill your purpose.

Another approach to clarifying your purpose is to set aside some time for quiet reflection—time for a period of meditation. (See Principle 47, “Inquire Within”). After you become relaxed and enter into a state of deep self-love and peacefulness, ask yourself, *What is my purpose for living?* or *What is my unique role in the universe?* Allow the answer to simply come to you. Let it be as expansive as you can imagine. The words that come need not be flowery or poetic; what is important is how inspired the words make you feel.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Jack Canfield has been a successful author, professional speaker, seminar leader, corporate trainer, and entrepreneur. After graduating from Harvard University, Jack started his career as a high school teacher in Chicago's inner city. Jack quickly became obsessed with learning how to motivate his unmotivated students. In this quest, he discovered self-made Chicago millionaire and success guru W. Clement Stone. Stone was the publisher of *Success Magazine*, the president of Combined Insurance Corporation, the author of *The Success System That Never Fails*, and coauthor, with Napoleon Hill, of *Success Through a Positive Mental Attitude*.

Jack went to work at the W. Clement & Jessie V. Stone Foundation with the charge to take these success principles into the schools and Boys Clubs of the greater Chicago area—and later the entire Midwest. Wanting to understand these achievement motivation principles even more clearly, Jack returned to graduate school at the University of Massachusetts, where he received his master's degree in psychological education. After graduating, Jack embarked on a career of conducting seminars for schoolteachers, counselors, psychotherapists, and—later—corporate leaders, managers, salespeople, and entrepreneurs, teaching the principles of self-esteem, peak performance, achievement motivation, and success.

Along the way, Jack wrote and coauthored such books as *100 Ways to Enhance Self-Esteem in the Classroom*, *Dare to Win*, *The Aladdin Factor*, *Heart at Work*, and *The Power of Focus: How to Hit All Your Personal, Business and Financial Goals with Absolute Certainty*, as well as the best-selling 85-book *Chicken Soup for the Soul*® series, which has currently sold over 80 million copies in 39 languages around the world. Jack has also shared his principles for success, self-esteem, and happiness in his best-selling CareerTrack audio album *Self-Esteem and Peak Performance* and his Nightingale-Conant albums *Maximum Confidence* and *The Aladdin Factor*.

Because he's in demand more days each year than he could possibly speak and do seminars, Jack has also created two video-based training programs: the STAR Program, which is his basic self-esteem and peak performance training

for corporations and schools, and the GOALS Program, which are the same principles presented for at-risk populations such as welfare recipients and prisoners.

Organizations and corporations that have sought Jack out to share these principles with their members and employees include Virgin Records, Sony Pictures, Merrill Lynch, Monsanto, ITT Hartford Insurance, GlaxoSmith-Kline, Scott Paper, The Million Dollar Forum, Coldwell Banker, RE/MAX, FedEx, Campbell's Soup, TRW, Society of Real Estate Professionals, the Million Dollar Roundtable, American Society of Training & Development, Ameritech, NCR, Young Presidents' Organization, Chief Executives Organization, GE, Income Builders International, U.S. Department of the Navy, Siemens, Cingular Wireless, Southern Bell, Domino's Pizza, Accenture, Bergen Brunswig Pharmaceuticals, Children's Miracle Network, UCLA, University of Michigan, the Council for Excellence in Government, and hundreds of others.

Jack has given speeches and conducted workshops in all 50 states in the United States, as well as in Canada, Mexico, Europe, Asia, Africa, and Australia. He has also appeared on over 600 radio shows and 200 television shows, including *20/20*, *Inside Edition*, the *Today* show, *Oprah*, *Fox and Friends*, *CBS Evening News*, *NBC Nightly News*, *Eye to Eye*, and CNN's *Talk Back Live!* and on PBS and QVC.

Jack conducts one-day and weekend workshops that focus on Living the Success Principles, the Power of Focus, Self-Esteem and Peak Performance, and Maximum Confidence, as well as an annual 7-day Breakthrough to Success: Living the Success Principles training in which he teaches the principles of success in a powerful, life-changing workshop. His trainings are designed for businesspeople, managers, entrepreneurs, salespeople, sales managers, managers, educators, counselors, coaches, consultants, ministers, and others who are interested in maximizing their personal and professional success.

To find out more about Jack's workshops and training, books, and audio and video training programs or to inquire about Jack's availability as a speaker or trainer, you can contact his office at

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Janet Switzer, from her first job as campaign coordinator for a member of Congress at age 19 to building an international publishing company with over \$10 million in assets by age 29, epitomizes the personal achievement and professional accomplishment that comes from applying these proven principles of success.

Today, she's the marketing genius and business growth expert of choice for some of the world's top success gurus: peak performance expert Jack Canfield, master motivator Mark Victor Hansen, marketing icon Jay Abraham, Internet income expert Yanik Silver, and *Jesus CEO* author Laurie Beth Jones, among others. Additionally, Janet has counseled more than 50,000 companies and entrepreneurs worldwide in leveraging their intangibles and information assets for untold millions in potential windfall revenue. She's the author of the Instant Income® series of small-business marketing resources designed to help entrepreneurs not only create immediate cash flow for their business but develop lucrative new profit centers, too. For details, visit www.instantincome.com.

Janet is an internationally recognized keynote speaker and founder and editor of *Leading Experts* magazine—as well as a columnist with *Training Magazine Asia* and numerous newswires and press syndicates.

She regularly speaks to thousands of entrepreneurs, independent sales professionals, corporate employees, and industry association members on the principles of success and income generation. Additionally, she helps achievers who are experts in their field attain worldwide status and million-dollar incomes by building publishing empires around their business strategies, training concepts, industry expertise, and unique market posture. Her multimedia short course “How Experts Build Empires: The Step-By-Step System for Turning Your Expertise into Super-Lucrative Profit Centers” is the industry's definitive work on the subject of developing and marketing information products.

Janet makes her home in Thousand Oaks, California, where she belongs to Calvary Community Church and works with young people as a local 4-H Club project leader—a role she's enjoyed for nearly 20 years.

To bring Janet to your next event, call 805-499-9400 or visit www.janetswitzer.com. To subscribe to *Leading Experts e-Magazine*, visit www.leadingexperts.net.