

Change Your Mind Change Your Destiny

*The eight habits of success that will help
you create better relationships, more health,
more wealth, and more happiness.*

Dr. Jay LaGuardia

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DEDICATION

To my wife Pam, and my children: Alyse, Anthony, and Taylor, for their constant support and love. You have always inspired me to become a better husband and father. You are my core, my passion. I love you guys. I am also thankful to all those who have encouraged me to write this book and share this message.

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PREFACE

This book was written with the intent to dispel the myth that personal growth is hard. It doesn't have to be, it just takes know-how, commitment, and dedication. Personal growth and change are never easy but, with the appropriate tools, anybody can achieve them. If a guy like me, who grew up with challenging circumstances, with all the built-in excuses that most of us have, could willfully change my destiny by applying the eight habits taught in this book, anyone can.

Your past is your past, and that's where it needs to remain. The windshield in your vehicle is twice as large as the rear window for a reason—because we should spend most of our time looking forward. It is the part of our lives that we have control over and that we are able to affect based on a new vision we might have for ourselves. We get to choose every day how we show up, either as a victim or victor. I believe with these eight habits, the odds of creating the life of our dreams have never been greater. How do I know this? Because I've lived it, I've taught it, and thousands of others have also experienced these life-changing results. Many of these concepts have been around for years, but I've been able to devise a simple way of understanding them and, more importantly, applying them to life.

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So, who should read this book? Well, everyone of course! If you have picked up this book, it's because you have a curiosity and a desire to grow. If you have ever struggled with poor or low self-esteem, a lack of confidence, or an inability to define your life's purpose, then this book is for you. If you've ever experienced past challenges (and who hasn't), then this book is for you. If you've ever struggled financially or had trouble with relationships, this book is for you. If you've ever had big dreams, or a lack of dreams, this book is for you. What I'm really saying is that everyone can benefit mentally, physically, spiritually, and financially from the eight habits discussed in this book.

Please join me on this journey of personal growth and self-fulfillment. You'll be glad you did.

CHAPTER ONE

"AN INTRODUCTION"

*"You may be disappointed if you fail,
but you are doomed if you don't try."*

~ BEVERLY SILLS

Change Your Mind, Change Your Destiny

The eight habits of success that will help you create better relationships, more health, more wealth, and more happiness has been in the making for quite some time. To be more specific, for about 50 years, which is how old I am at the time of writing this book. This book is a story of the transformation of an individual through life's journeys and experiences. While somewhat remarkable, it's certainly not unique to me. However, it's a story which I'm hopeful can inspire others to know that they can achieve anything they desire with the proper tools and a little help here and there.

Obstacles in life occur all the time, but it's how we handle them that determines our destiny. We can allow those obstacles to define us, or we can use them as springboards to learn and grow and move beyond; even reinventing a new and better version of ourselves. When we're experiencing the challenges of life, it's often difficult to see beyond them as we get consumed by everything going on around us. Often our view becomes clouded, and our thinking so jaded, we cannot see through the process. This whole book is about setting up and providing the tools necessary to learn what it takes to get over life's challenges. Is it easy? No. After all, life isn't easy. There are very few places in life that arm you with the tools necessary to learn how to become personally successful.

Schools certainly don't teach you these tools. Most parents would love to if they were familiar with these habits; unfortunately, they can only share what they know. Society doesn't teach them. In fact, in many ways, our culture mocks personal growth and self-help programs as a sign of weakness. However, the opposite is true.

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I've been studying personal growth, self-improvement, and the habits of success for more than 30 years. During this time, I've been able to apply these tools and habits in my life, as well as mentor and coach others in these simple steps. What I've observed is that those who apply the lessons within this book are able to achieve any dream they have, or any goal they set. The formula is not new, nor is it unique to this specific book. However, I learned as a person who, prior to beginning my own journey of personal growth, was totally clueless on what to do and where to begin, let alone what resources could help me. I believe that you'll find everything within this book you need to begin your journey so that you can create the life of your dreams.

In my own life's journey, I've faced many difficulties. The eight habits in this book were powerful tools that not only saw me through those dark times, but made me stronger. I will share with you in Chapter Three how important mentors are in providing a foundation to get you started. Mentors can manifest in many forms; they can be a coach, teacher, spouse, or friend. It could be a tape or even this book. (Well, considering that it's the 21st century, maybe not a tape—perhaps an MP3 or podcast.) Fortunately, although technology may change, the value of mentors doesn't!

Potential mentors exist all around us. These are people who are willing to share their experiences with you. You'll be amazed how many there already are and who can't wait to help you on your journey.

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Mentors are a great resource who will help you understand how they made their dreams and goals come true while helping you better define your own. In Chapter Two, you'll see that dreams are the fuel that ignite the passion to take action. Dreams spark new ideas in which you create something better for yourself, your family, or humanity.

Dreams are the fuel for future achievement. They keep you motivated in the present and inspired for the future. Have you stopped dreaming? I find that people who are stuck in life have stopped dreaming. Dreams are nothing more than images of your soul's desire. As life occurs, it's easy to get disconnected from our dreams. In Chapter Two, I will show you how to dream again. Our dreams are inspired by our highest values. In Chapter Six, you'll learn how important defining your values are for setting goals. Values are the engine behind every decision we make. This book can provide you with the skillset necessary to identify and prioritize your values.

Once you've defined your values, the process in Chapter Nine, goal-setting, becomes far simpler than you've ever experienced it before. Many of us know that goal-setting is an important part of success, but few of us actually do it, and even fewer write them down. When you have a defined set of values, your goals are easier to establish.

Chapter Seven covers meditation—the tool that changed my life more than any other. Most people are not aware of how powerful meditation can be, and even fewer still actually practice

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it. Meditation was the driving force behind my transformation from being anger-driven in life, to discovering an inner calm and peace. This provided the impetus for understanding who I was and why I’d always reacted so angrily to life’s experiences.

Chapter Eight discusses the importance of affirmations. The human brain is constantly engaged in dialogue. Unfortunately, the vast majority of that dialogue is rooted in negativity. In Chapter Eight, you’re going to learn how to change that internal dialogue from negative to positive using the simple and effective strategy of affirmations.

A shift in consciousness begins with an attitude of gratitude. This is covered in great detail within Chapter Five. I believe gratitude is the single strongest virtue that can begin to change a negative consciousness to a positive one. Chapter Eight will show you how gratitude can unlock all things that are good in your life, and how that same gratitude can attract the right people, places, and things to make your every dream and goal become a reality.

In Chapter Four, it’s all about your authentic self. Most of us live our lives to please others. Many of us find ourselves trying to live up to others’ expectations of what our life should be according to them. Even if they mean well, this rarely results in being true to our authentic self. Unlocking our authentic self is a revealing and joyous experience. There is nothing more fulfilling than getting to know self, and even better is to live true to self. Chapter Four will help you find that authentic self – the true essence of who you are that exists deep inside you.

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At the conclusion of each chapter you will find a series of steps that will get you started on implementing each habit into your life. In addition to the actions steps, I provide you four questions that help you examine previously held beliefs you have about each of the eight habits. Take some time and complete these questions before you move on to the next chapter to get the best results. Unless we understand why we think the way we do, we have little chance of creating change.

Most books written about personal growth lack real tools that you can apply immediately. I really want the time you've invested reading this book to have the greatest impact possible for your life. This book is not a passive experience but one which, if applied as designed, can change anything about yourself you desire.

I'm excited and humbled that you've chosen this book to be a part of your life's journey. My ultimate goal with this book is to share these eight steps that anyone can apply to their life and overcome any obstacles or challenges that may be holding them back. Each chapter will provide simple action steps that you can apply immediately to begin your transformation. Remember: personal transformation doesn't happen overnight; it's a lifelong evolution. Hopefully, you'll have "Aha!" moments when reading this book. Perhaps a thought or idea will present a new image of who you want to become. If this book inspires you to create better relationships, to improve your financial status, or clarify your life's purpose—anything that leads to finding your true happiness—then the purpose of this book has been fulfilled.

CHAPTER TWO

"DREAMING"

*"To dream by night is to escape your life,
to dream by day is to make it happen."*

~ STEPHEN RICHARDS

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It was a warm summer afternoon and the ballpark was full. I emerged from the dugout to the roar of the crowd and stepped to the plate with the game on the line. The bases were loaded with two outs in the bottom of the ninth; it was the ultimate chance to be a hero. The pitcher was staring me down as I prepared for my moment of destiny. I dug into the batter's box, readying myself for that moment of destiny. The pitcher entered into his windup and delivered the pitch; with a mighty swing came a thunderous whack as I hit the ball as hard as I could. The ball soared into the blue sky above; the left fielder hopelessly raced to the fence and could only watch as the ball sailed into the stands. The entire crowd went wild; I was the hero of the moment, hitting the game-winning grand slam. As I approached home plate, my team was jumping up and down, basking in this incredible moment of triumph. It was a magical moment. I was 10 years old. Upon the crack of my bat, we had become district champions. Even though, like many of you, I've had recurring dreams since childhood of becoming a professional athlete, that experience at a mere 10 years of age was arguably the closest I would ever experience to living that dream.

My entire life, I'd dreamed of becoming a professional baseball player, and that grand slam moment seemed to cement the possibility of it becoming a reality. Unfortunately, my skill level did not meet my passion for the game and, even though this dream never became a reality for me, it helped to instill dreaming on a regular basis within my life. This habit would serve me well in many different ways throughout the years to come.

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So, let's take a moment together and reflect back to a time as a child when you had your own dreams and aspirations. Do you remember how you felt? If you're like me, you felt energized, enthusiastic, and even invincible—like you could accomplish anything. It didn't matter how far-reaching or crazy your dream was, it was still your dream, and no one could take it away from you.

Getting back to reality for a minute, Dr. Sigmund Freud, the legendary founder of psychoanalysis, theorized that dreams are driven by an unconscious desire for wish fulfillment. Along those same lines, I personally believe dreams are the images and desires of the subconscious mind, waiting to be fulfilled. They sometimes require us to be courageous enough to take big and bold action if they are to become our new reality.

There is no such thing as a silly or frivolous dream, and putting energy into them should never be considered a waste of time. Having dreams are necessary to see beyond our current reality. They provide us an opportunity to get lost in our imagination, and to develop the portion of our brain that allows us to think boldly and outside the realm of possibilities. If for some reason you don't think this is possible, just consider some of history's greatest pioneers.

Let's start by thanking God for people who are willing to dream big, like Michelangelo, who saw “The David” in a block of marble, as opposed to everyone else who just saw a piece of rock. Or consider all the amazing innovators like Henry Ford. He is

singlehandedly responsible for the creation of the assembly line, which systematically resulted in lower costs, eventually allowing every American to own a vehicle, and launching the industrial revolution. Then there is my personal favorite, Leonardo da Vinci, the original Renaissance man best known for his painting of *The Last Supper*. He was also a philosopher, an engineer, and an inventor. Many of his inventions we have perfected and still use today, such as the helicopter, the tank, and solar-powered energy. When did he ever sleep? For those of you who need a more recent example, consider Jeff Bezos, the founder and CEO of Amazon.com who has revolutionized e-commerce. (This is one of my wife's personal favorites due to the convenience of online shopping!)

What do all of these amazing people have in common? They were dreamers. They were willing to challenge themselves and think big and differently, even in the face of criticism and ridicule. They had the courage to step forward and pursue their dreams, even against great odds.

Maybe you don't have the desire to change the world. Maybe your goal is to go to college or improve your relationship with your spouse or children. You see, it doesn't really matter what it is. These fundamentals of change and personal improvement remain the same, nonetheless. Excellence is not a genetic predisposition. Many of these great innovators were self-made. Some might not have been born any special talent, skill, or ability. In fact, to start with, with the only difference between them and most of us was their self-belief and willingness to pursue their dreams. What

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further differentiates them from most is their persistence and commitment to stay the course. Let’s all remember that excellence is a mindset, and dreaming is a skillset and a habit, just like the other eight habits you’ll be reading about in this book.

Dreaming must be learned and then put to practical use. Even though most people think dreaming is something we do only at night, we can learn to dream often. We move in and out of dream states more frequently than we know. Think about it. How often do you catch yourself daydreaming in the middle of a conversation? Many times you may become completely detached from everything in your environment, including the conversation itself. Then you find yourself brought back into your current reality by those around you who have noticed you’ve taken a momentary mental vacation. There’s nothing wrong with this. This is good, it’s healthy, and it’s normal and should actually be encouraged. Okay, perhaps not driving down the interstate at 80 miles per hour, but it should be supported within a safe and controlled environment. You see, we don’t have to be asleep to dream.

When we take these momentary mental vacations, we’re moving into alpha brain waves. This is explained in greater detail during Chapter Seven, “Meditation,” but here is a brief explanation of two of the brain cycles called alpha and beta. Beta brain cycle is when you’re present and conscious in your current environment, or, in other words, a normal awakened state. The next phase, alpha, is when you step beyond and move into a conscious dreamlike state. It’s not hard to access alpha brain waves. Often,

it's very simple to do so by taking a couple of deep breaths in, exhaling them slowly, and refocusing your mind. This allows you to slow your thoughts down. The alpha state redirects our thoughts to someplace different, imaginary, and creative. This heightened creative state is from where new ideas originate. It's where thoughts pop into our head and new intentions are created.

Children do this easily because they don't put any limitations on their thoughts and easily embrace the concept of dreaming. Unfortunately, in today's world, this type of behavior is often discouraged or worse yet, some of the most imaginative children are being classified as attention deficit disorder. So, what is in fact a part of a child's normal brain development, and which is also a major foundation for future success, is many times being classified as a disease. Here's a scary thought for you—if Einstein were born today, he would most likely have been heavily medicated. Mozart might have found himself institutionalized. Many of the most influential figures throughout history may have never been able to reach their full potential if they'd been born today. Be sure not to confuse creativity in dreaming with a deficit disorder. Think about it. As a kid, who doesn't fantasize about being a professional athlete, princess, superhero, actor, or even a rock star? Detaching ourselves from reality to something new and different is a very important step in the development of the brain. The more we do it, the more that portion of the brain develops. Therefore, the more times we engage the creativity of our mind, the easier it becomes. Those who develop this skill tend to be the greatest innovators and the biggest visionaries.

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The funny thing is, as you watch children participate in this behavior, they free themselves of judgment and ridicule for their dreams and fantasies. They couldn't care less what anyone thinks. They're so caught up in expressing themselves that they have no time for judgment, whether it's their own or someone else's. As adults, we need to embrace and encourage this, not only for children, but for ourselves as well. More importantly, think about the last time you really dreamed, leaving your current reality behind, and thought about something crazy or different. It's not very common for adults. Why is that? Our minds get cluttered and filled with everyday activities. All the mundane habits and behaviors of trying to survive in our daily lives leave no room for creativity and dreaming. We get so caught up in the activities of being an adult, such as work, school, paying bills, raising a family, and taking care of a home, that we dream less and less. Dreaming is too important of a success habit to allow this to happen.

We need to set time aside each day to clear our minds, and slow our thoughts, so we can tap into the creative portion of the mind. This will allow us to dream more, while thinking bigger and bolder. Dreaming is an essential ingredient to eventually living our destiny. In fact, I would argue that it is impossible to fully live our destiny without experiencing and practicing the process of dreaming. Dreaming unlocks our soul's desire to be fully expressed in our lifetime. Dreaming helps give meaning to life. Dreaming creates excitement, and the possibility of creating something new. There is no better process of connecting to your purpose.

When I work with clients, I ask them, "What is your purpose?" They usually shrug their shoulders, or give me that deer-in-the-headlights look. They're so busy being busy they've taken very little time to contemplate this question. Sadly, the most common response is that they don't know. Worse yet, they don't know how to connect to their purpose, or even how to begin to understand it. The next logical question I ask is, "Do you dream regularly?" As one might have expected, those who are disconnected from their purpose, or have altogether never identified it, don't dream. Those who have dreamt previously, unfortunately, don't remember their dreams or have stopped dreaming altogether a long time ago. So, I explain that dreaming is not something you do only at night. In fact it is important to understand if you really want to connect and fully understand your purpose in life, you must learn how to actively dream again. While working together, I teach my clients the skill sets they need to do this, which allow them to find or reconnect with their life's purpose. This only becomes possible by putting aside the daily distractions that clutter our minds. Author Robin Sharma refers to this as "the age of dramatic distraction."

Dreams are never right or wrong, they just are what they are. They are messages from our subconscious mind we could choose to take action on or not. It has been said that dreams without action are just illusions. This simply means that if your dream is compelling enough, you must take action or it will never be realized. Having a dream is step one, and taking action is step two. A great life philosophy to live by is to find those who have had a similar dream to yours, took action, found success, and achieved their dream. If you do the same things they do, you'll

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increase your own chances of success. We will discuss this further in Chapter Three, “Mentors.”

To realize your dreams, it’s important to your success to let go of the fear of judgment. It really doesn’t matter what others think. It’s your dream; therefore, the only thing that matters is what you think. Gandhi once wrote, “Never let someone walk with dirty shoes through the garden of your mind.” Never allow the critics or the naysayers to pollute your mind with their own limited beliefs.

The thing about dreaming is, the clearer you are—with greater specificity and detail, using all of your senses—the more likely it is that your dream will become real. This is the process of visualization. When we visualize, the mind cannot tell the difference between an actual event and one vividly imagined in great detail. If you are able to engage all five senses so that within your mind’s eye you can feel, taste, smell, hear, and see it, then your dream is already a reality. The greater the clarity in specificity of the dream, the greater the likelihood that you’ll experience it. Your mind will believe it’s already occurred, therefore, conspiring with every decision, thought, and action you have and moving you forward to make it your new reality. That’s the beauty of dreaming; it reframes and reprograms the subconscious mind, which focuses on creation. The last, and arguably most important ingredient, is massive action. Don’t discount the importance of taking massive action. There have been countless dreams that were never realized simply for lack of action. Dreams plus action equals a new reality.

Change Your Mind, Change Your Destiny

Dreaming creates a new and higher vibrational tone and energy. The higher we vibrate, the more likely it is we are to attract our dream. Unfortunately, most people stop dreaming and, comparatively, experience low vibrational emotions such as fear, despair, depression, etc.—which only wind up attracting those low-tone energies and experiences. It's the reason we repeatedly attract the same type of experiences, people, places, and things in our lives. If we want something new and different, we need to act and think differently. There's no better place to start this process than by dreaming.

The Five Steps to Dreaming

Step number one: What's Possible?

Begin with a childlike heart by asking: what's possible? Honor your response; the bigger the better. Make note of it and don't diminish or minimize any thoughts or ideas.

Step number two: Your Happy Place

Find your place. You can dream anywhere, but typically most of us have a place that inspires us to think bolder.

Step number three: Eliminate the Naysayers

Eliminate all the people who don't support you. I don't mean anything drastic, but find a way to remove their influence from your life.

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Step number four: Dream Builders

Surround yourself with people who support and empower your dreams. These could be mentors, coaches, or anyone interested in seeing your dream become a reality.

Step number five: Get Going

Take action; no dream can become a reality without taking bold action. Failure doesn't occur by taking action; it only happens if we never start, or we quit.

Eliminating the Obstacles to Dreaming

1. What previous thoughts or beliefs do you hold about dreams?
2. How would letting go of your old beliefs about dreaming serve you in a positive and productive way?
3. What would your life look like if you dreamed more regularly?
4. What date do you plan on implementing dreaming as a part of your success habits?

CHAPTER THREE

"MENTORS"

"I'm not a teacher, but an awakener."

~ ROBERT FROST

Early in my career, I was sitting in my office having a phone conversation with a prospective business consultant. Well, it wasn't really a conversation; it was more of a monologue of me expressing my frustrations with all the things that were going wrong within my business. I was complaining about staffing issues. We were losing employees as fast as we could hire them. However, my complaints were not limited to just employees, they were all-encompassing—covering literally anything and everything I could think of at the time. This monologue, which felt like hours on my end, probably lasted less than five minutes. At the conclusion, I actually felt better. I felt like I'd given the consultant everything he needed to figure out what was going wrong within the business.

After I finished, I waited for his response. There was this awkward silence that seemed like an eternity. Eventually, I asked, "Hello, are you still there?" and he said, "Yes." He then said, "I know what's wrong with your business." I emphatically responded, "Great, what is it?" While thinking to myself, *this is really going to be great, now I can move beyond all these troubles*. However, his exact words—which would ultimately rock my world—were, "Your business is waiting for a leader to show up." Hello, two by four to the head. I was like, *you have got to be kidding me. I just explained to you everything that was going wrong!* At which point he said, "Your problems are not outside, your problems are inside—inside of you. Businesses rise and fall on leadership and right now your business lacks leadership." Ouch! At that moment, you'd have thought somebody had taken a saw and cut me right in half. I felt

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hurt, humiliated, and angry, but you know what? He was exactly right.

~Humility~

It was my arrogance and hubris that had devolved our business into an endless series of problems. I thought I knew it all. I thought I could figure it out on my own. I didn't want to admit that I needed help. I lacked the humility necessary to learn what I needed to know to create the success I desired. The beginning of this chapter is about learning humility, because receiving mentoring requires immense humility. It's being humble enough to understand that you might not know everything. We need to be open-minded to the instruction and help of others. Being humble is not a weakness; it's actually a strength. For most of my life, I thought I knew it all and I didn't need anyone's help. This attitude in my business brought me to the brink of complete and utter frustration. I was so unhappy; I was even considering quitting and doing something different. Arrogance (and I was full of it) will blind you, rendering you incapable of seeing the solutions that might be at hand. Perhaps, more importantly, it'll make you incapable of seeing the people who can assist and help you to overcome any and every problem you'll face, in business or in life. Fortunately for me, I was finally open to hearing the words the consultant spoke to me.

Humility is acknowledging that you need help. The vast majority of successful people, in both business and in life, have the habit of seeking out mentors to assist them on their path to success. That

willingness to not only seek out instruction, but to actually accept it, is one of the cornerstones of a successful life.

~Curious Minds~

Finding or attracting a mentor begins with the concept of a curious mind. A curious mind is one that is inquisitive, with a desire to learn and grow. It's amazing the type of people who will show up in your life when you have a desire to learn. The funny thing is, these mentors are most likely already present in your life. The development of the curious mind is what allows us to finally recognize how they might be able to help us.

This reminds me of a time back in college when I was studying for a big exam. It was late that evening, I was leaving the library and I walked past a lecture hall. I heard a familiar voice resonating from inside, so I decided to take a look. As I peeked inside, I was surprised to see Dr. Richard Rada, the first chiropractor who'd had a major influence on my life. As he was giving a lecture about chiropractic, I decided to sit down and listen. While he was explaining to the audience what chiropractic care was, I realized he was telling the same story he had told me just a few months prior. For whatever reason, I actually heard what he was saying this time, and I was blown away; so much so, it changed my life. At that moment, I decided to no longer pursue my education to become an orthopedic surgeon. Instead, I chose chiropractic as my profession.

The point is that most of us have probably had similar experiences. We have heard a message more than once, but didn't really hear

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it or pay attention to it until the right voice stimulated a curious mind within us. This curious mind, as discussed above, makes all the difference in our ability to learn and understand. It's like when we listen with an open heart, free of judgment and receptive to the message, is when we're ready to learn. This reminds me of one of my favorite quotes, "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear."

We must be in the right frame of mind with a readiness and receptiveness to grow. Learning requires humility – a willingness to admit that we don't have all the answers. When we tap into our humility, we are ready to receive the mentors that are all around us.

How do we sort through all the countless messages that we are bombarded by every day? Information comes from countless sources. Sifting through this noise and chaos is much easier when we have a trustworthy and respected voice to help us decipher and understand what it is we're hearing. Being able to trust is an important part of receiving mentoring. Without trust, there is no safe place in which a foundation of confidence can be built. It doesn't matter how great the mentoring is if we can't let go of fear and past programming. So, I guess you can say that mentoring requires some faith. To me, faith is believing without seeing, without any tangible evidence to support our belief. Not a blind faith, but a faith that you know to your core what you're hearing is true, right, and just. You can get all the best suggestions and ideas in the world but, without trust, you would never take action.

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Letting go of the fear and uncertainty is an essential quality to being mentored. It truly is a leap of faith.

At some point, we must begin to trust if we are going to change and grow. Not everything that occurs in life is easily explainable. Some things happen without explanation. I like to think it is the universe conspiring with our hearts' intent. This is evidence that you're following your purpose. Trusting in the process is a leap of faith that will reward you in the end if you're willing to believe.

~Authenticity~

The beauty of true mentorship is that mentors often serve with no expectation of anything in return. They serve selflessly and from their heart. Contrary to popular opinion, there are people who want to serve and expect nothing in return. They really care about you and your success. The more authentic people we have in our lives, the more blessed we are. Authentic people walk their walk and talk their talk. They give us a feeling inside; a knowing that they do truly care about what is best for us. This is when you know that you've found the right person. I guess you can say this can also relate to having faith, but it doesn't take long to see the true authenticity of someone shine through—through their actions and words. Great mentors won't just tell you the way, but will show you the way. Therefore, once applied, you have a new skillset that is developed for a lifetime.

Once you've experienced the incredible benefits of being mentored, you'll most likely want to become a mentor yourself. As I've mentioned before, I've been blessed with many great

“MENTORS”

mentors in my life. They have authentically given so much of themselves – their time, energy, and resources. These experiences compel me to pay it forward and help others. To reach out and assist others as they embark upon their path is my personal mission. To inspire others to help them live happier, healthier, and more prosperous lives. That is my mission, and I give thanks daily for the opportunity to live this mission. I am truly fortunate to be able to do this through my speaking, teaching, writing, consulting, and coaching. There is nothing more rewarding than serving others. There’s no greater feeling than to help another person achieve their goals, to help them see a brighter future, and explore new opportunities that once were never imagined. Nothing will elevate your self-worth more than serving another human being.

Mentors come in all sizes and shapes, and they are all around us. They are friends, teachers, coaches, ministers, business leaders, authors, athletes, spouses, and parents – the list is almost endless. Mentors often show up at both the best and worst of times, whether we’re ready or not. The most influential mentor in my life was my father-in-law, Dr. Joe Stucky. No one taught me more about being a professional, a caregiver, leader, and about unconditional love and service.. He lived by the axiom “To love, to give, to serve,” and he did that so richly. He was a great example of this to me and countless others. He helped shape and mold me into the man that I’ve become, and the success that I’ve been able to achieve. My gratitude and appreciation is immense. He saw things in me that I never saw in myself. Just a few weeks before he passed away, I shared with him the story in which I was

halfway through graduate school. I was completely out of money and was going to have to drop out of school. I had been dating his daughter (my wife now), Pam, roughly six months, and we were not even engaged at the time. Pam had told her parents of my dire financial situation. Through their generosity and belief in me, they paid for my semester of school. Think about that: they wrote a check because they believed in me and were willing to invest in me, expecting nothing in return except for the hope that one day I would pay it forward. I joked with my father-in-law that it was the best \$2000 investment he ever made. We both chuckled and, with a quick wink, I knew he was in agreement.

Truth be told, the importance of this story really had very little to do with the money and everything to do with their belief in me. They gave me a chance and taught me about selflessness and generosity. That belief resulted in me recommitting and working harder than I'd ever done previously. You see, mentoring creates an accountability that will often provide a greater motivation than going it alone ever could.

When our life is nearing its end, this is how we'll be remembered – by the impact we made on the lives around us. Did we make our world a better place to live? Did we inspire others? Did we make a difference? Did we live a life well-served? There's no better way to make this possible than to have a mentor in our lives, or to become one ourselves.

“MENTORS”

How to find good mentors:

1. **Be receptive to potential mentors:** Be conscious of people who are an example of what you would like to become. With everyone that you come in contact, ask yourself, “Is this person living a life I wish to have? Do they exemplify the qualities and characteristics that I wish to learn?” Mentors can be found anywhere, so keep an open mind to the possibilities.
2. **Identifying potential mentors:** Make a list of those people you have identified. What are the qualities you admire of those on your list? This could be business savvy, integrity, confidence, financial success, strong relationships, or fitness—whatever the skill or quality it is you want to learn.
3. **Make the call:** This is when you may become the most uncomfortable. Call and invite your potential mentor out for lunch or coffee. Tell them that you want to pick their brain about... (and insert whatever you want to learn). Remember, this is where your humility needs to shine through. Asking for help is not a sign of weakness, but a sign of strength.
4. **Be specific:** At your meeting, have an outline ready. What skill or quality are you interested in learning? Be humble and share with them what it is you admire about them. Where did they learn this? Are there any resources they would recommend?

Change Your Mind, Change Your Destiny

5. **Ask for help:** This may be the toughest of the steps. You'll definitely be stretched outside your comfort zone. Ask them if they'll help you. Don't be surprised if they're more than willing to do so. Mentors have a passion to serve others.
6. **Get to work:** Be ready to learn and take action. Your hard work and commitment is often more than enough of a payback to your mentor. If your mentoring requires a fee, understand you are making an investment in you for your future—it will pay off if you do the work. Remember to always give thanks and praise constantly for the help you're receiving.
7. **Pay it forward:** Look for the opportunity to help someone else on their journey. Become a mentor yourself.

Eliminating the Obstacles to Mentoring

1. What previous thoughts or beliefs do you hold about mentors?
2. How would letting go of your old beliefs about mentoring serve you in a more positive and productive manner?
3. What would your life look like if you had mentors?
4. What date do you plan on implementing mentorship as a part of your daily success habits?