

'Jack Delosa is a real entrepreneur. In *Unwritten*, he elegantly uncovers how to build something truly great.'

Matt RockMan, co-founder of Seek, entrepreneur and investor

'Jack Delosa is a heady mix of intelligence, passion, humour and humility. In *Unwritten*, he propels us to be better humans and in doing so defines the new measure of success.'

**Megan Quinn, co-founder of NET-A-PORTER,
non-executive director at UNICEF Australia**

'As Australia's transitioning economy responds to a rapidly changing world, we are in an unprecedented position to seize exciting opportunities; and to become a regional – even a world – innovation leader. Innovation and entrepreneurship are all about testing boundaries, taking risks, eschewing fear. *Unwritten* is a captivating guide to doing just this.'

**Wyatt Roy, Assistant Minister of Innovation
for the Australian Federal Government**

'Imagine knowing who you want to be and the legacy you want to leave. That is the essence of entrepreneurship and happiness, and Jack has managed to capture it beautifully in *Unwritten*.'

Tammy May, founder and director of MyBudget

'Jack Delosa is a leader of the new school. In *Unwritten*, he challenges us to be boundless in every sense of the word.'

Jack Phillips, GQ

'Having a resource like Jack curate a world of wisdom and fuse it with his own unique instincts is fast becoming my greatest unfair advantage.'

Jules Lund, television personality and founder of TRIBE

'You don't become an expert at anything without daily practice. In *Unwritten*, Jack lays out the "Workout Plan" to achieve your life's best work.'

**Osher Günsberg, television and radio presenter,
host of *Australian Idol* and *The Bachelor***

'Jack has a unique entrepreneurial voice, and has used it to inspire many from our generation, myself included. With *Unwritten*, he continues to influence far beyond the world of business.'

Illy, international hip-hop artist and Aria Award winner

'Mark Twain famously said: "It ain't what you don't know that gets you into trouble. It's what you know for sure that just ain't so." In *Unwritten*, Jack Delosa does a deep dive into the true meaning of life – a sense of purpose – and its inextricable relationship to success, achievement, contribution and legacy.'

**Jan Owen AM Hon DLitt, social entrepreneur, author,
CEO, Foundation for Young Australians**

'Undeniably powerful. In *Unwritten*, Jack has captured tomorrow's wisdom for today.'

Dan Gregory and Kieran Flanagan, co-founders of The Impossible Institute

'In *Unwritten*, Jack reveals how to build the future. He unveils how to rethink our approach towards life and entrepreneurship in the most remarkably concise manner.'

**Dorry Kordahi, co-founder of DKM Blue,
BRW Young Rich List Member**

'Jack Delosa is a major figure of influence in the Australian business and education scene.'

Startup Daily

'In 2015, Jack's company, The Entourage, was featured in our benchmark study of "Best Places to Work" in Australia. A defining characteristic of so many great workplaces is leadership that knows how to unite people around a purpose, to build great things that touch the world. *Unwritten* is a unique opportunity to gain insight into one such leader.'

Zrinka Lovrencic, managing director of Great Place to Work Australia

'In a world where it is more important than ever to be you, *Unwritten* encapsulates how to continuously grow out of and into your best self to create great things.'

CEO Magazine

'*Unwritten* takes an unprecedented look at entrepreneurship and the power it has to evoke change. Drawing on stories of some of the world's most inspiring female leaders, it empowers other women and men alike to leave their mark on society. Having interviewed and worked alongside Jack, I can see his authentic voice shine through in every word of *Unwritten*'.

**Deborah Hutton, Australian media personality,
founder of Balance by Deborah Hutton**

Jack Delosa is changing education. He is the founder of Australia's largest education institution for entrepreneurs, The Entourage, which has a community of 300,000 members. Jack's vision is to improve traditional education by introducing a style of learning that puts the individual first. Under his leadership, The Entourage was awarded the 4th Best Place to Work in Australia by *BRW* magazine.

Prior to The Entourage, Jack co-founded MBE Education, which assisted small and medium-sized enterprises in raising money from investors. MBE quickly became one of Australia's fastest growing companies, helping their clients raise hundreds of millions of dollars. Along the way, Jack also became a high-profile investor in growth companies such as QBiotics, Martin Jetpack (ASX:MJP) and Emerchants (ASX:EML), and founded The Entourage Growth Fund, which invests in upstart businesses.

Jack's last book, *UnProfessional*, was highly acclaimed, reaching bestseller status within three weeks of launching. He is one of Australia's leading entrepreneurs, having been listed in the BRW Young Rich List since 2014.

life's best
work

432

(Model No.)

01123

growth + comfort
garcia, co-exist

UNWRITTEN

Reinvent
Tomorrow

choice, not chance

JACK DELOSA

FOREWORD BY MICHELLE BRIDGES

No. 432

you are the
creator!

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BTC

THE
Entourage
PUBLISHING

2/10/1988

choice
chance
not chance

choice
chance
not chance

let work be an
extension of yourself

This one's for Dad. These pages born from the
trees of the seeds you planted.

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www.the-entourage.com.au

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There is a voice that doesn't use words. Listen.

Rumi

FOREWORD

I still recall getting the email from my agent about speaking at a conference called ‘Unconvention’. Immediately, my interest was piqued. ‘Really? It’s called Unconvention? I love it!’ Before I’d really looked into it, I knew I was already in. I mean, unconventional is kinda my middle name. So why would I investigate any further? Way too conventional . . .

The first thing I noticed about Jack was his ease with everyone in the room. We were out the back in the green room with a bunch of awesome motley crew speakers who all had something to say. He seemed very relaxed and intent on listening to whoever was speaking at the time. I actually had no idea that he was the one in charge; he was far too relaxed to be that person. Once I realised my error, my ‘impressed’ barometer went further up. Great guy.

Having now done a tour with Jack and worked alongside him, I know that he lives his life as his message to the world, and *Unwritten* is his way of capturing it. This message resonates deeply with me, with those who work alongside him and, of course, with his audience. It’s real and it’s raw. It cuts straight to the truth, because Jack speaks from experience. You don’t learn this kind of stuff sitting in a classroom or in a

UNWRITTEN

library. Sure, you can read about it, hypothesise all you like, but the real learning is always in the action.

Jack's insights into OPRs (Other People's Rules) are pertinent to how we all live our lives. I love a good acronym (J.F.D.I. has long been my calling card). How many of us have been brought down by OPRs throughout our lives? Especially when they are handed to us almost as a rite of passage within our family or close circle. OPRs can all too easily become entrenched ways of thinking, and the crazy thing is that many of these concepts have gone completely untested by the 'thinker' – a clear-cut case of 'but we've always done it like this'.

Philosophy is my thing. Socrates' 'The unexamined life is not worth living' resonates throughout this book, as Jack certainly gets us thinking and examining all our assumptions . . .

Check in. You have the ability to respond to your life any way you wish. It's the way in which you respond to what the universe serves you that will define you.

Not what you say about yourself.

Not what others say about you.

What will define you is your action.

Respond. Ability.

Responsibility.

Unwritten is the perfect guide to taking responsibility for who you are and – in a very real sense, as Jack says – building the world around you.

Mish

Michelle Bridges, entrepreneur, author and TV personality

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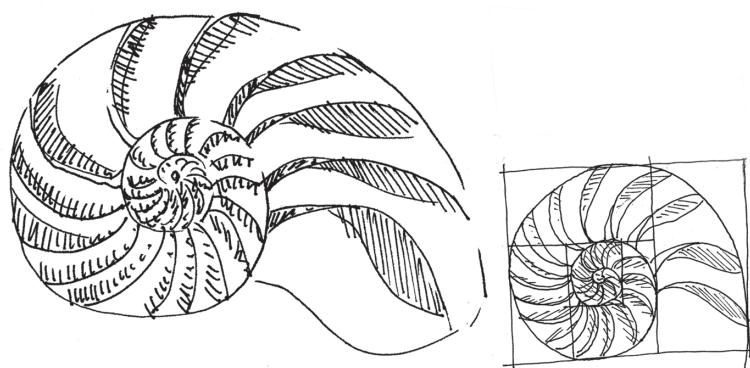
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Introduction

Fulfillment
 Life's best work
 come from
 alignment w/ one's
 self
 Living true

Who am I?
 Why am I here?



All greatness begins within
 creation is spirituality becoming "real"

REINVENT TOMORROW

'Whatever you do in life may seem insignificant to you.
 But it's important you do it, because no one else will.'

Mahatma Gandhi

It starts off as a whisper. A feeling from within hints ever so gently that you may be destined for something more. Normal isn't you. The traditional life is not who you are. When you dare to pay attention to the whisper, it grows slightly louder to tell you that you can do something great. Something that matters.

Soon you are walking along a different path – one that is awe-inspiring and challenges you to become more of yourself. This is a path where the outward journey and the 'doing' will always perfectly reflect the inner journey of your being. Your life's work is now an extension of who you are.

I am talking about entrepreneurship. And I don't just mean running your own business – although that is certainly one expression of it – but rather any form of taking ownership of your life and creating something that doesn't yet exist, be it

a business, a career, or anything of which you are proud. Regardless of what flavour of entrepreneurship you pursue, when what you do is fuelled by who you are, you will do your life's best work.

Entrepreneurship is not a rational decision. To be somebody treading an unbeaten path towards a dream unfulfilled is not something we one day wake up, weigh up, and decide to do. It is more than that; it is who we are. We do not walk such a challenging path because it gives us something to do; we walk it because it reflects *who we are here to be*.

The reason we heard the whisper, when so many don't, is that it resonated with the deepest part of us. Over many months, or maybe many years or decades (everyone's different), we became more dissatisfied with the traditional way of life, and the whisper grew louder. Day by day, it intensified, until it became a roar we could no longer ignore. It was at that point where we decided to live a life that wasn't governed by what was safe or tried or proven, but by our own unique sense of purpose. In this sense, entrepreneurship is a response to a higher calling.

I'm not a religious person. However, I am a spiritual person. I think even the most pragmatic among us realise there's more to who we are and the world around us than what the naked eye can see. For me, spirituality is about exploring our consciousness and our essence beyond our physicality. In this sense, I view the world and our place in it through a very spiritual lens. I believe that we are not human beings having a spiritual experience, but spiritual beings having a human experience. I believe that God is all of us, and that we create ourselves and our world. I believe we are each capable of becoming more. To live a life that aligns with and honours our higher selves is to live

an extraordinary life. And I am fully, absolutely, with every cell in my body, happy for you to believe the same thing or believe something different. We make far too many judgments, and I think that 'right and wrong' is a very shallow paradigm through which to view the world. I believe that fully recognising our own truths and living in accordance with them, while encouraging others to do the same, is the next step in our evolution.

Entrepreneurship is a spiritual endeavour because, at its essence, it is about *creation*. What starts out as nothing more than a compelling feeling in our heart and an inspired thought in our mind soon grows into something real. We talk about it with someone else, we share it, we dream about it, love it, wrestle with it, cry with it, and soon enough we begin to act on it and live with it.

What was initially an intangible seed planted inside us soon becomes something very real – something people can touch, interact with and use in their everyday lives. As it grows further, it reaches out into the world, touching the lives of many, even employing others who want to contribute to the journey. What was once the seed of an idea is now giving others the opportunity to do *their* life's best work. There is immense joy in finding others who are passionate about a vision that you now share. If they are the right people, they will do things they once thought impossible, each becoming a person they had never envisaged. Their entire life changes because they are part of a mission that has grown into something meaningful, something real. Yesterday, it was a thought, and today, through a whole lot of hard work and a little bit of magic, it exists.

To me, entrepreneurship mirrors life. It magnifies our experience. It is the path we walk on our quest to becoming the best versions of ourselves. It is us experiencing what

we are capable of and what we can contribute to the world. When work doesn't feel like work, we stop worrying about work-life balance, because we've achieved work-life harmony. The two are no longer competing forces but, rather, different colours that make up the landscape of our lives. We have not lost ourselves in our work; we have found ourselves in our quest.

Life, like entrepreneurship, is a constant process of creation. Through our thoughts, words and deeds, we are constantly creating who we are and, in a very real sense, creating the world around us. Every inch of it. And it all starts from within. For me, the purpose of life is to consciously create who you want to be and the contribution you want to make.

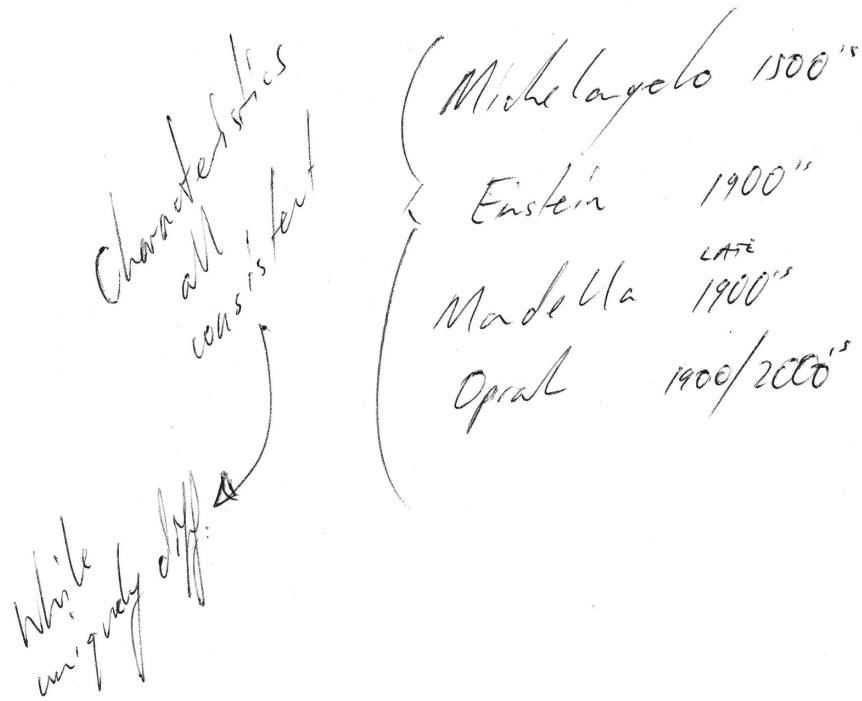
This is a book that examines timeless principles to enable you to do just that. It is for those who recognise they can *create*, who recognise that life is led by choice and not by chance. It is for those who dream of things that never were, and who want to change things for the better. It is for those who see how malleable the world truly is and recognise they are already shaping it. And it is for those who realise the world only changes as we do.

We all leave a legacy, whether it be through the upbringing of a great family, the growth of a veggie patch, the way in which we touch the lives of others, the establishment of a business or large-scale societal change. Every life shifts the world in some small or large way. Legacy cares not for scale. This is not a book about breadth, but rather about depth. It's less about how far-reaching your influence is and more about ensuring that whatever you do is a representation of who you truly are. Mahatma Gandhi said of legacy, 'Whatever you do in life may seem insignificant to you. But it's important you do it, because no one else will.'

This is not a book about making money, although I don't see making money as a bad thing. With money, intention grows and influence amplifies. This is not a book primarily about business, although business can be an incredibly effective vehicle to carry one's vision into the world. This is not a book about becoming the next Nelson Mandela or Oprah Winfrey. Much can be learnt from their stories, but to copy these people is to *not* learn from them.

This is a book about becoming more of *you*. About continuously growing out of and into your best self. It's a book of unconventional wisdom for living a life on purpose. It contains stories that will shed light on how you can shape the world around you and be an example for those who want to do the same. When enough of us do so, together we can reinvent tomorrow.

History

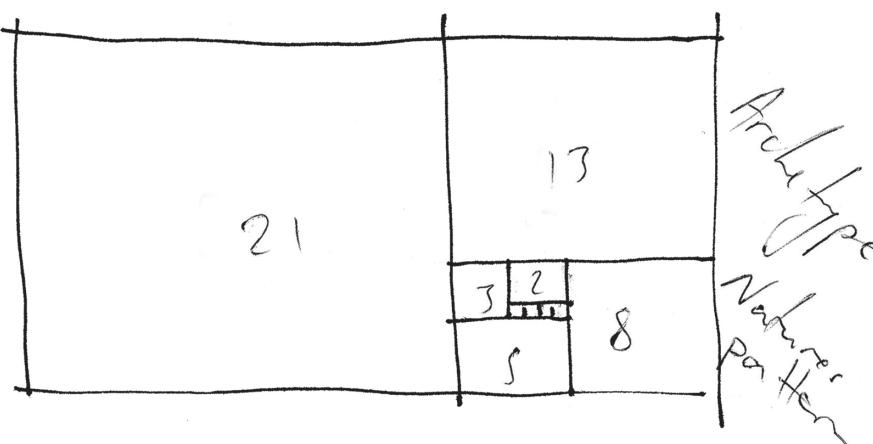


Chapter 1

THE GREATS OF HISTORY

'In testing the boundaries of human capabilities and technologies, we are standing on the shoulders of giants. Yesterday, we fell short.'

Sir Richard Branson



16/8
Still unwritten?
Why??

On 31 October 2014, Virgin Galactic's SpaceShipTwo embarked from the Mojave Air and Space Port on a flight that would test its new rocket engine and fuel. Piloted by 43-year-old Peter Siebold and his 39-year-old co-pilot Michael Alsbury, the spaceplane took off under its WhiteKnightTwo carrier aircraft.

Just ten years earlier, in 2004, Sir Richard Branson founded Virgin Galactic with the vision of making space travel accessible to everyone. Owning 400 companies across the Virgin Group empire, Branson has been knighted at Buckingham Palace for 'services to entrepreneurship' and has an estimated

net worth of \$5 billion. Today, he has a strong focus on philanthropy and space travel. Among Virgin Galactic's ambitions are to establish the first hotel in space and to run a two-hour commercial flight from London to Sydney by travelling outside the Earth's atmosphere.

At an altitude of 50,000 feet, SpaceShipTwo broke away from WhiteKnightTwo and fired its new engine as planned. Nine seconds after ignition, the tail booms of the spaceplane unexpectedly began to swing upwards, increasing the drag as it accelerated. Two seconds later, SpaceShipTwo began to disintegrate mid-flight.

Peter Siebold was thrust from the craft, ejecting his parachute and returning to Earth with serious injuries. Co-pilot Michael Alsbury tragically lost his life in the crash.

The team of 400 Virgin Galactic staff watching from the Space Port witnessed the shattering of a decade of hope, only to quickly learn that they had also lost the life of one of their close friends and colleagues, Michael Alsbury. This was an incredibly sad day for Virgin Galactic. The team of scientists and engineers had worked tirelessly to test the boundaries of human possibility while doing everything in their power to ensure the safety of the brave test pilots.

The world's media immediately turned its attention to Virgin Galactic and its founder, Sir Richard Branson. What had happened? Who was to blame? What would Branson do now?

On that day in October 2014, I was on my way to visit Branson on Necker Island. I was part of a small group of people invited to spend time on Necker with Richard. As we were flying in, he was of course now heading out to California to meet with the family of Michael Alsbury and his team of 400, to mourn with them and to work out what to do next.

Branson spent a day in California at the Mojave Space Port, taking the time to console everyone who was affected, to offer his counsel and to get a feel for the resolve of the team in the wake of such an accident. Upon his return to Necker Island the next day, I noticed he was visibly upset by the events of the previous two days. When we asked him why he came back to Necker to see us, he simply replied, 'Because I said I would.'

A small group of us sat with Branson in The Temple House, a room he had purposefully built for a non-governmental organisation called The Elders, which he had initiated in 2007. The Elders brings together 12 of the most influential and revered people in the world to tackle the planet's biggest challenges and to help resolve major conflicts, from their unique platform of political independence. Members of The Elders have at various times included Nelson Mandela, Kofi Annan and Jimmy Carter, the 39th President of the United States. The Temple House is a beautiful building constructed with 12 sides, one for each member of The Elders. We all appreciated the importance of the special room in which we were gathered.

Branson sat in his board shorts, feet up on his coffee table, talking to us about what had happened and what he had been through over the last two days. 'It was important I went there,' he said. 'It's important that as leaders we front up to any sort of tragedy. It was important for me to speak to the family of the test-pilot who we lost and be with the team.' He went on to explain that it was essential for him to *feel* how everyone was. The clear picture he gained of what had happened and how everyone felt about it gave him the knowledge and confidence to decide on their next steps. 'They needed to know that the space program would continue, that what they had given a good chunk of their lives

for would not be for nothing.' And then, as his voice started to waver and his eyes filled with tears from thinking about the 400 people he obviously cared deeply for, he finished, 'They needed to know that they weren't going to lose their jobs.'

To sit with one of the greatest business leaders of all time in the midst of the largest crisis of his career was eye-opening for me because it revealed so much of Branson's humanity.

Throughout that week, Branson was not only excusing himself from conversations to focus on phone calls from the regulatory bodies involved in the crash investigation but was also finding himself the focus of the world's media. Speculative journalism meant that headlines were being splashed across the likes of CNN, *The New York Times* and the UK *Telegraph*: 'Virgin Galactic crash: "Don't let more die", Richard Branson told'; 'Branson "should stick to mobile phones", says expert'; 'Branson spaceship explosion: the "missed" warnings'.

It's important to note that all of the news stories had come out before the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) had released any findings on the cause of the accident. While the NTSB was still investigating, Branson and Virgin Galactic could not publicly comment on what had happened due to any discussion being classified as 'speculation'. While Branson and his team had to follow due process, the media did not, and they went on saying whatever they wanted, pointing the finger and being as radical as they liked without fear of any repercussions. Branson would later remark, 'We found it uncomfortable over the weekend when so many self-proclaimed experts in the UK came out saying there had been an explosion. We're pleased the [investigators] came out and categorically denied that.'

The next day, after sitting across from Branson over lunch as he and I discussed what's wrong with traditional education and what needs to happen for it to improve, I decided to go for a walk along one of Necker's many beautiful beaches. After a few hundred metres, I came to the tennis club, nestled between the beach on one side and the lush green forest on the other. There, alone on a beanbag, Branson was sitting, still in his board shorts, deep in thought, peering out into space.

My time on Necker with Richard was an incredible experience but this moment was particularly profound for me. It caused me to stop in my tracks, in awe of the contrast presented by the image in front of me, this grand juxtaposition of Richard Branson the business icon and the reality of the person. At this very moment, the world's media was feverishly focused on this global icon and how the tragedy would impact on the 'legend of Sir Richard Branson', and all the while he was quietly sitting alone, in his board shorts, concerned and upset – just as you or I would be. It occurred to me how very human we all are regardless of our achievements. It perfectly highlighted for me that history often puts people like Branson on a pedestal in a way that makes them 'larger than life' and diminishes their humanity. The mythology that develops around them often disguises the lessons inherent in their stories by making their accomplishments appear unattainable, and their contribution unachievable. The reality is they are just people, with the same doubts and the same emotions as all of us. They are as vulnerable and unsure of themselves as you and I, and success and tragedy affect them much as they do us.

Through years of study, and precious moments like this time with Branson, I have learnt that the great figures throughout history all questioned their own resolve at

times, wrestled with their self-belief and fought against feelings of inadequacy. I have discovered that these larger-than-life figures find their greatness not in being perfect but in realising they never will be. This gives them the resolve to move forward imperfectly. Their virtues were not effortlessly acquired or easily demonstrated but, like everyone else, gained through hard work and the endless struggle that comes with the search of one's true self.

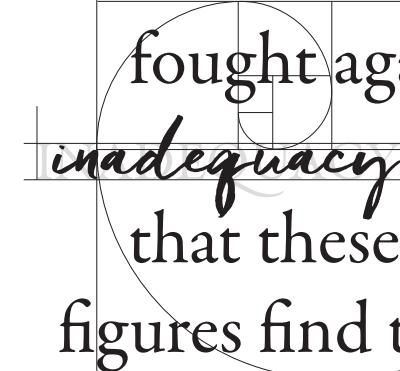
The greats of this world are not superhuman icons who have reached an unattainable level of accomplishment – they too sit on beanbags in their board shorts by themselves and think and challenge and question and doubt.

In the speech that Sir Richard Branson gave on 1 November 2014 at the Mojave Air and Space Port, the day before he returned to Necker Island, he said, ‘Every new transformative technology requires risk, and we have seen the tragic and brave sacrifice of Mike and the recovery of injured surviving pilot Pete Siebold. Their tremendous efforts are not in vain and will serve to strengthen our resolve to make big dreams come true.

‘In testing the boundaries of human capabilities and technologies, we are standing on the shoulders of giants. Yesterday, we fell short.

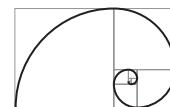
‘I truly believe that humanity’s greatest achievements come out of our greatest pain. We are determined to honour the bravery of the pilots and teams here by learning from this tragedy. Only then can we move forwards, united behind a collective desire to push the boundaries of human endeavour.’

It was later found by the NTSB that there was no explosion, and the cause of the tail booms swinging up and ultimately destroying the spaceplane was human error. The team at Virgin Galactic have since put in place



Great figures throughout history all questioned their own resolve at times, wrestled with their self-belief and fought against feelings of inadequacy. I have discovered that these larger-than-life figures find their greatness not in being perfect but in realising they never will be.

technological measures to ensure the human error cannot be repeated.



The initial inspiration for *Unwritten* came after my time on Necker Island when I was in Rome, on a vacation, peering up at the ceiling that Michelangelo had painted in the Sistine Chapel over 500 years ago. The tour guide whom I had engaged to teach me about the Renaissance and those who had shaped it was walking me through the years of Michelangelo's life, explaining the philosophies that underpinned his work.

Although, like many others, I had heard the name 'Michelangelo' before, I was fascinated to learn more about the man behind the legend. So often, these iconic names become clichés in our society without us really knowing the truth of their lives. When we dig beneath the surface-level stories that form around such figures, it is not just their common humanity that emerges but also some key similarities in their ways of thinking, which are more fascinating to me than the legends themselves.

I learnt that Michelangelo studied great artists who had come before him while also having a need to innovate outside of what had been done in the past. I learnt of the lengths he would go to in order to master his artistry. I learnt that he was an independent thinker, which saw him have an adversarial relationship with the values of the Catholic Church. I learnt that, while he wasn't a religious

person, he was a spiritual person and saw his work as an opportunity to communicate his truths – his art was an extension of himself. And most of all I learnt – as we'll explore in Chapter 5 – that he risked his life to communicate these views on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel through hidden symbolism.

Having studied many iconic characters across business, politics, arts and science, I realised while gazing up at that famous ceiling that the principles that influenced Michelangelo's life were surprisingly similar to those found in the lives of Albert Einstein, a twentieth-century physicist, Nelson Mandela, a South African revolutionary, Oprah Winfrey, a modern-day entrepreneur and philanthropist, and, of course, Richard Branson. For the first time, I found myself triangulating between different people, from different professions, in different times, and noticing a pattern in the principles that guided their life's work. I remember thinking to myself, 'Why has nobody told these stories in a way that examines these patterns, these remarkable similarities?'

I quickly ran back to my hotel and for the next three days I stayed cooped up in my room. I was no longer exploring Rome for its beauty but history for its patterns.

Of course, at a granular level, the greats all lived very different lives. Each person's path is as unique as their fingerprint. My only intention in telling their stories is to enable you to write yours. There is no blueprint for how to build one's life, and to copy the greats is to not learn from them. However, when I looked beyond the specific actions they took, or the professions they were in, and elevated my viewpoint to examine instead the paradigms and principles that guided them, I was fascinated to uncover a common archetype.

This discovery was another step in my quest of exploring the stories and the minds of those who have come before us. I've always been fascinated by people who have driven change, the stories of human spirit overcoming insurmountable challenges, the very real and in many ways ordinary individuals who have gone on to achieve extraordinary things.

Unwritten explores the archetype of people who have achieved great things. It is my attempt at bringing together the different pieces that give us a glimpse into the mosaic of human potential.

The Archetype of Greatness

Great spirits develop a strong sense of self. They consciously create themselves according to the person they want to be and the mark they want to leave – often viewing their life as an expression of who they are.

Always curious, great spirits have a need to learn more. Often, they start out by studying history – examining those who have come before them, like Mozart learning to play the works of other pianists before writing his own symphonies. Later in life, the knowledge gained from studying others becomes the foundation upon which great spirits will innovate. While often admirers of history, great spirits develop a healthy disregard for what has been achieved in the past, understanding that today's capabilities are far greater than what was achievable yesterday. They study history not to be confined by what is tried and proven but so that they may push these boundaries through innovation.

Through hard-won experience, the greats come to realise that to be guided by one's own intuition is the most enlightened way to navigate through life. A strong sense of self and a healthy disregard for the status quo means they develop the resolve to challenge popular opinion. They are independent thinkers. History holds no example of people who have changed the world by following conventional wisdom.

Great spirits are driven by something larger than themselves, a higher purpose. Understanding the contribution they want to make forces them to get clear about their life's mission and the legacy they want to leave. While some onlookers label their vision for the future as unreasonable, it is this very belief in a better future that enables them to touch the hearts and minds of many. Great spirits reach people on levels that others do not.

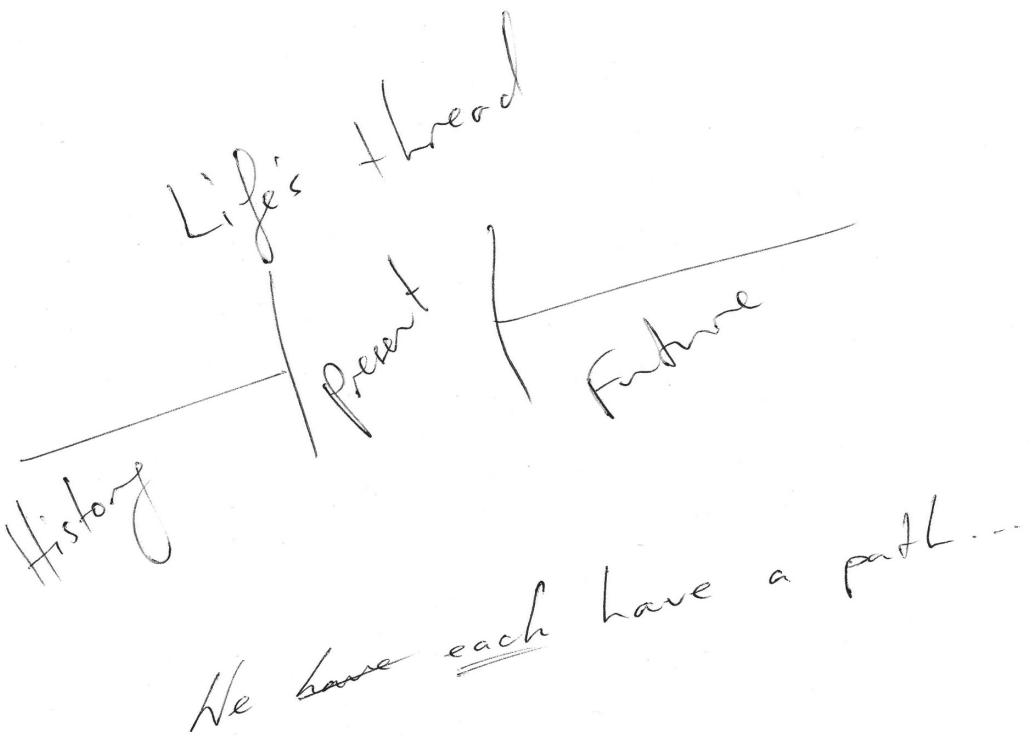
Also, they are not afraid of challenge. Often having experienced some sort of hardship throughout their life, they have a high level of belief in their ability to overcome obstacles.

Those who speak of progress are inevitably met with resistance from a world that finds comfort in familiarity. It is the congruence that great spirits have between their sense of self and their life's work that enables them to keep moving forward against the tide of protest.

While great spirits are intimately connected with their vision for the future, life teaches them to find joy in the journey. It is the work, not the rewards, they fall in love with. For those who are tuned in, life becomes their greatest teacher as they learn that their experiences hold the greatest potential for wisdom.

As great spirits progress through life, slowly building the future they envisaged, those same onlookers who once criticised them now label them 'genius', with little understanding of the effort or dedication that went into their journey. Indeed, it was Michelangelo who said, 'If you knew how much work went into it, you would not call it genius.'

It is through peering into these timeless principles of greatness, and in realising that to be human is to seek the fullest expression of self, that we become better equipped to navigate the road that leads to our own unique legacy.



Chapter 2

KNOW THYSELF

'It's not the path itself that matters the most; it's that it has been consciously created and is therefore a reflection of who you are.'

To know thyself is the foundation of greatness. Whether you want to run a business, be a teacher, grow a vegetable garden, meditate in the mountains, raise a family or work in a bakery (or all of the above), being your best self is not about scale or how 'big' your dreams are; it's about alignment. Fulfilment is not found in reaching lofty heights but in living in accordance with your deepest truth – and evolving as it does. Each of us has a story that flows through our history and into our future; this is our life's thread.

My tap on the shoulder came when I was only five years old. My parents started a not-for-profit organisation called Breaking the Cycle, which took long-term unemployed youth off the street and put them through a training program that ultimately resulted in meaningful employment. Because only

a finite number of kids could be seen each year, Breaking the Cycle chose the most at risk: young adults who were in and out of jail, addicted to drugs or from abusive homes. Despite selecting the most challenged people, Breaking the Cycle would place 97 per cent of its kids into employment, with 85 per cent still meaningfully employed after 12 months. It was the most successful job-placement agency for long-term unemployed youth in Australia.

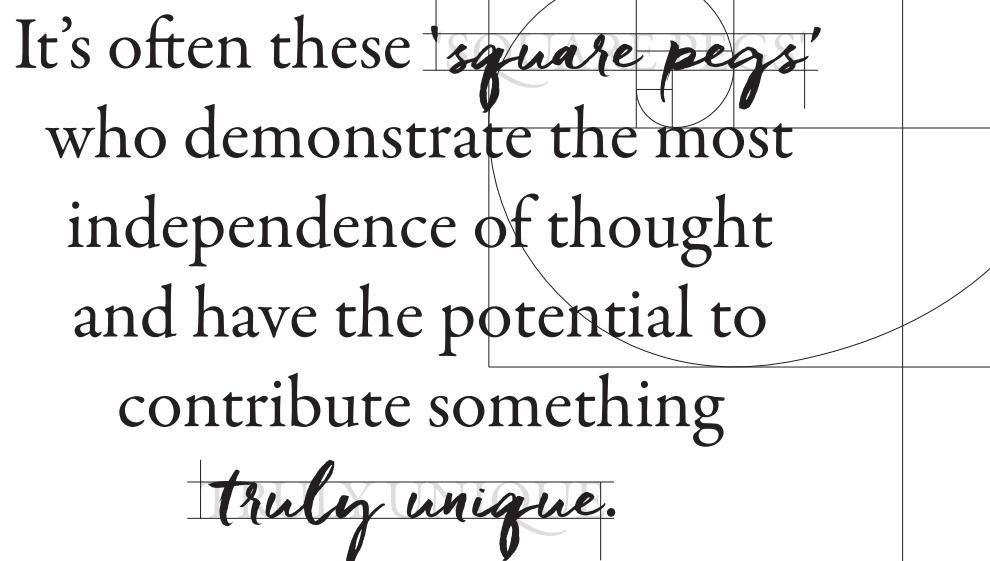
Breaking the Cycle was a big part of my family's life. I can remember spending numerous weekends completely immersed in Breaking the Cycle fundraisers and fun runs. Whenever I could, I'd take a day off school and go into the office to spend time with the teenagers and learn from the trainers. Many of the kids starting the course looked as though they were ready to die. Over a period of three months, I was witness, first-hand, to their transformation – Breaking the Cycle helped to change their entire outlook on life. I remember this as a particularly happy and profound time in my childhood. I became enchanted by a world that enabled people to transform – a world where it was possible for kids with little hope to grow into young adults with their own sense of purpose and direction. Even at this young age, I remember thinking this was the most important job in the world: to help people lead meaningful lives.

In 1995, the federal government shut down the Commonwealth Employment Services department, re-engineering how not-for-profits would access capital. As a result of these changes, Breaking the Cycle was no longer able to access the funding upon which it depended. I felt a strong sense of social and political injustice that an organisation that had helped thousands of kids break the cycle of drugs, violence, crime and jail was now no longer able to carry out its valuable work, simply because it didn't have the money.

I learnt two major things from Breaking the Cycle. The first was about education and the second was about money. I'll get to the money part later, but first it showed me that the education system fails a lot of us, and a conventional career path doesn't work for everyone. Far too many people fall by the wayside because they don't fit the traditional mould that society expects. With access to the right guidance and information, though, it's often these 'square pegs' who demonstrate the most independence of thought and have the potential to contribute something truly unique. Although I didn't have the awareness to fully understand it yet, Breaking the Cycle introduced me to a field that would become my life's work: education.

Nelson Mandela said, 'Education is the most powerful weapon with which we can change the world.' I believe this to be true. Education teaches children how to read and write, and it gives people an opportunity to lift themselves out of poverty. It teaches accountants how to prepare financial statements and doctors how to perform life-saving surgeries. However, we are now in an era of unprecedented change and uncertainty. Education needs to do more than teach us how to remember; it needs to teach us how to think.

Students starting school in 2017 will, if they go on to tertiary studies, be entering the workforce in 2035. Given today's ever-increasing rate of change, this presents an enormous challenge for us as a society. How do we ensure we are able to empower them for a future we ourselves know little about? A few years ago, IBM spoke to over 1100 global business leaders for their biennial IBM CEO Study and identified the two main competencies that employers need in their people: adaptability to change and creativity in generating new ideas. I believe we are not meeting



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Know Thyself

this challenge sufficiently. I believe our twentieth-century industrial style of delivering education is still firmly based on long-held curriculums and teaching methods that are preparing students for a world that no longer exists. In order to truly address this gap, we need to transform our education system into one that places as much emphasis on emotional intelligence, creativity and innovation as it does on numeracy and literacy. We need to move away from a system that focuses on group standards to one that focuses on the individual, a system that targets a person's strengths and values to help guide what they learn.

From an early age, I have been dissatisfied with the conventional path that traditional education sets us up for. I rally against the production-line mentality of 'Go to school, remember this fact and that, do what you're told, qualify for university, graduate, get a job (any job), slowly work your way up, get married, have a family, hit a global financial crisis, work harder, retire if you can and don't ask too many questions along the way'. That feels like a soulless approach to life, a process that doesn't honour the very reason we are here: to experience ourselves through a life fully lived. This inherent dissatisfaction drove me to start doing my own research at the age of 14; it prompted me to find a new path – one that worked for me.

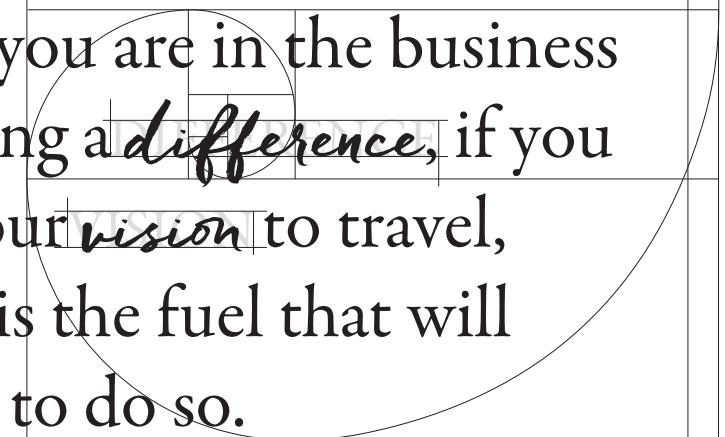
I became obsessed with the study of making the world a better place. I researched politics, education and history to better understand who really influenced things in our society. I didn't want to sit back and play the game that was asked of me; I wanted to know who set up the rules of the game and how I might go about influencing real change.

Had you met me at 14 years of age, I would have told you that I wanted to become a politician, because I thought they were the people who decided whether something

happened or not. I thought if I became one of them, I could influence education. The further my studies took me, the more data I found to suggest that our education system was in desperate need of innovation. The more I researched individuals and ideas that had changed the course of history, the more I observed that those who had truly influenced the world were not politicians; they were inventors and innovators, they were entrepreneurs.

In the late 1800s, Nikola Tesla enabled the production and distribution of electricity, which today still provides the fundamentals for our everyday lives and so much more. Alan Turing played a pivotal role in developing a machine during the Second World War that would intercept and decode Nazi messages, enabling the Allies to win pivotal battles, turning the tide of the war. Turing's inventions would go on to be called 'Turing Machines' – today we call them computers. Henry Ford had a significant impact on society when he introduced efficiencies around the manufacturing of the automobile. I learnt of the millions of people Oprah Winfrey had touched through the medium of television, and how one woman, J. K. Rowling, was credited with doing more for childhood literacy than any other person in history through her book series, Harry Potter.

Again and again, I found that entrepreneurs were the agents of major innovation. And also, of course, that many of these people had spent and made a lot of money along the way – which brings me to the second lesson that Breaking the Cycle taught me. Money, or the lack of it, starkly limits what you can achieve. My father told me something that really struck a chord after Breaking the Cycle ended. He said, 'You can't run off love, trust and pixie dust.' Even if you are in the business of making a difference, if you want your vision to travel, money is the fuel that will allow it to do so.



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I understood that in order to contribute to the field of education, I would need to become somebody who could take ideas and make them real. And for that reason alone, I started my first business. Sir Richard Branson once said of his first business, which was a magazine he launched while in high school, ‘I never wanted to be an entrepreneur; I just knew I needed to be one to keep my magazine going.’ In my instance, I never wanted to be an entrepreneur; I just knew I needed to become one in order to influence the education system.

It occurred to me that, while some may view business as a machine for greed, for every Alan Bond type character there was a Bill and Melinda Gates, who had established the largest private foundation in the world. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation does extensive work in the areas of disease, poverty and human rights by applying entrepreneurial principles to philanthropy. For every Christopher Skase fugitive, there was a Warren Buffet, who had made the world’s largest charitable donation in history. It seemed like the world was moving on from the ‘greed is good’ mode of doing business, and I started to view business as a vehicle for bringing new ideas into the world.

My message is certainly *not* ‘everyone should start a business’ – far from it. Such a suggestion would be as one-dimensional as the current ‘one size fits all’ approach to education. My message is to develop a strong sense of who you are and live a life that gracefully aligns with that. If that life resembles a traditional path, and you have evaluated it and chosen it, as opposed to accepted it on autopilot, it must be viewed as a wise decision. It was Socrates who said, ‘The unexamined life is not worth living.’ It’s not the path itself that matters the most; it’s that it has been consciously created and is therefore a reflection of who you are.

My protest is against a system that commands conformity. My fight is against a world that encourages mediocrity. I believe humanity needs to evolve to a new paradigm that celebrates individuality and promotes the pursuit of one’s unique purpose. Each person’s path is as unique as their fingerprint.

In my own journey, ironically, my passion for learning meant that I wasn’t satisfied at university. It became clear after only a short while into my commerce and law degree that I would learn more by pursuing my own self-directed apprenticeship out in the real world. So, just months in, I discontinued my university studies in order to advance my education.

My ‘apprenticeship period’, running my own business with little knowledge of what I was doing, spanned the same amount of time that my degree would have, and I spent the first four years of my business career making zero visible progress. I was going backward, borrowing money I couldn’t afford and working completely around the clock. It was an incredibly discouraging introduction to business, yet, while there was zero *visible* progress, there was progress in the one thing that underpins anyone’s success in life – one’s self.

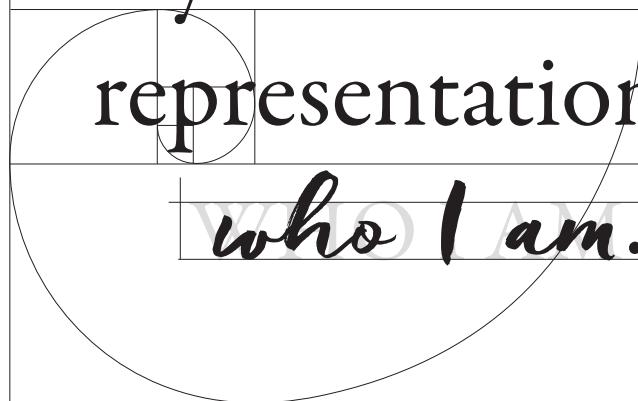
It was the failures of my first few years in business that gave me the lessons to later co-found a company called MBE Education. Through utilising experienced advisors, MBE would enable small and medium-sized enterprises to raise money from investors, acquire and exit businesses. We quickly became one of Australia’s fastest growing companies, giving me the financial foundation and the credibility to return to my childhood dream of bringing innovation to education.

In 2010, I founded The Entourage, an education institution for innovators and entrepreneurs. I set out to build

a style of education that not only equips people with the practical skills required to be successful in tomorrow's world but also focuses on the individual's personal growth. We are a school for the square pegs – a place where those who don't fit in . . . fit in.

Today, we are Australia's largest educator of innovators and entrepreneurs, with a community of over 300,000 people, thousands of highly engaged students, and alumni who pepper the lists of Australia's fastest growing companies and most successful entrepreneurs – an example that education works when it focuses on enabling the individual in a holistic sense. The Entourage employs over 100 of the most passionate minds in education, all with the aim to shift humanity's paradigm away from accepting the conventional life path and towards creating a life that truly aligns with who each individual is. The vision that guides us is *to push civilisation forward by enabling more people to live on purpose*. We believe that if we can introduce a new style of education that truly enables innovation and entrepreneurship, then we can make a difference in some small or large way.

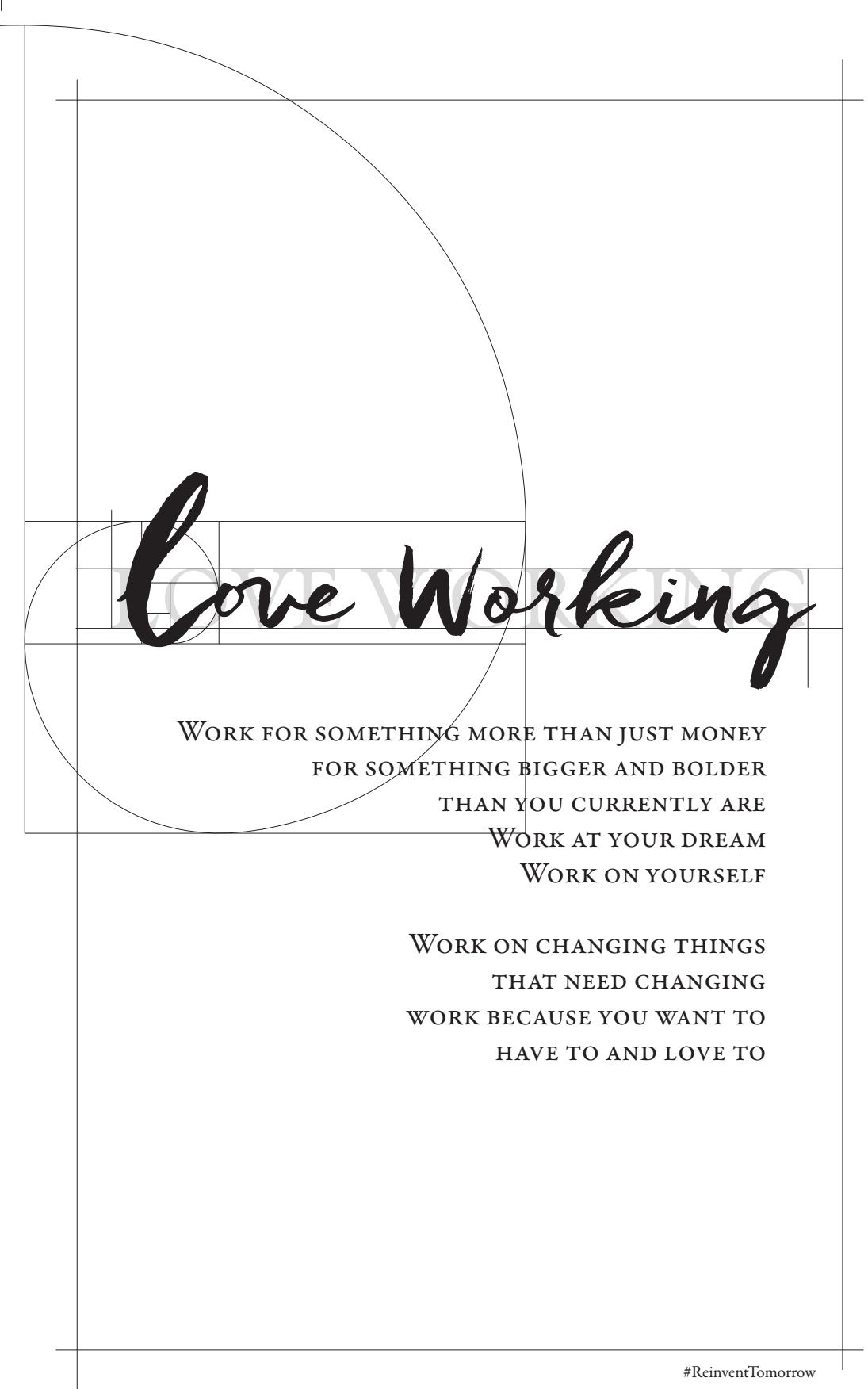
A philosophy that permeates both our education and my personal journey is that human beings do their life's best work when they are living a life that aligns with their unique purpose. If there is one thing that has brought me fulfilment and enabled my success, it is that my outer world perfectly reflects my inner world. My life's work is a representation of who I am.



My life's work is a
representation of
who I am.

UNWRITTEN

I stand here today not as an entrepreneur but as somebody who feels compelled to contribute something to the world. It was Archimedes who said, ‘Give me a place to stand and with a lever I will move the whole world.’ Well, if we each stand in our own sense of self, and our life’s work becomes our lever, perhaps we can all play a part in moving the world in our unique way.



History is not a barrier
to be overcome but
the frontier from
the beginning

Monet 1874 + Einstein 1905
real innovation happens outside
the institutions of creators
APRIL 1, 1976

Chapter 3

THE FUTURE IS UNWRITTEN

'Imagination is more important than knowledge.'

Albert Einstein

It is important that we do not use the achievements of yesterday to define what we believe is possible today. History, in this instance, has served only to limit our thinking and to accept 'what is', rather than imagine 'what could be'. For those who wish to truly pioneer and invent new things, history can instead provide great insight into how to put innovation into action. The interesting paradox here is that those who invent new things are often great admirers of history, while also having a healthy disrespect for what has already been achieved. They use the past not as a boundary but as the very frontier upon which to innovate.

The innovator's dilemma is that when you are truly innovating, by definition there will be little evidence to support

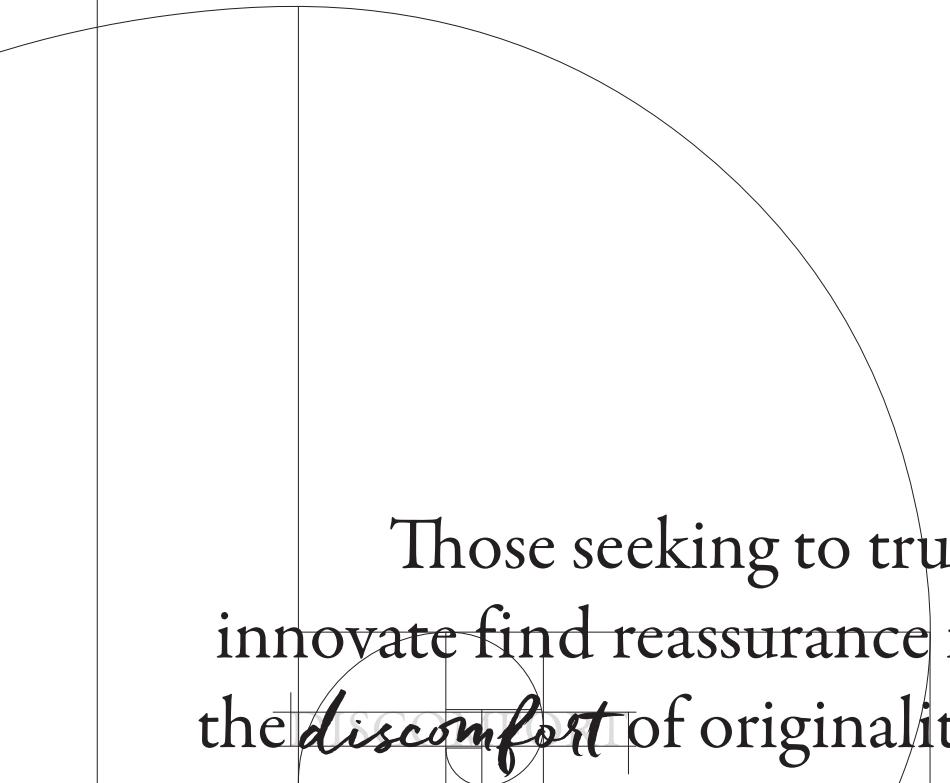
your thinking. If you could point to tried and tested models to validate your conclusions, what you are envisioning is not innovative; it is simply an improvement of ‘what already is’. Thinking in terms of improving ‘what already is’ is what psychology calls ‘analogical reasoning’. More simply put, reasoning by analogy is to think in terms of ‘*this* is likely to work because it is similar to *that*’ or ‘what we are planning to do in the future is likely to work because it is similar to what has been done in the past’. Reasoning by analogy is the enemy of innovation. It encourages us to take the ‘safe’ option, because what we’re proposing has worked before, rather than wrestle with the uncertainty of doing something new.

To create something truly original therefore requires a deep sense of courage and vision. In his book *Creativity, Inc.* (written with Amy Wallace), Ed Catmull quotes his friend and colleague Andrew Stanton, a movie producer with Pixar Studios, as saying:

It's gotten to the point that we get worried if a film is not a problem child right away. It makes us nervous. We've come to recognise the signs of originality. We have begun to welcome the feeling of, 'Oh, we've never had this exact problem before – and it's incredibly recalcitrant and won't do what we want it to do.' That's familiar territory for us – in a good way.

In this sense, those seeking to truly innovate find reassurance in the *discomfort* of originality.

This is not to suggest that innovation requires us to make reckless and wild decisions about what direction to take in the future. Rather, great innovation is often the result of good judgement and a calm wisdom that has been steadily acquired over many years. This judgement comes from hard-won experience, and that experience is



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the outcome of learning from the many ‘bad judgements’ made on our journey to create something new. Mastering innovation is the pursuit of a lifetime – so best to start now.

Those who strive to create new things are quickly confronted by the stark reality that we live in a world that finds comfort in doing what is tried and tested. When your plans are not supported by data and the reassurance that evidence provides, you can find yourself being ridiculed, criticised or even completely ignored, by those who simply do not believe what you are setting out to do is plausible. They all too easily close the door on your way of thinking because it’s new, it’s unfamiliar and it challenges the rules, in which they are invested. The battle against conventional wisdom therefore becomes the innovator’s greatest encounter.

In initiating the art movement of Impressionism in the nineteenth century, Claude Monet and the artists he worked with were scorned by the art world and had many of their paintings rejected by the most prestigious gallery of the time, the Salon de Paris. The very name ‘Impressionism’ comes from the ridicule that Monet and his counterparts attracted from the traditional guard of the time, who criticised them for not properly depicting a picture with any realism but, rather, simply giving an ‘impression’ of a particular scene.

After being rejected by the jury of the Salon’s annual art show for many years, Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Paul Cézanne and other like-minded artists came together to create their own exhibition, which opened in the same week and in the same city as the Salon’s 1874 show. These misfits, who had been rejected and dismissed by their peers, had refused to have the door closed on their artistic contribution and instead created a new door to walk through, unconstrained by the gatekeepers of the

traditional art world. Today, the art hanging on the walls of that very first exhibition hosted by the Impressionists would be worth more than \$500 million.

In 1900, a 21-year-old Albert Einstein graduated from the Swiss Federal Polytechnic Institute in Zurich, Switzerland. Einstein had travelled to Switzerland to enrol in college shortly after renouncing his German citizenship at the age of 17. He had left Germany because his pacifism was profoundly in conflict with his homeland’s imperialistic and increasingly militant views. This began his ‘on again, off again’ relationship with Germany, a situation that continued for the rest of his life.

Throughout college, although talented in physics and mathematics, a highly disengaged Einstein would often not attend class. In those lessons where he did show up, he would tune out and be seen to be daydreaming. He felt that his professors were teaching old science and that simply retaining facts did little to enhance a student’s intelligence. Instead, Einstein would sit and ponder questions of physics that he felt were more pressing. These included ‘How does light travel through space?’ and ‘What would happen if a person travelled at the speed of light?’. Even at a young age, Einstein was fiercely independent intellectually and guided by his own curiosity. He would later remark, ‘We came out of college knowing everything about the history of science, but nothing of the future.’

Einstein’s professors would often mistake his boredom for laziness. As a result, when he graduated from college, he was unable to get any letters of recommendation from his teachers, who believed he would never amount to anything. In the years that followed, he applied for countless teaching jobs and academic roles in high schools and colleges across Switzerland. Due to the lack of references, he

was turned away from every major job he applied for, forcing him to take part-time jobs as a means of simply earning a living. In essence, for much of Einstein's early life, he was ridiculed, outcast and turned away by the academic world because his imagination and thought processes were *different*. His ideas were so unfamiliar to the establishment that they would discount his contributions and label him unintelligent.

In 1901, Einstein took a romantic break in Italy with his girlfriend and former classmate Mileva Marić. During this trip, Marić fell pregnant – something that would cause both Einstein and Marić great shame in the coming months and years, because to give birth to an illegitimate child was considered unacceptable by both of their families. Their little girl, Lieserl, was born nine months later. After being taken care of by Einstein's mother, Lieserl is thought to have died of scarlet fever at the age of just 21 months.

At this point in his life, Einstein's past pointed to little hope of a brighter future. He was a young man who was no longer a citizen of his home country, a scholar who had been ridiculed and belittled by his professors throughout high school and university, a father to an illegitimate daughter who lived a life too short, a son who had been ostracised and branded a failure by his family, and an unemployed physicist who was completely rejected by the professional world of academia for his perceived lack of intellectual ability.

Einstein would write in a letter to his sister, 'After all, I am nothing but a burden to my family . . . It would be better if I were not alive at all.' His father died believing Albert was indeed a failure. In another letter, to one of his close friends, Albert vowed that he was simply going to lose himself in his physics and work incredibly hard to

His ideas were so ~~unfamiliar~~
to the establishment that
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make a meaningful contribution to the world of science, to prove to those around him, and himself, that his life was in fact worth living.

In 1902, a depressed Einstein moved to Bern, the capital of Switzerland. With the help of a friend's father, he was finally able to secure a job as a lowly patent clerk at the patent office, in the Federal Office for Intellectual Property. Here, he would work six days a week, evaluating patent applications in a small, messy government office reminiscent of the oppressive classrooms he had disliked so much throughout high school and university. But, over the next three years, it was also here that Einstein would conceive many of his world-changing ideas, revisiting his daydreams of what it would be like to ride alongside a beam of light, and how light travelled through space. It was from these innocent musings that some of the most revolutionary scientific discoveries of all time would be made.

In 1905, while still working six days a week as an unknown patent clerk in Bern, Einstein would publish four papers that ultimately changed the way humanity thought about space, time and the universe. The subjects of those four papers were the Photoelectric Effect, Brownian Motion, the Special Theory of Relativity and his famous equation $E = mc^2$.

In writing these papers, Einstein confronted two centuries of scientific enquiry head-on – including the work of his greatest idol, Sir Isaac Newton – and challenged the very foundations of contemporary physics. Had any scientist made just one of these discoveries in their entire career, they would be considered legendary. Einstein made four, in what would become known as his *Annus Mirabilis*, his Miracle Year. At the time, he was just 26 years of age and unable to

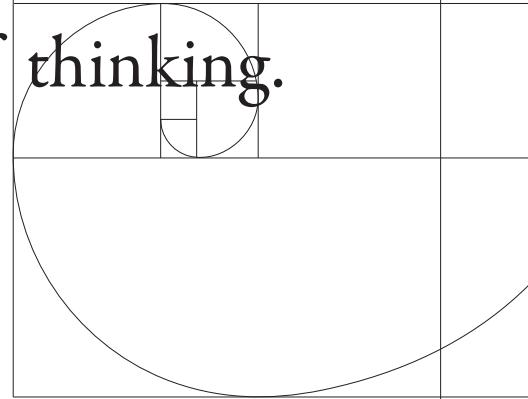
get a job in academia. He possessed both courage and tenacity to think independently of the existing consensus.

His ability to think so independently is what is called in physics 'first principle reasoning'. First principle reasoning is about sifting through the theory and going back to the foundation of what we are *certain* is true, and then reasoning up from there. This method of thinking is effective in any field, particularly science and business, as it prevents us from being influenced by popular opinion. Rather, it compels us to come back to what we know to be true and to build from there. Going back to first principles gives us a more solid foundation upon which to innovate and test new theories.

Einstein's brilliance was grounded in his independence of thought – his willingness to think beyond conventional wisdom and to challenge accepted knowledge. As is so often evident in the lives of those who contribute great things, his commitment and determination not to be constrained by the status quo propelled him to develop disruptive ideas that were foreign to the best physicists of the day, who were more entrenched in tradition. In this sense, when Einstein said, 'Imagination is more important than knowledge,' he was illustrating a key ingredient of innovation.

True innovation in a particular field of endeavour often comes from people outside the traditional guard, as evidenced by the Impressionists and Einstein. It was the misfit who would not conform to convention who ultimately introduced a new way of thinking. This can also be seen in the world of business – mature enterprises by their very nature are often large, comfortable, risk-averse and resistant to change. This creates an environment where new ideas do not live long enough to see the light of day. The pioneer or the entrepreneurial upstart, however, has

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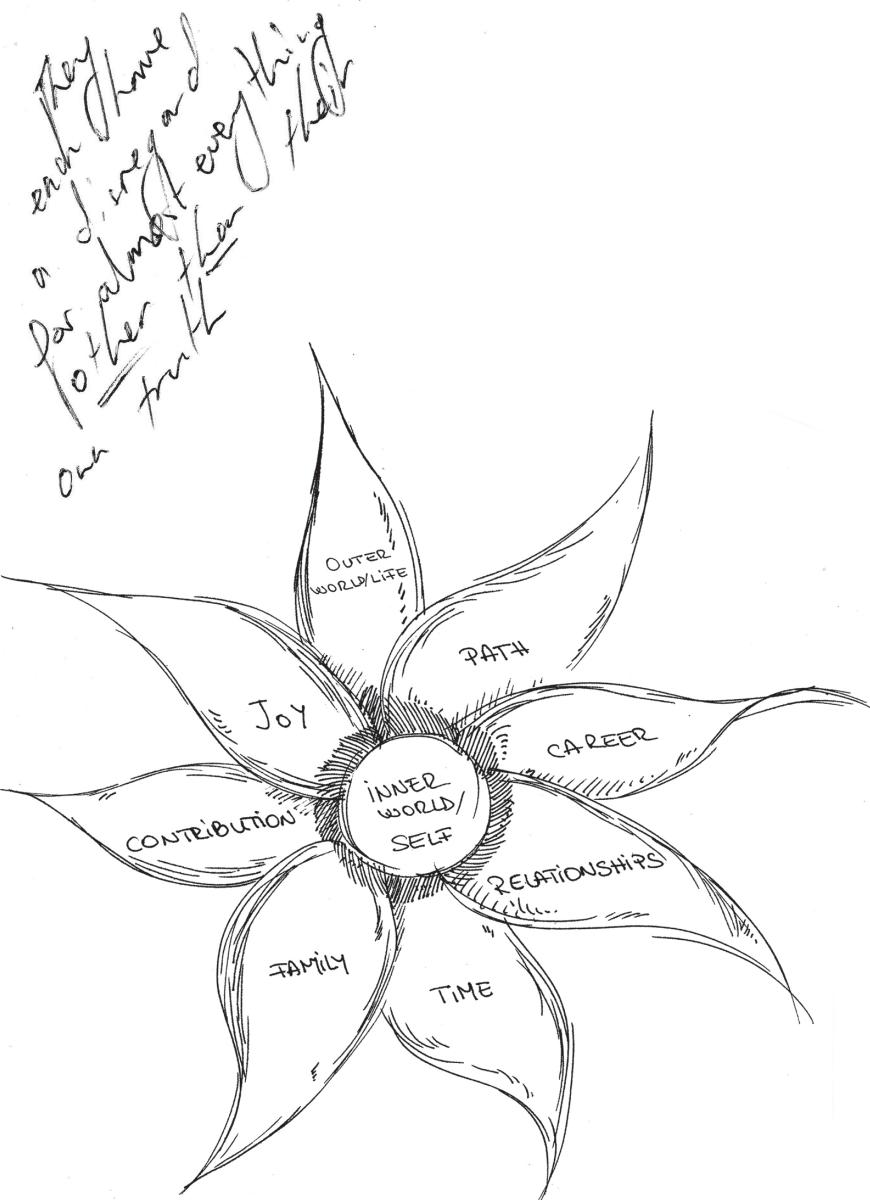


innovation built into their very DNA, creating the perfect conditions for disruptive ideas to grow. This is why disruption often occurs at a grassroots level, outside of the very institutions it threatens.

This principle is called ‘creative destruction’ – where the introduction of the new causes the demise of the old. The new idea, the new business, the new technology, the new product disrupts the existing players in a way that can harm or destroy them. Any empire, regardless of how large it may be, can topple if it ignores change and stands in the way of progress.

Inventing a better tomorrow begins with acknowledging, like so many pioneers before us, that the future does not need to resemble the past. History holds many examples of individuals who said ‘The future is going to look different to how we thought’, and often they were right. We need to resist the temptation to be confined by the past, but rather use it as a foundation upon which to stand, in order to get a glimpse into the future.

Spirit



fulfillment is when
inner world = outer world
follow your own
Joy Curiosity
intuition

Chapter 4

THE VOICE THAT DOESN'T USE WORDS

'All of my best decisions in life have come because I was attuned to what really *felt like* the next right move for me.'

Oprah Winfrey

Some call it intuition, some call it gut, some call it heart, some call it soul and others call it God. I call it your *higher self*. It's that piece of us that science can't explain, but to be human is to *feel* it. It's that hunch, that inner sense that feels so clear. It's the feeling of joy that makes time disappear or the curiosity that urges you to take a step.

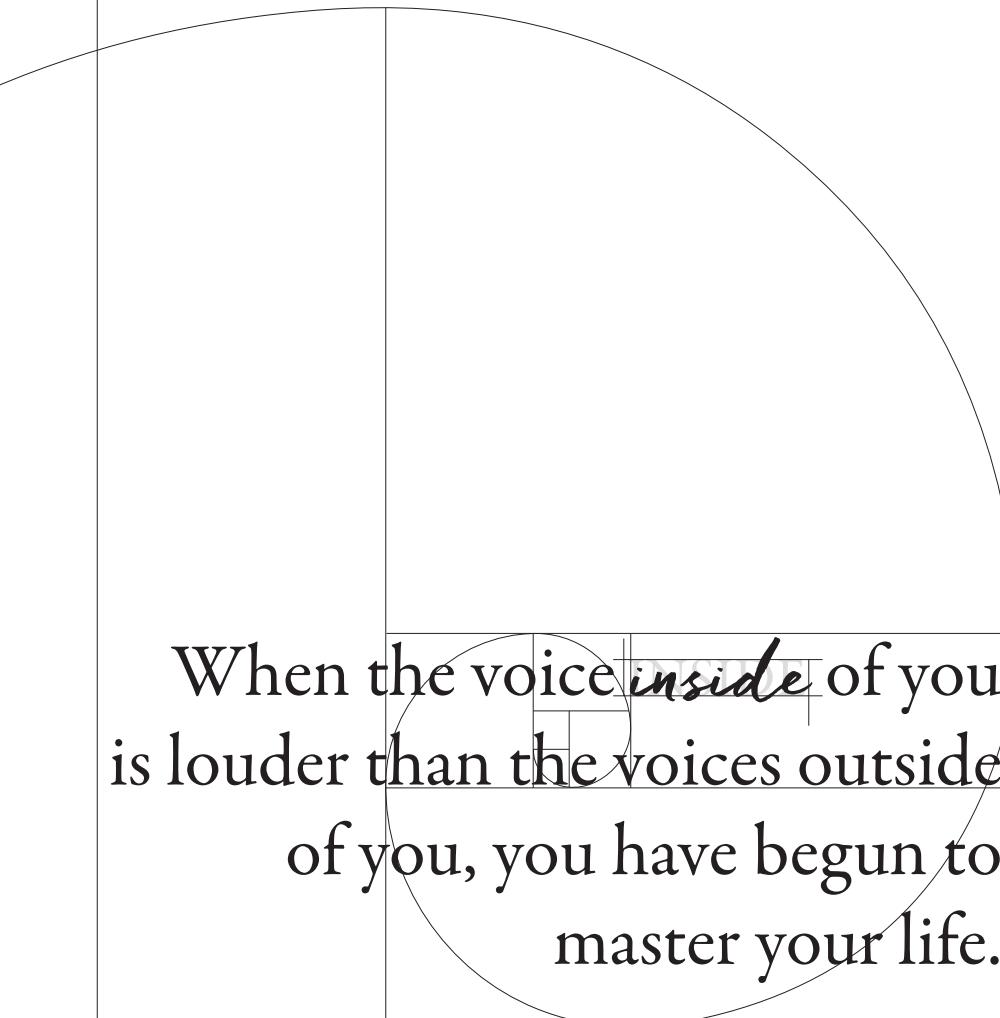
I believe that inexplicable feeling that lights you up right where you are or that pulls you in a particular direction is your *higher self* speaking to you. I believe the things that resonate with you do not resonate with you by accident but rather

because they have struck a chord deep inside. Listening to these messages gives us a channel to hear our soul's intention.

One of the key differences I've observed between those who live a life that reflects their true potential and those who don't is that the latter spend a lot of time seeking validation and asking permission from others. Often, we are taught that when we are making important decisions in life, somebody else will have the answer we seek – someone smarter, someone more experienced, someone more qualified. While it can be wise to seek the counsel of a trusted guide, it is important that your decisions ultimately rest in the hands of the only person qualified to make them: you. When the voice inside of you is louder than the voices outside of you, you have begun to master your life.

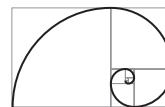
The challenging part about letting your life be guided by your own self is that we live in a culture that places too much emphasis on intellectual rationale and too little on intuition. Often, when our intuition is suggesting we explore a certain path, it goes against the conventional wisdom or the rationale of the tried and proven way of thinking. While it is important to be intelligent in our decision-making, it is equally, if not more, important to feel what our heart is saying and to trust our intuition. In his Stanford Address in 2005, Steve Jobs said, 'You can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backward. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something – your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life.' Your intuition is your compass.

The poet, scholar and mystic Rumi said, 'There is a voice that doesn't use words. Listen.' Intuition is the language of the soul. It is your inner GPS system that will help you



When the voice *inside* of you
is louder than the voices outside
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walk and navigate *your* path in life, if you let it. Those who strive to live a life that is aligned to their true self must first pause long enough to hear what their true self is telling them.



Oprah Winfrey was born to a teenage single mother in rural Mississippi in 1954, and grew up in significant hardship. By the age of nine, she had been sexually abused, and at 14 she had a child who died in infancy. A tree that grows in strong winds grows strong roots, and this was certainly true for Oprah, who developed a firm sense of self at a young age.

In 1971, Oprah won her region's Miss Fire Prevention Contest and went to the local radio station to pick up her prize. Upon arriving, she was asked by one of the assistants at the radio station whether she'd like to hear her voice on tape, to which Oprah replied, 'Sure!' When the staff at the radio station heard her recorded voice, they offered her a job, and she began working in radio at the age of 17. Three years later, while in her sophomore class at Tennessee State University, Oprah received a call from CBS that ultimately led to her taking an anchor role on the local news. 'I could feel inside myself that reporting was not the right thing for me even though I was happy to have the job.'

Oprah reflected on her life in an on-stage interview at the Stanford Graduate School of Business in 2014. 'I started listening to what felt like the truth for me. I started to feel that reporting wasn't for me, but I had my father, I

had my friends, everybody was saying, "Oh my god, you're an anchor woman, you're on TV, you can't give up that job." So I was torn between what the world was saying to me and what I felt to be the truth for myself.'

News reporting was not who Oprah was. She would care deeply about the people in the stories she covered. If Oprah reported on a local fire, she would return after she finished work with blankets for those who had been affected. She found herself wanting to bring more heart into what she was doing. She would often test the boundaries, falling outside what CBS deemed to be professional news reporting. The structured nature of reporting didn't allow for her to be her whole self. Oprah would ultimately be fired from her anchor job for her natural, ad-lib style. However, the network had her on a contract for \$25,000 and they didn't want to have to pay it out to someone who wasn't going to be around, so they demoted her and put her on a talk show.

'The moment I sat on that talk show interviewing the Carvel Ice Cream man and his multiple flavours,' Oprah said laughingly at Stanford, before her tone dropped to one of deep certainty, 'I knew that I had found home for myself. The truth is that, from the very beginning, I have listened to my instinct. All of my best decisions in life have come because I was attuned to what really *felt like* the next right move for me. When I started working in talk, I knew that it was the right thing to do.'

The heartfelt approach that got Oprah fired from being a news reporter was the very thing that resonated with her audience on the talk show. So much so that she would go on to have her own wildly successful show. Between 1986 and 2011, *The Oprah Winfrey Show* aired every weekday in America and was syndicated all over the world – and in those 25 years, Oprah never missed a single day.

The Voice That Doesn't Use Words

'I live from the *inside out*.
And so everything that I have,
I have because I let it be fuelled
by who I am.'

- Oprah -

Not one. She was now working and living not according to the advice of others but in harmony with her true self. Her work was completely aligned with who she was as a person.

Oprah went on, 'Everybody has that and you cannot fulfil it unless you have a level of self-awareness, to be connected to the inner voice or the instinct, that allows you to make the best decisions for yourself. Every decision that has profited me has come from me listening to that inner voice first, and every time I've gotten into a situation where I was in trouble, it was because I didn't listen to it. I overrode that voice, that instinct with my own head, my own thinking. I tried to rationalize and tell myself, "Oh, but you're going to make a lot of money."

Being driven by something far more meaningful than money enabled Oprah to foster a genuine authenticity that contributed to making her one of the most successful entrepreneurs in history. She was ranked by Forbes as the wealthiest African-American woman of the twentieth century, is acknowledged as one of the greatest philanthropists and is often referred to as the most influential woman in the world. 'I live from the inside out. And so everything that I have, I have because I let it be fuelled by who I am and what I realised my contributions to the planet could be. And what my real contribution is . . . It looks like I was a talk show host, it looks like I'm in the movies, it looks like I have a network, but my real contribution and the reason why I'm here is to help connect people to themselves . . . and the higher ideas of consciousness. I'm here to help raise consciousness.'

To allow your life to be guided by your intuition is as simple and as difficult as following your joy and what makes you curious. Listen to these cues. Turn them up. Make them roar. And watch as your life echoes your soul's intention.

Why did he risk his life to
express his truth?

Social Constructionism:
not a reflection of reality
but the creation of reality

399 BC
Socrates put to death
1869-1948
Rebellion against authority
consistent across all time periods
1508-1512
Feb 11, 1990
CONFUCIUS BBC
-479 BC
August 1963 38

Chapter 5

OPRS AND THE TIMELESS INGREDIENT OF GREATNESS

'To confide in one's self, and become something of worth and value is the best and safest course.'

Michelangelo

When Pope Julius II asked Michelangelo to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the first decade of the 1500s, the artist, in his early 30s, was immediately reluctant. Michelangelo had devoted his life to becoming a master sculptor; he was not a painter. However, Pope Julius II insisted, so Michelangelo had no choice but to stop what he was doing and turn his hand to this new grand project.

On the ceiling-high scaffolding that he had constructed himself, Michelangelo spent four years standing upright, painting over his head. To ensure his work would be preserved for as long as possible, he insisted on painting each brush stroke onto wet plaster, which would often drip from the ceiling into his eyes, causing him to become partially blind in one eye.

These four torturous years would result in Michelangelo bringing together the then opposing worlds of religion, science, spirituality, history and art.

In the main part of his masterpiece, Michelangelo depicted nine scenes from the Book of Genesis. The first five show God creating our universe in the order described in the Bible: light and darkness; the sun, moon and earth; land and water; Adam; and then Eve. The next four move on to the stories of the Garden of Eden and Noah, illustrating how mankind has progressed imperfectly after God's initial creation.

For me, the most interesting scene is the one showing God creating the first man, Adam. In it, God and Adam are reaching towards each other, their fingers not quite touching, which symbolises that man, while longing to touch God, may never fully accomplish this feat while he rests in human form.

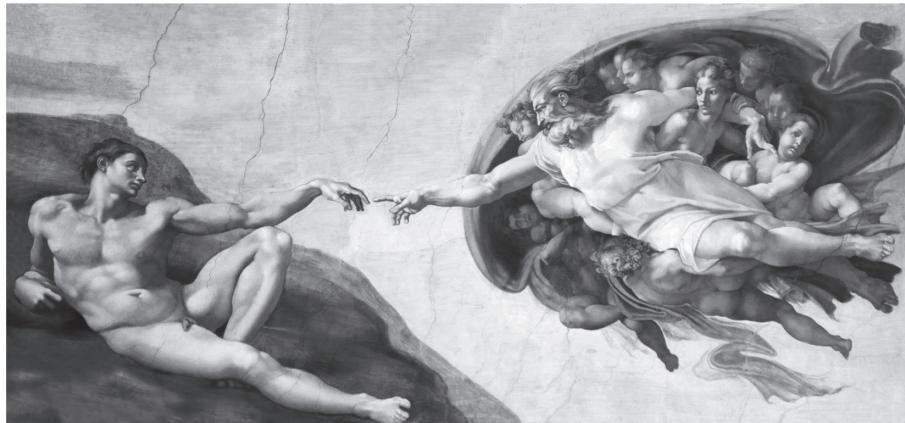
However, when you look closely at this painting, you can decipher a message that Michelangelo left hidden in the plaster. Michelangelo painted God and the angels surrounding him within the image of a human brain. Painting God in the anatomy of man is something that would have been considered sacrilegious at the time, had it been recognised for what it really was.

In Renaissance Rome, human anatomy was not nearly as widely understood as it is today. To dissect a human

body or conduct an autopsy was quite rare and could only take place under strict conditions. As such, very few people would have been able to recognise Michelangelo's image as a representation of the human brain. However, Michelangelo was not just a sculptor; he was also an anatomist. His knowledge of the body was impeccable. Like Leonardo da Vinci before him, he had been given permission to dissect corpses from church hospitals, and he would perform autopsies on them in a bid to be able to better capture human beauty.

There is much speculation as to why Michelangelo risked his life on something as sacrilegious as painting God within the form of the human brain on the ceiling of a building that has significant meaning for the Catholic Church and, indeed, Rome – the Sistine Chapel is the very room in which each new pope is selected. Over time, Michelangelo grew to dislike and would often protest against the opulence and corruption of the church at the time. He didn't see the church as a necessary pathway to God but believed anybody could reach God or their higher self directly. Painting God in the form of a human brain was, I believe, his way of indicating that God is not something or someone separate from ourselves but rather our higher consciousness that we are reaching for, even if we never attain it.

Through this hidden symbolism, Michelangelo was simply doing what all great people do: expressing his truth through his work. For him, his work was an extension of himself. He risked his life to convey this message to future generations, challenging the social and religious rules of the time, because he viewed art as a spiritual practice and, as a true artist, he could not remove his personal convictions from his work. He didn't know how to complete work



MICHELANGELO'S 'THE CREATION OF ADAM'



THE ANATOMY OF THE HUMAN BRAIN IN 'THE CREATION OF ADAM'

that wasn't a representation of his innermost truth – he would rather have died.

Many of the greats such as Michelangelo exhibit a strong independence of thought that enables them – in fact urges them – to follow their own instincts. The origins of their independence arguably lie in their innate realisation that the world is predominantly made up of Other People's Rules (OPRs) – that is, widely accepted constructs that are perceived as reality. You might have come into contact with some of these yourself:

You must try to avoid making mistakes at all costs. To try at something and to fail is a bad thing. Your success in life will be determined by your formal qualifications. Your past predicts your future. Life is safest when you don't take risks. It is wise to follow the beaten path. If enough people think it, it must be true. Good things come to those who wait. It takes money to make money. You need permission. Don't ask the obvious questions; people will think you're unintelligent. People who achieve great things do so because they are naturally gifted.

Psychology calls the influence of OPRs 'social constructionism' – where beliefs are jointly developed and regarded as absolute truths, when at best they are simply commonly held assumptions. In her paper 'The Social Construction of Leadership', Gail T. Fairhurst states that people 'make their social and cultural worlds at the same time these worlds make them'. In other words, the constructs that societies adopt are often not a *reflection* of reality but rather *create* our reality, and therefore form the limits in which we live. While OPRs may make up the architecture of other people's lives, they do not need to influence yours. Michelangelo wisely said, 'To confide in one's self, and

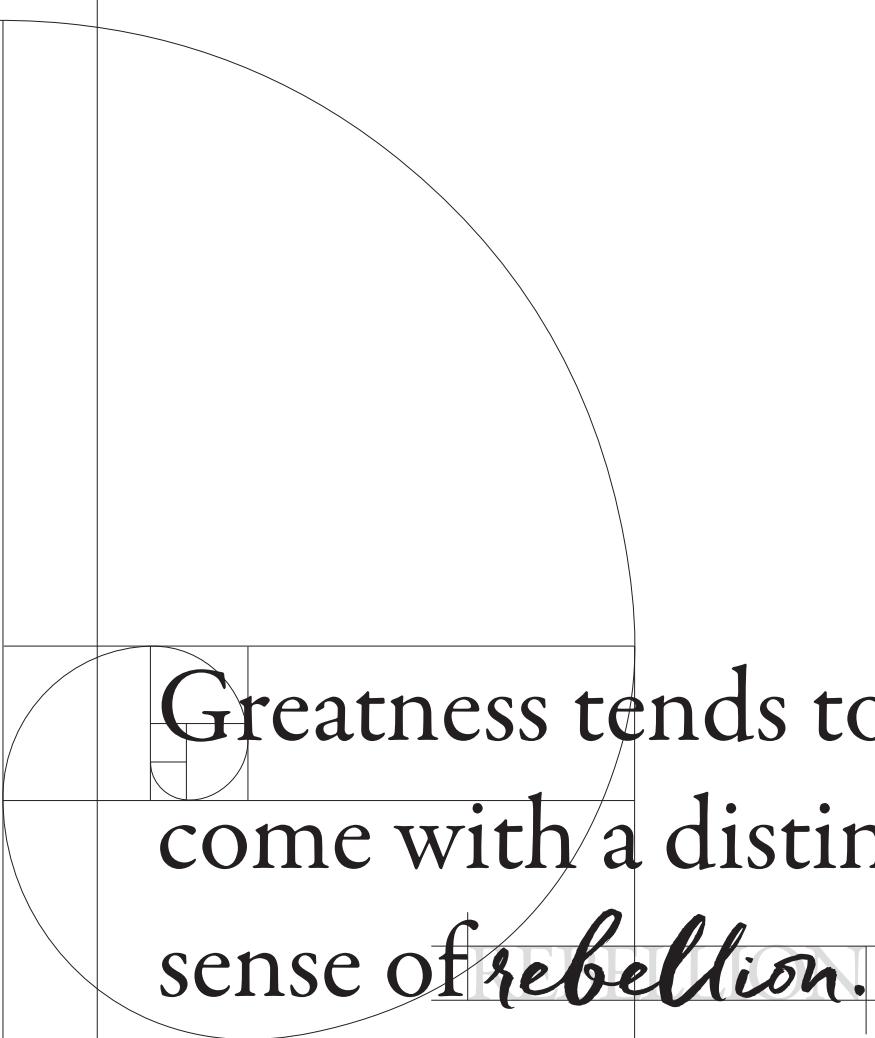
become something of worth and value is the best and safest course.'

Doing something truly unique in life and business requires you to challenge widely accepted wisdom. In his book *Wisdom*, Stephen Hall points out that, 'in a profound sense, the figures now celebrated for their wisdom often had an adversarial relationship with the prevailing values of the society in which they lived'.

Greatness tends to come with a distinct sense of rebellion. The Michelangelos of this world told society what it was not yet ready to hear, and this was both their strength and the source of the friction they experienced throughout their lives. Identifying OPRs in our own life starts with us asking ourselves *where do commonly held paradigms not equal my truth?*

It's not about 'right or wrong' or 'whose truth is best' – quite the opposite. It's about finding our own truth and allowing others to do the same. Understanding that each person has their own view of the world is one of the key steps towards being less judgemental and more accepting of each other's uniqueness. It is about realising that there are very few absolutes in life and that everyone has their own unique rule book to living a life fulfilled. Is it good for you? Is it good for others? Is it good for the planet? If the answer to each of these questions is 'yes', then you have the right, and in fact the obligation, to stand in your truth.

In the book *The Top Five Regrets of the Dying*, the Australian palliative care nurse Bronnie Ware draws on her experiences of looking after patients in the last 12 weeks of their lives. Ware talks about the clarity that people at this stage of life often have and notes distinct patterns in the wisdom they share. In her blog on the same subject, she remarks, 'People grow a lot when they are faced with their



Greatness tends to come with a distinct sense of rebellion.

OPRs and the Timeless Ingredient of Greatness

own mortality. I learnt never to underestimate someone's capacity for growth.'

Number one on the list of regrets from the dying is:

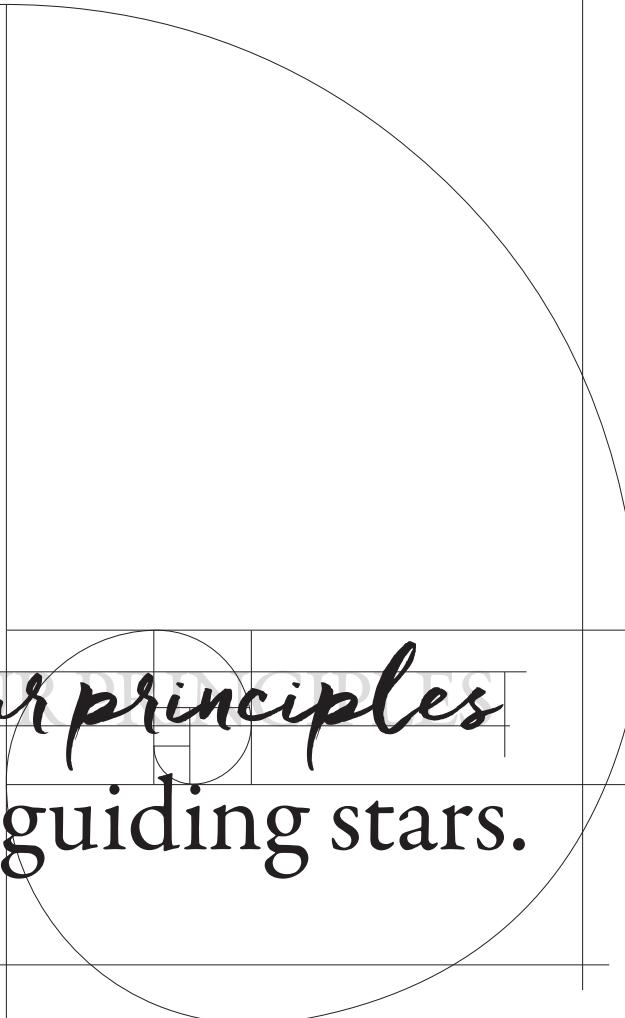
- 1. I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected of me.*

This was the most common regret of all. When people realise that their life is almost over and they look back clearly on it, it is easy to see how many dreams have gone unfulfilled.

Most people had not honoured even a half of their dreams and had to die knowing that it was due to choices they had made, or not made.

It is very important to try and honour at least some of your dreams along the way. From the moment that you lose your health, it is too late. Health brings a freedom very few realise, until they no longer have it.

To live a life according to OPRs is the most commonly walked path to a life unfulfilled. Who are you? What is true for you? What do you value in life? Who do you want to be? What could you contribute to the planet? What do you want *your* legacy to be? Brew yourself a tea or pour a glass of red and journal on these questions. Let what you write become *your* rule book. Let *your* principles be your guiding stars. It doesn't matter which figure in history you look at, whether it be a sculptor turned painter from 500 years ago, a physicist from 100 years ago, a television host born in the 1950s or a global entrepreneur of today, they all embody the one timeless ingredient of greatness: rebellion.

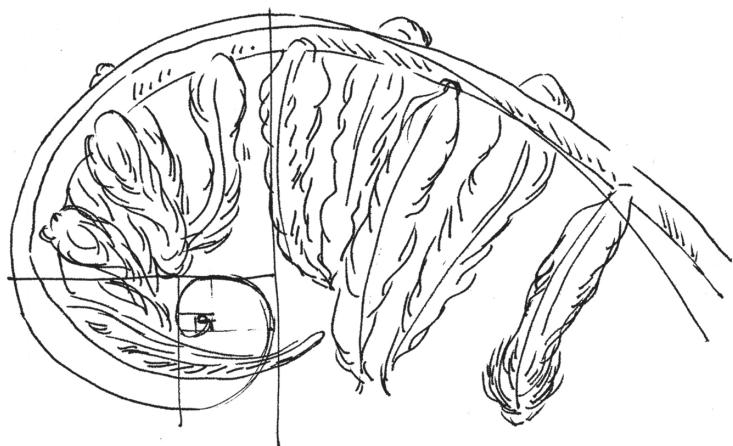


Let your principles
be your guiding stars.

Chapter 6

PROVIDENCE MOVES TOO

'When you become completely aligned, your ability to create comes alive. Things start to happen, mountains start to shift, and it is as if the universe begins to assist you in your quest.'



We create our world.
Providence follows.

Ten years had passed since I finished high school, and, much to my disappointment (genuinely), I hadn't been able to attend any of the reunions that had been and gone. I had moved from my home town of Melbourne to live in Sydney and was either overseas or had something come up at the last minute that prevented me from reconnecting.

One day, though, my media team received a call from a news crew asking whether they could do a profile piece of me returning to my high school, speaking to the students and catching up with my teachers. By coincidence, the very next day, my high school reached out and asked whether I would be happy to fly to Melbourne to speak to some of their students.

I told them that it fitted in beautifully with a request we had just received the day before, and they were excited at the thought of a news crew coming along to feature the school. I then left it to my team to organise the date that I would fly down to revisit my old school.

When the day came, I had to laugh when my alarm went off at 6 am because I had to go to school. Although the journey was a little bit further than it used to be, it felt incredibly grounding to know that I was going back to the place where I grew up.

As I sat on the plane with a cup of tea, looking out the window to the mountains below, I remembered a moment I hadn't thought about for ten years . . .

In the traditional sense, I was never a good student. To this day, I have a huge amount of gratitude to my high school for not asking me to leave on the many different occasions when they probably should have. I always found it hard to fall into line. It's funny how when you're young, the notion of being 'responsible' seems to mean conforming or subordinating to authority, whereas when we grow up, we tend to realise that to be responsible for one's self and one's life is incredibly empowering.

Being the poorest kid in the richest suburb meant that I was surrounded by adults who were accountants, lawyers and doctors. Although I had a hunch that my life's work would one day be in education, at that point I had no idea how it would manifest; I was still looking for the first step. Being surrounded by adults who had followed a traditional path, I never saw an image of a life that excited me, or a 'grown-up' I wanted to emulate. As a consequence, like the majority of high-school students around the world, I found it hard to find purpose in what I was supposed to be learning at school.

At the end of Year 11, we were all sent off to do work experience. I decided to join my cousin, who worked in Legal Aid in Victoria – a body that offers free legal advice and services to those unable to afford it. This was the first time since Breaking the Cycle that I'd seen meaningful conversations happen out in the real world. I found it fascinating getting just the tiniest glimpse of how the world worked and again seeing first-hand how powerful the right help could be when given to those who needed it. It helped spark more of an impetus in me to apply myself at school.

As I continued to develop my thinking about what I wanted to do in life, the week I spent with my cousin gave me enough insight into the real world to give school meaning. Although being a lawyer probably isn't intrinsically linked to who I am, it seemed like a safe next step. So, in Year 12, my final year of high school, I applied myself and got the grades I needed to get into law school. Because I had finally started doing some work within the four walls of my school, I even won my first ever academic award at the end of that year. It was the honour that no one wants because it's such a backhanded compliment; I was the proud recipient of the 'Most Improved' award. 'Well you weren't very good at anything before this year, Jack, and, well, this year you weren't so bad!'

As my prize for winning such a highly coveted award, I got to do what every teenage boy dreams of doing: go to the local bookstore and pick a book for myself. Overwhelmed with excitement (please, sense the sarcasm) one summer afternoon, I walked into the local bookshop in all its beige glory to find dusty books and people who looked like they spent too much time in bookstores.

With zero bearings as to where to go or what I was even looking for, I was naturally drawn to the Personal

Development section. As I stood there gazing over the titles, it was blindingly obvious that none of them interested me – until, in a moment, I looked down to the bottom shelf and my eyes connected with one particular book. I bent down, picked it up, blew the dust off and started to flick through it.

This book genuinely connected with me on a level I had never experienced before. It was different, it was profound, and it spoke to what was true for me unlike anything I'd ever seen. It lit me up from the inside, and I felt as if the author was standing next to me in the shop, whispering in my ear, 'This is the one.'

Book in hand, I went to the counter and struck up a great rapport with the owner, once I told him I was from the local high school. But then he looked down at the book I had chosen. His entire energy changed and his face became unimpressed. 'Huh!' he said, and then laughed. 'That easy, is it?' Not knowing how to respond, and at this point shrinking back into myself, I murmured, 'I guess so.' He turned around and put it on the pile of books that lay behind him. 'Your headmaster will give it to you on speech night.' Conversation over.

Speech night was the final graduation ceremony, where the entire school came together – teachers, parents, siblings, friends – to celebrate and see off the leavers. Standing side stage next to my fellow scholarly high-achievers, I waited for our headmaster, Mr Urwin, to call my name so I could go and collect my award and my book. Looking at those around me – dux of the school, school captain, school vice-captain – it dawned on me that this was the first time I'd ever been on stage during high school.

When it got to the point where I was next, I could hear my headmaster start to laugh. A moment passed, and all

of a sudden the auditorium erupted in hysterics. The headmaster laughingly called my name, and I proceeded cautiously onto the stage, shook his hand, took my book and exited stage right.

As I came off, I asked one of my close friends, 'Why was everyone laughing?'

Clearly reluctant to reply, he said, 'Mr Urwin looked at the title of the book and started laughing. Then he held it up for the audience to see and they started laughing at you as well.'

The book was called *Think and Grow Rich*.

My headmaster, my teachers and the parents who filled the auditorium found the book to be funny because of its perceived naivety. *Huh! That easy, is it?* The thought of an individual thinking and growing rich was so outside of their reality it was laughable.

Although my definition of rich has changed over the years from one of money to one of meaning, the principle I inherently knew to be true back then I still hold true today: that, with our mind, we create every inch of our life from the ground up. Thoughts become words that become deeds that become our reality. It was this inherent, albeit undeveloped belief that connected me with *Think and Grow Rich* when I saw it on the bookshelf.

You do your life's best work when you reach a point of ultimate alignment – when your heart aligns with your head, which aligns with your hand. Heart: who you are, your intuition, your innermost truth, what brings you joy, what makes you curious. Head: what stimulates you, what excites and intrigues you, what you're good at and what aligns with the way you think. Hand: the work that you do and the activities that you engage in on a daily basis.

Heart. Head. Hand.

You do your *life's best work*
when you reach a point
of ultimate alignment.

Providence Moves Too

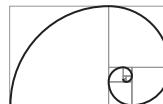
When these three things are all working in harmony, you are truly congruent in what you are doing – your outer world perfectly reflects your inner world. This is the space in which great things happen.

In a more spiritual sense, something else happens, in my experience, when you become completely aligned. Your ability to create comes alive. Things start to happen, mountains start to shift, and it is as if the universe begins to assist you in your quest. When the stars start to align and you feel the guidance of a higher power, this is called providence.

So there I was, looking out of the plane window with my cup of tea, reminiscing about my high-school journey and how it had ended on that night ten years earlier.

The day I spent revisiting my school was brilliant – walking through the halls and buildings that held so many memories, speaking to hundreds of students about the importance of listening to their inner voice, and spending time with my headmaster and teachers, many of whom had moved on but had returned for that day so that we could reconnect. I was even given a tour of the Great Hall, where I had attended my speech night ten years earlier, although I was rushed through. With tradesmen running around and ladders everywhere, the host turned to me and said, ‘You’ll have to forgive us, Jack. We’re setting up for speech night tonight.’

It was a truly humbling and grounding day, one that I found therapeutic, as I was able to pass on my genuine gratitude to them all for seeing something inside me before I did.



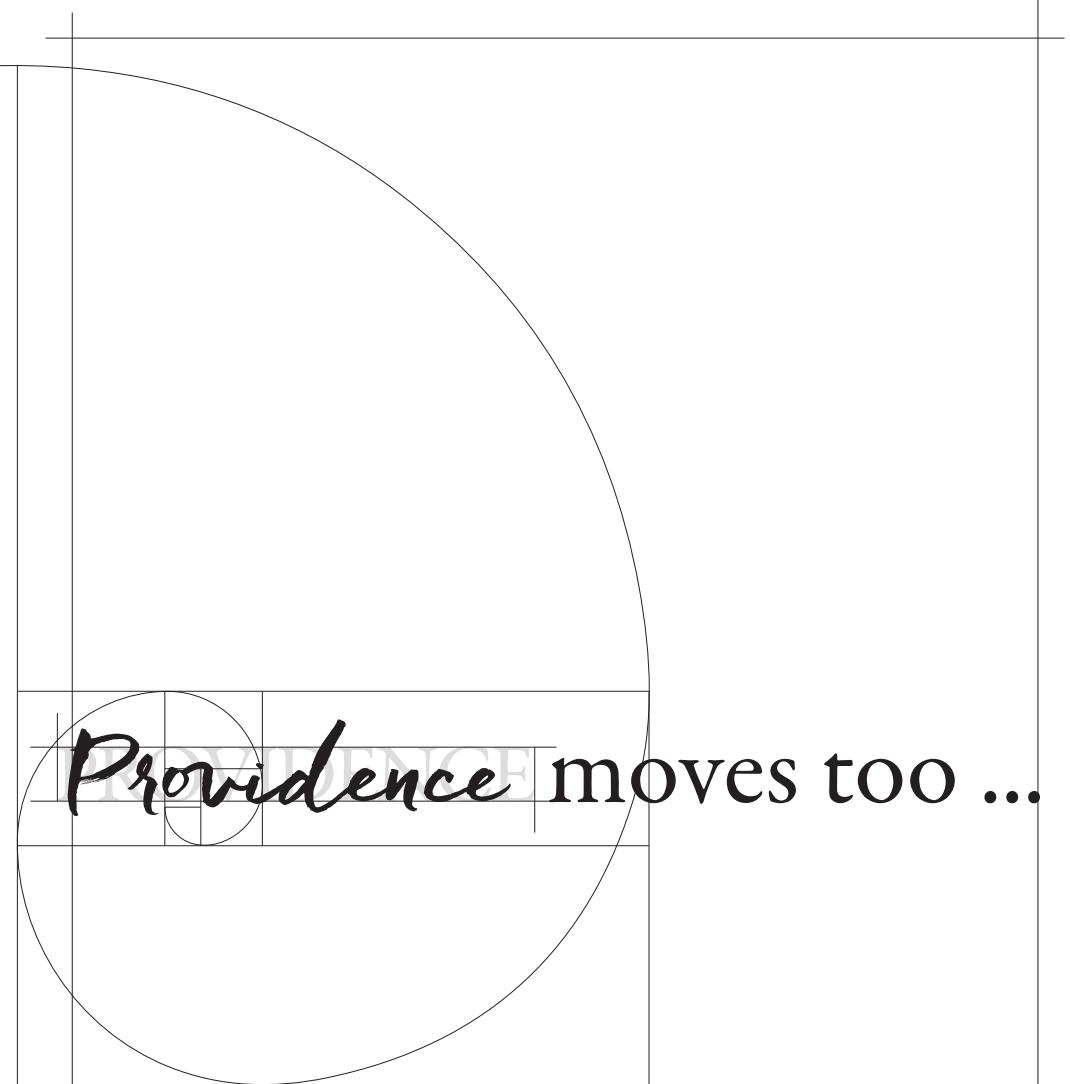
I woke up the next day, back in my home in Sydney, with a strange feeling. It was like the end of a movie when a character has a flashback to preceding events and, all of a sudden, the story makes sense. I had the previous day's scene playing in mind from when we walked through the Great Hall. *You'll have to forgive us, Jack. We're setting up for speech night tonight.* At the time, it didn't even register, as I was nostalgically gazing through the buildings of my youth. However, as I woke up with this in my head, I had an excited feeling of disbelief. I thought to myself, 'No, surely not.' I quickly reached over to my phone and brought up my calendar, scrolling back ten years to my graduating year of 2004. Looking at the dates from ten years earlier, I confirmed the feeling that I'd woken up with: that the day I returned to my high school with a news crew was ten years *to the day* since they had laughed me off stage at speech night for choosing a book called *Think and Grow Rich*.

Ten years. To. The. Day.

The reason they had invited me to come back to speak to the students was they had just seen that, at the age of 27, I had been listed in the BRW Young Rich List: Australia's top 100 self-made, wealthiest people under 40.

I lay in bed in awe at how serendipitous that decade had turned out to be. In that moment, I expected to be excited . . . I wasn't. I simply felt an overwhelming sense of inner peace and resolve. I felt like God was winking at me.

When we live a life that aligns with our highest truth, providence moves too. Things happen that we can't explain; nor do we need to. When it happens to you, take it as a sign that you are aligned within yourself and you are on purpose. You are living the life you are meant to live, and, even though people will laugh at you along the way, you too have a reason to smile.



Hearts
and
Minds

"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the people to gather wood, divide the work & give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the endless sea."

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

1900 - 1944

Vision,
Mission
Values

Chapter 7

VISION – FINDING PURPOSE

'Who you are speaks so loudly,
I can't hear a word you're saying.'

Ralph Waldo Emerson

The extent to which you fulfil your vision is the extent to which you can mobilise other people towards it. Those who are able to achieve great things are those who have developed an ability to touch the hearts and minds of people everywhere. This ability is called leadership, and its essence is greatly misunderstood.

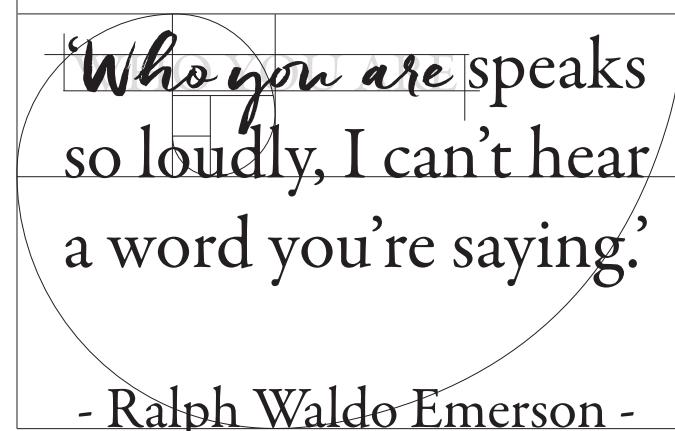
Any meaningful endeavour in life is going to require you to be an exceptional leader. Whether you want to be a great parent, a great partner, a great employee or a great entrepreneur, how successful you are in that endeavour will come

down to how well you are able to *move* people.

The problem with a lot of the existing thinking around leadership is that it doesn't recognise the importance of character. It speaks of tactics rather than intention. It speaks of behavioural manoeuvres rather than personal principles. Character cannot be faked and therefore leadership cannot be artificially manufactured. If you are approaching your people with the intention of 'maximising human capital efficiency', then you have already lost the game. Efficiency is, of course, important. However, it is achieved through creating an authentic culture that is centred around a purpose, not through viewing people as resources to be exploited. Becoming a great leader is about unlearning much of what we've been taught about what it means to lead.

Leadership is about resonance. To what degree are you able to resonate with the people who look to you for guidance? In this sense, leadership demands authenticity and is strongest when your leadership style and your behaviour are a natural extension of who you are. It was Ralph Waldo Emerson who said, 'Who you are speaks so loudly, I can't hear a word you're saying.' Sustained leadership demands that you *are* the person your people think you are.

I care for my people with all of my heart. Nothing brings me more joy than seeing the right people step into the right environment and flourish. The most rewarding part of my life to date has been enabling people to become somebody they hadn't imagined. I love to challenge people to do just once what they previously considered impossible and see how their entire life changes forever as a result. Their self-image, the way they view the world, their confidence, their communication, their relationships, their work – it all transforms when somebody steps into the best



'Who you are speaks
so loudly, I can't hear
a word you're saying.'

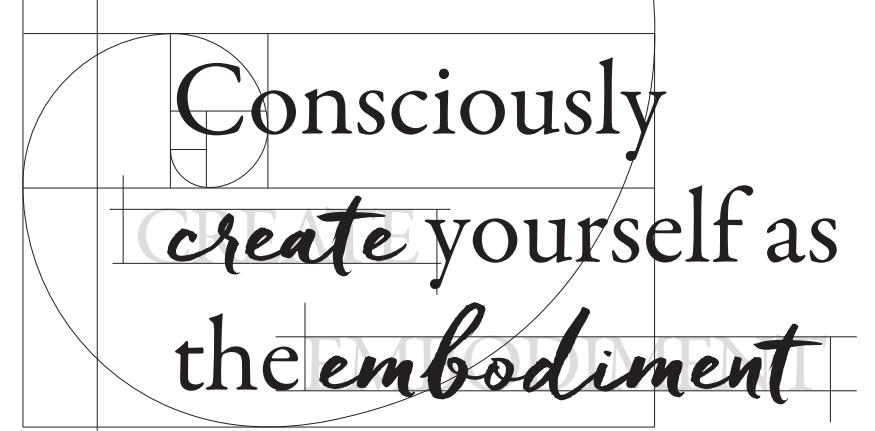
- Ralph Waldo Emerson -

version of themselves. This is what leaders do – they help people completely reimagine who they are and what is possible for them to achieve. It is the essence of contribution: to touch the lives of others in a way that makes them more, in a way that makes them shine.

The biggest advantage I have when it comes to business is that I was never taught the tactics. All of my principles around business, leadership and legacy have been built from the ground up using first principle reasoning. As I've said in Chapter 3, this means starting from the foundations of any particular subject and finding your own way from there, rather than relying on other people's models. I was never part of another business or a large corporation, so, when it comes to leadership and business, I never learnt how things were 'meant to be done'. As such, by default, my thinking has always begun with a blank canvas, and I have only painted on it that which has proven itself to work.

My principles on leadership have come from having built teams of over 100 people whose self-actualisation I obsess over, and from directly studying the *character* of those throughout history who have touched the hearts and minds of people everywhere and mobilised millions towards one common vision. This kind of exploration has led me to a very human-based leadership style that enables great people to come together in a tribe and do the impossible. In 2015, The Entourage was named Australia's Fourth Best Place to Work by *BRW* magazine, a testament to developing a heart-based culture that cares for the individual.

So, while leadership cannot be manufactured, it can be developed. And the development begins with you. Consciously create yourself as the embodiment of your principles and as a model for others to follow. As leaders,



Consciously
create yourself as
the embodiment
of your principles.

we must live our lives as if everybody is taking their cue from us. In this way, whether you want to build a great family, influence the team in which you work, or lead an organisation with thousands of employees, you will be the example that people silently seek.

Contrary to conventional thinking, culture is not about beanbags, bicycles and fireman's poles. These are gimmicks that often serve only to detract from the true essence of an organisation. Culture goes far beyond the eye candy the media hold up as 'great culture'. Don't be fooled. Go deeper.

Culture is about uniting around a purpose. It is about a group of people collectively sharing and working towards a vision. It is about creating an environment that inspires and enables people to do their life's best work. It is about purposefully creating an environment with teams of people who understand the importance of what's being done and therefore demand of one another that every single person performs and contributes. It challenges, demands, invites and enables every member of the team to continuously be growing out of and into the best version of themselves.

Great leadership needs to be ingrained into the DNA of the organisation. Often, the energy of the founder of the company or the leader of the team is enough to spark a great culture in the early days, when there are few people. However, as the team grows and the leader is no longer able to reach everybody directly, the leadership needs to be structural – it needs to be infused throughout the company using guiding principles. It is critical for anybody who wants to be an impactful leader to understand that great leaders do not create followers; they create more leaders.

The three principles that underpin any great culture are *vision, mission and values*. Vision relates to the ultimate

purpose being pursued by the organisation; its reason for existence. This purpose is contribution-centric, focusing on the contribution the organisation will make to the lives of other people or the planet. For example, the vision for The Entourage is to push civilisation forward by enabling more people to live on purpose.

Mission is the measurable and company-orientated target for what you want to become. While the vision focuses on others, the mission is centred on you – the ultimate goal for what you as a company or a team are trying to grow into. It is through achieving the measurable goal of the mission that we fulfil the purpose found in the vision. For example, the mission for The Entourage is to become the world's number one education institution for entrepreneurs.

Values are the set of standards that govern and guide who we are and who we must be. These values articulate the expectations, beliefs and behaviours that we want to exist in our organisation. They ensure that when we arrive at the achievement of the vision and mission, we arrive gracefully, with our heart still intact.

Let's look at vision in a bit more detail, before moving on to mission and values in the next chapters.

Finding a Purpose Bigger than You

As entrepreneurs, or anybody who holds a dream unfulfilled, we spend our lives tinkering with a universe that doesn't yet exist. Those who are able to move people are those who are able to dream of things that never were. It is in describing the beauty that comes with a better tomorrow

We spend our
lives tinkering
with a universe
that doesn't yet exist.

that imaginations are sparked and hearts are touched.

The greats of history each had a vision for the contribution they wanted to make to the people around them, to humanity, or to the world. This vision was focused not on them but on a greater purpose, which would improve the lives of others or the world at large. In this sense, I use the words purpose and vision interchangeably, to describe a contribution-centric legacy.

Creating a vision for your life and your life's work ensures that everything you do aligns to your purpose, giving your life's work a direction and a meaning that fuels you along the journey. I'll use myself again as an example – not because I'm saying I have achieved greatness, but because I am an ordinary person following the principles of those who have. The vision I hold for my life's work is *to push civilisation forward by enabling more people to live on purpose*. This purpose influences everything I decide to work on and, more importantly, everything I decide *not* to work on. It is my guiding star, which reminds me what my life's work is for, and therefore I only engage in businesses and projects that will enable me to move towards the actualisation of my vision. *Your vision is the contribution you want to make and can only be formed from your own unique sense of purpose.*

The vision Einstein held for his life was to be able to articulate the universe in one short, elegant formula. The vision Oprah holds for her life is to elevate the consciousness of humanity. The vision that Steve Jobs held for his life was to make a dent in the universe. The vision that Elon Musk, co-founder of PayPal and founder of SolarCity and SpaceX, holds for his life is to enable the future of humanity.

It's important to note that, while the four examples I've just given are from people who want to make a global

impact, this certainly does not need to influence the scale of your vision. Remember, legacy cares not for scale – it's not about breadth; it's about depth. It's not about how far-reaching it is, only how deeply your vision resonates with *you*. If you were to craft a global vision for your life because that's what Steve Jobs did, then really you are following the influence of OPRs rather than your heart.

Some questions to ask yourself, explore and wrestle with over time (this is not a 15-minute exercise) are:

- What do I want my life to be about?
- What am I great at?
- What change would I love to see in the world?
- What would I love the ultimate contribution of my life to be?

Mould your responses to these questions into a single sentence that inspires you, and this will be your vision.

Having a clear vision for your life and your life's work not only guides and directs your own decisions but also provides leadership to those whom you enrol on the journey. Everybody wants to be a part of something bigger than themselves. Everybody, including you and me, longs to be a part of something that matters.

Leadership demands that you have a claim on the future. Great leadership enables you and your people to consistently achieve the impossible, time and time again. By having a clear vision, you will be one of the few who are bold enough to truly create the future.

Leadership is about guiding people to a particular

destination. Without a vision as to where you are going, by definition you cannot be leading. Yet so many people avoid dreaming of the future or speaking of where they would like to go out of fear of not getting there. As a leader, this is not good enough. Your role, first and foremost, is to imagine what is possible, reinvent tomorrow, and make it how you see it.



Chapter 8

MISSION – LAYING THE PATH

Musk has one guiding question: What do I want to do with my life's work?
Same question asked by Socrates, Gandhi, Einstein, Winfrey, Rowling, Jobs.

'It seemed like one should try to make the world a better place because the inverse makes no sense. The only thing that makes sense to do is strive for greater collective enlightenment.'

Elon Musk

Elon Musk is a man with several missions. He is taking on the aerospace industry, the aviation giants, the energy utilities, the oil companies and the car giants of the auto industry . . . and winning.

When Musk was in college in 1995, he asked himself a question: 'What do I want to dedicate my life's work to?' He decided that the overall vision he held for his life was to enable the future of humanity. As he explained to Ashlee Vance, who wrote his biography, with his cooperation, in 2015, 'Maybe I read too many comics as a kid. In comics it always seems like

they're trying to save the world. It seemed like one should try to make the world a better place because the inverse makes no sense. The only thing that makes sense to do is strive for greater collective enlightenment.'

Musk set about researching the key ways that he might influence the future of humanity and came up with: the internet (still in its infancy in 1995); sustainable energy; space travel; rewriting the human genetic code; and artificial intelligence (AI). He questioned whether rewriting the human genetic code and AI would have a beneficial or detrimental effect on humanity, and therefore decided to base his life's work on the first three. His vision to enable the future of humanity now had three missions that would act as pathways for him to walk to achieve his purpose.

Elon Musk – Vision and Mission

To enable the future of humanity				
1	2	3	4	5
The internet	Space travel	Sustainable energy	Rewriting the human genetic code – not aligned with the vision	Artificial intelligence – not aligned with the vision

A pattern that has been self-evident throughout my life, and hidden within the stories of all the greats of history that I've studied, is that to do your life's best work you need to be driven by something far greater than yourself. This purpose becomes the vision you hold for your life and often breaks down into different missions – the routes you take to achieve your vision.

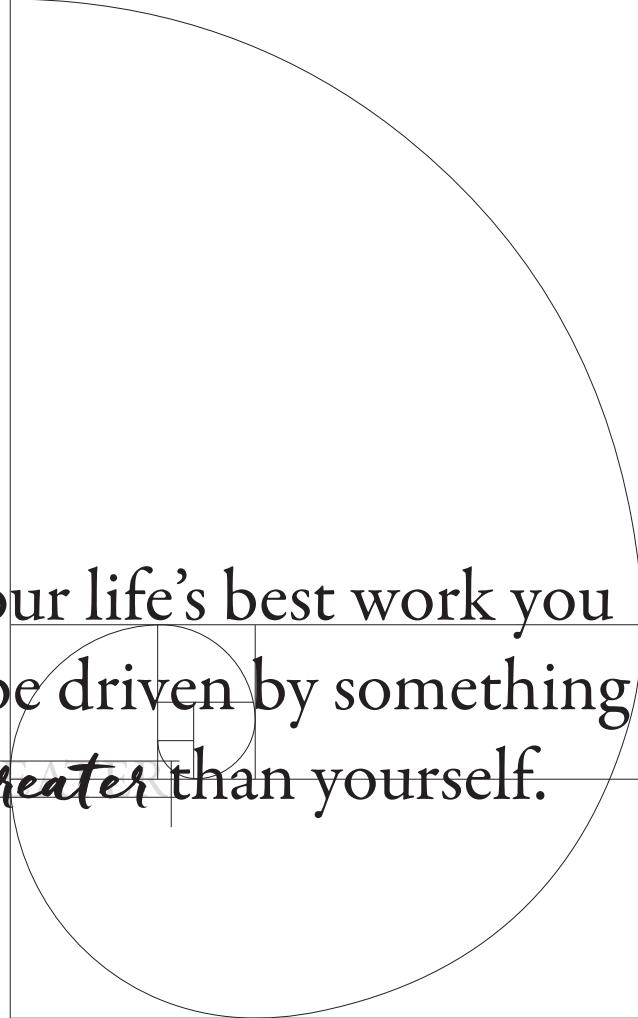
If the vision is the summit of the mountain, the missions represent the different pathways you may walk to get there. It is through accomplishing the mission that you actualise the vision.

Musk decided the internet would be his first mission. He would later tell Sal Khan in an interview for the Khan Academy in 2013, 'It seemed like I could either do a PhD and watch the internet happen or I could participate and help build it in some fashion.'

In 1995, he founded an internet start-up company called Zip2 with his brother, Kimbal. Zip2 would grow into an online map that listed local businesses in the area, and Musk was able to sign up major newspapers such as *The New York Times*, who could use the platform to advertise local businesses such as restaurants and gyms to their online readers. We are very familiar with this concept today. However, back then was the first time anybody had created a digital map and combined it with listings usually found in the yellow pages.

The brothers would get their internet connection by running a cable through a hole in the floor and tapping into the internet service provider located on the floor below them. With absolutely no money, Elon and Kimbal would literally live out of their tiny office, working there during the day and sleeping there at night.

The company brought on several investors, who



To do your life's best work you
need to be driven by something
far greater than yourself.

deemed a young Musk too inexperienced to be its CEO. Reluctantly, he handed over the day-to-day management to someone else. Four years later, Compaq acquired Zip2 for \$307 million in cash and \$34 million in stock options. At the time, Musk owned seven per cent of the company and made \$22 million from the sale.

After the sale of Zip2, Musk immediately invested \$10 million into his second start-up, X.com. X.com was another first of its kind, enabling people to transfer money over the internet. Rather than customers sending a cheque to the vendor and waiting for it to clear – which could take weeks – X.com made immediate payments a reality by taking the world of financial payments online. ‘Money is really just an entry in a database. It’s low bandwidth so it seemed like something that should really lend itself to innovation,’ Musk would tell Bloomberg Business in 2014.

One year after launch, X.com would merge with another company called Confinity to create PayPal – which would go on to become the leading payment system in the world. In 2002, eBay bought PayPal for \$1.5 billion. As the largest shareholder, at 11.7 per cent, Musk made \$180 million from the sale.

Mission one complete.

Musk now revisited the dream he had in college. He had built two innovative internet companies and felt that perhaps it was time to move on to his other missions in life: space travel and sustainable energy. Like many tech entrepreneurs, Musk had laid his foundations in the internet industry. However, it was what he did next that no one saw coming and today has the whole world watching.

Again without pausing, in 2002 Musk founded SpaceX, an aerospace company with the mission ‘to enable people to live on other planets’. Musk wants to inhabit Mars and

believes he can achieve this in our lifetime. His view is that eventually there *will* be an extinction event on planet Earth, and at that moment it will be important for humanity to be multi-planetary. Having a self-sufficient civilisation on Mars ensures the survival of human consciousness. Therefore, this mission clearly falls within Musk's vision of enabling the future of humanity.

Musk travelled to Russia three times in an attempt to buy a second-hand rocket. After several negotiations with the Russians failed, he decided that the biggest challenge of starting a rocket company was not in fact the price of existing rockets but rather that there had been no innovation in rocket engineering in 60 years.

In his interview with Sal Khan, he said, 'Historically, all rockets have been expensive, so therefore, in the future, all rockets will be expensive. But actually that's not true. If you say, what is a rocket made of? And say, OK, it's made of aluminum, titanium, copper, carbon fiber . . . And you can break it down and say, what is the raw material cost of all these components? And if you have them stacked on the floor and could wave a magic wand so that the cost of rearranging the atoms was zero, then what would the cost of the rocket be? And I was like, wow, OK, it's really small. It's like two per cent of what a rocket costs. So clearly it would be in how the atoms are arranged. So you've got to figure out how can we get the atoms in the right shape much more efficiently. And so I had a series of meetings on Saturdays with people, some of whom were still working at the big aerospace companies, just to try to figure out if there's some catch here that I'm not appreciating. And I couldn't figure it out. There doesn't seem to be any catch. So I started SpaceX.'

Musk is the embodiment of someone who does not let the limitations of the past constrain the way he thinks about the

future. Never before has there been a tech entrepreneur turned space explorer. Never before has there been a private rocket company that has successfully navigated space. Never before have there been any plans of travelling to Mars, even from NASA or the US Government. All of this is immaterial according to Musk, who builds his understanding of what's possible and what will be possible in the future from first principle reasoning.

Further to having a healthy disrespect for the status quo, Musk has such a strong sense of purpose for his life's work that this gives him a higher tolerance for financial risk than what we're used to seeing in traditional business people. Later on in that interview, he said, 'A lot of my friends tried to talk me out of starting a rocket company because they thought it was crazy. One friend made me watch a video of rockets blowing up . . . There were some people that had tried to start rocket companies and not succeeded and they tried to talk me out of it. But the thing is that their premise for talking me out of it was, "Well, we think you're going to lose the money that you invest." And I was like, "Well, that was my expectation anyway." It's not like I was trying to figure out the rank order of the best way to invest money and on that basis chose space. I just thought that it was important that humanity expand beyond Earth.'

Now that Musk was pursuing another one of his missions in space travel, he decided to start exploring his third mission: sustainable energy. In 2004, he invested in and eventually took a controlling stake in and became CEO of an electric car company called Tesla Motors. Through this business, it is Musk's dream to be the catalyst for the auto industry to increasingly build top-quality cars based on sustainable energy and clean fuel.

'With Tesla the goal is to try to accelerate the advent of

sustainable transport . . . Our goal is not to become a big brand or to compete with Honda Civics, rather to advance the cause of electric vehicles. So we're just going to keep making more and more electric cars and driving the price point down until the industry is very firmly electric . . . We want to have a catalytic effect until [the point at which] half of all new cars made are electric, then I think I would consider that to be the victory condition. So the faster we can bring that day, the better.'

At the time, Tesla was perhaps one of the most unwise investments in history. Automotive companies were going offshore, experts were declaring that the technology for electric cars wasn't ready for consumers, Musk had zero automotive experience, and the last time there was a successful US car start-up was Chrysler in 1925. Nevertheless, Musk decided to invest \$70 million in Tesla in the hope of moving the world towards a cleaner form of energy consumption.

And then again, in 2006, Musk co-founded and funded a company called SolarCity with the mission of ridding America and eventually the world of its addiction to fossil-fuel electricity. With SolarCity, Musk wanted to revolutionise energy production by installing solar panels on the roofs of homes throughout America for free and giving people a more affordable, and clean, energy solution to power their homes. In Musk's words, 'SolarCity is about sustainable energy production while Tesla is about sustainable energy consumption.' Musk put \$10 million into founding SolarCity, and with that he had invested almost all of the money he had earned throughout his life.

In this sense, we see a man who is so dedicated to the vision he holds for humanity that his need to fulfil his purpose far exceeds his need for profit. In business, it is an

interesting paradox that it is often those who do not hold money as their primary motivation who add the most value to the world and therefore become the most wealthy.

Between 2006 and 2008, the world was laughing at Musk. And towards the end of 2008, the criticism seemed warranted, as inflating costs, a global financial crisis and a lack of trust from investors in these fanciful upstarts made it appear as though all three companies were going to die.

When Musk invested \$100 million into SpaceX in 2002, he knew that it would ultimately fund three unmanned rocket launches. One of these had to succeed if he was to prove that a private company could successfully build rockets. If none of the first three launches worked, they would not win the contracts or attract the investors they needed to fund the company, and SpaceX would die. 'The first rocket didn't get very far. It got about a minute up and then there was an engine fire and that was it. The second flight actually did make it to space but not to orbit. And then in flight three again we didn't get all the way to orbit.' In this third launch, on 3 August 2008, the rocket exploded before it could reach orbit.

At Tesla, the costs of production had blown out of proportion, from a projected \$65,000 to \$140,000 per car. This put the company into extreme duress, as costs continued to stretch and sales continued to lag. Then the global financial crisis hit, which was disproportionately bad for car manufacturers. 'That was tough. It was obviously an economic period that saw the bankruptcy of General Motors and Chrysler, and there we were a young company selling a very optional car – people don't need a \$100,000 sports car.' And in 2008, people *definitely* didn't need a \$100,000 sports car that was battery powered.

'I had to take all of my reserve capital and invest it into

Tesla. Which was very scary because it would obviously be quite sad to have the fruits of my labour with Zip2 and PayPal not amount to anything. But there was no question that I would do that, because Tesla was too important to let die.' Coming in to the end of 2008, Musk invested his last dollars into Tesla to give the company less than a fighting chance.

To make matters worse, the bank that had backed SolarCity terminated the relationship, meaning that company was also now in trouble. It was the week before Christmas, and Musk's three companies each looked like they would be bankrupt before the year was out. 'We had maybe a week's worth of cash in the bank or less and there was just very little time left in the year to resolve these things. There was like two or three business days left in the year.' If Musk reached close of business on 24 December 2008 without raising money from external investors, then all three companies would die and he would be declared bankrupt.

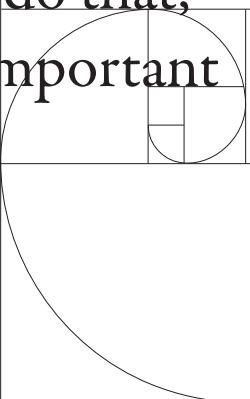
Understandably, Musk was extremely challenged personally. 'I never thought it was possible for me to have a nervous breakdown . . . that was about as close I was going to come.' His mother would later tell Bloomberg Business, 'I felt like I had a hole in my heart. I just didn't see him getting out of it, he was just so sad.'

On Tuesday 23 December 2008, with less than two business days before a Christmas that would see all three companies collapse, SpaceX received word that they had won a \$1.6 billion contract from NASA to resupply the International Space Station. At this point, Musk had only a few hundred dollars in the bank and could not have made payroll the next day.

On Wednesday 24 December, at 4 pm, with one hour

'I had to take all of my reserve capital and invest it into Tesla. Which was very scary because it would obviously be quite sad to have the fruits of my labour with Zip2 and PayPal not amount to anything. But there was no question that I would do that, because Tesla was too important to let die.'

- Elon Musk -



before the working year was out, Musk successfully raised money from previous Tesla investors that would ensure Tesla and SolarCity would also not die. Musk would end the year with his vision intact, having saved it from the brink of several disasters.

Musk's biggest strength is also his biggest weakness: the vision he holds for the future is so implausible, so unlike anything the world has ever seen, that it is hard for his ideas to be taken seriously in a world that uses the past to navigate the future. SpaceX, Tesla and SolarCity are all so ambitious that, until they had each made significant progress towards 'proof of concept', Musk's visions were unbelievable.

Today, SpaceX is the first privately owned company to put rockets into orbit, the first private company to have a rocket orbit the Earth and return safely, and the first private company to deliver cargo to the International Space Station. The only other organisations that have achieved any of these feats are the nations of Russia, China and the USA.

SpaceX is now NASA's largest contractor, with around \$5 billion in space-travel contracts, and an investment from Google gives the company a valuation of \$12 billion. It is building the most powerful operational rocket in the world, and its rockets to date have been completed at about a quarter of the cost of Boeing's or Lockheed Martin's, making space travel the cheapest it has ever been in history. Musk has single-handedly brought more innovation to space travel in ten years than Russia, China, the USA, Boeing and Lockheed Martin did in 60 years. Today, Musk has humanity landing on Mars in 2025.

In 2013, *Consumer Reports* labelled Tesla's Model S the best car it had ever tested, scoring an unprecedented

99/100. It is the fastest four-door sedan in history and the safest car ever tested by the US Government's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The company doesn't label each car by the year it is made, because – unlike other car brands – you don't need to wait for a new model to get all the new features. With a Tesla, you get all the new features through an *automatic* software update over wi-fi. Tesla's initial public offering in 2010 was the first of an American car company since Ford in 1956. And in 2015, seven years after being one hour from bankruptcy, the company was worth \$31 billion.

Today, SolarCity is America's largest provider of solar panels and employs more than 10,000 people. It offers free installation across homes, businesses and governments, and delivers clean energy at a fraction of the cost that consumers pay for fossil fuels such as coal, oil and natural gas. It is building the largest solar panel factory in the US and, after going public in 2012, is valued at \$6 billion. It has revolutionised the way the US produces energy and will continue to change the way the world thinks about the necessary transition to a cleaner future.

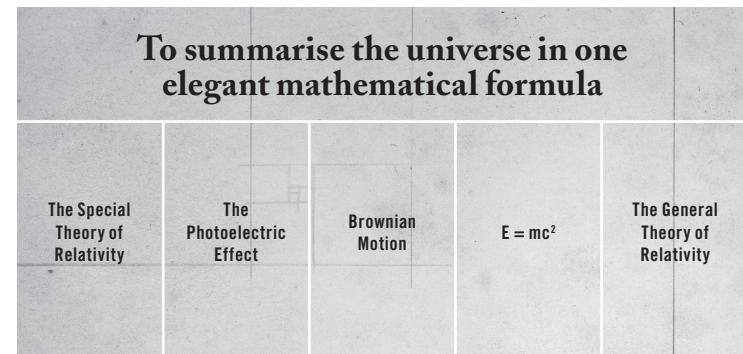
Musk has forced the world to rethink space, energy, transport and the future of humanity. And he's still in his 40s. He is a brilliant example of someone who is unconstrained by yesterday's thinking. His vision of enabling the future of humanity gives him and his people such a sense of purpose that they set out to do the impossible and achieve it time and time again. Musk is truly pushing civilisation forward and in doing so is prompting humanity to reimagine what we are capable of. Through Musk's accomplishments, the potential of human endeavour is travelling further than it ever has before.

Let's look at some of the greats we've discussed so far in

Mission – Laying the Path

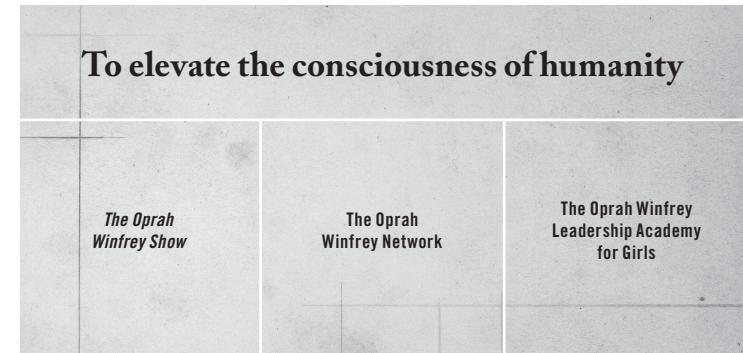
terms of this relationship between vision and mission. The top band is the vision, and the boxes beneath contain each of their missions.

Albert Einstein – Vision and Mission

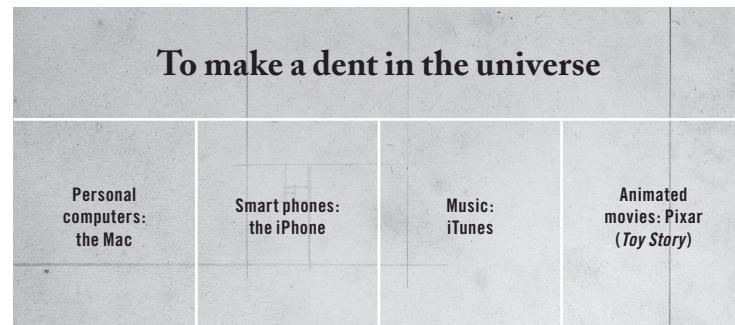


The potential of
human endeavour
is *travelling further*
than it ever has before.

Oprah Winfrey – Vision and Mission



Steve Jobs – Vision and Mission



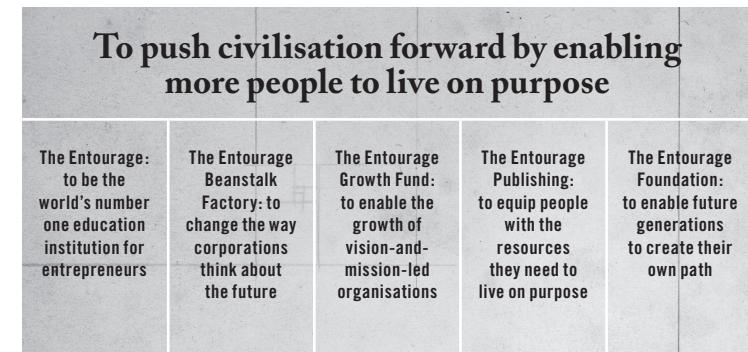
While each of these people achieved several missions throughout their life, it is incredibly important to note that they always started with one. It was not until they had sustainably succeeded in one mission that they moved on to the next.

The exception to this is of course Elon Musk, as he was the CEO of both SpaceX and Tesla. However, it was never Musk's intention to be CEO of Tesla; it was a position he took out of necessity in 2008 when the company needed a new CEO and he didn't have time to go and find someone else suitable. 'I wouldn't recommend running two companies,' he says. 'It decreases your freedom a lot.'

Steve Jobs had the same experience during the time he was running Pixar and Apple. He told Walter Isaacson, who was writing his biography, 'I had a young family. I had Pixar. I would go to work at 7 am and I'd get back at nine at night, and the kids would be in bed. And I couldn't speak. I literally couldn't, I was so exhausted.'

When I was building The Entourage into what it is today, I consequently set out to take the 'one at a time' approach. Again, solely as an example of how these principles can be applied to anything we do, here is how my vision has broken down into subsequent missions.

Jack Delosa – Vision and Mission



Often, great entrepreneurs will diversify and take on several missions once they have a substantial financial, resource and reputation base. Today, Sir Richard Branson owns over 300 companies. However, for the first ten years of his career, he had just one company: Virgin Records. It was when he sold Virgin Records for \$1 billion that he was able to employ the best people the world has to offer and, on occasion, launch two projects at once. Even Branson's timeline suggests he likes to focus on one early-stage project at a time.

In deciding on your mission, you should select one thing and try to become the best in the world at it. It should be your aim to set a goal so big that you can't achieve it until you grow into the person who can. Once you are successful in that first mission, you may stay with it or diversify into your next path. While the vision will remain constant throughout your life, you may embark on different missions in order to achieve it.

UNWRITTEN

Here are some questions to help you best identify your mission:

- What am I great at or what could I be the best in the world at?
- What work engages my heart and head?
- What is a big, audacious goal for my company/team/project/family that both excites and scares me?

The one-sentence, inspiring summary you come up with in response to these questions will be your mission.

Principles
Procedure.

why	Vision	Summit	Heart
what	Mission	Path(s)	Mind
who	Values	Climber	Character

Values

Strong self
sense of purpose
sense of collective language

Chapter 9

VALUES – BOTTLING MAGIC

'What we're about isn't making boxes for people to get their jobs done, although we do that well. Apple's about something more than that. Apple at its core, its core value, is that we believe that people with passion can change the world for the better.'

Steve Jobs

One of Einstein's guiding values was simplicity. He believed in making things as simple as possible, but no simpler. Einstein is often credited with the quote, 'Any intelligent fool can make things bigger, more complex. It takes a touch of genius – and a lot of courage – to move in the opposite direction.' It was E. F. Schumacher, an early-twentieth-century economist, who actually said it, but this quote does accurately summarise one of Einstein's key values.

Einstein was one of the most influential figures in Steve Jobs's life. Jobs grew up fascinated by people who had

influenced humanity, and he saw Einstein as one of the most independent thinkers in history. He applied Einstein's principle of simplicity to all of his business ventures, from the minimalist style that flowed through all of Apple's products and its retail stores, to the graceful business models he developed across many industries. Even at his large home in Palo Alto, for many years he would have no furniture other than a mattress on the floor to sleep on and a large picture of Albert Einstein hanging on the wall. This was the same photo he had hanging above the hallway he would walk through before entering the stage to deliver a presentation at the Apple Town Hall.

'We believe in the simple, not the complex' is one of Apple's core seven values to this day. Jobs, who saw his work as artistry, once said, 'The first thing we ask is: What do we want people to feel? Delight. Surprise. Love. Connection. Then we begin to craft around our intention. It takes time. There are a thousand "no's" for every "yes". We simplify. We perfect. We start over. Until everything we touch enhances each life it touches. Only then do we sign our work.'

More than half a century after Einstein championed simplicity in the early 1900s, his message connected with a young boy called Steve Jobs. This principle is inherent in the products that we live with today, from the iPhone, to the Mac, to the iPad and even iTunes. Although crafted at the hands of Steve Jobs, the devices that populate our modern lives have Einstein's fingerprints all over them.

Values are a set of principles that guide and govern who we are and who we must be. Great companies have a soul and values bring it to life through language; they articulate our essence in a way that would otherwise remain unspoken.

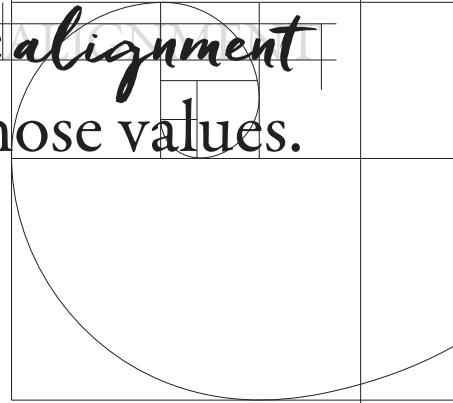
**'The first thing we ask is:
What do we want ~~people to feel?~~**

**Delight. Surprise.
Love. Connection.**

**Then we ~~begin to craft~~
around our intention.'**

- Steve Jobs -

Great culture is not about creating a list of values; it is about the *alignment* to those values.



Like a lot of things in the business world, they have been bastardised by corporate misuse. For example, Enron, whose executives ended up both financially and morally bankrupt (and in prison), had ‘integrity’ listed as one of their top four values.

Values should not be a set of principles that are manufactured to engineer productivity or loyalty but should be – and will only serve when they are felt to be – an authentic representation of the true heartbeat of an organisation. They are the way by which we bottle the magic that lies within every great company. Values, like brand, should not be about creating a label that sits on the wall but should simply be a confirmation of what *is*. In this sense, values are not created but rather discovered. They are the genuine answers to the questions ‘Who are we?’ and ‘Who do we strive to be?’. Great culture is not about creating a list of values; it is about the *alignment* to those values and how well an organisation lives them.

One of my primary goals in life is to be a vision-, mission- and values-driven leader, leading not from a position of title or authority but from a position of purpose. If the vision we hold is the summit of the mountain and our missions are the different paths we can walk to reach it, the values represent *who we want to be* along the journey. Great values should not only bottle our DNA today but also capture what we wish to become tomorrow.

If you were to put The Entourage under a microscope, you would see our DNA is made up of our ten core values.

The Values of The Entourage

1. Be wow – seek to amaze in everything you do

We want to make the world say wow. Everything we do – whether it's how we walk through the door in the morning, how we communicate and interact with each other, or the lengths we go to for our students – we conduct with an elegance that makes people think and say wow.

2. Make it happen – be outcome-orientated

We are a high-performance organisation. Through innovation, efficiency and a ‘make it happen’ attitude, we accomplish in a month what most aim to achieve in a year. ‘Make it happen’ is about being aware of the outcome you are setting out to achieve. ‘Make it happen’ is not about ‘getting it done at all costs’ or ‘getting it done at the expense of other factors’. It is about elegantly and holistically finding solutions and driving projects through to completion.

3. Everything's world-class

We have an informal culture because we believe that bureaucracy prevents innovation. While we are informal, we are certainly not casual. We are only informal for the purpose of enabling us to meet the high standards that we have. Our mission is to be the world’s number one education institution for entrepreneurs. As such, everything we do, from the broad principles down to the specific details, needs to be world-class every time.

4. Have a growth approach – take ownership of your own growth

The growth of our members and the growth of our movement rests solely on the growth of us as individuals and as a team. At The Entourage, you take 100 per cent responsibility for your growth and we will take 100 per cent responsibility for your growth.

5. Have fun, bring quirk

We love what we do and it shows. Ours is an environment where the work we do really matters. We change lives. We empower people to rethink what they are capable of. When we stay connected to this fundamental truth, we smile, we laugh, we have far too much fun and together we glow.

6. Do more with less – become a master of leverage

Throughout history, there have been organisations, movements and people that have proven you can effect great change and make a significant impact without having all the traditional resources. ‘More input = more output’ is outdated thinking that has been disproven time and time again by upstarts and high-growth businesses that have found innovative ways to do more, add more value for the customer, in *less* time and with less resources. It is a self-evident truth that more can be done through strong thinking and real innovation.

7. Live on the extra mile – good enough isn't good enough

This isn't a game we play when we're 'at work'; it is *who we are*. This is a journey that requires you to always be striving to be your best self so that you have more to offer. How is your life set up? How do you spend your time? Do your habits help you or hinder you? Do you invest time in your own personal growth? Do you ensure you are fit, healthy and happy, and have the energy you seek to be your best self? This is a place where those who love to live on the extra mile will feel like they finally fit in.

8. Come from heart – stay humble, respectful and compassionate

We respect *everybody*. Within the team, we speak to everybody with the same level of respect and compassion regardless of title or hierarchy. We can truly empathise with the journey our students are on. We respect where they are and how they are feeling, while compassionately shining a light on the path forward. We care.

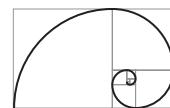
9. Take initiative – don't wait

The Entourage is a fast-paced organisation where new opportunities and challenges arise every single day. As such, this environment demands that at all times every team member is *thinking*. By coming back to first principles – our vision, our mission and our values – each team member is expected to identify challenges, think them

through, develop potential solutions, have great conversations and progress.

10. Dream out loud – have dreams and goals, and celebrate personal milestones

We are dreamers who work. What vision do you hold for your life? What is the mission that colours your path? What personal values do you have that help guide your decisions and help you achieve your own unique sense of happiness and fulfilment in your life? Tell us, so that together we can enjoy this journey.



By identifying the vision, mission and values of any culture, you are capturing the high-level principles that will give context to every belief, decision and action of your team. By elevating the conversation beyond specific behaviours and micro-tasks, these principles provide the overarching framework that will empower your people to know who to be and what to do in thousands of unique situations without ever needing to receive the granular instruction.

It was Vincent Van Gogh, post-Impressionist painter, who said, 'Great things are done by a series of small things brought together.' Van Gogh would capture the small things and the glistening details with his paintbrush while looking up at the night sky. As a leader, vision, mission and

‘Great things are done by
a series of small things

brought together.’

- Vincent Van Gogh -

values are the guiding stars that your people can look up to at any given moment to see how best to bring together the small things and navigate the way forward. Great leaders very rarely discuss behaviours and tasks, but rather give the overarching guidance to help direct great decision-making within their people.

Everything you do as a company is a representation of your vision, mission and values. Your direction, your strategy, your projects, who you hire, promote and fire, how you communicate, how you market, how you enrol customers, how you deliver, how you work, how you play, how you think: they are all viewed through the lens of your vision, mission and values.

After being ousted from the company he founded in his garage in 1976, Steve Jobs was, for over a decade between 1985 and 1997, no longer welcome at Apple. During this 12-year period, Jobs built NeXT and Pixar, which released *Toy Story* in 1995. This period was incredibly important for Jobs, who reflected on it as one of the most creative times of his life. After Pixar went public in 1995, Jobs increased his wealth by \$1.5 billion – more than he had ever done at Apple.

By 1997, Apple had become a rapidly sinking ship. From being one of the most innovative and respected companies in the world prior to Jobs’s departure in 1985, the heart had been ripped out of it. In the early years, Apple was a great company with a unique DNA. It stood for innovation and was relentless in its quest to bring technology closer to humanity. Jobs described the computer as ‘a bicycle for the mind’, as he saw Apple’s mission as enabling human endeavour to travel further. After Jobs’s departure, Apple lost this.

Apple started to resemble all of the corporations it had once disrupted and overtaken. It became more about profit

than about purpose, more about personal politics than about progress. In the decade Jobs was gone, Apple spent more on R&D than ever before, yet innovated significantly less. Once upon a time, innovation was built into Apple's DNA; it was a philosophy deeply entrenched in its values. After Jobs left, Apple began to think innovation was the role of an R&D department, and in doing so it lost an important piece of who it was.

In the quarter before Jobs returned to Apple, in March 1997, the company reported a quarterly loss of \$708 million. The business world estimated that it would be gone within six months. Jobs at one point had resigned himself to the belief that the company he had loved so much was going to die. Even the then CEO, Gilbert Amelio, said, 'Apple is like a large ship with a hole in the bottom, and it's my job to get the ship pointing in the right direction.' Unfortunately, Amelio wasn't joking; he was deadly serious.

Upon his return, Jobs focused on Apple's current situation and what was required to lead it out of failure and back into the future. Jobs did this quickly, as he knew that bankruptcy loomed over Apple every day it didn't change. The management at Apple had created a museum in honour of everything it had achieved in the past. Jobs's first direction: get rid of the museum. He had always held the view that Apple was a company that obsessed about the future, not the past. As he gleaned more insights into where Apple had gone wrong and what was required, his primary message was simple: 'Apple needs to remember who Apple is.'

In a presentation to his team on 23 September 1997, Jobs said, 'What we're about isn't making boxes for people to get their jobs done, although we do that well. Apple's about something more than that. Apple at its core, its core value, is that we believe that people with passion can

change the world for the better. And that those people who are crazy enough to believe they can change the world are the ones that actually do. And so what we're going to do is to get back to that core value. A lot of things have changed, the market's a totally different place than it was a decade ago, and Apple's totally different and Apple's place in it is totally different and we understand that. But values . . . those things shouldn't change. The things that Apple believed in at its core are the same things that Apple really stands for today.'

Jobs was on a mission to remind the people at Apple and the world at large *who Apple was*. It was during this presentation in 1997 that Jobs was launching the 'Think different' campaign. Jobs believed that, in reinvigorating the values that were once so prevalent at Apple, it wouldn't only inspire a great culture internally but also, in doing so, it would translate to the outside world. 'Marketing is about values. This is a very complicated world, it's a very noisy world and we're not going to get a chance to get people to remember much about us. No company is.'

Jobs knew that what differentiated Apple and made it unique to consumers was that it stood for something. 'Think different' was about reminding the world what Apple stood for. 'One of the greatest jobs of marketing the universe has ever seen is Nike. Remember, Nike sells a commodity. They sell shoes! And yet when you think of Nike you feel something different than a shoe company. In their ads, they don't ever talk about the products; they don't ever tell you about their air soles and why they're better than Reebok's air soles. What does Nike do in their advertising? They honour great athletes and they honour great athletics. That's who they are; that's what they are about.'

Before rolling the ad for the people in the auditorium

who were sitting in wait, Jobs said of the campaign he was about to launch, ‘It is what we are about and it touches the soul of this company.’

The ‘Think different’ ad that Jobs released that day had the following narrative: ‘Here’s to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels. The troublemakers. The round pegs in the square holes. The ones who see things differently. They’re not fond of rules. And they have no respect for the status quo. You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them. About the only thing you can’t do is ignore them. Because they change things. They push the human race forward. And while some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do.’

What followed has gone down in history as one of the biggest corporate turnarounds the world has ever seen. Jobs got rid of 70 per cent of the products that were in the pipeline to focus on the few he believed would truly make a difference. Getting back to who it was, Apple began innovating again. In the coming decades, it would release products that would revolutionise the personal computing industry, the phone industry, the tablet industry and the music industry. This innovation, which truly brought technology closer to humanity, was the perfect expression of the essence that Apple had once lost.

Shortly before Jobs died in 2011, Apple was the most valuable company in the world. From being written off by everyone – including Jobs himself – in 1997 to regaining its position of market leadership, Apple had achieved a second act that is still unmatched today by any other business in history.

Resilience

Each of the greats
had to overcome extreme
adversity & do this?
How did they do this?
Sense of self purpose
Sense of love
~~Self~~

Chapter 10

THE LOST ART OF SELF-LOVE

'It's not enough to have a dream, or to have a great business mind or to be a great writer; we each need to develop the resilience that enables us to continue walking in the midst of great challenge.'

Every three months, I go away to the Blue Mountains, a beautiful, vast mountain range a little over an hour out of Sydney. I deliberately stay in a small hut, with no electricity, no television, nothing around for miles except trees, birds and a three-hour walking track that takes me down into the valley to pass beneath the waterfalls. I go alone, plan nothing and turn off the phone – it's just me, a fireplace, a path to walk, and my journal. With nothing in my schedule and nowhere to be, it is still surprising even to me that these are the most productive days in my calendar.

For three days, I light the fire, sit on a lone chair and stare into the flames or out over the green mountain ranges,

occasionally reaching for my journal to note something down. I do as little as possible, and in this way I reconnect with myself. I reflect on the previous few months, how I've been feeling, what's challenged me, who I've been, how I've been. And in the stillness of being alone in a cabin, I gaze into the future and imagine. Although at times I'm thinking, it is more an exercise of *feeling*. For me, these trips are about reconnecting with heart, tuning in to my intuition, and ultimately creating the space for me to just listen. I am still amazed that, having only been there for half an hour, a solution comes to me for a challenge that I have been carrying and 'thinking' about for months. The answer was always there; I just needed to create the space to hear it.

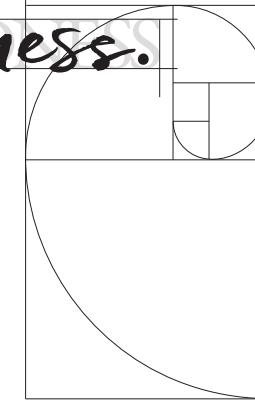
All of my effectiveness comes from my connectedness. When I feel connected, everything flows; I easily move through life creating what's important. When I become disconnected – stressed, tired, scattered – I start to strain, and business and life become a grind. When I'm connected, I feel like I'm operating from a place of love, and when I'm disconnected, I feel like I'm operating from a place that more resembles fear.

Self-love is the practice of acting in alignment with your own happiness. It is a topic that people shy away from, as it is often confused with conceit or arrogance. In fact, those two traits can be the first signs of a lack of true self-love. It is not about waking up in the morning with the urge to hug yourself; it is simply the practice of treating yourself and speaking to yourself the same way you would your best friend.

When you make a mistake, do you beat yourself up about it and remind yourself of all the reasons why you should give up trying, or do you coach yourself, offering the words needed to ensure you come back stronger?

All of my
effectiveness
comes from my
connectedness.

~~CONNECTEDNESS~~



When you accomplish something, however small or however large, do you acknowledge it and allow yourself to be proud, even in the absence of praise from others? When you think about your future self, do you do so in a way that disparages who you are today or do you celebrate who you are today while being grateful for the journey ahead? The difference between practising and not practising self-love can be found in practical examples as seemingly unimportant as these.

We all have what I call ‘happiness strategies’ – small, simple things we do that help us reconnect with self. For me, it’s journaling, walking, being at the gym, being by the water, reading a great book, writing. For others, it is time with their kids, time away from their kids, cooking, eating, surfing, sewing, painting, writing poetry, meditating, doing nothing, gardening, playing, socialising . . . Whatever they may be, we all have them, these activities that make time stand still as we lose ourselves in the moment. This is joy. This is reconnecting. This is remembering what it means to be alive, and what it means just to ‘be’. I don’t schedule my happiness strategies; I ritualise them. You won’t find ‘journaling’ in my calendar (although you will find retreats to the Blue Mountains). Generally speaking, I do them often and automatically, because they are the very simple things that give me joy and keep me connected.

These seemingly minor shifts in how you think, or these small practices that you can ritualise into your life, can have a significant impact on how you see yourself. Patterns of thought ultimately coalesce to form your self-image, and your self-image is the single most influencing factor in determining the life you create.

In my exploration of self-love and the things that can

erode it, I have found that it is often the hardships of our past – or, more accurately, our interpretation of those hardships – that cause us to forget how to be kind to ourselves. It’s the parent who didn’t love us the way we thought we needed; it’s the sibling whom we always elevated while belittling ourselves; it’s the partner who treated us exactly how we feared; it’s the job we didn’t get; it’s the break-up we never quite recovered from. It’s circumstances like these that create the perfect internal environment for self-blame, a lack of self-worth and feelings of inadequacy.

A lack of self-love can be destructive in anyone’s life. Not striving for what you want, rarely stepping outside your comfort zone, not connecting with others at the level of intimacy you seek, trying to fit in rather than stand out are all by-products of a lack of self-love. The truth is we all have scars. Below the happy and brave exteriors, we all carry different kinds of hurt. This doesn’t mean there is anything wrong with us; to the contrary, it means we are human, perfectly imperfect, like everybody else.

What you always need to remember is that your individuality is your strength – what makes you different is what makes you brilliant. It’s probably the very things about yourself that you are keeping in the shadows – your uniqueness, your differences, your hidden-from-the-outside-world vulnerabilities – that, once owned and embraced, would connect you with yourself and the world at large.

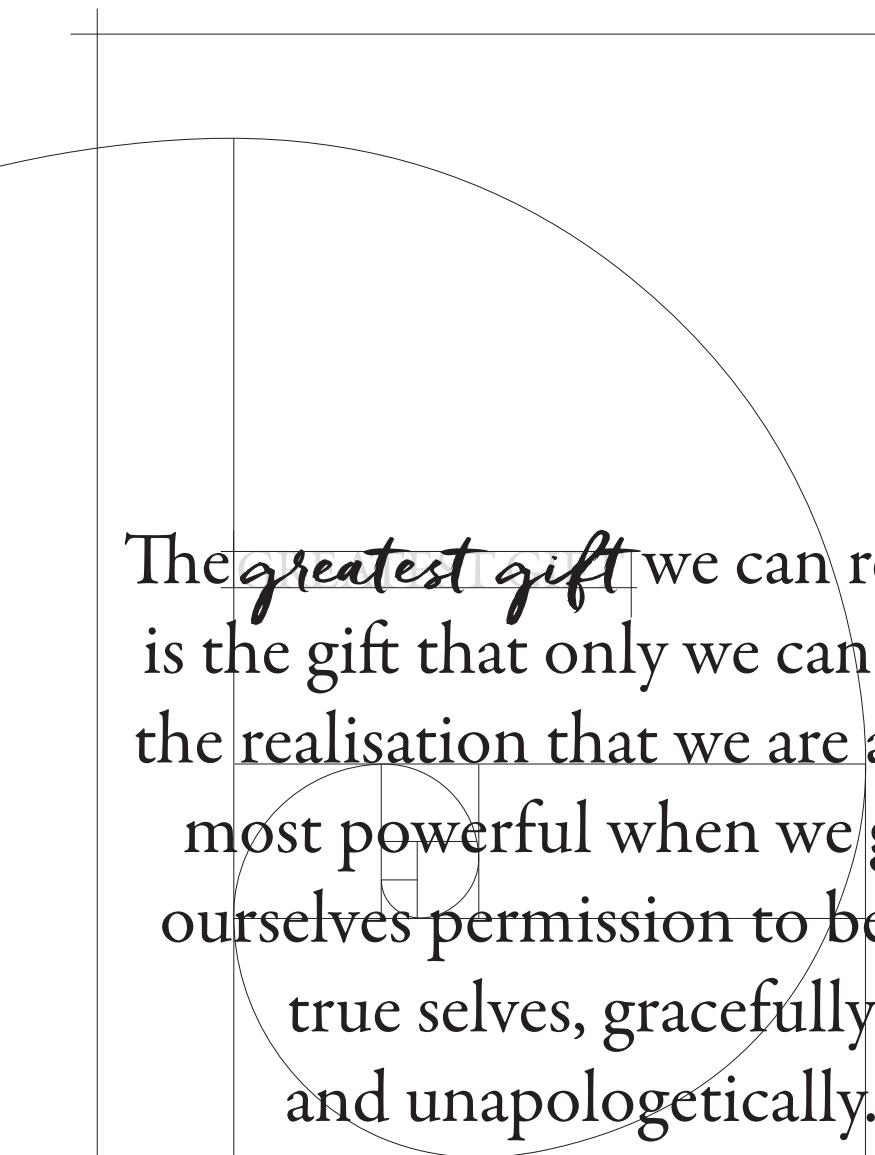
For those who want to make an impact, self-love is key because it helps you find the inner strength and assurance to keep going when things get difficult – and they do. It’s not enough to have a dream, or to have a great business mind or to be a great writer; we each need to develop the resilience that enables us to continue walking in the midst of great challenge. Self-love gives us the personal

foundation upon which we can build ourselves, upon which we can *grow* through adversity and overcome opposition from the outside world. It is from a space of self-assurance that you can approach your life and the world around you independently, without relying on validation from others.

Too many people spend their lives waiting for that single breakthrough moment that will instantly change everything. They live with an emptiness, waiting for something to come along that just might fill the void. It never comes. They die not knowing that the key they sought all along was something they could have found in themselves, had they just taken time to look within and recognise their own virtue.

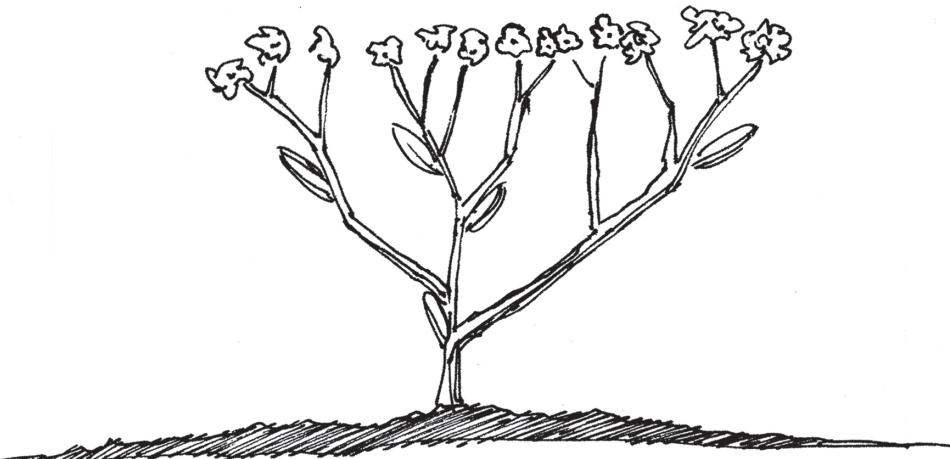
In a world that encourages us to seek validation from others, that thinks love is something that is experienced only when someone else gives it to us, that is constantly reminding us that someone else has the answers, the greatest gift we can receive is the gift that only we can give: the realisation that we are at our most powerful when we give ourselves permission to be our true selves, gracefully and unapologetically.

Self-love is about connecting to yourself and staying connected to yourself, especially in the midst of events and circumstances that may otherwise cause you to fall into destructive patterns. Self-love is about honouring yourself. It is about befriending yourself and recognising that the most powerful guide you have to help you navigate this journey called life is you.



The *greatest gift* we can receive
is the gift that only we can give:
the realisation that we are at our
most powerful when we give
ourselves permission to be our
true selves, gracefully
and unapologetically.

I asked
god so she gave me
growth char. Vengle



Growth &
comfort do
not
co-exist...

Chapter 11

THE VALUE OF ADVERSITY

'And so rock bottom became the solid foundation on which I rebuilt my life.'

J. K. Rowling

I believe that life is a continual process of growing out of and into your best self. I believe that's ultimately why we are here: to have the experiences that will enable our own personal evolution. Often, the periods of our greatest growth come in response to the times of our greatest challenge. Adversity invites us to think, encourages us to explore and sometimes forces us to find greater depths of strength in order to rise to the challenge that now lies in front of us.

When you are somebody who is living a mission-based life with dreams of creating a bright future, growth is most likely one of your highest personal values – one of the things you cherish most in life. As such, the coming of adversity is simply

the universe responding to one of our highest requests: the request for personal growth and evolution. I believe that challenge does not come to leave us defeated but rather to invite us to expand who we are and to become more of ourselves, in order to create the future we are envisaging.

Often, there is little difference between personal pain and the longing to be without it; pain carries a greater sting when we try to disown it. When we accept that to be challenged and stretched to a healthy degree can enable us to flourish, we find comfort in the discomfort that we used to wrestle with. It is through this soothing sense of acceptance that we are more open to discovering the hidden value that lies in every experience – both ‘good’ and ‘bad’.

It is during these challenging times – the passing of a loved one, divorce, business breakdown, bankruptcy, near business breakdown, betrayal, abuse, neglect, personal battles, failures, setbacks – that the greatest opportunity for wisdom presents itself should we pause long enough to find it, pick it up and carry it forward.

I grew up in a nice house with a family of five. Memories of my early childhood are very warm. We had a complete family in a home that was filled with love. I remember constructing a plastic pool in our front yard every year with my father and my two brothers, Cris and Tom. I remember climbing on the roof together, where we could see over into neighbouring streets, and it feeling like the most expansive view in the world. I remember Mum telling me stories about the teenagers she helped at Breaking the Cycle and how she always liked the naughty kids. I also remember Dad telling me ‘The only things you can’t do are the things you can’t imagine’. Among other things, he taught me about possibility.

Cris, my oldest brother, always looked out for me, and so

did Tom. When Cris reached his teenage years, he would teach me things I wasn’t supposed to know. When I woke up from nightmares, Tom would make shadow puppets on the wall as a way to distract me; he would make sure I was always laughing. In our later years at high school, Tom would ensure I was always okay. It probably wasn’t perfect but my memories make it so.

I now realise that having this kind of childhood even for a brief moment is more than a lot of people ever get. I feel so indebted knowing that during my formative years, although we were never wealthy, I had everything I needed.

When I was 12, my family lost all our money. We sold the house we lived in, sold the cars and had to adapt to a different way of living. Although I was too young to be bothered by it personally, my sadness came from seeing the stress it caused my parents, regardless of how well they shielded me from it. It was only recently that my father told me that, on one occasion, he wanted Cris to go to a concert that Cris was excited by, offering to give him some money for it. ‘I went over to the ATM to get Cris \$40 for the concert and I didn’t have it. I didn’t even have \$40,’ he told me 16 years later, understandably with tears in his eyes.

Throughout my teenage years, all three of us boys would rebel, and we had a great time doing so. Growing up was never something that interested me; maturity in the traditional sense of the word has never been something I aspire to. In those years, Tom and I became incredibly close. When we had both finished high school, we worked together at a call centre, hung out together at home, as Cris had moved out, and went out together on the weekend, each being welcomed into the other’s friendship group. I was closer to him than to anybody else in the world – we were incredibly similar.

So much so that we decided to start a business together. Our manager where we worked wanted to start his own call centre, and he asked Tom and me to partner with him to drive it. We had the discussions and developed a plan to go into business.

After months and months of preparation, the call centre was ready to launch on the coming Monday. Tom and I were due to open the door on our first business, and this was something that, at such a young age, we were proud of. With three days to go, on the Friday prior to the opening, Tom passed away after asphyxiating as a result of drug use. He was at home with Mum and me, just 21 years of age.

Tom was an incredibly intelligent person – far more incisive and independently minded than I ever was. Whereas we had both misbehaved in our teenage years, he had taken it one step further than me and was experimenting with heroin – something we had agreed we would never do. To this day, I think about what he would have achieved given the unique qualities and independence he possessed.

That Monday, I opened the business, without my brother by my side. In the coming years, I would be confronted by the high levels of stress that came from starting a business with nothing, by overwhelming feelings of personal inadequacy as my business went backward, and by the very apparent realisation that I was inexperienced in both business and life, all while learning to deal with the grief of losing my brother and best friend. That business was never successful, and I would end up moving on from it years later.

Those were the most difficult years of my life. I would oscillate between being numb and being incredibly anxious to the point where I couldn't converse with those around me. In those years, I absolutely lost myself and for a long

period struggled to find any pieces of light in a life that had become very dark.

When I eventually began to move through my grief, however, I returned to a belief that I had always carried: that everything happens for a reason. I have a somewhat spiritual view that everything that happens in our life, on some level, we have invited into our experience to encourage us to take the next step in our personal evolution. I think that, most of the time, we unfortunately miss these opportunities because we do not recognise them for what they are.

When my family hit hard times, it taught me the importance of money and gave me the hunger required to take on large challenges in life. The collapse of Breaking the Cycle taught me that the traditional education system doesn't work for a lot of people and that people who care can make a difference. Tom's passing away gave me the absolute resolve to dedicate my life's work to enabling people to live a life that lights them up – the world is full of Toms who will make a huge contribution if given the chance. The years of heartache and anxiety that followed Tom's passing were there to teach me to appreciate life and to find magic in a smile. It also gave me the understanding to truly empathise with others who were going through challenging times – something that has been incredibly important to my leadership in later years. Starting in business from zero and struggling for years meant that I became incredibly resourceful and developed the ability to create something out of nothing – a skill set that would later differentiate me from those who knew only comfort. The business ultimately failing gave me a permanent sense of humility – a virtue that one cannot sustain success without.

The dark years that felt like a nightmare were the very

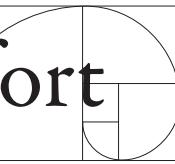
periods that enabled me to grow into the person who was able to build my dreams. Something that has been interesting for me to realise throughout my journey is that growth and comfort rarely coexist. The struggle, the grieving, the complete loss of self-worth, the constant searching, the forced humility were all exactly what I required to humbly develop into a person I needed to become. It was John D. Rockefeller who said, ‘Oh how blessed young people are who have to struggle for a foundation and a beginning in life.’

One wildly successful person who found her foundation through adversity was Joanne Rowling, better known as J. K. Rowling. She is, of course, the author of Harry Potter, the best-selling book series in history, having sold over 400 million copies. The movies that were based on them grossed \$5.3 billion in total, making Harry Potter the second-highest-grossing movie series ever. And then, of course, there was all the merchandise and even theme parks. Perhaps more importantly than her commercial success, Rowling is credited with getting colossal numbers of children reading for pleasure, many of them for the first time.

‘I was not the world’s most secure person. I wasn’t someone with an enormous amount of – in fact, I’d say I was someone with not much self-belief at all and yet in this one thing in my life I believed. That was the one thing in my life – I felt “I can tell a story”,’ Rowling told Oprah Winfrey in 2010.

Rowling had been writing almost nonstop since she was six, and then one day, while on a train at the age of 25, an idea strikes her like a bolt of lightning: ‘boy doesn’t know he’s a wizard goes to wizard school’. Not having a pen on her at the time, Rowling sat on a train as the ideas came

Growth and comfort
rarely coexist.



#ReinventTomorrow

flooding in. That night, she began writing her first Harry Potter book, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*.

Her mother had always been a huge supporter of her writing. Yet, six months after she had started writing Harry Potter, her mother passed away after a long battle with multiple sclerosis. Rowling had never told her mother about Harry Potter. ‘And I would have done. You know? I would have told her about it and I know she would have really liked it. I think it was six months before she died I started writing. Yeah, and I never shared it with her.’

Rowling points to the fact that her mother’s passing, while understandably traumatic, shaped the Harry Potter series into being what it was. ‘The books wouldn’t be what they are if she hadn’t died. I mean her death is on virtually every other page of the Harry Potter books, you know? At least half of Harry’s journey is a journey to deal with death in its many forms, what it does to the living, what it means to die, what survives death – it’s there in every single volume of the books.’

Here we see a clear example of Rowling taking something that is traumatically difficult and using those events to help her move forward. ‘If she hadn’t died I don’t think it’s too strong to say there wouldn’t be Harry Potter. There wouldn’t – you know? The books are what they are because she died. Because I loved her and she died. That’s why they are what they are.’

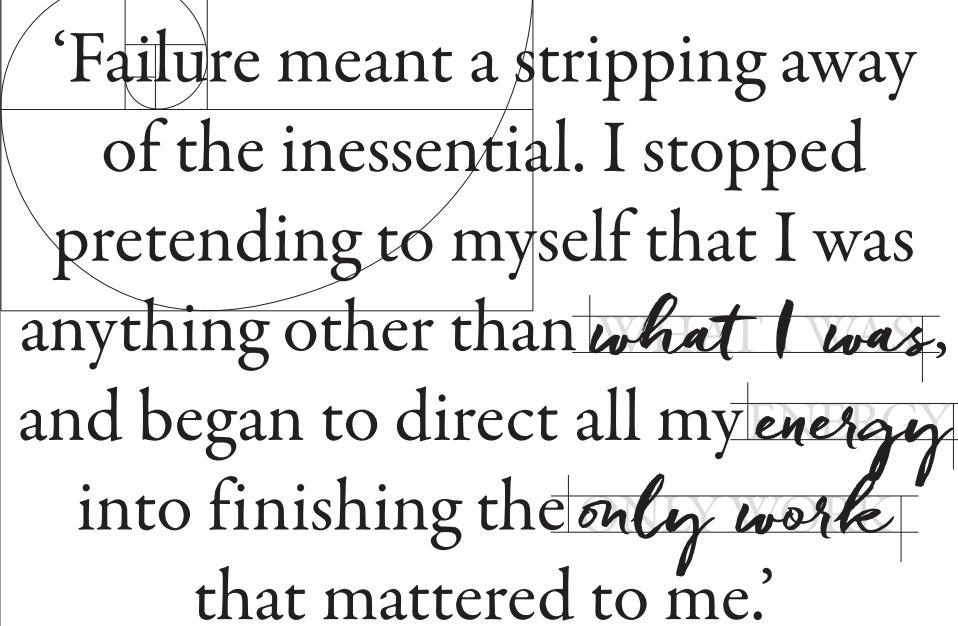
The years after her mother’s passing were incredibly hard for Rowling. In her own words, this was when she entered the dark period of her life. After moving to Portugal, Rowling married. Still a struggling writer, she became an English teacher, and within a couple of years she gave birth to her daughter, Jessica. Soon after Jessica was born, her marriage ended, and she decided to move to Scotland.

‘I had failed on an epic scale. An exceptionally short-lived marriage had imploded . . . and the fears of my parents, and those I’d had for myself, had both come to pass. By every usual standard, I was the biggest failure I knew.’

Rowling reflects that the period of depression she went through, while incredibly difficult to process and move out of, would ultimately be very formative in who she would grow into and how the Harry Potter series evolved. Many of the characters and creatures in the Harry Potter series arose from this dark period of Rowling’s life. ‘I think I had tendencies toward depression from quite young. It became really acute when I was sort of twenty-five to twenty-eight, it was a dark time. It’s that absence of feeling – and it’s even the absence of hope that you can feel better. And it’s so difficult to describe to someone who’s never been there because it’s not sadness. Sadness is – I know sadness – sadness is not a bad thing. You know? To cry and to feel. But it’s that cold absence of feeling – that really hollowed-out feeling. That’s what the Dementors are. And it was because of my daughter that I went and got help.’

Today, Rowling openly discusses that period of her life. Acknowledging that at the time she questioned whether she would get through it or for how long it would stretch, she now views it as providing the very direction she needed in order to focus on the work that mattered to her: being a mother and telling great stories.

In a Harvard Commencement Address in 2008, Rowling reflects, ‘So why do I talk about the benefits of failure? Simply because failure meant a stripping away of the inessential. I stopped pretending to myself that I was anything other than what I was, and began to direct all my energy into finishing the only work that mattered to me. Had I really succeeded at anything else, I might never



‘Failure meant a stripping away of the inessential. I stopped pretending to myself that I was anything other than what I was, and began to direct all my energy into finishing the only work that mattered to me.’

- J. K. Rowling -

have found the determination to succeed in the one arena I believed I truly belonged. I was set free, because my greatest fear had been realised, and I was still alive, and I still had a daughter whom I adored, and I had an old typewriter and a big idea. And so rock bottom became the solid foundation on which I rebuilt my life.’

In life, it is not what happens to us that determines who we become, but rather how we choose to interpret what happens to us, and therefore *who we become* as a result. In J. K. Rowling, we find someone who, like many others we’ve discussed in this book, had to endure the depths of her own pain in order to reach the heights of her own fulfilment.

The key question I’ve learnt to explore whenever I’m presented with great challenge is . . .

If this happened for a reason, what would that be?

It is in the stillness, and the pausing to feel our way through such a question, where we can shine a light on an otherwise dark experience. Regardless of how painful the present challenge may be, often this reflection can lead into a beautiful exploration of self. Some further questions here that you might find useful are . . .

What was this experience here to teach me? Did I need to learn about the value of life? Did I need to learn about the realities of loss? Did I need to learn to move beyond self and live in the service of others? Or did I need to learn to take better care of myself? Did I need to learn to love more wisely? Did I need to learn the true value of integrity? Did I need to move from one chapter to the next? Did I need to refresh my personal values to reflect who I had now become? And, ultimately, did I need to achieve higher levels of self-love?

Sometimes, the answers are immediately available. Other times, you need to ask yourself these questions for

years before the answers become clear. The adversity might be preparing you for a period that hasn't even happened yet, meaning you may not be able to make complete sense of it until those future events present themselves.

An OPR that we're brought up believing is that 'the truth hurts'. I do not agree with this. The real truth never hurts. If it hurts, it's because you haven't found the highest truth yet. You've bought in to a story you created or borrowed from someone else, and you've been running that story ever since. You haven't got to the true essence of what the experience was there to teach you; you've yet to find the gift in the adversity.

When challenge is seen for what it is, the result is rarely heartache or despair, but a deep sense of growth and acceptance. There is a hidden value in every experience, particularly the hard ones. Ask yourself, what was the most challenging period of your life? If that period happened for a constructive reason, what would that be? How did that experience help you to become the person you longed to become? You know you've found the hidden wisdom when you view your deepest scar as your greatest gift.

If this happened for a
~~reason~~, what would
that be?

"The wise man is the
marked man."
Stephen Hall

Chapter 12

RESISTANCE

'The decades of oppression and brutality had another, unintended effect, and that was that it produced . . . people of such extraordinary courage, wisdom, and generosity that their like may never be known again.'

Nelson Mandela

Confucius - couldn't get a job
Jesus - crucified
Socrates - put to death
Mandela - imprisoned
Gandhi - imprisoned
Dr King - assassinated

Whether it comes from parents, a partner, colleagues, in-laws, your own children, or the world at large, nobody seems to escape the criticism of others in one form or another. Indeed, as Aristotle said, 'There is only one way to avoid criticism: do nothing, say nothing and be nothing.' However, I do imagine that those who simply do nothing receive a lot of feedback from whoever's paying the rent. Attracting feedback is a part of everybody's life.

Ironically, this criticism only amplifies the greater one's contribution becomes. An understandable ingredient of human nature is to be resistant to change. Humanity finds comfort in what's familiar. As such, to know thyself and to speak of

progress is to put yourself where criticism can see you and protest can find you. The higher you rise, the more visible you become; and the greater the impact you start to make, the more resistance and opposition you will face from the outside world.

In my own journey, which I have learnt is indicative of most who set out along a non-traditional path, feedback on my early years of business would come from friends and family who would have preferred to see me take a safer route. It would also come from clients and suppliers, who would rightly point out where we needed to become more rigorous in our approach. As I built successful businesses, criticism would come from those who were threatened by another's success. And as we started to operate on a national and international basis, with increased media attention, criticism would inevitably come from people everywhere, attacking my way of thinking and even my character.

As your journey progresses over the years, the criticism that you draw will come from further afield and grow louder. Fortunately, if you're doing great work, so too will the praise and recognition. Although it varies depending on your line of work, my rule of thumb is that if 96 per cent of the conversation around what you do is positive and four per cent or less is negative, then you're doing okay. However, as your audience grows – say from 1000 to 300,000 people – that four per cent or less represents a substantially greater number.

This resistance always serves a purpose. In the beginning of my journey, the doubts expressed by those who cared about me prompted me to ask the necessary questions to ensure that I was comfortable with the risks I was taking. As my businesses grew, feedback from clients and



Resistance always
serves a purpose.

#ReinventTomorrow

suppliers highlighted the areas in which we needed to become stronger. Today, with criticism coming from people all over the world from a range of different backgrounds, I am forced to stay absolutely conscious of every decision I make. And this strengthens my thinking. When respectful criticism is truly *heard*, it prompts reflection and is used as a catalyst to ask yourself the hard questions. This urges you to confront the ways in which you can improve, and, as such, the criticism has served only to strengthen your resolve. In some ways, it is your friends who believe in your dreams and your enemies who help you achieve them.

An ironic pattern that surfaces when looking into the greats of history is that the more influential they become, the more they are protested against. Unfortunately, history demonstrates that our culture often encourages conformity, and challenges those who introduce new ways of thinking. In his book *Wisdom*, Stephen S. Hall says:

We can see that in many cultures, the wise man is the marked man. Many of the wise people on the list needed to abandon conventional modes of life and thought to nurture the habit of mind for which they are now celebrated, which is often to tell society what it doesn't want to hear; many were ostracised during their lifetime, while others were executed outright or assassinated. Mandela and Gandhi were imprisoned, Confucius was unemployable, Socrates was put to death, even the closest friend of Jesus Christ, according to philosopher Karl Jaspers, viewed him as a madman. In its particular time and place, wisdom not only perturbs but often appears socially dangerous.

One of the marks of a great spirit is the ability to rise above opposition to find the resolve to keep progressing.

‘Many of the wise people on the list needed to ~~abandon~~ conventional modes of life and thought to nurture the habit of mind for which they are now celebrated.’

- Stephen S. Hall -

Whether your journey entails large-scale societal change, building successful businesses, or simply self-exploration and becoming the best you, along the way you will be faced with resistance from a world around you that doesn't want things to change. To remain connected to one's vision and centred in one's self in the face of protest, regardless of scale, is a ceaseless endeavour that we all undertake.

One story that puts our challenges into perspective and reminds us of how fortunate we are to have the problems we do is that of Nelson Mandela. His journey is a great example of how human will can triumph in the face of the most extreme resistance. I want to recount it in detail here, firstly because it is a story that deserves to be told fully, and secondly because there are many lessons inherent in Mandela's life; one cannot overcome opposition without first building the strength of character to do so.

Mandela was born in 1918 and was named Rolihlahla Madiba Mandela. Madiba was the name of his clan, while Rolihlahla, the name given to him by his father, means 'pulling the branch of a tree' or 'troublemaker'. The British influence on African culture and education at the time meant that anyone with an African name was given an English name. On Madiba's first day of school, for reasons unknown, his teacher gave him the name 'Nelson'.

Although his birth name bestowed Mandela with a prophetic title of *troublemaker*, he was not born a revolutionary, and in his younger years he did not have an interest in politics. As he was doing his articles at a law firm, Mandela had a friend, Gaur, who was interested in the fight for freedom for the African people. Gaur encouraged Mandela on several occasions to attend events where people would gather to discuss politics, the freedom fight and governmental issues. Mandela eventually relented and reluctantly

accompanied Gaur to a political gathering. 'I was not inclined to join any political organisation . . . I went primarily out of intellectual curiosity. I was just becoming aware of the history of racial oppression in my own country, and saw the struggle in South Africa as purely racial.'

It is fascinating to learn that, like any person entering into a new field, the legend who is today 'Nelson Mandela' felt inadequate and undeserving to be among such people. 'I was far more of an observer than a participant. I felt extremely shy, wary of committing a faux pas, and unequipped to participate in the high-flown and rapid-fire conversations. My thoughts seemed undeveloped by comparison to the sophisticated dialogue around me.' At this point in his life, we see a young man who would go on to become one of the most revered political activists in human history feeling unworthy of even entering into a conversation about politics – evidence that even larger-than-life icons begin, and continue, just as human as you or me.

Mandela's political journey evolved to the point where the freedom fight became his life's work. The further he ventured into politics, the more his life was consumed and confined by the very racial oppression he was fighting against. Apartheid meant that South Africa was a country with deep racial segregation. The very word Apartheid means 'separateness' or 'apart-hood'. Under that regime, non-whites were removed from their homes, forced to live in designated areas, restricted from public facilities such as beaches, enrolled in separate schools, barred from government and at one point not recognised as citizens of South Africa. Between 1960 and 1983, 3.5 million non-white South Africans were driven from their homes, making it one of the largest forced removals in human history. Apartheid, however, lasted from 1948 to 1994.

By the end of 1952, Mandela had become so disruptive that the government placed even greater bans on him personally, severely restricting his freedom of speech, where he could go and who he could see. Under the restrictions, he could not attend public meetings or speak to more than one person at a time.

As such, during Mandela's first trial for 'high treason against the state', his political party the African National Congress decided that, if he was found not guilty, he would go underground. 'Only someone operating full-time from underground would be free from paralysing restrictions imposed by the enemy. It was something I knew I had to do. This would be a hazardous life and I would be apart from my family, but when a man is denied the right to live a life he believes in, he has no choice but to become an outlaw.'

On Wednesday 29 March 1961, Mandela was found not guilty, as cheers erupted through the courtroom. He could not go home, nor did he have time to celebrate. Although he had not been convicted, he knew that he had now become an even greater enemy of the government, which had lost face. He kissed and hugged his wife and kids goodbye, and vanished.

Mandela reflects in his autobiography *A Long Walk to Freedom* that he now had three objectives. He needed to disappear, build an army and start a revolution. 'I who had never been a soldier, who had never fought in battle, who had never fired a gun at an enemy had been given the task of starting an army. It would be a daunting task for a veteran general much less a military novice.'

When history remembers Mandela, it does so almost assuming that his path was written, his accomplishments inevitable, his talents God-given. History often remembers

these stories in an elegant fashion. However, when you look into the day-to-day lives of such figures, in each case the reality is far more messy and improvised than the mythology would have you believe. In this moment, we see Mandela as a very human character with three extraordinary things on his to-do list, unsure of whether he will be able to grow into the person capable of achieving these feats.

'I began in the only way I knew how, by reading and talking to experts. What I wanted to find out were the fundamental principles for starting a revolution. I discovered that there was a great deal of writing on this very subject, and I made my way through the available literature on armed warfare and in particular guerrilla warfare. I wanted to know what circumstances were appropriate for a guerrilla war; how one created, trained and maintained a guerrilla force; how it should be armed; where it gets its supplies – all basic and fundamental questions.'

Mandela was not born a revolutionary; he taught himself how to become one.

After remaining invisible for three years as he orchestrated a revolution from underground, he was arrested and convicted of conspiracy to overthrow the government. He was sentenced to life imprisonment. The year was 1962 and Mandela was 44 years of age.

Many years later, in 1985, with Mandela still behind bars, the South African Government was under growing pressure. There were mass upheavals and unrestrained anger from the non-whites of South Africa, who made up 80 per cent of the population. At the same time, economic sanctions were placed on South Africa by countries around the world who shared in the protest.

Throughout his sentence, Mandela was held up by his people as the face and the leader of the anti-Apartheid

movement. The government would often reach out to him with letters in attempts to initiate conversations. However, Mandela sensed they were often just testing the waters, and he felt he wasn't in a position of strength from which to negotiate, so he never replied.

As the government came under increased pressure both domestically and internationally to end Apartheid, they moved Mandela to a new part of the jail, where his cell resembled an apartment. It had three bedrooms, a separate toilet and a swimming pool. 'By prison standards it was palatial,' Mandela would later write. The move had him intrigued as to the government's motivation. He spent weeks deep in thought, wondering what this could mean and how he could best utilise the government's current position. 'Over the next few days and weeks I came to a realisation about my new circumstances . . . I resolved to use it to do something I had been pondering for a long while, begin discussions with the government.'

This was a bold move by Mandela and would ensure that South Africa wasn't led down a path of more violence and greater destruction. The two opposing sides in this conflict would be coming together to talk. 'There are times when a leader must move out ahead of the flock, go off in a new direction, confident that he is leading his people the right way.'

In the coming months and years, Mandela would often be transported to the homes and offices of ministers and the president, where he would sit and engage in rigorous debate with up to eight government officials at a time. He would front them alone, in his prison clothes, arguing on the side of right.

Even though he was outnumbered and up against decades of racial prejudice, Mandela was able to advance

the government's understanding of the issue. His resolve through the negotiation period was absolute. While his conditions were incredibly disadvantageous – he had been in prison for a quarter of a century, was cut off from the outside world, was outnumbered, and was wearing prison clothes and sometimes chains – he was able to rise above his surroundings to a point where he was not defeated or bullied but able to pursue a meaningful conversation against a forceful oppressor. Again, we see a person maintaining his composure against all the odds and not letting his spirit be defeated.

On Sunday 11 February 1990, Mandela was released from Victor Verster Prison after serving 27 years. Throughout his imprisonment, he had rejected at least three conditional offers of release, in anticipation of the day when he would be released unconditionally and could continue his work. He was 72 years old.

Four years later, Mandela became president of South Africa. The man who had spent 27 years behind bars as a terrorist in his own country was now the nation's first democratically elected, and black, president. As promised, he formed a multi-ethnic government and began dismantling the structures that held Apartheid in place.

Upon reflecting on his life, Mandela highlights that it is through great oppression that great character is formed. 'The decades of oppression and brutality had another, unintended effect, and that was that it produced . . . people of such extraordinary courage, wisdom, and generosity that their like may never be known again. Perhaps it requires such depth of oppression to create such heights of character.' Although clearly saddened by his years of oppression, Mandela indicates that resistance, when confronted intelligently, can strengthen the human spirit.

For me, Mandela's story is one of human strength overcoming insurmountable obstacles. It's a reminder, albeit an extreme one, that human virtue can flourish even in the most challenging of environments. In Mandela, we find humility, patience, courage, selflessness, sacrifice, forgiveness and grace. We are reminded that genuine strength doesn't come wrapped in bravado or showmanship but in the assured humility that comes from self-love.

Albert Einstein said, 'Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds.' I've always thought it speaks volumes that Einstein didn't say, 'Great spirits have always encountered rigorous debate . . .' No, it is not debate, nor slight opposition that great spirits face – it is *violent opposition*.

Whatever your own personal journey might entail, remember that characters like Mandela can inspire the rest of humanity. They are examples of the challenge we are capable of meeting and the resistance we are capable of overcoming, when we find our inner strength in the quiet resolve of the human spirit.

'Perhaps it requires such *depth*
of oppression to create such
heights of character.'

- Nelson Mandela -

Legacy



Chapter 13

THE JOURNEY

'Unattached to the destination . . .'

We live in a world that worships the results and not the work. The fruit but not the tree. The destination but not the journey. Paradoxically, it is those who are unattached to the destination, with all of themselves fully engaged in the journey, who ultimately find their way.

Harmony of work & life
mind, body & spirit
self & others

A
After learnt strong
hard long but experienced

Balance

Golden mean
~~Legacy born in sustained effort of body mind~~
Legacy born in sustained effort of body mind
of soul.

1.6/8

Chapter 14

WORK DIFFERENT

'We need more role models of doing things differently.'

Arianna Huffington

Great legacies are not found in illustrious accomplishments or grand moments; great legacies are built by everyday people putting consistent effort into one pursuit over a sustained period of time. Living a mission-based life is about finding your calling and getting busy immersing yourself in it. Greatness in any endeavour, be it building a strong family, a meaningful career, a thriving business or a legacy that impacts millions, is attained by those who lose themselves in the journey. Those who are living in accordance with their thread are driven by a sense of purpose and fuelled by a sense of joy. It is not about attachment to the end result or about getting somewhere, but about finding the artistry and the beauty in the work itself. Like a painter who comes alive when they are painting, when we get lost in the work, we can produce a masterpiece.

One example of someone who found her calling and

immersed herself in it is fashion icon Sara Blakely, founder of Spanx. In 2012, Blakely was named one of *Time's* 100 Most Influential People for what she has achieved in business and philanthropy.

When Blakely was seven years of age, she came up with the idea of 'charm socks': socks that would be decorated with ornaments that were meaningful to the person wearing them. Her mother would take her to buy a bag of plastic charms, they would sew them on to socks together, and Sara would sell them at school. Although she didn't know it at the time, this was the beginning of a thread that would form the basis of much of Blakely's life's work.

During her school days, around the dinner table, her father would ask Blakely and her brother what they had failed at. 'I would come home and sit at the dinner table and he would say, "Sara, what did you fail at this week?" And if I didn't have something, he would actually be disappointed. I can vividly remember coming and saying, "Dad, Dad, I tried out for this and I was horrible," and he would high five me!' she says laughingly, talking to *Fortune* magazine. Being okay with failure would later mean that Blakely would lean in to the work required to build her dream.

As she grew up, Blakely thought that going to law school would be the most practical path for her. Fortunately for women everywhere, however, Blakely's plan to become a lawyer was short-lived. As she herself reports, 'I failed the LSAT [Law School Admission Test]. Basically, if I had not failed, I'd have been a lawyer and there would be no Spanx. I think failure is nothing more than life's way of nudging you that you are off course.'

From there, Blakely went to work at Disney World as a cast member and then sold fax machines door-to-door in Florida. It was in the humidity of Florida that she had

'I think failure is nothing more than ~~life's way~~ of nudging you that you are off course.'

- Sara Blakely -

the idea that would be the catalyst for the rest of her life. ‘I needed an undergarment that didn’t exist,’ she said, sick of wearing undergarments that were uncomfortable as she walked door-to-door each day. Blakely remembered the seven-year-old Sara and began dreaming of creative solutions. ‘It never dawned on me as a consumer but everybody making our hosiery wear were men. And I quickly realised why it had been so uncomfortable. Because the people making it were not wearing it,’ Blakely said. ‘And if they were, they were not admitting it,’ she continued with a laugh. And so was born her fashion business, Spanx.

With her life savings of \$5000 and a big idea, she started experimenting with fabrics and different designs, and ultimately taught herself patent law to protect her product as she was developing it. Once she was satisfied she had developed an undergarment that was more comfortable and appealing to women than what was already in the market, she drove for ten hours to North Carolina, where most of America’s hosiery mills are located, to demonstrate her new concept. Again, Blakely found herself going from door to door, though this time it was in the hope of launching her dream. ‘I would go from mill to mill and they would always ask me the same three questions. They’d say:

“And you are?” and I’d say, “Sara Blakely.”

‘They’d say, “And you’re with?” and I’d say, “Sara Blakely.”

‘They’d say, “And you’re financially backed by?” and I’d say, “Sara Blakely.”

‘And they’d show me the door.’

Today, Blakely reflects on those days as the hardest of her entire business journey. With no reputation, financial backing or experience, she found it incredibly difficult to get her first order in an industry that is dominated by big

players. She thought back to when she was a kid, sitting at the dinner table with her father. ‘I didn’t realise it at the time but he was teaching us that failure was not trying. And so with Spanx and everyone saying it was such a bad idea initially, I feel so much freer to be willing to “fail” in the traditional sense because I’m not focused on the end result. It’s like working a muscle. The more you’re willing to risk something and maybe fail, you realise there’s always a hidden gift in it; you either meet someone new that brings you to a different place in your life or you learn something new. I was always really excited by how my life grew with every risk I took.’

Blakely’s brilliance was in how she approached life and work. Living a life that was consistent with her thread gave her the resolve to try, and try, and try. This determination saw Blakely land her first order, which would see her selling Spanx to seven stores. The innovation she had brought to her fashion, by making undergarments that women enjoyed wearing, meant that Spanx was more popular in-store than the traditional products she was competing against.

Although the public had started buying her wares, Blakely continued selling fax machines in order to generate an income and fund her project. During the day, she would sell office equipment; of a night, she would work on her dream – doing the research, developing the products, and working on the legalities to protect her ideas. She did all of this concurrently for two years.

After starting with just \$5000 and having never raised external money or spending a dollar on traditional advertising, today Sara has her own Spanx retail stores across the US and sells her hosiery in more than 50 countries around the world. True to her vision – ‘To help women feel great about themselves and their potential’ – Blakely launched

the Sara Blakely Foundation in 2006 to help women through education and entrepreneurial training. In 2012, Blakely was named the world's youngest self-made female billionaire by *Forbes* magazine. A testament to her ability to manage a heavy work ethic with the desire to build a holistic and fulfilling life beyond business – she is also married with four kids.

Building something that is robust – a business, a career, a family – requires a huge amount of effort. And not just ‘hustle’ or blind labour. In my view, these things are far too one-dimensional to enable somebody to do something truly special. It requires deep reflection, strategic thinking, intelligent actions and dependable leadership. Hard work is a very real part of building something great. That’s why it’s so important you do what you love. Blakely was able to make Spanx a success while juggling the other elements of her life because it was something she loved.

In 2007, Steve Jobs was on stage with Bill Gates at the D5: All Things Digital conference, and said about entrepreneurship and innovation, ‘It’s really hard. And you have to do it over a sustained period of time. So if you don’t love it, if you’re not having fun doing it, you don’t *really* love it, you’re going to give up. And that’s what happens to most people, actually. If you really look at the ones that ended up, you know, being “successful” in the eyes of society and the ones that didn’t, oftentimes, it’s the ones [who] were successful loved what they did so they could persevere, you know, when it got really tough. And the ones that didn’t love it quit because they’re sane, right? Who would want to put up with this stuff if you don’t love it?’

The focus required to achieve extraordinary feats requires you to be *very* clear about where your strengths lie, what you love, what you want to spend your time doing

and what you don’t. The term ‘work-life balance’ often sees work come off as the enemy. However, when what you do for work is fuelled by who you are, work doesn’t seem like work anymore. You have found something far greater than work-life balance; you have achieved work-life harmony.

This does not give us permission to work around the clock to the detriment of ourselves or others – burnout, exhaustion or damaged personal relationships are all signs that we need to better manage ourselves along the journey in order to stay fulfilled and look after those around us. However, in a very real way, it does mean we live a very different lifestyle than most are used to. And therefore this lifestyle and commitment to our work needs to be managed with careful strategies.

A principle that applies not only to building a business but to building any meaningful endeavour in life is that of *highest and best use* – determining the areas and projects that you can do better than anyone else and that will add the most value to the business. The journey, then, of building your business is a journey to a point where you only work on the things that are your highest and best use, and *everything* else is either delegated to your team or outsourced to great people. As Blakely says, ‘The smartest thing I ever did was to hire my weakness.’

There is a big difference between being productive and being busy. For entrepreneurs and innovators, you need to minimise the time you personally spend with your hands on the tools doing the tasks, and maximise the time you can spend thinking, researching, strategising, problem-solving and leading. As a business grows, these once intangible functions become a very real full-time job. It is in these *high-level* roles that your time is best spent. This means that as you develop the money and the resources to

When what you do for work
is fuelled by *who you are*,
you have found something
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work-life *harmony*.

employ other people to do brilliantly what you should not, you eventually get to a place where you are only devoting time to the things that push the business forward, or the things that rejuvenate your mind and body.

On 6 April 2007, Arianna Huffington woke up under her desk at work in a pool of her own blood. As she was working, Huffington had collapsed, hit her head on the way down, broken her cheekbone and cut her right eye, which would need four stitches. In the coming weeks, Huffington visited doctor after doctor as they performed tests for brain tumours, heart disease and other medical conditions that could explain the collapse. Fortunately, the doctors were able to clear her of any medical condition or illness. However, what caused the collapse was almost as troubling: Huffington had passed out at her desk as a result of exhaustion and sleep deprivation.

Having been an author and a journalist for much of her life, Huffington co-founded The Huffington Post in 2005, which today is the third-largest source for online news. *Forbes* lists her not only as one of the Most Powerful Women in Media but also as one of the Most Powerful Women in the World.

'At some point by default, we began defining success by two metrics: money and power,' she told Rachel Whetstone at 'Talks at Google' in 2014. Prompted by her collapse from overworking, Huffington developed a third metric, which has four fundamental pillars: well-being, wisdom, wonder and giving. 'When you look around, you see that the majority of people we know about who are successful are workaholics. So you look around and say, "Hey, they succeeded because they worked around the clock." But there is no correlation.'

When you are clear about who you are and what you

want to create in life, it can be all too easy to work yourself to the point of exhaustion. When you are burnt-out, your decision-making capabilities decrease, your problem-solving abilities diminish and your productivity, even if you don't realise it, suffers greatly. And we are in an era where good judgement and clarity of thought are more valuable than exertion.

Today, Huffington has discovered that she can achieve just as much without working herself to the point of collapse. 'I'm not for a minute suggesting we're not going to work hard. I work hard now. I'm suggesting not working stupidly, and regenerating, and renewing ourselves, which only make us better at work.'

Huffington challenges the commonly held OPR that the harder we work, the more we achieve. 'We need more role models of doing things differently.' She suggests we need to take pauses to become re-energised and, more importantly, to feel fulfilled. And the research agrees with her.

Mark Bertolini is the CEO of one of America's top 100 companies by revenue and its third-largest health insurance company, Aetna. Following a skiing accident that saw Bertolini break his neck, he became dependent on narcotics as a coping mechanism, until, in his words, he 'found his new cocktail'. His new cocktail consisted of meditation, yoga and acupuncture. Bertolini was so pleased by the transformation that he introduced mindfulness classes that would bring each of these practices to his 49,000 staff. Shortly after introducing the classes, he brought in Duke University to conduct a cost-benefit analysis on introducing mindfulness into the workplace. In 2015, *The New York Times* reported that Aetna saw a 28 per cent reduction in stress levels on average across those who took the classes.

They also found a 20 per cent improvement in the quality of sleep. These benefits made people more effective and able to achieve an extra 62 minutes of productivity each week. Aetna estimates this to be worth \$3000 per employee per year.

Today, even the most traditional corporations are implementing mindfulness practices and pauses for their people. Boston Consulting Group, one of the leading management consulting firms in the world, has a Red Zone Report, which is a report generated and delivered to management when a consultant's billing hours are too high and they may therefore be at risk of health problems, fatigue or depression. Even some of the largest and most traditional investment banks in the world, such as Goldman Sachs, have introduced meditation classes for their people, understanding the importance of personal well-being in doing great work.

Something I learnt in the first five years of my business journey was to value my downtime as much, if not *more than*, my uptime. I found that it was in the pauses, in the resting, the rejuvenating, that I was able to recharge. And when the time came to get back into the work, I would do so with a wellness of mind and body, and a lightness of spirit. Managing this dynamic between applying myself and re-energising myself took me *years* to figure out, and will never be a perfect science.

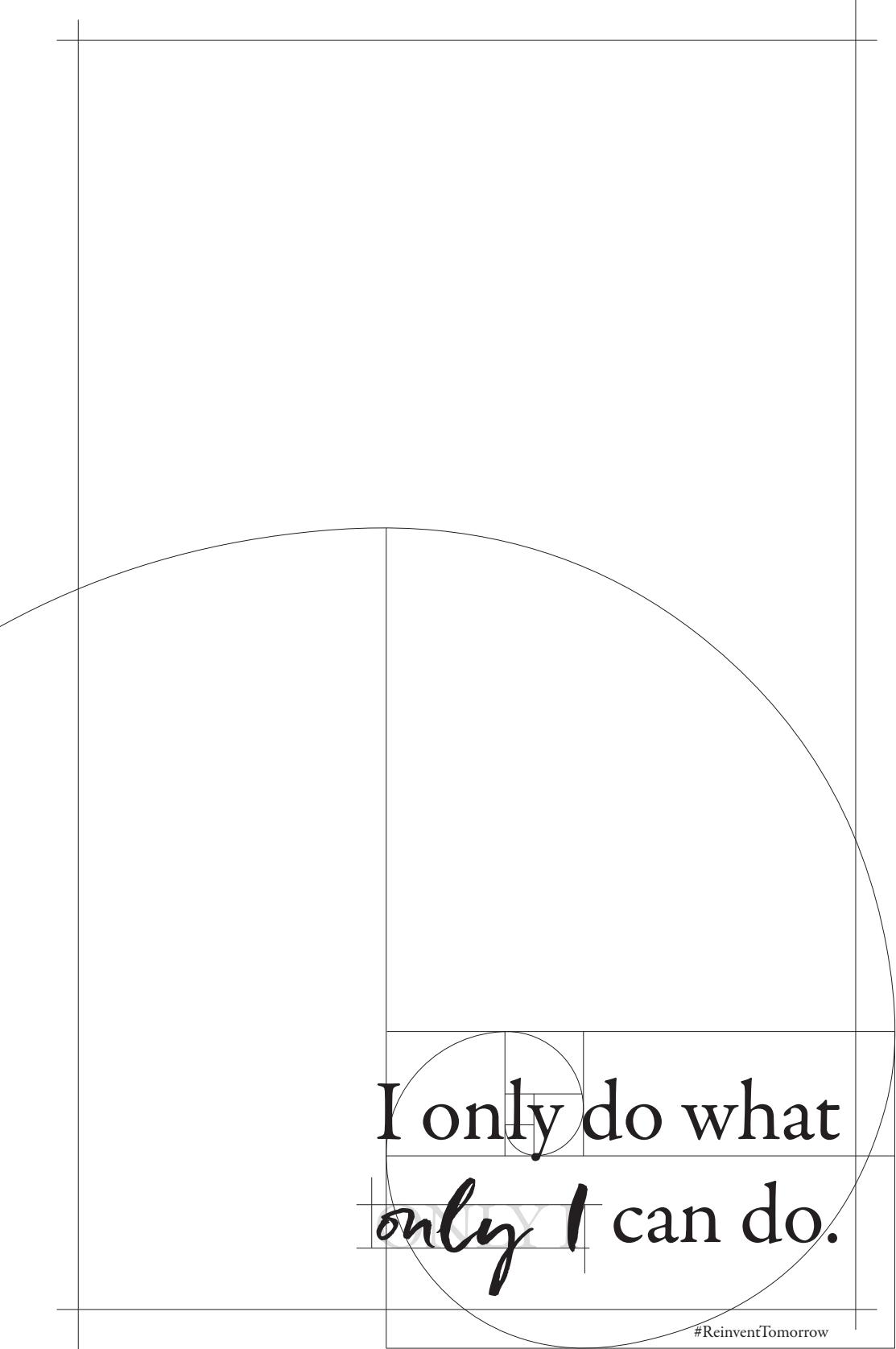
Mark Nepo, famous poet and philosopher, says of sacrifice, 'The original definition of sacrifice moves more inwardly, it means to give up what no longer works in order to stay close to what is sacred.' For me, I needed to continually give up what no longer worked for me, both at home and in business, in order to stay close to what is sacred: living a joyful life that brings about the achievement of our

vision and mission. This means that today, both at home and in business, *I only do what only I can do*. While it took me many years to get to that position, it is a meaningful pursuit for anybody living a mission-based life. Declutter your life and your schedule of everything that either doesn't bring you joy or doesn't move you closer to your vision.

This clarity around how you spend your time and what you do and don't engage in may be foreign to most other people. We live in a world that is always plugged in: phone calls, emails, text messages, Skype messages, Facebook notifications, LinkedIn Mail... Most people are never more than two metres away from their smartphone – even while they're asleep or in the shower. As such, the vast majority of people unfortunately spend their time reacting to their environment. Without a clear understanding of their highest and best use, or of what projects are most important to them, they are at the mercy of other people's demands, which come flying at them through these different channels.

When you have done the thinking around how your time is best spent, you will no longer be reacting to outside stimulus. You will step away from your emails and commit to the most important task at hand, knowing full well those emails will still be there later. Often, productivity is simply a function of having done the thinking to know what's most important. It was Henry Ford who said, 'Thinking is the hardest work there is, which is probably the reason so few engage in it.'

The number one factor that will determine how effective and productive you are is this: *how much time you can spend uninterrupted on one particular task*. Do the thinking, get clear on your highest and best use, and reclaim your time. This will enable you not only to be incredibly effective but also to rejuvenate and re-energise.



UNWRITTEN

Taking control of your schedule and your environment enables you to be more present. When you are engaged in work, be fully engaged. When you are not, do your best to fully disengage. Wherever you are, *be* there. The pauses re-energise you, make you more whole and fulfilled, and therefore make you more effective when you do decide to return to the work. Being effective, and being able to *sustain* that effectiveness, is how you will build your legacy.

Even doubted
MLK dream...
his are all human
We are all vulnerable
- unsure if we
making it go

Most famous dream
was almost never
written
History spoken -
How many dreams are left

We all need to be pushed
sometimes...

0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, A



Chapter 15

TELL 'EM ABOUT THE DREAM, MARTIN

'These people don't know it, but they're
about ready to go to Church.'

Clarence B. Jones

On the evening of 27 August 1963, at the Willard Intercontinental Hotel in Washington DC, Dr Martin Luther King, Jr was sitting in his suite, surrounded by his advisors. They were discussing what he would say during his speech the following day at the Lincoln Memorial in what would become known as the March on Washington.

One of Dr King's advisors and speechwriters, Clarence B. Jones, who was in the room that evening and on the platform with Dr King the following day, would later tell *Time* magazine, 'among his advisors, there were those who were

suggesting, "Martin, people are coming to the March on Washington because they're coming to hear you preach." And there were others who said, "No, Dr King, we have to give a kind of political direction, a treatise of where we are!"

After graciously engaging in the conversation and taking on board the different viewpoints that were being presented to him, Dr King eventually replied, 'Thank you so much, but I'm going to go up and work on my speech in counsel with the Lord.' At which point, Dr King found refuge in the quiet space of his room, where, in consultation with God, he considered what he wanted to say the next day.

In what is still to this day the largest political rally in US history, Dr King took the stand in front of 250,000 people. The crowd fell silent and he began nervously reading: 'I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.' Clarence B. Jones, also standing on the platform, was surprised to see that Dr King was reading the speech that Jones had given him the night before. Many accounts from those who attended that day indicate that people felt Dr King was nervous as he began talking and therefore stuck to the script he had been given.

'Mahalia Jackson interrupted him while he was speaking,' Jones remembers in a perplexed tone. Mahalia Jackson was a famous American gospel singer whom Dr King was a huge fan of. She yelled at Dr King as he was tensely reading from the page in front of him, 'Tell 'em about the dream, Martin! Tell 'em about the dream.' Dr King heard Jackson's shout, turned around and made eye contact with her. He pushed the piece of paper that had the speech written on it to the side and assumed a stance that suggested he

'Tell 'em about
the dream, Martin!
Tell 'em about the dream.'
- Mahalia Jackson -

The most famous dream in history was going to remain unspoken because the custodian of the dream didn't deem it worthy to be shared until one of his friends gave him a push.

Tell 'Em About the Dream, Martin

was ready to start truly *speaking*. 'His whole body language changed,' Jones recalls. 'And I stated to the person next to me, "These people don't know it, but they're about ready to go to Church." It was as if some transcendental force had come down and taken over his body.'

Deepening his voice and speaking in a tone that resonated with conviction, Dr King started to speak not from the page but from his heart, about the future he envisaged for his people. What followed is one of the most famous speeches in human history: 'I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

'... I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

'I have a dream today!

'I have a dream that one day... right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

'I have a dream today!'

The unplanned and unscripted words that Dr King spoke that day transformed a nation. They became not only the famous rallying cry of the American civil rights movement but also a slogan for millions of people around the world who dreamt of a better future. All of this would not have happened if it wasn't for one Mahalia Jackson interrupting Dr King to shout, 'Tell 'em about the dream, Martin!'

The most famous dream in history was going to remain unspoken because the custodian of the dream didn't deem it worthy to be shared until one of his friends gave him a push.

I remember that, when I learnt this while watching a documentary on Dr King, I sat there and cried. And cried. I cried at the realisation that even Dr Martin Luther King, one of the most revered political activists in history, doubted his vision. He too was reluctant to share his innermost dream. He too needed to be pushed.

The iconic figures whom we have spoken about through *Unwritten* are no different to you or me. They have the same vulnerabilities and the same insecurities as everybody else. The reason I study those who have changed the course of history is not because they are different but because they remind me of you, they remind me of us. The reason why I enjoy putting moments that changed history under the microscope is that I realise those moments are just the same as this very moment.

Those who dedicate their lives to a meaningful pursuit are those who have lost and found themselves in a calling that is uniquely theirs. Legacy is left by those who have listened to their inner voice and been guided through life by their own intuition. For people who are attuned to what life is telling them, *life is the greatest teacher*.

The most effective way to find and stay on course with your true path in life is to *listen*. Listen to what your life is telling you. Pay attention to what makes you curious, to what gives you joy – this is your life speaking to you. Observe the experiences you have – they are here to teach you something. Observe how you *feel* about them – your intuition will guide you. Observe what fascinates you – this is the best indicator of your calling. And then, get to work. When you live a life that lights you up, you will act as a shining example for the world to see.

When Joanne Rowling was a kid, she spent all her time writing stories – she would go on to sell 400 million books.

When Oprah was young, she would spend all of her time telling stories that other people could see themselves in – she would go on to touch billions of lives through such stories. When Sara Blakely was a kid, she dreamt of helping people wear things that were meaningful to them – she would go on to become one of the world's most successful fashion entrepreneurs. When Einstein was a child, he would dream of riding atop a beam of light – a dream that would form the basis for the Special Theory of Relativity. When Elon Musk was a kid, he would read comic books and dream of one day travelling to Mars – something SpaceX will now most likely achieve in the not too distant future.

We all have fears and we all have dreams. We fear that we aren't progressing through life at the pace that we once hoped we would. We fear that our dreams are too big and that we may not be enough to make them a reality. We fear that a challenge might come along and be too great. We fear that we are not enough for ourselves and for the people around us. We fear that if we don't succeed on our path, it will mean we have failed as a human being. We fear that we won't have the impact or make the contribution we would like to. We fear that, if all of that is true, then our life wasn't worth what it could have been. Of course, none of it is true; it is simply what we fear.

We dream of making progress. We dream of growing into the person we envisage, the person we know we have the potential to become. We dream of having courage. We dream of being able to impact others as we understand that our fingerprints never fade from the lives that we touch. We dream of being an example. We dream of making a contribution, and leaving the world a little bit better than we found it. We dream of leaving our own unique legacy,

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understanding that whatever our legacy will be, it will be reflective of how we lived our life. We dream of getting to the end and being able to whisper the two words that everybody wishes they could: 'It mattered.'

It is my hope you now realise that the people you have seen throughout this book are no different to you, the pivotal moments no different to now. I hope that, as we've gone on this journey together, you have learnt to see the same promise in you as you have in those who have left a legacy that is larger than life. I hope that you don't view your life through these examples or in comparison with them, but rather use them for what they are – a gentle reminder that to be human is to be a powerful creator, and that you can create whatever *you* choose.

So, let me ask you, which of your dreams are still unwritten?

So, let me ask you ...

... which of your dreams
are still *unwritten?*

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To Dad: you started this conversation with me before I could walk. It is because of you I am who I am today.

And to everybody out there courageously living a life that aligns to your unique purpose, keep shining; the future is unwritten and you are what the world needs.

The movement marches on . . .

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