

# *The Ultimate Success Secret*

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**Is it possible that there is one single,  
super-powerful secret of success of  
far greater importance than all others?**

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**A Favorite Story**... the much revered, very wise, aged rabbi is on his deathbed, his rabbinical students gathered for the deathwatch, arranged with the smartest of the students at the rabbi's head, the next smartest second, and so on, down to the pitied dunce of the class, at the foot of the bed. As it becomes increasingly apparent that the old rabbi was soon to depart, his best student leaned over and whispered, "Before you leave us, could you please, finally, give us THE secret of life itself, great master teacher, sir?"

After a few moments of thought, with considerable effort, the rabbi managed to croak out, "*Life is like a river.*"

The honored student turned to the one next to him and said, "The master said 'life is like a river.' Pass it down." And so each student in turn passed the wisdom down to the next. But the dunce said, "Hey, wait a minute. Life is like a river? What does that mean? Ask him what he means by that."

Ashamed and tentative, each student passed the question back up the line. The best student again leaned over and said, "I'm sorry, master teacher, but the dunce, down at the end, he does not understand. He wants to know: what do you mean? Life is like a river."

With every ounce of strength remaining in his dying, frail body, the rabbi managed these last words: "Okay, so it's not like a river."

“A Lobster,  
When Left High And Dry Among The Rocks,  
Has Not Instinct And Energy Enough  
To Work His Way Back To The Sea,  
But Waits For The Sea To Come To Him.  
If It Does Not Come,  
He Remains Where He Is And Dies,  
Although The Slightest Effort Would Enable Him To Reach The Waves,  
Which Are Perhaps Within A Yard Of Him.

*The World Is Full Of Human  
Lobsters:  
Men Stranded On The Rocks  
Of Indecision And  
Procrastination,  
Who, Instead Of Putting  
Forth Their Own Energies,  
Are Waiting For Some  
Grand Billow Of  
Good Fortune To Set Them  
Afloat.”*

- Dr. Orrison Swett Marden

## INTRODUCTION

### What You Will Discover In This Book

Why have I written a book with such an audacious title?

It sometimes seems like only yesterday that I was a punk kid with big ideas, adding gray to my hair to try and look a little older. I certainly do not have *that* problem now. I could stand to take some of the gray out. After a speaking engagement last year, my friend Lee Milteer observed that my groupies seem to be getting a lot older. Anyway, I feel like I've stacked up enough expensive experience to justify committing some opinions about "the ultimate success secret" to paper. I have gone from broke to well off; from severe struggle peaks of success in not one but three professional fields; and, along the way, I have had the good fortune of working with, hanging out with quite a number of exceptionally successful people from business, sports, entertainment. Famous people, like Joan Rivers, who started over after her husband's suicide and her loss of her career, working for \$500 a week on "Hollywood Squares," pronounced a washed-up has-been by her own agent; who reinvented her career and her life with courage and determination. And non-famous people, like Gladdie Gill, a 50+ year old school teacher living uncomplainingly with Hodgkin's disease; on her summer vacations, climbing mountains, traversing Alaska in a jeep; at home, taking care of every imaginable orphaned animal; at school, defying dullard administrators to give her students the richest imaginable learning experiences, thus earning the support of an entire community of parents and kids, and having a truly lasting impact on many lives. I have had the privilege of working closely with a great many "from scratch" entrepreneurs who've built empires, extraordinarily successful salespeople, top executives, top speakers. I have quite literally been surrounded by and immersed in success for years. And I'm a good observer. I have not let this go to waste.

It is impossible to count the number of authors, researchers, psychologists, "motivational gurus," etc. who have been fascinated by the question of what causes some people to be successful and others to fail. We know it is not "environment," as some liberals insist; it cannot be, because out of the very worst environments come fabulously successful individuals, repetitively enough not to be passed off as aberration. Blaming external factors, and excusing a person's results because of external factors, is not going to lead anybody to the answer to this question.

In the United States, probably the most famous of authors to have attacked this question thoroughly was Napoleon Hill. His findings are summarized in his best-known book, **THINK AND GROW RICH**, a bestseller in its time, and, solely thanks to word-of-mouth, a steady seller, surviving and remaining on the fickle

bookstore shelves for decades. (If, by some chance you have not read this book, you must.) In 1917, America's first billionaire, Andrew Carnegie, set Napoleon Hill on a mission to discover the commonalities, the "principles" shared by hundreds of the most exceptional achievers of their time. Eventually, Hill arrived at thirteen such principles. Recently, management guru Stephen Covey had a blockbuster best-selling book with his "Seven Habits Of Highly Successful People." My speaking colleague Zig Ziglar talks about the "Ten Qualities" of successful achievers. Thirteen. Ten. Seven. Pick a number. *Well, I have the audacity to step forward and tell you that I've boiled it down to ONE.*

I changed the question to:

Is there one single secret to success of such overriding importance that, if concentrated upon exclusively, will literally change a person's entire life experience and results? If so, what is it?

That's right, - *one*. I believe that I have identified the one, single, sole "secret of success" universally shared and relied on, above all other success secrets, by all extraordinarily successful individuals. And it is my contention that any person who discovers, accepts, comes to understand, and gives priority, paramount importance to this one secret can and will quickly create unbelievable breakthroughs in his or her life.

Incidentally, my focus has been quite different than Napoleon Hill's. I have paid a lot less attention to the *thinking* of the successful, and paid a lot more attention to their *behavior*.

In this book, I have NOT come out and simply stated the ultimate secret. Frankly, I could write it down on a 3x5" card. There are several reasons why I haven't done that. First of all, it's darned hard to get \$19.95 for a 3x5" card. My accountant, Snarly Stubbyfingers insists that we create things we can sell for profit. (If I refuse, he swears he'll up and leave and he's the only one here with the combination to the safe where we keep the Oreos and the good Scotch.) Second, if I just tell it to you outright, in its shortest form, it lacks useful impact. I've found it is of little use to those I simply tell it to. On the other hand, those who ferret it out for themselves seem to place great value on it and get great value from it. So, I hope you can discover this secret for yourself. It is waiting for you in a number of places in this book.

I don't have any special reason to be overly mysterious, though – so, a clue. The "spark" that drove me to write this book may, in itself, be revealing. A very

mundane event got me going. I had been thinking about writing a book on this particular subject for quite some time. I'd been assembling notes on it for a couple years. But there was one little incident that got me to work. On a restless night, late at night, I was thumbing through TV GUIDE trying to find something to watch for an hour or so when I noticed this listing:

### **Movie: ACTION JACKSON!**

That name instantly appealed to me. *Who was "Action Jackson?" How did he earn such a dramatic nickname?* Well, the movie turned out to be a bad B-picture; a run-of-the-mill cops-and-bad-guys, black exploitation film starring Carl Weathers. I would not recommend the movie. But the hero's name stuck in my mind long after the details of the movie faded. Action Jackson. *That*, I thought at the time, perfectly describes the kind of person who gets the most out of life.

Think about some of the biggest blockbuster movies of recent years. Raiders of the Lost Ark. Die Hard. Lethal Weapon. Batman. The Fugitive. Think about the enduring success of the James Bond series. Why have these films been such enormous box office moneymakers? I think one of the answers is the dramatic juxtaposition between the movies' always-in-action adventurers and most people's comparative slow motion lives. The constant, the universal characterization of such big screen heroes is their bias for action. And for an hour or two, everybody becomes an Action Jackson, living vicariously through these heroes.

What the Mediocre Majority never learns is that they do not have to settle for living vicariously through others. Anybody can be an Action Jackson – dive headlong into the greatest adventure of all: setting and rapidly accomplishing meaningful, worthwhile goals, meeting fascinating people, visiting exciting places, living an exciting life. Even people who are above-average achievers are often guilty of seeing themselves and their own lives “smaller” than need be.

Well, I am here to tell you that those who live life “large” do share a single, ultimate secret. Through the stories, experiences and examples I’ve assembled for you in this book, you can now discover that very secret and get it working for you.

Dan S. Kennedy

## Chapter 1

### TAKE ACTION TO ESCAPE FROM PRISON

Have you ever been inside a real prison? A friend of mine, some years ago, served one year in the Ohio State Penitentiary, and I went to visit him frequently. I can tell you: nothing you see on TV or in the movies can even half-prepare you for the shock of the real thing. I don't remember how many times I went inside and back out from behind those prison walls, but the awe, fear, disability and depression I felt never lessened, from the first time to the last. No description I could write could convey the powerlessness that came over me in that environment.

There are millions of people enduring that environment every day.

But that's a small number compared to the many millions of people who might as well be in such a prison for the little joy and satisfaction they're deriving from life. People build their own prisons, incarcerate themselves in them, and make the environments every bit as bleak, stark, depressing and debilitating as the actual penitentiary I visited in Ohio. These people's private prisons' block walls are constructed of complaints and resentments, the mortar from excuses, the bars forged from pessimism and procrastination.

We might say that they are locked up in "Pity Prison." Their sentence is indefinite and of their own making. They could walk out as a free man or woman at any time – *if they would just apply The Ultimate Secret Of Success.*

#### A Word About Heroes

As I finish this book, the "O.J. Simpson thing" has sparked a national discussion of the relative wisdom or lack thereof of turning sports champions, entertainers and other public celebrities into heroic role models. NBA star Charles Barkley publicly insists, "I'm no role model." By his behavior, we must give him credit for honesty. Unfortunately, he cannot discourage countless young people from giving him hero status. The argument against viewing people as heroes based on their proclivity for making baskets, catching passes, packing concert halls, or delivering lines in movies is a good one, as too many seem to have an equal proclivity for squandering their status, money and time on drugs, alcohol, epic sexual misbehavior and violence.

Actually, there are plenty of REAL heroes all around us. Yesterday, while killing time at the airport, I got my shoes shined. The lady doing the job, I'd guess about

35 or 36 years old, was finishing her second shift of the day with me, at 6:00 PM. Just as she was finishing, the pay phone rang; as it turns out, her teenage daughter and son are required to call her every hour to check in. She is a divorced mother of two, a high school grad, with very limited marketable job skills, doing a relatively tough job, compensated by tips so the quality of her work, her attitude, her smile are critical; she is raising two teenagers; and she is saving up money to go back to school. I had to inquire and prod to find all this out. She was not complaining, not whining, not looking for pity. A *real* hero.

After a speaking engagement in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, I was eating dinner in the Holiday Inn restaurant. Seated several tables away, alone, was a man about my age, in a wheelchair. His hands were apparently of little use to him. He dined on a bowl of soup and a soft drink, both consumed through a straw. When the check was brought to him, he somehow produced his wallet – I didn't see how – and extracted dollar bills from it with his teeth. Here was a man saddled with obvious shoulder-to-toes physical disabilities that made a simple journey to a restaurant difficult, tiring, possibly embarrassing. No one would criticize him for dropping out and coping out. But he refused to let his handicaps imprison him. A *real* hero.

During a weekend in Las Vegas, as I was leaving Caesar's Palace, the man getting his car from the valet ahead of me was also in a wheelchair. He and the valet knew each other and joked together as the man hoisted himself from his wheelchair into the car. The valet then left to retrieve my car. I walked over and asked the man if he would like help getting his wheelchair into his car. "Thanks," he said, "but it's not necessary. I've been doing this for myself for 30 years *and I'm thankful that I can.*" One-handed, he folded up the wheelchair, pulled it into the car behind him, slid across the seat, and drove off. He, too, refused to be imprisoned by his handicap. A *real* hero.

I had reason to recall these two instances and individuals recently, as my Dad had a reoccurrence of an unusual neurological condition that put him flat on his back in the hospital, unable to sit up by himself, feed himself, stand, walk or do much of anything else. His doctors did their best to convince him that he, at best, might not go beyond being helped into a wheelchair. He set goals for regaining leg strength and balance. Then for control of the upper body. Then for feeding himself. Then for dressing himself. Then he moved from hospital to long-term care facility, today's euphemism for nursing home. And last weekend, he got into his own car and drove himself to his apartment. Today he came back to work at the office.

I once had a blind man in a sales organization I managed. He had not been blind at birth, but had lost his sight in his late teens. He worked with his wife in our

business, and was an enthusiastic, effective salesperson. He told me a favorite pastime was washing and waxing his car at ten or eleven o'clock at night, in the dark; it didn't matter to him but it sure bugged his neighbors! I asked him how it was that he had avoided bitterness or self-pity. He told me: "Very early on, I got to meet and talk with many other blind people and I realized that many had let their lack of sight ruin their lives. They built little prisons for themselves and locked themselves in. I was determined not to do that." A *real* hero.

Each of these individuals' lives demonstrate that positive attitude *and actions*, even in the most negative of circumstances, can make a big difference.

## WHO ELSE IS AFRAID OF PUBLIC S-S-S-SPEAKING?

Phobias are real. I've had the privilege of working with Florence Henderson on a couple of TV projects, and gotten to know her – did you know that following the cancellation of "The Brady Bunch," her career dried up and her fear of flying rose up and dominated her, crippling her pursuit of career opportunities because she could not get on an airplane? Barbara Streisand stopped doing concerts thanks to uncontrollable stage fright. Johnny Carson reportedly suffered from incredible anxiety before every show. A comedian I know well, who I won't name, has such severe stage fright he vomits before most performances.

But there's not a phobia on earth that can't be treated, conquered, controlled.

Who's afraid of speaking in public? Just about everybody! Several surveys have shown that more people fear public speaking than fear heights, snakes, serious illness, accidental death or financial failure. One survey of Fortune 1000 executives revealed speaking to groups as their #1 fear. I'm fortunate to earn about a third of my income from speaking... and from \$3,000.00 to as much as \$25,000.00 from each speech. But if you went back to the time in my childhood when I stuttered almost uncontrollably – when I could turn one short sentence into one long s-s-s-s-seminar – who would have predicted this career for me?

Although the problem lessened as I matured, to this day I am still "at risk" of getting "hung up" on a word, starting to stutter, embarrassing myself on stage, on the phone, or in conversation. Was it smart to choose careers in selling and speaking? Who would have blamed me for letting this influence my career choices? I refused to do that.

My friends John and Greg Rice were imprisoned by their midget size, until a man by the name of Glenn Turner ("Dare To Be Great") got a hold of them. John and Greg can't reach all the elevator buttons without something to stand on, and Glenn

Turner was the first person to tell them that even “little men” could do big things. John and Greg have become very popular motivational speakers, on the subject of “Thinking Big!” – even though they have to climb up onto a table so the audience can see them. They achieved considerable success as real estate salesmen, even though they had to ask their customers to describe the things above sink level that they couldn’t see. They’ve been featured on countless TV programs and in movies, built a sizeable real estate investment business, and live a top quality lifestyle in sunny Florida.

**FOR EVERY HANDICAP, OBSTACLE  
AND TRAGEDY,  
THERE ARE TWO STORIES.**

Go ahead, name a handicap. Born and raised in a ghetto, as a latchkey kid, then surrounded by gangs, crime, drugs. A physical handicap. A crippling accident. A terrible disease. Illiteracy. Lack of education. A speech impediment. Severe phobia. Name the handicap. There are two stories to be found for every one you can think of. Story #1, unfortunately the most common, will be of people who’ve let that handicap imprison them. Story #2 will be of the person who has accomplished the most extraordinary things in spite of, in some cases because of that very same handicap.

Each individual , by his or her actions, chooses which story will be theirs.

<u>IMPRISONING</u>	<u>THE ACTION MODEL</u>
I Can't	I Will
Resentment	Gratitude
Desire For Sympathy	Desire For Accomplishment
Dwelling On “It's Not Fair”	Search For Opportunities
Acceptance	Invention
“Maybe Tomorrow...”	Do It Now!
Withdrawal	Participation
Depression	Celebration Of Even Small Victories

**It's An Impossible  
Situation,  
But It Has Possibilities."**

- Sam Goldwyn

Chapter 2

**TAKE ACTION TO  
TAKE CHARGE OF EVERY ASPECT  
OF YOUR LIFE**

Once driving to Cincinnati, Ohio to St. Louis, Missouri, to fight boredom, I was listening to a radio call-in show, hosted by a lady psychologist. I no longer remember her name or the name of the caller, but I certainly remember the conversation.

The caller, a woman, 40 years old, in her second marriage, spilled out a load of unhappiness and misery. Her husband didn't pay enough attention to her. Her kids were grown and no longer needed her. She was bored. Finally, the host stopped her and said: "You will continue to be unhappy as long as you depend so much on others to make you happy."

I pulled the car off to the side of the road and jotted that down as a fill-in-the-blank formula:

You Will Continue To Be Un\_\_\_\_\_  
As Long As You Depend On Others  
To Make You \_\_\_\_\_.

Then I wrote down a few examples:

\* You will continue to be unimportant as long as you depend on others to make you feel important.

\* You will continue to be un-prosperous as long as you depend on others to make you prosperous.

\* You will continue to be uninspired as long as you depend on others to make you inspired.

## THE MIRACLE FORMULA FOR TAKING CHARGE OF EVERY ASPECT OF YOUR LIFE

Let me tell you how this Miracle Formula came to me. The very first seminar I ever attended, now more than 25 years ago, where “success concepts” were presented, was a real eye-opener for me. The speaker talked about what he called the most unpleasant success principle in the world. Well, who wants to hear about the most unpleasant thing? But I was there, so I listened. He said, repeatedly, “You are exactly where you really want to be.”

Now, let me tell you where I was. I had driven to the seminar in a 1960 Chevy Impala and it was not 1960. When it rained, this sad old car leaked from the top and from the bottom. The seats never dried out; they stayed musky damp in the summer, they froze and cracked in the winter. The car’s frame was broken clear through, so its rear end was held up with a contraption of bailing wire, wood blocks and a turnbuckle. But there was no shame for this car. I’d paid just \$25 for it, on payments, and it was all I could afford at the time. And the condition of the car was symbolic of a few other aspects of my life. So when the speaker said: “You are exactly where you want to be,” hey, I didn’t like that very much.

It took me a while to stop arguing and start thinking.

Then I finally wrote down a “formula” from what I thought about, as a result of this statement. I could give it to you on the back of a matchbook – it doesn’t require a whole BOOK to give you this – but don’t let that diminish its importance. It is my non-humble opinion that this painfully arrived at formula has truly profound importance.

Here it is:

### **CONTROL = RESPONSIBILITY, RESPONSIBILITY = CONTROL.**

Everybody wants more control. If you take all your personal, career, financial and other goals, everything you think you want out of life, and boil all that down to a single overriding objective, it is the desire for greater control. Greater control over finances, present and future. Greater control over your time and lifestyle. Greater control over your kids. Etc. Etc.

Ironically, as much as we desire greater control, we are the ones who give it all away. Every time we say...

- It's the location of our business
- It's the season
- It's the competition
- It's the economy
- It's the supervisor who has it in for me
- It's the way I was brought up
- It's my partner/co-worker/spouse/etc.
- It's \_\_\_\_\_

Each and every time we say, “It’s the...,” we really DO two things simultaneously: one, we push away a small “weight” of responsibility, and that temporarily makes us feel better, but, two, we give up an equal-sized amount of control. Whenever we deny responsibility, we give up control. Get rid of a “pound” of responsibility, lose a pound’s worth of control.

**The Miracle Formula In Action:  
Why DOES One Person Prosper And Another  
Suffer?**

I happen to know two people very well who are very much alike. They own two almost identical businesses. Their businesses are in neighboring, very similar towns. My observation is that they are equally skilled in the technical and administrative aspects of their business.

One, Peter E., has struggled for about seven years just to stay in business. He has gained very little, if any, financial ground during those years. His life is a day-to-day struggle for survival.

The other fellow, Robert L., started six years ago. His business has grown by 10% to as much as 30% each year, every year. He is now getting ready to turn it into a fortune through franchising.

When I talk with Peter E., I hear a lengthy discourse on all the outside influences that negatively affect his business. The economy, taxes, banks that won’t give small business a fair shake, competition from huge corporations, and his list goes on and on and on. Every time I talk with Peter, I hear the same list. A broken record playing over and over again.

I acknowledge, by the way, that these factors do exist. I am frustrated by some of them myself. But the issue is not the existence of these factors. The issue is how much control Peter lets them have over his business. Every time Peter recites his list, he shuffles off responsibility for his situation, and that temporarily helps him feel better. But with the responsibility goes the control.

When I talk with Robert, these matters only occasionally come up. Instead, he talks excitedly about the innovative strategies he has discovered and developed to keep his business growing regardless of external influences. He exhibits healthy curiosity and quizzes me about strategies I've seen or discovered recently that might work for him. "How does that client of yours in x-business deal with this y-problem?" – he wants to know. Often, he'll say something like, "I really screwed up on this situation. Let me tell you about the base I missed and what I'm doing about it."

Robert accepts all the responsibility for his success or failure, his errors and his achievements, and because he does, he retains control.

### ONLY 5% EXHIBIT SELF-RELIANT BEHAVIOR

A couple years ago, I did a speaking tour of all the CEO Clubs (Chief Executive Officers) in the country, for Joe Mancuso's Center For Entrepreneurial Management, and I talked with groups of corporate presidents in nearly a dozen different cities. If I heard it from one CEO, I heard it from a dozen: "It's getting harder and harder to find worthy people to promote from within."

"Why is that?" I asked.

"Only about 5% of all the people we employ consistently exhibit self-reliant behavior."

"What do you mean by 'self-reliant behavior'?"

One President answered this way: "Well, take the typists here in the office. They know that a proofreader checks their work for errors, so they rely on her rather than bothering to check their own work and consistently present her with typing done right the first time. Then we've got fifty sales reps in the field. Accounting has to constantly chase and nag every one of them to get their paperwork. My Sales Manager told me the other day that we've got one guy who we give wake-up calls to."

Another President said, "We have about 20 people in the Chicago plant. Only three or four consistently get here on time, ready to work. I figure about 5% of all the people we've ever employed, in all the different jobs, accept full responsibility for successful completion of every aspect of their jobs."

When you think through what these CEO's said, you have a simple answer to a long list of questions...

- \* How can I move ahead in my career?
- \* How can I get a better job?
- \* How can I start my own business?
- \* How can I have a better relationship?
- \* How can I maintain a positive outlook?
- \* How can I make more money?

Most people have unsaid extensions to these kinds of questions:

- \* How can I move ahead in my career – *when others have more education than I do?... when the boss likes Steve better than me?*
- \* How can I get a better job – *when the economy's so bad?*
- \* How can I start my own business – *when I haven't got any money?*

...and so on.

The answer to these questions and many more like them is: self-reliant behavior.

In Houston, Texas, on March 26<sup>th</sup>, one of several times this year that I've followed General Schwartzkopf on a program, I listened as he posed this rhetorical question: *if you are put in charge, when you are put in charge, what should you do?* TAKE CHARGE!

He was talking about the very essence of leadership – not waiting, not procrastinating, not looking around to copy how others did it or are doing it, not waiting for a committee to cover your butt with its recommendations; instead, stepping forward to do what needs to be done and to do what is right.

All too often, even when an individual finally gets the chance to be “in charge” that he has coveted, he accomplishes little. For years, other players on the NBA Chicago Bulls grumbled and groused about being stuck in the shadow of Michael Jordan. They coveted the chance to command that spotlight and lead the team. But when Michael Jordan retired, that spotlight searched vainly for that team’s next leader. In 1994, it couldn’t find one. The most logical heir-apparent embarrassed himself and his entire team in the playoffs by throwing a “hissy fit” over not being named by the coach as the man to get the ball and try the final shot in the final seconds of a closely-contested play-off game. This would-be leader let his ego control his actions. Incredibly, he refused to go back in from the time out and give his best efforts to the play that had been called. You can look around and see such individuals squandering their opportunities constantly in just this way.

But I would go even farther: *why wait until you are put in charge?* Take charge anyway. The fact is: there's a leadership vacuum just about everywhere. Maybe in your home. Probably in your business or place of employment. In your industry, in your community, in your church, in your country. Quite bluntly, the very fact that a man of such obviously, severely-flawed character and un-American ideals as Bill Clinton can be elected President of the United States speaks loudly about this universal vacuum of leadership. And I suggest this leadership vacuum offers you the opportunity you seek to change your life for the better. Let me give you a very down-to-earth example:

Mary S. was at a seminar I presented for Doctors some years ago. She was there with her husband, a dentist. She pulled me aside on a break. "Could I talk to you alone for a minute?" So she and I ducked out of the meeting room, went down the hall, and found an empty meeting room to step into.

"I'm so frustrated," she told me. "There are so many things you've been talking about that we could do to build up the practice. We keep going to seminars, hearing good ideas, but my husband never gets anything new implemented. Nothing happens. The staff now knows when he comes back from a seminar talking about new ideas, all they have to do is wait a few days and it'll all blow over. And the practice hasn't grown a bit in three years."

"What kind of things would you have him do?" I asked.

"Join the Chamber of Commerce, attend meetings and make contacts with other businesspeople in the community," she said. "And start a mailing campaign to area business owners and executives. And put out a monthly newsletter for our past and present patients. And put together a little how-to book, something like 'How To Keep Healthy Teeth For Life.' And, in the office, our reception area desperately needs redecorating. The staff needs some help with handling telephone calls, especially from new patients calling in because of our yellow pages ad. And -"

"Wait a minute," I raised my hand like a traffic cop and brought her to a halt. "Mary, these all sound like inarguably good ideas to me."

"But he won't do any of them," she said sadly.

"Well, Mary," I asked, "what are *you* waiting for?"

For the first time that night, Mary was speechless. She returned to the meeting room with a particularly thoughtful look on her face.

You see, it's one thing to complain about another person's failure to pick up the ball and run with it. In this case, Mary was certainly justified in being frustrated with her husband's lack of ambition and initiative. But she'd been complaining to him and about him for three years. She'd been frustrated for three years.

Obviously, that wasn't going to change anything. Her only apparent options: accept him and things exactly as-is and stop being aggravated, continue being frustrated every day of her life for the rest of her life, divorce him and leave, or pick up the ball and do some running of her own.

Most would choose one of the first two options. Thoreau observed, "Most men (and women) lead lives of quiet desperation."

About a year later, Mary S. appeared at another of my many seminars for doctors. Again, she cornered me on a break, apart from her husband. "I want to tell you," she began, "that I was very angry with you and the way you answered me that night. I wanted some sympathy. And I wanted you to go have a tough talk with my husband. But I sure didn't want you to challenge *me*."

"Should I apologize?" I asked.

"Hardly," she answered. "Let me tell you about my new life." Mary no longer worked in the office as a dental assistant. Instead, she had hired her replacement, then appointed herself 'Director Of Marketing.' She joined the Chamber of Commerce, a businesswoman's club, a Toastmasters group, and enrolled in a Dale Carnegie class. She assembled a book – "Secrets Of A Healthy Smile For Life" – and she began speaking to groups of school children, PTA meetings, civic groups, everywhere she could, on behalf of the practice. She put together a practice newsletter, assigned writing tasks to other staff members and occasionally even to patients, got it done, published and out every month. She designed a new 'Family Plan' to promote to the practice's patients. She created and promoted 'Patient Appreciation Weeks.'

In five months, the practice doubled. Although shocked at first, her husband adapted to her new role and new interests. And he was kept pretty busy just handling the new patient flow anyway.

"Now I work just three or four hours a day, doing all the marketing and promotion for the practice – I'm our 'Mrs. Outside,' he's our 'Mr. Inside,' and I've even got time for my new venture, creating and publishing health-related coloring books for kids, distributed through dentists nationwide. *I'm not waiting anymore,*" she concluded.

Now, what are you waiting for?

**“Are you pleased  
with your present  
place  
in the world?**

If your answer is *yes*,  
what's your next port of  
call?

If your answer is *no*,  
what are you going to do  
about it?”

Earl Nightingale

From: Earl Nightingale's Greatest Discovery  
Published by Dodd/Mead

## Chapter 3

### **TAKE ACTION TO GET THE KNOW-HOW YOU NEED**

Not knowing how to do something has never stopped me from setting out to do it, and I've become convinced that anybody can become competent, even expert at just about anything; there are books, cassettes, courses, classes, teachers, mentors, newsletters, associations, an absolute abundance of information linked to virtually any and every skill or ability or occupation you can think of. A whole lot of it is readily available, free. More at very modest cost. Some, pricey.

I am frequently amazed and dismayed at the people who seek me out and ask questions that evidence they haven't even done an ounce of homework or research on their own. Today, a business owner came to me after I finished delivering a speech on advertising and marketing, handed me the advertising flyer he'd prepared and invested his hard-earned money in having printed and distributed, and said, "What do you think?"

I had a few questions of my own. "Before you put this together," I said, "what books did you go and get about writing advertising headlines? About advertising in general?" And I could have asked a dozen more questions along these same lines. The answers were, frankly, pitiful. Non-existent. He had done nothing, nada, zero to prepare himself for the task of putting together effective advertising flyers. When you look at this objectively, from the outside in, it's pretty obvious that this is stupid behavior. And quite bluntly, if you insist on behaving stupidly, you do not deserve positive results.

Ignorance about any particular subject is forgivable and, fortunately, fixable. Stupidity is another story altogether.

#### **The Serious Student At Work**

When I became earnest about using more humor in my speeches and seminars, and getting good at using it, for example, I found no shortage of assistance out there. Beyond simply observing and analyzing great humorists and comedians, I found plenty of books on the subject, Esar's Comic Encyclopedia, videos, seminars, newsletters, and audiocassette courses. I learned "timing" from listening to a fantastic humorous speaker, Dr. Charles Jarvis, from comedian Shelley Berman, and others, over and over and over again. I read all the classic masters – Benchley, Thurber. I read all the contemporary humorists, I read everything Steve Allen ever

wrote. I found “old” comedy records, I subscribed to humor services like Orbens. I became a very serious student of humor. Gradually, I transitioned from picking and telling jokes to creating original material, from jokes to humorous stories. I did a whole lot of homework.

When I got involved in teaching advertising, marketing and sales to doctors of chiropractic, I became a serious student of the chiropractic profession. I subscribed to the profession’s journals, I got and read books, I visited offices, I went to seminars, I asked questions of doctors. In a few months, I knew enough and sounded so much like a chiropractor, that we had to continually correct doctors who called me “Dr. Kennedy” and convinced themselves I was one of them. To this day, I’ll be walking through a hotel lobby, airport, mall, and have a chiropractor yell out, “Hello, Dr. Kennedy!” And, although I would never give an adjustment, I can do a decent exam, a good report of findings, I can sell people on chiropractic better than most chiropractors, and I could operate a practice. I could go to a convention and easily pass myself off as a doctor, if I chose to. I’ll bet I could go to an office and get myself hired as an associate doctor.

Some years back, I worked closely with a client in the retail theft control business. His company dealt with employee and delivery man theft in supermarkets, convenience stores and drugstores (where it is an immense problem). Then, I subscribed to all the trade journals of the supermarket, convenience store and drugstore industry, and assembled articles about theft from several years of back issues. I read what books I could find on the subject. I studied my client’s materials. I learned the language of retail finance. To this day, I can walk into any such store or restaurant and, in 5 minutes, tell you whether or not the employees are stealing and, if so, show you the “hidden evidence” that proves it. And I could give a seminar to retailers on the subject and no one would question my status as an expert.

I’m not bragging. I’m just pointing out that it isn’t very difficult to quickly acquire expertise in a given area, if that’s what you want to do. But it’s amazing to me the number of people who just never bother.

When I worked with the chiropractors, I used to ask groups for a show of hands – how many had really studied even one book or course on how to sell. In most groups, less than half; yet every day, their incomes depend on their effectiveness at selling... selling the public and new prospective patients on chiropractic, selling new patients their recommendations and their fees. They’re not alone. Just about every business or occupation is a composite of several different types of expertise, but most people master one and are content being an amateur in the others.

If not knowing about something stands between you and what you want to accomplish, get busy and go get that know-how. It really is that simple.

### The 7 Ways To Get Smarter About Virtually Any Subject – Fast

1. *Find and read at least a year's back issues of the related trade or specialty magazines.*

Every business, industry, occupation, vocation, hobby or special interest – from cooking to computer programming, from ostrich farming to searching for lost gold mines, from long-haul truck driving to golfing, from writing to woodworking, from Astrology to Zoology – has one, in most cases several magazines all its own. In these magazines, the experts write articles, all interviewed and profiled, how-to secrets are revealed, advertisers promote their wares.

2. *Answer a lot of ads you find in these magazines.*

Let all those advertisers try to sell you their products and services. Soon, you'll be deluged with information. All coming to you, free.

3. *Find the top experts, most successful people and most celebrated people in the field.*

Such people have probably written books, recorded audiocassettes, they may sell such products, seminars or consulting, and/or they may even be approachable just to talk with or visit with free. Seek out the best and the brightest and find out how you can best turn their experience into your knowledge. Surprisingly, even in competitive fields, these outspoken experts and super-achievers exist.

Some years back, I worked with a chiropractor who started his own practice immediately after school. Almost immediately. First, armed with a list he had painstakingly compiled of 50 of the most successful, most respected chiropractors in the country, he got in his car and drove across country, north, south, east and west, going to each of their offices, asking if he could observe, take the doctor to lunch or dinner and pick his brain, visit with the staff, and so on. Forty-nine of the fifty were gracious, generous, encouraging and helpful. He arrived home with what he called "A Master Practice-Building Plan From The Masters Of The Profession." He had great confidence in this plan. He implemented it with natural enthusiasm and positive expectation. And he built a record-breaking practice in short order.

If I were to start in a brand new business today, I would follow his example.

4. *Find the books written by “the OLD masters.”*

Just about every field has “old masters,” whose works are hard to find or even out of print, who many ignore as passed with time and no longer important. They’re wrong.

In the selling field, every salesperson should read books by Frank Bettger, Red Motley, Robert Trailins, to name a few, from the 1950’s, the 1940’s, and earlier if you can find them. Robert Trailins’ “old book,” DYNAMIC SELLING, published by Prentice-Hall a long time ago, to be found only in libraries or used bookstores, offers better advice on crafting powerful appointment-getting presentations than any book, seminar or course I’m aware of.

In direct-response advertising and copywriting, today’s top pros, like my friends Gary Halbert and Ted Nicholas, and I, constantly refer notices to the works of the “old masters,” Robert Collier, Claude Hopkins, Victor Schwab and others, dating back to the 1930’s.

5. *Join trade associations or clubs.*

The “learning curve shortcuts” available through trade association membership and attending association conventions and workshops is remarkable. The opportunity to make dozens and dozens of important and beneficial contacts is even greater.

Most associations have archives of tapes from past years’ conventions and workshops, so you can “attend” two, five, even ten years of past events as if a time machine was at your disposal.

Many national associations have state, regional or city “chapters,” with easily accessible meetings and seminars, usually all at very modest costs. If you are interested in writing, for example, The National Writers Club has Chapters in most states. If you are interested in speaking, the National Speakers Association has Chapters in many cities.

6. *Take a class, workshop or seminar.*

Community colleges are getting more and more progressive and competitive in their class offerings and their use of bona fide, real world experts as instructors. The seminar organization, The Learning Annex, with operations in many major cities, offers the most diverse assortment of classes I’ve ever seen – everything from how to start an import/export business to how to become a belly dancer or how to strip like a pro to how to buy and sell antiques. Somewhere, there’s somebody giving a class, workshop or seminar on just about any subject you can

imagine. (There is, for example, a bona fide expert who takes a few people at a time fishing for a week, at a hefty \$5,000.00 a pop, and teaches them “how fish think” so that they can more easily catch more fish. Laugh if you will, but he is for real, and was the subject of a very successful TV infomercial, “Outdoor Challenge,” hosted by Curt Gowdy, produced by my friend Pam Daily, for which I wrote the commercials. My friend Jerry Patterson has hundreds of loyal, happy students at his periodic “casino gaming conventions,” where he teaches his blackjack methods.)

7. *Do your homework.*

The public library is the place to start. Most major city libraries have self-serve, easy-to-use computer systems, so you can plug in any topic and find all the books, articles and other resources related to it. There is a master directory published for every imaginable subject, and if you can’t find one in your area of interest, there is a “Directory Of Directories” to help you.

If yours is a business area of interest, there is a very comprehensive directory for do-it-yourself research included in my “How To Turn Your Ideas Into A Million Dollars” Course. (1994 Catalog, Chapter 6 or call 602/269-3111.)

## Chapter 4

### TAKE ACTION TO SHED EXCESS BAGGAGE AND DISCOVER NEW CAPABILITIES

In a novel “Line Of Duty,” author Michael Grant has one of his characters deliver this: *“A guy I fish with once told me a funny story. He’d just bought an anchor, and as he went forward to tie it to the anchor line, he slipped and fell overboard. Suddenly, he’s sitting on the bottom of the lake in fifteen feet of water, cradling his brand new anchor. He didn’t want to let go, but he was running out of breath. Realizing his choice was drowning or losing the anchor, he reluctantly let go and swam to the surface.* The character in the novel, a police detective, went on to say, *“The Job has been my anchor and I’ve been holding onto it for 23 years. I don’t want to let go either, but I’ve run out of breath.”*

Most people can be caught holding onto prized anchors.

Another way to look at it is in terms of roles. A person gets so used to a role, so comfortable in that role that, even though unhappy, the fear of trauma of stepping outside the role feels worse than the pain of continuing in it. Such roles include: The Victim (*why me – it’s so unfair*), The Martyr (*I gave up everything for you*), The Last Angry Man (*I’m mad as hell at everybody and everything – but I will keep taking it*), The Misunderstood Genius, and so on.

So much of our current thoughts and actions have their basis in childhood. My aversion to having a large house with a yard to care for is the direct result of growing up in over-large homes where there was always some damned thing in need of repair or cleaning or replacement, some project to be done or, worse, some disaster to be battled – like, in our second house, a basement that flooded every Spring to such a degree that the neighborhood’s animals lined up two-by-two outside. And growing up with yards always in need of mowing or weeding (until I discovered that a hungry Shetland pony on a tether made lawn mowers obsolete). Anyway, I am emotionally averse to all that. Of course, that’s obvious. No need for years of analysis to figure that out. And it’s not particularly important. But it is the only one of who knows how many examples of today’s thoughts, attitudes, likes, dislikes, fears, ideas and behaviors firmly rooted in childhood programming that has never been challenged or even reconsidered.

In cases where this does no harm, or even helps, I suppose there’s no need to tinker with it. But what about the baggage that does burden, the anchor that does drown, the past programming that does limit? It is plain as can be that people are

controlled – yes, controlled – throughout their adult lives by limits that were set and by behaviors that were prescribed early on, then never challenged.

If you are not achieving the results you tell yourself you want out of life, it may very well be that these set-in-the-past restrictions are getting in your way. In the late 1980's, I had the privilege of editing and assembling a new audiocassette series featuring the recorded radio broadcasts and lectures of Dr. Maxwell Maltz, famous in the 1950's for his best-selling book, "Psycho-Cybernetics," in which he advanced the idea that everything from a person's financial success to the accuracy of his golf swing was controlled by a subconsciously-held, very detailed "self-image," largely constructed out of childhood programming and experiences, then reinforced through self-talk. Dr. Maltz was first pointed in this direction while in practice as a cosmetic surgeon; many patients came believing that getting some physical flaw fixed – a nose bobbed, breasts enlarged – would alter the way they felt about themselves and make them happier, but even after surgery that made them beautiful or handsome on the outside, they still thought, talked and acted as if nothing had changed. From this observation, Dr. Maltz made the giant leap – now virtually accepted as universal truth – that a person can practice the perfect golf swing, for example, all he wants and still suffer an awesome slice unless and until he somehow alters the image he has of himself as a golfer.

There is a kind of mental magnetism connected to the self-image. Earl Nightingale put it this way: *we become what we think about most.* Of course, that's not instantly, literally true; if it were, as a teenager, I'd have become Playmate Of The Month. But, over time, it is true. People do think themselves sick. Or old before their time. Or a victim. A perpetual loser.

Certainly, experience alters the self-image. For years, a person considers himself hopelessly clumsy. Then, out of dire necessity, he picks up tools and fixes something and is shocked to discover the awkward lack of coordination of teenage years has been replaced by reasonable facility, and he can drive a nail, and now has to question the long-held, limiting self-image: *hey, wait a minute, maybe I'm not so clumsy after all.*

There's no reason that has to happen only by happy accident. Instead, you can benefit enormously by testing your limits. "*Let's just see if this is still true.*" The more of this you do, the more likely you are to uncover abilities you didn't know you had.

In "The Hobbit," Bilbo Baggins said, "I don't like adventures. They make one late for dinner." That is the attitude of far too many people. At age 25, David Smith – college dropout, gambler, playboy, occasional saloonkeeper, began what he has

called a “healing journey” of exploration. By the time he was 35, he had become the first person to swim from Africa to Europe, had kayaked 2,000 miles down the Nile, run a marathon with tribesmen in Kenya, and put himself through a number of other incredible adventures. (You can read about his story in his book “Healing Journey: The Odyssey Of An Uncommon Athlete,” published by Sierra Club Books.) David inscribed the book to me, “to a man who knows the art of adventure.” Frankly, I wish that was a bit truer than it actually is. But I do stretch. I do test. Constantly. Why not? Fortunately, I grew up hearing “how do you know until you try?” You don’t.

### Take A Closer Look At The Labels Sewn On You

Labels get sewn on children – then they often stay on them as they become adults, even though they are no longer correct (if they ever were). Consider these labels:

- \* Such a CLUMSY AND AWKWARD CHILD
- \* SLOW LEARNER
- \* BOOKWORM
- \* SHY WALLFLOWER... THE QUIET TYPE
- \* DAYDREAMER
- \* Just not good with \_\_\_\_\_ (math, spelling, sports, etc.)

Or consider these: Clint Eastwood was told by an executive at Universal Pictures that he “had no future as an actor” because he had a chipped tooth, an Adams apple that was too prominent, and talked too slow. Best-selling, millionaire author Scott Turow (“Presumed Innocent”) must be a shock to his high school English teacher; Scott got an “F” in that course. In his first fight, Joe Louis was knocked down six times in three rounds, and labeled by one sportswriter as a “doormat with no future.” Charles Schultz, creator of “Peanuts,” was turned down for a job as a cartoonist at the Disney studios, and told he “lacked talent.”

### What Life’s Winners Do About Their Labels: The Artichoke Factor

The labels of football teams are interesting. In many cases, there are images invoked for the players to live up to. The Los Angeles Raiders, for example, with the pirate logo, silver and black colors, “Raiders” name, all that calls for a very tough, aggressive, physical style of play. Players have talked about there being something “special” about that tradition; they’ve said that when you put on a Raiders uniform, something happens to you inside. For years, the Pittsburgh Steelers were famous for their “Steel Curtain Defense.” For obvious reasons, you’ll probably never see a football team named “The Williamsburg Librarians.”

Which brings us to the small Scottsdale Community College, in 1975, with a very liberal student body opposed to competitive sports. They considered football frivolous, superficial and representative of a too-violent, too-male-dominated society. As a symbol of their feelings, they elected the artichoke as the official mascot of the college's football team. Imagine the ridicule you'd suffer suiting up and taking the field as a player on the Scottsdale Artichokes!

The Artichokes played their games at a local high school, because their own practice field had no bleachers, and no funds were ever approved for any. Their head coach, John Aviantos, had no scholarships to offer in recruiting talented players. Burdened with the artichoke name, given no recruiting tools, minimal funds, Coach Aviantos still had to compete. And, in six years, the Artichokes won four conference championships, went to two bowl games, and never had a losing season. Coach Aviantos coined the term "The Artichoke Factor" to represent the aspect of a person's character that inspires him to rise to a challenge, to look at the labels that have been sewn on, disagree, and tear them off. "Successful people rarely start out labeled as most-likely-to-succeed," Coach told me. In the sixth year of his tenure there, an 8-foot-high sculpture of an artichoke was erected – a monument to Aviantos' determination not to let a negative, humiliating label stay sewn on his football program and his players.

Labels Sewn On "Accidentally" In Childhood  
Are One Thing – Labels Attached To Us As  
Adults Are Another

The CBS news anchor Dan Rather once commented that one of the most shocking lessons in life is the discovery that not everyone wishes you well. There is a surprising amount of jealousy, envy and resentment directed at high achievers in every field. The more you try to do and the more you do, the more you will be subject to it.

Consider the "Idiot" label that the media tried so hard to sew onto Vice-President Dan Quayle. His words and actions were scrutinized with microscopic intensity for the express purpose of "catching" something that could be used to get another stitch sewn with that label. (Last Sunday, I listened as V.P. Al Gore gave a long, rambling, meaningless, confused answer to a question on "Meet The Press" and was not challenged then, nor did anyone comment on it later. Had it been Quayle, it would have been front-page news.) Quayle has defied the label with a mixture of humor, quiet confidence, determination and strategic action, and has refused to let it limit or interfere with his actions. We may yet see Dan Quayle as a serious contender for the White House. He might surprise a lot of people and make a good President.

As I mentioned in this book's introduction, the "Washed-Up Has-Been" label was sewn on Joan Rivers after the loss of her talk show and the suicide of her husband, and it was sewn on her by her own agent and manager, many "supposed" friends, and the media. Joan defied the label with grit, hard work, a willingness to go through any door of opportunity she could find, humor, talent and self-confidence. She refused to let her actions be limited or dictated by the label others were so eager to attach to her.

In preparation for another book, I did considerable research on Debbi Fields, founder of Mrs. Fields Cookies. She and I also appeared as speakers on several events together. Debbi is arguably one of the best known, most widely recognized, and most phenomenally successful women entrepreneurs of our time. But in the beginning, she was labeled as an "empty-headed housewife" by her husband's business acquaintances, bankers, family, "friends," vendors and suppliers.

Fran Tarkenton, who I've gotten to know thanks to a number of Guthy-Renker Corporation projects, was labeled "too small to play in the NFL." Today's quarterbacks are still scrambling to catch up to some of his records. More recently, Doug Flutie, a collegiate football superstar, was labeled "too small" to play pro ball by the NFL. Last year, he was THE most valuable player – with his multi-million dollar arm – in the expanding Canadian Football League.

It seems that the world is eager to attach labels: too old... too young... too small... too big... too slow... too dumb... too clumsy... too inexperienced... too this-or-that. You've just about got to keep one eye open while you sleep because somebody may be sneaking up to try and label you.

It is important to note that successful people tend to defy their labels, past and present, with their actions. Unsuccessful people accept and conform to their labels by their actions.

## Chapter 5

### **TAKE ACTION TO GET PAID**

One of the most interesting metaphysical authors, Stuart Wilde, says “When they show up, *bill ‘em.*” What does that mean? It actually refers as much to overriding attitude as to business policy.

One meaning is to properly value your time. If you do not place a high value on your time, I can promise you no one else will. Yet, the one thing we all have an equal amount of is time. Everybody starts out each day with 24 hours to invest as wisely as possible, for profit, for joy, for the benefit of others. The richest man in the world gets not a minute more to work with than does the poorest beggar on the street. But you can bet everything you’ve got that he thinks about that time differently, feels about that time differently, allocates that time differently, and has an entirely different intellectual, emotional, physical and actual experience with time than does the beggar. There’s the rub; to get from poor to rich, you have to adopt the attitudes about time of the rich.

Another meaning, a bigger one, is to value yourself.

When I first started in the “success education business,” one of the few people in the country who was consistently effective at selling self-improvement audiocassette programs direct, face-to-face to executives and salespeople, gave me what turned out to be very, very good advice – he said: “Don’t waste your time trying to sell these materials to the people who need it the most. They won’t buy it. You should focus on selling to successful people who want to get even better.” Over the years, I’ve demonstrated the validity of this to myself a number of different ways. And I’ve developed an explanation for it. There is what I now call “the self-esteem Catch-22 loop” at work here: in order for a person to invest directly in himself, which is what buying self-improvement materials is, he has to place value on himself, i.e. have high self-esteem, but if he has such high self-esteem, he is probably already doing well and does not have a critical need for this type of information; he will get marginal improvement out of it; but the person who needs it most does not place much value on himself, i.e. has relatively low self-esteem, which prohibits him from buying, believing in or using self-improvement materials.

At a very practical level, I see this “value hang-up” surface all the time with entrepreneurs, authors, speakers, consultants, doctors dealing with fees and prices. I understand it. I still remember the first time I quoted a client \$15,000.00 to

develop a direct-mail campaign for him, held my breath, and instantly thought to myself, “*Geez, Kennedy, a lot of people work all year to make that much money. What business do YOU have asking for that for a few days’ work? Who do you think you are anyway?*” But here’s the amazing thing: the world largely accepts YOUR appraisal of your value, and just about everybody under-values and under-prices their contributions.

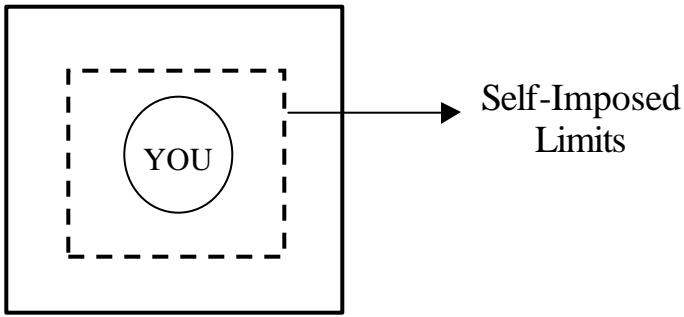
My good friend Rodney Tolleson was very active for a handful of years in the practice management business, providing doctors of chiropractic with a comprehensive collection of business-building services, training and counseling. I worked with him doing many of the seminars. We both discovered that these “professionals” were no different than anyone else; they had incredible mental and emotional blocks about charging what they and their service were worth. Although his company provided them with enormously helpful technical, management and marketing assistance and tools, the greatest income leaps were achieved by focusing on the doctors’ beliefs about worth and value – “practice-esteem” and “self-esteem.” There was more “fee resistance” in the doctors’ minds than in the public’s. And all their actions relative to promoting the practice, stimulating referrals, setting, asking for and promptly collecting fees, insisting on compliance with recommendations were governed – hindered – by their surprisingly low self-appraisals.

### A “NO BS Marketing Letter” Subscriber & Inner Circle Member Hits The Nail On The Head

I’m fortunate to have thousands of Inner Circle Members and Subscribers who are bright, curious, innovative, and contributive, so ours is more of a continuing dialogue than just my publishing a newsletter. One such Member is David Garfinkel, the President of a consulting firm named “Let Your Clients Do Your Selling.” When I got into the final stages of this book, I invited my Members to submit their ideas about “the ultimate secret of success.” David’s suggestion was most interesting. And while it does not name “the ultimate secret,” it does hit the nail on the head about the chief obstacle to benefiting from that secret.

David said, “After all the smoke clears, it gets down to one thing – one limiting belief – one self-concept that, once revamped, will set you off on a permanent success trajectory. I think that’s different for each of us, but it’s usually a personal version of the feeling “Yes, I really CAN succeed.”

I agree. For more than 15 years, I have explained that we live inside two boxes:



The solid, outer boundary represents REAL LIMITS, and we all have some real limits. The oldest active player in the NFL is Vince Evans, a backup quarterback at the L.A. Raiders – Vince is 39 years old; my age. Still, I really CAN'T go try out and make the roster of an NFL team. Even if I trained for the next 12 months, I still couldn't do it. Vince has stayed in peak condition and played his entire life. I didn't play in high school (I didn't go to college), I rarely exercise and haven't "worked out" in years, I have chronic back problems, one bad knee, and, well, I'd go out of the tryout on a stretcher. I just cannot play pro football, no matter how much I may "desire" it – unless I buy a team. Even then, I probably wouldn't get through a series of downs. That IS a REAL limit.

As of now, you CAN'T do business on Mars. That's a REAL limit.

But way inside that solid line, real boundary, is a dotted line. The dotted line represents the SELF-IMPOSED LIMITS. This is a much smaller box we build around ourselves. It's made up of "IF," "CAN'T," "IMPOSSIBLE" inaccuracies applied, of negatives in "The Big 4 Of Life:" Self-Esteem, Self-Image, Self-Confidence and Self-Discipline. But David's suggestion adds a new wrinkle to all this; that there is ONE "dot" on this dotted line that is bolder, blacker, bigger and more significant than all the others... and that when you bust through it, the entire dotted line box disappears.

In monetary terms, that dotted line certainly controls how much value you place on yourself, your time, your know-how and your services, how much you dare demand, and how much you get. Anytime you push that box out, you automatically increase your income. Now I would suggest that the biggest leap can come from pushing against it at the point where it seems strongest.

### "Abundance" Doesn't Care

Bill and Hillary Clinton and their supporters have tried to "criminalize" exceptional ambition and achievement. They have tried to characterize President Reagan's tenure as "the age of greed." This follows a liberal theme that the economy is and must be "win-lose;" if one person gets "too rich" that somehow

forces others to become poor or poorer. This kind of class divisiveness may be necessary politics for the liberals, but it is economic nonsense. And, unfortunately, this is one of the ways people build up guilt about striving for and achieving extraordinary successes.

Foster Hibbard often talks about two men going down to the ocean, one with a teaspoon, the other with a bucket, each taking away the amount of water he chooses to take away. The ocean, however, doesn't care. The ocean doesn't care if you come down there with a teaspoon, bucket or tanker truck. The ocean is a miraculously replenishing, unlimited resource. That represents ABUNDANCE. And Abundance doesn't care either. It matters not to Abundance whether you tap into it a little or a lot. Your "withdrawals" don't diminish anyone else's opportunities nor do they damage the total amount of available abundance. It is infinite. Infinite! And the only limits on "your share" are placed on you by you.

**What You Are  
Willing  
To Accept  
Is What You Get.**

## Chapter 6

### **TAKE ACTION TO WIN OVER WORRY**

*I have had a great many misfortunes in my life – but only about half as many as I have painfully anticipated.*

Worry can create physical illnesses, stress and fatigue. Worry robs you of your competence and confidence. Many people are literally immobilized by worry.

Yet, as destructive as we know worry to be, and as unnecessary as worrying often proves to be, most people still let worry into their lives virtually every day. Ironically, we give our worries power by thinking about them. The more you worry about something, the more power itself gains over you. Even small worries can amass enormous power if you let them. Dr. Edward Kramer observed: “A penny held to the eye blocks the sun.”

So, how do you eliminate worry from your life?

I’m not sure you can eliminate it. Worry is often the starting point of constructive, creative thought. But you can reduce its time consumption and influence on your life.

You can temporarily do it with chemicals. Booze. Prescription, over-the-counter or street drugs.

Personally, I used the drink-to-coma method myself, for several years. The problem with that is, when you return to the real world, the things you were worrying about are there waiting for you, and you’re further handicapped in dealing with them by the hangovers and other physical debilitation. This kind of escape yields no real benefit and has its own added costs. I can’t speak to the drug thing, as I’ve never tried any street drugs and very rarely even swallow a Tylenol. But I can talk about alcohol from experience, and I’ll only briefly say this: if you find yourself knocking back a few every day, everything you tell yourself about not having a problem is crap. You’ve got a problem. NOT a solution; a problem. If you protect it and continue with it, it will eventually destroy your business or career, an important relationship, your health or land you in jail. If you cannot quickly kick this habit alone, get help.

*THE only real antidote for worry is action.*

Decision is the empowering opposite of worry. When you take action to solve a problem, you take power away from the problem, and you gain power. For every

source of worry and anxiety, there is usually a list of a number of potentially helpful actions. If you'll get involved in making that list and acting on all the items on the list, worry will be eliminated; it cannot co-exist with such constructive action.

I recently read an article about a CEO of a huge company, on the brink of financial ruin, presented with the fact that they had only enough cash to operate the business for another three days. "What then," he asked, "are we going to spend it on?" He was instantly moving on to actions, not worry.

If you find yourself too frequently immobilized by worry, I have a book to recommend: W. Clement Stone's **THE SUCCESS SYSTEM THAT NEVER FAILS**. Pay particular attention to his discussion of the sudden termination of his right to represent a particular company; the end of a business he had struggled mightily to build; an eminent and apparently unmanageable threat to everything he had and everything he had worked for; and how he reacted to it.

*But – what about the problem you cannot take any action to resolve?* First of all, there's rarely any situation that defies all action. But, for the sake of conversation, let's assume that you are up against something so tough that, at least at the moment, there is absolutely nothing you can do, no action you can take. If that's the case, then the only thing you can do is set that problem aside entirely and take action on some other matter or project that you can do something about.

*The ONLY antidote for worry is action.*

*What about worrying about what others think?* A great deal of unhappiness comes from people pursuing and achieving others' goals instead of their own. When I was a kid, one of our neighbors, Ralph F., created a great deal of unhappiness for himself, his wife and his five sons by obsessing over his sons' disinterest in taking over the family business. I wonder how many kids buckle under to such pressure and achieve the goals their parents set for them – and wind up wishing they hadn't. Working to achieve others' goals set for you, to meet others' expectations, to satisfy others' definitions, that is what you do when you worry about what others think.

My friend Herb True had moved from the academic world to a very successful career in professional speaking, and could have continued to enjoy a growing, exceptional income, create and market cassette albums, author best-selling books and accumulate wealth. He chose not to. Herb chose to cut his business back to taking just a few speaking engagements a year so he could return to teaching at Notre Dame. When he did so, I know that many of his peers and friends thought

he'd lost his marbles. Or gotten too old to compete. Or had the business pass him by. None of those things are true. But regardless of what anybody else or everybody else thought, Herb chose to pursue *his* goals. The result is one of the most contented but invigorated, happy and fulfilled individuals I know or have ever observed.

Oh, and you'd probably be surprised (*disappointed?*) if you knew how little others think about you. Most people have their hands full dealing with their own lives. They ponder yours a lot less than you probably assume. But regardless of how little or great the world's interest is in how you choose to live your life, "sooner or later you stand in your own space." The cure for worry over others' opinions is taking action that satisfies you and, as a result, increases your sense of control, feeling of power, self-confidence and self-esteem. Others can never gift you with self-esteem or peace of mind. These are products of your own actions.

## Chapter 7

### TAKE ACTION WHEN YOUR 'INNER VOICE' SPEAKS

About 40 years ago, an expectant mother took a \$500 risk and placed a little ad in "Seventeen Magazine" for a new purse monogrammed with the customer's initials. She believed in her idea and acted on it, even though \$500 was a great deal of money for her at the time, even though she had no market research to support it, even though she had no business experience. Her little ad produced \$32,000.00 in orders. And these days her Lillian Vernon Company sells more than \$150-million of merchandise each year.

In a speech to the New York Venture Group on May 17, 1990, Lillian Vernon said, "I want quick decisions. I take chances, relying on what I consider 'my golden gut.'"

She went on to say: "Growing from a million-dollar to a multi-million-dollar company involved areas such as finance, list management, computers and large-scale production realms beyond my expertise. I tried to cover my shortcomings by surrounding myself with experienced veterans of large corporate cultures, usually from outside the direct marketing industry. There were so few direct marketers in the early 1970's that I filled my ranks with managers from different walks of life who generally were very savvy to the ways of big business – and most of them almost killed us. I don't want to generalize, but some of the corporate executives I hired just couldn't make a decision. They took analysis to the point of paralysis. Every consideration had to first be studied by a committee. In my business, sending a good idea to a committee was like sending Rip Van Winkle to a slumber party. I hate, more than anything, to wake up and find that one of my competitors is already doing something I was planning on." Lillian Vernon continues to pick winning products for her catalogs today, often trusting her 'golden gut' and making fast decisions.

Confident decisiveness is one of the most prized qualities in the business world. All great leaders exhibit it. People naturally respond to such a person. It is easy for the decisive individual to inspire trust and cooperation. Where does this kind of confident decisiveness come from? Call it what you will: intuition, the golden gut, the inner voice, insight – most exceptionally successful people admit to listening to a secret, inner advisor.

A Few Thoughts About "Insight"\*

*“The mind can only proceed so far upon what it knows, and can prove. There comes a point where the mind takes a leap – call it intuition or what you will – and it comes out on a higher plane of knowledge.” – Albert Einstein*

My friend and speaking colleague Lee Milteer has just had her first book, FEEL & GROW RICH published (and praised by the likes of Og Mandino, Brian Tracy and Jack Canfield), and I thought excerpts from its chapter on “Intuition: Your Secret Talent” would be appropriate here:

“It is interesting that in our western culture we seem to comprehend almost all of our experiences through the logical, linear, analytical thinking process. We use words to communicate this kind of thinking. Because words are our way of understanding the world, we’ve almost forgotten we have an intuitive, creative part of ourselves. We’re not trained to say I FEEL but rather I THINK. If we deny and cut off our intuition, then we get trapped by concepts learned through our programmed minds. Yesterday’s learned beliefs (alone) cannot solve today’s challenges or enable us to capitalize on tomorrow’s opportunities.

Today, more and more successful people – executives, artists, entrepreneurs – are realizing that making decisions is *not* an exclusive function of the analytical left side of the brain. You must now use the intuitive and creative right side of your brain as well. You must have an integration of analytical and intuitive thinking. This is commonly referred to as “*whole brain thinking*.” Dr. Jonas Salk said, “A new way of thinking is now needed to deal with our present reality. Our subjective responses (intuitive) are more sensitive and more rapid than our objective responses (reasoned). This is the nature of the way the mind works. We first sense, then we reason why.”

I suggest that you have some fun in your life and start testing your intuitive abilities. When the phone rings, ask yourself who it is before you answer – see how many times you’re right. When waiting for an elevator, guess which one will come first. There are dozens of small games you can play with yourself to strengthen your abilities. Your ‘intuitive muscle’ gets stronger as you use it. Then, when you need your intuition, you will feel more confident in using it.

In his book “The Intuitive Edge,” Philip Goldberg noted “...astonishing speed with which the truly intuitive mind can bring together bits of information only remotely related in time and meaning to form the sudden hunch or whispered feeling that we call intuition.” Conrad Hilton, who was well known for using his intuition in his hotel business, wrote ‘I know when I have a problem and have done all I can to figure it out, I keep listening in a sort of inside silence until something clicks and I feel a right answer.’

*Here are some of Lee’s  
action-tips for  
encouraging your intuition:*

- ➔ Listen to your body; that’s why we call intuition a ‘gut’ feeling. The solar plexus is a large network of nerves located behind the stomach and is said to be the seat of emotion. You can have an accurate, gut-level reaction to many situations.

- ➔ Allow yourself to redefine the problem frequently; writing out the problem gives you the opportunity to see the problem from a different perspective.
- ➔ Allow yourself to play. You don't have to be sitting in your office to come up with creative and intuitive solutions. Take a walk, feed the birds, play hooky for an hour and then come back to work on the problem.
- ➔ Take action on your insights. Start investigating with the approach of "will this hunch logically work?"

Two of the self-help pioneers that I've long been a serious student of; Napoleon Hill and Dr. Edward Kramer both promoted reliance on insight and intuition. I don't often talk about it, but I often act on little "flashes" that come to me seemingly out of the blue. I'll give you an example:

Earlier this year, at the second "Jeff Paul Tells All" Mail-Order Seminar we sponsored, one of the attendees was a long-time subscriber and 'student' of mine, Dr. Michael Anderson, owner of a very successful chiropractic practice management company. During the two days of the seminar, I heard about his goals and objectives. On my flight home, a "flash" came – I'll bet Dr. Anderson would buy my SuccessTrak business, notably including my "Practice Building Secrets Newsletter" for chiropractors. Prior to that "flash," I had not even thought about spinning that business off, although I was gradually recognizing that it was no longer a good fit with my other interests and activities and was, therefore, being neglected. As I thought about this "flash," I developed an argument in my mind for synergy between Dr. Anderson's current business and goals and what I had to offer, that made mine worth more to him than it was to me. Most importantly, immediately on my arrival at home, I generated a letter to Dr. Anderson suggesting the deal. And a win-win deal was consummated in a matter of weeks.

For me, this is not at all unusual. These "flashes" frequently occur, I frequently act on them quickly, and I frequently benefit as a result. Consequently, I'm a believer in the role of "intuition" in otherwise hard-nosed, tough-minded, pragmatic business environments. And I find information on the subject, such as that Lee has assembled in her new book, of great value.

(\*Portions of the above reprinted from an issue of The Insight Travel & Success Letter. For information: 602/269-3111. Also: Lee Milteer's book: "Feel & Grow Rich: How To Inspire Yourself To Get Anything You Want" is available in many bookstores or from her office c/o Box 5653, Virginia Beach, VA 23455. \$18.95.)

### How To Use The Miraculous "Dominant Thought Principle" To Energize Your Inner Advisor

I will try to tell this true-life story as briefly as possible: in my hometown of Akron, Ohio, a prominent judge, respected citizen, family man, wound up on the front page of The Akron Beacon Journal and in prison, as a child molester. This was 20 years ago; we were still shocked by such things. He was asked how a man like him could wind up in such a horrible situation. He described a “process” – he said, “One day, years ago, I was out watering my lawn, a little girl in a sundress went by and for a fleeting millisecond I thought about what it would be like with her – then, of course, I pushed it from my mind. But a year or so later, at a mall, another little girl, and I held the thought for maybe a minute.” He went on to mention another incident, 15 or 20 minutes of thought. “Then one day,” he said, “I woke up and found it was all I was thinking about. For days, it dominated my thoughts. Then I did it.”

This is a NEGATIVE example of the amazing power of Dominant Thought.

After 20 years of intense research into what made super-successful people tick, Napoleon Hill wrote: “Our brains become magnetized with the dominating thoughts which we hold in our minds, and by means which no man is familiar, these magnets attract to us the forces, the people, the circumstances of life which harmonize with the nature of our dominating thoughts.”

I know this to be true, personally, in its positive and its negative application.

When you come to grips with this Dominant Thought Principle, you have the “supercharger device” for dramatically accelerating the achievement of any objective; instead of taking weeks, months or years to move from first, fleeting thought to dominant thought, deliberately utilize dominant thought – because the lapse of time between dominant thought, action and achievement is minimal. All the time is taken up in getting to dominant thought. Very little time is required to get from dominant thought to reality.

Beyond this, dominant thoughts energize your Inner Advisor. Your dominant thoughts are your Inner Advisor’s directives. Your dominant thoughts tell your Inner Advisor what to work on. Your Inner Advisor then jumps into action; mobilizes all the vast resources of your subconscious mind, your memory, your experience, your connection to universal intelligence. Then your Inner Advisor tells you precisely what to do, who to call, where to go and when to act, to get from dominant thought to reality as rapidly as possible. When you energize your Inner Advisor with deliberate dominant thought, you can trust and confidently, decisively act on the Advisor’s recommendations.

## Chapter 8

### TAKE ACTION TO PROFIT FROM THE POWER OF POSITIVE ASSOCIATION

Advertising agency empire-builder David Ogilvy established a tradition of welcoming new executives with a gift of five wooden dolls, each smaller than the other, one inside the other. When the recipient finally gets to the fifth little doll, the smallest doll, and opens it, he finds this message: *if each of us hires people who are smaller than we are, we shall become a company of dwarfs, but if each of us hires people who are bigger than we are, we shall become a company of giants.*

You can certainly take this beyond hiring. If you surround yourself and spend time with people who are “smaller” than you, you will stay as you are.

Take action to involve smart people in your projects. I am constantly impressed with how my clients, Greg Renker and Bill Guthy of the Guthy-Renker Corporation pull together project teams, invite outside experts and consultants to their company meetings, collect qualified opinions and data, and patiently explore different viewpoints. They constantly apply Napoleon Hill’s “mastermind principle.”

#### Take A Millionaire To Lunch

There are smart people readily accessible everywhere. You might seek out and tap retired and highly experienced executives or entrepreneurs in your field to assist and advise you. (SCORE, the Service Corps. Of Retired Executives, under the auspices of the SBA, even provides such consultants free to many small businesses.) You might find successful people in your field, in other geographic areas, happy to share their experiences for the price of a lunch or dinner. My speaking colleague Jim Rohn urges people: “Take a millionaire to lunch.” Jim says he to buy him a big, juicy steak, fine wine, then dessert and keep asking him questions, and keep listening carefully. And he observes that most people are too short-sighted to ever take this advise; *hey, the guy's a millionaire? – let him buy his own steak.* I'd add that most people take people to lunch who know less than they do, have less successful experience than they do, like a tennis player preferring the company of inferior players. You might find smart, helpful people through professional associations or at seminars and conferences. You might need to hire smart people to advise you or provide very specialized services for your business. Only one thing is certain; you won't find smart people if you do not take action to find them.

Recently, at the 1994 American Booksellers Association, I ran into a young couple who had authored and published an excellent, unusual travel book. I had met them about seven months earlier at a conference for self-publishers where I spoke. At that conference, they had asked me a few questions, but been resistant to advice they didn't like, clearly eager for someone to validate their own opinions, and even more clearly unwilling to pay for expert assistance. At ABA, they told me of having just appeared on a major national network daytime talk show. But their book wasn't in stores and they never got their own 800 number given out on the show, were not prepared to negotiate that with the show's producers, and were not prepared to hold their own as one of several guests on a panel – another of the guests monopolized the entire show. I certainly could have made sure they got their 800 number shown and given out on the show, the calls handled, probably sold 5,000 or more books immediately by phone and collected three times that many inquiries, coached them in asserting themselves on the show, and otherwise helped them capitalize on this very difficult-to-get exposure. And I'm not the only one; there are any number of people very well-qualified as advisors in such a situation. But they squandered a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity by being stubborn and by being cheap.

Every business, every occupation and every field has grown far too complex for one person to go it alone and capably handle every aspect of the activity. Insisting on doing EVERYthing yourself is very false economy.

It's interesting that over 30 different writers made creative contributions to the hit movie THE FLINTSTONES. Several directors. Steven Spielberg. The talented actors and actresses. Market and consumer researchers. A giant mastermind group. In his first book, Lee Iaccoca wrote about his "team of horses" – the mastermind group that turned Chrysler into a winner. In many instances, the existence and importance of a mastermind group within a business or organization goes unnoticed by most of the outside world. But behind most successes, there is between a 2-person and a 20-person mastermind alliance hard at work.

Now, here's a tricky part: you cannot listen only to advice you like and only to opinions that validate your own. Well, you can, but you'll most certainly fail in most of your endeavors. Sometimes, the most valuable person is the one with the courage to confront you and tell you "the Emperor has no clothes."

On the other hand, you need to take great care in choosing those people you test ideas on and solicit opinions from. At my seminars, I all too often hear from the person who had a "great idea," bounced it off a few friends, got talked out of it, only to subsequently see someone else come up with the same idea and go on to amass a fortune. It's a frequently-told tale. In describing the proper make-up of a

“mastermind group” – the short list of those people you choose to routinely serve as your sounding boards – Dr. Napoleon Hill wrote: “*We share nothing we plan to achieve with anyone except those who believe in us and who are in complete sympathy with our plans.*” This does not mean “yessers.” No, we need good criticism. We need someone to point out the flaws and hazards we may overlook in our enthusiasm. But these people have to be truly eager for our success, confident of our abilities, progressive, innovative and optimistic in general, and possessing of successful, relevant experience and knowledge.

Walt Disney was more brutal and brief in his comments about others’ opinions. He would typically ask ten people for their opinions and when all ten disliked one of his ideas, he would rate that one as most worthy of investment. The great actor Peter Ustinov said, “If the world should blow itself up tomorrow, the last audible voice would be that of an expert saying: it can’t be done.”

Definitely be wary of the “expert” who can only tell you why you will fail and why you canNOT do what you want to do. John Polk, a client of mine, a young man who has built a very successful multi-million-dollar publishing and public seminar business, recalls sitting across the desk from an “expert consultant” early in his business and being told that he was not good enough, smart enough, mature enough or dynamic enough to build such a business. The “expert” gave him a day-long dissertation in all the reasons John was destined for failure – unless, of course, he gave this expert a mountain of money and carefully adhered to every word of his advice.

(I might mention that this is never how I approach the consulting work that I do; to the contrary, I encourage people to do all they can on their own and generally try to breed independence not dependence.) In this case, John got angry.

Understandably. Although he might have been intimidated by this expert, instead he reminded himself: I’ve carefully studied this field, I’ve done my homework, I’ve assembled products I believe superior to much of what’s out there, I’ve become an accomplished speaker, and there’s no reason I cannot do this. And, at last check, this expert was out of the expert business altogether – John Polk is very successful in his chosen business. So, beware the expert who can only tell you what you canNOT do (or canNOT do without the expert). Look, instead, for the knowledgeable person who may point out flaws and question premises but can and will also suggest possibilities and improvements and, in general, is eager to figure out how you CAN accomplish your stated objectives.

Such people have to be “big” enough not to be jealous or envious of your success and accomplishments. They have to be smart enough to know what they do not know, and secure enough to admit it – a person with equally strong opinions about

everything cannot be trusted. They must not fear the truth or shun reality, but they must be, overall, optimist and positive-minded by nature. To paraphrase the title of Peter McWilliams' book, you cannot afford the luxury of a truly negative individual as a close advisor. And your collection of advisors should include people from "inside" your particular field and from other diverse fields.

Finally, in soliciting and considering opinions, there is a time to say, "Enough has to be enough" and then take action. I have often taken pains to correct people's picture of the entrepreneur as a wild-eyed risk-TAKER, defining the entrepreneur, instead, as someone who MANAGES risk. Obviously, the more information and worthwhile opinions you can assemble and consider before making an important decision, the better – however, this balances out against a value-of-passing-time issue... the assembly and evaluation of information can become a never-ending pursuit in and of itself, with always one more person yet to be heard from, one more source yet to consult, one more piece of data to be obtained. If you're constantly seduced by the next piece of information to be uncovered, paralysis of analysis takes over.

### The 3-Legged Stool Of Successful Achievement

Picture in your mind a 3-legged stool. If any one leg is missing, you can't sit on it; you topple over. One leg is no more important than the other. All three legs share exactly equal importance. Two without three is no better than one without two or even none. All three are vitally necessary. Their importance is evenly, perfectly balanced.

So, one of these legs is: INFORMATION. Another: ADVICE AND ASSOCIATION. The third is: DECISION AND ACTION.

Watch the pro football coach on the sidelines, the next time a game is on television. He has less than a minute between plays to direct his offense. He has INFORMATION: in his hands, usually on pages attached to a clipboard, is a "game plan," including a collection of planned plays, all built on prior, careful analysis of information collected about the opposing team's strengths, weaknesses and behaviors, as well as his own players' abilities, strengths and weaknesses. He has ADVICE AND ASSOCIATION: during the week before the game, most coaches confer with all their assistant coaches and players, and often by phone with a few trusted, little-mentioned advisors, like other coaches, retired coaches. During the game, he is getting input from assistant coaches in the "skybox" above the field and from other assistants on the sidelines with him. He is getting instant feedback from the players – here's what happened... here's what I noticed on the

last play. But then he still has less than a minute to arrive at DECISION. And, it doesn't matter whether it is what might be judged as a minimally-important situation; the first play of the game; or a life-or-death situation, 4<sup>th</sup> and 4, two minutes left, down by a touchdown, he still has less than a minute. How would you do under similar pressure?

Of these three legs, ADVICE AND ASSOCIATION is the one you can and need to set up in advance, cultivate over time, and use on a daily basis. You'll do yourself a great favor by organizing your own network, your own "brain trust" of people whose judgment and support you can depend on.

## Chapter 9

### TAKE ACTION TO (AT LEAST) DOUBLE YOUR PAYCHECK

Here is the truth no politician, few economists, few teachers want to tell people, and that few people want to hear: certain jobs are only worth a certain maximum number of dollars per hour, whether you've been there doing it for one year, ten years, or thirty years. Longevity does not necessarily merit more money because the individual's length of time on the job does not necessarily increase the real value of getting that job done. (Financial problems of big bureaucracies like the U.S. postal system, the airline industry, the auto industry... our ability to compete in world markets... quality problems in our educational system... have a lot to do with the pressure on employers to pay more to people purely based on length of time on a job. Demagogue union leaders and politicians perpetuating this 100% false economy for their own gains have done irreparable harm to this country. Academics who wish to ignore how the economy really works and MUST really work have aided and abetted the fraud committed on the American public; on workers; on students being prepared for careers.)

As our economy is forced to acknowledge this uncomfortable reality in the years to come, there will be a great many bitter casualties.

However, hidden inside this uncomfortable truth is the secret to increasing your income literally at will.

In his book EARL NIGHTINGALE'S GREATEST DISCOVERIES, Earl noted that "every field of human endeavor has its stars; all the rest in these fields are in a descending order of what we might call 'the service-reward continuum.'" He went on to point out that the reason some people earn more money than others is that they have made themselves more valuable. He observed that, for the most part, the size of a person's paycheck is determined by this question – *how difficult is he or she to replace?*

As I was writing this, I was listening to a roundtable debate on a Sunday morning news program about employment and productivity and security in America, and a young employee had this question for management and for unions – "How will you help me avoid losing my job in the future?" Well, you see, hat's the wrong question. The unions try hard to protect their turf by answering it, and, as a result, they tell a big lie. Management tries hard to answer it and, as a result, they lie. Government even sticks its nose in and tries to answer it and lies. The only real truthful response is to refuse to answer it at all. What this young man needs to do

is go find a full-length mirror, sit down in a chair facing it, stare deeply into his own eyes, and ask himself, “What am I going to do to avoid losing my job in the future?” The key words are “*what am I going to do?*” – that is the question.

And here are the extension questions:

1. What am I going to do to increase my value in the marketplace?
2. What am I going to do to demonstrably increase my value to my current employer (or clients, customers, patients)?
3. What am I going to do to increase my value to prospective future employers?
4. What am I going to do to make myself so valuable that I’m the least likely to be cut, the last to be cut?

Unfortunately, the most common responses are: “I don’t have time...” “I can’t afford to...” “my employer should...” “the government should...” *Take evening classes and spend my own money? Hey, I’m already working hard all day. When I come home, I’m tired. And I can’t afford to take classes. Besides, if these classes are going to give me skills I’ll use on my job, my darned employer oughta pay for them. And I ought to get to take the classes during regular work hours. If I have to go to classes on my time, I should get time-and-a-half.* Eric Hoffer wrote, “There are many who find a good alibi far more attractive than achievement.”

I have sometimes been introduced, as a speaker, as The Professor Of Harsh Reality. Well, here is the harsh reality every adult should come to grips with as quickly as possible, every young person should be taught: one year, three years, and five years from now, the particular job (task) you do will not have appreciably increased in value. YOU will either have stayed the same in value or increased in value through your own initiative; that’s the only way. If you have not increased in value at some point, your employer can’t or clientele won’t pay any more – regardless of inflation. It is at that point that your economic status shifts into reverse. Your income stagnates or declines. The gradual decline in your buying power as a consumer will prevent you from saving, investing and creating financial security or erode what you have already accumulated. And your vulnerability to layoff, termination or replacement increases.

This is true of the self-employed, the business owner as well. If you are not increasing your value to your customers, if you are not making yourself indispensable to them all over again, every day, then you are declining in value to them. You are either increasing in value or declining in value.

*How many people do you think have this “add value” idea straight in their minds?* Well, look around. One out of every ten adult Americans is on food stamps. 95% of the people reaching retirement age lack the financial resources to take care of their basic needs without all sorts of direct and disguised welfare. In most big companies, there are masses of people doing the very same jobs, the very same way year after year, even decade after decade, shocked when cheaper foreign labor or automation or some other “replacement” boots them out on the street. Small business owners suddenly find themselves vulnerable when a major, mass retailer or chain or aggressive new competitor comes to town. How can these terrible things happen to “good people” in America?

Every one of these people has one very distinctive thing in common; from one year to the next, they have not taken any initiative, not done anything, not invested any money or time in increasing their own personal value. YOU need to look very closely at all these folks and avoid following their example at any and all cost. And, if you really would like to double your paycheck, simply take action to triple your value; one of three things will absolutely, certainly happen: one, your present employer will respond with raises, bonuses and advancement; two, a new employer will find and grab you; or three, you’ll discover some entrepreneurial opportunity and move on to writing your own paycheck. And if you already own a business and would like to double your paycheck, simply take action to triple your value to your customers. Your compensation will always catch up to your value.

## Chapter 10

### **Take Action To Promote Yourself, Your Ideas, Your Business, Products And Services**

Today, I had lunch with Coach Bill Foster, currently in charge of the entire Southwest Conference of college basketball, after a long, incredible distinguished coaching career. Bill gave the famous Jim Valvano his first coaching job. Bill had a phenomenal tenure at Duke and then at the University of South Carolina. *ESQUIRE MAGAZINE* featured him as “Dale Carnegie on the basketball court,” because of his reputation as a powerful motivator. He turned Northwestern’s program around. In every case, everywhere Bill went, attendance soared, alumni support increased, and community involvement with the team improved dramatically. Bottom-line: Bill Foster knows how to fill seats.

And that’s what we talked about at lunch; what he is now busily doing for the SWC’s schools, most with sagging attendance; he is teaching and motivating coaches to become promoters, and he is relentlessly promoting. Last year, the tournament’s big Tip-Off Luncheon, for example, had only 300 in attendance; this year, 1,000; and Bill’s goal for the next one, 1,500 – a 500% increase in two seasons. Schools with game attendance down to 2,000 will, within a single season, climb to 4,500 with Bill’s determined influence.

#### **What Bill Foster Knows About Success That Most People Don’t (Or Don’t Want To)**

Here’s what Bill told me, that everybody needs to hear and take to heart (whether they like it or not): *Coaches, he told me, often don’t understand that what they do off the basketball court, all year round, in their communities and with the national media, promoting, is as important as what they do on the court* – because if attendance sags, the university’s easiest fix is to fire the coach and bring in a new coach with new excitement and new promises. Because if attendance sags, recruiting suffers. Because if attendance sags, player confidence and commitment suffers.

In other words, a very, very important part of the coach’s responsibility is promotion. In other words, the “core” of coaching (like the “core” of operating a restaurant, owning a pet shop, writing books, being a jeweler, whatever) is not of sole importance; it is not *the* key to success. The smart coach is an assertive, creative promoter. “One of the signs on my wall says a terrible thing happens when you don’t promote,” Bill said, smiling. “Nothing.”

I have watched Bill's career closely, both at the University of South Carolina, then at Northwestern, now at SWC, and I'll tell you something; if you didn't know where he was, you could figure it out just by collecting and looking at the promotional literature, the calendars, the newsletters, the mailings of each school. One would stand out above all others. And that's where you'd find Bill Foster.

You see, in EVERY field of endeavor, in ANY field of endeavor, the winners are promoters.

Now, some people will want to argue about how unfair that is. I saw some clown from the ABA on a talk show the other day blaming the legal profession's disfavor with the public on "those few attorneys who do a lot of advertising." At Arizona State University, the academic in-crowd just about ostracized the professor who turned "Where There's A Will, There's An 'A'" into a giant nationwide bestseller, making himself famous and rich along the way. That's all crap. It's jealousy. Ego speaking. Those unwilling to promote are always the biggest, most vocal critics to those successful through promotion. Pick any field and you'll find both. You'll find very vocal critics of promoters. And you'll find tremendously successful promoters.

General Patton was viewed by many of his peers as a shameless, egotistical promoter. Madonna, throughout her career, has been sneered at as a no-talent self-promoter. Brandon Tarkintoff. Donald Trump. Richard Nixon brought himself back from utter, unparalleled disgrace to respected status as an astute elder statesman through an aggressively-implemented, thorough strategy of self-promotion. And let's add the adage, "*There have been many statues erected to honor those highly criticized, but very few statues erected to critics.*"

### You Only Get To Choose From Door #1 Or Door #2

You really have two choices. You can choose to stick your nose up at the promoters, criticize them and criticize promotion, view it as unseemly, as beneath you, as crass, and stand around grumbling about it. OR you can get good at it and use it to create influence, prominence, prestige, credibility, celebrity, career and financial success. It is your choice.

The coaches Bill works with face these choices. Some of those who choose "Door #1" will lose their current positions and move "down" to smaller schools, and there they may very well find happiness, peace of mind, a "home," and that's okay. Many, though, will move "down" and be puzzled and embittered by it. They'll

live forever in envy of others they judge to be less qualified, less capable coaches than they are. The world is full of such people.

A few will pick “Door #2.” *They’ll get the message.* They’ll somehow get intellectually and emotionally okay with the way things really are. They’ll dig in and learn and adapt and grow. They’ll become great promoters. And those are the coaches whose names you and I will know.

**This Guy Could Start An Argument  
In An Empty Room – How Can You Succeed  
With A Personality Like That?**

Buddy Ryan, when Defensive Coordinator at the Chicago Bears, irked head coach Ditka, the owner and countless others with his braggadocio self-promotion. Then he went on to be head coach in Philadelphia, and, in short order, so aggravated the owner and local media that he was fired. Then, as Defensive Coordinator of the NFL’s Houston Oilers, Buddy Ryan lost his cool and got into first an argument, then a fistfight with the Offensive Coordinator on the sidelines, during a nationally-televised game. His “sin” was shown over and over again during the game and on newscasts, in Sports Illustrated and newspapers, and every pundit said, “Now he’ll never get another head coaching job.” Many peers, sportswriters and others rejoiced in Buddy’s demise. Finally, his big, fat mouth had destroyed his career, as it should.

Nuts. As soon as the season ended, the owner of the Phoenix Cardinals grabbed Buddy Ryan like a drowning man clutching a lifesaver. And Buddy grabbed the mike at the press conference and instantly insulted past coaches, players, the owner, and said, “Well, Phoenix, you’ve *finally* got a winner here.” And 20,000 season tickets sold like hotcakes.

Buddy Ryan now has a very real chance to recreate his universally-feared, “killer” defense here in Phoenix and immediately take the Cardinals from the cellar to a winning record. Next year, he’ll have a very real chance to take this team to the Super Bowl. But do not misunderstand how that opportunity has come about. That opportunity exists for one reason and one reason only: because Buddy Ryan’s aggravating, controversial, bombastic self-promotion was a “lock” to fill the stadium in Phoenix. He has his shot because he fills seats.

Reading what Robert Ringer said about “The Leap Frog Theory” in his book WINNING THROUGH INTIMIDATION literally changed my life. That’s when I first got *the message.*

Let me now try and summarize the message.

Waiting around to be discovered, to be recognized, to be noticed, to be appointed, to be promoted guarantees one thing and one thing only: old age. Focusing on doing whatever it is that you do better than anybody else and trusting that alone is enough (and arguing tirelessly that it *should* be enough) guarantees one thing and one thing only: a long life of labor in oblivion.

If Jesus had hung around his hometown working as a carpenter, giving his talks at the local Kiwanis Club meeting, writing books that never got published, waiting to be discovered, we might all be Zen Buddhists today. He was a pretty bold, bombastic promoter. Turned wet bread into fish. Healed the blind. Pitched a fit about the merchants hanging around the temple. Well, you know the story. I don't have to tell you about it. You know the story because Jesus was such a great promoter.

## Chapter 11

### IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO ACT ON YOUR IDEAS. THE ONLY RELIABLE PATH TO MAXIMUM SUCCESS IS *MAXIMUM ACTION*

My speaking colleague Jim Rohn says that when you look closely at the highly-successful individual in any field, you walk away saying to yourself: "*It's no wonder he's doing so well... look at everything he's doing.*" Well, there's a darned good test! If we followed you around for a week and painstakingly recorded how you spent your time, what you did every day to advance your career or business, would we wind up saying to ourselves, "It's no wonder he's doing so well – look at everything he's doing?"

The truth is that most people are intellectually lazy, surprisingly uncurious in their acquisition of information. And, in their businesses, they lazily rely on only one, two or three methods of attracting customers or clients. As a consultant, quite frankly, I do not walk away from most clients saying, "It's no wonder he's doing so well – look at everything he's doing." Mostly, I say to myself, "It's a miracle he's doing as well as he is – look at how little he's doing."

I once knew a chiropractor who built three million-dollar-a-year practices. Not one, three. Dr. S. built and sold one, moved to another community, built and sold another one, and one's a fluke but three's a system, so the word spread and a whole lot of doctors wanted to know how he did that. So many, so much so, that thousands each paid \$30,000.00 to come and hear him expound on his methods in seminars. But the essence of his success was really quite simple. Invariably, every doctor asked him the same question: "How can I get \_\_\_ new patients this month?" How can I get 30 new patients this month? How can I get 50 new patients this month? The number always varied but the answer was always the same. And so was Dr. S.'s answer: "*I don't know one way to get 30 new patients, but I know 30 ways to get a new patient and I use every single one of them.*"

See, if you need new clients for your business, don't do one thing, do a dozen things. If you have a problem to solve, don't implement one possible solution; implement a dozen. One of the speakers I appear with frequently these days is Reverend Robert Schuller, and he's become famous for his story of how he faced the massive cost overruns in completing The Crystal Cathedral. Confronted with a need for ten million dollars, he made a list of ten different ways he might raise that money. Then he went to work on all ten simultaneously.

Take action to diversify the way that money and success comes to you, the way that you solve problems, even the way that you acquire new information and grow as a person.

Curiosity, incidentally, is a wonderful thing. Forget the old “curiosity killed the cat” thing; curiosity is what uncovers opportunities and makes people rich. The average child of 5 to 10 asks hundreds of questions a day; the average adult asks only a handful. This is why kids have so much energy and enthusiasm for living. This is also why adults age prematurely and rapidly. Life-force itself comes from curiosity and creativity. *“Always Be Creating And Discovering, With Enthusiasm.”* When it becomes “went there, did that,” you have at least one foot in the grave.

### What Kind Of Action Yields The Greatest Results?

Yes, there is one type or kind of “action” that produces maximum results in a minimum length of time, thanks in part to ‘the principle of momentum.’ Again, it’s from Jim Rohn that I first heard about the incredibly powerful Principle Of Massive Action. The key word here is: Massive.

Not tiny action. Not wimpy action. Not tentative action. Not toe-in-the-water action. Not ponderously slow action. Massive action.

In 1946, a man named Walter Russell had his philosophies published, largely because he was such an unusual, larger-than-life figure. Russell never went past elementary school, and his first job was a clerk in a dry good store earning \$2.50 a week. To the amazement of just about everybody who knew of his “non-background,” Russell achieved considerable fame and success as an architect, sculptor, and artist. With the publication of his success philosophies, Russell became known as “the man who tapped the secrets of the universe.” Russell insisted that every man has consummated genius within, and taught that “every successful man or genius has three particular qualities in common, and the most conspicuous of these is that they all produce a prodigious amount of work.”

In his classic LEAD THE FIELD recordings, Earl Nightingale told, with slight sarcasm, of the man who arrives home every day and says to his family, “Boy, am I tired” – because that’s what he heard his father say every day when he arrived home from work, at a job, under conditions that really warranted the expression of exhaustion. I am often impressed at how little work people are willing to do in order to get what they insist they want.

Let me give you an example of The Principle Of Massive Action *in action*: a woman, Barbara L., cornered me at a seminar, introduced herself as the CEO of a specialized, industrial company – in her words, a woman in a man’s world, and told me of her frustrations and woes with finding financing. She was literally turning away lucrative manufacturing contracts because she couldn’t finance the necessary raw materials, labor and other costs while in production and then waiting to be paid a month or so following delivery. Having once run a specialty manufacturing company with similar problems, I instantly had empathy – and ideas – for her, but first I asked some questions. And I was not surprised to discover that she had tried most banks, suffered rejection, and pretty much given up.

From my own experience, I knew Barbara had stopped at only scratching the surface of potential solutions. But she was no different than most. Most people, confronted with a problem, think of and try only a few solutions, and give up quite easily. This, incidentally, is the blunt truth behind many of our popularized societal ills and failures. Most people who “can’t” get jobs usually have given up on getting a job. People who “can’t” get off welfare have truthfully given up getting off of welfare. Here’s why this is inarguably true: because there are people just like them who have persevered and gotten jobs, who have persevered and gotten off welfare. If one can, everyone can.

So, just as example, here was my prescription for Barbara:

1. Strengthen the proposal package and re-contact every bank that said no. Then keep re-contacting them and bringing them up-to-date every thirty days.
2. Reach out to friends, associates, community contacts, vendors in search of recommendations of other lenders and/or somebody who has a relationship of some kind with someone of authority in one of those banks.
3. Discuss different formats for the financing: revolving receivables credit line OR asset-based long-term loan OR 90-day notes. Ask the banks for different things.
4. Contact banks outside the local market... draw a 300-mile circle around the plant and contact every bank in that circle.
5. Consider a sale/leaseback arrangement with a leasing company for all the equipment and furniture in the factory and offices.
6. Contact the SBA. Through the SBA, get put in touch with SBA Certified Lenders. And investigate the SBA’s preferred lending services for woman-owned businesses.

7. Get free help through the SBA, from SCORE (Service Corps. Of Retired Executives) for beefing up the business plan, proposal, etc.
8. Meet with key vendors and discuss creative, extended terms that could equate to the same effect as a loan or credit line. Simultaneously, open up conversations with new, alternative vendors who might use credit as a means of acquiring new business.
9. Consider factoring some receivables. Meet with factoring companies and brokers.
10. Offer customers a significant discount for paying 50% to 100% of the contracts in advance. (There is a cost of financing, no matter how you do it. You can convert that cost to a discount for prepayment without impact on true, net profit.)
11. Advertise for private lenders and “angels.”
12. Form a new limited partnership or corporation with private investors, which will serve as a financing-for-profit business, lending against your other company’s receivables.
13. Franchise or pseudo-franchise exclusive sales territories, and use the fees collected from that to establish your own financing fund.
14. Alter the nature of your business, the “mix” of your business, so you can get cash-with-order business.
15. Through blind, confidential advertising, put the entire business up for sale and test the waters.
16. Meet with key employees and discuss possibilities for assembling receivables financing or equity investment from employees.

Now, here's the "trick" I shared with Barbara: do all 16 of these things at the same time. Right now. Fast. Back when I ran a company with its nose pushed up against this same wall, I did all 16 of these things. In our case, we succeeded with #'s 3, 5, 8, 10 and 14. #10 alone, incidentally, dramatically altered the company's cash flow situation, even though everybody told me that the clients in our industry would never prepay for their manufacturing orders. In three months, we converted over half the existing clients to prepaying, for a 10% discount.

But if we had tried one, done everything we could before giving up on one, THEN tried two, done everything we could with two, THEN tried three... it's pretty obvious that time's going to win and we're going to lose.

Of course, she might have responded – as most would – with “Geez, that's a lot of work!” And she might have said, “How am I supposed to get all that done?”...

and... “But I don’t know how to do all those things...” or “I’ll be working until midnight everyday to do all that.” Etc. But I’m delighted to report that Barbara found an SBA Certified Lender-bank, secured a long-term loan replacing all her other financing and providing expansion capital, and she found three private individuals happy to finance individual, large receivables from new contracts as she needs them. And, it’s no wonder Barbara finally got her financing; look at everything she did!

I won’t bore you with all the grisly details, but I am absolutely convinced that, when my wife and I separated, had I not applied the Principle Of Massive Action, I’d be single instead of happily married today. (Of course, had I applied the Principle earlier and consistently, she wouldn’t have left in the first place. But that’s another book.)

**Could You Cultivate THE Most Prized  
Personal Characteristic Of Any And All  
Known To Man?**

Let me give you one other example, that leads us to yet another important success behavior: recently, in Fort Wayne, Indiana, for me, disaster struck; the setup crew for the “Success ‘94” seminar tour called me in my hotel room, the afternoon before the event, to tell me that none of my product was at the convention center. Everyone at my office’s end then did everything they thought they could do to correct the problem, to get UPS to deliver early the next day, to try and trace the location of the shipment. They did everything they thought they could do, but they still stopped short of doing everything that could be done. As concerned and earnest as they were, they stopped short. Why? Because very, very few people understand the idea of refusing to accept anything less than success.

After they gave up, I dug in. Through a series of phone calls and conversations, I finally got to the guy standing on the right receiving dock in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. I sold him – and I mean *sold* – on getting up early the next morning, getting to his warehouse, and going through the carloads of boxes left there during the night to find mine. And to call me by 7:00 AM that morning with the good news that he had done so. And, a little after 7:00 AM, he was on the phone. And he had the boxes loaded in his own, personal pickup truck. And he brought them to the convention center, undoubtedly in violation of a handful of company regulations. And, for you cynics, I didn’t offer him money, he never asked for money, and when we finally tried to give him money that morning, he refused it. Now, I honestly believe that I did not do anything here that anybody else couldn’t have done. This was not a matter of “talent.” I just refused to accept anything less than success. I stayed at it long enough and hard enough that I got a little “earned

luck," and found a guy like me – two people who can and will "carry the message to Garcia." If you don't know the story of the man who carried the message to Garcia, I've reprinted it here. It reveals the most prized characteristic on earth.

### A Message To Garcia

In all this Cuban business there is one man stands out on the horizon of my memory like Mars at perihelion.

When war broke out between Spain and the United States, it was very necessary to communicate quickly with the leader of the Insurgents. Garcia was somewhere in the mountain vastness of Cuba – no one knew where. No mail or telegraph message could reach him. The President must secure his cooperation, and quickly.

What to do!

Someone said to the President, "There is a fellow by the name of Rowan who will find Garcia for you, if anybody can."

Rowan was sent for and given a letter to be delivered to Garcia. How the "fellow by the name of Rowan" took the letter, sealed it up in an oilskin pouch, strapped it over his heart, in four days landed by night off the coast of Cuba from an open boat, disappeared into the jungle, and in three weeks came out on the other side of the Island, having traversed a hostile country on foot, and delivered his letter to Garcia – are things I have no special desire now to tell in detail. The point that I wish to make is this: McKinley gave Rowan a letter to be delivered to Garcia; Rowan took the letter and did not ask, "Where is he at?"

By the eternal! There is a man whose form should be cast in deathless bronze and the statue placed in every college of the land. It is not book-learning young men need, nor instruction about this and that, but a stiffening of the vertebrae which will cause them to be loyal to a trust, to act promptly, concentrate their energies; do the thing, "Carry a message to Garcia."

General Garcia is dead now, but there are other Garcias. No man who has endeavored to carry out an enterprise where many hands were needed, but has been well-nigh appalled at times by the imbecility of the average man – the inability or unwillingness to concentrate on a thing and do it.

Slipshod assistance, foolish inattention, dowdy indifference, and half-hearted work seem the rule; and no man succeeds unless by hook or crook or threat he forced or bribes other men to assist him; or mayhap, God in His goodness performs a miracle and sends him an Angel of Light for an assistant.

You, the reader, put this matter to a test: you are sitting now in your office – six clerks are within call. Summon any one and make this request: "Please look in the encyclopedia and make a brief memorandum for me concerning the life of Correggio."

Will the clerk quietly say, "Yes, sir," and go do the task?

On your life, he will not. He will look at you out of a fishy eye and ask one or more of the following questions:

Who was he?

Which encyclopedia?

Where is the encyclopedia?

Was I hired for that?

Don't you mean Bismarck?

What's the matter with Charlie doing it?

Is he dead?

Is there any hurry?

Shan't I bring you the book and let you look it up yourself?  
What do you want to know for?

And I will lay you ten to one that after you have answered the questions and explained how to find the information, and why you want it, the clerk will go off and get one of the other clerks to help him try to find Garcia – and then come back and tell you there is no such man. Of course, I may lose my bet, but according to the Law of Average, I will not.

Now, if you are wise, you will not bother to explain to your “assistant” that Correggio is indexed under the C’s, not in the K’s, but you will smile very sweetly and say, “Never mind,” and go look it up yourself. And this incapacity for independent action, this moral stupidity, this infirmity of the will, this unwillingness to cheerfully catch hold and lift – these are the things that put pure Socialism so far into the future. If men will not act for themselves, what will they do when the benefit of their effort is for all?

A first mate with knotted club seems necessary; and the dread of getting “the bounce” Saturday night holds many a worker to his place. Advertise for a stenographer, and nine out of ten who apply can neither spell nor punctuate – and do not think it necessary to.

Can such a one write a letter to Garcia?

“You see that bookkeeper,” said the foreman to me in a large factory.

“Yes; what about him?”

“Well, he’s a fine accountant, but if I’d send him uptown on an errand, he might accomplish the errand all right, and on the other hand, might stop at four saloons on the way, and when he got to Main Street would forget what he had been sent for.”

Can such a man be entrusted to carry a message to Garcia?

We have recently been hearing much maudlin sympathy expressed for the “downtrodden denizens of the sweatshop” and the “homeless wanderer searching for honest employment,” and with it all often go many hard words for the men in power.

Nothing is said about the employer who grows old before his time in a vain attempt to get frowzy ne’er-do-wells to do intelligent work; and his long, patient striving after “help” that does nothing but loaf when his back is turned. In every store and factory, there is a constant weeding-out process going on. The employer is constantly sending away “help” that have shown their incapacity to further the interests of the business, and others are being taken on. No matter how good times are, this sorting continues: only, if times are hard and work is scarce, the sorting is done finer – but out and forever out the incompetent and unworthy go. It is the survival of the fittest. Self-interest prompts every employer to keep the best – those who can carry a message to Garcia.

I know one man of really brilliant parts who has not the ability to manage a business of his own, and yet who is absolutely worthless to anyone else because he carries with him constantly the insane suspicion that his employer is oppressing or intending to oppress him. He cannot give orders, and he will not receive them. Should a message be given to him, to take to Garcia, his answer would probably be, “Take it yourself!”

Tonight this man walks the streets looking for work, the wind whistling through his threadbare coat. No one who knows him dare employ him, for he is a regular firebrand of discontent. He is impervious to reason, and the only thing that can impress him is the toe of a thick-soled Number Nine boot.

Of course, I know that one so morally deformed is no less to be pitied than a physical cripple; but in our pitying let us drop a tear, too, for the men who are striving to carry on a great enterprise, whose working hours are not limited by the whistle, and whose hair is fast turning white through the struggle to hold in line dowdy indifference, slipshod imbecility, and the heartless ingratitude which, but for their enterprise, would be both hungry and homeless.

Have I put the matter too strongly? Possibly I have; but when all the world has gone a-slumming, I wish to speak a word of sympathy for the man who succeeds – the man who, against great odds, has directed the efforts of others, and having succeeded, finds there's nothing in it: nothing but bare board and clothes. I have carried a dinner-pail and worked for day's wages, and I have also been an employer of labor, and I know there is something to be said on both sides. There is no excellence, per se, in poverty; rags are no recommendation; and all employers are not rapacious and high-handed, any more than all poor men are virtuous. My heart goes out to the man who does his work when the "boss" is away, as well as when he is at home. And the man who, when given a letter for Garcia, quietly takes the missive, without asking any idiotic questions, and with no lurking intention of chucking it into the nearest sewer, or of doing naught else but deliver it, never gets "laid off," nor has to go on a strike for higher wages. Civilization is one long, anxious search for just such individuals. Anything such a man asks shall be granted. He is wanted in every city, town and village - in every office, shop, store and factory. The world cries out for such; he is needed and needed badly – the man who can "Carry a Message to Garcia."

## Chapter 12

### TAKE ACTION TO TURN FAILURE INTO SUCCESS

I once saw a particularly ornery dog latch onto a mailman's leg. The mailman shook his leg, but the dog held on, growling menacingly. The mailman kicked the dog with his other leg. The dog held on. The mailman drug the dog down the sidewalk. The dog held on. The mailman sprayed the dog with Mace. He hit the dog on the head with his mail sack. He swung his leg, dog attached, into a tree trunk. The dog held on. I thought to myself: there is the dog version of Dan Kennedy.

In his best-selling book "Swim With The Sharks," Harvey MacKay tells of being turned down by all his local lending institutions. Then he drew a 3-inch circle on the map around his city and called on all the banks within that circle. They all turned him down, too. So he drew a bigger circle. Eventually, he got his loan. He says he'd still be drawing ever-bigger circles if he hadn't connected. I believe him.

If you look at most highly-successful entrepreneurs, you won't find markedly superior talent, intelligence, education or resources. Self-made millionaires are surprisingly ordinary – and, often, surprisingly unintelligent – people. Conversely, a small percentage of Mensa members are self-made millionaires. So it ain't intelligence. Instead, it seems to have much to do with a profound sort of stubbornness.

#### How You Deal With Failure Determines Whether Or Not You Ever Get To Deal With Success

Research supervised by a prof at Tulane University revealed that the average entrepreneur goes through 3.8 failures before achieving significant success.

Actually, the entire entrepreneurial experience is one of frequent failure interrupted by occasional success. The entire experience of selling is one of frequent refusal (rejection) interrupted by occasional acceptance. In direct marketing, we call it "testing," not failure. But a whole lot more "tests" fail than succeed.

Go Ahead, Screw Up, Fall Down.  
Embarrass Yourself.  
A Lot. Fast.

There IS value in making mistakes. General Schwartzkopf discussed one situation he encountered where, if a bundle of decisions were made and actions taken and 49% turned out wrong, everybody'd still be way ahead of where they were with no decisions being made and no actions taken. I say: screw up. Fall down. The opposite requires living in constant fear of error, and that's a sad, pitiful existence. You have to look at every significant accomplishment as the end result of a certain number of successes, but also a certain number of failures.

Billy Crystal is, as I write this, one of Hollywood's hottest comic commodities. CITY SLICKERS was a huge hit, birthing a sequel. But let's not forget his movie MR. SATURDAY NIGHT, which he deeply believed in, which was Dead On Arrival at the theaters, and which was a huge disappointment to him personally. Everybody, at every level, who is attempting much of anything screws up and falls down.

I watched the actor Ted Danson last night on The David Letterman Show. Danson took his lumps from Letterman about his much-publicized relationship with Whoopi Goldberg, most memorable for Danson's appearance at her Friars Club Roas in blackface, where he delivered a monologue of remarkably raunchy and racist humor that offended those in attendance and became major news for days. Letterman extracted a few pints of blood and laughs at Danson's expense. Coming on the show and letting that subject be discussed was certainly a big risk, and I'd guess that Ted was fully aware of the risk of coming away looking like a buffoon or worse. But he took the risk, dealt with the matter, and, I think, came across as a decent, affable guy who used really bad judgment in one instance, has a sense of humor and humility about his own situation, and can take his hits like a man. I think his stock went up as a result of that interview.

If you aren't willing to risk actions that may cause you personal, financial or other embarrassment, you aren't going to be taking much action at all. So go ahead: screw up, fall down, embarrass yourself, and do a lot of it, as quickly as you can. Learn as much as you possibly can as you go. But whatever you do, don't let yourself be imprisoned by the fear of making mistakes.

### Death Of An Actor

"One of the saddest stories to come out of Hollywood last year was the rather sordid tale of the death of a young actor named Barry Brown. He played leading roles in BAD COMPANY and DAISY MILLER, and he was an actor of unusual promise. But he had the misfortune to do his best work in movies that were, in one way or another, unsuccessful. As he found it increasingly difficult to get parts, he became depressed, began drinking heavily and behaving erratically. He was found

in his home, shot through the head with a gun and bottle beside him, and friends theorized he had been playing Russian roulette and had not intended suicide.

Barry Brown, dead at 27, had talent, looks and intelligence. All he lacked was the one quality that, if absent, can make the rest useless: he lacked the ability to hang in, the emotional strength necessary to reject rejection and keep coming back for more.

"It is the same in many professions, of course. From salesman to saxophonist, the individual who risks something of himself in performance has to be somewhat inured to rebuff."

So wrote Bruce Cook, contributing editor to American Film Magazine, in an article for THE WALL STREET JOURNAL a few years ago.

This story is all the more tragic when you consider that it must be representative of tens of thousands of similar stories, some reported, some not, of people who gave up.

It's such stories that prove that talent, genius and education are no assurances of success. In fact, the history of American business is full of stories of people lacking in those qualities but strong in persistence who have achieved the incredible.

One has to wonder how much greater America would be as a nation, in all respects, if the best and the brightest were also the most persistent.

Probably the best thing about being in business for yourself is that there isn't anybody to give a letter of resignation to when the going gets tough. Industrialist C.F. Kettering said, "No one ever would have crossed the ocean if he could have gotten off the ship in the storm."

I can think of a number of times when I've wanted to quit and didn't, mostly because I couldn't.

In my experience, far more business success comes purely from persistence than from invention or investment. There's a lot to be said for simply not giving up.

(Note: Portions of the above reprinted from the book 'Kennedy On Money/Business/Success,' © 1985.)

So, How *Do You Convert Failure To Success?*

First, just by hanging in. Quite often, failure transforms itself to success purely as a result of persistence. Ernest Hemingway reportedly rewrote *The Old Man And The Sea* two hundred times and tried forty-four different endings for *A Farewell To Arms*. Keep trying a slightly different approach. But keep trying.

The insightful writer Ben Stein says, “Failure is like a patient teacher who tells us, ‘No, THAT won’t work. Try it a little differently. Or maybe a lot differently.’ If you look at failure as a coach, as a manager encouraging you to try different approaches, you get a much better idea of what failure is.”

Second, by diligently looking for the concealed opportunity. To quote proverbs and adages: nothing is either as good or bad as it first appears to be... and... whenever one door closes, another opens. Personally, every great disaster, disappointment and tragedy in my life has directly led to a greater opportunity or benefit. Every single time. But, you can only find what you look for, see what you expect to see.

Are there exceptions? I suppose so. There ARE some “failures” in which I’ve been unable to uncover any IMMEDIATE benefit or opportunity – and those, set aside as “unfinished business” (rather than “permanent failure”) have, in time, yielded enormous value. But these exceptions are few and far between.

Third, by taking prompt, decisive, constructive action. *Stopping* is the absolute worst thing you can do. I wonder how many shots Michael Jordan MISSED (failures!) in his pro basketball career? Even how many CRUCIAL shots he missed? Well, one thing’s certain; when he did miss one, he didn’t rush over to the bench, get the coach to take him out of the game, sit down on the bench, put a towel over his head, and refuse to take another shot for the rest of the game. What did he do when he missed? As soon as possible, he took another shot. Cotton Fitzsimmons, a wise, veteran coach, now in management here with the Phoenix Suns says, “Sometimes you have to let a player just shoot his way out of a slump.” No, *stopping* is not the answer. Instead, as with most problems, action is the only true antidote.

## EPILOGUE

By now, you should have “locked in” on the Ultimate Success Secret presented to you a number of times throughout this book. The people who are LIVING this Secret are the most respected and admired, influential and powerful, successful and happy individuals on the planet.

I would like to add a very brief discussion about just one *application* of this Secret – and to quickly note that, like all advice, it’s easier said than done; that, like “the fat doctor,” I could stand to take my own medicine more frequently; but that does not diminish the importance of the ideas.

On the long, often dangerously boring drive from my home city of Phoenix to Las Vegas, there are signs posted frequently, at sites of deadly accidents, warning drivers not to drive if they’ve been drinking, not to drive if fatigued. The signs say:

### ***There Is A LAST Time For Everything.***

Tell your wife (or husband) you love her (or him) more often. (I don’t say it nearly often enough.)

And, especially tell her (or him) *today*, because they might be gone tomorrow. There is a last time for everything.

Stop and have a friendly conversation with your Mom, Dad, a friend, the guy at the newsstand on the corner. (My mother had a severe stroke last year and cannot have such conversations with us, we can’t have them with her.) Take just a few minutes for this more often than you do. And, especially *today*. They might be gone tomorrow. There is a last time for everything.

I called to talk to a friend the other day, another entrepreneur as busy, as obsessed as I; she wasn’t in; when she called back, she said, almost apologetically and wryly, “I was out having a life.” She had gone out to lunch with someone 100% unrelated to her business. Whatever it is that you really, really enjoy doing, really, really, really enjoy it the next time you do it. There is a last time for everything.

When you go to your job or place of business today, be thankful you’ve got one, and give it the very best you’ve got. Tomorrow, thousands will lose their jobs – and *then*, maybe, wish they’d done things there differently. Tomorrow, a thousand entrepreneurs will close business’ doors – and *then*, maybe, wonder what might

have happened if they'd advertised more creatively, sold more aggressively. There is a last time for everything.

*Whatever* you're going to do today, give it your best, and take from it the best you can. There is a last time for everything.

Just

DO

It.

- Nike

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For nearly 20 years, The Author has made it his business to surround himself with exceptionally successful individuals and to study them in zealous search of one ultimate success secret – and this book contains that discovery. The Author, Dan Kennedy, has had his books favorably featured several times in Success Magazine, in USA Today, in Selling Magazine, and countless trade and specialty magazines. As a Speaker, Dan addresses over 100,000 people a year. And, as a Consultant, he works with clients in nearly 100 different fields, from startup entrepreneurs to CEOs of \$200-million companies. His speaking colleagues, associates and clients include celebrities from the fields of entertainment, sports, publishing and politics.

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